

1 Diabolo Excalibur/Vertax Workshop

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Origins:

It must be noted that the Chinese one-bell style of diabolo has variations that involve changing the axis of the diabolo, and so there arises the thought that perhaps the form is much older than we might first think. Many people point to two jugglers, Andy Premdas and Christoph, as individuals who first demonstrated publicly a variety of techniques with this style of diabolo play early in the 21st century. Roman and Nella of Tr'espace can certainly be considered the artists most responsible for the popularization of the form, dating from their public performance at the 2004 EJC in Carvin, France. Interestingly enough, they both call the form "horizontal" play, and they speak of jugglers to demonstrated to them earlier than Andy P. and Christoph. Today, there are many excellent players all over the world (Thierry N from France, and M4U from Italy being the chief innovators in my opinion), and Tr'espace is performing two-diabolo vertax runs in their current show.

Fundamental Technique:

The following directions are oriented for right-handed acceleration. First of all, it is helpful, if not imperative that you learn how to do Chinese vertical whips in regular orientation. Of even greater importance is the idea that the string controls the degree and speed of tilt on the diabolo. Essentially, the portion of the string on the left side of the diabolo must rub the side of the front cup, which will cause the diabolo to tilt up. The greater you apply the pressure, the faster the diabolo will tilt. Once the diabolo has reached the vertical plane, you want to relieve the friction by dropping the angle of the string. You can do this by controlling the position and posture of your left hand. The right hand provides the acceleration by Chinese whipping forward and back on the right side of the diabolo. Another key point here is that you keep your right hand positioned exactly right so that the right hand of the string is perpendicular with the axle and NOT rubbing any cups, which will affect your control and the overall tilt of the diabolo. Beginners will want to turn slowly to their left in order to maintain the proper alignment of both strings, but ultimately it comes down to your arm, hand and shoulder position.

Tricks:

Suns

Undercide

Duicide (Matt Hall)

Slack String (Chris Garcia)

Two-hand Magic Knot to Whip (Chirs Garcia)

Hanging Chinese suicide (Ben Langholz)

Infinite Chinese suicide (M4U)

Behind the Back-Magic Knot-Toss (Nev)

One hand string combo (Thierry)

Around Head (Thierry)

Around Legs (Ryo Yabe)

Umbrella (Ryo Yabe)

String Stall (Tr'espace)

Infinite suicide (Tr'espace/Tempei)

UFO Grind variations (Martijn)

Figure 8 Around Legs (Nate Sharpe)

Integral Suicides (M4U/Matt Hall)

Freehand Innovations (Marron/Maki)