

DOI 10.36074/logos-28.11.2025.075

METHODOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR TRAINING ARTISTS IN THE GENRE OF «HANDSTAND–CONTORTION ON CANES»

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Introduction

The genre of handstand–contortion is one of the most complex and visually striking forms of contemporary circus art. It combines extraordinary physical flexibility, impeccable balancing technique, deep internal concentration, and a high degree of artistic expressiveness. A performer working in this genre transforms their own body into an instrument of emotional impact, conveying beauty, strength, and harmony through movement.

The relevance of this research lies in the need to develop an effective training methodology that integrates physical, technical, and artistic preparation. Handstand–contortion requires not only an exceptional level of flexibility, but also precise body control, regulated breathing, the ability to maintain balance, and the capacity to express emotion through posture. Modern performer training should not be a mechanical acquisition of elements, but a conscious and well-structured process aimed at shaping a harmonious artistic personality.

Main Part

The training methodology for the handstand–contortion on canes genre is based on several fundamental principles: systematic progression, gradual advancement, safety, and an individualized approach. Each stage of preparation is aimed at developing a specific set of skills—physical, technical, psychological, and creative.

At the initial stage, the primary objective is to strengthen the musculoskeletal system and develop strength, static stability, coordination, and flexibility. Without an adequate level of physical preparedness, mastering balancing techniques becomes impossible.



Particular attention is given to the muscles of the back, arms, shoulder girdle, core, and legs, as these are responsible for maintaining the body in complex positions and ensuring full control of movement.

The exercise system includes:

- supported handstands;
- balance and pose-holding exercises;
- elements involving fixation of the body in static positions;
- dynamic exercises aimed at developing endurance.

Regular general physical training forms the foundation for further mastery of technique. It develops not only physical capabilities but also discipline, self-control, and confidence in one's own abilities.

Breathing in the handstand–contortion discipline is an extremely important component that affects both the physical and psycho-emotional state of the performer.

Proper breathing helps to:

- reduce muscle tension;
- maintain balance;
- regulate the internal rhythm of movement;
- improve concentration when performing complex elements.

The performer must learn to coordinate their breathing rhythm with the plasticity of movement: inhalation is preparation, concentration, and gathering of energy; exhalation is the moment of execution, release, and completion of the pose. This approach creates integrity in performance, making movements smooth, natural, and harmonious.

Work on breathing also helps the artist manage their psycho-emotional state, remain calm before entering the arena, overcome nervousness, and maintain control even during critical moments of the performance.

Flexibility is the primary tool of a handstand–contortion performer. Without systematic work on stretching, it is impossible to achieve the impressive plasticity required in this genre.

Flexibility should be developed gradually, in accordance with safety principles. The preparatory warm-up—exercises that warm up the muscles, tendons, and joints—is of particular importance. Only after this should deep stretching exercises be performed.

It is essential to combine both dynamic and static stretching:

- Dynamic stretching improves muscle elasticity and prepares the body for movement.
- Static stretching develops stability and allows the performer to hold the body in specific positions for extended periods.

SECTION 25.
CULTURE AND ART

Systematic work on flexibility not only improves technique but also contributes to the development of aesthetic expressiveness. The plasticity of movement becomes softer, more natural, and more harmonious—this is what creates the unique beauty of the performance.

Once the fundamental physical skills have been formed, the stage of technical mastery of the canes begins. This is a complex process that requires precision, concentration, and patience.

The performer learns to:

- properly position the canes and maintain balance;
- center their body weight;
- perform transitions between positions;
- practice ascents and descents.

The main objective of this stage is to develop a sense of axis, as well as spatial and temporal awareness. The performer must be conscious of every movement—every millimeter of bodily shift.

The instructor monitors technique, corrects the position of the torso, arms, head, and legs, and teaches movement economy and precision of line.

It is during this period that the performer's technical culture is formed, becoming the foundation of future stage expressiveness.

At the final stage of training, the focus shifts from technique to the creative interpretation of movement.

The performer must learn to transform technical elements into an artistic image. This is no longer merely execution—this is stage art.

The performer works on:

- facial expression, gaze, and breathing rhythm;
- arm plasticity and the overall composition of movement;
- creating the emotional atmosphere of the act.

At this stage, the instructor acts as both director and mentor, helping the student discover their individuality, reveal character, and express a specific mood or idea through movement.

This is what transforms technical mastery into true artistry of plasticity and emotion.

Conclusion

The genre of handstand–contortion on canes is not merely a circus discipline, but a harmonious integration of the performer's physical, technical, and spiritual development.

The methodology for training in this genre requires a combination of systematic physical preparation, proper breathing techniques, continuous work on

flexibility, and mastery of body control. Every movement must be conscious, precise, and filled with meaning.

General physical training develops strength and endurance; breathing cultivates inner balance; stretching enhances plasticity; cane technique provides stability; and the creative component adds emotional depth and stage expressiveness.

Together, these elements form a holistic system of performer development in which body, mind, and spirit function in unity.

A true master of handstand–contortion is not simply an executer of tricks, but an artist who uses their body as an instrument for expressing ideas and emotions.

Through plasticity and balance, the performer conveys to the audience a sense of tranquility, inner strength, harmony, and beauty.

Thus, the training methodology in the handstand–contortion on canes genre not only promotes professional growth, but also cultivates a profound culture of movement, fosters respect for one’s own body, and develops spirituality and artistic taste.

It is a path of self-discovery, refinement, and creative evolution that leads to genuine art—the art of harmony, beauty, and the perfection of the human body.

