

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 which 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

The co-founders of Hideaway Circus, Josh and Lyndsay Aviner have launched a brand new circus tour titled Stars Above. The circus will be open air and tour throughout the Northeast United States in August and September. This contemporary circus show's aim is to put a modern twist on the nostalgia for traditional circus tours. Due to COVID-19 placing restrictions on international travel, the cast is entirely composed of some of the most talented U.S-based artists. Tune in a little later in the show to hear my interview with two of the artists in Stars Above.

Cirque du Soleil has announced that their Montreal-based shows are returning in 2022. They have signed a 10-year contract with Old Port. This follows up the excitement of the return of their Las Vegas shows.

The month of July found the juggling community quite busy with online Festivals. The biggest US based juggling festival called IJA which stands for the International Jugglers Association. The all-volunteer run foundation, which dates back to 1947, recently offered their online offerings from July 12th to the 20th and it included a welcome show, a cascade of stars and a flow show as well as a series of master classes by Iman Izarazi, Jay Gilligan and Francisco Cruz.

A week later, the European Juggling Convention kicked off their annual festival online (it was meant to be in Finland this year). Finland still hosted a stripped version of the massive event through the medium of Discord. On the weekend of July 23rd though there were workshops, a bar space, a gala show and the General Assembly including the election of the EJC 2023!

In CircusTalk News

Most recently on our PRO Talk series, Adrian Berry-artistic director of Jacksons Lane-gave some great advice on pitching your show to presenters and programmers. Along with Flora Herberich, producer and project manager, they give tips for getting contracts, approaching venues, presenting concepts, and more.

There are a ton of great festivals starting this summer! If you want a rundown on what to expect, we published a Festival Roundup on CircusTalk. It includes highlights, photos, and videos on the International Circus Festival Gold Elephant, Alberta Circus Festival, Underbelly Festival, Montreal Completement Cirque Festival, TILT, Edinburgh Fringe Festival, We Hot American Circus Festival, and St. John's International CircusFest.

Now for EVENTS

The Circus Historical Society in Connecticut is holding its 2021 convention this September. There will be tours of the Barnum Museum, excursions to circus sites, a short circus film festival, and more.

This August, Poland is hosting the 25th International Festival of Street Art BuskerBus. This festival blends contemporary circus and busking. The festival is very diverse, dynamic, and interactive.

Green Fools Theatre Society in Alberta, Canada, is running a circus summer camp from August 23-27. The program will expose campers to circus skills like juggling, role-bola, unicycle, aerial skills, and more! There will be circus classes in the mornings and afternoons taught with ascending difficulty. Their goal is to challenge campers in a safe and supportive environment. Morning classes are taught in French.

Now for Shows

Teatro Zinzanni has reopened in Chicago and I had the good fortune to be there to see its relaunch. I previewed the show back in 2019, interviewing producer Stanley Feig right before they opened their doors to Chicago after having long before established themselves in Seattle as a classic variety arts dinner show.

So, I ask myself for this new show, what has changed?

Industry insights

The key concept for the summer of 2021 is local talent. If you think about it--it is a much safer bet right now for any circus company or festival that is booting back up to hire people in their own country. Simply because thanks to the pandemic not all borders are open and work visas are hard to come by. But the interesting thing about this is that it truly is a phenomenon, perhaps

more so in Australia, US and Canada where the borders are more solid than the EU. And this phenomenon is changing the shape of the industry as well as expectations--and hopefully helping artists as well as the environment--but it's not without its hiccups.

In the past, casting directors had an international pool to choose from that was only limited by their budget. This new restriction may irritate circus organizers even while it might have a better impact on their budgets--but if you zoom out your lens to the whole of the circus arts and performing arts world-- it also is exacting subtle changes, especially in the landscape of circus. Some interesting examples of this are the aforementioned new Hideaway show, built solely on American talent like emerging artist Delyaney Bayless (juggling) and Alexandra Feit (Cyr wheel) both Circadium graduates, and established young performers like Will McGowan (diabolo), Book Kennison (singing and Ringmaster) as well seasoned headliners such as Adam Kuchler (clown) and Summer Lacy Aerial chains. Tune in a bit later in the show when I check in with some cast members from Stars Above who are experiencing these adaptations!

The Montreal Complétement Cirque Festivals and St. John's International Circus Fest in Canada are proceeding with all-Canadian shows and artists, and FIRCO Festival in Madrid--which adapted their show from Ibero-American reach to local Spanish circus competitors for the year.

These shifts in casting structure may cause some planning nightmares for casting professionals looking to continue the status quo, but on the flip side they offer unique opportunities to circus artists in the country of their origin to focus on building their local networks stronger and to advocate for the circus arts and funding in their own backyards.

Now for Jobs

Wild Project is looking for artist submissions for its Wild Culture Performance Program. They will produce 15-20 works and present them to audiences. The deadline to submit is October 31st.

Circus Fantasia is seeking female artists for their show in the UK. They are specifically seeking ground acts but will consider other acts. The application deadline is September 30th.

La Serre is offering a group residency program for circus performers in Montreal. Participants can use their space for exchanging expertise and developing ideas. Applications are due August 8th, and the date of residency would begin September 1st.

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.

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

Hi, and welcome back to this month's Education Spotlight. This month with Press Pass it's all about circus summer camps. Summer camps are a great way for circus students to maintain their circus skills, try out new acts, and make connections in the industry. We had the opportunity to contact Circus Smirkus and get an inside look at their camp this summer!

I asked, “How does circus summer camp further circus education as a whole?” to which they responded,

“Circus Smirkus is an excellent choice for kids to come and learn circus as a beginner or expand their circus experience if they already have circus skills. At Smirkus, we train under Big Top Tents, giving kids a unique circus experience and showing them traditional circus education, which they might not otherwise get at their local circus schools. We also spend time teaching kids how to perform - how to take their skills, work with others and really uplift everyone through the power of performance. This is truly an immersion program in circus that furthers circus education at any level, no matter where they are in their circus journey.”

This honestly sounds like so much fun, and it seems like students who enroll in circus summer camps really get a chance to work on their soft skills like teamwork and confidence, not just specific tricks. Obviously, this summer there still is the pandemic to think about, so I also was interested to know what kind of COVID-19 precautions Circus Smirkus is taking. Their protocol includes having campers and staff quarantine and test negative prior to camp, physical distancing, and using masks. So far, they have had no COVID-19 cases this summer, which is great news.

Thanks everyone for tuning in, this has been another Press Pass Education Spotlight. See you next month!

Now for our Guest Interview

Ottavio & Naomi Gesmundo were such gracious guests and we delved into some interesting topics, including how Naomi's background in dance and martial arts informs her duo act, and how Ottavio's classic circus background led him to where he is today. Listen in!

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 to you by Circus Voices and CircusTalk--**All the Circus News In Your Ear.**

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