

Circostrada Network

A photograph of a circus performer walking a high wire. The performer is shirtless and wearing dark pants, balancing on a thin wire that stretches across the frame. Below the wire, a yellow ladder is visible. The background is a dark, textured wall, possibly the interior of a tent or a circus building. The lighting is dramatic, with strong shadows cast on the ground below. The overall tone is warm and artistic.

Sanae Barghouthi &
Yohann Floch (coord.)

CIRCUS AND STREET ARTS:
Encouraging European
cooperation projects

STREET ARTS AND CIRCUS:

Encouraging European cooperation projects

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Culture Programme



Education and Culture DG

CIRCOSTRADA NETWORK

HORS LES MURS



Presentation

European cooperation projects in the circus and street arts have been on the rise in recent years. This new tendency shows cultural actors' desire to work together on the European level and to invest themselves in sturdy and long lasting partnerships.

We are thrilled about this new process, which we have been supporting in our own way since 2003 through the activities of our network Circostrada as well as through the organisation of gatherings and exchange sessions among European professionals. Now, with this publication, we hope to accentuate the richness of these projects and to help give them an increased level of exposure. By bringing them together in a single document, our goal is also to offer a general and transversal overview of European cooperation initiatives in the field of the circus and street arts.

You will also discover the wide diversity of the projects currently being carried out, as well as the synergy of networks linking together the European territory. From the issues of artistic training to that of the production or distribution of works, as well as the question of spreading artistic influence along cross-border territories, these projects cover a particularly large field and bring together a large number of partners. While many of them are supported by the European Commission, they are not only funded by the Culture programme, but also receive support from other programmes with widely varying objectives (education and several programmes of regional development).

However, despite this diversity of nature, content and funding, the projects have certain characteristics in common. First of all, they are committed to employing professionals and artists from different practices and cultures. Each project is thus enriched through contact with the realities of different countries along with the logistical crossovers with each partner. The projects also work, each in their own way, toward greater structuring within the European circus and street arts. Regardless of their nature or project length, they continue to put into place cooperative tools and apparatuses to structure the professional landscape.

Finally, artistic recognition for the circus and street arts is without a doubt the major preoccupation and ultimate goal that is seen in all of the projects. The European dimension of the networks in place and the activities proposed reinforces the legitimacy of these artistic forms at the local and national levels and, in certain cases, this dimension can have a decisive effect on public policies. By supporting these cooperation projects, Europe is indeed sending a strong signal. It recognises the vitality of these artistic sectors and grants them the place they deserve in the European cultural landscape.

Stéphane Simonin
Director [HorsLesMurs]

Black/North SEAS

SEAS platform

Black/North SEAS is a major European platform for intersecting Arts with other sectors of society. It connects cultural operators, artists, public officials and scientists in a complex and multi-lateral cooperation project stretching over nearly four years and across the European continent, from the North Sea to the Black Sea. The primary focus is the creation and distribution of interdisciplinary artworks on a transnational basis. The touring is supplemented with major conferences – CityScape – on relevant themes: Environment, Urban Planning, Cultural Tourism, Citizenship, Migration.

Harbour areas/cities are essential starting points for Black/North SEAS. They are areas of mobility, national borders, migration, transportation and often historic landmarks. Black/North SEAS re-thinks these areas by adding a cultural dimension. It is the common aim of all its partners to connect events to city planning and urban re-generation.

During the first phase of Black/North SEAS (2006-2008), a series of 18 interdisciplinary and transnational co-productions were created, many inspired by an experience ("a date") between two artists or groups of artists, from two different European regions, while exploring a harbour city on a European coast. Read more about the productions here:

www.seas.se/productions/index.php

SEAS toured the Black Sea and North Sea coasts in 2008 and 2009. It opened in Odessa (Ukraine), and went to Varna & Balchik (Bulgaria) and Mangalia (Romania), Istanbul (Turkey) and around the Black Sea. On the coast of the North Sea visits went to Helsingør and København (Denmark), Helsingborg & Göteborg (Sweden), Tromsø (Norway) and Skegness (UK).

Actions / 2010 work programme

2010 will be a challenging year for SEAS, the framework of the project is being developed, into a more action-based platform. SEAS X is a travelling laboratory to and through Georgia, Turkey and Ukraine, inviting selected artists from Sweden, Ukraine and Georgia and other countries to share workshops, installations, videos, seminars and performances, together with communities in, for instance Batumi (Georgia) and Odessa & Kherson (Ukraine). Public space, collectivity, encounters with strangers and access / inclusion will be explored through creative experience, developing methods for cross-border collaboration and cultural exchange. At the end of each time spent in one Host station, SEAS X will organize, together with local partners,

and participants, a public event based on collaboration with chosen local community groups.

Artists and researchers will contribute with their own animations and concepts. They are encouraged to develop collective and adaptive formats, based on the response from the communities and individuals they encounter. They are encouraged to document these experiences. SEAS X will be formed by artists working with different media (video, performance, storytelling, art installations, photography), together with architects, sociologists, researchers, technicians and producers. The trip is planned for September-October. Follow the preparations on the SEAS X blog: <http://seasx.wordpress.com/>

A conference, Re:Perceiving Cultural Spaces and a mobile arts festival with SEAS artists will be arranged in Stockholm 11-14 November 2010. The conference summarizes the experiences and knowledge inspired by, and connected to, Black/North SEAS.

Re:Perceiving Cultural Spaces explores questions crucial to the sustainable future of flexible art spaces and contemporary cultural practice in the 21st century. Post-institutional approaches will be at the core of the program, with particular reference to policy strategies and artistic tendencies in different European countries.

A SEAS documentation will be launched in November 2010. A web based hand book is indeed being planned, collecting the accumulated know-how of four years of practice spread out amongst partners, artists, reserachers and producers in the more than ten countries where SEAS has been realised.

Each event is based on multiple partnerships with local partners and host organisations. Local partners in 2010 are, among others, Caucasus Foundation in Tbilisi (Georgia), Batumi City Theatre (Georgia) and TOTEM City youth Association in Kherson (Ukraine)

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Duration of the project: July 2007 – October 2010

European grant: 1,393,947 Euros for 3,5 years

Partners: Intercult (Sweden), Theatre Sfumato (Bulgaria), Badco (Croatia), Hotel Pro Forma (Denmark), Tromsø Kommun (Norway), Copenhagen International Theatre (Denmark), Treaty of Utrecht Cultural Programme (Netherlands).

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CARAVAN

The international association CARAVAN gathers eight youth and social circus schools, coming from eight European countries. Its objective is to promote circus practices in youth education throughout Europe and to favour their development, through concrete actions such as youth exchanges and training for trainers.

General objectives

- > To contribute to the improvement of the quality of circus arts teaching with a formal and non-formal educational purpose in Europe.
- > To promote the importance of the inclusion of artistic practices, including circus arts, in the education of young people throughout Europe.
- > To support the personal development of young people, create pathways and promote their confidence in engaging with each other across Europe.

Specific objectives

- > To professionalize the pedagogical, social, artistic and administrative skills of teachers and schools in terms of circus education.
- > To promote the use of those skills in the work with young people across Europe.

To this end, CARAVAN determined to:

- > Organise exchanges with educational aims for young people: create a volunteers exchange network, organise artistic and intercultural encounters.
- > Organise exchanges designed for trainers: workshops, seminars, meetings, projects to be built together, pedagogical exchanges.
- > Organise exchanges designed for managers of circus schools: workshops, seminars, meetings, projects to be built together, pedagogical exchanges.
- > Develop certification tools between partners of the network in the field of circus art training.
- > Feeding relevant information to and influencing local, national and European governments.

Actions / Working programme

Even before CARAVAN was established, members were meeting for two youth exchanges in 2007:

- > in South America (spring 2007), in the framework of "Youth in the World".

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Duration of the project: permanent
European grant: 113,000 Euros for the entire project
Members: Circus Elleboog (Netherlands), Ateneu Popular Nou Barris (Spain), Belfast Community Circus (Ireland), Cabuwazi (Germany), Ecole de Cirque de Bruxelles (Belgium), Zaltimbanq' (Luxembourg), Le Plus Petit Cirque du Monde (France), Sorin Sirkus (Finland).

> in Luxembourg (summer 2007), in the framework of "European Capital of Culture 2007"

Since 2007, with the support of the EVS – The Way To European Understanding project and Eurodyssée, CARAVAN members have put in place a network of exchange of volunteers, to promote the mobility of young people between their institutions.

Training for trainers

The Training for Trainers is organised with the support of Cirque du Soleil, and is also open to non-CARAVAN members.

Networking actions

As part of their Networking project, supported by the Youth in Action Programme, each CARAVAN school organised a "Local Activity". These 1 or 2-day events had a double objective: promoting the network they were putting in place, and gathering experts on a specific topic in order to develop a pedagogical tool to be shared with their partners. Directors of CARAVAN schools also met on several occasions to define their cooperation objectives, to develop a working plan and to write the statutes of our international association.

Leonardo da Vinci Partnership

CARAVAN members have embarked on a research project entitled "Youth and Social Circus Training. A New Spirit for Europe". Over the years, in Europe and in other parts of the world, circus has been developed as a tool presenting many pedagogical assets, which can be used to reach out to young people with special needs or fewer opportunities. The development of this rapidly growing social circus sector has led to a new profession: social circus teacher. The time is now right for the sector to move towards agreed standards of good practice.

Consequently, through this project, CARAVAN members aim to prepare an international frame of reference that will form the foundation of a European training programme for social circus trainers.

The research methodology is developed under the supervision of the Education Science Faculty of Université Libre de Bruxelles (ULB). It includes the detailed analysis of several social circus projects from each CARAVAN member, by means of a logbook, and also through the direct observation of these projects in four cities: Brussels, Berlin, Amsterdam and Bagneux/Paris.

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Channel Circus Arts Alliance

The Channel Circus Arts Alliance is an association of three cultural and artistic structures in England and in France.

- > La brèche, the centre for the circus arts in Lower Normandy,
 - > Lighthouse, the Arts Centre of Poole
 - > Activate, the agency for the development of theatre and dance (Dorset, Bournemouth and Poole).
- They are collaborating closely with the production company Crying Out Loud toward the implementation of this new partnership.

In 2009-2010, they will run a project supported by the Interreg IV A programme and their respective partners whose goal is to extend the influence of the new circus.

Thanks to this project, contemporary circus production will have shows distributed on both sides of the channel. It will also form a network of experts for a better understanding of creation within this discipline.

The project will concentrate, in its first phase, on Cherbourg-Octeville, Poole and within Dorset. It will then reach out more broadly into Upper and Lower Normandy, Brittany and the Southwest of England.

Programme > France

> **The Cross Spring Festival** from 7-10 April 2010, part of Spring, a festival of new circus forms in Lower Normandy. The event aims to present shows, works in progress and installations, bringing together at La brèche British artists with especially innovative work.

> **Residencies:** Layla Rosa and Laura de Nercy (August 2009, La brèche, Cherbourg): development of writing for performances, choreographic and dramaturgical research centred around What If...

> **Workshops:** Workshop preparing individuals to work with small children. Intended for counsellors, artists and instructors in the field of children's circus. Run by a specialist at Circus Space in London (March 2010).

> Professional gatherings:

- Organisation of a professional gathering aiming to encourage exchange between cultural structures and French and British companies as part of Spring, the festival of new circus forms in Lower Normandy;
- Regional meeting (7-8 April 2010) to define a touring outline for French and British productions in 2011 in La brèche.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Duration of the project: 01/04/2009 – 31/12/2010
European grant: 45,598 Euros for the entire project
Partners: La brèche (France), Lighthouse (UK), Activate performing arts (UK), Crying Out Loud (UK).

Programme > England

> **Temps Fort circus season**, August to October, 2010

The season will include French and English contemporary circus companies within the Lighthouse theatre, in the streets of Poole as well as in the cities and rural areas of Dorset.

> **Cultural actions and professional gatherings:** workshops, performances, professional gatherings, discussions and artistic residencies.

> Workshops:

- A week of circus workshops for children and families will be offered to kick off the season (August).
- Activate will hold one-week-long youth workshops as part of the Aimhigher initiative. Aimhigher offers cultural experiences and challenges to young people, encouraging them to imagine a more ambitious future, starting with their studies (October).

> **Master class:** Master class on juggling with Denis Paumier in partnership with Circomedia and the Vocational Training School of Bristol.

> **Educational weekend:** From 23-24 October, the Lighthouse will hold a weekend of workshops organised by French and English artists.

> **Professional gatherings:** In October, Crying Out Loud will give a presentation on the contemporary circus. A gathering between French and English artists will take place on the theme of professional training.

> **Films and conferences:** as part of the Mondial circus with Laurent Chevalier and Denis Paumier, who imagined and developed the concept of working with mathematical principles, computing and siteswap juggling.

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Circonnection

The Circonnection project is a network of 5 international partners (Hungary, UK, Italy, Spain, France) to organise masterclasses for teachers, artists and circus promoters.

The five partners are Hungarian Juggling Association-Cirkuszinház Produkció (Hungary), Associació Valenciana de Circ – Espai de Circ (Spain), Let's Circus company from New Castle (UK), Ex Voto Collectif (France) and Qanat Association – Scuola di Cirko Vertigo in Grugliasco (Italy). Partners host high-level seminars and workshops, which are open to all professionals around the world, so that they can strengthen their skills and enrich their cultural portfolio.

The Circonnection series offers more than 20 workshops in 2 years held alternating among the 5 nations of the network.

As for facilities, the organizers especially rely on their Italian partner, Scuola di Cirko Vertigo in Grugliasco, next to Torino. Their perfect new hall and a circus tent offer a well-equipped space for working sessions.

Themes of the upcoming workshops: specialised juggling courses, seminar on touring circus shows at festivals, theatres and institutions with a special focus on over-European markets; practice in the use of new technology and of rigging methods of circus equipment; writing of a contemporary circus show; creation and staging a number or a show; teaching technique for educators, trainers of circus skills; youth circus with its special safety and privacy requirements; knowledge of equipment, materials, mechanical applications and experience in first aid.

Instructors notably include:

- > Denis Paummier (experimental worldclass juggler from France, developed several new theories and methods in juggling),
- > Arian Miluka (circus technique instructor from Albania, made his studies in China, founder of European pedagogy of nouveau cirque),
- > Joanna Bassi (important figure on the international scene of popular and comical theatre with a background in the circus arts, just like her parents and brother Leo),
- > Thomas Loriaux (engineer specialized in circus security and maintaining circus equipment), Vincent Messenger (in charge of Cirque Éloize touring development).

To have detailed information on the program and to register, please visit the website www.circonnection.eu.

The international workshop program 'Circonnection' is funded by the Leonardo da Vinci Partnership project.

The Leonardo Da Vinci program supports training activities to gain and use knowledge, skills and qualifications in order to facilitate personal development, employment and participation in the European job market.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Duration of the project: September 2009 – September 2011
European grant: 14,000 Euros (Hungary and Spain), 20,000 Euros (UK), 16,000 Euros (Italy and France) for the entire project
Partners: Associazione qanat scuola di cirko vertigo (Italy), Ex Voto Collectif (France), Associacio' valenciana de circ espai de circ (Spain), Let's... Circus! (UK), Cirkuszinház Produkció (Hungary).

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Circostrada Network

Circostrada Network is a European platform for information, research and professional exchanges for street arts and circus arts sectors.

Objectives

Circostrada's goal is to work towards the development and structuring of the circus and street arts on the European scale. Although these sectors have proven to be highly dynamic throughout Europe, they are still in need of centres of exchange, cooperation, reflection, and professional representation on the European level.

Circostrada Network contributes to the open circulation of information and resources within these artistic sectors, favouring actual encounters and cooperation between European professionals, and carrying out communal actions toward a greater recognition of these new artistic forms.

This kind of development and structuring is to be seen as part of a long-term goal. Indeed, we must support the perpetuation of cooperative projects, which are often made fragile through lack of funding, visibility and recognition.

Circostrada Network therefore carries out reflective actions and advocacy work in order to:

- > develop street and circus arts professionals' access to existing programmes, such as artistic and technical training, accompanying professional training, artistic residencies, grants for the exportation of artistic work, etc.
- > develop the creation of support programmes for these sectors (technical mobility support – circus tents – production, etc.)
- > inform circus and street arts operators of existing support programmes.

Actions

The coordinating team creates an ongoing work plan and puts into place the strategies chosen by the network. In this way, Circostrada participates in the promotion, observation, consultation, and assistance of the circus and street arts sectors. The network heads a series of actions (organisation of colloquiums and seminars, publications and professional gatherings, etc.) intended for both the professional sectors as well as local, national and European institutions.

The activities of the Circostrada Network have three main focuses:

- > A "resources and information" focus to collect and pool available information on street and circus arts (artists, companies, festivals, production centres, programming venues including the festivals, professional news, specialised articles and works, etc.). This makes it possible to update the European data base, publications of useful resources in the sectors as well as the website and the e-newsletters.
- > A "research and observation" focus to co-ordinate studies, colloquia and relations with the researchers who work on our sectors. This takes concrete form through the production of surveys as well as the development of existing work or projects in progress.
- > A "professional encounters" focus to suggest meetings between cultural operators in street arts and circus arts (producers, artists, programmers, European institutions and networks) in order to become better acquainted with the problems related to our sectors, to contribute to the birth of trans-national projects and to increase recognition of these disciplines.

The network receives the support for bodies active at the European level in the field of culture (category networks) in the framework of European programme Culture 2007-2013.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Duration of the project: permanent
European grant: about 96,000 Euros per year
Members: list on www.circostrada.org

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Circ-que-o

In Spain and in France, in the sector of the circus arts, the economic and institutional contexts are converging at several points. Indeed, the participation of public authorities is greatly developing in Spain and Spanish figures have learnt to mobilise private and public funding to develop their activities. In France, difficulties experienced by the cultural sector, which received strong public funding, have forced individuals to seek out new resources and new organisational models between the market, public actions and other sectors. There is therefore a convergence of territorial situations, which create a context that is favourable to cross-border cooperation, wherein each party will be able to find, within the experience of the other, practices they will be able to adapt to their own territory in response to the difficulties encountered there.

It is in this context that 10 organisational and institutional structures of the Pyrenees-Mediterranean region have come together to construct and elaborate an innovative platform that, like a cluster, will enable the emergence of a renowned circus network within this territory. The desire to use this process to contribute to the economy of knowledge through a lasting development project relies on the artistic, cultural, economic and social approach of an outside sector.

The foundations of this partnership are the fruit of a long-term development, with, first of all, several euro-regional projects like Chemins de Cirque or Bivouac and Caravanes de Cirques. Afterward, in order to best prepare Circ-que-o!, work was carried out over one and a half years with less than 7 seminars and 6 work meetings.

The project is built around three objectives:

- > To encourage the integration of the circus section within the cross-border space.
- > To reinforce local and cross-border synergy between the actors.
- > To reinforce employment, the economy and creation by better assisting project leaders.

The actions are based around three main directives:

An educative platform of exchange to:

- > Encourage and develop, within the cross-border regions, cooperation between players within the network, circus schools and the university;
- > Better prepare professionals, especially artists, to make use of economic opportunities;
- > Increase the amount of training offered on an international level through a high-level, cross-border training programme.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Duration of the project: December 2008 – December 2011
European grant: 1,163,500 Euros for the entire project
Partners: Animahu (Spain), Associació de professionals de circ de catalunya (Spain), Asociación de Malabaristas de Zaragoza (Spain), Lido (France), Rogelio Rivel (Spain), Université Toulouse 2 le Mirail / Centre d'Initiatives Artistiques du Mirail (France), Ville de Jaca (Spain)

The flagship actions:

- > Summer universities for young creators.
- > A cross-border course between the schools of Lido in Toulouse and Rogelio Rivel in Barcelona, so as to improve the training curricula of the two schools and create the conditions necessary for the implementation of an international, cross-border training programme.
- > A university training course: university diploma, then a professional degree that creates links with the curricula of other schools.
- > A master class curriculum in Aragon that takes place alongside the training programmes of the Rogelio Rivel and Lido schools.

A process of networking for the economy and for employment so as to:

- > Improve assistance for project leaders.
- > Bring together the means available to creation sites to encourage the emergence of cross-border creation.
- > Develop a cross-border job market for the circus by focusing on the realities and complementary elements of each territorial situation.

The flagship actions:

- > A united growth network to assist projects
- > Les Chemins de la Création, with the networking of creative spaces to enable artists to create their shows.
- > Les Chemins Émergents, a network of 20 programmers from the Pyrenees region to help artists to distribute their work during the creation process.

The promotion of the project thanks to:

- > A publicity plan that will give the project impact on the local and European level.
- > A website: an online resource centre for the cross-border circus arts.
- > Migrating circus: every year, a travelling festival intended for the public and for professionals will promote the work and distribute the practices acquired in the framework of the project.

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Ciudades que Danzan

Ciudades Que Danzan (CQD) is an international network of festivals with a program of dance shows in urban landscapes. They have in common the desire to humanize cities while encouraging their architectural and artistic heritage, thanks to the promotion of dance and cultural exchanges. Currently, the CQD network is composed of 35 European and South and Central American dance festivals.

Objectives

The Association Marató de l'espectacle, creator of the network has succeeded in creating an international circuit integrated by independent festivals with a common objective: the promotion of dance in urban landscapes.

In this main objective we can see that CQD's important goals are:

- > To be the unions of architecture and urban space, the contemporary dance and the public.
- > To improve cooperation between different countries, creating a common agreement of artistic distribution among different languages and cultures. Respect of cultural plurality and work against all types of social exclusion is an important aspect.
- > To open a different vision toward artistic and cultural heritage inherent to each city. Through the language of dance, the people passing through the spaces learn to look at a place, a street, a corner in a new way, hence rediscovering them.
- > To encourage creative concepts to invigorate public access to culture as a prominent tool of social integration.
- > To establish a platform of thoughts and debates on the relation of dance with the urban / public spaces and the public.
- > To approach in this way the relation of dance to the audience and vice-versa.

Missions, strategy and actions

Ciudades Que Danzan was born out of the need to create a dynamic system of cooperation, coordination and organization. It's a voluntary process of sharing projects and information in order to:

- > Establish a solid platform of exchange, collaboration and promotion between organizers of the CQD festivals.
- > Offer a tool of artistic and management consulting for new festivals that have recently entered into the network, so as to help young festivals to thrive.
- > Develop common communication and promote actions, in order to achieve greater international exposure, not only for the network's festival members but also for participating companies and creators.

- > Establish a platform of reflection and debate on the relation of dance with urban / public landscapes and the audience by the publication of a magazine on this theme.

- > Create productions together with other cities, including dancers from different nationalities to develop choreography conceived within a specific site.

- > Offer a moving photographic exhibition, showing work developed in all festivals of the network.

- > Support the diffusion of reports and documentary videos, offering spectators and professionals the chance to learn about work developed in other cities.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Duration of the project: permanent
European grant: pending
Members: list on www.cqd.info

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European Circus Association

Circus is Culture

The classical circus is known throughout the world as a variety of acts presented in a central ring involving artistic displays, acrobatics, clowns, music, animals, and mind-boggling feats of strength, beauty and daring. The modern European circus can be traced to London around 1770.

Today more than 1,000 circuses thrive across Europe.

Many are owned or managed by and feature talented descendants of the original great circus families. The European Circus Association (ECA) was established to promote circus arts and culture, thereby protecting this important part of our shared heritage.

Vision

The classical circus is under increasing pressure from a vast array of legal and regulatory requirements, competition from television, cinema, amusement parks and other forms of entertainment, and the relentless tactics of a few well-funded activists. In 2002, ten European circuses founded the ECA with the certain knowledge that collective and sustained action was necessary to secure the future of the classical circus. ECA wishes for circus including the presentation of animals to continue to enchant, educate and entertain the audiences.

Priorities

ECA's activities focus on five key areas:

- > Achieving increased state recognition of circus as culture.
- > Increasing access to artists by simplifying visa and work permit requirements.
- > Facilitating circus movement through standardization of technical requirements.
- > Setting high standards for animal care and presentation.
- > Ensuring quality education for circus children and aspiring artists.

Organisation

The ECA is a non-profit organisation directed by a Board comprised of many of Europe's most famous circus names.

Our membership includes more than one hundred and forty circuses, festivals and animal training businesses based in more than 23 European countries. Important associations exist with partners in Africa, Oceania, China and North America. Our activities are supported by contributions from our members as well as donations from circus supporters and fans. Activities are planned and carried out by elected

Executive Officers of the Board of Directors, supported by a General Manager and Brussels Representative.

Membership

The ECA is open for membership to circus organizations, producers, agents, festivals and animal training businesses. Membership is renewed on an annual basis following payment of applicable fees. In addition to a yearly meeting, Members are invited to an annual symposium, organized in conjunction with the International Festival du Cirque de Monte Carlo, at which topics of current interest are presented and discussed.

Achievements

- > Growing membership of more than 140 circuses, festivals and animal training businesses based in more than 23 countries.
- > Creation of a powerful circus community network including Europe, North America, China, Africa and Oceania.
- > Excellent working relationships with all relevant departments of the European Commission.
- > Recognition as the official circus trade organization by the European Parliament.
- > Increased understanding of circus interests and challenges by politicians and government officials.
- > Routinely invited to provide input on European and national legislation affecting circus interests.
- > Successful adoption of the European Parliament 2005 resolution calling for greater support of circuses as part of European culture.
- > Presentation of Next Steps: Report on the Implementation of the European Parliament 2005 Resolution on new challenges for the circus as part of European culture on 28 September 2009 in the Brussels Parliament: this report was created as a collaborative effort by the European Circus Association (ECA), the Forum of Christian Organisations for the Pastoral Care of Circus and Carnival Workers (Christian Forum), the European Network for Traveller Education (ENTE), the European Showmen's Union (ESU), and the European Federation of Professional Circus Schools (Fédération Européenne des Écoles de Cirque).
- > Establishment of effective information services to keep members up to date on legal and political developments of importance.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Duration of the project: permanent

European grant: none

Partners: list on www.europeancircus.info

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European Federation of Professional Circus Schools

Created in 1998, the European Federation of Professional Circus Schools (FEDEC) is a network comprised of 45 members: 41 professional schools and 4 circus organisations located in 21 different countries (Australia, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, The Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tunisia and United Kingdom).

Objectives

FEDEC's main vocation is to support the development and evolution of pedagogy and creation in the field of circus arts education with the following objectives:

- > To improve the education provided in professional circus schools.
- > To reinforce ties between professional circus schools.
- > To represent these schools at the European or international level.
- > To promote the work of young artists who have graduated from these schools.

Missions

To this end, the FEDEC sets up different activities:

- > Facilitating a network of schools, allowing the organisation of numerous bilateral and multilateral exchanges of students, teachers and administrators each year.
- > Assembling and distributing information of all kinds in the circus arts education sector.
- > Designing and coordinating European projects that aim to improve the teaching practices of its members (in particular through the production of teaching aids, seminars, professional exchanges, dissemination of best practice).

Activities

For its 2010 work programme, the FEDEC network has undertaken the following activities:

- > Network meetings, assemblies and annual internal conference.
- > Consulting members on lifelong learning opportunities for their pedagogical teams, on student exchanges and on professional integration.
- > Representative actions, advocacy for its members through meetings and reports.
- > Cooperation with other networks in education, culture and circus arts.
- > An updated database of circus training organisations on the FEDEC website.
- > 6 bilingual newsletters to the network members.
- > Publication of additional chapters of the "Basic Circus Arts Instruction Manual".
- > Organisation of a "Circle", showcase presenting the students of the schools.
- > Pedagogical and artistic exchanges of the FEDEC members schools and their students.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Duration of the project: 2010 – 2011
European grant: 100,000 Euros per year
Members: list on www.fedec.eu

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European Youth Circus Organisation

The European Youth Circus Organisation (EYCO) is a non-profit organization / association of mainly youth circus national umbrellas. It was founded in 2009 and currently has 9 members located all around Europe.

The organisation works in collaboration with varied partners to stimulate, promote and support on a national and European level the process of recognising and structuring youth circus.

History

Founded in 2005, the N.I.C.E. Seminars have been held in Berlin (2005), Paris (2006), Tampere (2007), Amsterdam (2008) and London (2009). The aim is to build upon an initial informal networking event of European Youth Circus groups. One of these groups, called "Umbrella of Umbrellas", decided during the N.I.C.E. Seminar in Amsterdam to build an official Umbrella, called European Youth Circus Organisation, EYCO.

Aims

EYCO aims to stimulate and support on a national and European level:

- > The process of recognising and structuring youth circus and its contributors.
- > The increasing quality of youth circus and its contributors.
- > The promotion of youth circus – by its nature a popular, accessible and inclusive art form – as a means for participants to take an active role in society.

Figures

EYCO is composed of 9 members including 5 full members comprised of national existing federations: Fédération Française des Ecoles de Cirque (France), Circuscentrum (Belgium Flemish community), BAG Zirkuspädagogik (Germany), Finnish Youth Circus Association (Finland), Circomundo (Netherlands) and 4 candidate full members currently in the process of formalising their national representation, that is to say Spain, Italy, United Kingdom and Belgium (French community).

EYCO gathers today:

- > 307 circus schools/organisations : 130 in France, 19 in Flemish Belgium, 115 in Germany, 23 in Finland, 20 in Netherlands.
- > 1,870 teachers: 800 teachers in France, 130 in Flemish Belgium , 720 in Germany, 70 in Finland and 150 in Netherlands.
- > 512,000 circus arts practitioners: 300,000 members in France, 4,000 in Flemish Belgium, 200,000 in Germany , 3,000 in Finland and 5,000 in the Netherlands.

Schools, organisations, teachers and practitioners from Spain, Italy, UK and Belgium will potentially join EYCO.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Duration of the project: permanent

European grant: none

Members: Fédération Française des Ecoles de Cirque (France), Circuscentrum (Belgium Flemish community), BAG Zirkuspädagogik (Germany), Finnish Youth Circus Association (Finland), Circomundo (Netherlands)

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European Zone of Artistic Projects

Background

The network was set up in 1996 through a first programme, Art'Urb (1997 to 2000) and as a result of the bond and exchanges developed between the festivals Viva Cité (in Sotteville-lès-Rouen), La Fête dans la Ville (in Amiens) and the Streets of Brighton (in England).

In 2000, the network project became PECA – European Polycentre of Artistic Creation – and specialised in the development of street arts creation spaces, with the opening of l'Atelier 231 (in Sotteville-lès-Rouen), and Le Hangar (in Amiens) and with new partners joining in: Culture Commune in Loos-en-Gohelle, the towns of Hastings and Rother in England.

The PECA partners' project was then to develop and professionalise street arts on their territories, as a significant and integral part of urban regeneration, taking into consideration the spaces dedicated to residencies and art creation as appreciable means to boost territorial development, at the junction of cultural, social and economic objectives.

The PECA project enabled the partners' organisations to broaden their artistic and cultural spheres of activity, while being part of the implementation of world-class projects. It also allowed them to reinforce their creation spaces in terms of equipment, and to share good practice on project development and delivery.

In 2008, the towns of Hastings and Rother withdrew from the network, PECA became ZEPA, and opened up to new partners: Le Fourneau (in Brest, France), Southampton City Council with the Nuffield Theatre, Hat Fair festival (in Winchester), Brighton Festival and Out There (by SeaChange Arts, in Great Yarmouth).

Outcomes

- > Creation of a Franco-British space for populations, artists and professionals.
- > Access to culture for all.
- > Meetings and exchanges between artists and audiences.
- > Work with communities in difficulty.
- > Social, economic and cultural development.
- > Patrimony promotion (site, cultural, human).
- > Delivery of high quality and ambitious artistic projects (production, touring, training within the ZEPA area).
- > Transnational exchanges and sharing of good working practices.

Output

Coverage and development of the euro-regions

The network area in which the nine partners work includes a large part of the INTERREG IV eligible area. Working with other key players or 'second-tier partners', each partner will extend its own capacity to lead on meaningful activities. These could include local authorities, creative enterprises, universities, art companies or even community groups and voluntary organisations. This approach will help to spread the practice, activities and outcomes across regional and national boundaries.

Regional artistic projects

The creation and presentation of artistic projects in the public realm are at the forefront of the overall project. The concept of 'regional artistic projects' illustrates a crosscutting approach to regional development led by artists. They are the key players dealing with issues identified by the project partners such as citizenship, urban regeneration, living heritage interpretation, educational development, etc.

The projects directly relate to local communities and are an opportunity to share common experiences on a European level, through commissions, touring, residencies, populations' exchanges, community involvement, etc.

Several large scale and flagship projects will be produced by all partners with two 'associated' companies, a British and a French company.

Development of a supportive cooperation

Activities led by partners, such as training, transmission of knowledge, encounters between people and professionals, regular meetings (some including the partners' second-tier partners'), development of shared tools (internet site, publications, etc.) are all aimed at bringing collaborative work, social enhancement and mutual enlightenment to the core of the project.

The ZEPA partners choose the street-arts companies they wish to develop projects with, based on their ability to be involved in a cross-border, multi-partner project, i.e a project involving two or more partners. ZEPA is not planning on releasing a tender for any projects developed.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Duration of the project: 2008 – 2012

European grant: 3,110,169 Euros for 5 years

Partners: L'Atelier 231 (France), Le Fourneau (France), Le Hangar (France), Culture Commune (France), Brighton Festival (UK), Hat Fair Festival (UK), Zap Art (UK), Southampton City Council with the Nuffield Theatre (UK), Sea Change Arts (UK).

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Experiment Diversity (with the street arts and circus!)

Experiment diversity (with the street arts and circus!) encourages the trans-mobility of people working in the street arts and circus by raising the awareness regarding the diversity of European local contexts and providing actors with good examples of creative strategies to bypass structural weaknesses, to overview diverse cultural contexts and from regions/ countries with less developed cultural policy towards the street arts and circus.

This project was conceived by key European partners, each of whom are information centres that provide information and advice for these sectors.

Together, the partners aim to:

- > Provide information and intelligence in order to strengthen intercultural dialogue and understanding of local cultural contexts/ realities.
- > Create and foster opportunities for artists and cultural workers to explore new connections.
- > Expand the skills and knowledge of the organisations, cultural workers, for a diverse and sustainable arts environment within these unique art forms.

During the project, the consortium will experiment new ways to achieve these objectives, and share experiences with institutions, representatives, organisations and networks, processing expanding knowledge, horizons and opportunities for exchange to further the practice of international arts. The information centres strongly believe they play a valuable role in promoting intercultural understanding and international connections. Through sharing information and intelligence, the project will champion intercultural understanding and will allow artists and producers to make new connections and collaborations which will encourage future mobility (of ideas, people and projects).

To achieve these goals, they designed a project to:

- > Welcome 32 artists (individuals and collectives) and cultural workers (producers, artistic company managers, critics, presenters, technical directors, etc.) from Europe to the 4 Partner States, to visit the street arts and circus contexts during facilitated six-day tours, the 'Visits'.
- > Create, produce and distribute information and intelligence relating to these art forms via the network of information officers: free multilingual help-sheets, cultural/sub-sector profiles, the 'Briefing'.
- > Review the visits by highlighting the key elements of each context, to underline their diversity, to collect and give visibility of best

practices. The experiences and reflections will be published in a book, *Diversity/ Highlights*. These results will be disseminated at regional, national and European levels.

Visits

Each Information Centre will propose a facilitated tour in its country that would enable 32 professionals from partner countries to meet the key players for circus or street arts over a set period of 6 days. Each partner country formally offers the 8 country specific beneficiaries a place at one of the 4 tours. Beneficiaries are not offered the opportunity to attend the tour within their own country. Each 'Visit' would therefore have a mixture of nationalities attending. The 'Visits' will aim to develop the soft skills of the 32 beneficiaries as well as the cultural workers met during the tours. The Visits will take place in 2011 in Belgium, Finland, Sweden and the UK. The calls will be spread all around Europe at the end of 2010.

Briefings

The street arts and circus 'Briefings' are targeted specifically at cultural professionals, artists and cultural officials, with the aim of encouraging and facilitating reciprocal international exchange and co-operation. However, they will also be of interest to members of the general public who are looking for detailed information on the street arts and circus of the countries profiled. Each 'Briefing' will focus on a particular country, providing a thorough analysis of its cultural policy, cultural infrastructure and artistic local context, with an emphasis on developing future collaborations. They will also include a panorama of the sectors, a directory of contacts and pertinent case studies of local artistic projects. These documents will be tested at the end of 2010.

Book

The consortium will prepare the topics to be presented and debated during the 'Visits'. A researcher will witness the 'Visits' and review each of them, writing portraits of beneficiaries, of the key players met, of the organisations visited and of performances attended. He will collect and compare the experiences from the beneficiaries. The researcher will be involved in the valorisation of the project: reviewing existing literature and holding discussions with beneficiaries, local professionals encountered during the visits, staff from Information Centres, etc. A book, *Diversity/ Highlights*, focused on the individual/ collective benefits will then be published at the end of 2011.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Duration of the project: May 2010 – October 2011
European grant: 82,305 Euros for the entire project
Partners: Subtopia (Sweden), Circus Arts Forum (UK), Internationaal Straattheaterfestival (Belgium), Sirkuksen Tiedotuskeskus (Finland)

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Illimitrof Company

This is an International cooperative project with China, supported by the European Commission's Culture programme. The project is coordinated by Illimitrof Company, in partnership with the street festival of Ramonville (France), the Stockton International Riverside Festival (United Kingdom) and several partners in China (Independent street arts festival, Institute of the City Arts, a new contemporary art museum...)

As part of the Culture programme of 2008-2013, the European Union has selected Illimitrof Company for its international cooperative project with China.

With 20 years of experience in China, the Illimitrof Company wishes to be the catalyser of a profound and respectful exchange between the East and the West, carried out with the hope of setting a long-term precedent: "We think that our cultures reflect each other intrinsically like a kind of mirror."

The goals of the project

- > To develop international cultural cooperation in the field of the circus and street arts.
- > To encourage the convergence of cultural points of view between Europe and China, as well as their diversity of expression.
- > To create networks to enable the distribution of Franco-Chinese shows in Europe and in China.

The project consists of three main work initiatives:

> The presentation of a Franco-Chinese show

Three potential show choices. Each show is the fruit of experimental work that allows the two cultures to come together and open new fields of thought.

> The organisation of conferences

Their goal is to take stock of possible artistic links

- 1) Taking stock of the street arts in China:
 - Long-standing traditions in the street arts.
 - Readability of a contemporary practice in the Chinese street arts.
- 2) The formal and informal ways in which Chinese creation functions in the public space:
 - The human and legal dimension of the idea of the artistic company in China.

- The ways in which the independent arts and those linked to the authorities find funding.
- The economic constraints that result from this.

> Workshops

These involve 15 people, bringing together Chinese and European artists under the co-direction of a Chinese and a European overseer. These workshops will enable artistic skills to be discovered or to mix according to specific research directives

- Chinese energy at the service of the creative act in the public space
- Contact between two cultures and their own relationship with the spectator.
- The search for a common artistic language between the two cultures.
- Concrete experimentation (theatre, scenography, music, visual arts) on universal themes, putting perspective on the traditional and contemporary history of each culture.

- > The opening of a **research laboratory** in the street arts, as well as different Chinese institutions.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Duration of the project: October 2008 – September 2010

European grant: 175,000 Euros for the entire project

Partners: Festival MiramirO (Belgium), Stockton International Riverside Festival (UK), Institut des Arts de la Ville, Hitang, Cie Pa Ke Chu, Ecole du Cinéma Français, Nouveau Musée d'Art Contemporain, Festival indépendant des arts de la rue, Cie des 5 mains (China)

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Jeunes Talents Cirque Europe

Jeunes Talents Cirque Europe is a programme aiming to locate and support the emergence of new authors and creators and to thus encourage the development of new forms of writing in the field of the circus arts in Europe.

A cooperative network between cultural actors for creation

Convinced of the wealth to be found in the circus arts and of the good sense of coming together, different European cultural actors who are committed to the development of the circus arts have decided to work in networks to provide young creators with means of production, creation and beyond, as well as knowledge of distribution networks.

Goals of the operation

The project aims to encourage the emergence of new authors in the field of the circus arts in Europe, to encourage creation and mobility and to encourage the distribution of the circus arts and culture, along with the spreading of intercultural dialogue.

It is a biennial operation and has been carried out for the first three editions (2001-2006) by the association Scènes de Cirque.

Since its fourth edition (2007-2008), it has been structured, carried out, organised and managed by the association Jeunes Talents Cirque Europe, a non-profit organisation, appointed as producer and operator.

Goals:

- * To locate and encourage the development of new forms of writing based on circus disciplines.
- * To assist in the professionalisation of young artistic talent focusing on the field of creation.
- * To support writing and young creation in the field of the circus arts through assistance that is adapted to the professional development of each team.
- * To encourage exchange and cooperation between cultural actors, to contribute to the mobility of authors/performers and to enable a wide distribution of their work in Europe.

Actions

The operation consists of five phases:

phase 1: call for projects distributed in Europe (May 2009)

phase 2: selection based on applications (November 2009)

phase 3: selection based on the presentation of a model and an interview (January-March 2010)

phase 4: assisting the artistic teams in their creation process (April-August 2010)

phase 5: public presentation of project excerpts (August-November 2010)

In order to meet these goals, Jeunes Talents Cirque Europe needs the collaboration of cultural structures called "associated partners", who follow the different phases and meet the assistance needs of the artistic teams.

The following 10 projects have been selected:

- > Petit Mal (Race Horse Company – Finland) by Petri Tuominen, Rauli Kosonen, Kalle Lehto (directed by Maksim Komaro).
- > Circuits fermés (Compagnie DeFracto – France) by Guillaume Martinet & Minh Tam Kaplan
- > Losing Grip (Spain), by Raquel Veganzones (Spain) & Janne Timothy Gordon (Girisho – Finland)
- > Värinpuutostila (Sirkus Aikamoinen – Finland), Oskar Rask, Mira, Sade, Jouni, Heikki & Kaito.
- > Bed (Frenetic Engineering – UK) Annabelle Holland.
- > I, Mistress and Wife (Nomaden vzw – Belgium) Anna Nilsson (Sweden), Anke Bücher (Germany) and Michela Henie (Switzerland)
- > Encore non nommé (Mosjoukine – France) Tsirihaka Harrivel, Vimala Pons, Erwan Larcher, Maroussia Diaz Verbeke.
- > File-Tone (Subliminati Corporation – France), Maël Tebib (F), Jordi Querol (S), Mikel Ayala (S), Lorenzo Mastropietro (I)
- > My! Laïka (Zebraman – France) Elske Van Gelder (NL), Philine Duhlmann (Germany), Salvatore Fraska (I)
- > C8H11NO2 (Positive Force – Croatia) Antonia Kuzmanic & Jakov Labrovic

These projects will receive a grant from 12 to 17,000 euros as well as personalised assistance: residencies and artistic and technical advice. They will also be able to present a completed excerpt of their project at one of the many public presentations organised between August and November 2010: in Helsinki (May), Copenhagen (August), Strasbourg (September), Ghent (October) and Paris (November). Lastly, a European gathering of young artists will be organised in June in Santiago de Compostella (Spain), where artists, past winners and non-winners who participated in the operation will be invited.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Duration of the project: 2009 – 2010

European grant: 200,000 Euros for the entire project

Partners: Mala Performerska Scena (Croatia), Cirko (Finland), Kobenhavns Internationale Teater (Denmark), Subtopia (Sweden), Cirkus Xanti (Norway), Crying out loud (UK), Moving head productions (UK), Circus Centrum (Belgium), Theater op de Markt (Belgium), Ute Classen Kulturmanagement (Germany), Axencia Galega das Industrias Culturais (Spain)

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Le PLÔT

With 5 years of collaborative experience working on the cross-border project CIRCULONS!, Autour des arts du cirque (interreg III 2002-2007), Le Prato (France) and the Maison de la Culture in Tournai (Belgium), are the proponents of an innovative initiative in the landscape of the circus arts with the establishment of a circus hub of international scale: Le Plôt, the first cross-border circus centre, 2008-2012, as part of interreg IV (FEDER fund).

Through their historical involvement, their compatibility and their desire to support young circus creations, the two structures are determined to develop their projects in production, support for the arts, distribution, training and any activity contributing to the influence of the circus arts. This centre also exists through the communal use of workspaces and skills: staff, infrastructure, equipment, etc.

Therefore, several objectives have been set with the implementation of Le Plôt:

- > To favour the development, the creation and the influence of new artistic processes (production, co-production, aid, creation of networks).
- > To encourage artistic creation and open-mindedness to new forms (training, master classes, workshops, meetings with artists); To develop the circulation of audiences, artists and artworks; to implement events and/or festivals.
- > To reinforce a proactive approach to developing the circus arts (gatherings, conferences, involvement in networks or work groups).

Activities

Distribution:

- > 15-20 shows each year, adding up to more than 80 burlesque/circus shows distributed by one of the two structures.
- > 10,000 to 15,000 spectators per year.
- > Between 500 and 1000 tickets bought by spectators from the partner structure.
- > About one hundred artists hosted per year.
- > About ten shows per year involving a partnership between our two structures (free shuttles and/or the opening of ticket windows for certain shows or events).
- > The organisation of festivals or events (innovative and/or unique projects, Piste aux Espoirs...).
- > The hosting of artistic teams that perform under circus tents.

Co-direction:

The development and direction of communal events, from conception to execution, using the skills of each team and the resources of each structure.

Assistance:

- > Loyalty in assisting companies, which are invited on several projects.
- > Support for companies: 5 to 10 new companies per year.
- > 5 to 10 instances of sharing workspaces or residencies per year, for research or creation periods, generally held at the Le Prato, for one week or more.
- > Around 3 co-productions per year.

And also:

- > Broad publicity throughout the euro-regional zone.
- > Special pricing policies.
- > Adjustment of performance rooms and space for the circus.
- > Possibility of converting a performance space at the Maison de la Culture in Tournai into a circus ring.
- > Projects carried out with other structures with wider influence (Armentières, Roubaix, Brussels...).
- > Active participation in national and international networks for the development and promotion of the circus arts.
- > The organisation of professional circus gatherings (national or international).

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Duration of the project: 1/01/2008 – 31/12/2011
European grant: 1,050,000 Euros for the entire project
Partners: Le Prato (France), La Maison de la culture de Tournai (Belgium).

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The Minimob project is a cooperative European cultural project with the theme of urban space. It focuses attention on the mutation of cities in Europe, and notably on the process of metropolitanization that is at work. It addresses questions of mobility and studies the urban realities of several cities in Europe, encouraging an artistic approach with mobile and wireless technologies. The following subjects will be addressed: local and international issues, the reduction of urban segregations and territorial ruptures, reduction of the digital divide. Experimenting with new urban usages, Minimob encourages new artistic practices linked to mobile and wireless technology. It invites artists and residents to explore new realities and urban mutations. The implementation of artist residencies, put into place at the selected study site, contributes to this approach. Overview of 5 European cities: an artist from another city is invited to create a film focused on the site with the help of a mobile phone. Short films are produced that shed light on the social and spatial specificities of different territories, offering a patchwork of plural and innovative representations of European cities.

Goals

- > Contribute to an informed and pluralistic definition of the urban space of the cities of Europe: Paris, Barcelona, Prague, Warsaw and Timisoara;
- > Encourage residents to take possession of new technologies as means of expression and of sharing;
- > Promote the new forms of creation linked to today's cultural usages;
- > Federate urban, artistic actors and create a European network out of the resulting innovation.

Eventually, Minimob hopes to develop a research and production network on art, new urban usages, new technologies and mobility in Europe.

Minimob also participates in the emergence of new artistic forms and in the audience's appropriation of them. The goal is also to bring about new representations of the urban space in accordance with contemporary social and cultural usages. In this vein, an international competition for art students and a local competition for the public will be organised.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Duration of the project: May 2010 – December 2011
European grant: 199,950 Euros for the entire project
Partners: La Cité internationale universitaire de Paris (France), Le Hangar (Spain), Moving Closer (Poland), CIANT - International Centre for Art and New Technologies (Czech Republic), Centre culturel français (Romania), Videomedija (Serbia).

History

The Minimob project, created and developed by Dédale, came to life in an early form for the Cultural European Season in 2008. A first collection of urban fictional works on mobile phones was created with French and Italian artists and collectives under the name of RomaParis en trois minutes (see <http://www.romaparisentroisminutes.fr/fr/home.php>). The film "Le Temps des Images" was distributed at the Grand Palais, the Pocket Film festival and the Oslo Screen Festival.

Actions

The project's actions have been implemented for 2010 and 2011 and will operate at the local and European level, creating passageways between these different scales: territorial creation residencies, allowing for the creation of a collection of mobile films focused on the cities of Europe, workshops with the residents, international workshops, mobile film contests for residents and European contests for young artists, public events in several cities of Europe.

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New Nordic Circus Network

The aim is to place contemporary circus on the cultural map of the Nordic countries and to strengthen the sector on all levels in the Nordic countries in a very powerful way. The Nordic engagement will also raise more interest at a local, national and international level. The Nordic project is already regarded in Europe and internationally as an example of very good practice. Nordic contemporary circus is and will continue to be represented on the level of productions, festivals, tours, education and social interaction.

Overall objectives:

- > Support artistic development of Nordic contemporary circus.
- > Sustain and continue the circus network development in Nordic countries
- > Strengthen integration of the Nordic circus field into European organizations and networks.
- > Sustain and continue contemporary circus research in collaboration with universities and academies in the Nordic countries.
- > Improve the cultural political status of circus art within the Nordic context
- > Develop the market for Nordic performances both in the Nordic region and internationally and profile Nordic artists and productions to potential partners and presenters.

The partners have worked since 2007 in creating, developing, co-ordinating, financing and managing NNCN.

Activity programme:

Juggling the Arts (JTA)

The aim of JTA is to develop the artistic potential of contemporary circus in the Nordic countries and to create a working forum for this. JTA aims to develop artists' ability to create their own work and thus underline the independent authorship of contemporary circus. There is a need to develop artistic conceptual thinking – how does an artist create her own artistic language, dramaturgy and personal universe. JTA invites Nordic circus artists to 4 five-day laboratories with a focus on artistic concept development and dramaturgy. 24 artists are selected by an open call. The laboratories are mentored by "senior" artists, e.g. Maksim Komaro (FI) and Tilde Björfors (SE). JTA reinforces contacts between Nordic artists.

Touring support

Nordic contemporary circus is today represented internationally on the level of productions, festivals and tours. However, national support systems for touring are still limited. The development of a

market is absolutely a necessity, as the art form is not upheld with major state subsidies. In order to develop the market in the Nordic region and internationally and to profile Nordic productions, NNCN offers touring support to 4 Nordic performances.

Networking activities

Experiences in the Nordic countries differ, but there is a common need for development on all levels. As the partners are dealing with a "niche" art form, and as there is a lack of critical mass at a national level that limits the potential for development, a Nordic platform and collaboration is a viable strategy and a necessary one. The partners of NNCN have contact with most artists and organizations engaged in contemporary circus in the Nordic countries and have a unique network of contacts internationally. They are committed to continue creating a working long-term network with these many partners, and to share experiences, resources and visions.

Cultural political activities

Infrastructure and support systems for contemporary circus production and education are still fragile and weak. They aim to ensure that contemporary circus moves in from the margins and occupies a more central space in the cultural political field, by improving the commitment for developing circus recognition. Nordic conferences with policy makers, and professionals from the circus field are arranged once a year. Roundtable talks on the situation in the countries, meetings between cultural policy makers and professionals, and networking with the European professional network Circostrada. A Nordic circus policy program, with the aim that it be confirmed by all the participant states, will be produced.

Research activities

Whereas theatre/dance critics and academics are often well educated in the aesthetics and terminology of their art form, contemporary circus exists in a vacuum where clichés from traditional circus and borrowed terminologies are used. The results often do very little to help develop public understanding and appreciation.

- > Nordic circus critic and academic researcher seminars:
- > Book on artistic circus pedagogy:

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Duration of the project: January 2010 – December 2012

European grant: pending

Partners: Københavns Internationale Teater (Denmark), The Circus Village/PIT festival (Norway), Finnish Circus Information Centre (Finland), Cirko Centre for New Circus (Finland), Cirkus Cirkör (Sweden), Subtopia (Sweden).

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OPEN Street

OPEN Street is a cooperative international project aiming to improve the development and distribution of the street and fairground arts within the territories of participating countries. By comparing their respective, international experiences, the authorities and organisations involved in this project especially intend to put into place a platform of communal initiative and strategies for encouraging the use of these forms of artistic expression within urban spaces. The project includes an approach based on the exchange of information and methodology, the creation of a network of infrastructures and services, the comparative analysis of local systems of norms as well as periods of exchange and integration between various cultures.

For these past few years, a new relationship began to exist within small European cities between the urban space and the performing arts. Breaking with the tradition of a rite to be carried out solely within a pre-set environment, the performing arts can now be seen outdoors, where it fills prevalent locations of the community's social life, adopting its rhythms and interacting with its architectural elements, even going so far as to take on the characteristics of urban life.

The typical forms of expression of the countries adhering to this project find in the performance in the public space a kind of "smallest common denominator." Reciprocal knowledge of respective artistic traditions is an essential element for the cultural involvement of the populations in question.

The network made up of public and private organisations, having previous experience in the promotion of the street and fairground arts in their own country, has made them a true national reference point.

The reference point of all of the project's activities will be the "Open Forum." There will be three permanent locations: in Italy, at the Federazione Nazionale d'Arte di Strada in Rome; in Belgium, at the Promotion des Arts forains association in Namur; and in Germany, at the Neue Gruppe Kulturarbeit, in Bremen.

The project is defined by two major strategies:

- > The promotion of artists in the three partner countries and their free circulation within Europe.
- > The study of the different regulations setting protocol for artistic performances in the cities of Europe.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Duration of the project: June 2010 – June 2012

European grant: 200,000 Euros for the entire project

Partners: Promotion des arts forains asbl (Belgium), La Strada International Straßenzirkusfestival (Germany), FNAS / Federazione Nazionale Arte di Strada (Italy)

With the ambition of:

- > Arriving at a new registry of communal regulation to set the contours of artistic performance in the public space and outside of festival periods.
- > Setting the standard for European regulation that complies with the needs of public spaces and artists' free speech.
- > Offering a model that identifies artists performing freely in the European public space.
- > Presenting the results to the European institutions.

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PasseparCirque

The PasseparCirque project resulted from the union of two organisations, the Italian association Qanat Arte e Spettacolo and the French association Arc en Cirque, who both have a communal interest in saving, promoting and receiving the cultural and artistic heritage of the circus discipline through the use of more initiatives and activities, through the creation of pedagogical and artistic exchange, through the creation of a stable artistic company and through the shared direction of a virtual, bilingual library.

Origin of the project, initial context and identification of main issues

The project originated from the recognition of the circus arts as a consolidated and diffuse reality. Their origins and history have not been known for very long, especially since the circus arts are in a state of constant change and movement, always needing to be closely followed. This is what this project intends to do by responding to two major demands. It plans to consolidate and distribute the link that exists between culture and the circus through the modernisation and real or virtual distribution of a bilingual documentation centre. Grugliasco (Turin) and Chambéry are cities united by the same passion for the contemporary circus. The two cities have important circus schools, a festival, a performance season of circus shows and a centre of resources and documentation.

Goals of the project

The goal of the project is to preserve, develop and promote the cultural and artistic heritage of the circus, encouraging the knowledge and recognition of a distinct territorial identity, while also encouraging an ensemble of values and principles through cultural comparison and the mobilisation of artists and professionals within the two territories and the creation of jobs. The common goal is to create cultural and artistic exchange where it would be possible to bring together not only artists and protagonists, but also the local population, which could play an active role in this initiative by participating in the selection of artists for the creation of an artistic company; also participating in festivals and performance seasons as an audience and by being the first to consult the (real or virtual) bilingual document centre on the circus arts.

Expected results and planned impact

The project hopes to create and develop a true cultural and artistic exchange across borders around the circus arts without limits of time and space. This would be made possible thanks to the comparison and sharing of heritage, shared knowledge, values and actions, information and communication channels and the exchange and training of artists, professionals and operators within the sector who make the totality of their skills and experience available. The goal is therefore the birth of cultural and artistic exchange, the creation of a stable artistic company and the creation of a real and virtual bilingual document centre. Our goal is to have a positive and constructive impact as much among professionals of the sector as among enthusiasts and the general public. These great expectations feed off the possibility of creating jobs and promoting the Franco-Italian territories with quality cultural and artistic initiatives (Festival, performance seasons and shows).

Actions

- > The creation of a company and its show
- > The sharing of a digital catalogue for the two document centres that can be consulted online (www.passeparcirque.com/pmb/opac_css). The collaboration and exchange of resources and documents to accompany this communal use.
- > The implementation of a season of performances enabling the distribution of French artists and companies in Italy, as well as Italian artists and companies in France.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Duration of the project: 2008 – 2011

European grant: 411,081 Euros for the entire project

Partners: Associazione Qanat Arte e Spettacolo (Italy), Arc en cirque (France)

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Ping Pong

Created and piloted by Le Muscle and La Cellule, the Ping Pong Project is a European project whose goal is to encourage international artistic exchange in the field of creation in the public space.

Through this project, festival directors are offered advice and expertise leading up to their event as part of their research for performers to include in their venue. A partnership is then put into place with other festivals, thus creating the conditions of an artistic ping-pong. In parallel, Ping Pong assists selected artists in carrying out their projects and organises an onsite location for meeting and hosting professional gatherings as part of the festival.

The central idea is to help in the development and creation of new international networks among cultural structures and institutions, to support artistic teams in the distribution process and to highlight new territories by going out to discover new audiences.

The Ping Pong Project began in 2009 at the Festival de Teatro y Artes de Calle (TAC) in Valladolid, and was initiated by the company Le Muscle. It is now being developed in collaboration with the teams of Le Muscle and La Cellule.

Actions

The Ping Pong Project takes on its full dimension in 2010 with the Stockton International Riverside Festival in Stockton-on-Tees (United Kingdom) and the Cratère/Surfaces festival in Alès (France). These two festivals each host 5 companies from the other country.

These two partner festivals are also committed to carrying out the Ping Pong Project. The European project is constructed thanks to their dynamic and driving investment. Their constructive exchange with the Ping Pong Project team is essential to the implementation of this initial exchange throughout Europe.

The year 2010 will also see the creation of a European booklet and the search for new partners ready to invest in this programme of artistic exchange. A work meeting with potential partners will be organised for 3 July 2010, during the festival in Alès.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Duration of the project: 2010

European grant: none

Partners: La Cellule (France), Le Muscle (France), Cratères/Surfaces (France), Stockton International Riverside Festival (Royaume-Uni), Réseau en Scène Languedoc Roussillon (France), Arcade Arts du spectacle en Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur (France).

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Rendez-vous

Lieux Publics has brought together in situ, a network of organisers who have been associated since 2003, to discuss multi-disciplinary European works in the public space. Throughout two, communally funded, multi-annual programmes (Culture programme 2000) running from 2003-2006 and 2006-2009, the network's activities were characterised by the implementation of projects, artistic production, European residencies and cross-border distribution.

In December of 2009, Lieux Publics initiated a new programme, "Rendez-vous", a project funded by the European Commission (Directorate General of Education and Culture / DGEAC), for the development and evaluation of pilot activities encouraging mobility.

Rendez-vous will carry out a certain number of activities:

> Artists speak to artists: a seminar of artistic discussion on the creation projects by the 17 artists selected by 17 directors of the IN SITU network. This seminar took place from 2-5 February 2010 in Neerpelt (Belgium): support for the writing of new projects and the implementation of these projects by bringing them together.

> Directors' choice: a performance programme intersected with an itinerant festival, the first fruits of a festival of festivals and of pluralistic creations.

> European Nomad residencies: 8 residencies for European artists of varying content so as to experiment and define the clear protocol and specify what is going on behind this portmanteau word: intersecting East-West residencies, residencies of adaptation to another country or language, involvement of the local population, involvement of local artists, transmission of works bringing together a repertory.

> Go & see: 5 intersecting missions in countries outside of the network, meant to identify pertinent artists and professionals and put into place a method of spotting them out.

These actions will form the base of an evaluation, the establishment of a pattern and a re-enactment:

> Each activity will lead to an established pattern that can be followed in all artistic disciplines;

> The publicity will give exposure to the European Commission's activities;

> A European glossary, hosted by the online revue ViaEuropa.eu, will be developed so as to specify a certain number of ideas in the main European languages;

> A downloadable thematic booklet in four languages will be published in the online revue ViaEuropa.eu in January 2011;

> A public meeting will take place in Brussels in February 2011 to discuss the analysis and reimplementation of the event.

Based on each of these actions as well as on the previous experience of the network and each of its members, a summarizing document, to be submitted to the Commission in February 2011, will set out the main principles and analyse the cultural, human and economic effects. The goal is to give the Commission ideas for preparing the new generation of cultural, community-based programmes.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Duration of the project: December 2009 – February 2011

European grant: 225,000 Euros for the entire project

Partners: Lieux publics (France), Arge La Strada (Austria), Artopolis (Hungary), Atelier 231 (France), Ctyri dny (Czech Republic), Københavns Internationale Teater (Denmark), Stichting Terschellings Oerol festival (Netherlands), UZ Ltd (UK).

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TRANS-Mission

The goal of the TRANS-Mission project is to improve practices of assistance toward creation, production and distribution in the sector of the contemporary circus, in the hopes of increasing the sector's overall professionalisation and recognition at the European level.

Emphasis will especially be placed on the writing of shows, which is often neglected within this sector, as well as the preparative steps that can be taken as early as the first phases of a creative work to help in a project's distribution.

These hubs have noticed similar issues within their respective work environments:

> The work behind the preliminary writing of a "script" is often lacking in circus shows, as this aspect of creation is not part of circus artists' usual process. They prefer to create through experimentation.

> Certain shows tour very little due to a lack of professionalism within the creation and a certain lack in terms of distribution.

> Today, the circus is not viewed on merely a national level. To be sustainable, a show must be distributed internationally, as national markets are too limited.

> Large performance structures that bring together many artists require large-scale material and specific equipment and therefore imply a certain number of logistical and technical constraints (today, for example, very few spaces are equipped to host aerial performances). They are also more difficult to distribute due to their high cost. Therefore, large performance structures are currently left out in favour of less ambitious forms, which require a limited number of performers on stage and use a minimal amount of equipment.

From these various observations came the desire to find a communal response through a project whose goal would be:

- > To encourage collective processes.
- > To enable companies to implement a conceptual, dramaturgical phase so as to reinforce the writing of their show.
- > To prepare the circulation of works from early on in their creative process: to analyse, understand and integrate distribution processes and work on the issue of audience and adaptability.
- > To make companies aware of partner networks.
- > To encourage the transmission of knowledge and skills, especially through gatherings between key resource individuals and companies.

To accomplish this, the goal is to closely and continuously support 4 contemporary circus companies with creation projects for 4, 5 or 6 circus artists, offering them a residency at each location, a co-production, as well as marketing assistance among international festivals organised by the partner structures.

At the same time, the partners hope to enable an overall analysis of the issues underlying the project. To this effect, they will organise professional gatherings as well as opportunities in the form of sponsorships to allow the sharing of experiences. The result of this experience and of this analysis will be made available through a publication.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Duration of the project: 01/12/2010 – 30/11/2012
European grant: 160,000 Euros for the entire project
Partners: Espace catastrophe (Belgium), La Central del Circ (Spain), La Grainerie (France), Zelig (Italy).

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