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## Recent Talks

### [Circus Training into Circus Practice](#) (13 February)

Talks by Amanda Langlois (McGill), Ron Beadle (Northumbria University, Newcastle, UK) and Jon Burt (Macquarie University, Sydney Australia). The video isn't yet ready but will be available to consult shortly.

### [Which Social Circus for Which Society?](#) (9 January).

Talks by David Simard (Cirque du Soleil), Jennifer Spiegel (Concordia), and Zita Nyarady (York). The video is available on private channel on Vimeo for consultation. Please contact me for more information.

## Magic at McGill this Friday

### Adaptations of Nineteenth-Century Magic Effects in Contemporary Québécois Circus and Theatre

Conference-demonstration by Joe Culpepper  
(McGill)

Friday 13 March, 2 p.m.  
Redpath Museum (historic teaching auditorium),  
McGill University  
859 Sherbrooke West

Last year's premier of Etienne Saglio's circus show *Le soir des monstres* concluded with a stage illusion first performed in London in the 1860s. This year, Lepage's avant-garde play *Coeur* adapts moments from the life and magic of France's famous nineteenth-century conjuror: Jean-Eugene Robert-Houdin. This talk will explore the socio-historical origins of sever magic effects to think about how their cultural, political and artistic functions change through contemporary performances in Montréal.

Joseph Culpepper is a performance scholar, magician, and magic consultant. He recently completed a PhD in comparative literature at the University of Toronto. His dissertation, "Reception and Adaptation: Magic Effects, Mysteries and Con Games," analyzes how individuals experience magic through various media. Joseph currently teaches magic as practice-based research at the National Circus School in Montréal and is a visiting scholar at McGill's English department.

## Next Event

Friday 10 April  
10:00 - 12:30

## Other news

[Upcoming Circus Semiotics Conference](#)

[Christabelle Sethna](#) (Ottawa), "Animal Celebrity: The Memorialization of Jumbo the Elephant"; [Tracy Zhang](#) (Montreal), "Nation, Globalism, and the Transnational"; and [Jan Rok Achard and Louis Patrick Leroux](#) on the challenges in developing an archive and methodology for an oral history of Québec circus (and they will have some video footage to show).

The project Zirkus | Wissenschaft aims at establishing the Circus as an object of cultural studies, which in Germany so far has been largely unexplored. For this purpose the conference wants to bring together scholars from all over the world to create an interdisciplinary network to offer the opportunity of intense scientific exchanges, and to support ongoing research projects as well as initiating further plans.

The conference, entitled Zirkussemiotik (Semiotics of the Circus), will focus on how and under which conditions meaning is produced and transmitted in the so called New Circus, and in which way this depends on the construction of meaning in traditional circus performances. Semiotics, the theory of meaning creation which analyses the use of signs and the different kinds of sign processes, will help to provide answers to these initial questions.

The conference will centre around three topics:

1. Semiotics of the traditional Circus
2. Semiotics of the New Circus
3. Possibilities of analysing New Circus performances

The three topics are going to be linked by focusing on the interactions between the traditional and the New Circus, which are important factors for the constitution of meaning in circus performances.

Graduate School 'Practices of Literature'  
<http://www.uni-muenster.de/Practices-of-Literature/>

### **PhD Research Studentship at Northumbria University**

Please follow the link for PhD scholarship into circus research in England!

<http://www.findaphd.com/search/projectDetails.aspx?PJID=61771>

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