



Circus, Education, Heritage

ECA International Academic Conference

Budapest, 11th January 2024



Our goals from the beginning


The European Circus Association (ECA) is a non-profit organization established in 2002 to unite Europe's circuses and promote and preserve circus arts and culture as part of Europe's cultural heritage. The ECA represents more than 130 circuses, festivals, animal trainers and artists in Europe.

The ECA protects its members' interests through monitoring and outreach in Brussels and the Member States:

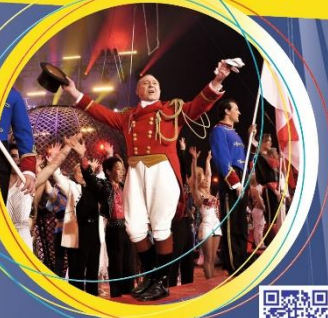
- Cultural recognition
- EU regulations
- Animal welfare
- Travelling children's education





21 Years ECA: Our Goals and Achievements




**INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE –
FOR THE PLEASURE OF ALL!**





www.europeancircus.eu



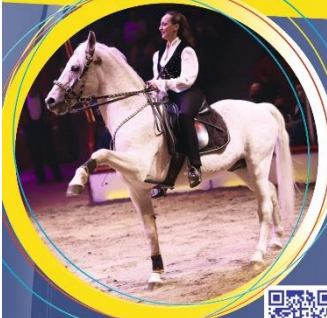
**BETTER EDUCATION –
FOR CIRCUS CHILDREN!**





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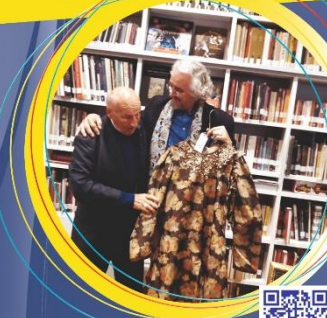
**RESPECT –
FOR HUMANS AND ANIMALS!**





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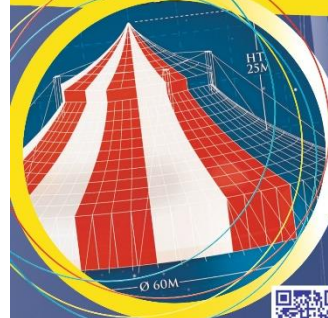
**VALUABLE DOCUMENTS –
PRESERVED FOR THE FUTURE!**




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**HARMONIZATION –
OF EU REGULATIONS!**



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Our latest achievements

- 1) Yearly symposium in Monte-Carlo**
- 2) Publications and documentations**
- 3) EU study about circus**
- 4) Intangible Cultural Heritage**
- 5) Big Top Label**
- 6) Support for Ukraine**



1) Yearly Symposium Monte-Carlo

Every year during the International Circus Festival in Monte-Carlo, ECA and FMC hold their joint Circus Symposium.

Speakers from the circus community as well as external experts speak about the latest developments, chances and risks for the circus.

By nature, speakers for the European Circus Association focus on Europe, while the Circus Federation takes a global perspective.

Circus Symposium 2023





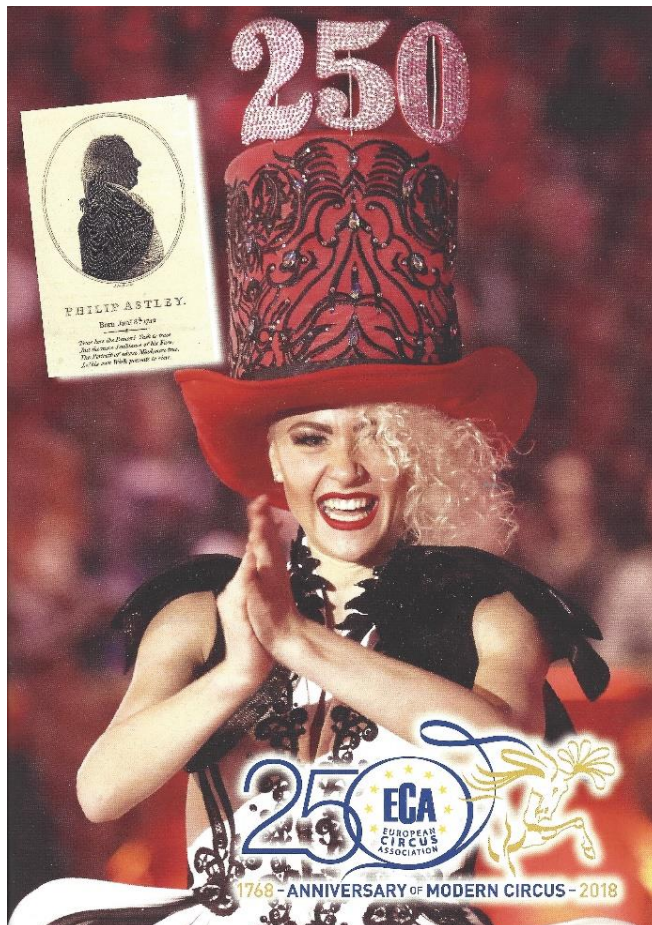
Circus Symposium 2023

Saturday, 21 January 2023 (Riviera Marriott Hotel La Porte de Monaco)

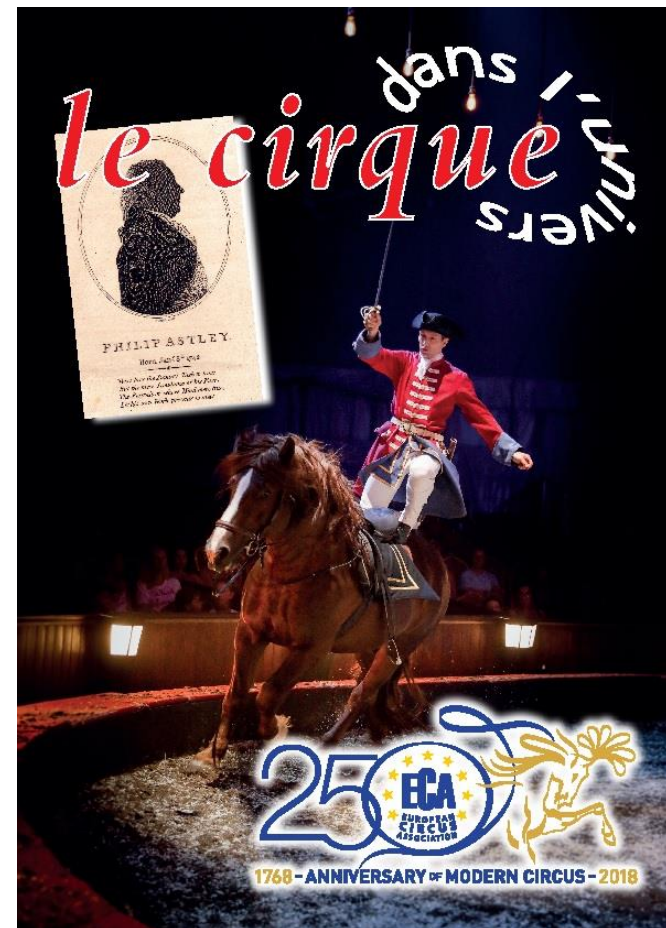
- 10:30 - 11:30 FMC and ECA Symposium part 1: „Think of opportunities and possibilities“
Moderator: Alex Sijm (NL)
Germán Aguirre (Chile), Board member Latin-American Circus Federation
Fred Serex (Australia), show producer, founder & director of Spectacular TV
Menno van Dyke (NL), juggler and artistic director of Circusstad Festival,
Atze Lubach (NL), Executive Producer of Duursma Events Group
- 11:30 - 11:45 Coffee Break
- 11:45 - 12:45 FMC and ECA Symposium part 2: „New ideas in challenging times“
Jan Ketil Smørðal, Cirkus Agora (Norway)
Peter Fekete, Budapest Capital Circus (Hungary)
Flavio Togni, American Circus (Italy)
- 12:45 - 13:00 Ringling’s Comeback in 2023 (Kenneth Feld interviewed by Chris Berry)

2) Publications / Documentations

Germany



France





3) EU study about circus.

In 2003, the European Circus Association supported a study about the situation of the circus in the European Union.

In 2020, ECA again supported an update of „The situation of circus in the EU Member States“, commissioned by the EU.

This new study was based on an online survey among circus professionals in Europe.

Due to the online method, many answers came from the better educated circus schools and contemporary companies, not so many from traditional circus.

The outcome was still remarkable and important for all.

Key recommendations



**The situation of circus in the EU
Member States**

Study report

- Cultural recognition in all Member States.
- Better access to EU funding programs for traditional circuses.
- Access to compulsory education for children travelling in circuses.



4) Intangible Cultural Heritage



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Intangible
Cultural
Heritage

In its 2003 Convention UNESCO agreed on the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, that is transmitted from generation to generation, constantly recreated, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity.

As part of the Fédération Mondiale du Cirque, the European Circus Association is working on bringing circus on the UNESCO list of Intangible Cultural Heritage.



ICH: Work in progress

In Europe, we managed to bring circus on the national lists of Intangible Cultural Heritage in several countries:

- The Netherlands
- Hungary
- Finland
- Sweden
- Wallonie (French speaking Belgium)
- Ireland
- Germany

In South America

- Chile



The goal: Worldwide recognition

To start the application for the UNESCO list of Intangible Cultural Heritage, we need circus on national lists in several countries and two or more continents.

Looking for candidates in Latin America and Asia.

For coordination, please contact the Fédération Mondiale du Cirque.



unesco
Intangible Cultural Heritage



5) Recognition for the best circuses



In 2017, the „Big Top Label“ was created by the Hungarian MEP Istvan Ujhelyi as a quality assurance system for the circus world in Europe. Supported by the ECA, an independent committee takes the final decision based on personal inspections and checklist by Mr. Ujhelyi’s cabinet.



Big Top Label – Award Winners

- **2018**
 - Circus Krone (Germany)
 - Cirque Arlette Gruss (France)
 - Blackpool Tower Circus (U.K.)
- **2019**
 - Circus Gebr. Knie (Switzerland)
 - Sirkus Finlandia (Finland)
 - Circusz Richter (Hungary)
- **2022**
 - Circus Roncalli (Germany)
 - Cirkus Brazil Jack (Sweden)
 - Circus Balkanski (Bulgaria)

Big Top Label – Winners 2023



Big Top Label – Winners 2023



6) Support for Ukraine



Soon after the war started in the Ukraine, the European Circus Association supported the Circus in Ukraine by raising and transferring money for artists and animals.



New Statutes – New Goals 2024

- **Organizing scientific events** and collaborating and supporting scientific studies on the situation of the circus in Europe.
- **Support for museums, archives and collections** to document circus history.
- **Promoting school education opportunities** for children who travel with the circus and working with relevant associations.
- **Promoting training opportunities for artists** and animal teachers and supporting corresponding school and training offers.

Circus is Culture for Millions!



„Circus art is a vivid part of Europe’s cultural heritage with a history, in all its forms, that spans centuries.“

*Ursula von der Leyen
President of the
European Commission*



Don't forget:



World Circus Day is on 24th April 2024!

For more information see www.circusfederation.org



May all your days be circus days.

The circuses in Europe welcome you at any time.

[Thank you.](#)



Circus: Culture for Millions!