

joker | 'jökər | Martin, Flip

Bio

Martin Houge was born on a stormy Friday night in Stavanger, Norway, seaside winter wonderland of the North, becoming the 4th member of a quite ordinary family ... but ordinary never really sufficed for Martin.

Always seeking out adventure and odd things, at age 12 Martin discovered Thor's hammer in Copenhagen, Denmark when he stumbled upon his future tool of trade, a curious art-form of the ancient Chinese, the diabolo.

Honing his skills of performance, and the diabolo of course, Martin moved at age 15 to neighboring city Bergen, Norway and began performing his craft in the city-center where he quickly achieved cred amongst the street soul of Bergen.

It wasn't long before Martin had acquired an entourage of like-minded friends eager to push the boundaries of their small town audiences. Stemming from this ideology, Martin formed performance troupes "Pyro Trance" and later "The Bergen Jokers."

In 2003, a former foe turned friend of Martin's, Christian Starr, joined the team and began collaborating on extracurricular projects including a series of films documenting the team's adventures. A few years later, these adventures spanned further when Martin and Christian decided to go global taking the Bergen Jokers international on tour through Scandinavia.

It seemed only fitting to end at the beginning. The final show of the Bergen Jokers was performed in the heart of Denmark, Copenhagen, where Martin's first diabolo and spark of inspiration were discovered.

Over the years, Martin has continued to delight audiences around the world in and out of shows by never ceasing to be extraordinary.

Addendum

Martin is the heart and soul of The International Jokers. It was Martin who founded TIJ's predecessor troupe, "The Bergen Jokers at the turn of the millennium;" it was Martin who selected and assembled it's members Christian Starr and Kerry Son of Sil; it was Martin who kept the metaphorical torch aflame throughout the years; and in 2013 when the trio reunited after a near decade hiatus to pursue individual endeavors, it was Martin who rekindled it's resurgence in Bergen.

A new title, "The International Jokers" was established since each of it's three remaining members had literally returned from three distant corners of the globe.

... a brotherhood was resurrected and the rest is history.

joker | 'jökər| Kerry, Son of Sil

Bio

Growing up on the road as a singer in his family musical concert act, “the Silsons,” Kerry is no stranger to the spotlight. The act toured through 32 of the 50 states with performances along the way.

In 1999, at age 16, Kerry continued the entertainment legacy by shifting his focus to equestrian stunts and acrobatics on a handful of notable shows of Central Florida including Arabian Nights Dinner Attraction and Universal Studios.

Since age 12, Kerry honed his skills as a juggler under the guidance of Guinness World Record Holder, Bruce Sarafian and in 2002 was invited on a European Busking tour with juggling mentor John Nations. Destinations included; England, Germany, Norway, Sweden, Iceland, Denmark, Holland, France, and Spain.

This tour opened many doors and lead to more entertainment adventures over the following decade including: Buffalo Bill’s Wild West Show in Paris, France; Universal Studios in Osaka, Japan; Feld Ent./ Ringling Bros.; and Cirque du Soleil’s Cavalia in Canada and the USA.

Over 20 years and 25 countries later, Kerry’s experiences have lead him to be a teacher, director, and collaborative creative developer for an assortment of productions including: Cavallo Equestrian Arts of Sarasota; Pullman City Westernstadt in Germany; and more.

Addendum

Kerry’s relationship and legacy with The International Jokers traces back to 2002 during Kerry’s first busking appearance in Norway’s second largest city, Bergen. It is there where he made acquaintance with Martin Flip locally famed as the master and creator of popular performance troupe, The Bergen Jokers, and soon thereafter, Christian Starr, a fellow Joker... the trinity was formed and the rest is history.

joker | 'jōkər | Christian, Starr

Bio

Christian Starr-Lassen hails from family of classical musicians and took to music and entertainment at a young age in his place of birth, Knoxville, Tennessee.

By 7 he was performing Irish fiddle tunes and Vivaldi on the violin. Later on he developed a love for singing Americana with his guitar.

In 1996 Christian's parents were inducted into the Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra which gave rise to the first of many international adventures to come.

Over the years, Christian zealously ascended the deck as a jack of all trades. Cameraman, documentarian, juggler, horseman, stunt-man, actor, voice-over actor, and of course musician to name a few. This eclectic collection of skills naturally opened many doors.

In 2003, Christian was proposed and of course accepted the role of show manager and documentarian for Martin Houge's Bergen Jokers, an up and coming local troupe which later became a more integral part of Christian's entertainment legacy.

Christian the adventurer floated down the Mekong in a home-made bamboo raft in 2005. He lived in a truck for two years in France. Having visited or lived in so many corners of the world, Christian is fluent in English, French, and Norwegian and can make himself understood in Swedish, Danish, Dutch, and Spanish. He also makes fabulous pancakes.

Christian is an adept, all 'round performer. You might see him riding horses in the principal role of Disney's largest live show or you might find him on the streets of Paris entertaining large crowds of people who have stopped to watch him juggling machetes, telling silly jokes, and balancing on a burning slack rope; you never know.

What you do know is, whatever the show, Christian can make it better.

Addendum

Christian's involvement with The International Jokers began back in 2003 when Martin Flip initiated him in the crew of "The Bergen Jokers" as their cameraman. Christian began collaborating on extracurricular projects including a series of films documenting the team's adventures. Later, as manager, Christian helped to take the Jokers international ... an international tour was plotted and the rest is history.
