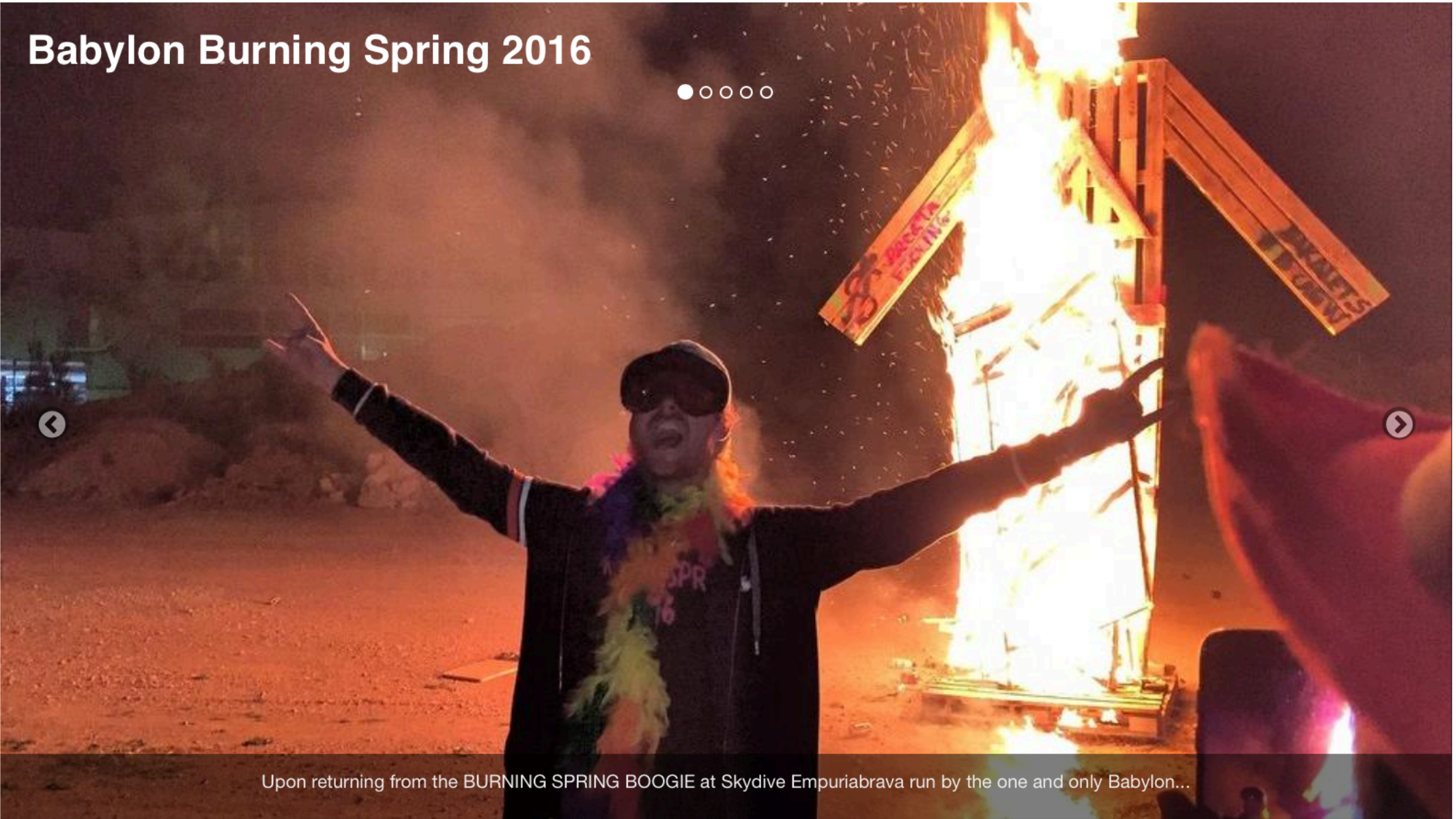
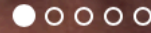


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Babylon Burning Spring 2016



Upon returning from the BURNING SPRING BOOGIE at Skydive Empuriabrava run by the one and only Babylon...

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Babylon Burning Spring 2016



Words by Romain Georjin

22 Jun 2016



Burn, baby, burn! — Image by Gustavo Cabana

A RENDEZ VOUS WITH VALUES ATTACHED

I had already been touched by the mind-boggling images of the jumps and by the party atmosphere that I found during the few days shared in fall at the BABYLON® & GICONI®'s crazy [Halloween Rocky Boogie Horror Show](#). Today, we're back in Empuriabrava for the BURNING SPRING BOOGIE 2016.



The staff of the Burning Spring 2016 — Image by Ralph Wilhelm

This boogie was structured so as to represent both the new BABYLON® plan and the 10 values upon which the Burning Man Festival - held every year in the BlackRock Desert in Nevada - is based. These values, this intention to share the moment and the situation with emphasis on creativity as well as on the dispersion of ego, were amongst the messages that emerged over the weekend. 147 motivated participants, now dubbed « Burners », came from all over Europe.



Happy Burners — Image by Gustavo Cabana

A PROGRAM, SPACE FOR EVERYONE AND TO EACH HIS OWN RHYTHM

Thursday May 5th 9 am. The GICONI bus ® is in place, an improbable playlist rising from its gut, a neon pink Buddha welcomes you and the statue of the BurningSpring 2016 is erected. The welcome brief allows each participant to chose a group with a program that fits their needs. Loads are divided so that everyone feels at ease. Belly jumps, tracking jumps, traces, vertical jumps that morph into traces... and more vertical, and jumps with tubes, and wingsuits, and the first flocks....

The logistics are taken care of and, upon arrival, everyone gets their gear checked and the drop zone brief.... everyone needs to adapt a bit. For many of the jumpers, these are the first experiences jumping with groups this size.



Tube tracing... — Image by Pierre Rénié

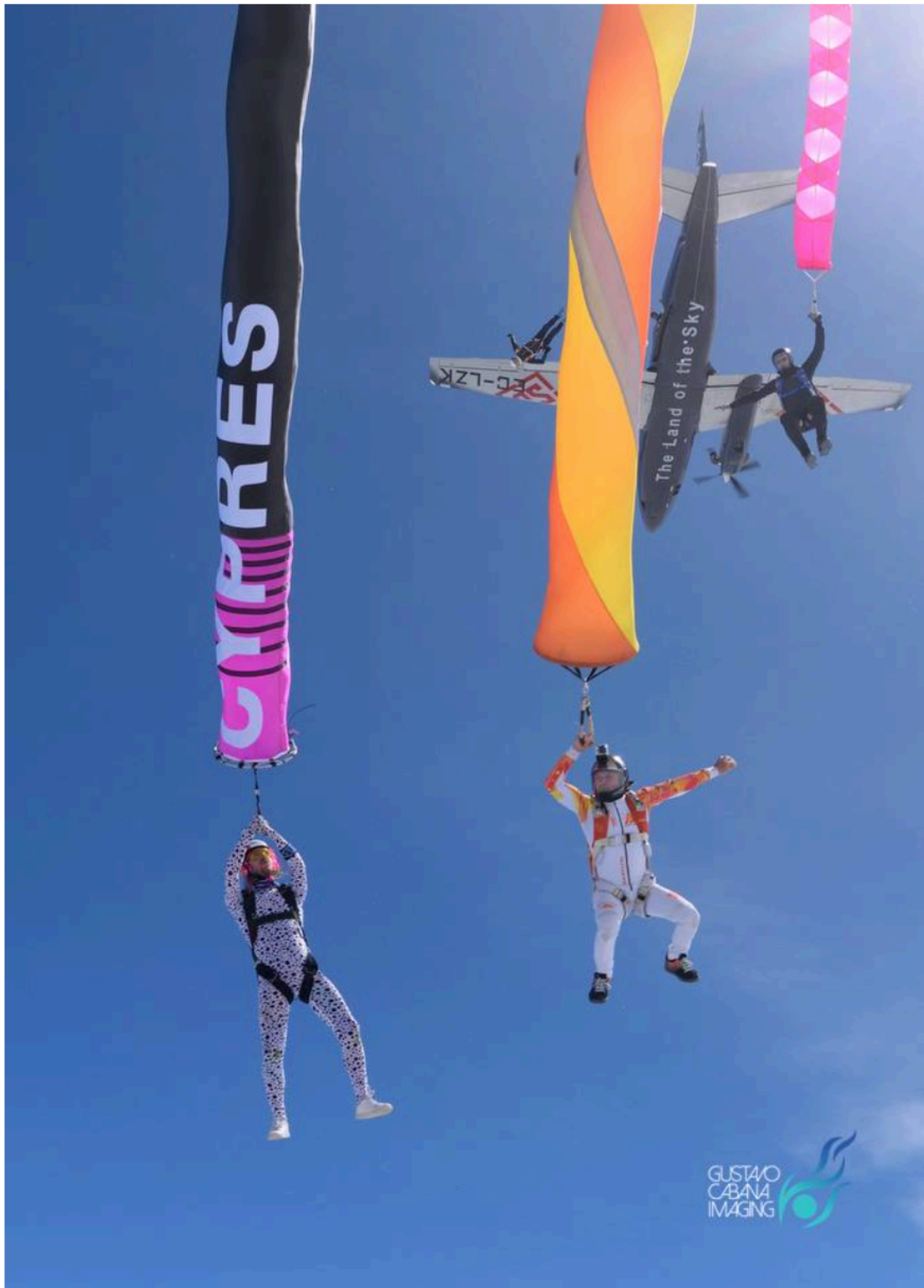
Thursday May 5th 10 am first load

A few traces with the bubbling Aldo Comas, exit from the Beech over the marina and above a few clouds that mark the descent... the show is on!

A BOOGIE IN CRESCENDO TOWARDS 16,500 FEET

The forecast was not ideal, not ideal at all. But Empuriabrava came through and the timing was perfect. We would all have loved a few degrees more, but we did have the sun on our side.

The jumps led by the LOs are strung together, some jumpers change group to follow Stephane Fardel's verticals. We jump among « Burners », followed by Mike and Eliot, the video-men... Cathy Bouette organises a hybrid jump, hanging from a belly flyer, with two tubes, the others head-up or carving around them.... The idea is to have fun, everyone contributing in their own way and with safety always on the forefront. This is the Boogie spirit, sharing intense moments, in the sky and on the ground, with friends or with people we have just met.



And from 14500 ft we go to 16500 ft... another dimension for the vertical jumps that seem to last an eternity. It's good to get into the rhythm with a few jumps from 14500 ft before going to 16500. Even though the Beech takes you to altitude quickly, in 10 minutes, exiting at 16500 ft/FL165/5100m still remains an experience to be had. Everyone breaths calmly during the last few minutes of the climb.

Olav Zipser, never refusing to be photographed with the jumpers who want a shot with him, leads small freefly groups. Olav, a legend in the sky, pioneer of modern skydiving to whom the birth of freefly is often attributed, more than 50 gold medals in various international competitions, founder of « The First School of Modern SkyFlying », « Sports Emmy Award » winner. Olav Zipser, that's all.



Olav Zipser... Leading the way... — Image by Gustavo Cabana

DESIRE TO SHARE THOSE INSTANTS - THE VIDEO OF THE DAY

Every night it's free beer (it's simple and to be consumed with moderation) but it's important, the barbecues are lit at dusk, the wood fires, the tapas after the tunnel jam, making the calmest of the door-men nervous. All this while waiting for the Babylon editor to finalise the « video of the day ». The Babylon video editor stays stuck to his chair, buried in a jungle of GoPros brought in by the « burners », wishing to share these moments on the big screen! Everyone joins up at night to smile about the day just spent, before watching an "open air" showing of the film.

A40 WAY TRACK - TWIN OTTER AND BEECH

Saturday May 7th 6 pm - « Briefing for the 40 way track in 10 minutes ! ». The words resonate powerfully. The levels are heterogenous so many ask themselves if they'll be able to participate. The list is prepared and then everyone listens carefully and with excitement to the brief. Even those who won't be participating listen; the tension build-up is easy to sense. Break-off at 6500 ft in a group of 40...

Saturday May 7th 7 pm - The Beech and the Twin Otter align at 16500 ft. The Babylon crew is at the door, the smoke bombs are lit, Gustavo Cabana's cameras are rolling and we start off on a 90 second track in the line of flight with the Drop Zone and the sea in full view right in front of us.



Formation Load: Tracking over the DZ — Image by Ralph Wilhelm



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The two flocks stretch out below the two aircraft, left empty after just a few seconds. Everyone joins in a large and spread out formation, because everyone's first priority in this jump is security. We fly through the smoke of the smoke bombs, we fly through clouds at 2500 meters. The images of these 40 skydivers flying through clouds will remain amongst the most beautiful of the weekend. The break-off is splendid. It lasts close to 20 seconds! The 40 canopies open and everyone flies back to the drop zone sporting a smile that leaves no doubt as to how good it was to share such a special moment amongst the clouds.

When the video is shown that evening, those images in the clouds create clamor amongst the « burners », enthused for having shared such an experience and “signed” such images.



A LAST EVENING WITH A GRAND FINALE

Saturday 00.00 am: The GICONI Bus® , filled with skydivers begins a long procession, some follow the sound that envelops it, the bus makes its way to the runway/ taxi way of the Drop Zone. People dance, some tour the airfield in the small DZ owned tractor, fireman are in position to guarantee safety, adding the sound of their siren to that of the party. The happy crowd makes the most of this night. The Babylon crew, in costumes, take possession of the firetruck and make their way up the runway. Surreal.



The crowd gathers and « The man » is set ablaze, embraced by darkness. It's going to be a long night.

The photos of the BURNINGSPRING 2016 quickly spread and give a visual identity to the event. The dates for the BURNINGSPRING 2017, an event which will become a yearly rendez-vous, are announced: May 10th to 14th 2017, more detail [here](#)



NAMES AND LEGENDS

Load Organizers (LO):

FF: Cathy Bouette, Aldo Comas, Juanma Ruis, Olav Zipser, Arno Fletcher, Stephane Fardel. Wingsuit: James Stancomb

Video:

Mickael Lamy, Eliot Pothet

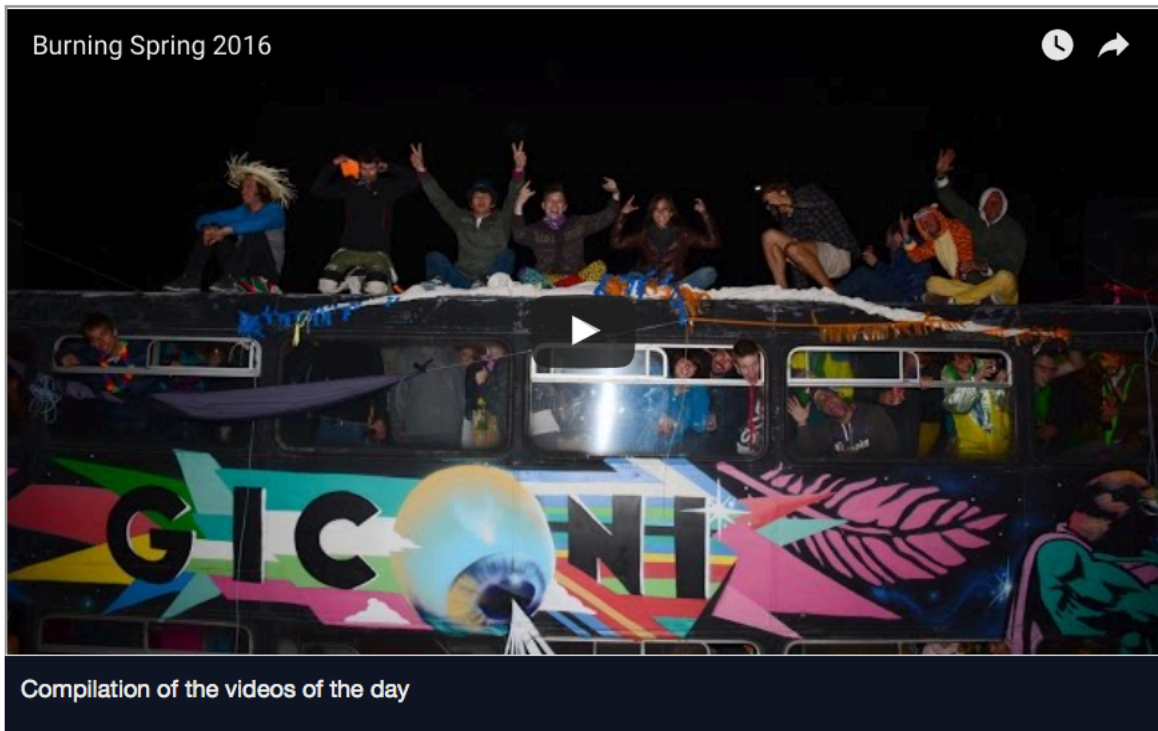
SPRING BURNING FACTS:

147 participants for about 2000 jumps, as praise to futility
82 rotations of the Beech emblematic of the EmpuriaBrava Drop Zone
2 x 40-way tracks from the Beech and Twin Otter in formation at exit

Next BABYLON® & GICONI® appointment :

Summer of 69 from 13 to 17 July 2016 Skydive EmpuriaBrava.

FFI [here](#)



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