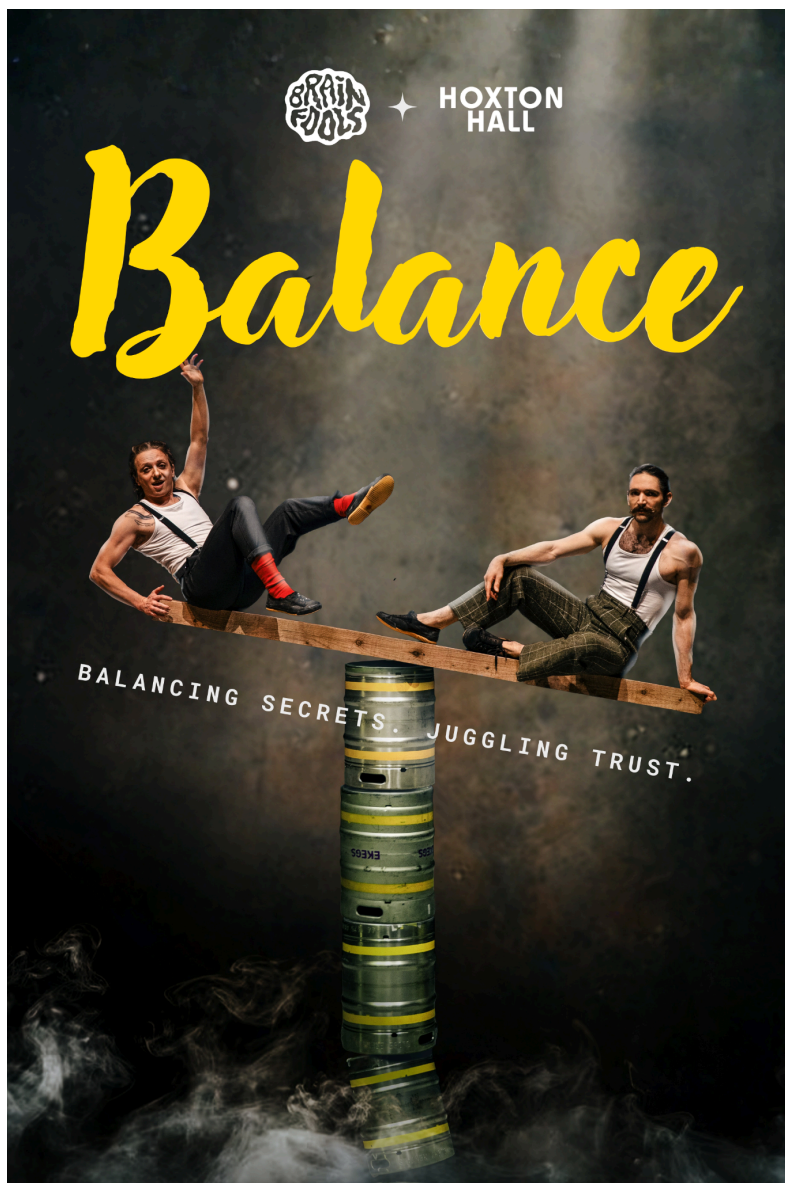




BALANCE

MARKETING PACK SUMMER / AUTUMN 2025



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<https://www.brainfools.com/>



Introduction

Balance is the dynamic new work from Brainfools, fusing high-skill circus arts with a distinct vintage aesthetic.

Balancing Secrets. Juggling Trust. Moving beyond traditional circus formats, this dynamic duet performed by **ich-duO** (Jared Shanks & Toffy Paulweber) transports audiences to a dusty pub cellar where two strangers are thrown together by circumstance.

Stuck in confinement, a wary standoff transforms into a playground. One character guards a secret; the other strives to protect them both. Together, they explore the universal challenge of building trust in a tight spot, using the "cellar inventory"—industrial metal kegs, a wooden plank, and fragile glass bottles—to create a visceral metaphor for reliance and stability.

It is a show about finding lightness in the dark, delivered with Brainfools' signature wit and breathtaking skill.

Key Themes & Selling Points

- **Shadows of the Past, Mirrors of the Future:** Set in 1940s London, the show navigates the tension of the era. It subtly explores the bond between a Jewish refugee fleeing Austria and a local man hiding his queer identity. While rooted in history, this story of two "outsiders" finding safety in one another acts as a powerful mirror to modern conversations about displacement, identity, and belonging.
- **Identity & Solidarity:** Moving beyond simple friendship, the narrative explores a high-stakes alliance. It portrays two people who cannot truly be themselves in the outside world finding a moment of freedom underground. It is a poignant, universal celebration of finding "your people" when the world feels hostile.
- **Innovative "Found Object" Circus:** A sustainable approach to spectacle. We bypass traditional aerial rigs to transform "found objects"—industrial kegs, wooden planks, and glass bottles—into a unique visual language. It is a masterclass in upcycling, turning the ordinary into the extraordinary.
- **Universal Storytelling:** A completely non-verbal narrative driven by evocative body language and an uplifting score. The themes of hiding, protecting, and connecting transcend language barriers, making *Balance* accessible to international audiences and diverse communities alike.
- **Visceral High-Skill Spectacle:** Featuring alumni of the National Centre for Circus Arts, the performance offers more than just tricks. The risk is real: balancing on fragile glass and tossing heavy steel kegs creates a palpable tension that keeps audiences on the edge of their seats.
- **Smart & Green Touring:** Designed for the modern touring landscape. *Balance* is fully self-sufficient with battery-powered sound and a 15-minute setup. Whether in a theatre, a town square, or a park, the production adapts seamlessly to any environment.



Target Audience (available both outdoors and indoors)

- **Outdoor Arts & Festival Audiences:** Ideally suited for audiences seeking high-impact, visual spectacle in non-traditional spaces (town squares, parks, festivals). The high kinetic energy holds attention in busy environments.
- **Contemporary Circus & Physical Theatre Enthusiasts:** Patrons of contemporary performance venues who appreciate high-level skill fused with narrative depth and dance.
- **Young Adults & "Cross-Over" Audiences:** The themes of social anxiety, identity, and finding one's place resonate strongly with Gen Z and young adults, while the aesthetic bridges the gap for non-traditional arts audiences.
- **Broad Public Appeal:** While sophisticated in technique, the non-verbal narrative is accessible to everyone, making it suitable for mixed festival crowds and passersby

Contacts

Marketing

Toffy Paulweber

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PR

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Co-Producers

Jared Shanks & Toffy (Christoph) Paulweber

hello@brainfools.com

Billing & Credits

Brainfools

Balance

Idea and Concept **Jared & Toffy**

Performed by ich-duO (**Jared & Toffy**)

Co- Producers **Jared & Toffy**

Music curated by **Jared & Toffy**

Outside Eyes **Sean Kempton, Jennifer Wilson, Brett Tatham Wood, Rika Fujimoto, Stuart Cox, Myles Macdonald, Pamela Farrugia**

Balance is supported by National Centre for Circus Arts, Hoxton Hall, Turtle Key Arts, Fish Island Circus, Out There Arts and Hoxton Trust Garden



Copy

Long version

“Balance: Balancing Secrets. Juggling Trust.”

Thrown together in a dust-covered cellar, two strangers find themselves stuck in close quarters. One is fiercely protective; the other is holding onto a secret he’s afraid to reveal.

In *Balance*, Brainfools transforms this vintage confinement into a breathtaking playground. Stripping away traditional circus apparatus, the duo **ich-duO** utilises a landscape of "found objects": heavy industrial kegs, a rickety wooden plank, and fragile glass bottles.

Through a seamless fusion of fluid choreography and high-stakes partner acrobatics, they reclaim these items, transforming them from static stock into instruments of connection. What starts as a wary standoff melts into a high-energy game of risk and reliance.

Witness a visual feast of resilience as they toss heavy weights with effortless grace, climb shifting towers, and navigate a nerve-wracking path atop glass bottles. At its heart, *Balance* is a life-affirming story about how we support each other when the ground feels shaky—proving that even strangers can find equilibrium when the world tips over.

“Brainfools Circus’s new show Balance is a joyful and thoughtful piece that successfully manages to ‘balance’ intimate storytelling and presentation along with all the scale, excitement and wow factor moments you want from a circus show!” — Stuart Cox (CEO, Hoxton Hall Theatre)

Credits:

- **Performance:** Jared Shanks & Toffy Paulweber (ich-duO)
- **Outside Eye:** Sean Kempton (Kook Ensemble)
- **Co-production:** Hoxton Hall
- **Supported by:** Certain Blacks, National Centre for Circus Arts, Turtle Key Arts, Fish Island Circus, Out There Arts, and Hoxton Trust Garden.

Medium Copy (Websites & Flyers - 100 Words)

Balance: Balancing Secrets. Juggling Trust.

In *Balance*, Brainfools transports you to a dusty pub cellar where two strangers decide to turn a tense situation into a game.

One protects, the other hides a secret. To bridge the gap, the dynamic duo **ich-duO** navigates a world of "found objects," transforming industrial kegs and precarious glass bottles into a playground for breathtaking feats.



From gravity-defying hand-to-hand acrobatics to the tension of balancing on glass, this is a kinetic display of trust. Visually stunning, funny, and full of heart, *Balance* explores the joy of finding a partner to help you carry the load.

Short Copy (Social Media & Listings - 50 Words)

“Balancing Secrets. Juggling Trust.”

When the world tips over, we find our feet. Using beer kegs, bottles, and planks, two strangers turn a dusty cellar into a high-energy acrobatic playground.

A life-affirming, charming acrobatic spectacle co-produced by Hoxton Hall. Don't miss the show that brings light joy in heavy times.

Biographies

Jared Shanks – Co-Artistic Director(Brainfools) & Performer (ich-duO) Jared is a versatile circus artist and co-founder of Brainfools. With a background in sports biomechanics and flying trapeze, he brings technical precision to his performance. As one half of ich-duO, his work is driven by a desire to create supportive environments, exploring themes of trust and physical reliance through dynamic partner acrobatics and object manipulation.

Toffy Paulweber – Co-Artistic Director (Brainfools) & Performer (ich-duO) Toffy is a contemporary circus artist and co-founder of Brainfools. A graduate of the National Centre for Circus Arts, he specializes in bottle-walking and acrobatics. Drawing from his own journey of finding his path in a new country and personal resilience, Toffy creates deeply personal work that transforms ordinary objects into symbols of hope and overcoming obstacles.

Images

Production images (credit: @mrpablura Pablo Herrera):

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/9uDWDvDwmZ6TSHCE9>

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/D8d7k1eK5CPju9aw5>

Poster Design (Canva Template):

https://www.canva.com/design/DAG-yVCx1yM/FKUt-JSbSntDdMnwrs6lRA/view?utm_content=DAG-yVCx1yM&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link&utm_source=publishsharelink&mode=preview

<https://www.brainfools.com/>



Video

Indoor Trailer credit: Pablo Herrera: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5CSeXcbsH2A>

Outdoor Trailer will follow 2026

Website

Show website

<https://www.brainfools.com/>

Quotes

"Brainfools Circus's new show Balance is a joyful and thoughtful piece that successfully manages to "balance" intimate storytelling and presentation along with all the scale, excitement and wow factor moments you want from a circus show!" - Stuart Cox (CEO, Hoxton Hall Theatre)

"Balance provides an interesting show which explores the balance in life with real life balances on everyday objects from the English drinking culture. It questions where this sits in our everyday life and this is an exciting new contemporary circus show which explores personal limits and vices in an exciting and intimate way. " - Clive Lyttle (AD Certain Blacks)



Social Media

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Instagram: @brainfools

X / Twitter: @brain_fools

Tiktok: @brain_fools

Suggested posts

Facebook	X / Twitter	Instagram	Tiktok
<p>Two Strangers. One Secret. A Delicate Game of Trust. 🔑 Stuck in a dusty cellar, two strangers find themselves in a wary standoff. One protects, the other hides a truth. To bridge the gap, they turn their surroundings—heavy beer kegs, rickety planks, and fragile bottles—into a precarious playground.</p> <p><i>Balance</i> is a high-stakes acrobatic story about learning to trust when the world feels upside down. A life-affirming spectacle proving that we can always find our footing if we lean on each other. 🌍✨</p> <p>Catch us on tour this season! 📺 [Link] #Brainfools #ContemporaryCircus #PhysicalTheatre #NewWork #Acrobatics</p>	<p>Balancing Secrets. Juggling Trust. ⚖️ Two strangers. A dusty cellar. A high-stakes game of acrobatics using beer kegs & bottles.</p> <p><i>Balance</i> is a life-affirming spectacle about finding light in the dark from @Brainfools. Don't miss the show that turns heavy lifting into light-hearted joy.</p> <p>See the tour dates 📌 [Link] #Circus #Arts #Touring</p>	<p>Balancing Secrets. Juggling Trust. 🎪🍷</p> <p>Thrown together in a vintage cellar, two strangers turn a standoff into a daring acrobatic game. Using heavy kegs and fragile bottles, we explore what it means to find your footing when the world tips over.</p> <p>From walking on glass to juggling industrial steel, <i>Balance</i> is a story of secrets, protection, and finding "your people" in the most unexpected places. 🍷✨</p> <p>Link in bio for tickets! #Brainfools #Balance #ContemporaryCircus #Acrobatics #Trust #VintageVibes #PartnerAcrobatics</p>	<p>It's the 1940s and you're stuck in a cellar with a stranger... so you start juggling beer kegs? 🍷👤</p> <p>Meet <i>Balance</i>: A show about secrets, trust, and walking on glass bottles. Watch us turn a "wary standoff" into a high-stakes acrobatic playground. 🎪👤</p> <p>(Don't try this at the pub!) 🚫🍷 #Brainfools #CircusTok #Acrobatics #Storytime #VintageStyle #Balance</p>



Press Release

Brainfools Presents "Balance": Balancing Secrets. Juggling Trust.

[City, UK] – [Date] – Prepare to be captivated by "Balance," the compelling new contemporary circus show from **Brainfools**, a UK-based company celebrated for their innovative and engaging performances.

Set against the backdrop of a dusty pub cellar in the 1940s, "Balance" tells the story of two strangers thrown together by chaos. One is a refugee fleeing his past; the other is a local man guarding a secret he can never reveal. What follows is a playful and precarious game of trust, where "cellar inventory"—heavy beer kegs, wine bottles, and wooden planks—are transformed into extraordinary tools for acrobatic expression.

Shadows of the Past, Mirrors of the Future Forget what you think you know about the circus. There are no red noses here, just breathtaking human skill and physical theatre. "Balance" explores a high-stakes alliance between two "outsiders" who find safety in one another, acting as a powerful mirror to modern conversations about displacement and identity.

Performers Jared Shanks and Toffy Paulweber (duo **ich-duO**) astound audiences with their creativity, using "found objects" to defy gravity. Watch in wonder as they gracefully fly through the air in daring partner acrobatics, toss heavy kegs with effortless precision, and navigate a nerve-wracking path atop fragile glass bottles.

A Story of Resilience "Balance' is about finding lightness in the dark," says Jared Shanks, Co-Artistic Director. "It's about two people who start as strangers but learn that to stay upright in a shaky world, you have to lean on someone else."

The show has already begun to resonate deeply with audiences, with one recent viewer describing it as:

"It touched my soul, a gentle reminder of humanity."

With its captivating blend of high-skill spectacle and subtle storytelling, "Balance" is perfectly suited for families, festival-goers, and anyone who loves to be surprised. The production is fully self-contained and battery-powered, allowing it to bring theatre-quality performance to town squares, parks, and rural halls alike.

Performance Details:

- **Dates:** [List Dates]
- **Time:** [List Times]
- **Venue:** [Venue Name and Address]
- **Tickets:** [Ticket Link - or mention if free entry]

About Brainfools: Brainfools is a UK-based contemporary circus company committed to creating innovative performances that resonate with diverse audiences. They push the



boundaries of circus by blending physical theatre, storytelling, and upcycled aesthetics to create rich, layered experiences that transcend language barriers.

Media Contact:

Toffy Paulweber Email: toffy@brainfools.com **Phone:** +44 7471 888268 **Website:** [Insert Website URL] **Socials:**@Brainfools

Box Office Information

Running time

outdoors: 30 minutes (no interval)

indoors: 45-55 minutes (no interval)

Age guidance 7+

Tour Dates

Premiere: Thu, 24th April - Hoxton Hall Theater

Sun, 12th July - Exeter Phoenix

Biographies

Jared Shanks (co-artistic director of Brainfools) is a working circus professional with a Master's degree in Sports Biomechanics. His extensive career has seen him perform and teach across the US in cities like NYC, Ohio, and Pittsburgh. He showcased his talents in duo trapeze and duo straps with Wizbang! Variety Theatre and as an aerialist in Cedar Point's evening show, Luminosity. Recently based in London, Jared has been touring across the UK, teaching and performing in shows hosted by celebrities such as Bill Bailey, John Partridge, and Denise Van Outen! Beyond performing, he has taken on combined performance/production roles, choreographing for the outdoor family show *Lucky Pigeons* and directing an ACE-funded upcycling themed exhibition called *Lift Up* with the up-and-coming London-based contemporary circus company Brainfools.

Toffy Paulweber is the founder and co-artistic director of Brainfools, a UK-based circus theatre company. He holds a degree in Information Design (Austria) and contemporary circus arts (London, UK). Toffy specializes in aerial rope and hand-to-hand acrobatics with Jared. Together, Jared and Toffy have created and toured the 7-performer ensemble show *Lucky Pigeons* from 2022-2024 (including Edinburgh Fringe), created a touring family-friendly circus cabaret show called *Circus Enchanté* (selling out shows in London & Cambridge), and curated a showcase series for emerging talent at the Jacksons Lane theatre.



Brainfools is proudly associated with the renowned circus theatre Jacksons Lane and the cabaret theatre Hoxton Hall in London.