

CIRCUS

I LOVE YOU



ANNUAL REPORT 2023

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As spring reached the Nordic countries, the activities of Circus I love you continued in April with tour preparations and constructions at the company's headquarters in Klippan, followed by a tour in Sweden partially organised by Circus I love you.

During the year the company kept on developing on many levels. The most noteworthy success was taking steps towards understanding better marketing for live performances on social media. The logistic upgrades were also bringing an expected success. The attempt of integrating new personnel into the circus was not bringing the outcome wished for.

In a nutshell, the year 2023 was packed with activities during which Circus I love you reached the so far largest amount of audience in its history. The year ended on a positive note, as the activities for 2024 were already well drafted out.



Self-produced events



The spring season of 2023 started with the annual month of preparation works at Circus I love you's headquarters in Klippan, Skåne. In addition to the yearly activities of servicing and passing the technical controls of the heavy weight vehicles, some large scale building work took place. As a change to the touring logistics of 2022, the decision was made to tour in the future with 3 trucks instead of 2 with the big tent, and 2 trucks instead of 1 with the small tent. This decision came as a solution to fix an accommodation possibility to the many employees without their own driver's license and/or caravan, and to acquire more space for packing, making the loading and unloading of the trucks safer and more efficient for the whole crew.

In March 2023 the company bought a swap-body trailer to be transformed into 4 rooms, and a new module to be built into a shower/toilet. These building works, as well as building some new platforms for the musicians to stand on for the performance, took place from April to May.

During 2023 Circus I love you took a large leap forward as an event organiser. Three different tours were organised during the year. First of these was a 2-week tour with the larger circus tent and I love you two -performance in Sweden before performing as part of the Göteborg city's 400-year celebration festival.

I love you two visited the cities of Bollnäs and Gävle, where the circus had already performed in the previous years with the performance Utopia. The 3 shows in Bollnäs were 83% full and the 4 performances in Gävle were sold out. In Gävle a collaboration with the local Kulturskolan's youth circus took place. The youth circus organised their ending of the year performance in Circus I love you's tent during the week.

During July started the performances with the smaller circus tent, first a 6-week tour in Finland and Åland in collaboration with the Finnish company Sirkus Aikamoinen with the performance Beauties. The performance visited mostly cities where Utopia had performed during the previous year, as an attempt to further install Circus I love you as a locally recognised touring circus of high quality. One new town was also introduced into the tour, that visited Naantali, Hyvinkää, Kerava, Salo, Raseborg in Finland and Mariehamn in Åland. The performances of Beauties were 90% sold out, with the most successful towns being Kerava and Mariehamn.

Collaboration with Riksteatern

Directly following the tour with the smaller tent in Finland and Åland, Circus I love you crossed the sea to Sweden. The tour continued with a long-awaited collaboration with Riksteatern and the performance Utopia, that had premiered in 2021.

With Riksteatern the collaboration was born from a common wish to uplift the circus in Sweden. Riksteatern had taken on the mission of building more possibilities for circus to tour nationwide, and hired a person specifically in charge of making this mission happen. Circus I love you had on its side gathered the knowledge needed to tour with a circus tent and collaborate with institutions most often specialising in indoor performances.

With the collaboration between Circus I love you and Riksteatern, the aim was to produce a tour together that would on one hand take down the economic risk that Circus I love you needs to carry while organising performances alone, and on the other hand help the local Riksteatern-organisations to successfully organise their first performances taking place in a circus tent. Riksteatern would provide Circus I love you with a minimum guaranteed fee for each town visited, reach out to all the local Riksteatern-organisations with the Utopia -performance as part of the catalog of proposed performances for the term 2023-2024, and collaborate on the marketing and media visibility of the performances. Circus I love you would work in close communication with the local Riksteatern-organisations to guide them through the process of finding an appropriate space for the tent, contacting the right officials and applying for the needed permits to carry out the event. Circus I love you also carried out a lot of the marketing for the performances and was responsible for the ticket office of the events.

The first 5 weeks of tour took place in August-September 2023 when Utopia visited Växjö, Tjörn, Motala, Eskilstuna and Simrishamn. The tour was an amazing success for all parties, resulting in 98% sold out performances.

The collaboration will continue with another 5 weeks of performances in Sweden in May 2024.



Touring internationally in 2023

Circus I love you continued collaborating with numerous theaters, festivals and event organisers who programmed the performance I love you two at their venues during the season 2023. The tour spanned from Karlsruhe, Germany to Marseille, Bourg-en-Bresse, La Seyne-sur-mer, Andrexieux Bouthéon, Eurre, Alès and Herouville Saint-Clair in France, and visited also two countries for the first time in the history of Circus I love you: Torino in Italy and Meyrin in Switzerland.

The year started with some out-of-the-ordinary performances in January, as I love you two was presented in Biennale Internationale des Arts du Cirque in Marseille. The festival is the largest festival dedicated to contemporary circus in Europe, and a key visibility point not only for the local audience, but for the international network of the contemporary circus field professionals and potential collaborators of Circus I love you. I love you two played 4 sold out performances at the festival and recieved a lot of new interest and contacts for its work.

The tent of Circus I love you remained set up in Marseille throughout the month-long festival to host 3 other performances hosted by the event.



I love you two was also presented in Sweden at Göteborgs Jubileumsfestival organised to celebrate the 400-year anniversary of the city of Göteborg. All 5 performances were fully booked.

The crew of I love you two was back on tour for the autumn starting in September. The convoi drove down to Karlsruhe in Germany, to return to perform at the Atoll Festival organised by Tollhaus. Performances followed in France in Bourg-en-Bresse as a guest of Théâtre de Bourg. Just 100 km away, but on the side of Switzerland, I love you two was performed in Meyrin hosted by Théâtre Forum Meyrin. The tour crossed back over to the French side of the border, and performances followed in La Seyne-sur-mer as a guest of Le Pôle, then in Andrexieux Bouthéon invited by Théâtre du Parc. Then the circus crossed the Alps over to Italy to Torino, to perform there invited by BluCinque Nice and Circo Vertigo. Next stops were in Eurre invited by Gare au Couloisses, in Alès at the festival Temps du Cirque organised by the national circus center La Verrerie and the season finished by a return to Festival Les Boréales in Herouville Saint-Clair.

The collaborations with the event organisers flowed smoothly, and the audience found the circus well. All in all the performances reached 88% from being full booked.



What motivates the actions of Circus I love you?

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 lifestyle 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

What is left of the circus once we take it away from its traditional context, and once it has emancipated from the influence of the other art forms?

In what way is this result beneficial for the society?

Circus I love you is initiating performing circus creations motivated by the questions above. The company wants its stamp to be a strong acrobatic content combined with live music. Adapting its venue to be able to tour internationally in Europe as well as locally in Sweden and the other Nordic countries, the company is putting a strong emphasis on the importance of presenting the performances for live audiences.



Additional activities

Circus I love you proposes to the organizers booking the company's performances a palette of other activities to happen on the side of the performances. During 2023 the most popular activity was Julia Simon visiting schools with her lecture of circus and the activities of Circus I love you, preparing the class in question to come see the performance. Also some guided tours on site to show the people the everyday life and surroundings of the circus camp were carried out during the tour.

To try to reach out to audiences that would not have had the means to visit the circus, free tickets were distributed to organisations reaching out to disadvantaged communities during the tours in Finland and Sweden. The largest audiences invited to the performances for free came through the local Red Cross organisation in Gävle, Sweden and through several organisations helping refugees in Salo, Finland.

As the performances of Circus I love you are aimed to please a wide audience, the company happily performs for school audiences. Specific school shows happened all throughout the tour of 2023 in Sweden, France and Switzerland.

The year 2023 was also busier than usual with hosting other companies' creations under the big top of Circus I love you. Starting the year in January 2023, Circus I love you set up the tent for the whole duration of the Biennale Internationale des Arts du Cirque festival in Marseille, and in addition to performing during one weekend there with I love you two, welcomed 3 other companies in the tent. The performances presented there as part of the programmation of BIAC were *23 Fragments de ces dernières jours* by *Troisième cirque / Maroussia Diaz Verbèke*, *9.8* by *Charge maximale de rupture*, and *Cie Libertivore's* performances *Hêtre* and *Phasmes*. At Göteborgs Jubileumsfirande 2024 the tent welcomed a children's theater play, and at the Festival Les Boréales in Herouville-Saint-Clair many shows programmed at the festival were also presented in addition to I love you two. These were the Icelandic singer-songwriter *JDFR*, the magician *Larsène*, a local open mic rap session and a concerts from local rapper *Docme* and music group *Madras*.

At Festival les Boréales Circus I love you participated in an educational art project for the local schools. The students of all the schools of the city had created collective artworks combining elements of circus and local architecture. The final artworks were created by a mixed media method of visual arts and displayed at the Comedie de Caen. All the students also got the chance to see the performance I love you two before the opening ceremony of their exhibition at the theatre. The acrobats of Circus I love you joined the opening ceremony of the students' art.

To strengthen the existing professional network and create new professional contacts for Circus I love you, the company was present at the most important gatherings of the professional contemporary circus field during the year. Producer Julia Simon attended the professional program at BIAC in Marseille, the 6th Fresh Circus seminar hosted by Circostrada and Artcena in Paris, and Circa festival in Auch.



Upgrades of 2023



Circus I love you continued to improve the logistic and technical aspects of the company in order to provide a more refined and efficient circus experience both for the audience, its collaborators and its employees. The new construction works of 2023 were a new toilet and shower module, new platforms for the musicians and four rooms of accommodation built into a swap body trailer. The new purchases were wastewater tanks, fencing for the circus area and the swap body trailer.

The construction period took place at the circus's winter quarters in Klippan during April, before the start of the summer tour. The music platforms were built in one piece to replace the old platforms that were taken apart during every rig down. This made the crew save time in the rig up and rig down.

The new toilet module, that was bought during 2022 was more appropriate for the loading in the truck with the forklift, and designed better for the new method of dealing with wastewaters of the camp. Until 2022, the toilet module had to be placed in the direct surroundings of a sewer, restricting the placement of the camp. From 2023 on, Circus I love you started to collect the wastewaters in a container, that was emptied in the closest sewer to the camp area with the help of the forklift. This new way made it possible to place the kitchen and the toilet modules to where it was the best for the camp, and not worry about the sewer location as much.

The 1m high fences to define the area of the circus and provide as a stand for marketing banderolls added into the professional look of the circus. Having the tent area fenced, and having painted the trucks pink and yellow with big logos of the circus in the past contributed clearly to the audience relating to Circus I love you as a quality circus installing in their town. To take the professional look another step further, Circus I love you decided to invest in a foyer tent to welcome the audience at the end of the year 2023. The 10 x14m tent in the colors of the circus was ordered for 2024 from Fratelli Greco Covering Productions.

One more truck on tour - less diesel spent for the convoi

During the tour of the 500-person tent in 2023, there was three trucks on tour instead of the 2 that had been the method until 2022. Having one more truck on tour made it possible to upgrade the loading plan of the seats and the tent to be more safe for the crew during rig up and rig down. The metal frames of the seats could be loaded on racks, making the loading of the trucks happen only by the forklift instead of the crew loading pieces in by hand.

The extra truck also provided the possibility to tow another heavyweight trailer, which led into the construction of Las Vegas, the accommodation trailer for 4 artists. The crew divided the swap body trailer purchased from Germany into four insulated rooms, that were equipped with a bed, sofa, storage space and heating. This made it possible for

the members of the crew not having their own caravan or driver's license to be accommodated by the company. Also accommodating 4 members of the team into the trailer pulled by a truck meant 4 less lightweight vehicles in the convoy, actually making the total diesel consumption of the circus smaller.

The small tent also toured during 2023 with 2 trucks, instead of the 1 truck until 2022. This allowed the kitchen module and forklift to be on tour, making the rig up and down very quick, and adding to the everyday comfort of the crew.

Marketing masterclass

To become better at marketing the self-produced shows, Circus I love you invested in a Meta-marketing masterclass from Matti Kropsu. Kropsu, who is specialised in optimising Facebook and Instagram advertisements came on tour for a week to coach the Circus I love you office team to achieve better results with the online marketing campaigns. As investing in marketing on social media is currently the most effective way for the company to gather audience for the performances, the masterclass was a great next step to sharpen the company's marketing tools and methods.

New employees

As a growing company aiming for creating more activities in the future, Circus I love you tried to invest in hiring more people to work for the company. During 2023 the attempts were to hire a new producer to work as part of the office team throughout the year and as a harbinger during the self produced tours, and to hire a roustabout for the tour with the bigger circus tent to help with all the unqualified tasks and divide the workload on tour between more people.

These attempts were partially working, but not leading to the successful outcome that the company hoped for. What was good about these two new employees during the tour of 2023 was that at the moment they were present during the tour, there were more people to help with the tasks. Circus I love you had however hoped for the new recruits to open doors to further development of the company in the long run. This plan was a failure. The new producer was helpful for the first months of tour they came to work on, but decided to leave the company after 8 weeks of work. The the plans of development in the office team of Circus I love you were put on hold until further notice.

The roustabout was working through the whole period of contract proposed, until the end of the tour in November 2023. This role was new in the history of the company, and the first attempt of having a person with a lower salary than the other crew members based on the roustabout's role to carry out mostly missions that did not require to be highly qualified. After the tour Circus I love you decided based on the feedback of the person having had the job of the roustabout, and the actual needs of the company, that the position of the less qualified roustabout would not exist for the tour 2024. As the logistic and technical upgrades had actually made the rig up and rig down less demanding, and as the roustabout had found it unmotivating to only carry out tasks not requiring being qualified, it became clear that a better idea would be to manage to employ a larger team of acrobats, who would also have time to do the unqualified tasks in the future.

There were also minor changes in the touring crew from year 2022. Musician and composer Periklis Dazy from the performance I love you two was successfully replaced by Lola Stouthamer. Musician Thibaud Rancoeur was successfully replaced for some of the performances by Julie Razet. As an upgrade to the everyday touring life, the cook of the circus was on tour also with the smaller tent. The cooks who worked for Circus I love you during 2023 were Rakel Holm, Ninni Korkalo and Brenda del Sole.

Repertoire 2023

I love you two (2022)

THE TEAM: Sade Kamppila, Oskar Rask, Julien Auger, Benoît Fauchier, Philomène Perrenoud, Felix Greif, Thibaud Rancoeur, Periklis Dazy, Thomas Fabien, Julia Simon, Pelle Tillö

PHOTOS: Minja Kaukoniemi

COPRODUCTIONS: Sirkus Aikamoinen, Réseau Grand CIEL, Les Transversales Scène Conventionnée Cirque de Verdun, Le Palc Pôle National Cirque Grand Est ChâlonsenChampagne, Cirk Eole MontignylèsMetz, UP Circus & Performing arts Bruxelles, Archaos Pôle national cirque Marseille

SUPPORT / RESIDENCIES: Les Transversales Scène Conventionnée Cirque de Verdun, Le Palc Pôle National Cirque Grand Est ChâlonsenChampagne, Cirk Eole MontignylèsMetz, Espace Périphérique, La Vilette Paris, UP Circus & Performing arts Bruxelles

FUNDING: Swedish Arts Council (Kulturrådet) Sweden



Beauties (2022)

THE TEAM: Morgane Stäheli, Sébastien Klink, Jùlia Campistany, Oscar Quevedo, Thibaud Rancoeur, Julia Simon, Pelle Tillö, Sade Kamppila, Julien Auger, Oskar Rask, Benoît Fauchier

PHOTOS: Mikko Pirinen, Susanna Marjaranta, Oskari Juhonen

COPRODUCERS: Sirkus Aikamoinen

FUNDING: Region Skåne



Utopia (2021)

THE TEAM: Sade Kamppila, Oskar Rask, Julien Auger, Benoît Fauchier, Thibaud Rancoeur, Pelle Tillö, Julia Simon

PHOTOS: Jan Johansson, Vukosav Petronijevic, Fahimeh Hekmatandish

COPRODUCERS: Sirkus Aikamoinen

SUPPORT / RESIDENCIES: Gävle Kommun / Gasklockorna



Statistics 2023

I love you two

performances: **50**

weeks on tour: **14**

cities: **13**

audience reached: **22 019**

Utopia

performances: **30**

weeks on tour: **5**

cities: **5**

audience reached: **4440**

Beauties

performances: **37**

weeks on tour: **6**

cities: **6**

audience reached: **5023**

Social actions

school visits: **7**

VIP visits of tent: **2**

audience reach of activities: **205**



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