

Show

Of

Hands

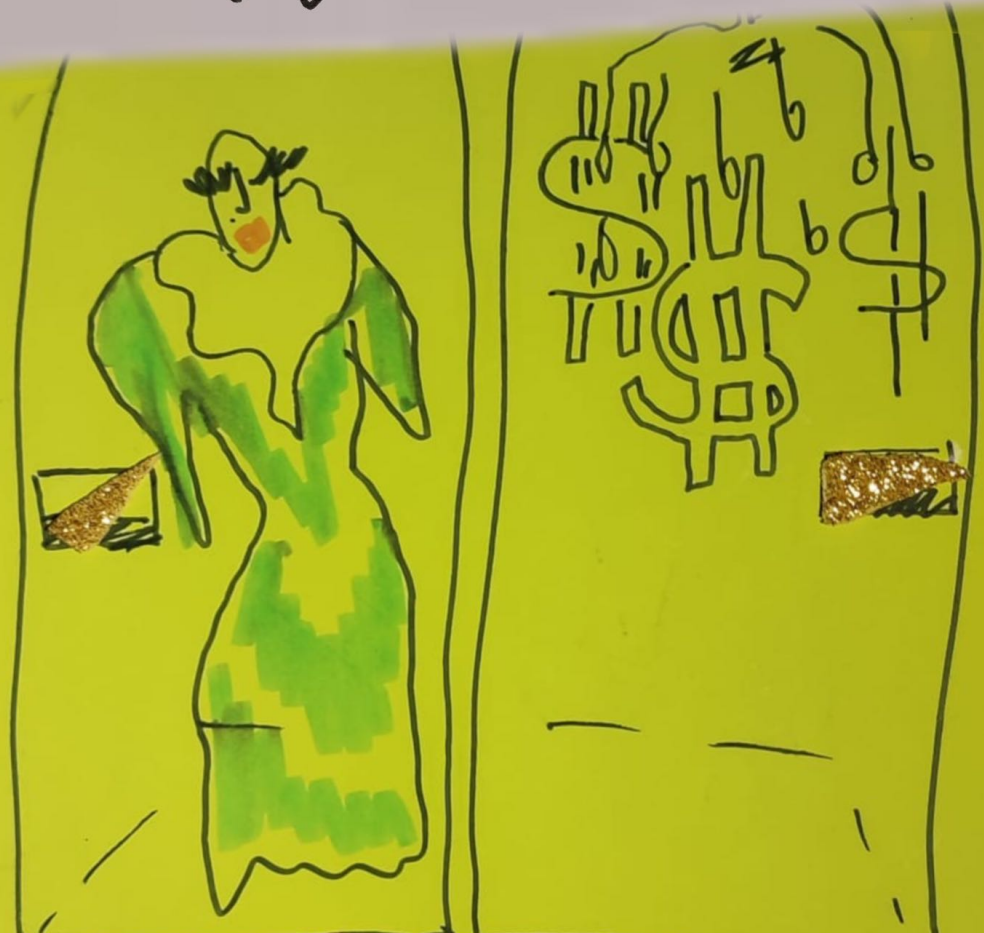
A circus/book

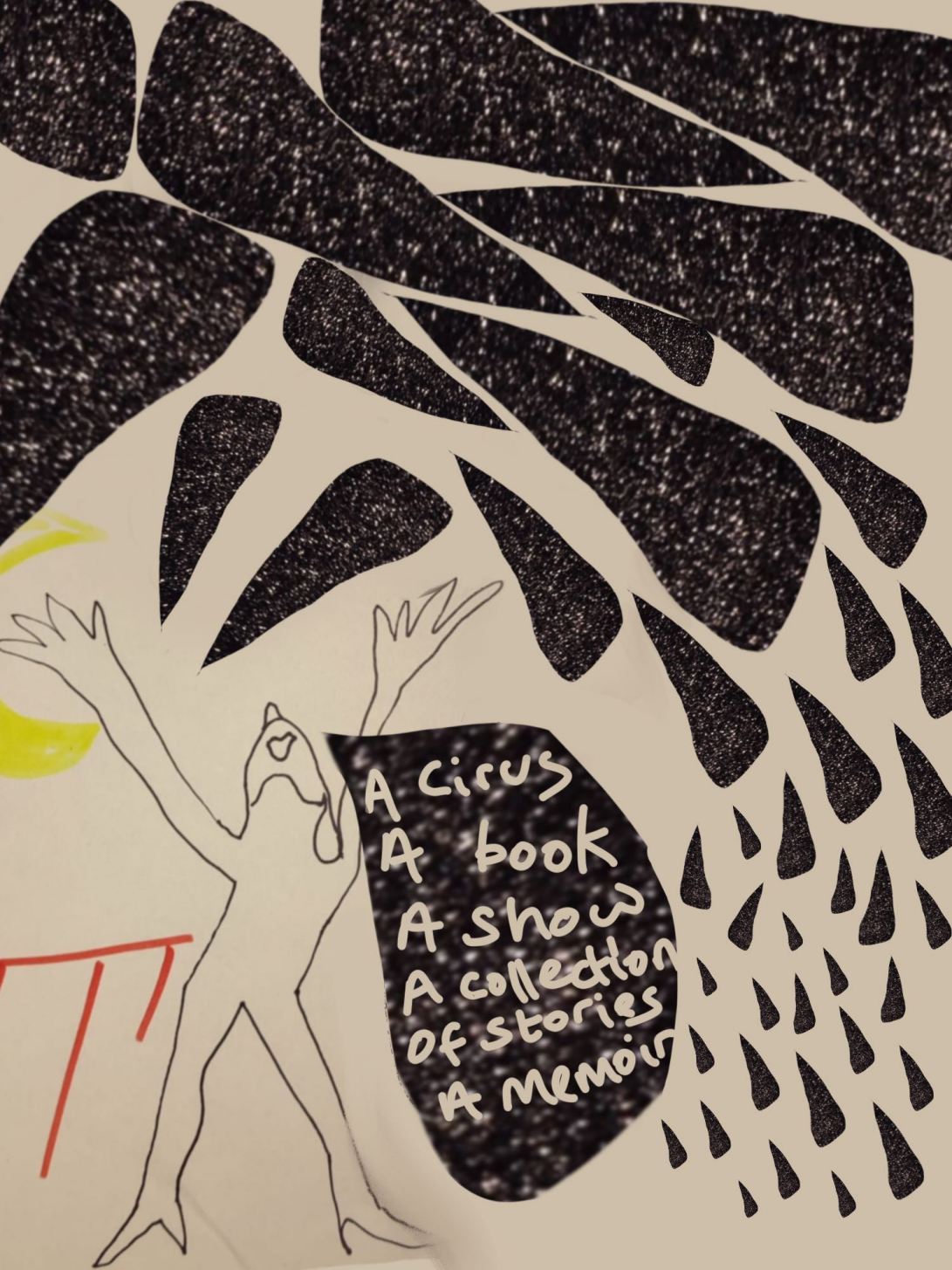


Theydies & gentlefemmes

Bois & girls...

WELCOME TO...





A circus
A book
A show
A collection
of stories
A memoir

This is a circus/book and as such, it presents itself to you upside-down. Think of its structure as a handstand.



At the top, you find the feet, those things that normally hold you up, that ground you.



At the bottom of this structure, you find the hands, full of intricate adjustments that are impossible to disconnect from the rest of the body. Like a handstand artist, I ask you to focus on these hands.

I'd like you to stand with me a while, to try to be in balance with me. As my dear handstand philosopher friends have taught me, doing handstands is about finding the state that allows you to stay here. My favourite circus artists invite you in, offer you their perspective.

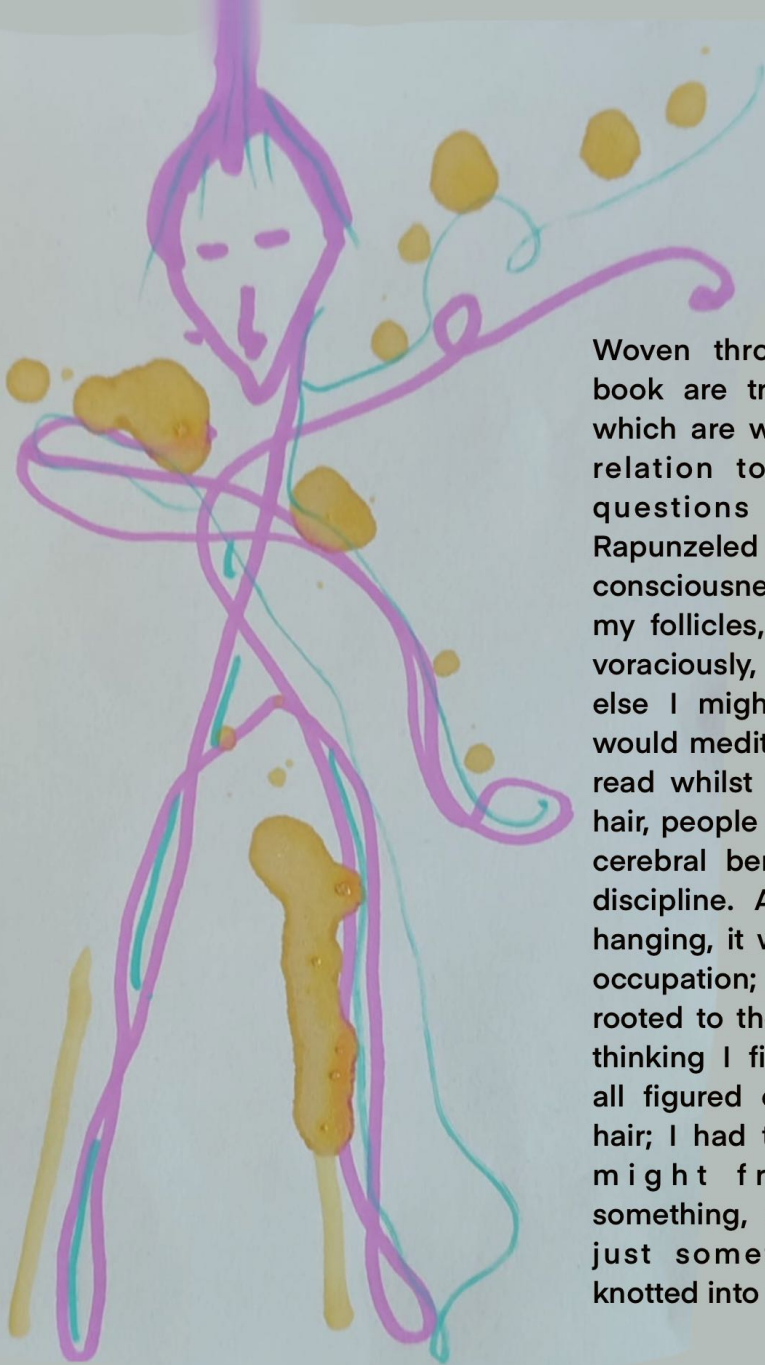


I offer the perspective of my hands (I am quite attached to them).

I flow through my hands, they have minds of their own, like cephalopod's appendages.

They are trans hands, sticky, busy with touch, with feeling, with the universe. They deal with the act of looking at the presentation of bodies.

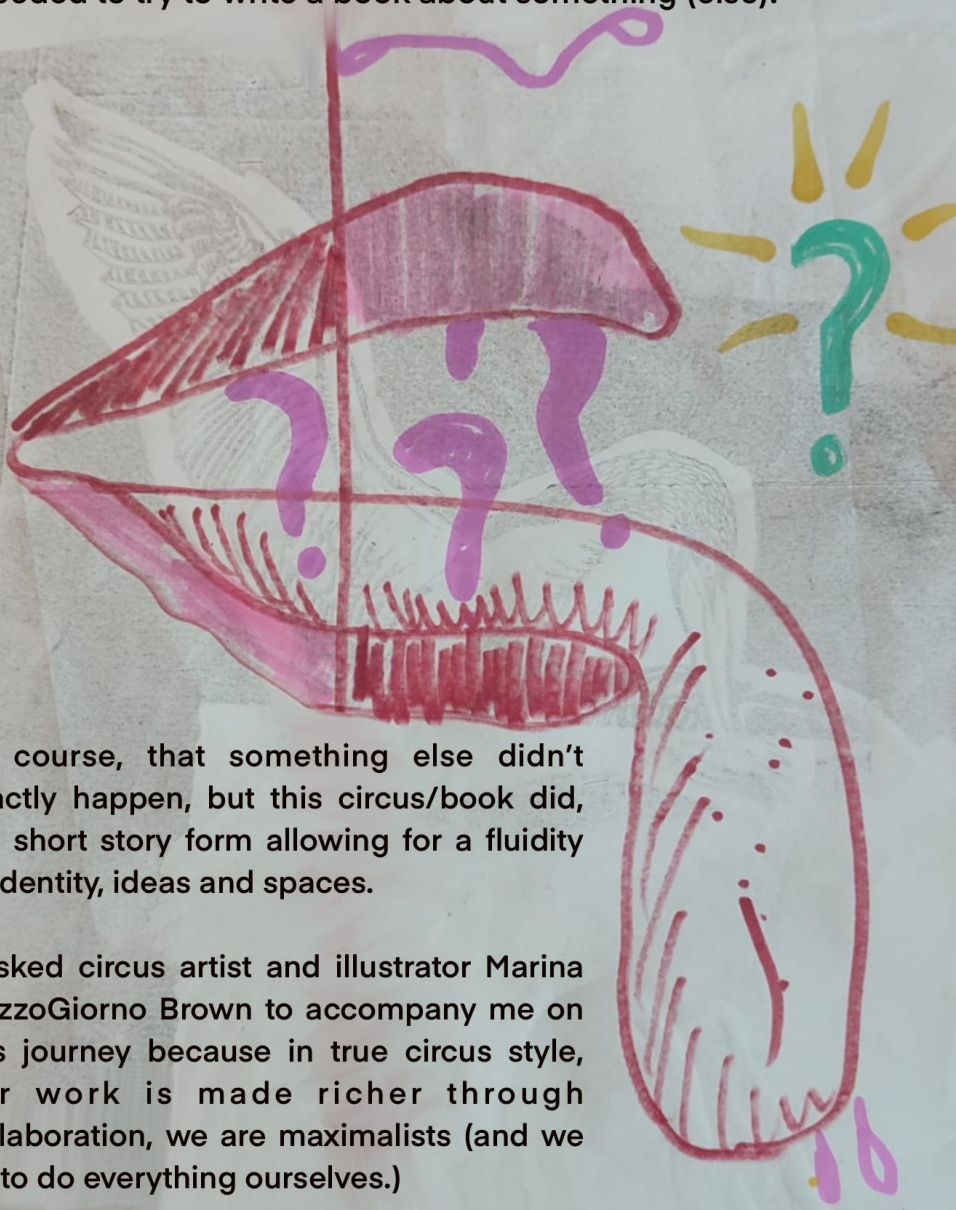
On the other hand(s), they were (unwittingly) shaken by a neoliberal cosmology, and so wring themselves around contemporary notions of selfhood.



Woven through this circus/book are traces of my hair, which are wrapped up in my relation to gender. When questions around gender Rapunzeled their way into my consciousness, and tunneled my follicles, I started to read voraciously, wondering what else I might have missed. I would meditate on what I had read whilst hanging from my hair, people rarely think of the cerebral benefits of a circus discipline. After 15 years of hanging, it was more than an occupation; it was how I was rooted to the world. One day, thinking I finally had gender all figured out, I cut off my hair; I had the feeling that it might free me from something, as if gender was just something that was knotted into my braid.



I read Paul Preciado and felt like a big boi and used big boi words. I proclaimed myself an anti-Samson and waited to feel all of my strength being restored after I had Delilahed myself. Feeling restless, I drew my pen to practice some (literary) fencing, and proceeded to try to write a book about something (else).



Of course, that something else didn't exactly happen, but this circus/book did, the short story form allowing for a fluidity of identity, ideas and spaces.

I asked circus artist and illustrator Marina MezzoGiorno Brown to accompany me on this journey because in true circus style, our work is made richer through collaboration, we are maximalists (and we try to do everything ourselves.)



Marina Mezzogiorno-Brown discovered circus in 2009 in the nightlife of New York, learning and performing at The House of Yes; in 2013 she graduated from Flic Scuola di Circo (Torino, Italy), specialized in aerial rope, and has been performing internationally ever since.

She was trained in visual art by her grandmother, sculptor Bonnie Jean Malcolm, starting before she could even fully control her hands and ending when Bonnie passed away at 100 in 2022. Her paintings and decor work appear in festivals and buildings in Seattle (Othello Building), Amsterdam (Jetlag Festival), and Italy (Cleolo, MagdaClan, Fantasy Festival). She created the artwork for Artichoke Pizza, NYC. She makes numerous art books using techniques such as screen printing, collage and pop-up.



Tay Lane is a performance artist and a writer with a background in circus. They perform internationally, from circus tents in Rio de Janeiro, to cable factories in Prague. They have given performance lectures in Smells Like Dialogue Festival Ghent, at BigCi Arts Centre New South Wales (AUS) and Berlin Circus Festival. They have received the Cirque De Demain Silver Award, Cirque Du Soleil Innovation Award and the Oxford Samuel Beckett Theatre Trust Award, among others. They have been published in places such as the book *Thinking Through Circus* by The Circus Dialogues, Nigerian Lit Mag *Juste Literary*, and *Circus Is Not The Only Fruit* magazine.

Collectif and then... think of themselves as a monster. A monster that devours artists, thinkers & mischief makers, that has many limbs, many eyes, many voices and many qualities that they don't have the vocabulary for. They do bite, and they can be dangerous. But never fear, the belly of the beast is a bright and bubbling place.

They have many tentacles that spread mangrove-like, wide across the earth, and have wrapped themselves around the ropes of circus as well as entangling themselves with pens, paints, banners, dance floors...

They are big & strong and have beaming smiles! They opt for disgrace over grace, elephant over elegant and naughty over nice, and they are very proud that reviewers have noted their 'ungainly' style. They are (over)ambitious, delicious and nutritious.

