



# CIRCUS

I LOVE YOU

Annual report 2019

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**An utopian circus:** a travelling venue where acrobats gather to express a dreamed vision of the world

**An acrobatic action:** an action that combines high risk with extreme mastery of risk management leading into a complex happening

**A vegan circus :** a circus not displaying any animals, proposing vegan food for its staff and audience, and taking action to minimize the ecological impact of cultural events

# A new circus is born

**"Circus I love you was created to fill the void of a circus without animals touring with its tent in the Nordic countries. Our crew is an international mix of mobile millenials embracing the nomad circus life on tour. The collaboration is a logical continuum for the slow life trend standing for voluntary simplicity, power of action and culture for all. We come from five different countries and through our acrobatics want to generate for the audience a peaceful inspiration towards taking action in their own lives."**

Starting a new circus is an acrobatic action in itself. 2019 is the second year of activity for Circus I love you AB. It is now possible to draw the first statistics, evolutions and results of the company. The artistic guidelines that are the main foundations of the company are now proven to make sense for the audience, the press and the professional field.

## Audience

At the end of the show Circus I love you, the artists stays on stage. It is the ideal moment to gather feedback directly from the audience. It is easy for everyone in the room to feel the love, the feeling of happiness, and the enthusiasm in the air.

**"It is the best show I have ever seen, and I have seen Iron Maiden several times !"**

As was the ambition, the show has an effect of making the people want to take action. They express that they feel like they should take again the bass guitar that has been in their attic for the 15 past years.

## Press

The critical eyes of the press has managed to point out most of the points that are dear to Circus I love you such as gender equality, happy simplicity and expression through acrobatics itself. Circus I love you is most of the time the biggest happening of a festival and benefits therefore of good media coverage gathered with the help of the organizers. The critics are positive, making shows often sold out.

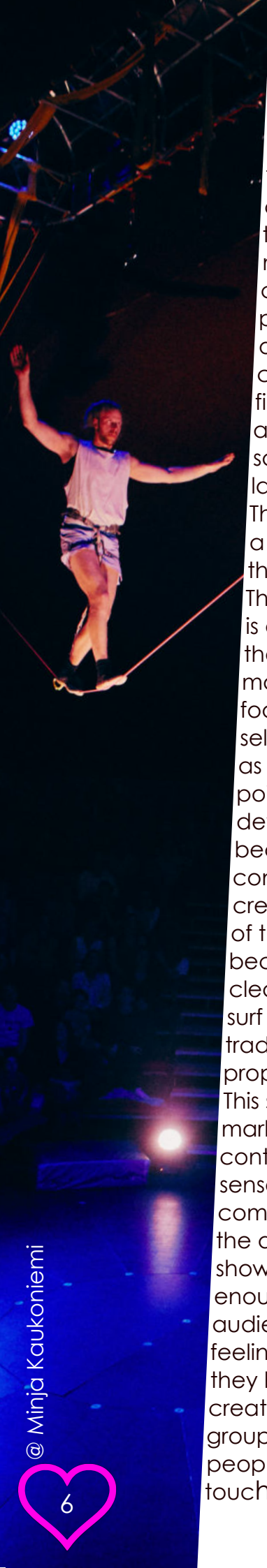
## Artists and programmers

During the 2019 tour, Circus I love you has participated in some major events for the professional field of European contemporary circus such as the festival Circusstad in Rotterdam,

the festival Circa, and the Fresh Circus (International seminar for the development of circus arts). Circus I love you was in those events in the center of the talks between professionals of the field. The artistic statements and propositions of company have lead to the most interesting discussions between actors of the field. A big part of professionals think it is one of the best proposition around in Europe nowadays, some even talking about a new era for contemporary circus. Another big part is questioning the relevance of Circus I love you being part of a network of organizations subsidized by the state, their main argument being that the show is so popular to the audience, it might even run with the traditional circus business model.







### A bridge between contemporary and traditional circus.

The first attempt of the company to use the traditional circus business model was in June 2019. The company now has its own point of sales in the tent and on the internet. The company organized for the first time a marketing strategy and the handling of ticket sales online and on site. This lasted 2 weeks in two towns. These were the pilot weeks for a bigger implementation of this model in 2020. The financial result of the pilot is approximately 0, meaning that the money invested for marketing, transportation and food got covered by the sellings, but no money came as surplus. It is a good starting point that will need development in order to become able to ideally contribute to the salaries of the crew and the overhead costs of the company in order to become sustainable. There is clearly a challenge in trying to surf the well known model of traditional circus while proposing alternative content. This seems to remain a marketing challenge, since the content of the show makes sense for the audience. The company is rejecting some of the aspects of traditional circus shows, but also embracing enough of them, so that the audience goes out with the feeling of understanding what they have seen: a circus show created and carried out by a group of young and dynamic people with a modern touch.

## Circus I love you the multiple bridge factory

As the company was recently founded, its impact on the surrounding is discovered and understood more as days go by.

### A bridge between countries.

Sweden is more of an importer than exporter of contemporary circus. The essence of the activity of Circus I love you is something new in Sweden and it will therefore take some time before it clearly has its foothold in Sweden. This is why it so far is exported mostly into the countries that have an existing place for this kind of business, like France or Belgium. Those countries however are more exporters of contemporary circus than importers. Circus I love you is facing administrative challenges because of this. 2019 has been a very effective year when it comes to sharpening the administrative tools in order to face the challenges brought by the international character of the activities. On the other hand, the organizers collaborating with the company also need to sharpen their tools. Thus the activity of the company is working as a facilitator for exchanges between European countries.

On the audience side, it is well understood that the artists come from different countries, and this reinforces the idea that diversity is a good thing. Something good is brought from somewhere far.



## A bridge to the ecological transition.

As the world is going through a major ecological crisis, it is a necessity to rethink the way the society works. Circus I love you is concerned, and its entire touring concept is made to keep green house effect gas production as low as possible. Traveling by the road gives the possibility to keep track of the precise amount of fuel consumed during the tour. After our calculations, the amount of fuel consumed per touring year happens to be nearly equivalent to performing once with the same amount of people in New York.

On the other hand, the company is addressing this issue to the programmers, that would like to book a show on the other side of Atlantic, and tries to make them aware of the ecological consequences and work against short term engagements on distant places.

Transitioning to the traditional circus business model is also a way for Circus I love you to become more free to decide for a more geographically coherent tour and minimize its ecological impact. The culture industry is very slow at organizing around this idea, so Circus I love you is taking the initiative with the hope to succeed faster.

## A bridge between personal and professional.

Staying in caravans around the circus tent is the one way to guarantee a good level of security for the building in case of both theft and weather hazards. Since Circus I love you is trying to group the tour to minimize the travels, the crew ends up living together in the camp for some months in a row. The activity of the company is in its essence affecting the personal life of its crew in a way that is not common in western society. Therefore the company had to be flexible and proactive, to be the actor for the personal wellbeing of the crew, by for example facilitating the visits of friends and families on tour in relation to logistic, schedule, living and food.



@ Minja Kautoniemi



# Peace, love and other statements

**Showing reality** / Not hiding is the major quality of the circus performer. Circus cannot fake high stakes. The performer cannot pretend to be or to do anything else than what is happening.

**Questioning people's relation to death and failure** / If circus cannot fake high stakes, it can make it happen for real. This is why the tension towards failure has been in a big focus in circus performances. It could be just related to pride (a juggler dropping an object), but also about death (an acrobat performing a physical stunt). We believe that the fear of failure prevents people from trying. The fear of the unknown prevents people from initiating adventures, or demonstrating what they believe is important. The acrobat is a Joker, a mirror to every people in the audience that can question what is important in life.

**Love** / If circus can be a tool for making people reflects on their life, then, the main high stake that we want to display on stage is love. The love will not be acted, the audience does not need to understand it. It will be present and shown, and the audience will feel it.

**Music & Circus** / Music and circus have many similarities. Both carry a long learning process to master the discipline, both work with the body and with objects (instruments) outside the body. Both communicate emotions, energies, and ideas wordlessly, and can thus provide an easy access for enjoying the show to a wide audience whether you are an expert or a first timer.

**Travel** / Circus I love you states for creations in circus tents. By the nomad life-style and by having an own mobile venue, we have a mean to reach new audiences, a space welcoming artistic research and proposition of a new action model for contemporary circus.









# Circus I love you (the show)

Circus I love you is the main activity of the company Circus I love you. The show toured from mid-April to mid-July and then all of October and November. The organizing of the tour is happening all year around. From April 2019 the production team started to organize the tour of 2020.




@ Minja Koukonen

"Our performance is a cross-composition of live music and circus arts, using the composition tools of long musical pieces like progressive rock, jazz or classical music. The performers of Circus I love you are 8 swiss army knife -acrobat/musicians from all corners of Europe. Our circus is absurd, death defying, simple and happy. We direct our power of action into a family friendly show promoting peace and love."



## 100% Circus

A photograph of two men performing on a stage. The man on the left, with a beard and long hair, is holding a large acoustic guitar and looking upwards. The man on the right, with blonde hair, is in a dynamic pose, looking towards the first man. Both are wearing skirts. The background is dark with a starry, glittery effect.

Circus I love you took over in September the administration of the show 100% Circus, that was previously carried out by the company Möjlighetsministeriet. As Mikkel Hobbitz and Julien Auger, founders of this project, are also part of the original crew of Circus I love you, this transition has been smooth. The show premiered on the 27th of January 2017 in Landskrona.

Two men wearing skirts are going through weird experiments. Sometimes they obviously play with the nerves of the audience. Sometimes they clearly do their best and fail. Sometimes they should obviously fail but surprise with the success. The audience does not know what to believe anymore and has to face a demonstration of tricks that belongs to a myth or to story telling.

Eternal apnea

One finger stand

Hair hanging

A shrimp lifting a titan

An aluminium pipe that sounds like an alphorn

A credible levitation

All of this developed in a chill and meditative atmosphere with a pinch of some Monty Python like humour.

A big glittery curtain as scenography.

The soundtrack is mixing live and recorded traditional music with surprising sonority from around the globe.



# I love you orchestra



@ Photographyk pour Le mans fait son cirque

The crew of the Circus I love you show is composed of acrobat/musicians. Therefore the company is also proposing to organizers to book a concert. This concert is only proposed to the organizers that already book the show Circus I love you. This makes the concert a rare happening. The crew has rehearsed a repertoire mixing traditional balkan and klezmer music with some rap, swing and calypso to guarantee a dancing mood and good party vibes.



# Bloom

**Circus I love you is deeply integrated in the field of contemporary circus in Sweden.**

As such, the two artistic directors of the company Sade Kamppila and Julien Auger have directed the 2019 new Cirkus Cirkör production Bloom. The company has also participated in the production as logistical help by providing with truck and drivers for the first tour organized for Bloom.

**In this new Cirkus Cirkör performance you're invited to a world of flowers, classical music and jaw dropping circus.**

An international cast of five multi talented artists sets out to change the world through joy, risk assessment and facing fears.

We learn to live in fear and we can create stress from everything going on in our basic everyday lives. We feel the pressure to not stand out, and trying is seen as the first step towards failure. We own more things than ever before, we look perfect in our pictures, but does that really make us happy? In Bloom, the artists face fear and stress and instead of turning it into terrible political decisions, they turn it into concrete circus actions and creativity. Through dedication, collaboration and joy they turn fear into poetry of risk.

"Our aim is to impress people with (super)human skills, to make them laugh, let them feel stressed and then release their tension." -Ben Collis

As the artists fly through the air on teeterboard, swing in trapezes and ropes, lift each other, do pair acrobatics and mouth hang, they embody the soul of circus: That you don't have to give in to normalcy, different is good, you should be as unique as you feel. Let yourself bloom.



# Duo Sabok

During the year, the bigger tent of Circus I love you has also been a place for daily training for the artists of the company but also for guests artists that came to visit the tour.

The space has also been used for cross-educational purpose. The artists have learned about sound, light, and production technique, when the technicians and producers have learned acrobatic technique.

This cluster of shared knowledge has been a possibility for Saana Leppänen and Kert Ridaste to develop their duo show. Their duo Sabok's new creation is called Don't leave me hanging, and it is a performance where the artists are not saving their sweat, but rather pushing the limits of their exhaustion. Sabok goes back to the basics of a show that celebrates the human body, beauty, and strength.





## Vegan circus

Vegan circus will be a circus dinner show. It will be held under the 21m tent of the company and will welcome up to 200 people for dinner. The idea is to propose an evening event composed of a 4 course vegan dinner, high level circus acts and live music. During 2019 this show has been developed mainly on the conceptual level. The process was also started on the floor with a 2 weeks residency time with the whole crew at the end of October. The show should be ready to play in spring 2021.

## Utopia

Utopia will propose a similar experience as the show Circus I love you, including a composition of both acrobatics and music, but on much smaller scale logistics. The hope is to then be able to tour in smaller towns and places that have fewer cultural propositions. The plan is to borrow a 12m round tent from Cirkus Xanti (Norwegian circus company) to spend a shorter time for setting up and down with a smaller crew, while getting an audience capacity of about 150 people. The creation process will take place in the spring 2020.

## Circus I love you two

This new production will be a patchwork of 4 different pieces of 20 minutes long, each created by 4 different circus couples living a nomadic lifestyle. Those 4 small shows will be gathered into one full length circus performance about love performed in the 21m round tent of Circus I love you. This show is now in its writing phase and should premier in Spring 2022.



To become economically sustainable, Circus I love you needed to upgrade its audience capacity. This has led to investments:

- a new circus tent of 21m in diameter
- a small circus tent of 6m in diameter that is used as ticket office
- a tribune fitting the 21m tent and seating 500 people
- a wooden stage on a metal frame of 8m in diameter
- a 26T truck that can carry the entire tribune

## 2019 a year of big investments

To become autonomous on tour to be able to carry out the business model of traditional circus, the company also bought a 18T truck that has been rearranged into:

- a storage space of 4m<sup>2</sup>
- a fully equipped kitchen
- a shower room
- a toilet

On the other hand, the 16m tent of the tour of 2018 became obsolete. It got sold to the youth circus Circo all'in circa to Udine (Italy).

KOS 29R



# Credits

## Circus I love you (the show)

CIRQUE / MUSIQUE (CREATION)

Sade Kamppila, Oskar Rask, Julien Auger, Benoît Fauchier, Mikkel Hobitz Filtenborg, Saana Leppänen, Thibaud Rancoeur, Andil Dahl

CIRQUE / MUSIQUE (INTERPRETATION)

Sade Kamppila, Oskar Rask, Julien Auger, Benoît Fauchier, Kert Ridaste, Saana Leppänen, Thibaud Rancoeur, Periklis Dazy

COOK: Davide Arra

TECHNIQUE: Jose Carlos Ferrer

PRODUCTION: Julia Simon

ADMINISTRATION: Pelle Tillö

PHOTOS: Minja Kaukoniemi & Mikko Pirinen

CO-PRODUCERS: Sirkus Aikamoinen, Möjlighetsministeriet, Kozh productions, Le Manège - scène nationale de Reims, CIEL - cirque en Lorraine, Théâtre Firmin Gémier / La Piscine

SUPPORT / RESIDENCIES: Wintervuur Festival - Antwerpen, Subtopia / KKNord - Stockholm, Le Manège - scène nationale de Reims, Theater op de Markt - Neerpelt, Cirk'Eole Montigny-lès-Metz / Les Transversales - scène conventionnée cirque de Verdun, Cirkus Cirkör - Stockholm, Cirko - Helsinki, Bing Bang Circus - Rennes

FUNDINGS: Arts Promotion Centre Finland, Institut français / Région Bretagne, french institut of Sweden and finnish institut of Sweden, The Swedish Arts Council, The city of Stockholm, Region Stockholm, Svenska Kulturfonden

## 100% Circus

BY AND WITH: Mikkel Hobitz and Julien Auger

MAGIC EYE: Etienne Saglio

POET: Kajsa Bohlin

PHOTOS: Sade Kamppila, Julia Simon, Thor Hauknes

TECHNIQUE: Sade Kamppila or Moa Autio

BOOKING: Julia Simon

RESIDENCIES:

La Cascade, Pôle national des arts du cirque (France), L'Onde Théâtre centre d'art, Vélizy (France), Landskrona Theater (Sweden), Theater Maskinen, Riddarhyttan (Sweden)

# Statistics 2019

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Circus I love you (the show)

months on tour: 5

cities: 11

performances: 55

audience reached: 24 500

100% Circus

months on tour: 1

cities: 5

performances: 10

audience reached: 3 100

I love you Orchestra

cities: 2

performances: 2

audience reached: 300

Total audience reached: 27 900 people.



# CIRCUS

I LOVE YOU

Circus I love you

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