

Good morning, ladies, and gentlemen.

I am delighted to be here with you today.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mr. Peter Fekete, General Director of the Centre National des Arts du Cirque, to whom we owe this wonderful festival.

Let me introduce myself: my name is Louis Sampion Bouglione, I am co-director of the Cirque d'Hiver Bouglione in Paris, head of communications, founder of the Musée Emilien Bouglione and president of the association of the same name!

The museum I have come to talk to you about embodies the passion and transmission that have driven my family for 5 generations.

Tradition is important.

“Tradition is perpetual motion,” wrote Jean Cocteau. It sums up the spirit of the circus.

The fact this museum exists today is due to my father’s activity.

To find out how it all began, you have to go back in time!

He was just fifteen when his father ordered him to tidy up the winter circus offices and throw everything away! The whole history of Cirque d'Hiver is there. Before his very eyes, despite his early age, he could see the value of the documents, photos and objects crammed into these boxes. He immediately grasped the extent of this priceless heritage. He understood that this treasure trove would change his life forever.

Before," he says, "I did the circus out of habit; now I know what it means to do the circus!

Since then, he has never ceased to attend sales and travel the world to enrich it with new pieces. Artists offer him their treasures, patiently and relentlessly, every day, he watches over this fabulous heritage. He preserved and safeguarded it.

My father passed on his passion to me, having grown up in the world of the circus, surrounded by collectors' items. It is my turn to quickly become aware of what this represents: his life, those of the artists and of all circus people! That is why I want to preserve our heritage through objects, so that their memory never dies out.

So, to keep this passion alive, 15 years ago, I opened a museum inside the Cirque d'Hiver. Visits are on request and by reservation, in small groups, as we are short of space. In the near future, I hope to enlarge it to enable a wider public to admire more treasures in better condition.

1 year ago, I created the Association du Musée du Cirque Emilien Bouglione.

To bring together enthusiasts and help the museum. To date, the acquisition, conservation, and restoration of exhibits, both ancient and modern, have been financed solely by the association and me.

Needless to say, we receive no support or subsidies from any source, and yet the circus is an integral part of Europe's cultural heritage.

My wish: to have the necessary funds and space, where the objects in the collection can be presented in their own right, at the crossroads of history and the collective imagination. So that these objects of light, which have a soul, can have a second life.

This collection is not just the passion of a lifetime, or the story of a dynasty... it is quite simply the legend of Cirque!