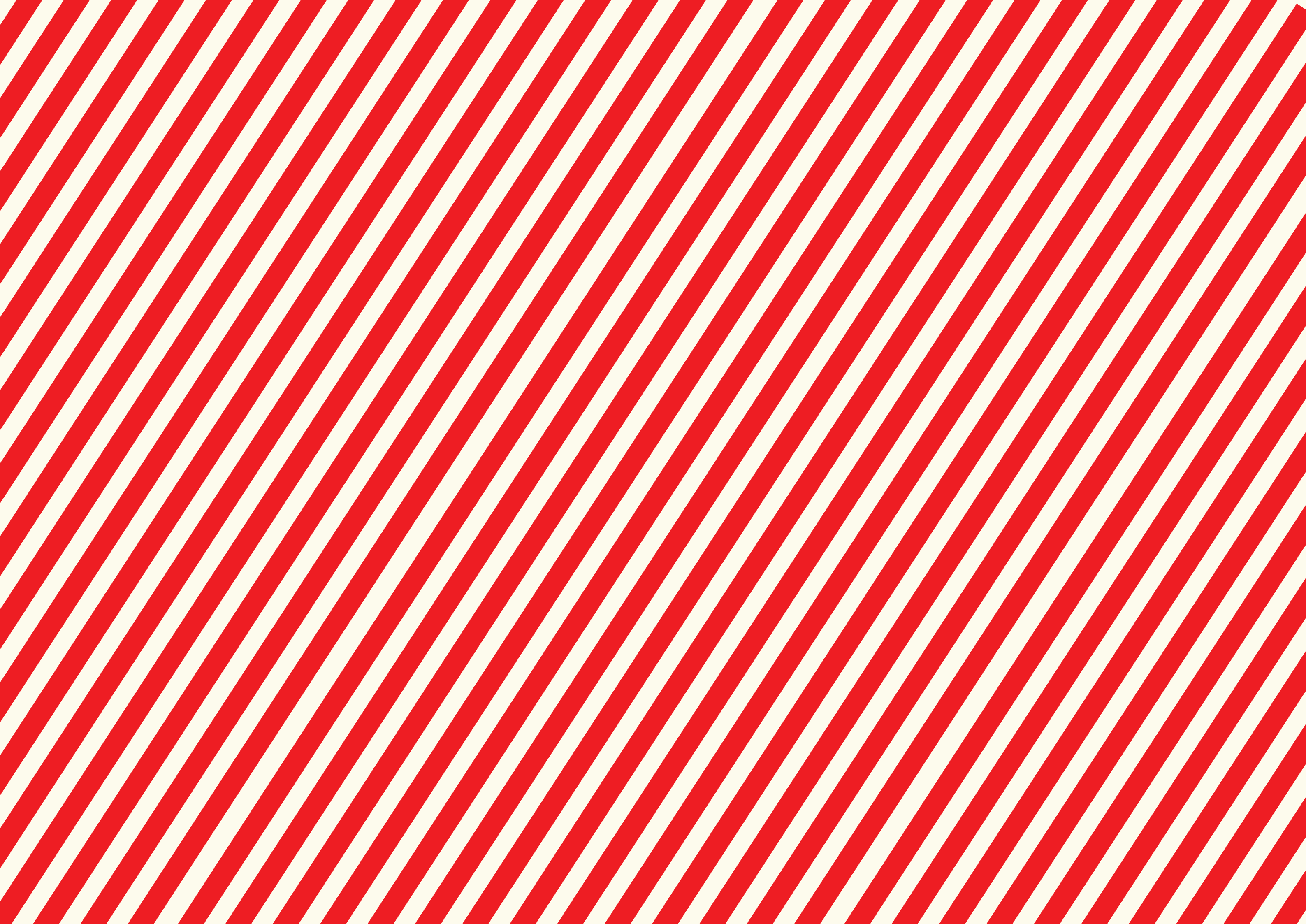


CIRKUS CIRKÖR

ANNUAL REPORT 2021





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AND SO, ANOTHER YEAR HAS PASSED. Another pandemic year, a “repeat” we certainly hadn’t hoped for. A year during which Cirkus Cirkör performed the world premiere of Circus Days and Nights, composed by Philip Glass, flew a hot air balloon circus over Sweden’s capitol city, knitted peace with activists and cabinet ministers on Stockholm’s Sergels torg plaza, participated in a “reverse” Alby conference where we listened to boys and young men speak about their lives and identities, saw another class of world-changers graduate; a year where our show Trassligt (Tangled) and its teachers greeted over 2 860 children across the country with circus classes and, just before the Covid restrictions struck again, Bloom was able to take up residence at Södra Teatern for a spell, delighting more happy families with a breath-taking circus show. And this is only a small sample of our activities during the year, all of which you will have the chance to get better acquainted with by reading on.

Being the CEO of Cirkus Cirkör brings with it the privilege of being part of a movement that believes in people as co-creators with the capacity to push internal and external boundaries in art and society. Within the framework of the Vinnova project Trust Trampoline, which we initiated in 2021, we explore the disciplines and dimensions of the circus as tools for building trust – between individuals, groups and in society. Trust in society is perhaps what has taken the biggest “hit” after two years of restrictions, waves of infection, recommendations and vaccinations. This project is both an update and an intensification of our previous endeavor, Circus Transfer, which also builds on Tilde Björfors’s research. If we, through our knowledge, experience and ability to create and feel trust, can be part of a movement where trust and faith in one another are front and center, I am convinced that we can also be instrumental in bringing about positive change. Just like in our show Knitting Peace – which in 2021 could not greet audiences in Borås as planned but – whose small, small stitches and loops were given space in our production hall to investigate the question of whether it is possible to knit peace. The exhibition We Knit for Peace, which The Textile Museum of Sweden in Borås moved out into city’s shop windows, has likely never felt more important than now, this fateful spring of 2022.

Together with Botkyrka municipality we were, among other things, once again able to open our doors to all those who wanted to try and test circus training, thanks to our free sessions Chilla med Cirkör (Chill with Cirkör). We want Cirkörhuset (Cirkör House) to be the obvious choice as a place for Alby’s residents to visit and feel at home in. Being part of a local community while simultaneously conducting an international business has always been a matter of course for Cirkus Cirkör. Small wonder then that the pandemic dealt such a severe blow to all the office acrobats, artists, creators, educators and technicians who were not able to do what we are passionate about, namely, to meet, train, test, create, play, develop and “circus-ify” society through contacts, connections and dialogue.



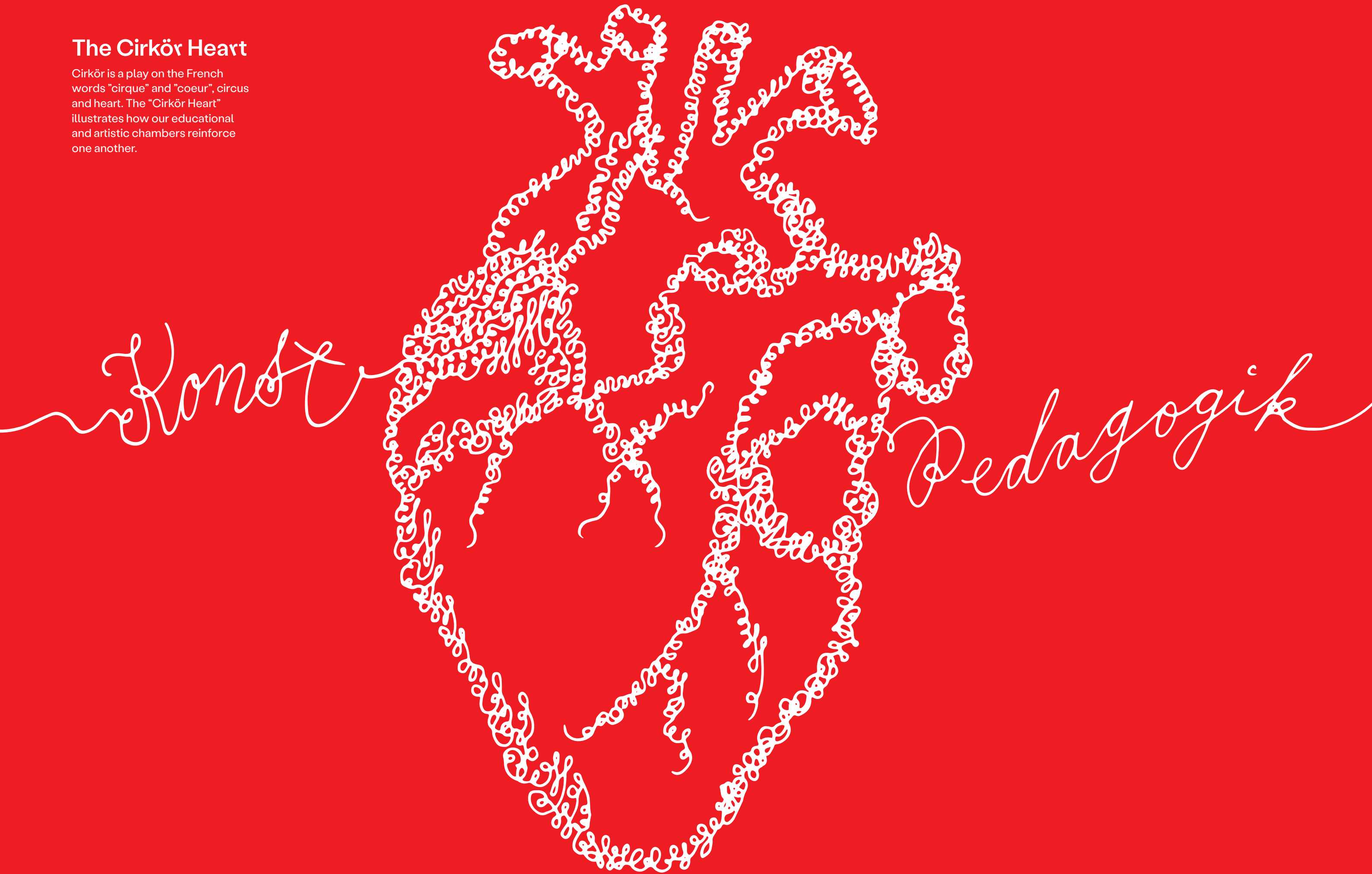
PHOTO: KATARINA ANDERSSON

But 2021 was not only about postponing and re-planning. During the year we also took steps toward continuing our pursuit of artistic and innovative development. Cirkus Cirkör has accomplished its mission of establishing contemporary circus artistically and pedagogically and will now work towards deepening and developing contemporary circus as well as our contribution to the evolution of performing arts and innovative research. At the same time, we have listened closely to the dreams and needs of young adults to better understand how we can remain relevant for the future and offer our resources in a way that addresses the needs of the future.

I look back on 2021 with pride and see all the activities that everyone within and together with Cirkus Cirkör – against all odds but always with 100% commitment – created and brought with them out of Cirkörhuset into the world: up in the air, to stages, schools, town squares and to every meeting with our fellow human beings. Stubbornly, together with the rest of you, we will continue to make the impossible possible, push boundaries in art and society and create a better world. Within us. Within you. Everywhere.

The Cirkör Heart

Cirkör is a play on the French words "cirque" and "coeur", circus and heart. The "Cirkör Heart" illustrates how our educational and artistic chambers reinforce one another.



ARTISTiC ACTIVIT/ES

2021 began by rethinking, thinking afresh and rethinking again. This year, Cirkus Cirkör had planned to, finally, carry out several projects that had been postponed due to the pandemic: going on tour with Bloom, opening the show Pippi at Cirkus in the summer as well as the long-anticipated revival of Knitting Peace in collaboration with Borås Stadsteater (Borås City Theater). But once again, all this had to be put off. However, against all odds, we managed to create, rehearse and, at the end of May, be ready for the world premiere of the circus opera *Circus Days and Nights*, composed by Philip Glass and directed by Tilde Björfors in collaboration with Malmö Opera. Only 50 people were seated in the theater, yet thousands around the world were able to experience livestreamed performances. And in the summer, we had the opportunity to fly a hot air balloon over Stockholm.



CIRCUS DAYS AND NIGHTS, in collaboration with Malmö Opera and composed by Philip Glass, had its world premiere on May 29. The American poet Robert Lax's epic *Circus Days and Nights*, considered one of the most important American literary works of the century, was transformed into a circus opera! It is the story of daring to dream, daring to leap, daring to let go, as well as a dizzying dream of world-class poetry, music, song and contemporary circus. A tale about the power of circus to make the impossible possible, of daring to believe that human beings are capable of so much more than we imagine. Everything that permeates Cirkus Cirkör's work, as well as the power of art as a metaphor for life, expressed through a day in the circus ring – creating, creativity, collaboration, trust, courage, taking risks and working hard.

The iconic composer Philip Glass wrote the music for this opera during his pandemic quarantine in Manhattan. The acclaimed playwright David Henry Hwang and Cirkör's creative director Tilde Björfors wrote the libretto, while Magdalena Åberg, Ellen Ruge and Robert Hvenström gave life to the magical space that became our circus ring. The ensemble was teeming with world-renowned artists – circus performers, opera singers and musicians, including a kapellmeister on the concert accordion. Because stringent pandemic restrictions were still in place following the world premiere, *Circus Days and Nights* was streamed live and seen by a paying audience in 50 countries. We reached viewers in the USA, Japan, Germany, France, Austria, Italy, Portugal, Taiwan, India, Iceland, South Korea, North Macedonia and Singapore to mention a few. Side by side with Malmö Opera, we turned a problem into an opportunity.

Music: Philip Glass

Libretto: David Henry Hwang and Tilde Björfors, after a poem by Robert Lax

Directed by: Tilde Björfors

BLOOM is the result of a collaboration between Cirkus Cirkör, Stora Teatern in Gothenburg, the regional organizations Cirkus i Väst and Nycirkus Öst and Södra Teatern in Stockholm. To foster conditions conducive to the various art fields and to artists working and growing creatively, Bloom was developed by a young ensemble following an open call. Together with Cirkus Cirkör, a family show for small stages was created, which opened in 2019. All scheduled and rescheduled performances were cancelled in 2021, but on the final quivering days of the year, Bloom could reopen at Södra teatern in Stockholm. At last! With a partially new ensemble, family audiences were once again able to enjoy the delightful, poetic and lively Bloom.

Directed by: Julien Auger and Sade Kampila



CIRCUS DAYS AND NIGHTS PHOTO: KAROLINA HENKE

PIPPI AT CIRKUS was envisioned as our expansive, welcoming birthday bash in Stockholm's royal park, Djurgården, in collaboration with PopHouse Productions and The Astrid Lindgren Companies. However, as early as January, we made the difficult decision to postpone the premiere until 2022, since the scheduled technical and artistic labs could not take place as planned. Labs where artists, creative and technical teams were meant to explore the meeting between circus, musical and theater, to find new means of artistic expression for family audiences. The plan was, and still is, for this show's run to include a wide range of associated activities, what we call Cirkusliv (Circus Life): a show and interactive experience outside Cirkus arena – to generate inspiration, enthusiasm and involvement. During 2021, preparations for the world premiere in July 2022 were ongoing.

Script: Tilde Björfors, Maria Blom and Björn Ulvaeus

Music: Björn Ulvaeus

Directed by: Tilde Björfors and Maria Blom



KNITTING PEACE was once again supposed to see the light of day at the end of January 2021, in a dazzling revival together with Borås Stadsteater. Until the very last minute, we tried to keep hope alive. The ensemble rehearsed and prepared to move to Borås. However, due to the rampant spread of the corona virus in society and the audience limit of eight people, we made the difficult decision to cancel. Once again, we had to plan for a new opening date. At the end of 2021, the ensemble finally gathered for rehearsals and a January 2022 premiere, followed by a tour in Sweden and Portugal.

Conceived and directed by: Tilde Björfors
Composed by: Samuel "Looptok" Långbacka

In our collaboration with Borås Stadsteater, what drives us is, as always, an exchange of experiences in order to impact and change the world through circus arts. The worldwide hit, Knitting Peace, about striving, longing to create meaning and a better world is a telling example of how the art of the show and of the activist movement "A Call to Knit" find their way into the community and begin weaving threads through it that bind us together. In collaboration with The Textile Museum of Sweden in Borås, "A call to knit" was initiated that resulted in 116 knitted pieces from Spain, the USA, Argentina, Great Britain and Ireland – amazing creations accompanied by deep, philosophical words about peace and its importance to us as human beings. When the pandemic made it impossible to execute the exhibit inside the textile museum, it was instead carried out in display windows and empty storefronts all over the city of Borås – creating an opportunity for everyone to experience these works of art and craft in a "transmission-proof" and democratic manner, perhaps allowing even more people to enjoy these knitted pieces than if they had been inside the museum.

The exhibit opened on February 14 and was taken down on May 16. Approximately 80 000 people saw the Borås exhibit – an example of the need to bring art into public spaces. During 2022, more calls to knit are being planned all over the country.



CIRCUS DAYS AND NIGHTS PHOTO: KAROLINA HENKE

ARTISTIC CONCEPTS AND EVENTS

2021 was as heavy as 2020 in terms of the business of performing arts. This became especially clear with regard to our concepts and events, which essentially came to a complete standstill during the spring. However, the year also revealed a pent-up need to provide and once again enable people to experience performing arts. We got a phone call from Stockholms Kulturfestival (Stockholm Culture Festival), with a crazy idea that only Cirkus Cirkör could tackle.

PUST

In the spring, an intensive exploration of creating circus in a hot air balloon began! We filled the balloons with acrobatics, music, courage and dreams. Longing was our driving force. A longing for the audience, for creating art together and for filling the city with breathtaking experiences, in spite of restrictions and the impossibility of bringing together a larger crowd. Yet the impossible became a reality when Cirkus Cirkör, Stockholm's Kulturfestival and Peak Experience together created a floating, transmission-proof circus performance for the entire city of Stockholm. The production came to be called Pust (Gust).

Pust is a poetic and thrilling tribute to the timeless innovative power of the circus arts. As fleeting as a gust of wind, the performance floated over Stockholm. Brave artists, flying riggers and first-class pilots filled the air with art. In Pust, the silence of the balloons and the explosiveness of circus art contrast and complement one another.

Pust was performed for two weeks, when the weather and wind permitted, making the show by nature unpredictable.

Idea and project management: Philippa Staffas
Directed by: Camilla Hammarström
In charge of flying: Peter Magnusson

WE MISS YOU DAYS AND NIGHTS

An exhibition of Karolina Henke's fabulous photos of the artists and costumes in Circus Days and Nights. Henke's world of images along with Robert Lax's poetic texts about the circus as a metaphor for the cycles of life made Kungsträdgården park in downtown Stockholm their home between mid-August and mid-September. This exhibition was yet another example of art inhabiting democratic and accessible spaces, where it can lower thresholds and facilitate contact between people and culture.

Idea and execution: Karolina Henke and Tilde Björfors

NOBEL CALLING FOR PEACE

On October 8, during "Nobel Calling", the same day as the year's recipient(s) of the Nobel Peace Prize were announced, a demonstration for peace was organized at Sergels torg plaza in downtown Stockholm. Cirkus Cirkör oversaw the concept and contents and among the participants were the circus artists Axel Ahl, Sara Runsten, Simon Wiborn, the musician Samuel Långbacka, students from the circus upper secondary program, The Swedish Peace and Arbitration Society and the non-profit group Män (Men) to name a few. The Minister for International Development Cooperation, Per Olsson Fridh, was given a peace dove by the association Sticka Fred (Knit Peace), which only a few hours earlier had presented another dove to the Riksdag's (Swedish Parliament) Culture Committee. The minister gave a speech about the power of art and how important it is to be able to imagine a better world if we are to achieve a more peaceful one someday. The power of art lies in dreaming, creating and seeing opportunities, even the most miniscule. Stitch by stitch, we can reach the unattainable.

In collaboration with the Nobel Prize Museum.

LATE NIGHT SHOW

A pandemic project developed by the circus company La Putyka in Prague, with the tagline #CultureNeverStops – live broadcasts of circus performances with various approaches and themes, rigged in different places around Prague. In November, Tilde Björfors visited Prague and directed one of these broadcasts together with the artistic directors of La Putyka and Cirko Aero from Finland.

Director: Tilde Björfors
Idea and Concept: Rosta Novak and Maksim Kamarov



WE MISS YOU DAYS AND NIGHTS
 PHOTO: MARIANO TELLECHEA



PUST PHOTO: ALBERT JALAP

EXPO 2020 (2021)

In collaboration with the Swedish Institute, Cirkus Cirkör performed a custom-created act based on its core values of cooperation, gender equality and equity on Sweden Day at Expo 2020 in Dubai, which due to the pandemic did not take place until 2021.

ARTISTIC AND TECHNICAL INNOVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Circus Lab

At Cirkörhuset (Circus House), artistic and exploratory activities are constant. Among other things, we make our resources available to the various fields of art in the form of national and international residencies. In so doing, we create conditions for professional practitioners to work, develop and create art, at the same time as we ourselves are enriched by new impressions and connections at Cirkörhuset. Unfortunately, in 2021 we were forced to hit pause on our residency program because the risk of coronavirus transmission was too great. We were still able to provide opportunities for individual artists and small constellations to complete their residencies, including Regina Bauman, Simon Wiborn & Emile Pineault, Peter Åberg & Saara Ahola, Baha Swidan & Kajsa Englund, Felix Greif & Philomène Perrenoud. We also made sure to create conditions safe enough to allow professional practitioners connected to our productions to train and explore.

Cirkör Ensemble and Cirkör Ateljéer (Studios)

In the autumn of 2021, we started a technical innovation group to develop skills and inspire innovation for future sustainable tours in the, artistic development and new technical collaborations. As part of a larger investment by Cirkus Cirkör, we see this group as a means of facilitating exploration for future productions and of developing what are for us new techniques and methods. The initial stages consisted of a thorough review of new technologies and how they can be applied to new or existing disciplines within circus. Combinations that we could not have arrived at other than through research, investigation and hands-on testing by technicians and artists. Thanks to these development and innovation efforts, we will create several prototypes, build them in a workshop and subsequently fully test them in a lab.

We continued to explore the possibility of establishing an artistic core, perhaps a future Cirkör Ensemble. We also tried and tested ways in which we might initiate Cirkör Ateljéer – collaborations and networks comprised of artists, performers, techniques for artistic and technical development with the objective of forming a creative and interdisciplinary hub for contemporary circus, with its sights set on the future. To this end, we will appoint an artistic council and encourage the flow of creative dialogue at Cirkörhuset (Cirkör House).

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

In 2021, Cirkus Cirkör's educational activities welcomed and practiced circus with just over 20 000 children and young people, adults and seniors with and without disabilities. Our educational department has three branches: 1) circus courses during leisure, 2) circus activities and shows at schools, 3) special projects such as circus in asylum centers and nursing homes. Covid-19 continued to impact our operations, but we devised safe ways to offer activities both on our own premises and in schools.



TRASSLIGHT PHOTO: ALEX HINCHCLIFFE

CIRKUS DE LUXE

We offer the concept Cirkus de Luxe to schools, with one or several weeks of circus. The visit kicks off with an inspiring circus show for both teachers and students. In the following days, the students get to know the artists as educators through circus workshops. Students have the chance to practice balance, trust, cooperation and being present through various circus disciplines such as rope, trapeze, floor acrobatics, partner acrobatics and juggling.

CIRCUS TRIAL SESSIONS

Together with our educators and artists, Cirkus Cirkör visits places such as schools, rural farms, recreational centers, after school programs and non-profit associations with circus trial sessions. Here, children, young people and adults can try the different circus disciplines and test their own limits.

CIRCUS SHOWS

In 2021, we presented two productions, both self-produced. During the spring, Passa in (Fitting in) toured Sweden with our educational team of three artists. For the autumn term, we produced Trassligt (Tangled), inspired by Cirkus Cirkör's international success Knitting Peace. These circus shows are suitable for everyone, regardless of language background, as the circus artists share stories using their bodies rather than words. Trassligt is part of the cultural program Skapande Skola (Creative School).

In 2021, we also offered filmed versions of the shows to schools that were not able to receive visitors. The students watched in their classrooms and later met the educators class by class in workshops. We performed 80 shows all over Sweden during the year.

PASSA IN (FITTING IN)

In Passa in, we meet three different characters. Who is who? Aren't they similar? Or are they completely different? Using aerial acrobatics, juggling and partner acrobatics, the artists take the audience on a colorful and humorous journey that is both touching and engaging.

Directed by: Inger Jungehall

TRASSLIGHT (TANGLED)

Trassligt is a circus show of the highest order about helpfulness, trust and the right to be yourself. Here, we meet three characters who lift, support and spin each other through the confusion that is life. Sometimes things get messy, but how can we help? Through tightrope walking, partner acrobatics, rope tricks and juggling, the artists take us on a circus adventure that triggers thoughts and ideas for each specific class to reflect on. Who am I without others and what can we achieve together?

Conceived and directed by: Alexander Weibel Weibel och Aino Ihanainen



CHILLA PHOTO: KARIN ROBERTS

CIRCUS DURING LEISURE

The courses in this program are aimed at everyone from age 5 and up. Through the circus disciplines, independent of age or functional diversity, participants can take away lessons that will help them through every part and all the challenges of life. In 2021, the semester courses were held at Cirkörhuset (Cirkör House) in Alby, Kulturhuset Stadsteatern in Stockholm (Stockholm House of Culture & City Theatre), Stora teatern and Sjumilahallen in Gothenburg. During the year, slightly more than 1 150 people of different ages participated in our courses. At Cirkörhuset, we welcomed 137 children, young people and adult amateurs to circus trial sessions. We also opened our house to the public through Chilla med Cirkör (Chill with Cirkör) – a free circus session for the whole family – in which approximately 391 people participated on three occasions. The number of participants was significantly lower than usual due to Covid-19 restrictions and recommendations.

HOLIDAY/SCHOOL BREAK COURSES

Despite the pandemic, we have been able to offer school break courses at several locations. During the year, we arranged six week-long camps in Alby, Mölndal and Mariestad for about 200 participants.

OUR YEAR IN BOTKYRKA MUNICIPALITY

We had an active year in the municipality. 778 5th-graders visited Cirkörhuset (Cirkör House) within the framework of the program Kulturallemansrätten (Right of Public Access to Culture), and the municipality's 9th-graders all had the chance to see Gregorius on local stages in Tumba and Hallunda's outside of Stockholm. Two groups of summer employees organized training events in public spaces in northern Botkyrka. We also arranged a "fire show" and circus trial sessions in collaboration with the property management company Hembla. Along with local actors, we organized Christmas markets in Alby and Fittja.

Cirkus Cirkör is represented in and works actively with Alby Nätverksgrupp (Alby Network Group). Since the spring of 2020, we have been instrumental in planning a version of the Alby Conference on the theme of being a young man/man in Alby. We wanted to create a conference in reverse, where the target group are the experts and the politicians/officials/civil society are the audience. After several postponements, the conference was finally held on October 27 at Loftet in Subtopia. The 50 participants were a mix of young people, politicians from all parties, members of "the neighborhood watch" (trygghetsfältare), school principals and fathers. It was a fantastic day that brought fresh perspectives, new acquaintances, an enormous commitment to the theme and to intergenerational encounters. Here, we laid the foundation for our objective to develop a closer collaboration with young people and to invite them to work with us through dialogue, development and sharing resources.



PHOTO: KAROLINA HENKE

THE UPPER SECONDARY SCHOOL

The contemporary circus program is a collaboration between Cirkus Cirkör and St Botvids high school in Hallunda outside of Stockholm. This is a cutting-edge program where academics take place at St Botvids high school while physical training and instruction take place at Cirkörhuset (Cirkör House) in Alby. The program is college/university preparatory and offers a creative environment where commitment is encouraged and safety, well-being and participation are fundamental values.



The Circus Upper Secondary School was founded in 2000 and differs from many other high school programs dedicated to the arts through its proximity to the industry, thanks to teachers who are active on world stages. At Cirkörhuset, students train on the same premises as professional circus artists and educators. Because of this, students can establish a network for their future professional lives during their high school years. This proximity to circus professionals means that students benefit from the experiences of artists, educators and teaching staff, and can establish contact with future employers. Students also have the chance to experience and participate in different facets of Cirkör's activities. In 2021, Daniel Gulko took over as artistic director, which influenced the thematic and artistic focus of the school.

The mix between regular school, physical training and artistic creation offers variety and development. The program's admissions are national and students from our Nordic neighbors may also apply. In 2021, the contemporary circus program had a total of 38 high school students in years 1-3. The students hailed from Sweden, Norway and Denmark.

SPRING TERM

In 2021, several activities and projects had to be re-planned and postponed due to the pandemic. Still, during the semester the students participated in and experienced various workshops with themes such as equality, health, exercise and diet, open stage and livestreamed performances. They also took part in our concept performances and in a peace demonstration together with artists who regularly work with Cirkus Cirkör. In June, 14 circus students graduated, and those who applied to post-secondary programs were accepted to various schools in Sweden and in Denmark. Six students were accepted to Stockholm University of the Arts.

AUTUMN TERM

At the beginning of the autumn term, all three grades worked on their own thematic group project, each of which resulted in a 15-minute-long act that was presented and filmed at Cirkörhuset (Cirkör House). During the autumn, students also participated in various Cirkus Cirkör events, to strengthen their connection with our other departments. The semester ended with an open stage.



PHOTO: KAROLINA HENKE

COLLABORATIONS AND NETWORKS

Cirkus Cirkör has collaborated on, developed and spread the arts, pedagogy and artistic processes of circus nationally and internationally since its inception over 25 years ago.

NATIONALLY

Cirkus Cirkör's ambition to establish contemporary circus as an art form has always been at the core of our national collaborations, our efforts to strengthen the various fields of art and contribute to social, artistic and educational development. Our artistic co-productions always encompass a large dose of skills development and are driven by a desire to exchange experiences, while our regional development projects aim to strengthen the circus arts and create conditions that allow organizers to welcome circus art and pedagogy and often, together with us, to initiate development projects.

Our efforts to cultivate organizers and enable art to permeate every corner of society has made it possible to bring circus art and training opportunities to several of the country's regions, resulting in audiences and organizers now viewing contemporary circus as an integral part of the broad and varied concept "performing arts".

Our ongoing collaboration with our home municipality Botkyrka continues to be an incredible example of how Cirkus Cirkör in conjunction with the local community can impact society through inspiration from the circus arts. During the long pandemic, activities and events in nursing homes have been next to impossible. However, Botkyrka's care and welfare administration did give us the opportunity to bring all the municipality's senior care homes a Sitting Circus, allowing the residents to experience circus stunts and training using circus equipment under the auspices of two of our most experienced educators.

Kulturhuset Stadsteatern (Stockholm House of Culture & City Theatre)

Since 2020, there is a thriving circus operation at Sweden's most renowned culture address. In the coming years, we hope to make this collaboration as strong as the newly installed ceiling mounts and offer Stockholmers circus both as training and an art form.

Trust trampoline

Thanks to support from Vinnova (the Swedish government agency that administers state funding for research and development), we were able to immerse ourselves in a single circus discipline and bring our research and experience of how the skills and knowledge of circus can be transferred to the challenges and opportunities of daily life. Together with the Stockholm School of Economics and Hyper Island, researchers, artists and office acrobats have developed methods and principles for exploring and building trust. Through a collaboration with the Swedish Institute, facilitators and diplomats were able to participate in digital workshops. In 2022, we will further develop this project, include all the circus disciplines and work more broadly in society.



PHOTO: ALEX HINCHCLIFFE

Cirkus i Väst (Circus West)

Since 2019, Cirkus Cirkör and Stora Teatern in Gothenburg have jointly run the project Cirkus i Väst, with the aim of developing opportunities to experience and practice circus in the Västra Götaland region. Cirkus i Väst is a resource for work, production, continuing education, creative residencies and furthering the development of contemporary circus in the region.

Folkets Hus och Parker (The National Association of People's Houses & Parks)

We have been working with Folkets Hus & Parker for 26 years. In 2021, we carried out a tour of 14 shows and associated circus trial sessions from Piteå in the north to Skara in the south, as well as 8 weeks of school break courses all over Sweden.

Subtopia

Our closest neighbor is also one of our most active partners and part of the creative cluster that characterizes our corner of Alby. Among other things, we jointly organize the annual fall break camp FEAR, in collaboration with the performing arts school Scenskolan FEJM. Here, participants explore the theme of fears through circus, dance, theater and theatrical makeup. Thanks to support from the property management company Hembla and restaurant Folkes in Huddinge, children from Botkyrka were able to attend the camp for free and all children were provided with lunch and a snack. An important aspect of the weeklong camp is for children from different areas to meet, train and eat together.



THE ALMA AWARD PHOTO: CIRKUS CIRKÖR

The Alma Award

The Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award and second-year students from our high school program work together to choose the recipient of this prize, on the awards ceremony and a performance inspired by it. Reading and the circus arts meet creatively through the students' encounter with the recipient's literary universe. And in 2021 we aimed even higher, by collaborating with the design high school in Nacka outside of Stockholm. The event was held for the first time in the spring of 2021. This project challenged the students and helped them evolve.

Manegen

The relatively new interest group and members organization Manegen (The Ring), which brings together individuals and organizations within our area of the arts,

is an important player within the field. Naturally, Cirkus Cirkör is a member as well as an essential interlocutor for the organization.

Together with Manegen, we offer free daily training sessions for professional practitioners who are members. Daily practice and access to Cirkörhuset (Cirkör House) are essential to the existence of a professional circus sector all over the country, and Cirkus Cirkör's contribution to this cannot be underestimated. We take great responsibility for the various fields of art and for artists' opportunities to work. We are also a vital part of the country's circus arts ecosystem.

Riksteatern

Given Riksteatern's (the national touring theater company) mission to strengthen contemporary circus, it should come as no surprise that we collaborate closely with our closest neighbor. In 2021, we made plans for a joint 2022 residency, which will benefit artists, creators and technicians. We look forward to intensifying this partnership in the future.

Kulturskolan Håbo (Culture School in Håbo)

Cirkus Cirkör continues to work to make circus training available in municipalities and regions all over the country. We are intensifying our ongoing collaboration with Sweden's so-called "culture schools" and offer contemporary circus courses in Håbo municipality. During the year, we installed rigging points for aerial acrobatics on new municipal premises and have been able to welcome participants to more circus disciplines.

Cirkusflätan's educational council

Within the framework of the interregional collaborative project Cirkusflätan (the Circus Braid), we contribute course materials to a podcast and seminar-based educational training. We also have a member on Cirkusflätan's educational council. The council plans and implements activities that are in demand among Sweden's circus educators. In 2022, a workshop series on artistic elements in teaching, theme work and circus interpretation are planned.

Super Trouper

In 2021, we conducted our last training semester of the Super Trouper project together with researchers from The Department of Informatics and Media at Uppsala University. During the project, we have searched for motivation-enhancing technologies for circus training using spatial argumentation, sounds, games and playfulness in training activities.



PHOTO: KAROLINA HENKE



1000 days of culture

A collaboration lasting a thousand days intended to make clear the role of culture in our democracy – this is the concept behind the project 1000 Days of Culture, supported by 17 Swedish cultural organizations. These groups carry out joint initiatives and activities within the framework of the collaboration, which is run by Riksteatern. The initiative was launched in 2019, when there were exactly 1000 days left until Sweden's next general election.

INTERNATIONAL

Since its inception, Cirkus Cirkör has worked internationally, and though we may have achieved our objective of putting Sweden on the world map of contemporary circus, we refuse to rest on our laurels and continue to aim even higher. We are a world-leading performing arts company driven by our vision to change society through the art of circus. To stay relevant and continue attracting world-leading artists to our productions, we must participate in the global dialogue, meet our colleagues, practitioners and stage programmers and ensure that our analysis of the world around us remains current.

Baltic Nordic Circus Network

From the beginning, Cirkus Cirkör has been active within the Baltic-Nordic network BNCN, where we are also partners in the New Horizon Leadership Program, which during 2021 welcomed two apprentices for three weeks.

Caravan Circus Network

Cirkus Cirkör is a member of Caravan Circus Network, a European network for circus organizations that primarily works with educational activities for children and adolescents, as well as on the development of circus pedagogy. In 2021, our planned youth exchanges had to be postponed, but they will be carried out in 2022.

FEDEC

Cirkus Cirkör and our contemporary circus program are members of FEDEC, the European Federation of Professional Circus Schools. In 2021, we participated in their digital members meeting.

ISPA, International Society of the Performing Arts

In January each year, the ISPA congress takes place in New York City. Cirkus Cirkör is a member of this network and has over the years actively participated in various panels, coalitions and talks. This year, we focused on meetings dedicated to the international tour of Circus Days and Nights and participated in Pitch New Works, a digital meeting that was originally meant to be held in Reykjavik.

Pomegranate Arts, NYC

Cirkus Cirkör has joined forces with one of the world's most renowned producers and agents within performing arts. In collaboration with Linda Brumbach and her team, we will work to bring the art of circus to the world's most established and prestigious stages, as well as to its backyards.

MICC

In July, the circus festival MICC was held in Montreal, but remotely, with participants from all over the world. Naturally, Cirkus Cirkör was among them.

The European Core Curriculum for Youth and Social Circus Pedagogy

Since 2019, Cirkus Cirkör has been active in an Erasmus+ funded project to enhance circus pedagogy and to professionalize the vocation of circus educator. Five European circus schools and three universities have collaborated on a European curriculum for a bachelor's degree in Circus Pedagogy, which was completed in 2021. In 2022, national implementation plans will be finalized, and the work of putting the program in place at universities will begin. In Sweden, our goal is to make the entire program, in modules, available to students from the end of 2020s. But even before then, some training modules will be offered in Finland, Sweden and Ireland.

Reinventing Circus Organizations

Cirkus Cirkör will participate in the Erasmus+ funded project Reinventing Circus Organizations from 2020-2023. The project is a joint venture of three other European circus organizations; Coraggio (Berlin), Cirkus in Beweging (Leuven) and Cirqueon (Prague). The purpose is to share experiences of leadership and communication in order to improve the organizational structures of our own companies. In 2021, the first two study visits, to Leuven and Prague, could be carried out thanks to eased corona restrictions. The focus of these visits was "organizational structure" and "motivation". During the year, we were supposed to participate in several other networking events, festivals, trade fairs and meetings. Those that were not conducted digitally have been postponed until 2022 and 2023.



ORGANIZATION AND FINANCES

Due to the pandemic, which impacted us on every level – organizationally, financially and content-wise – 2021 proved to be yet another challenging year. But we have continued to face these challenges as circus artists, by focusing on the possible and by collaborating our way to innovative solutions.

THE PANDEMIC

We have continued to implement strict hygiene requirements: handwashing before and after each training session, class or lab, disinfection of hands when sharing equipment, disinfection of mats and materials after each session and adapting exercises that we have identified as potentially risky in terms of viral transmission. Parents and siblings were not allowed to accompany students onto the premises with the exception of classes for the youngest children, we kept all our groups as small as possible and avoided mixing students, course participants and artists. We attached great importance to scheduling, cleaning and behaving responsibly – as an organization and as individuals.

SUPPORT/RELIEF

We received state and municipal crisis relief during the year. No staff was short-term furloughed or given notice, but several people chose to leave Cirkus Cirkör and moved on to new challenges and assignments. Together we have created a strategic direction and a strategic home built on the foundation of our core values and collaborative spirit.

BOARD

After the Annual Meeting on May 18, 2021, the new board of Cirkus Cirkör Ideell förening (non-profit) and Cirkör AB (incorporated) took office, consisting of the following members: Eva Schöld (Chairperson), Maria Rankka, Mats Björkman, Anna Takanen, Johan Celander och Keith Fransson (Vice Chair). Inger Ashing, Nina Rawal, Mellika Melouani Melani, Gunilla Thorgren, Annika Levin, Magnus Aspegren and Olle Strandberg left their seats on the board.

EMPLOYEES

In 2021, Cirkus Cirkör had 31 permanent employees and 131 temporary employees, equivalent to 36 annual work units (AWU). In a normal operating year free from the impact of a pandemic, Cirkus Cirkör has around 55 annual work units (AWU), a clear sign of how much the pandemic affected our ability to engage freelancers within our field.

A total of 162 people received a salary from Cirkus Cirkör during the year: 94 women and 68 men. Additionally, 81 freelance artists, educators, technicians, set designers and others were paid fees. A total of 243 people received compensation from Cirkus Cirkör for work performed in 2021.

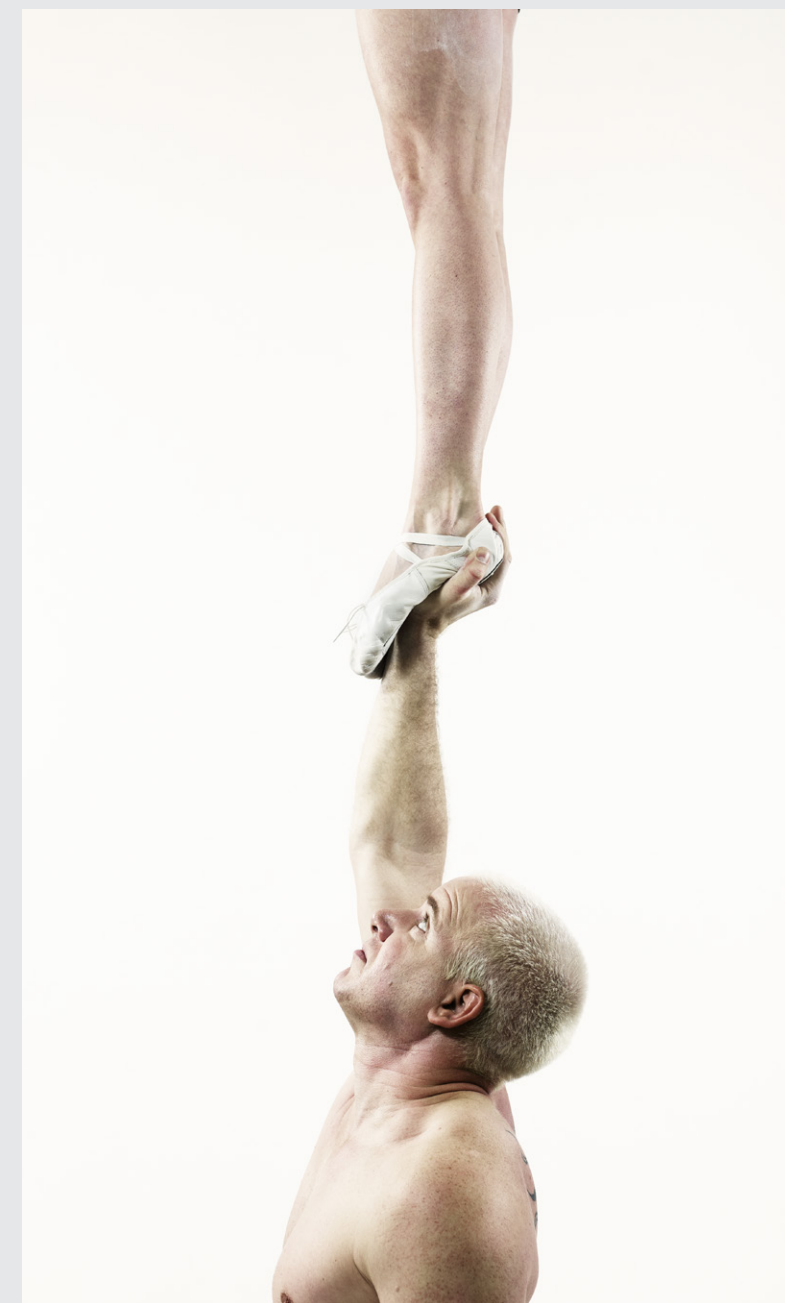


PHOTO: ERIK OLSSON

SUSTAINABILITY

Cirkus Cirkör actively works for and contributes to a long-term sustainable society. This is an integral part of our vision of “changing the world through contemporary circus”, of being a responsible workplace and cultural organization that influences and inspires ourselves and the world around us.



KNITTING PEACE PHOTO: KAROLINA HENKE

Our approach to sustainability within our various activities is broad, and we strive to use the resources we already possess in as efficient a way as possible. We understand that to remain relevant in the future, we must work innovatively with art and education from every perspective, not the least with regard to our common social, economic and environmental sustainability.

Since 2015, Cirkör has been affiliated with the UN Global Compact, the United Nations' international network for the promotion of social and environmental responsibility within companies and organizations. This means we are committed to adapting our business practices to their ten principles on human rights, labor, the environment and anti-corruption and to presenting these efforts in a report every year, a report that is now incorporated into our Annual Report. In adopting the Ten Principles, signatory companies and organizations undertake to adapt their policies and procedures in ways that allow them to contribute more sustainably to the development of economies and societies.

Companies and organizations from every sector are represented among the 15 000 organizations from 165 countries that have joined the UN Global Compact. Transparency is an important aspect of this work, which among other things entails that all affiliated companies and organizations undertake to annually publish a "Communication on Progress" (COP) describing their efforts to comply with the principals.

TRAVEL/TRANSPORTATION

Everyone at Cirkus Cirkör is encouraged to travel primarily by train and to avoid air travel. However, given that our productions tour all over the world, some air travel is unavoidable. To counteract the harmful emissions of carbon dioxide associated with our flights, since 2013 we carbon offset all air travel. A climate positive action that reduces the negative climate impact of flying. To raise awareness of the negative climate impact of air travel, our goal is to share the cost of carbon offsetting with external partners with whom we sign contracts with. We have developed cost templates for different parts of the world to facilitate reaching agreements and budgeting.

We carbon offset all our flights by investing in the installation of solar cells. This contributes to the production of renewable energy, a concrete and long-term project for improving the climate.

ELECTRICITY/ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Since 2014, our electricity is supplied by ETC el, which provides 100% renewable electricity and bears the Good Environmental Choice label of The Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SNF). ETC builds photovoltaic parks in various locations and thereby creates renewable energy in Sweden. Through our choice of electricity supplier, we are part of an evolution we wish to support.



**MINIMIZED CONSUMPTION/
SUSTAINABLE PURCHASES**

With the EU's waste hierarchy as our guide, we continuously strive to minimize purchases, to reuse all types of materials to the greatest degree possible and to recycle the waste that remains. Large portions of our sets, props, costumes, office materials and more are reused in our own activities.

For all purchases we strive to find environmentally certified products and suppliers who incorporate sustainability into their practices. Examples:

Food

Our purchases of coffee, milk and fruit for Cirkörhuset (Cirkör House) are currently nearly 100% organic.

Computers

In 2021, Cirkör bought seven new PCs, all TCO certified, plus one Apple computer (Apple products lack environmental certification). TCO Certified is an international sustainability label that stipulates social and environmental requirements for more sustainable IT products from a lifecycle perspective.

Merchandise

For textiles, such as t-shirts and totes, we always choose Earth Positive or Nordic Ecolabel certification.

100%
RENEWABLE ELECTRICITY



**THE 10 PRINCIPLES OF THE
UN GLOBAL COMPACT**

Business should:

- 01 Human rights**
Support and respect the protection of international human rights within their sphere of activity.
- 02** Make sure they are not complicit in human rights abuses.
- 03 Labor**
Uphold the freedom of association and recognize the right to collective bargaining.
- 04** Eliminate all forms of forced and compulsory labor.
- 05** Eliminate all child labor.
- 06** Eliminate discrimination with respect to employment and occupation.
- 07 Environment**
Support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges.
- 08** Undertake initiatives to promote environmental responsibility.
- 09** Encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.
- 10 Anti-Corruption**
Work against all forms of corruption, including extortion and bribery.

CIRKÖR iN NUMBERS 2021

FINANCES

During 2021, Cirkus Cirkör had a turnover of SEK 36 065 138, of which SEK 15 500 138 were comprised of our own sales, SEK 29 950 of membership fees and SEK 20 535 050 of external investments:

	SEK
Swedish Public Employment Service	147 500
Göteborgs Barnhus (children's foundation)	75 000
The Swedish Sports Confederation	47 751
Paid sick leave	169 272
Vinnova	50 000
Swedish-Finnish Cultural Foundation	12 000
The Government Offices	23 745
Swedish Arts Council, regional development grant	464 332

Operating grants	SEK
Botkyrka Municipality	3 508 450
Swedish Arts Council	10 037 000
City of Stockholm Cultural Administration	1 200 000
Region Stockholm (SLL)	2 800 000

Crisis/Covid relief	
Botkyrka Municipality	100 000
Swedish Arts Council	1 900 000

CIRKÖR

Board	6
Full-time employees	31
High school students	38
Freelance artists, educators, technicians, creators etc	212
Total number of people	287

287

TOTAL NUMBER OF PEOPLE ENGAGED BY CIRCUS CIRKÖR

212

FREELANCE ARTISTS, EDUCATORS, TECHNICIANS, CREATOR ETC.

31

OFFICE ACROBATS

AUDIENCE & PARTICIPANT STATISTICS

PRODUCTION/PERFORMANCE	# OF PERFORMANCES	# OF AUDIENCE/PARTICIPANTS
Bloom	6	2 180
Circus Days and Nights	10	460
Passa in (for kids and young people)	55	3 866
Trassligt (for kids and young people)	24	2 907
Pust	4	120 000
Streamed performances	10	6 216
Total performance activities	109	135 629

OTHER ACTIVITIES	# OF ACTIVITIES	# OF PARTICIPANTS
Cirkör Event performances	3	82 969
Alma projektet Esc19 Kulturhuset	2	80
Circus Upper Secondary School Events	1	100
Training tour – Folkets hus & Parker	626	13 660
Totalt other activities	632	96 809

CANCELED (DUE TO COVID -19)

PRODUCTION	CANCELED/POSTPONED ACTIVITIES
Trassligt (for kids and young people)	9
Pippi på Cirkus	61
Bloom	20
Total performances activities	90

741

NUMBER OF PERFORMANCES AND ACTIVITIES

90

CANCELLED PERFORMANCES DUE TO COVID-19

232 438

NUMBER OF VISITORS AND PARTICIPANTS



CIRKÖR TOUR 2021

Performances, events and educational activities

SWEDISH REGIONS

Blekinge Ronneby

Dalarna Hedemora

Gävleborg Hudiksvall

Jämtland Bräcke

Norrbotten Boden, Piteå

Närke Örebro

Skåne Malmö

Stockholm Bromma, Hägersten-Älvsjö, Rinkeby-Kista, Hässelby-Vällingby, Södermalm, Skarpnäck, Farsta, Södermalm, Skärholmen, Norrmalm, Rinkeby-Kista, Täby, Enskede-Årsta-Vantör, Botkyrka, Haninge, Järfälla, Nacka, Sigtuna, Upplands Väsby, Vallentuna, Österåker, Södermanland, Gnesta, Katrineholm, Nyköping and in the air.

Uppsala Enköping

Värmland Årjäng

Västerbotten Lycksele, Skellefteå, Sorsele

Västernorrland Härnösand, Sollefteå, Sundsvall, Timrå

Västmanland Norberg

Västra Götaland Borås, Falköping, Gothenburg, Skara, Sotenäs

Östergötland Norrköping

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
Dubai

CZECH REPUBLIC
Prague



CIRKUS Cirkör ANNUAL REPORT 2021 COVER PHOTO KAROLINA HENKE
GRAPHIC DESIGN KARIN ROBERTS PRINT SIB TRYCK HOLDING AB PAPER GALERIE ART SILK
ENVIRONMENTAL FRIENDLY PAPER

**CIRKUS
Cirkör**