



CASA

MULTIMEDIA MARKET GUIDE
SWEDEN

CIRCUS AND STREET ARTS CIRCUITS

CASA

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SHORT HISTORY AND OVERVIEW OF THE CIRCUS AND STREET ARTS

Swedish contemporary circus is considered to have part of its origin in the street theatre group Jordcirkus in the 1970 and 80s. They were inspired by many of the same ideas and conditions as their contemporaries Circus Oz and Archaos, and could be defined as political circus-theatre. In France the generational energy of that time developed into nouveau cirque, while in Sweden it diminished or was channeled into physical theatre – only to reoccur later. While today contemporary circus is growing wildly and in many different directions in Sweden, street theatre is very rare. The weather may play a role, but that's not the whole story. In recent history street theatre has been strongly associated with the left-oriented political theatre movements of the 1970s – to the times of parents and grandparents – and as such has often been considered old-fashioned. This is changing, however; today we see young circus companies creating outdoor performances with the desire of reaching audiences that don't find their way to theatres. Circus and street art remain connected, though as yet there is no independent outdoor performance sector in Sweden.

As early as the 1980s you could take acrobatics classes in Stockholm. In 1987 Gycklargruppen was formed, a company working with a mix of comedy and circus disciplines and inspired by the audience interaction they had encountered in street performance abroad. The first circus education was started by an artist from Gycklargruppen in 1988.

Another key influence was Stockholm Water Festival inviting international new circus shows to Stockholm in the early 90s. Archaos was a big success, and together with other pioneer companies like Circus Oz and Cirque Plume, they introduced the circus form to the Stockholm audience and to Swedish culture.





In 1995 Cirkus Cirkör created their first show with the support of Stockholm Water Festival – and the rest is history. Cirkus Cirkör has developed at pace through the last twenty years, going from a group of wild and independent young artists to a company that produces shows that tour the world, that founds educational programmes, that pushes for changes in cultural policy to improve the recognition of the circus form, that trains hundreds of thousands of children in circus techniques all over Sweden, and that has won recognition as a regional institution with a mission to develop the art form. Cirkör's importance to the development of the art form in Sweden is immense. Since the end of the 90s the company has been located in Botkyrka – a city that has invested greatly in Cirkus Cirkör and in the development of the contemporary circus field. Subtopia is a cultural cluster owned by Botkyrka, with the mission of building infrastructure for the creation, touring and presentation of circus.

While we are still waiting for the new wave of outdoor performance to hit us, we nonetheless enjoy a variety of artistic approaches within contemporary circus in Sweden. Since the 90s different new circus practitioners have continuously emerged, each with their own vision and idea of what circus is and should be. Circus is performed in many different venues and spaces all over the country; it draws on all the performing arts and there is a growing audience acquainted with the form. In Sweden there is a national federation, open training for professionals, higher and research education, residency systems, networks, and within the circus sector we find an impressive number of international collaborations compared to other art fields.

PUBLIC POLICIES AND SUPPORT SCHEMES

There is no cultural policy for circus and street arts in Sweden, nor are there any official statistics available on government or regional expenditures for circus and street arts, or on estimated audiences. All support and statistics for these art forms go under the headings of theatre and dance, as do all applications for funding. However, Manegen, the Swedish federation for circus, variety and street performance, is currently mapping the sector and collecting statistics, and they have generously made some numbers available for this text.

General Objectives

The objectives for Swedish cultural policy were renewed in 2009 by the Ministry of Culture:

“Culture shall be a dynamic, challenging and independent force built on freedom of speech. Everybody shall have the possibility to participate in cultural life. The development of Swedish society shall be characterized by creativity, diversity and artistic quality.”

To reach these objectives, cultural policy aims to:

- facilitate access to cultural experience and develop creative abilities
- promote quality cooperation and exchange in artistic innovation
- give special attention to children and young people’s right to culture.

Circus and Street Arts

Despite the lack of public policies for circus and street arts, it is clear that the number of projects, artists and organisations receiving public funding has increased in recent years, mainly in circus. This is linked to an increased awareness within the sector. It also has to do with the fact that since 2005 there has been a higher state education within circus, and the fact that,

also in 2005, Cirkus Cirkör was given regional institution status, meaning it would receive permanent funding from The Swedish Arts Council, Stockholm City Council, Stockholm Region, and Botkyrka City Council. In 2009 the Swedish Arts Council supported the development of Manegen, a national federation.

According to statistics from Manegen, in 2014 a total of 2.6 million Euro of public funding from the state, the regions and the cities was allocated to circus and street arts. 1.3 million Euro was state funding, 300,000 Euro was allocated at the regional level, and 1 million Euro at the city level. Of this, 1.5 million Euro was allocated to the regional institution Cirkus Cirkör's activities, 515,000 Euro was awarded to festivals; 310,000 Euro was allocated to independent artists and companies; 59,000 was received by Manegen; 64,000 was spent on the Stockholm region circus consultant; 57,000 was allocated to Karavan in Malmö; and the remaining 90,000 Euro was received by development projects (Autopistes and Circus Glass Royal).



LINDA BEIJER,
CHAIRMAN, MANEGEN

What do you see as your most important task in circus/street arts in your country?

Infrastructure. I mean solid systems and structures that make it possible to study and work professionally. Places to train and create; education in all professions, supporting creation, producing, selling, marketing and touring of shows. Many venues wish to present circus but hesitate due to lack of experience and knowledge. More knowledge of our art forms, especially of street arts, among decision-makers, arts support systems and professionals in other art forms. We have a large engaged audience that wants more.

CIRCUS AND STREET COMPANIES AND ARTISTS CURRENTLY WORKING IN THE COUNTRY

Definitions are not easy when it comes to the world of circus and street arts, which makes counting rather difficult. Moreover, most artists are not defineable in one category, but mix circus disciplines with clowning, magic and theatre, and work in tents as well as on the street, in theatre venues, and in art galleries. The numbers below are to be taken as an estimation. Street artists, clowns and magicians that define their work in a circus context are also included in these figures.

According to Manegen's statistics, there are more than 300 professionally working individual artists in this field in Sweden, plus about 50 Swedish artists having long-term contracts with international companies and staying mainly in Canada, Spain, Belgium or France. There are around 60 artistic companies; roughly 60% define themselves as circus companies, and the rest speak of their work in terms of clowning, magic and/or variety – or a mix of all.

Usually artists work in different companies, and in several companies simultaneously. New companies appear and disappear. The field is in constant flux. More or less everyone in the field knows each other in Sweden, and most of the 350 Swedish artists work and tour abroad frequently. About 10% of them moved to Sweden for education or work, and then stayed there, or still consider Sweden to be their base. Non-Swedish artists that were educated in Sweden or stayed for a period of work, but then left the country altogether, are not included in these numbers.

Some examples:

Cirkus Cirkör

Cirkus Cirkör was founded in 1995 with the vision of establishing the circus art form in Sweden. Since 2005 they have had regional institution status. Today, Cirkör tours the world and has created its

own platform for research and development, Cirkör Lab. Cirkus Cirkör runs a high school circus program and reaches around 30,000 people per year with its circus pedagogical programmes and community work. Current touring shows are *Limits*, *Knitting Peace* and *Underart*.

www.cirkor.se

Svalbard Company

Four young circus artists attended DOCH at Stockholm University of Arts, found each other, and decided to create a company together. They yearn to create truly multidisciplinary work, beyond classifications. Their first and current touring performance is *All Genius All Idiot*.

www.svalbardcompany.com

Water On Mars

Water on Mars is made up of the three jugglers Tony Pezzo, Wes Peden and Patrik Elmnert, who met while studying in DOCH at Stockholm University of the Arts. They are all champions in their field, all having juggled since childhood and toured the world with their art.

www.wateronmarsjuggling.com



Burnt Out Punks

Burnt Out Punks is a group of circus artists that run a fire-driven punk circus which has toured internationally since 2005, performing for about half a million people in fifteen countries. Fire, comedy and spectacular effects are important features of their aesthetics, and many of their performances are created for big outdoor festival contexts. Their current touring shows are *The Stockholm Syndrom* and *Asphalt Apocalypse*.

www.burntoutpunks.com

Kompani Giraff

Kompani Giraff is the offspring of the successful variety show *Salong Giraff*, which performed in different venues for seven years in Stockholm. Today Kompani Giraff is an artistic company producing circus and variety performances that tour in the Stockholm region, Sweden and the Nordic countries. Current productions are *Tvärslöjd*, a magic and acrobatics show for children, and *2% Impact*, a circus investigation of the question of human free will.

www.kompanigiraff.se



WILLE CHRISTIANI,
ARTIST AND DIRECTOR CIRCUS ARTS,
BURNT OUT PUNKS

What do you see as your most important task in circus/street arts in your country?

I believe that my most important task in circus and street art in Sweden is to create art that treats the audience as the most important part of a creation. The role of the artist in society is of great importance. This role includes introspection but must not end up alienating the audience. My many years in the world of contemporary circus and outdoor performance in Sweden have given me knowledge of the many difficulties involved in being an artist. I need to keep creating art and share that knowledge with the next generation.

FESTIVALS AND VENUES PROGRAMMING CIRCUS AND STREET ARTS

There is no existing mapping of Swedish festivals and venues presenting circus and street arts. Venues or festivals exclusively presenting circus and/or street arts are very rare; however, several performing arts and music festivals/venues programme circus and street shows alongside other forms. Estimating the number of venues and festivals that frequently present Swedish or international companies, it's around 25. In the autumn of 2015 a network of these venues was created, CircusNet Sweden, which will develop its agenda during 2016. The Swedish national touring theatre Riksteatern has also recently shown a tendency to programme more circus in the venues in their touring circuits around Sweden. If we were to count festivals and venues that have either an outspoken commitment to presenting circus / street arts, or just an obvious record of doing so, we would get only a handful.

Some examples:

Stockholm Street Festival

Founded in 2010 and produced by Funnybones Production, this festival takes place every year in July, filling the area Kungsträdgården in Stockholm city centre with busking by Swedish and international street artists.

www.stockholmstreetfestival.se

Halmstad International Street Festival

Halmstad International Street Festival has been an annual four-day festival since 1998, inviting street and performance artists from all over Europe as well as from other parts of the world to perform in the streets, alleys, squares and parks of Halmstad.

www.halmstad.se

Hangaren Subtopia & Subcase

Hangaren Subtopia is situated in Botkyrka and was inaugurated in 2010. Hangaren presents Swedish and international circus shows, from intimate to large-scale. Since 2009, Subtopia presents an annual showcase for Nordic contemporary circus, Subcase, which gathers some 300 presenters and artists over four days.

www.subtopia.se / www.subcase.se

Stockholm Culture Festival

Stockholm Culture Festival is a six-day cultural city fest created in 2006. The artistic leader Claes Karlsson was a pioneer in bringing international circus shows to Sweden in the early 90s and still today partly dedicates the festival to circus and street shows.

www.kulturfestivalen.stockholm.se

Stora Teatern

Stora Teatern in Gothenburg was inaugurated in 1859, a beautiful three-balcony theatre that is today a well-preserved historic building filled with contemporary performing arts. Stora Teatern presents Swedish and international theatre, dance, circus and music – including six circus productions per year.

<http://goteborg.se/wps/portal/storat>

Karavan

Karavan is situated in a former garage in Malmö and run by the circus company Cirkus Saga. It was inaugurated in 2009 as a venue and working space for independent practitioners, with the aim of establishing contemporary circus in southern Sweden. Karavan presents Swedish and international companies in an annual festival.

www.karavanmalmo.se

Umeå Teaterförening

Umeå teaterförening is part of Riksteatern's touring circuit for performing arts, and presents theatre, dance, circus and performance. Through the years they have increasingly booked international and Swedish circus and street shows. In 2014 in the context of Cultural Capital Umeå 2014, they presented a festival dedicated solely to contemporary circus.

www.umeateaterforening.se

PERNILLA APPELQVIST,
PROGRAMMING PRODUCER,
STORA TEATERN

In terms of audience and market development – what are the most important challenges for circus/street arts in your country?

Stora Teatern's aim is to present a broad spectrum of diverse international circus shows. This is a challenge for the marketing department: to inform the audience that these shows, being characteristically so different from each other, are all so-called 'contemporary circus'. If the audience, after having seen an entertaining acrobatic show like *Cuisine & confessions*, returns with expectations to see something similar, they might be very confused to see an absurd dark nouvelle magie show like *Oktobre*.





EDUCATION AND TRAINING

DOCH _ Stockholm University Of The Arts

In Sweden there is one high level education for circus artists: the Circus Programme at DOCH in Stockholm. Since 2005 this three-year programme has led to a University Degree, Bachelor of Arts in Circus, 180 ECTS. Eighteen students are admitted every second year. Applicants come from all over the world. The programme focuses on artistic experimentation and methodology in order to develop each student's personal artistic voice and process of creation.

DOCH also offers research education, housing several research projects within the field. Moreover, in 2016 the first Masters Programme in Contemporary Circus Practices will begin, aimed at practicing circus artists wishing to deepen and expand their relationship to circus craft and discourse within the contemporary field. The Programme comprises two years of advanced studies. It is research preparatory and qualifies the student as a Master of Fine Arts.

By establishing collaborations with numerous individuals and networks within the national and international circus arena – teachers, prominent artists and researchers – a diverse environment is created at DOCH, facilitating the ability of students to relate their activities to broader artistic and social contexts.

www.doch.se

Secondary School Circus Educations

There are three secondary schools with programmes in circus, for students aged 16-18. The programmes last three years and are all part of the public Swedish secondary school system. They are open for applicants from all over Sweden.



SUSANNE REUSZNER,
HEAD OF COMMUNICATIONS,
CIRKUS CIRKÖR

In terms of audience and market development – what are the most important challenges for circus/street arts in your country?

To keep on communicating that circus is an art form with various expressions and artists, and to show that circus is high quality performing arts but also an open art form that takes an active part in society. Also, to be better in communication via digital media. Circus has a great advantage in being visual, communicative and not so dependent on the spoken word, but we often lack in competence and budget. Finally, to encourage more presenters and venues to present circus on a regular basis.

The circus programme of Vasa Secondary School in Gävle was founded in 1988, and has educated many of the active professional artists in Sweden. The programme will be closed in the near future. This education has been focused mainly on a 'traditional circus' perspective.

www.gavle.se/Utbildning--barnomsorg/Gymnasieskola

Cirkus Cirkör / St Botvids circus programme started in 2000 as a cooperation between Cirkus Cirkör and the municipality of Botkyrka. The education has a focus on contemporary circus and gives a broad educational base for further artistic studies as well as university qualification.

www.cirkor.se

In Jämtland in northern Sweden a secondary school programme for winter acrobatics was founded in 2004 with the support of Cirkus Cirkör. After 10 years of educating young winter acrobats the education was closed in 2014.

www.jgy.se

Training For Professional Circus Artists

Manegen, the Swedish federation for circus, variety and street performance, organises open training five days a week for professional circus artists in Karavan (Malmö) and Cirkus Cirkör's circus hall (Botkyrka). In 2014 the total number of training sessions was 2547 – since then however the number of members of Manegen has increased. Manegen is funded by the Swedish Arts Council to organise the open training.

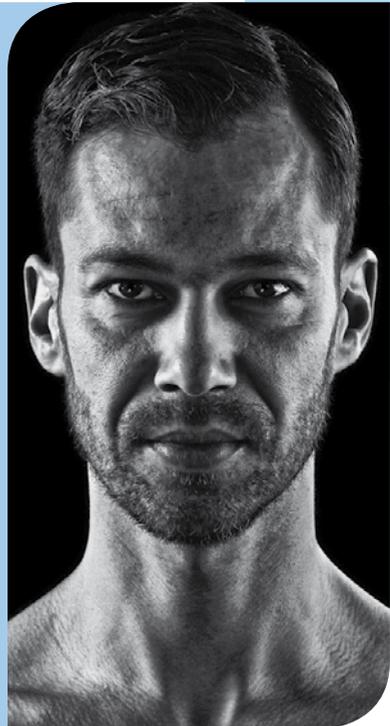
Courses For Children And Young People

All over the country, organisations and institutions of different sizes organise courses and training for children and young people. 22 culture schools in Sweden offer circus courses for children up to 18 years of age; 1354 children took part in these courses in 2014. Cirkus Cirkör trains over 30,000 children each year all over Sweden in their courses and training programmes. On top of this, around 30 organisations in the country offer circus courses for some 8,000 additional children.

JOHN-PAUL ZACCARINI,
HEAD OF CIRCUS MASTERS
PROGRAMME DOCH, STOCKHOLM
UNIVERSITY OF THE ARTS

What do you see as your most important task in circus/street arts in your country?

To create alternative networks of production, cooperation and dissemination that sponsor work that takes risks with the notion of circus, looking beyond the circus sector for alliances to help it become more relevant to actually existing conditions of being-in-the-world right now. Circus is often comfortingly sealed within its own frames of reference. It is contemporary only with regards to itself. In comparison to the field of current performance practices, circus is actually rather conservative.



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43

⊠ B 44

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A 43

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A.C. 46

B.C. 47

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A. 45

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B. 48

A. 48

CREATION AND RESIDENCY CENTRES

Creation supporting centres in the field of circus hardly exist in Sweden, and for street arts there are none that are defined as such. Residency systems are rare, and co-producing and commissioning have not been common ways to work in Swedish performing arts. However, things are slowly changing. During the last few years some regional institutions in different parts of the country have produced and co-produced performances in collaboration with circus companies and artists. More and more venues and festivals over the country have an openness to the idea of welcoming artistic companies not only to present their performances, but also to create them. Centres can however not apply funding from the state or regions to support or commission artistic creation; the only way to fund residency programs at the moment is through applying for funding for specific international collaborations or Nordic artistic development programmes. For this reason it is still very rare to find funded residencies offering more than a rehearsal space and maybe accommodation.

Some examples:

Cirkör Lab

Cirkör LAB is Cirkus Cirkör's platform for research and development, where they offer residencies to external artists and companies, both national and international. Through the LAB, Cirkör wishes to create a place where cross-boundary arts and science meet, with circus as the common denominator.

www.cirkor.se

Subtopia

Subtopia is situated in Botkyrka, where it houses many arts organisations in a cluster of eight buildings spread over 15,000 sqm. Subtopia supports creation, research and artistic development,

and offers residencies and workshops to individual artists and artistic companies, as well as providing information and advice on circus and street arts.

www.subtopia.se

Orionteatern

Orionteatern is an independent theatre in Stockholm that is known for having presented international and local circus performances in their industrial space since the 1980s. At times they also support local companies in creation. A recent example is the co-production of *Gynoïdes* with CirkusPerspektiv in winter 2016.

www.orionteatern.se

Östgötateatern

Östgötateatern in Norrköping is an example of a regional institution showing an interest in producing and co-producing circus performances. A recent example is the co-production of *Tänk om* with Cirk L in 2015.

www.ostgotateatern.se



KIKI MUUKKONEN,
ARTISTIC PROGRAMMING DIRECTOR,
HANGAREN IN SUBTOPIA

What do you see as your most important task in circus/street arts in your country?

At the moment I find the most important task within my role – which is to support creation and to present shows to an audience – and at a time when infrastructure and support systems are being built on many levels, is to push for discussion about the content of the artistic work being created and presented. How does it relate to the world of today? What is the intended relationship between the performances and the audience? What are the values we defend, and what are the guiding lights of our artistic choices?

ADVOCACY AGENCIES AND PROFESSIONAL INFORMATION PROVIDERS

In Sweden there are two organisations that work consistently on information and advocacy for circus and street arts in order to develop state, regional and city policies that affect the conditions for artists and companies working professionally in the field. There is also a Baltic-Nordic network with similar goals on a Baltic-Nordic level.

Manegen – Federation For Circus, Variety And Street Performance

Manegen is the Swedish national federation for circus, variety and street performance, and a national member organisation for professionals within the sector. Their mission is to exist as a forum for information and support for the circus, variety and street performance community within Sweden. Manegen offers daily circus training for professionals in Stockholm and Malmö, funded by the Swedish Arts Council. The federation works to create better working conditions and possibilities for their members, and to give them a stronger place in the cultural sphere and market. Manegen also organises capacity building in different forms for professional artists. It was founded in 2009 as an initiative of several organisations, artists and producers, in a process that was financially supported by the municipality of Botkyrka, Subtopia and the Swedish Arts Council.

www.manegen.org

VIKTORIA DALBORG, ARTIST AND DIRECTOR, KOMPANI GIRAFF

In terms of audience and market development – what are the most important challenges for circus/ street arts in your country?

One challenge is that circus competes with other art forms with more economic resources, when it comes to marketing, producing, selling shows to the venues. Programmers should take risks and realise that by booking circus they can build new audiences. An important step for the art form's development is to get a greater diversity of circus companies in the market. More companies must have financial support so that we can develop and establish ourselves artistically.



Cirkusakademien

Cirkusakademien was founded in 1973 with the aim of preserving circus as a recognised art form in Sweden, and spreading knowledge about and promoting the circus arts. Cirkusakademien has mainly worked for and represented traditional circuses. They work with local and state authorities on issues like changing regulations to facilitate touring with tents and arguing for the importance of securing the existence of touring traditional circuses. Since 1975 they have built up one of the biggest archives in Europe on traditional circus, containing books, pictures and props from famous acts and artists. Six times a year Cirkusakademien publishes a magazine.

www.cirkusakademien.se



CASE STUDIES OF THREE SUCCESSFUL AUDIENCE AND MARKET DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Buskincity

BuskinCity is a collaboration with municipalities and business associations in ten different cities spread around the southern part of Sweden, from Stockholm down to Lund. It is a pilot project, to be developed over three years, in which every participating city provides an equipped space for street performing. The goal is to grow with 5-10 new cities per year. BuskinCity invites professional street performers to busk in the cities by giving them an online calendar to book themselves in.

BuskinCity was conceived in 2014 by Thorsten Andreassen, Festival Director of Stockholm Street Festival, and Ulf Andersson, Festival Director of International Street Theatre Festival in Halmstad, both having vast experience of street theatre and performing in public space. They imagine the project as a way to introduce performing arts in city centres, without putting the burden of finance on the city and without motivation from commercial stakeholders – it is the artists themselves that set the terms, with no obligations to funders or venues. The artists will bring their art to the public space, and be very free in their expression.

www.buskincity.com

The Stockholm Region Circus Consultant

In spring 2014 the Stockholm region decided, as a result of Manegen's consistent lobbying, to employ what is called a 'Circus Consultant' with the aim to open the door to the world of circus for young people in the region. This makes it possible for municipalities and schools to book performances subsidised by the region. The Circus Consultant's mission is to ensure that children and youth in the region will encounter circus arts, to provide performances as well as inspiration and education to schools and other local organisers, and also to educate circus performers in reaching young target groups.

<http://danskonsulentdis.se/cirkuskonsulenten>

Autopistes: Circus Dissemination

Autopistes was an international cooperation project that aimed to create touring networks for circus performances in the Nordic countries, in southern Europe and in North America. The idea was to get venues and festivals in these areas to collaborate in order to improve the flow of artistic work. The partners organising the project were Subtopia from Sweden, La Grainerie from France, Institut Ramon Llull from Spain, and Tohu from Canada. During 2014-2015, Autopistes organised three types of activities:

- Workshops for venues and festivals with the purpose of sharing knowledge, discussing artistic work, and designing structures for collaborative touring networks.
- Experimental tours with chosen artistic projects to try out methods of collaboration.
- Seminars where experiences and good practices from the projects were gathered and evaluated.

As a result of the project, there today exists two new defined networks of venues and festivals: a North American network of some fifteen partners in USA and Canada, and a Swedish network of some 25 partners. The Swedish network is called CircusNet Sweden and is still in its development phase, with the mission and activities not yet defined.

<https://autopistes.wordpress.com>







CASA is a new European support programme designed by five arts organisations to equip professionals from the contemporary circus and outdoor creation sectors to work and cooperate internationally, raising their ambition and capacity to work at international level.

This brochure focuses on the particular cultural context providing information and analysis of cultural policies, cultural infrastructures and local artistic realities.

www.casa-circuits.eu

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