

2024

ANNUAL REPORT





# FROM THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD

2024 was a bountiful year for Cirkus Syd, as we saw so much of the hard work of our team come to fruition.

Like a tree that has spent a long winter putting down roots we established deeper relationships with our partner cities, region and nation; we drew energy from our friends and collaborators, giving them support and structure in return, our beautiful leaves; and finally we brought forth a harvest for the benefit of everyone when we hosted the first edition of the Southern Sweden Circus Festival (SSCF).

The festival was centred in Lund and Malmö and from our bases there we set off to tour around Skåne. We wanted to bring circus to the people, to share with them the beauty and bravery that inspires us.

Watching several thousands of people gather in the market square in Lund to witness Soka Tira Osoa by Cie Basinga filled me with delight and the show itself energised me, feeling how much more we can create when we connect and play together.

## We got to be part of history

Along with our long term collaborators Cirkus Brazil Jack we staged the first circus parade in Malmö for 40 years to mark the company's 125 years anniversary. Classical and contemporary circus working with each other to make a spectacle that got us into the news and brought hundreds of people into Brazil Jack's big top for their masterful show.

Circus and the people who make it are so often full of surprises, so often leaders by example and wonderful friends in hard times. I know that our work as Cirkus Syd brings more power to those to make and share circus with the world and I look forward to being part of the world we create together.



Edward Rapley  
Chair of the Board

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# EXPLORING OUR IDENTITY

## WHO WE ARE

Cirkus Syd is an international NGO, we act as a hub connecting people, ideas and practises through circus. We are embedded in the community of Northern European circus and have members all over the world.

We are ambitious, integrative, hopeful, caring, engaged, and playful. We are part of both the contemporary and classical circus worlds.

## WHERE WE ARE

Our headquarters and training space is located at Stenkrossen in Lund, in Skåne, the southernmost county of Sweden. Cirkus Syd has a clear geographic base and from there we embrace wider social connections as part of 6 ambitious networks:

- Baltic Nordic Circus Network (BNCN)
- Circostrada European Network for Circus and Street Arts
- International network of Circus Arts Media Projects (INCAM)
- Culture Action Europe
- Future By Lund
- SWAN Residency Network



## WHAT WE DO

We work on projects at every scale from local to international. We run the biennials Southern Sweden Circus Festival and New Horizons Summit. We collaborate with other international circus organisations in different networks and projects such the New Horizons Leadership Programme. The major strands of our work include:

- Leadership Development
- Circus Training
- Events
- Education
- Circus Infrastructure
- Residencies
- Publishing



## WHO IS OUR AUDIENCE

Cirkus Syd works hard to reach large and diverse audiences through all of our projects. We want to create the greatest positive impact for as many people as possible. Audience development and outreach is part of our thinking right from the start. Our audiences include:

- Circus professionals
- Emerging artists
- Children and young people
- Academics
- Stakeholders in business
- Local government





# WHY WE DO IT


- To promote collaboration – between people, between organisations
- To encourage wonder – sharing the deep joy and beauty of creativity
- To demonstrate leadership – & support leaders at every stage of their journey
- To facilitate cross-cultural exchange – when we share we learn and grow

We believe that the way circus people create and organise has lessons for so many other sectors in and beyond the arts. We honor the various legacies, histories, and cultures of circus – and explore the evolving role of circus in society today, in a rapidly changing world.

We are excited by innovation, entrepreneurship, Do It Yourself / Do It Together, and artistic research and we champion culture as an agent for democratic participation.



'We want to create the greatest positive impact for as many people as possible.'



'We believe that the way circus people create and organise has lessons for many other sectors in and beyond the arts.'



# STRUCTURE AND STRANDS

Cirkus Syd's organisational structure begins with our fee paying members, these are the people who most regularly engage with our ongoing activities. The members are served by the professionals we engage to deliver on the different strands of our activities, from classes to festival performances. Freelancers report to staff and staff report to the Director who in turn is responsible to the board and the board is accountable to the members via the AGM. So we have a circular leadership structure which allows for flexibility and responsiveness.

## TEAM

### BOARD MEMBERS

Daniel Gulko, Anna Ljungqvist, Edward Rapley (Chair), Burak Sayin, Nick Zelle

### DIRECTOR

Lina B. Frank

### ASSOCIATED ARTIST

Fridamy Roth

### FREQUENT FREELANCERS

Ludvig Landgren, Molly Blaesild, Carlos Lopez, Simon Westerberg, Lea Firrus Norberg, Jason Dupree, Ben Smith, Linus Mårtensson, Alice Bokaldere, Elisabeth Künkele, Camilla Lysell, Hugo Bergman, Kristian Anshelm, Tom Brand, Elena Stanciu and many more.



## STRANDS

Leadership  
development

Circus Training

Events

Education

Circus  
Infrastructure

Residencies

Publishing

# ACTIVITIES: LOCAL

Our local activities include providing training via classes and access to a training space. This mostly happens at our base in Stenkrossen where we have the use of equipment and sufficient height for most forms of circus. Our current training activities include training sessions for our members, open training sessions for the public, and specific technique classes taught by experienced professionals.

We also hosted and supported a number of residencies, helping circus artists develop specific shows and improve their professional practice.

## RESIDENCIES

### Residencies in collaboration with the Swedish Arts Grants Committee

Bobbo Jägerfeldt  
Julietta Birkeland

### Air, Nordic Residencies

Mikkel Hobitz, Rotor (DK)  
Teatronas, Itch (LT)

### Pilot Cross-Residency with Montreal

Region Skåne, Quebec Arts Council, Compagnie des Autres, Elsa Pakkasvirta

### Other residencies

CircusByMe, Kroppen som åldras  
Fridamy Roth, Otrolig! Helig!





# ACTIVITIES: NATIONAL

Sometimes our events take place in the local area but have a national scale and that was the case of the Southern Sweden Circus Festival (SSCF), which took place across Skåne in September 2024. This was the first edition of this biennale and it was produced by Cirkus Syd in collaboration with Lund & Malmö municipalities. Cirkus Syd's vision is that by 2030 SSCF will be the largest circus festival in the Nordic region. We want Skåne and the municipalities within it to be internationally known as great places to experience and create high quality circus. The festival was built around themes of large scale spectacles, city-touring, regional development & collaboration, representation, engagement & wellbeing, and innovation.

Watch our festival wrap video here:



## THE GROWTH OF OUR FESTIVAL

**2023:**  
2 municipalities  
4 days  
12 places  
20 events  
4 shows  
5000 audience

**2024:**  
11 municipalities  
10 days  
25 places  
50 events  
15 shows  
17000 audience

**2026:**  
*Ambition:*  
20 municipalities  
80 events

**'We want Skåne and the municipalities within it to be internationally known as great places to experience and create high quality circus.'**





# PROJECTS AND EVENTS

We have run events in collaboration with members & the local community, such as a member and volunteer movie night, and rehearsals in Entreéteatern & Lilla Teatern.

As we expand the event provision that we can undertake we are now running larger events such as Stena Fastigheter 30 year anniversary, Länsförsäkringar anniversary and taking part in the Eurovision.

We are always keen to find new ways of engaging with people so this year as part of Kulturnatten we performed at a Teen Disco. There are always more possibilities to explore.

Working with our team of freelance professionals we provided circus taster sessions at the following places and events:

Malmö Museum  
Eurovision  
Länsförsäkringar  
Stena Fastigheter  
Peterskolan, Lund  
Fågelskolan, Lund  
Lund Comedy Festival



# INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATIONS

## NEW HORIZONS LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME (NHLP-EU)

NHLP-EU is a Baltic-Nordic collaboration with European dimension which took place in 2023-2024, led by Cirkus Syd (SE), Rigas Cirks (LV), and DYNAMO (DK) and co-funded by the European Union.

The vision for NHLP-EU is to strengthen the position of the circus field in Europe by supporting future leaders to acquire and develop skills and competencies for strong leadership.

We have now concluded our feedback and evaluation of this extensive international collaboration and are in the pre-production stage of the next edition which will incorporate all that we learned. [www.newhorizonsleadership.eu](http://www.newhorizonsleadership.eu)

## FOUR NATIONS AN INTERNATIONAL CIRCUS EXCHANGE

During 2024 Cirkus Syd worked as the international collaborator to a new UK consortium funded by Arts Council England's pilot funding: Four Nations.

The International Circus Exchange is a new network of partners including Circus City, Summerhall, Circusful and Cirkus Syd, who are passionate about developing and nurturing contemporary circus.

The network will come together to share knowledge, skills and expertise of working internationally within the following themes:

**Advocacy and Fundraising**  
**Improving Access, Inclusion and Diversity**  
**Co-commissioning and presenting work**  
**Mobility**



# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

We recognise our responsibility to both the local and global environment, and actively work to create sustainable and inclusive activities that benefit society, culture and the planet.

We strive for Cirkus Syd to be a role model in sustainability, where our activities and projects not only promote the art of circus, but also contribute to a long-term and positive impact on our society and environment. We work to implement sustainable practices in all our activities, locally and internationally.

## OUR SUSTAINABILITY VISION ENCOMPASSES:

**Environmental Responsibility**

**Social sustainability**

**Financial sustainability**

**International engagement and cooperation**



Cirkus Syd is committed to being a sustainable and responsible organisation by integrating sustainability principles into all our activities.

We see sustainability as a necessary and natural part of our identity and our future, and we are committed to creating positive change for both people and the environment through our art and activities.

**'We are dedicated to creating an inclusive and fair working environment, both for our members, performers and audiences.'**



## NEW HORIZONS LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME (NHLP-EU)





# FUNDERS AND SUPPORTERS



CITY OF  
LUND

Malmö stad



Co-funded by  
the European Union

VISIT | skåne

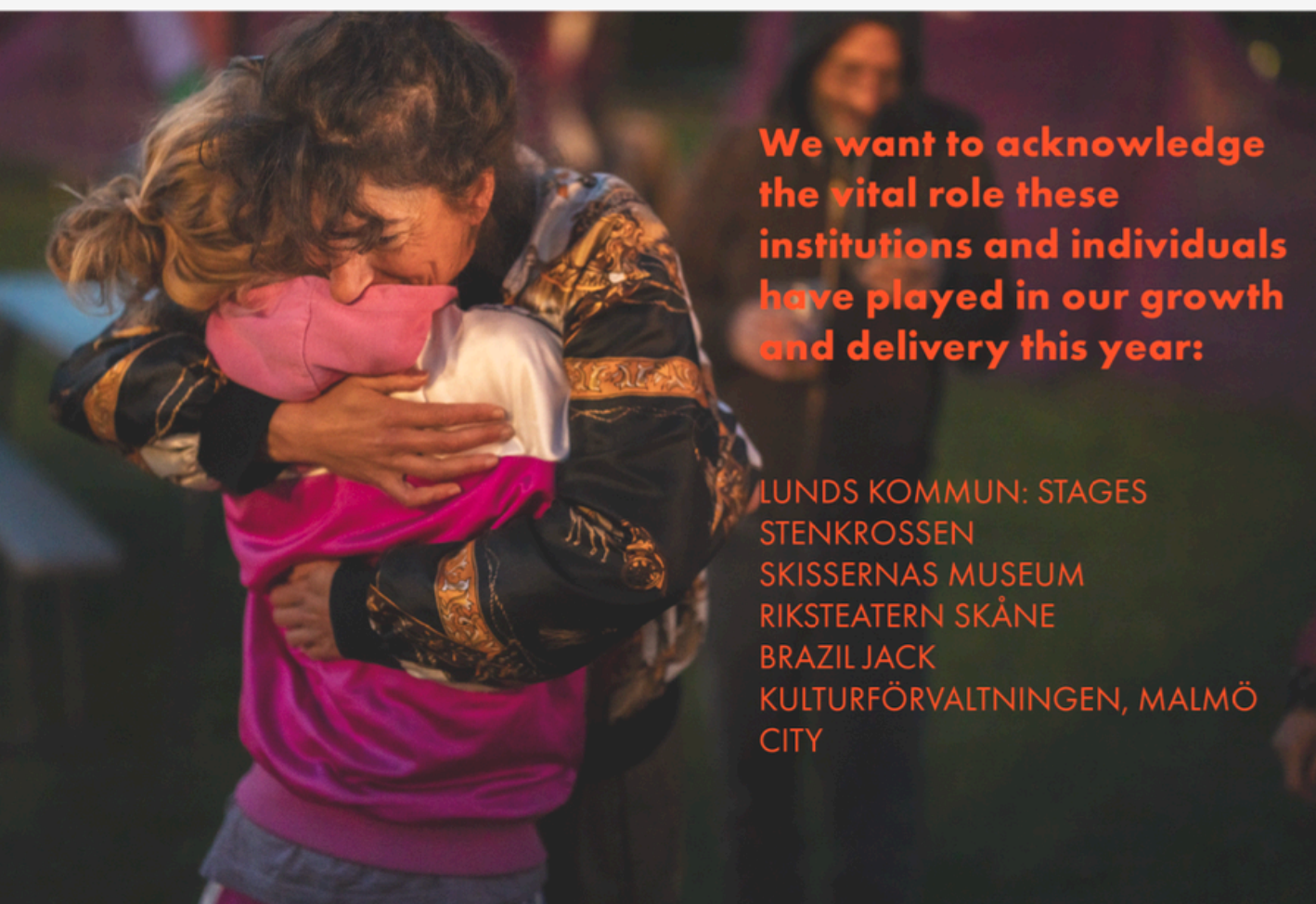


Nordic-Baltic  
Mobility  
Programme  
for Culture

STENKROSSEN  
mycket  
SNACK &  
mycket  
VERKSTAD



DYNAMO



**We want to acknowledge  
the vital role these  
institutions and individuals  
have played in our growth  
and delivery this year:**

LUNDS KOMMUN: STAGES  
STENKROSSEN  
SKISSERNAS MUSEUM  
RIKSTEATERN SKÅNE  
BRAZIL JACK  
KULTURFÖRVALTNINGEN, MALMÖ  
CITY



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SYD

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