

Hi, and welcome to **Press Pass With the Editor** on the Circus Voices Network brought to you by CircusTalk News. This is Kim Campbell, the editor of CircusTalk News. If you are new to the show, this monthly news-based podcast will revolve around the circus and performing arts industry and provide front row access to what's happening around the performance world.

In Breaking News

As you may recall from earlier iterations of Press Pass With the Editor, Australia is still miles ahead of the rest of the world in opening up their performance venues and festivals. Last month Adelaide Fringe went off without a hitch, except for an unfortunate incident involving a stolen and very expensive Big Bird costume and two repentant culprits dubbed The Big Bird Bandits.

Well, now The Sydney Opera House is presenting an adaptation of The Little Prince, combining elements of circus, dance, and acrobatics. Sydney Opera House Head of Contemporary Performance, **Ebony Bott**, says: "The Little Prince is a timeless tale that continues to resonate with both children and adults with its universal themes of loneliness, friendship, love and loss. This unmissable production, under the direction of Anne Tournié, uses movement and innovative technology to relay the delicate and eloquent poetry of the original masterpiece to the delight of audiences big and small."

The National Circus Talent Competition took place in Vietnam on April 27th. 29 acts in all performed on stage. Although at first glance this seems like good news for Vietnam's circus culture, in an article out that same week in VN Express by Mai Trang titled *Crisis as circuses unable to attract young performers*, the deputy director of the theatre says that he is concerned about the future of the art form, stating that he has not been able to recruit many circus acts in recent years from the Circus Arts & Variety Intermediate school where they normally get circus acts, stating "It's not that we lack talent, but the commercial pressure is real and impacts us both at organizational and individual levels. Only when our basic needs are met can our passion for the circus grow." He cites low incomes for the risk and time it takes to train professional artists as the main impediment to recruiting new circus artists in Vietnam.

Chronicle Live in the UK recently reported some good news. Touring shows in the United Kingdom are opening up about 300 new jobs for circus artists. John Haze, who is director of 3 circuses--Circus Extreme, Circus of Horrors, and Circus Berlin says that some of the jobs will be permanent positions and that the circus performers are reuniting from around the world. Haze says they are looking for “singers, dancers - even acrobats - but the new posts also include box office and front-of-house staff, lighting and sound technicians, drivers and tent technicians to join the tour at the end of May.”

But perhaps the most exciting news this past month in circus was the article that published in the NY Times titled *Cirque du Soleil's Return Could Be Its Most Challenging Feat Yet*

As Cirque is set to reopen, many wonder if the monolithic company is up for the challenge, and NY Times author Dan Bilefsky did not shy away from the issue in this piece, stating “At a time when the pandemic is still raging and uncertainty remains about people’s willingness to return to large theater venues, the attempted comeback by the former behemoth is a litmus test of sorts for the live entertainment industry. Can the badly battered Montreal-based circus, already struggling with creative exhaustion before the pandemic, rise again?”

Later in the article, Bilefsky points out that “With touring on the horizon, the circus also faces the logistical challenge of navigating different health and safety rules across the globe. ‘It’s going to take a very long time for the Cirque to come back to what it was before the pandemic — if ever,’ said Mitch Garber, who stepped down last year as Cirque’s chairman.” But it is not all doom and gloom. The reporter was careful to touch on hopeful signs elsewhere in the performance world of places that live entertainment is poking up, in Rotterdam for example, and the much anticipated New York return of Broadway in September of 2021. And of course Cirque’s own plans to reopen its *Mystere* and *O* shows in Las Vegas this summer to a large audience with modified seating and safety protocols.

What the article also covered was how out of work circus artists from Cirque are choosing to remain relevant to the art form by creating their own works or adapting to take on other opportunities.

In CircusTalk News

Our associate editor Madeline Hoak has published her second article in her multi-media series Circus Bodies. This article, Fat Circus Bodies, resonated with me on a personal level and it also delved into a lot of the stigma fat circus artists face in order to even be given the opportunity to train, create and perform. Fat, Asian, circus artist Micheal Jay Garner from Cirque du Soleil's Kooza lays it all out for us with his truthful insights. In my favorite quote of the article, Garner breaks it down, pointing out how White artists and thin artists may experience layers of privilege that can leave them insensitive to the struggle others undertake daily. "It's often been said that fat is the last bastion of acceptable prejudice. People feel like, 'Oh, well, you could just do some more situps, and you'd be fine.' And that's as insulting as saying, 'If you could just be less Asian, you'd be fine. You would not be subject to the violence that's occurring on a regular basis against people who look like you.'"

I asked Madeline why exploring the variety of body types and identities in circus was important to her and she replied, "The Circus Bodies series is important to me because it is a platform to discuss one of the most vital and complex elements of circus: how performing bodies create cultural meaning. When we start to explore that, we get to the root of so many other facets of circus: virtuosity, representation, what it means to be and who gets to be a circus artist. So far, the series has collected conversations with professionals from around the world and generated incredibly important information for any evolving circus community. I'm excited for the upcoming articles and panel discussions about BIPOC Circus Bodies, Disabled Circus Bodies and Circus Bodies in Extreme Acts and Sideshow."

We offered our first PRO Talk: Circus Tech — Putting the Arts in S.T.E.A.M. hosted by Nadein Johnson and with three guests, all who happened to have a juggling background. Craig Quat, Greg Kennedy and Naeil Jammal. The topic went from how STEAM can augment circus education to how it can augment the performance experience.

The next PRO Talk is called Circus X YouTube: Creators Wanted

Moderator: hosted by Veronica Blair, circus artist, storyteller, and content creator, who will start a conversation about the importance of intentionally growing the digital body of circus work and discourse while creating a hardier, more recognizable sector as a result. All using YOUTUBE.

Guests include YouTube creators from the international circus community. Eric Hernandez, USA – [CirqueLIFE](#), Lea Toran Jenner, FRANCE – [Lea Toran Jenner](#), [Unity Adventures](#) and [Duo Unity](#), Noeli Acoba, USA/ CANADA – [Noeli Acoba](#) and Ross Travis, USA – [Antic in a Drain](#). Discover how they got started, what inspires their content creation and what their most successful videos are. The discussion will be followed by a live Q&A. That conversation just happened but PRO members can watch the video discussion on CircusTalk's PRO Space page!

Stacy Clark now has two 360 Degrees series episodes under her belt: Coaching with Sarah Poole and Bouncing Around with Zeb Hunter. It's so interesting to see how her philosophy of circus coaching, casting and holistic approaches comes across in conversations with her guests. PRO members, Check it out on CircusTalk News.

Stacy's next guest is Dustin Walston, an athlete and artist turned Cirque du Soleil tour coordinator.

Now for EVENTS

The inaugural International Circus Awards are here!

And if you had a show in 2020 it is time to apply starting June 1st. Here is a message from Aaron Marquise explaining the details and be sure to check CircusTalk's event listing about the awards to see all of the categories and various timelines! The International Circus Awards is an annual program produced and managed by The Contemporary Circus & Immersive Arts Center (CCIAC), a non-profit circus arts organization based in Troy, New York, USA.

A big event that happened in late April was the launching of the American Circus Alliance, an organization made by and for the American circus artist and company. The ACA held its first group zoom brainstorm in May where new members got the opportunity to hear of plans and join

breakout rooms of committees they were interested in helping form. There were a bunch of committees but an example is the Forming a US Touring Network committee, an Insurance committee, a Membership committee.

Popping over to CircusTalk events in June I see that the All Bars Flying Trapeze Club is having a two day intensive in Cheltenham, UK on June 24th-25th. This is a live, in-person event, as learning the flying trapeze online is not an option.

Circus artist extraordinaire and CircusTalk contributor Lea Toran Jenner has a new project called *Lea's Late Night Circus Show*: This free online show streams every Saturday night through July 31st. Based in Berlin, host Jenner features different weekly guests who perform and chat about what it means to be a circus artist. You should check it out!

A online circus training company called Cirqueathome is offering masterclasses and Personal Training. Ugo Laffolay and Shelli Epstein are artists from Cirque du Soleil's *Luzia* who are offering bespoke at-home consultations and training sessions online. Visit CircusTalk's EVENTS page to sign up with either of them!

Now for Shows

Industry insights

A hopeful circus industry trend right now is that circus festivals and arts festivals are announcing their schedules, some of which are hybrids of digital and in-person, and some of which are full on LIVE EVENTS.

It is an interesting phenomenon, the hybrid festival, because it offers the best of both worlds for organizers who get to take advantage of local funding to offer live in person events, but who also get to expand the reach of the festival to the wider international performing arts community.

Case and point...The TILT Festival is one of those hybrid events, and they seem pretty excited about it, stating on their website, "For the first time ever TILT is going hybrid with BOTH an in-person AND [online](#) program of masterclasses and shows. Which means, you can now join us

from wherever you are in the world and experience world class teaching from world renowned teachers without having to travel. All the shows will be live-streamed with 360 filming so if you can't come join us in person then, you really won't miss a thing! Our in-person Festival will take place in Birmingham as usual, with lots of Covid secure measures to keep you safe. “

The festival takes place from July 12th to July 23rd. The festival will feature aerial and physical theatre, masterclasses, and seminars. Visit [CircusTalk](#) to register to attend!

Underbelly is set to return to London, in person, from July 1st to September 26th. The festival will take place in Cavendish Square. Ed Bartlam, co-director of Underbelly, said “We’re looking forward to collaborating with local stakeholders and businesses and playing our part in bringing Central London roaring back to life this summer. Most importantly, we are so pleased to be able to once again provide a platform and a home for so many brilliant artists, freelancers and arts sector workers who have been deprived of a stage and a living for over a year.” The festival is known for combining circus, cabaret, variety and family entertainment.

The 12th Montreal Cirque Festival will take place in a hybrid edition this summer. The festival will have both digital productions and outdoor performances. From July 8th-18th aerialists and acrobats will gather to provide live family-friendly entertainment.

Two other festivals of interest who have made some preliminary announcements are Underbelly and Montreal Completent Cirque.

Last of all, the Edinburgh Fringe which takes place this year from August 6-30th is also squarely in hybrid festival plan mode--staying open to the idea that in person events will happen, but not at the full tilt they were at 3 years ago, which is why Chief Executive of EdFringe Shona McCarthy says they are offering A [Fringe Artist and Venue Recovery Fund](#). This £75,000 funding pot which is available to Fringe companies, creatives and venues to support projects that will enable a return to the Fringe in 2021 or 2022. The fund will prioritise projects that seek to improve opportunities for access on the Fringe by underrepresented groups – you can find out more at edfringe.smartygrants.com.au/recoveryfund.

Now for Jobs

Mention 2 --Did you know CircusTalk is *the* source for international circus and street arts jobs? It's free to list your circus performing and admin jobs, open calls, auditions and residencies on CircusTalk, so create your account today and start listing all the new performing arts openings and you will reach the right pool of talent.

1. Creative Athletic Performance has posted a casting call for performers to join a touring tent show with Vernardos Circus in the USA. They are looking for circus performers with comedy experience and singing and dancing is a plus. The tour will be 45 weeks and 22 venues. Submission deadline is June 1st so hop on over to apply!

2. Social Integration Director at SANCA in Seattle, Washington. Full time position. Apply on CircusTalk! The Social Integration Director is responsible for creating, implementing and maintaining all programs related to social circus and helping to integrate them into SANCA's programming which includes Every Body's Circus, outreach programs, and all other programs and classes that serve students from a variety of backgrounds.

3.. The National School of Circus Arts of Rosny-sous-Bois (ENACR) has a full-time position open for a circus technician with experience in light and sound tech. The prospective technician would manage the spaces and teaching equipment: as well as the technical organization of spaces, classrooms and equipment according to users' needs.

4. The Drill House doors now open for COVID-19 safe artistic residencies (No min. length of stay)

The Drill House, based in Great Yarmouth, UK, is a national centre dedicated to the development of circus and outdoor arts ran by Out There Arts. Applications are now open for artists that work in outdoor arts and circus, and those that work in other disciplines who are keen to work collaboratively with or extend their practice into these art forms. Encouraging and welcoming submissions from people across all cultural and social backgrounds and actively seek

applications from those currently underrepresented in the arts community; particularly people of colour, people identifying as LGBTQ, D/deaf and disabled people (as defined by the Equality Act 2010).

To apply to any of these jobs, open calls or residencies, visit us on CircusTalk.com and search under JOBS.

Now for our Education segment--with associate editor Lydia Nord

Hi everyone, welcome to this month's education spotlight. We're so excited for everyone who is graduating or has graduated already from circus school this year. We're going to be featuring graduates on social media and also on CircusTalk news in a Meet the Graduate segment in June. So make sure you look out for that. Today, I have a special guest! I got the chance to ask Breece Laurehnt a couple questions about his circus experience and what his post grad plans are. Brice is a San Diego Circus Center graduate who specializes in aerial straps. I'll let him handle the rest of his introduction.

Thanks again for working with us Breece, and good luck in all your future endeavors! That's it for this month's education spotlight. Make sure you stay tuned to CircusTalk News and our social media for more graduation features!

In our efforts to highlight circus graduates and emerging artists in the month of June as new artists are entering the workforce, we are featuring an experienced casting director. My guest this week is Francisco Cruz, of The 7 Fingers. We sat down to talk about casting circus graduates, how to get prepped for auditions and open calls and more.

Wrap Up

That is all for today's Press pass with the Editor, your front row access to what's happening in the performance world and a monthly circus news podcast brought you by Circus Voices and CircusTalk--All the Circus News In Your Ear.

Mention 3: *If you enjoyed this podcast, be sure to subscribe and consider taking a moment to give us a review on Apple podcasts so we can reach more people interested in circus and the performing arts. Also, we'd love to hear from you directly; send your podcast-worthy news to news@circustalk.com*