

#ressonacirc

A PROMOTIONAL
TOOLKIT FOR
THE **CATALAN**
CIRCUS



As part of:



Coordinator:



With the support of:



#ressonacirc is one of the measures included in the Circus Promotion Plan 2019-2022 and has been led by the Association of Circus Professionals of Catalonia (APCC).

The aim of this dossier is to boost the circus' profile in the media and other promotional channels. It aims to bring the vision and knowledge that the media have of the circus up-to-date, raising awareness of the diversity and dynamism of the circus produced in Catalonia, and providing organizations with the resources they need to find out more information about this sector.

The Department of Culture and the Association of Circus Professionals of Catalonia (APCC) have, within the broader Comprehensive Circus Plan, developed the Circus Promotion Plan 2019-2022, an eleven-point programme which aims to raise the profile of the Catalan circus in local cultural, social and economic life, and to encourage interest in it from beyond Catalonia's borders.

The Plan, wholly funded by the Department of Culture of the Catalan Government, includes key contributions from Barcelona City Council's Institute of Culture and the Ramon Llull Institute, and has been developed in collaboration with the Centre de les Arts del Circ Rogelio Rivel, the Ateneu Popular

9Barris, La Central del Circ, La Vela de L'Estruch, the Network of Circus Spaces of Catalonia (XECC) and Nilak, in addition to enjoying support from various local authorities, organizations and facilities around Catalonia.



Circus is transgression, a venue without borders, a snapshot of life, a hand that holds and doesn't let go, a question, a challenge to the here and now.

It's a leap into the unknown, an unknown that grows, encompasses and pulsates... and why not? Always resistant, persistent, insistent, it is a space in which to rethink, rewrite and question each other and ourselves.

It's also a BODY which opens up, retreats, retracts and stretches out. Expansion, contraction, pulsations and more questions:

What if...?
What if we went higher, further?
Why not? HERE and NOW, CIRCUS.
Always taking another step, further and beyond.

Griselda Juncà, circus artist

#ressonacirc

AN INTRODUCTION
TO THE **CIRCUS**
IN CATALONIA
TODAY

Circografia de una travesti
Victoria Sickness
© Victoria Sickness



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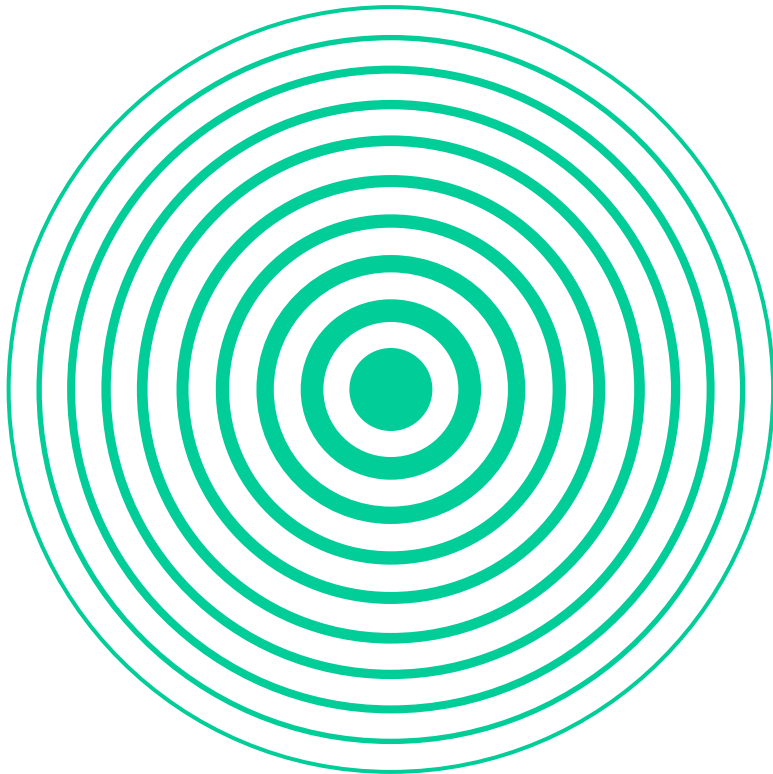
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#concepts



**'We create circus to share our worldview
and outlook on life, and to emphasize
the value of caring for others, and the beauty
of working together.'**

Fabrizio Giannini, circus artist

#harderstill_the traditional circus



The traditional circus is **the most recognisable** type of circus performance.

The universal circus, **THE GREATEST SHOW ON EARTH**, is the type of circus that we have all experienced as an audience, coming from all walks of life to fill circus tents, and have also seen on television, in films, in the imagery of children's stories. Indeed, it has helped to preserve a tradition that is familiar to all of us, and which continues to this day.

The **foundations** of the **TRADITIONAL CIRCUS** are its circus acts, each of them up to fifteen minutes long, with **no common narrative thread** beyond the ringmaster's introductions and a **desire to push limits** and go **'harder still'**.

The **VENUE** is usually a **tent or cabaret**, and may have certain defining visual features including (but not limited to) the **prevalence** of **brightly-coloured** costumes, or the extensive use of **brass and percussion** as part of the musical accompaniment. Many of those working professionally in this type of circus have become involved through their **families**, with the tricks of the trade passed on from one generation to the next.



It should be noted, however, that what we now call **'CLASSIC CIRCUS'** was known in its early days as **'MODERN CIRCUS'**. At the end of the 18th century in England, Phillip Astley incorporated specialist disciplines into his equestrian circus that had been developed by street and fairground performers.

#beyonddrisk_contemporarycircus

Nowadays we can name **as many types of circus as there are paths to artistic freedom:** post-circus, chamber circus, garage circus, auteur circus, activist circus... With or without labels, the circus, like the rest of the performing arts, is **constantly evolving** and **branching out** in new directions.

That said, the contemporary circus which first emerged in the eighties has a number of **DEFINING TRAITS.**

The first is the **desire of those who practice it**, who rarely come from circus families, to see the circus recognized as a performing art.



Contemporary circus **SHOWS** tend not to be the variety features of old, focusing instead on a **limited number of disciplines**, or exclusively on one, and often include **influences from other performing arts** such as theatre and dance.



Estat d'Emergència
Producció Nacional de Circ
© Marta García Cardellach

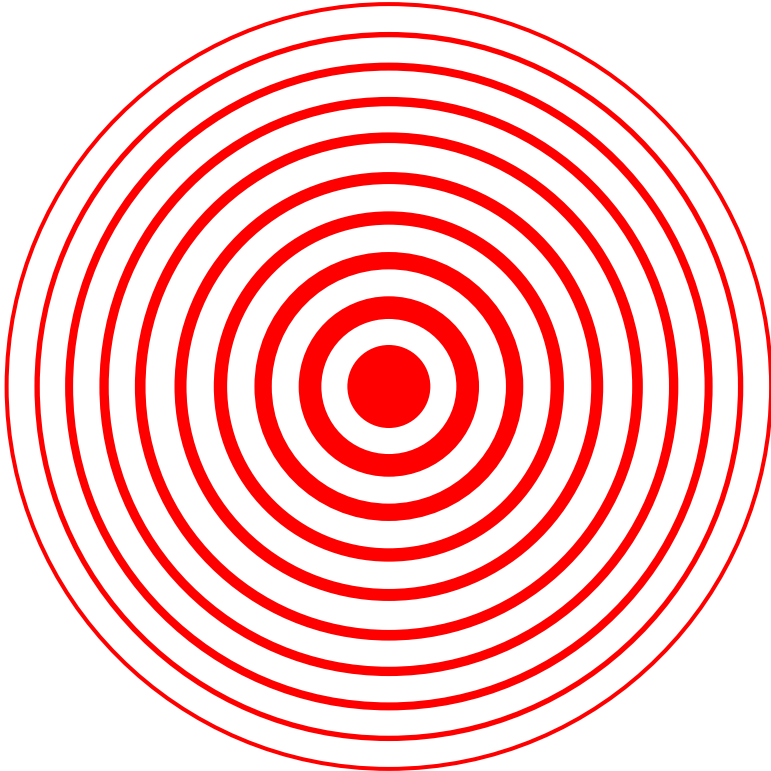
The **PERFORMANCE** tends to feature **soloists or small casts** (duets or trios), in venues ranging from theatres to public spaces, all the way to tents.

Across the board, contemporary circus shows are the fruit of **research** and **writing** that afford a uniqueness and coherence to the genre's poetic universe.

The journalist and circus critic Jordi Jané summed it up in these words: while the traditional circus is based on 'look what I know how to do', **contemporary circus is based on 'LOOK AT WHAT I HAVE TO SAY THROUGH WHAT I KNOW HOW TO DO'.**

These differentiations are, of course, not absolute; the existence of one way of doing things does not nullify the other, and there are artists who flit from one to the other as and when the moment or the venue requires.

#makingcircus



**'The circus is the oldest
and the most modern show on earth,
and is continually breaking its own
boundaries in the interests of bringing
joy to the audience.'**

Jordi Jané, circus critic and teacher.
World Circus Day Manifesto 2013

The staging of a show in front of an audience is the result of a long and laborious process. To reach this point, the artist will have passed through a series of stages.

#learning

FIRST CONTACT with circus techniques tends to come through a **specific introductory activity**, such as **family circuses**, which are **open to all**, and in which individual skills are put to the test in the name of having fun.



The introductory phase also features the **SOCIAL CIRCUS**, also known in certain circles as 'community circus', particularly in English-speaking countries.

As well being a well-established format in Catalonia, this discipline brings together a diverse set of practices that promote **the circus as an outlet for social and community change**.



Family Circus at Acroart
© Agustina Monczar

Although the full scope of the concept remains a matter of debate, on many occasions this is done in tandem with the teaching and learning of circus techniques, **fostering shared values and encouraging personal development, community cohesion and social wellbeing**.

With similar goals, it can also take the form of shows or therapeutic entertainment (for example, in hospitals or in refugee camps), **and as part of community and collaborative creative project**.

When the individual – child, young person or adult – takes a **greater interest in the circus**, they move on to the **LEARNING PHASE**, focusing on one or more circus techniques in a familiar setting (**schools, youth centres, community centres**) or in a **specialist circus centre** which, fortunately, are growing in number.

Those who want to dedicate themselves **professionally** to the world of circus can learn the ropes in **circus schools and specialist centres**. **Professional and higher education centres**, such as universities, can offer official qualifications. **Although there are no university-level opportunities here in Catalonia**, there are two official vocational qualifications.

Institutional learning, however, **is not the only way** to become a circus artist. To this day, many professionals are **self-taught artists**, while others bring experience from **other fields** and disciplines, including gymnastics and other sports on the one hand, and dance and physical theatre on the other.



#creation

When the artist has acquired the tools they need, the **RESEARCH PHASE** begins.

It is the phase in which the **expressive possibilities of circus techniques** are **experimented with and studied**, both methodically and intuitively, with the aim of discovering the movements needed to tell our stories.

Technical research into the discipline **can go hand-in-hand with studies in specific areas**. The contemporary circus, to paraphrase the journalist and circus critic Jordi Jané, seeks to use technique – the things we know how to do – to communicate and educate.



Artists working at the Central del Circ. © Mila Martínez

Creation can be a **solo or a collaborative effort**, taking place in labs and creative spaces, or in a company's own space.

Ideas, materials and fragments that will take a fuller shape during the writing phase of the show begin to emerge here.

As a result, and in contrast to more typically textual forms of theatre, **the author of a circus show is almost always the performer.**



Artists working at the Central del Circ. © Mila Martínez

AUTHORSHIP, particularly in companies, **is almost always collective**, the result of a continuous exchange of materials and ideas between members. This is another characteristic feature of the circus.

In **DRAMATURGY**, by contrast, **other figures** who are not necessarily performers **tend to be more involved. This is especially true in terms of direction**, in which pieces, scenes and themes are worked on, discarded and brought together in order to help develop and give meaning to the show.



Creative workshop
© La Bonita

The aim is to achieve consistency between the different elements of the show as a whole, giving a coherence that is not necessarily **based on** a classic narrative structure or a text, nor in the mis-en-scène, but **on rhythms, movements and sensations.**

Should there be no formal director, **it is common to have external oversight** from someone – or several people – who can contribute, from a more detached or impartial position, to the staging of the show created by the group of artists in question.

In order to fully bring a creative piece to fruition, the **appropriate spaces**, especially with regard to technical conditions – width, height and the possibility of rigging, among others – **are a must**.

More and more often, when they are able to do so, artists can create a show through successive **creative residences of varying duration** (ranging from weeks to months at a time).

They can also count on other forms of support from **circus platforms and networks** that offer artistic and technical advice, access to administrative, spatial and economic resources, external oversight for projects, audience and booking contacts, and much more.



The **CREATIVE PROCESS** typically takes **between three months and a year and a half**, although circus pieces and shows **may continue to evolve even after they are premiered**.

#performance



Carman. Javier Ariza
Festival Circ Picat
© Festival Archive

THE STREET has historically been the **most common circus performance space in Catalonia**, be it in the context of festivals, local fairs, or other kinds of events. The closeness of the audience often influences the staging, and **interaction with spectators** is very frequent.

The street is also a **space of artistic freedom**, and many proposals are performed in the off areas of festivals or self-financed by passing the hat around.

Street circus festivals and their laid-back audiences are common across Europe, and serve as an opportunity for **artists from a wide array of disciplines to put their communicative abilities to the test.**

Many circus companies opt for **THEATRE SHOWS** as a chance **to work with other techniques** such as lighting, scripting and staging, as an opportunity to deal with themes more appropriate **for ADULT AUDIENCES** than typically family-friendly circuses, and as a means of **avoiding the general hustle and bustle** and other distractions that might affect a street performance.

This is especially the case in countries such as France and Belgium, while in Germany **cabarets** (with dinner and drinks) play host to pieces from all sorts of companies. For this type of show, the venue must be big enough and meet the necessary conditions to host the circus apparatus that the performers require. **Theatres** are increasingly open to adapting, learning about and hosting circus shows, as well to incorporating this genre into their booking alongside drama and dance.

The traditional circus venue is the **TENT** or **BIG TOP**, typically circular in form, although it comes in many shapes and sizes. Some hold thousands of spectators, while others can accommodate just over a hundred.

The fact that **the artist** performs **in the middle of the ring, surrounded by the audience, conditions the mis-en-scène** and exposes them more than in any other type of performing art. Tents, especially those with 360° seating, create a special sort of temporary community insofar as the artist is constantly able to see how the audience is looking at, experiencing and reacting to their performance.

Big top circuses tend to be **itinerant**, requiring that there are people within the company – be they artists or not – who are set-up specialists. This also means that members also spend their personal time together, and often live together in caravans.

In recent years, and as other performing arts have done, the circus has broadened its horizons to include **other formats**, such as **site-specific** performances, in which **shows are created for or adapted to a particular venue**, usually as part of an artistic residence or festival commission.

While the big top is more readily associated with what we know as the traditional circus, some contemporary circus artists and companies also choose this structure for their creations.



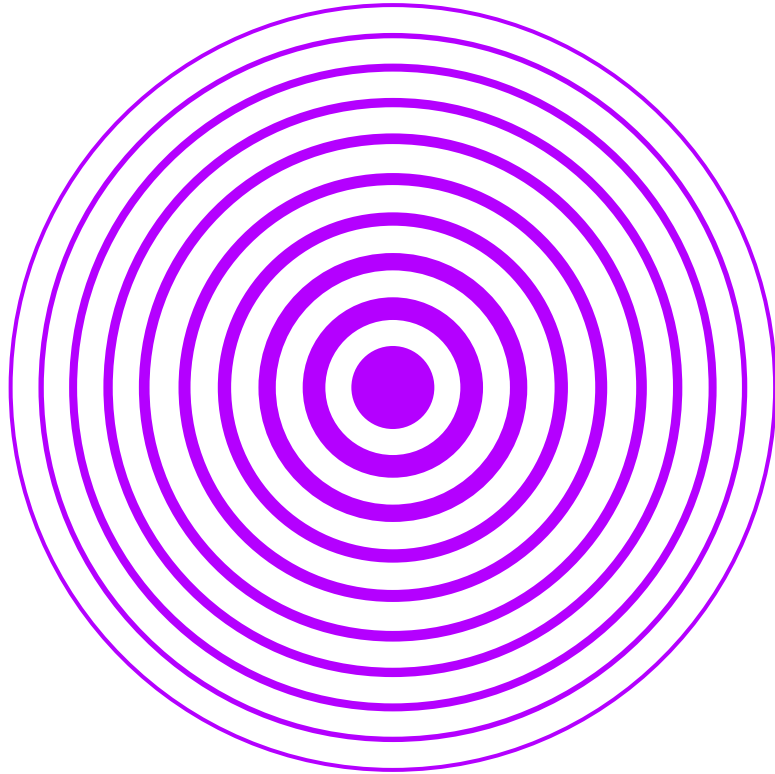


#training

Besides the three major activities and phases mentioned above, the circus boasts another, which lies at its very heart: training.

It is an **essential daily activity for maintaining** peak technical performance.

Where training is carried out in shared spaces, it provides an important opportunity **for the exchange of ideas and peer support** for engaging in high-risk or more challenging techniques.



#professions andprofessionals

**'It is a way of life,
a positive way of participating in a whole
range of performing arts.
The circus is truly art for art's sake.'**

Montserrat Trias, circus artist



As in any other kind of performing art, the full range of circus activities call on a **wide variety of professionals**.

THE ARTIST is the person who **interprets and, almost always, creates**, and who bases their expressiveness on the **mastery of one or more circus disciplines or techniques**.

While unable to mention all of them, we would like to present some of the most oft-seen disciplines in the Catalan circus.

#acrobatics

A physical discipline, full of exceptional challenges.

It normally includes aerial elements and often entails physical risks for performers. It can include:

FLOOR Contortion; **cascades**, or simulated falls; foot-to-hand and hand-to-hand *flying acrobatics*, in which two or more artists hoist each other up and catch each other in an array of different positions.





AERIAL Silks; trapeze (fixed, flying, swinging, or duo); **aerial hoop, rope, aerial dance, hair hangs and cradles**, which is an apparatus composed of two horizontal parallel bars to which the person known as the 'catcher' locks their legs in order to be able to catch the 'flyer'.

WITH APPARATUS teeterboard; hula-hoop; trampoline; **Chinese pole** (a 3 to 6m high, rigid and vertical bar); **Cyr Wheel** (a wheel about two metres in diameter which the acrobat spins/rotates, manipulates, and climbs inside of); **and the German wheel**, which is similar to the Cyr Wheel but is a former form/apparatus and consists of two rings.



#clowns

A multi-faceted staple figure of the stage who **aims to connect emotionally with the audience**, especially through **laughter** but also **surprise**, **tenderness** and **reflection**, among others.

Their humour, which mixes the simple and the profound, is founded upon an **interaction** with the public, **mime**, **falling over**, **clumsiness**, **naivety** and grotesque distortions of reality.

The **most traditional types** of clown are the **white** or sad clown (serious and authoritarian, in white and sequined clothing) and the **auguste** or happy clown (mischievous and anarchic, with a red nose and red shoes).

Among the other traditional figures are the **contra-auguste**, who usually acts as a mediator between the previous two; the **character clown**, an evolution of the auguste who acts alone and does not usually speak, and **Monsieur Loyal**, who acts as a ringmaster.



A la fresca. Anna Confetti.
© AlexCarmona

The figure of the clown, a character that also appears in the theatre, is well-known to the general public and is constantly evolving, **with more and more interest** in amateur clown arts. This, indeed, speaks volumes of the clown's social significance.



#balance

A physical skill which consists of **undertaking difficult or forced movements or positions while maintaining one's balance.**

For example: **antipodism** (juggling objects or people with the feet while lying on one's back on the ground); **artistic cycling**; **free ladder**; **funambulism** (tightrope and wire walking); **unicycling**; **rola-bola** (a plank balanced on a cylinder, on top of which the artist sways); **hand balancing** (doing handstands and balancing weights while upside down), and **stilts**.

#juggling

A skill with two **main forms**:

throwing various objects into the air and catching them – for example, rings, balls, hammers, etc. – and which are greater in number than the hands of the juggler(s),

and the manipulation of objects, with balancing acts and/or objects being thrown at the juggler.



#otherprofessions

Many of the people who are artists, both while performing or later in their careers, **become circus trainers**. Nevertheless, in recent years there has been an increase in the number of professionals devoting themselves exclusively to training, due to an increase in training spaces and sustained interest in the sector.

The circus sector has a growing body of professionals specialized in the **administration, development and promotion** of shows, although most of the time those who create these pieces usually take care of these tasks themselves.

The **director** is sometimes replaced or complemented by the **figure of the external observer**, a very specific circus role that is given to a professional who is not normally part of the company.

The use of **circus-specific equipment** brings two typical technical roles into play in the professional landscape.

The first of these is the **circus equipment maker**, a specialist in the design and construction of circus apparatus.

The second role is popularly known as as a **rigger**, someone who **oversees and ensures circus safety** from a technical standpoint. They are responsible for placing and fixing circus equipment (trapeze, Chinese pole, etc.) to the ground or to the ceiling, and making sure they are used safely once the artists puts them into operation.

In the circus, as in any other performing art, **professionals from other artistic backgrounds** are involved, particularly in **stage design, lighting, sound and wardrobe**. Companies with greater resources or that are part of a larger business structure entrust these tasks to external professionals.

Finally, and as in other performing arts, **the figure of the researcher** is beginning to take on greater significance. This person carries out research into either the **physical** (the possibilities of a specific discipline, for example) or the **theoretical aspect** of the circus (its dramaturgy, history, relationship with society, etc.).

For more information on *circus* terminology, we recommend consulting the *Diccionari de Circ* in the Circus Resources section of [Termcat](#).



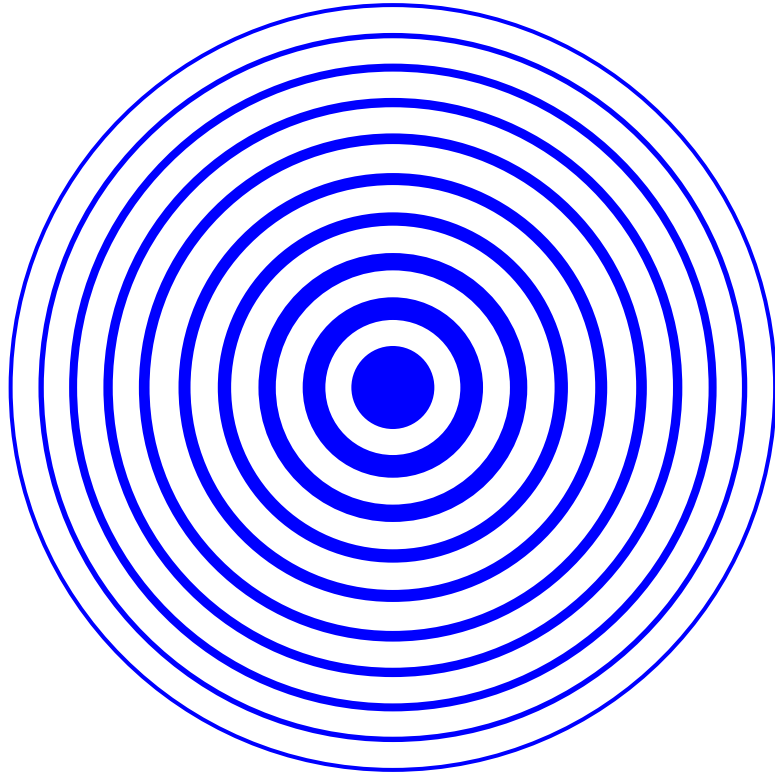
#now

THE **CIRCUS** IN **CATALONIA**

Eva Romero

Communicator specialized in circus





#thecircus
#thecompanies

**'[Circus] is surprise, challenge,
confidence and mutual aid, a helping hand
that grabs you and doesn't let you go,
a real and present moment, a round-trip
flight, an infinite cycle.'**

Griselda Juncà and Anna Pasqual
World Circus Day Manifesto 2017

#thecircus

Explosive laughter, surprise, curiosity, reflection, melancholy, the thrill of being alive, freedom.

Circus shows make us feel all kinds of things, sometimes simultaneously.

This **emotional force** is surely the most characteristic feature of the art and of the professionals who practice it, and who live and breathe their craft.

It is an endeavour in which a lot of things are constantly on the line: physical safety, the audience's reaction, and economic and professional stability.

It should come as no surprise that **the circus in Catalonia is made up of CREATIVE PEOPLE** with an **OVERWHELMING PASSION** and a reserve of crisis-proof and **ENDLESS ENERGY**.

Artists from across three different generations and very diverse backgrounds live together in Catalonia, and all of them are helping the circus here evolve.

The **first** generation of **self-taught artists** who spurred this art on in Catalonia after the fall of the Francoist dictatorship coexist with a **second** generation, largely composed of the **first graduates** from the **Rogelio Rivel Circus Arts Centre** and the **Carampa School in Madrid**. Many among the **current generation** have undertaken their **professional training and education abroad**, and have begun working in a Catalonia that already provides a home to a considerable number of creative spaces.

Currently, artists from long-standing companies often run or advise younger companies. All of these companies combine hands-on physical skills with **research** and **hybrid stage languages** (bringing dance and theatre, especially, into play), as well as a diverse array of **themes and styles**.

If we take **a look at the current art scene, albeit neither exhaustively nor exclusively**, we can see **some overarching features**. Let's go!

HUMAN RELATIONS are a central theme for many companies, who approach it largely from a **comic** ([Circ Vermut](#), [Pakipaya](#)) **poetic** ([Cia. Madame Gaüc](#)) or combined perspective ([Amer i Àfrica Circ cia](#), [Compañía de Circo 'eia'](#), [Escarlata Circus](#) o [Los Galindos](#)).

This balance between comedy, tenderness and **VISUAL POETRY** also predominates in clown productions ([Cristina Solé](#), [La Industrial Teatrera](#), [Leandre](#), [Pau Palaus](#), [Tortell Poltrona](#) or [Adrian Schvarzstein](#)). Clowns like [Pepa Plana](#) and [Alba Sarraute](#) take to the stage to create **highly personal and often activist works**, while [La Bella Tour](#) and [Rhum et al.](#) reimagine classic pieces through the humour of the present-day.

Some circus creators dedicate their shows to experimenting with the **EXPRESSIVE POSSIBILITIES OF SPECIFIC EQUIPMENT AND TECHNIQUES**. Among them, [Circ Pànic](#) and their work with the Chinese pole, [Karl Stets](#) and his use of ropes, [troposfera.xyz](#) and the diabolo, [Yldor Llach](#) and the artistic bicycle, and [Professor Karoli](#) and the unicycle.

Others play with **MATERIALS**, such as is the case of [Animal Religion](#) and [Carla Farreny](#) (mud), [Joan Català](#), (metal), and [Cíclicus](#) and [Júlia Farrero](#) (wood), as well as [Manolo Alcántara](#), who builds his equipment and scenery himself.

Attention to detail in sound production is a near-constant. **ORIGINAL MUSIC** and **LIVE MUSIC** are common ingredients, whether performed by the artists themselves ([Javier Ariza](#)) or by professional musicians ([Cia Vöel](#), [Cia Du'K'tO](#), and [Col·lectiu La Persiana](#)).

Within the current scene, **family-friendly shows** by travelling big-top circuses and companies such as [Cia. Capicua](#), [Circ Pistolet](#), [Moi Jordana](#), [Los Barlou](#), [Guga i Silvia](#), [Ramiro Vergaz](#) and [Anna Confetti](#) coexist with other, **edgier productions**, such as those by [Kerol](#), [Joel Martí & Pablo Molina](#), [cia. Vaques](#) and [Atempo Circ](#). In all of the above, there is no shortage of improvisation nor **INTERACTION WITH THE AUDIENCE**.

There is also the circus for adult-only audiences and, like any other artform, the circus can take influence from **SOCIAL CHANGE**. One example of this are the emerging **grassroots circus** companies such as [Col·lectiu Mur](#), [Kolektivo Konika](#), [Las Sistars](#) and [InoKollektiv](#), who are **overturning the classic role of women** in the circus. Companies are also starting to raise awareness on other **social issues**, such as (dis)ability ([Ferran Oorbitg](#)), vulnerability ([Elena Zanzu](#)), sexual violence ([Som Noise](#)), capitalism ([Psirc](#)) and women's empowerment and gender ([En Diciembre](#)), among others.

Across the board, Catalan creators, **in addition to the physical risks of their trade, are going out on a limb artistically, creating their own stage language**, one which continues to grow with each passing day.

#thecompanies

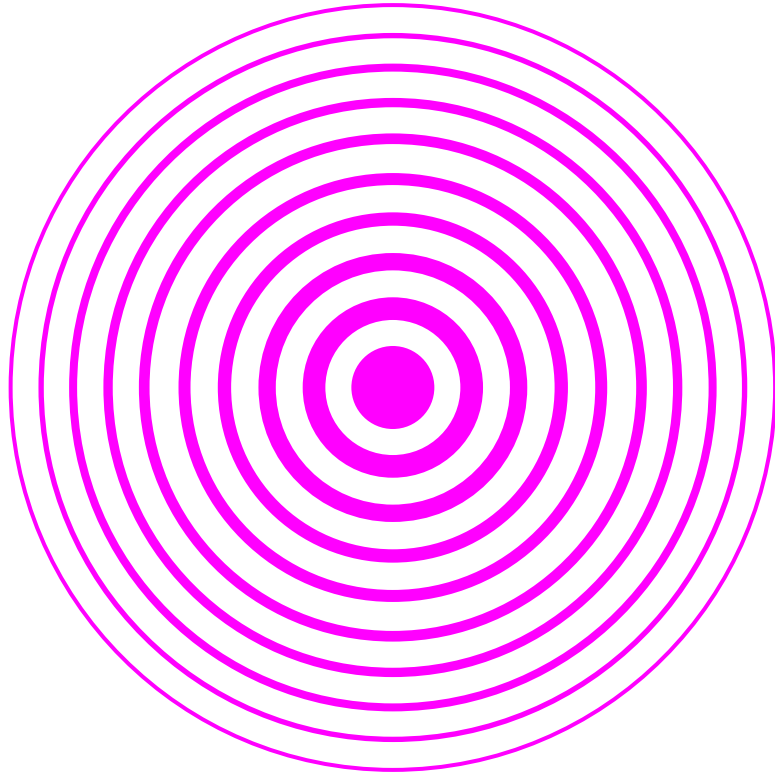
According to figures from the Government of Catalonia, 11.7% of the performing arts companies in Catalonia in 2018 were circus companies. In practice, this means that 22 companies met the requirements – be made up of artists with a minimum of three years professional activity, and have a minimum of 15 paid performances throughout the year – to be considered as such. It should be noted that **the Circus Companies Guide produced by the APCC includes a total of 120 companies** as of 2020. This list does not set requirements in terms of which companies can be included.

According to data gathered as part of the 2019 APCC survey, these are mostly **small companies** (57% are made up of 2 or fewer artists), with an **average lifespan of six years**.

These companies are largely **centralized**, with almost 65% operating in the province of Barcelona, where spaces for creation, training and performance – the few which exist – are also concentrated.

On average, companies produce **a show every two years**, although in some cases they usually have several shows on the go at the same time.

Most artists complement their professional activities with other work, usually circus training and education, something which up to 41% of artists dedicate themselves.



#wheretoseecircus?

#wheretolearn?

#whereitismade?

**'The circus is a space in which reality
becomes metaphor.**

**The circus is about bodies, objects,
the universe, instincts. I like it
because it's fragile, free, anarchic.**

It is a poetic revolution.'

Roberto Magro
circus artist, director and trainer

#wheretoseecircus?

Catalonia hosts more than half of the shows produced by Catalan companies, **mostly in PUBLIC SPACES** and especially at its **numerous FESTIVALS**.

Currently there are **about fifteen specialist circus festivals**, many of which came to prominence in the 2010s, while others, such as the Festival Internacional de Pallassos – Memorial Charlie Rivel (founded in 1984), the Fira de Circ al Carrer de La Bisbal d'Empordà (1996) and the Fira Trapezi (1997) are more longstanding.

In addition, up to **thirty performing arts festivals** dedicate a part of their programming to the circus. Little by little, the circus has become an essential feature of festival line-ups.



Violeta. Col·lectiu La Persiana
© Marta Garcia Cardellach

The **street** is **where it's easiest to see circus**, but **the circus is making a space for itself in THEATRES**, and an increasing number of performances are taking place in indoor environments.



24th Winter Circus. Ateneu Popular 9Barris. © Marta Garcia Cardellach

Although Catalonia is at the forefront of circus within Spain, **its regular channels for booking and promoting shows need further support**. Nevertheless, **there are exceptions well worthy of mention**, such as the **Ateneu Popular 9 Barris**, which books circus shows some 40 days a year, as well as **L'Estruch Fàbrica de les Arts en Viu de Sabadell**, which hosts around fifteen shows, many of them the fruit of the creative residencies the space hosts.

More sporadically, circus performances can be seen at the Antic Teatre (new multidisciplinary stage languages) and **in a number of community centres** as part of the recent Barcelona District Cultural cycle.

Public theatres across Catalonia see up to 100 days of circus shows a year, still well short of the number of pieces in production, but a total which continues to tick steadily upwards. One scheme that has helped to increase the presence of the circus in theatres has been the **tour undertaken by the Producció Nacional de Circ, which has sought to reach younger audiences** less commonly seen in theatres. National Circus Output (La Producció Nacional) is one of the measures of the Circus Promotion Plan 2019-2022. With a programme of specific activities focused on shows, the scheme has been made possible thanks to the continuous work undertaken with theatrical venues.



In-house booking is concentrated in the bigger cities and county towns. To compensate for this, the [Nilak travelling circus theatre project](#) was founded, taking its tent **on tour to areas without theatres**, and pitching up in selected towns to offer shows and workshops. Working in a similar vein is the [Pobles de Circ](#), which has taken shows and circus workshops **to towns with less than 10,000 residents**. Both initiatives are part of the 2019-2022 Circus Promotion Plan.

In Catalonia, there are more than a few **TRAVELLING BIG-TOP CIRCUSES**: the [Circ Raluy Legacy](#), the [Circ Històric Raluy](#), the [Circ Raluy Clàssic](#), the [Circo Smile](#), the [Circo Italiano](#) and the Gran [Circo Universal](#). Their presence always provides a cultural boost to the towns they visit, something which would only be strengthened by industry-specific policy at a national level to allow for the simplification and standardization of the granting of permits.

The [Circ Cric](#), , a travelling circus project, has its **headquarters in Montseny**, and works to an unflagging schedule. Lastly, a number of circus companies are returning to the **touring or fixed tent formats in more intimate settings**, among them, [Los Galindos](#) and [Circ Xic](#).

#wheretolearn?

At the heart of **amateur circus practice** is the **drive** to do **something physical, non-competitive and creative**. These are just some of the values that people, be they children, young people or adults, look for in the circus. And it is precisely the social significance of **these values that has allowed the presence of circus-as-leisure to grow exponentially**.

There has also been an **increase in CIRCUS SPACES**, with over **over sixty** in Catalonia, mainly in the province of Barcelona. Almost half of these are part of the **Network of Circus Spaces of Catalonia, or XECC**.



Many of them, in addition to offering training, also **organize exhibition activities and/or cede spaces** to companies for creative use. These are transversal spaces which are essential for raising the profile of the circus, and which create new opportunities to see circus shows and to reach new audiences.

#whereitismade?

In terms of **professional recognition**, the **Rogelio Rivel Circus Arts Centre** in Barcelona is the **only school** to offer professional circus training with **an officially-recognized qualification**. The 4-year course includes **an intermediate-level training programme** and **a higher-level** course. Preparatory courses for further circus education are also available, although this education must be completed abroad in places such as Quebec, France, Belgium and Sweden, as no such courses or training are available in Spain.

Several circus spaces, in addition to the Rogelio, **offer** workshops for **continuous professional development**.

The need for **CREATIVE SPACES** is currently **being met**, although it is **heavily centralized** in a few **specific areas**.

In **Barcelona**, we have **La Central del Circ**, the largest creative circus space in the country, fruit of a scheme which arose from the efforts of the APCC, which has managed the space from the very start. The Central del Circ, which is funded by the Government of Catalonia, is a Barcelona City Council facility which, like the longstanding Ateneu Popular 9 Barris (managed by the Associació Bidó de Nou Barris), is part of the city's Art Factories network.

L'Estruch in **Sabadell** is another municipal facility with a transdisciplinary approach which, among other projects, has a specific circus focus.

Throughout the rest of Catalonia there are a host of other facilities, among which are two **artist-run and operated initiatives**: the **Espai de Circ Cronopis** (Mataró), **Tub d'assaig** (Terrassa, in a municipal building), **as well as centres that host collective training and learning activities** such as LaCrica (Manresa), Can Batlló, La Bonita (Barcelona), and La Fàbrica de Somnis (Vic).

More and more spaces dedicated to circus creation are popping up. In 2020, Konvent Cirk, a project designed to support the creation and promotion of the circus, was born in the Konvent (Berga), a multidisciplinary self-managed arts space. In 2021, La Bau (La Garriga), a space shared by an association of various groups of artists and technical professionals, opened its doors.



Cotufa and Cachaba
World Circus Day at Tub d'assaig
© Marta Garcia Cardellach



#financialturnover
#beyondCatalunya
#socialoutreach

**'The circus is a channel that allows
you to project fantasy and folly,
create disbelief, and challenge establish
boundaries. Its circularity opens up
to a human truth.'**

Marcel Escolano, artist and circus director



#financialturnover

According to statistics provided by the **Government of Catalonia**, from **2012 to 2018**, the **TURNOVER** of the **22 circus companies** included in their study reached **€2.7 million in 2018**.

Going by the 2019 APCC survey, this volume has continued to grow, with the constant emergence of new companies.

Making a statistical projection based on the responses received and the number of circus companies known to APCC (120, including 5 big-top circuses), turnover went from **4 million euros in 2012** to approximately **9.1 million euros in 2019**.

According to data provided by the **Ministry of Culture**, it **increased its funding for the circus by 87% between 2014 and 2021**. It should be noted that this increase includes longstanding subsidies, extraordinary financing provided as part of the Circus Promotion Plan, and aid to the sector to deal with the effects of the COVID-19 crisis.

More specifically, the recent **Circus Promotion Plan 2019-2022** has allowed for the **investment of €759,656.16** by the Ministry of Culture (in total, the plan has a budget of more than one million euros). This **figure**, although by no means inconsiderable, **is a long way away from investments such as those made in 2010**, one of the years in which the first Comprehensive Circus Plan was implemented, **and in which investment reached more than €3,900,000** (data provided by the Ministry of Culture).

Nevertheless, **the CIRCUS ECONOMY is not only** a matter of **the people who work in it professionally**, but also of **the spaces and towns that include circus as part of their cultural provisions**. Some key examples are the €650,000 and the dozen jobs created by the 2016 Steet Circus Fair in La Bisbal d'Empordà, according to an economic impact study commissioned by the local council.

The circus is, by its very nature, an **eminently international affair**, given its traditional lack of reliance on words, its cosmopolitan make-up, and the nomadic way of life of the big-top circuses.

From our country, many **artists move abroad**, either seeking **further development and learning** or to find **better job opportunities**. This results in a **circus made up of artists born in Catalonia but created outside our borders**, mostly in **France**: Blai Mateu (Baro d'Evel), Jur or Georgina Domingo (Cridacompany), Marcel Vidal (Marcel et ses drôles de femmes), Marta Torrents and Sergi Parés, among others.

In turn, **artists from all over the world come to Catalonia**, attracted by the vitality of the sector. Almost **one-fifth of the members that make up Catalonia's circus companies** come from outside of Spain.

According to the APCC Companies Survey, in **2019, 23% of the shows** performed by **Catalan companies** took place **outside of Spain**. The Catalan government's Cultural Statistics also confirm this trend: while in 2018, circus performances made up 7.3% of all artistic performances, they constituted 21% of the total performances beyond our national borders. That is to say, **one fifth of Catalan performing arts shows that are seen outside of Spain are circus shows**. The sector, therefore, has a strong impact on the image of Catalan culture abroad.

Non Sin Tri
World Circus Day at Tub d'Assaig
© Marta Garcia Cardellach



It should be noted that **this transportability is supported by public bodies** such as the **Catalan Institute of Cultural Companies** (IPEC, through its internationalization arm Catalan Arts) and the **Ramon Llull Institute, as well as international programmes** that promote training, creation and exhibition through residences, co-productions and direct financial support. **Other standouts** include the cross-border project **Travesia** (which has operated under various names since 2008) and the European project **CircusNext** (since 2017).

#socialoutreach

In addition to being an artistic discipline, the circus can have a clear social vocation and impact on **PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**, both individually and collectively. **The circus stimulates healthy habits** such as physical conditioning, corporal dexterity, sensitivity towards artistic expression, creativity, self-esteem, teamwork, hard work and overcoming one's own limits, among others.

All of these **represent values which are beneficial** not only to children, young people or disadvantaged groups, but also for **society as a whole**.

Circus techniques can be used in primary and secondary education, in subjects such as physical education, mathematics or physics, and also in **the world of business**, with circus workshops for teambuilding.



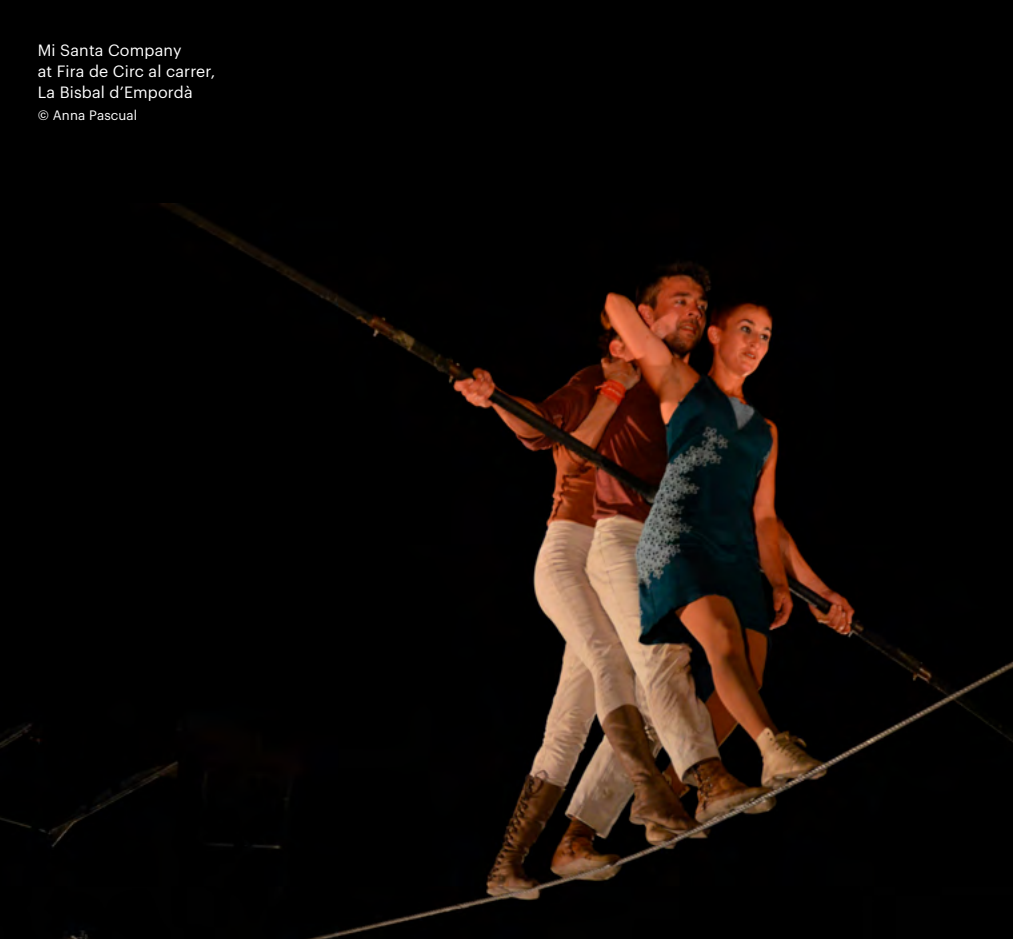
Cia Sabanni
Pallassos sense fronteres
© Marta López Mas

It should also not be forgotten that **the presence of circus artists can alleviate suffering**, even if only briefly, in **difficult environments** such as hospitals (**Pallapupas**), refugee camps or among members of the population affected by economic and social crises (**Pallassos sense fronteres** or Clowns Without Borders).

#tomorrow THE **CHALLENGES**



Déjà vu
Cia Manolo Alcántara
© Raquel García



The main challenge is **PARADIGM CHANGE**,
to change the image of the circus that prevails both
**in society and among the majority of performing
arts bookers.**

We need to highlight the value of the circus and
get the message across that it is a mature art,
one of **great quality** which **is also suitable for adult
audiences**, and which does not pose as many
technical difficulties as might be suspected,
given **the huge number of experienced technical
professionals on hand in this country.**

The question is: **how can we ensure that circus
is seen** as an established art, **on an equal footing
with the rest of the performing arts?**

A good way to start would be **TO PROMOTE more SPACES and OUTREACH** between company promoters and those who are engaged in booking, to help them overcome the clichés, get to know both the projects and the artists better, and encourage them to book and co-develop circus shows.

Another option would be to promote **circus exhibitions and events** to open doors, create networks and reach new audiences.

We also ought to call for a greater role for circuses **in large public facilities**, and to drive the consolidation and growth of **exhibitions and cabarets in creative spaces**.

With regard to **BIG-TOP CIRCUSES**, we must establish a **SINGLE PROTOCOL for the whole of Catalonia to ease the administrative burden, including turnarounds and fees**, on local councils, and devolving management entirely to local cultural representatives.

We also need to awaken the desire to see circus through **CREATIVE ACTIVITIES FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**, a greater presence of the circus in schools, support for awareness-raising initiatives such as museums, collections and awards, and, most pertinently, involvement of media outlets.

The sector must continue to OFFER A WIDE RANGE of styles, formats, looks and themes that include both riskier and experimental and more accessible shows, with quality as the essential ingredient. To this end, **we must keep fighting to ensure that the necessary support is made available in order to achieve these goals.**

- **RECOGNITION and PROFESSIONALIZATION of the different types of roles involved are also particularly important.**

An **Artist's Charter** (L'Estatut de l'Artista) must **provide rights** which are relevant to the particularities of their **professional life** (seasonal work, maternity leave for acrobats, work-family life balance, retraining for artists retiring from the stage, full retirement, etc.).

The Charter should also increase **oversight** and standards in **contracts** and **salaries**. This would pave the way for artists to devote themselves fully to their creative practice, and to be able to count on the support of experienced internal or external professional figures dedicated full-time to management, distribution and promotion.

- It would also provide for a **balanced distribution of training and creative spaces** throughout the country, with high-quality and well-maintained infrastructure, equipment and resources;
- the **improvement and expansion of the network of schools at all levels** so that they might offer quality facilities to students, and working conditions worthy of the training staff, as well as studies that go all the way up, as in theatre and dance, to university level.

The circus must also **MAKE ITSELF KNOWN** to other sectors outside the cultural realm, particularly in the world of business.

New working relationships could be established that would allow the circus to serve as an example in values such as health, teamwork and creativity in the field of human resources.

In addition, it is necessary that public bodies, businesses and the arts administrators get involved to make mentoring, sponsorship and financial backing a reality, as well as to stimulate investment in the social circus through corporate social responsibility actions.

We are living in changing times; there is no doubt that the circus will adapt, as it has always done.

DIGITIZATION can be an ally in promoting performances, artistic research and technical training.

The climate and economic crises, in turn, oblige us to make a stand in favour of **SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES** such as those that have always characterized the circus: recycled materials, non-hierarchical management, and accessible and transversal art.

The circus artist has the freedom to fly, detaching themselves, even if for a few moments, from the laws of physics that bind bodies and objects to the ground. **THE CIRCUS IS TRULY FREE, AND THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE IS ENSURING IT STAYS THAT WAY.**





#history

Contemporary Catalan circus: an overview 1976-2021

Jordi Jané

circus critic and teacher

Catalonia began to develop *another type of circus* in 1976, in the turbulent political and social context that followed the death of General Franco. Guided by models such as independent theatre and companies such as Els Joglars and Comediants, **the first wave of companies** (La Tràgica and *Tripijoc Joc Trip*, and **els Germans Poltrona** and *La màquina de fer discursos*) paved the way for **the creation, in 1978, of the Circus Cric**, which in the 1981-82 season undertook its first circus tent tour.

Early facilities

This *new circus* had started from scratch, and aspiring artists took their cues from classic *circaires* such as Nani Frediani, Frankokos and Rogelio Rivel, as well as gymnasts and acrobats such as Piti and Toni Español. The following years so the creation of the **Festival Internacional de Pallassos de Cornellà** (1984), the **Circus Fair in La Bisbal** (1984 and 1985, restarted in 1996) and the **Fira Trapezi** (Reus and Vilanova, 1997).

These were preceded by the **Ateneu Popular 9Barris**, which has been booking circus shows and events since 1977 and **has been involved in setting up l'Escola Infantil de Circ** (1997) and the **annual Circ d'Hivern winter circuit** (1996).

The Ateneu **has been the birthplace of projects as decisive as the Circus Association of Catalonia**

(ACC, 1991- 2000), the **Rogelio Rivel Circus School** (1999, today known as the Rogelio Rivel Circus Arts Centre), the **Association of Circus Professionals of Catalonia**(APCC, 2004) **and the beginnings, in the summer of 2006, of La Central del Circ.**

These bodies exist alongside others that help to promote and strengthen the contemporary circus all across the country. For example, the **residence and creative centre La Vela** (Vilanova and La Geltrú, 2004-2011, restarted in 2014 in Sabadell by the Centre de Creació L'Estruch as La Vela de L'Estruch). In November 2006, Catalan police evicted the ebullient creative centre La Makabra in Barcelona. However, **centres for creation**, training and learning continued to multiply, and in 2013 **came together under the banner of the Network of Circus Spaces in Catalonia** (XECC).



Setting up the tent, Rogelio Rivel Circus Arts Centre 200. © CACRR Archive

Partnerships with public bodies

The **creation of the APCC in 2004 has produced** the dual effect of **joining up** an endemically disparate **sector and forcing the Ministry of Culture of Catalonia to include the circus in its policy decisions.**

At the request of the APCC, in 2005 the Parliament of Catalonia declared the circus to be a ‘performing art of high cultural interest’. This was followed by the drafting of the Comprehensive Circus Plan, and the category of *circus* was included in the National Culture Prizes (these categories would disappear in 2013 with the reformulation of the National Prizes). In 2006, the Ministry of Culture organized the exhibition *Contemporary Catalan Circus: The art of risk* at the CCCB, complemented by the International Seminar *El circ i la poètica del risc*.

In 2008, the Ministry of Culture and the APCC presented the ***Comprehensive Plan 2008–2011***, structured along five main lines (**training, creation, production, exhibition and promotion**) and designed ‘for the improvement and promotion of the circus sector’. **Without adequate financial provision**, the Comprehensive Plan **achieved only a very small part of the objectives** it set out.

The ***Comprehensive Plan 2012-2015*** **suffered from the same problems** as the first. The ***2019-2022 Promotion Plan*** seeks to adapt the objectives of the two Comprehensive Plans **to the economic and structural reality** of the country.



Promotion: an unstable environment

Although audience numbers have grown exponentially thanks to the quality of the shows, **our circus is lacking in support from the media and academia.**

2004 saw the founding of the quarterly magazine *Zirkòlika*, but the already limited promotion of and reflection about circus – which is not to say, stage arts in general – that there once was on radio, television and in the popular press, has fallen by the wayside or disappeared altogether.

Media professionals and outlets can make use of the online ***Multilingual Circus Terminology Dictionary***, developed by Termcat in collaboration with the APCC (see ‘Links’).

Artists, values, formats

The **complexity of creating auteur circus**, the **fragility** of our **performance circuits** and the government's solid yet incomplete **cultural policy** render this **self-sacrificing craft an act of continuous heroism**. Nevertheless, it is comforting to know that some of the **pioneers** of the 70s and 80s remain **active** and **continue to share their interests**, programmes and projects **with new generations** in a positive interchange of connections and experiences.

On top of this, the **emergence of foreign artists** and the constant **flow of ideas** stimulated by **international festivals** are elements that bring further colour to the sunny, Mediterranean disposition that characterizes our circus. Moreover, in terms of ideas, organization and

sensitivities, the appearance of circus companies by/for women and **the growing participation of women on and off-stage** (artists, directors, technicians, managers, administrators, etc.) has greatly enriched the sector.

Today, audiences can enjoy the results of a long series of steps, influences and generations that have made the anarchic circus of the 70s – intuitive, festive, and libertarian, but also hugely limited – their own and who, beyond the nature of each individual company, help the Catalan circus to stand out in festivals and events all over the world.

With regard to show **formats**, the aforementioned limitations with which the sector operates make **small-scale companies** and **small and medium-**

scale show formats a necessity. With only a few exceptions, **large-scale** show production remains on the Catalan circus' **to-do list**, and indeed there are a number of projects who require this move up to be able to fully realize their creative vision.

Trends and themes

The contemporary circus is a **hive of research and innovation** as regards circus techniques and dramaturgy, physical communication, stage language, machinery, apparatuses, scenography and stage design, and often crosses over into other arts (performing, plastic, musical, technological, etc.) in the search for the means of expression most suited to getting the piece's emotional content over to the audience.



Fil. Madame Gaüc in Alcanar with Pobles de Circ. © Marta Garcia Cardellach

Be they soloists or companies, creators project their creative universe through their shows, and make up a scene that encompasses everything from the decidedly **experimental** to **unabashed entertainment, via performances** of an overriding *poetic inclination*.

The coming together of body kinesis and non-linear narratives leads to creative pieces that can be read in various different ways. And, although the circus has not yet reached the levels of abstraction that dance can, it is well on its way to doing so. Any spectator can see that through the multiple forms and styles of balance, acrobatics, aerial and physical skills and clown art, **many Catalan auteur circus productions are at the very forefront of 21st-century performing arts.**

As for **the themes and ideas that drive the shows**, our auteur circus shows once again that **art and society are inseparable**. The poetics of the body bring many of the things that bedevil and concern us in our personal and social lives to the stage: from the most introspective matters to unrestrained capitalism, the animal within us, social relations, freedom of sex and gender, the health of the planet, the vindication of artisanry and handicraft, and the great issues of coexistence, refuge and exclusion. Today, the maxim of the semiologist **Paul Bouissac** is likely more valid than ever:

‘It may seem that the circus is on the fringes of culture, but it is actually at the heart of it.’

Links and bibliography

Contemporary Catalan circus: an overview 1976-2021

Current trends in Catalan circus

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- Grec 2015: *Pals*
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JWi_jZAlkqY
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<http://mercatflors.cat/blog/circ-dara-mateix-per-jordi-jane/>
- Jané, Jordi: *A propòsit d'Intarsi* (2017)
<http://mercatflors.cat/blog/a-proposit-dintarsi-per-jordi-jane/>

Diccionari terminològic multilingüe de Circ (TERMCAT)
<https://www.termcat.cat/es/diccionaris-en-linia/165>

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Presentations by, among others, Alessandro Serena, Raffaele De Ritis, Bienve Moya, Marc Lalonde, Joan Maria Minguet, Àngel Quintana and Gilles-Henri Polge (texts in Catalan + original versions of the French and Italian texts).

- Jané, Jordi: *152 Volts de pista* (2 volumes). Tarragona: Arola Editors, 2013.

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#networking

A **GUIDE** TO **RESOURCES**



Hats. JAM
Circ Picat Festival
© Festival Arxive

CIRCUS COMPANIES AND ARTISTS

APCC Circus Companies Guide

http://apcc.cat/media/upload/arxiu/MaterialDifusioAPCC/2021/GuiaAPCC_actualitzacioweb2020_BaixaRes.pdf

This guide includes information on 128 circus companies based in Catalonia with at least one member of the Association of Circus Professionals of Catalonia among their team.

APCC Professional Members Directory

<http://www.apcc.cat/professionals/>

More than 360 professionals are members of the APCC (May 2021), most of whom are artists (300). The other most common professional fields are training, direction and management/production. The APCC estimates that some 650 people work in the circus throughout Catalonia.

CIRCUS VENUES

According to the data of the venues survey carried out by the APCC in 2020, Catalonia has 68 circus venues, most of which are multipurpose and provide learning (58), creation (43), training (38) and, mostly on a one-off basis, exhibition (31), in different combinations.

They are unevenly distributed throughout the country: in the province of Barcelona, there are 49; in the province of Girona, 7; in the province of Tarragona, 7, and in the province of Lleida, 6.

They can be consulted via the following link:
<http://www.apcc.cat/noticies/view.php?ID=1697>

TRAINING SPACES

The Rogelio Rivel Circus Arts Centre (Barcelona) is currently the only **vocational learning** centre in Catalonia, and is a member of the European Federation of Professional Circus Schools (FEDEC).
<https://www.escolacircrr.com/>

Ongoing developmental **training for professionals** is also offered in this same space, as well as in other spaces such as:

- Cronopis (Mataró, since 2008)
www.cronopis.org
- La Bonita (Barcelona, since 2011, in its current location since 2015)
<https://es-es.facebook.com/LaBonitascc/>

The majority of opportunities, however, are for **beginners and amateur learners**. Some of the more longstanding projects and/or projects with a greater number of students are:

- The Children's and Youth School of the Ateneu Popular 9 Barris (Barcelona, since 1997)

<https://ateneu9b.net/formacio-i-circ-social/projectes/escola>

- Circ Quina Gràcia school
(Barcelona, since 2002)
<http://www.escolaquinagracia.com>
- Tub d'assaig (Terrassa, since 2007)
<https://tubdassaig.com>
- La Crica (Manresa, since 2009)
<https://www.lacrica.cat>
- La Circoteca (Valls, since 2012)
<https://www.passabarret.com/circoteca/qu%C3%A8-%C3%A9s>

A complete list of the spaces can be found via this link:
<http://www.apcc.cat/media/upload/arxiu/PLAIMPULSCIRC/Catalleg-MASTER-web.pdf>

CREATIVE SPACES

Some of the spaces that offer specific support for the creation of circus shows in the form of **residencies or venue handover** are:

- **La Central del Circ** (Barcelona, since 2008)
<https://www.lacentraldelcirc.cat/>
- **Ateneu Popular 9 Barris** (Barcelona, since 1977)
www.ateneu9b.net
Both are members of Barcelona City Council's Art Factories Network
- **L'Estruch, Fàbrica de les Arts en Viu**
(Sabadell, since 1995)
<http://lestruch.sabadell.cat/>
- **Espai de Circ Cronopis** (Mataró, since 2008)
<http://www.cronopis.org/>
- **Tub d'assaig** (Terrassa, since 2007)
<https://tubdassaig.com/>
- **La Bonita** (Barcelona, since 2011, in its current location since 2015)
<https://www.facebook.com/LaBonitascll>
- **La Bau** (Les Franqueses del Vallès, since 2021)
www.labau.net

A complete list of circus creation spaces can be consulted via this link:

<http://www.apcc.cat/circ-a-catalunya/creacio/>

Besides these, it is also becoming common for other multidisciplinary spaces or theatres to host creative residencies.

SOCIAL CIRCUS

circsocial.cat

As part of the 2019-2022 Circus Promotion Plan's 'Social and community circus' scheme, managed by the Ateneu Popular 9 Barris, the website <https://circsocial.cat/> has been developed, offering a map and a directory of organizations and projects in Catalonia that, through the circus, aspire to work for well-being, inclusion and social justice. It also includes a toolkit of resources related to this practice (social circus, community arts, circus in the educational system, etc.), with the aim of promoting knowledge exchange and boosting analysis and action from within the circus scene in relation to issues such as gender and functional diversity. The Ateneu Popular 9 Barris is a national benchmark in the field of social circus.

PERFORMANCE

CIRCUS FESTIVALS AND EXHIBITIONS

Currently there are more than fifteen festivals and exhibitions in Catalonia specializing in circuses, arranged below by date of creation:

- **Festival Internacional de Pallassos – Memorial Charlie Rivel** (Cornellà, October, biannual since 1984)
<http://www.festivaldepallassos.com/>
- **Festival de Circ al Carrer de La Bisbal d'Empordà** (La Bisbal d'Empordà, July, since 1996)
<http://firadecirc.org/ca/inici.html>
- **Trapezi** (Reus, May, since 199)
<http://www.trapezi.cat/>
- **Curtcirckit** (Montgat, June, since 2000)
<http://www.curtcirckit.cat>
- **Circorts** (Barcelona, Las Corts district, October, since 2000)
<https://ajuntament.barcelona.cat/lescorts/ca>
- **Castell de Circ. Mercè Arts de Carrec (MAC)** (Barcelona, Montjuïc Castle, September, since 2005)
<http://lameva.barcelona.cat/merce/ca/>

- **Festival de Circ de Terrassa** (Terrassa, September, since 2009, cancelled in 2020)
<https://tubdassaig.com/festival-de-circ/>
- **Festival Circ Cric** (Sant Esteve de Palautordera, spring, since 2010)
<https://circcric.com/ca/inici/>
- **Festival Internacional del Circ Elefant d'Or** (Girona [initially Figueres], February, since 2011)
<https://www.festivaldelcirc.com/>
- **Festival Internacional de Pallasses** (Sant Esteve de Palautordera, October, since 2014)
<https://circcric.com/ca/inici/>
- **Circ Picat** (Alpicat, June, since 2014)
<https://www.circpicat.cat/>
- **Circ d'Ara Mateix** (Barcelona, April, biannual, since 2014) Casa de la Dansa | Mercat de les flors
mercatflors.cat
- **Circ a la plaça** (Olot, July, since 2015)
<https://www.olotcultura.cat/projecte/circ-olot/>
- **Festivalet de circ** (Manresa, September, since 2018)
<https://www.festivaletdecirc.cat/>
- **Circdanya** (Prats i Samsor, August, since 2020)
<https://www.facebook.com/Circdanya-festival-108993977520229/>

You can consult a more complete list here:

<http://www.apcc.cat/circ-a-catalunya/exhibicio/index.php?CATEGORY2=33>

FESTIVALS HOSTING CIRCUS EVENTS

Additionally, up to thirty performing arts festivals dedicate a certain part of their programming to the circus. The most prominent are:

- **Festival Grec** (Barcelona, since 1976)
<https://www.barcelona.cat/grec>
- **Fira Tàrrrega** (Tàrrrega, since 1981)
<https://www.firatarrega.cat/>
- **Al Carrer** (Viladecans, since 1990)
<http://www.alcarrerviladecans.com/>
- **La Mostra** (Igualada, since 1990)
<https://mostraigualada.cat/>
- **Per amor a l'Hart** (L'Hospitalet de Llobregat, since 2001)
<http://www.festivalperamoralhart.com/>
- **Escena Poblenou** (Barcelona, since 2001)
<http://www.escenapoblenou.com/>
- **Festicam, Festival Internacional de Teatre i Circ d'Amposta** (Amposta, since 2013)
<http://etca.cat/festicam/>
- **PrimaverArt** (El Morell, since 2015)
<https://www.primaverart.cat>
- **Temporada Alta** (Salt, since 1992)
<https://temporada-alta.com/es/>

A more complete list can be found here:

<http://www.apcc.cat/circ-a-catalunya/exhibicio/index.php?CATEGORY2=34>

VENUES HOSTING CIRCUS EVENTS

Catalonia does not have a stable circuit nor any one venue dedicated exclusively to the staging of circus shows. However, we can highlight, by creation date:

- **Ateneu Popular 9 Barris** (Barcelona, since 1977)
www.ateneu9b.net
- **Circ Cric** (Sant Esteve de Palautordera, since 1981)
<http://circcric.com/>
- **L'Estruch** (Sabadell, since 1996, with a circus tent since 2016)
<http://lestruch.sabadell.cat/>
- **Mercat de les Flors** (Barcelona, since 1983)
www.mercatflors.cat
- **Antic Teatre** (Barcelona, since 2003)
<http://www.anticteatre.com/>
- **Community centres within the Barcelona Cultural District circuit** (Barcelona, since 2017)
<http://www.barcelona.cat/districtecultural/ca>

Circus creation spaces also often organize shows and cabarets.

TRAVELLING CIRCUSES

- **Circ Raluy Legacy**
<https://circularuy.com/>
- **Circ Històric Raluy**
<https://raluy.com/>
- **Circ Raluy Clàssic**
<https://www.raluyclassic.com/>
- **Circo Smile**
<http://circosmile.com/>
- **Circo Italiano**
<http://ilcircoitaliano.com/>
- **Gran Circo Universal**
www.circusuniversal.com
- **Nilak Circ teatre itinerant**
www.nilak.cat

Project started by a group of artists in order to bring a travelling stage to the parts of Catalonia without a theatre, included within the measures of the Circus Promotion Plan 2019-2022.

CIRCUS ASSOCIATIONS, NETWORKS AND PLATFORMS

IN CATALUNYA

Association of Circus Professionals of Catalonia (APCC) www.apcc.cat

Professional organization that collectively defends the rights of the sector and provides opportunities for professional development, as well as training in circus management and disciplines, spaces for knowledge exchange and reflection, etc. The APCC, founded in 2004, unites and represents the sector, with more than 360 professional members, and picks up the work done by the Association of Circus of Catalonia, active between 1991 and 1998.

Network of Circus Spaces in Catalonia (XECC)

<http://www.apcc.cat/noticies/view.php?ID=1697>

A network of both public and private spaces that offer resources for circus creation, training, learning, production, exhibition and promotion. It consists of about thirty spaces and was created at the end of 2012.

IN SPAIN

CircoRed

<https://cired.com/>

Federation of Professional Circus Associations in Spain, created in 2015. As of 2020, it is made up of 12 associations, among them, the APCC.

Federación de Escuelas de Circo Socio Educativo (FEECSE)

<https://feecse.es/>

Federation created in 2013 that brings together 30 training projects focused on an introduction to the circus, social circus and adapted circus across the country.

IN EUROPA

Circostrada

<https://www.circostrada.org/>

European Network of Circus and Street Arts, established in 2003, which promotes the development and recognition of these sectors at a European and international level.

Circusnext

<https://www.circusnext.eu/>

Platform of about thirty members from 17 countries that supports emerging artists. It is also a gold-standard brand for European circus of outstanding uniqueness and creativity.

Fresh Arts Coalition Europe (FACE)

<http://www.fresh-europe.org/>

International platform created in 2003 featuring some forty live arts organizations.

Pirineus de circ

<https://www.facebook.com/PDCTravesia>

Cross-border circus cooperation projects between organizations in Spain and France: Circ que o! (2008- 2011), Process()s (2012-2013), De Mar a Mar (2014-2020) and Travesia (2020-2022).

Caravan International Youth and Social Circus Network

<https://www.caravancircusnetwork.eu/>

Network founded in 2006 and made up of 35 schools that use the social circus as an educational tool.

FEDEC, European Federation of Professional Circus Schools

<http://www.fedec.eu>

Network founded in 1998 and made up of 70 organizations.

CIRCUS POLICY

First Comprehensive Circus Plan (2008-2011)

http://www.apcc.cat/media/upload/pdf//file_167.pdf

An APCC initiative that enjoyed the support of the Ministry of Culture and Media of the Government of Catalonia, coordinated by the circus sector through the APCC. It put forward policies and lines of action designed to improve and professionalize the sector.

Second Comprehensive Circus Plan (2012-2015)

http://www.apcc.cat/media/upload/pdf//ii_pla_integral_del_circ_2012-15-web_editora_14_16_1.pdf

Second strategic agreement for circus culture with the involvement of the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Education, the Ramon Llull Institute, the Culture Institute of the City of Barcelona (ICUB) and the National Council for Culture and Arts (CoNCA).

Circus Promotion Plan (2019-2022)

<http://www.apcc.cat/media/upload/arxiu/PLAIMPULS%20/191210%20PP%20Dossier%20Premsa%20Pla%20dImpuls%20del%20Circ.pdf>

The Ministry of Culture and the Association of Circus Professionals of Catalonia (APCC) have co-developed the Circus Promotion Plan 2019-2022, an eleven-point action programme for the promotion of the Catalan circus.

The Plan, funded in its entirety by the Ministry of Culture of the Government of Catalonia, includes specific contributions from the Culture Institute of the City of Barcelona and the Ramon Llull Institute, with support from the Rogelio Rivel Circus Arts Centre, the Ateneu Popular 9Barris, La Central del Circ, La Vela de L'Estruch, the Network of Circus Spaces in Catalonia (XECC) and Nilak, as well backing from various towns, official bodies and facilities around Catalonia.

The Plan aims to create a backdrop of opportunities in Catalonia for the promotion of the circus in the cultural, social and economic life of the country, and to raise its international profile.

PROMOTION

AWARDS

In Catalonia

- **Premis de Circ de Catalunya**, awarded by the magazine Zirkòlika (since 2010).
<https://premis.zirkolika.com/premis-zirkolika/>
- **Premis Ciutat de Barcelona de circ**, awarded by Barcelona City Council (since 2011).
<https://ajuntament.barcelona.cat/premisciutatbcn/>
- **Circus Category in the Premis Lacetània**, awarded by Barcelona City Council (since 2011).
<https://www.premislacetania.info/>

At the moment there is no Premis Butaca circus category, however, the creation of a similar category has been announced by the Premis de la Crítica.

<https://premisdelacritica.recomana.cat/>

Between 2005 and 2013, the Premi Nacional de Circ was awarded by the Ministry of Culture. These prizes are no longer divided into specific categories.

In Spain

- **Premio Nacional de Circo**, awarded by the Ministry of Culture (since 1990).
<http://www.culturaydeporte.gob.es/cultura/artesescenicas/premios/pn-circo/presentacion.html>

There is no circus category at the MAX Awards for Performing Arts, presented by the SGAE.

WORLD CIRCUS DAY

Overseen by the European Circus Association, with the collaboration of the European Union, it has been held on the third Saturday of April since 2008. The Association of Circus Professionals of Catalonia (APCC) oversees its celebration in Catalonia, producing a programme of a wide range of events and supporting the drafting and communication of a manifesto defending the sector's importance. The XECC helps to bring the celebration to towns and cities around Catalonia.

MEDIA

Clownplanet (since 2000)

<https://clownplanet.com/>

Blog specialized in clown arts, created by the clown and trainer Àlex Navarro, written in Spanish and with an international scope.

Zirkòlika (since 2004)

www.zirkolika.com

Quarterly magazine dedicated to the circus arts, and the only of its kind in Spain. In addition, it is also an online information portal..

Bloc de Circ (since 2009)

<https://blocs.mesvilaweb.cat/marcel/>

Blog on the news website Vilaweb, produced by journalist Marcel Barrera, which includes articles about companies, festivals, social circus and professionals from both the traditional and the new circus.

Blog Educació transformadora.

Apartat Circ social (since 2012)

<https://educaciotransformadora.com/category/circ-social/>

Blog produced by the social educator Antonio Alcántara that, in the section 'Circ social', gathers topical news and materials of Catalan, Spanish and international scope.

CIRCUS PHOTOGRAPHY

Alex Carmona

<https://alexcarmona.com/>

Alex Griffin

<https://www.instagram.com/alex.griffin.aus/>

Arnau Pascual Monells

https://www.instagram.com/foto_en_escena/

Clara Pedrol

[Clara Pedrol Fotografia](#)

Dani Álvarez (The way you look tonight)

<https://wayyoulooktonight.com/circ/>

Manel Sala 'Ulls'

<https://www.instagram.com/ulls2006/>

Maria Solà

<https://revela-t.cat/2020/portfolio/maria-sola-es/>

Marta Garcia Cardellach

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

Pirueteta photo (Natàlia Castellà)

<https://www.instagram.com/piruetaphoto/>

AUDIOVISUAL CIRCUS CREATION

Dieciséisbis (Alejandro Cabrera and Carlotta Napolitano)

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

Julià Rocha Pujol

<https://www.youtube.com/user/juliarochapujol/videos>

Julian Waisbord

<http://cargocollective.com/julianwaisbord>

Laura Carrau

<https://www.lauracarrau.com/videos>

Pep Pujol

<https://www.instagram.com/jpujolcat/>

Shasta Daisy Produccions

<http://www.sdp.cat>

Tristán Pérez-Martín

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

PHOTOGRAPHY AND AUDIOVISUAL CIRCUS CREATION

Caterina 'Kato' Angeloni

<https://elgatoproductions.net/>

Lucia Olalla i Marina Sulemaynova

<https://www.facebook.com/LluMPhotoFilms/>

Rakel Cros

<https://www.instagram.com/reitxelk/>

CIRCUS DICTIONARIES

Diccionari de circ en línia del Termcat

<https://www.termcat.cat/es/diccionaris-en-linia/165/ca/C?page=4>

Specialized online dictionary from the Termcat terminology centre, which collects more than 500 words pertaining to the thematic areas of acrobatics, aerial skills, balancing, show, the stage and business management.

Enciclopèdia de les Arts Escèniques Catalanes (EAEC)

<https://www.institutdelteatre.cat/publicacions/ca/enciclopedia-arts-esceniques.htm>

Created by the Theatre Institute, it currently includes 75 circus entries (artists, companies, entrepreneurs, events, overarching concepts, organizations, creative centres, specialized publications, etc.).

Online multimedia circus encyclopaedia (in French)

<https://cirque-cnac.bnf.fr/>

Created by the Centre National des Arts du Cirque, in collaboration with the National Library of France, it contains a large number of videos, photographs and articles written by specialists.

Circopedia (in English)

<http://www.circopedia.org/Glossary#G>

Created by Big Apple Circus.

EXHIBITIONS

Circusland (Besalú)

<https://circusland.org/>

Private 1500-square metre museum dedicated to the circus arts, with more than 500 exhibits.

Papers de circ

<https://www.facebook.com/Profkaroli>

Itinerant exhibition featuring paintings, books, stamps, postcards, posters, toys, models and foldouts, from the collection of the artist Professor Karoli. The collection is promoted via the above Facebook page.

Exposició Permanent del Pallaso Charlie Rivel (Cubelles)

<http://charlierivel.cubelles.cat/>

Permanent exhibition dedicated to Charlie Rivel (and his daughter Paulina Schumann) in his hometown.

LIBRARIES

Biblioteca de Nou Barris (since 2005)

<https://ajuntament.barcelona.cat/biblioteques/bibnoubarris/ca/canal/circ-i-arts-parateatral>

The Nou Barris District Library holds a large circus collection, and is the only library with a special collection of this kind in Catalonia.

ARCHIVES

Hemeroteca digital de les Arts Escèniques

<http://hemerotecadigital.institutdelteatre.cat/>

Digital archive of the Theatre Institute of Barcelona.

DOCUMENTARIES AND NEWS REPORTS

(selection, by date, starting with the most recent)

Videos of the 25th anniversary of the Circ d'Hiver

(Ateneu Popular 9 Barris, 2021)

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLffsW_Zymg-7BV8Xi3teB-HKncEzPcLnP

Video footage containing testimonials of those who participate in the Ateneu Popular 9 Barris' winter circuses, detailing the origin and evolution of the cycle.

'Enrico, el pallaso de Tarragona'

(S. Morris Produccions)

<https://vimeo.com/553201904?fbclid=IwAR2XKb9halQqEzq1xGOj-V5NlZqaa1xmEMNnZQ84C-uCK3TrOJzW85BGiQ20>

Documentary about Joan-Enric Miquel Roig, who in 1980 decided to take a leap into the unknown and dedicate himself to his passion: being a clown.

'Continuen a la corda fluixa'

(Background, La Red, 2021)

<http://www.alacarta.cat/telo-de-fons/capitol/230-continuen-a-la-corda-fluixa>

Report on the Circ Històric Raluy, the Circ Cric, and the 25 years of the Ateneu Popular 9 Barris.

'Avui circ, i sempre' (La Xarxa, 2020)

<http://www.alacarta.cat/zirkolika/capitol/avui-circ-i-sempre>

Report about the magazine Zirkòlika and its awards, the Ateneu Popular 9 Barris, the Biblioteca Nou Barris, and the situation of the contemporary circus.

'Circ d'estiu' (Teló de fons, La Xarxa, 2020)

<http://www.alacarta.cat/telo-de-fons/capitol/207circ-destiu>

Programme focusing on circus events at the 2020 editions of the festivals Grec, Fespluchapeau and Cruïlla, with shows by companies such as Baró d'Evel, Alba Sarraute, Producción Nacional de Circ, Joan Català, Kolectiv Lapso Cirk, Pepa Plana, Animal Religion and Circ Pistolet.

'Circ social' (Teló de fons, La Xarxa, 2019)

<http://canalterrassavalles.alacarta.cat/telo-de-fons/capitol/155-circ-social>

Programme dedicated to the more social side of the circus, featuring professionals and projects such as the Ateneu Popular 9Barris, Cronopis and the Revolution tent.

'Circ de demà' (Tria 33, CCMA, 2016)

<https://www.ccma.cat/tv3/alacarta/el-circ-que-ens-fa-vibrar/coleccio/3871/>

Report on the current circus scene following three young companies immersed the creative process.

SURVEYS AND STUDIES

(selection, by date, starting with the most recent)

Esfera Circ

<https://lacentraldelcirc.cat/esferacirc/>

Website with events, itineraries and opinion pieces in relation to the consultancy programme for cultural professionals, focused on expanding the imaginative possibilities of the circus. Coordinated by La Central del Circ as part of the Circus Promotion Plan.

Results of the companies survey undertaken by the Association of Circus Professionals of Catalonia (APCC)

<http://apcc.cat/noticies/1906/lenquesta-de-companyies-de-2019-ja-demostra-lincrement-de-preocupacio-del-sector-del-circ-per-la-precarietat>

Analysis of the results of the 2019 APCC Companies Survey and links to the results of previous surveys.

'Opciones dramáticas en el Circo Contemporáneo'

(Víctor Bobadilla, Saberes de circo, 2018)

<https://www.saberesdecirco.com/haciendo-circo/dramaturgia-de-circo-contemporaneo/>

Extract from a study of dramaturgy in the contemporary circus.

'12 mesos, 12 històries' (Ateneu Popular 9 Barris, 2017)

<https://ateneu9b.net/noticies/12-mesos-12-histories>

Interviews with 12 social circus professionals.

III Jornada de mediació artística – El circ per a la inclusió social (2016)

<https://educaciotransformadora.com/2016/06/30/videos-iii-jornada-de-mediacio-artistica-el-circ-per-a-la-inclusio-social/>

Collection of videos from the *III Jornada de mediació artística*, dedicated to the circus for social inclusion, held in May 2016 and organized by the National Council for Culture and Arts (CONCA), the Association of Circus Professionals of Catalonia (APCC), and the University of Barcelona. It included the presentation of papers, a round table discussion and presentations of various social circus projects operating in Catalonia.

'Circ d'ara mateix' (Jordi Jané, 2016)

<http://mercatflors.cat/blog/circ-dara-mateix-per-jordi-jane/>

Piece focused on current trends in the Catalan circus, published on the Mercat de les Flors blog, coinciding with the *Circ d'ara mateix* cycle.

'El perfil del formador de circ a Catalunya'

(CoNCA, 2015)

https://conca.gencat.cat/ca/detall/publicacio/01_pub_perfil_formador_circ

Research undertaken as part of the Second Comprehensive Circus Plan, highlighting circus teachers, the areas in which they work, the techniques they teach and how much time they dedicate to teaching.

'Els espais de formació de circ de Catalunya'

(CoNCA, 2015)

https://conca.gencat.cat/ca/detall/publicacio/3_pub_espais_formacio_circ

Research undertaken as part of the Second Comprehensive Circus Plan, and which identifies circus training spaces in Catalonia, what they are like, where they are located and what training they provide.

'L'estat actual de la formació de circ a Catalunya.

Propostes de recorreguts formatiu' (CoNCA, 2011)

conca-estatactualformaciocatalunya-propostesrecorregutsformatius2010-apcc_editora_14_14_1.pdf

Report from the *II Jornades de Formació de Circ*, held in Barcelona on the 20th and 21st of November 2010.

Artcena

<https://www.artcena.fr>

Information centre of the French Ministry of Culture's national centre for circus arts, street circus and the theatre.

BOOKS

(selecció, per ordre alfabètic d'autoria)

- Vv.AA.: *El món fascinant del Circ Cric*. Barcelona: CRAC / Viena Edicions, 2007.
- Alcántara, Antonio (Coord.). *Circ, educació i transformació social. El projecte pedagògic de l'Ateneu Popular 9Barris*. Barcelona: Bidó de Nou Barris i Neret edicions, 2016.
- Alcántara, Antonio / Ballester, Aïda. *Profesionales del circo social: 12 meses, 12 historias*. Barcelona: Neret edicions, 2020.
- Bech, Ramon. *La història del circ a Barcelona. Del segle XVIII al 1979*. Barcelona: Viena Editorial, 2015.

- Elias Campins, Jordi. *La capsa de les sorpreses (Memòries)*. Eds. Quim, Maria Rosa and Immaculada Elias. Barcelona, 2015.
- Elias Campins, Jordi. *Diálogos de circo*. Barcelona: Ediciones Circo, 1962.
- Elias Campins, Jordi. *10 anys de circ*. Barcelona: Ediciones Circo, 1964.
- Jané, Jordi: *Josep Andreu and Lasserre, Charlie Rivel*. Barcelona, Edicions del Departament de Cultura de la Generalitat. 1st edition: 1996. 2nd edition: 2000.
- Jané Romeu, Jordi – Minguet Batllori, Joan Maria. *Sebastià Gasch, el gust pel circ*. (Anthology). Tarragona: El Mèdol, 1997.
- Jané Romeu, Jordi. *Les arts escèniques a Catalunya*. Barcelona: Cercle de Lectors, Galaxia Gutenberg, 2001.
- Jané Romeu, Jordi. *152 Volts de pista* (2013). Barcelona: Arola, 2013.
- Jané, Jordi – Minguet, Joan M. (coordinators): *Catàleg de l'exposició Circ contemporani català*,

l'art del risc. Barcelona: Krtu/Departament de Cultura/
Triangle postals, 2006.

- Jané, Jordi – Minguet Joan M. (coordinators) (Massip, Cinta, Editora): El circ i la poètica del risc (minutes of the Seminari Internacional de Circ held at the CCCB in February 2006). Barcelona: Krtu/Departament de Cultura de la Generalitat, 2007.
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#ressonacirc
A PROMOTIONAL
TOOLKIT FOR THE
CATALAN CIRCUS