



CASA

MULTIMEDIA MARKET GUIDE

BELGIUM

CIRCUS AND STREET ARTS CIRCUITS

CASA

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SHORT HISTORY AND OVERVIEW OF THE CIRCUS AND STREET ARTS

In Belgium, modern street theatre emerged from the events of May '68 and in the seventies it was mostly known for its political content. In the eighties the form became more important than the content and the Flemish street theatre became mostly pure entertainment. In these years the first companies were founded, but practically all of them never left Belgian soil to give a performance. In the Walloon provinces, **Chassepierre** was founded in 1973, but Flanders would still have to wait ten more years for its first meaningful festival. It was at the end of the eighties and the beginning of the nineties that the largest Flemish festivals emerged; from the start they kept a focus on the European and international scene without forgetting local artists. In the heyday of the Belgian family circuses there were about twenty traditional travelling circuses, but since the fifties their number has been dropping because of the rise of new forms of entertainment. The traditional circus had been travelling from town to town for decades, but it was at the festivals at the end of the nineties that the public got to know a new form of circus. The Belgian circus left the family environment, and young artists tried out new material on the streets, in tents, and at site-specific locations.

In 2008 the Circus Decree gave wings to the Flemish circus, but even today festivals like **Miramir0**, **Theater op de Markt** and **Perplex** still play an important role in the development of the Belgium scene. They co-produce new spectacles, and because there are very few agents or organisations with a specific focus on circus and street art, they are quite valuable for helping circulate work through the Belgian scene. Circus in Flanders is, as in the rest of Europe, becoming more and more professional. Where it used to be pure entertainment for markets and fairgrounds, Flemish circus is evolving into a real contemporary art form that uses different art disciplines such as street theatre, video, performance, dance, etc. As it becomes more professional the circus craft is also being removed from its family context, and today every young person who wants to become a circus artist has the means to do so.



In the seventies Flemish artists chose the street as a playground because there was no other place to take their political theatre. Today we see that contemporary theatre-makers want to escape from the traditional black box to confront actual reality with their work, and more and more they do this by using the street, a tent, or a specific location to present their performance. Once again the festivals are there to help them with this new quest, and give them pointers on how to deal with the administrative paperwork and interact with these new types of public. Alongside this trend, there are also Flemish circus artists who are slowly becoming integrated into the programmes of regular theatre venues. A neat evolution, and an interesting challenge that gives the Flemish circus and street theatre scene something to work on in the decades to come...



BAUKE LIEVENS, DRAMATURG
AND ACADEMIC RESEARCHER,
KASK (SCHOOL OF ARTS GHENT)

What do you see as your most important task in circus/street arts in your country?

As part of my four-year research project (funded by KASK School of Arts, Ghent) investigating strategies for artistic research in the creation of contemporary circus, I see one of my most important tasks as being to generate dialogue between circus artists. To talk about circus. Or to find words to do so. To (re)define what we do, how we do it and why we do it. In a second phase, I would like to open this dialogue to policymakers and programmers. To realise that idea I am currently publishing a cycle of Open Letters to the Circus, to be followed by the organisation of several Encounters that gather invited circus artists from all over Europe to talk

and discuss. The first letter was published online in December 2015, and was followed by a first Encounter in Ghent in January 2016 with a second planned for Bristol in March 2016.

SVEN GATZ, FLEMISH MINISTER OF CULTURE, MEDIA, YOUTH AND BRUSSELS

What are the most important challenges for circus/ street arts in your country and specifically when it comes to audience and marketing development?

As general context, the cultural policy in Belgium is in quite a specific situation. A Belgian cultural policy doesn't exist. Culture is a responsibility of French-speaking and Dutch-speaking communities. So, I can just talk for the Flemish government, who are responsible for the cultural policy in Flanders (Dutch-speaking Brussels included). For me, audience and marketing development is a different matter for circus and street arts. Circus, and especially contemporary circus, is programmed indoors (tents, theatres and black boxes) and in public space. Circus is an interesting developing art discipline, but is still fragile. Concerning audience and marketing development, circus has some problems with the sorts of things the public associate with circus (the red nose, the elephant, etc) because contemporary circus has nothing to do with the old-fashioned image. Contemporary circus is for me an art discipline on the edge of dance, theatre and performance. So there is a big potential audience we can convince to come and discover circus. But communication/marketing in circus is always a blind date: it asks an adventurous spirit for a member of the public to buy a ticket, to look for an au pair for the kids, to search for car parking, and come to see a circus show. Therefore it is important that circus is included as a separate category in the brochures of established cultural venues and art centres. The regular press can and must be a partner in audience and marketing development. Neither cultural journalists nor the public have a frame of reference to write, talk and reflect properly about contemporary circus. Mostly they have a focus on the technical skills. Besides offering blind dates, it is necessary for circus organisations (companies, festivals, cultural centres, arts centres, etc) to develop a community around their programme. It is so difficult to convince the public to come and see a circus show, but once they're in, they're really in and keep coming back with family and friends. Public development for street arts (also circus in public space) is another topic. Most street arts festivals are free, and when they're well organised and marketed they get a big audience, even if the public don't know anything about the companies and their artistic proposals. But there is a question about the artistic level of street arts; there is a real division between artistic work and entertainment.



PUBLIC POLICIES AND SUPPORT SCHEMES

In Belgium there is no national policy on culture as this domain is under the authorisation of the different communities: the Flemish Community, the Walloon Community, and the German-speaking Community – a division based on the three official languages in the country.

According to the **Flemish Research Department** the total budget for Culture in 2014 was 482,027,000 Euro, which means 1.8% of the total Flemish budget. There is no official recognition for street arts as an art form in itself. The professional arts in Flanders are supported in the region under the **Arts Decree**, which divided 94,243,158 Euro between 256 organisations in 2014. Since 2008 circus has had its own decree. This decree wants to support all forms of circus – classical as well as new forms, amateurs and professionals – and includes measures to finance production and creation, education, dissemination (including travel grants for artists to perform internationally), festivals and promotion. There is no structural support for organisations at the moment, nor additional support for EU supported projects (as is the case in the Arts Decree); however, the decree is currently being reviewed. The new **Circus Decree** is expected to be implemented somewhere around the end of 2017. 28 organisations and 16 individuals divided a total subvention of 2,305,599 Euro from the Circus Decree in 2014. cjsm.be/cultuur

In the annual report '**Focus 2014**' covering the General Administration for Culture of the Walloon-Brussels Federation, it states that the total budget for Culture that year was 291,867,118 Euro, or around 3% of the total budget of the Walloon Government. 90,905,821 Euro were spent on 'Arts de la scène' or the performing arts, which include theatre, music, dance and 'carnival arts, circus and street arts'. This last category was good for 2% of that amount (1,254,954 Euro).

www.culture.be

Since the state reforms of 2014, support for Culture from provincial governments has decreased annually and the idea is that in time it will cease to exist completely. On a local level the cities are also an important support system for the arts, each one deciding on its own priorities and policy.

In Belgium, support for the arts mostly depends on the government. Private sponsorship is not as common as in some other European countries. The National Lottery is controlled by the government, and is obliged to contribute part of its profit back to society through funding and sponsorship of culture, sports, science and social projects.

Surveys on audiences

The study department of the Flemish government keeps Excel overviews with numbers on culture and audiences.

<http://regionalestatistieken.vlaanderen.be/statistiek-cultuur>

The Agency for Social Cultural Work asks cultural centres to give them data on cultural participation and audience development, which is bundled together in a yearly publication.

More interesting is the research published in 2015 by professor John Lievens from Ugent – Ghent University – on participation in cultural activities based on a survey done in 2014.

www.participatiesurvey.be



FESTIVALS AND VENUES PROGRAMMING CIRCUS AND STREET ARTS

Based on the data found in the guide to the sector **Le Nomade** (2011) there are about eighteen circus and/or street arts events in the French-speaking part of Belgium, of which nine receive subvention from the government. In addition there are about seventeen multidisciplinary festivals and 27 venues that also include circus and/or street arts in their programming. A new online edition of *Le Nomade* is planned for 2016.

Based on data from **Circuscentrum**, Flanders has around 21 festivals for circus. In 2014, ten of these festivals received funding from the Flemish government. Several of these festivals also include street arts in their programme. Flanders has a lot of local festivals presenting street arts and some circus in smaller villages. However, there are no exact figures for this activity.

Over the last few years there has been a tendency for indoor venues to leave the comfort of their buildings and to programme street arts or (performing) arts in public spaces. There is no precise data available on how many venues, but we can say that the majority of the bigger cultural houses are known to occasionally go beyond their brick walls.

The same can be said for the programming of circus in indoor venues. Circus in Flanders is on the rise since the Circus Decree, and more and more interesting creations are being made, increasing the interest of cultural houses in programming circus – both Flemish and international work. In the past, circus shows were booked by cultural centres as family shows or programmed for young audiences but of late this has started to change.

Some examples:

Smells Like Circus

In 2011, Circuscentrum started a collaboration with Vooruit – one of the big arts centres in Ghent – to get contemporary circus in Flanders the recognition it deserves in the performing arts sector. Since 2015 this has resulted in the five-day event **Smells Like Circus**.

http://vooruit.be/en/project/detail/1922/Smells_Like_Circus

MiramirO

MiramirO is one of the ongoing festivals recognised under the Flemish Circus Decree. This yearly festival in July infiltrates the city, giving a stage to a wide variety of art forms, but with a special focus on circus and performing arts in public spaces. Its aim is to bring audiences together in shared amazement.

www.miramiro.be

La fête des artistes de Chassepierre

La Fête des artistes de **Chassepierre** is an international festival dedicated to presenting the current trends in street arts from all over the world. The festival happens annually in August and is one of the oldest in the country, existing since 1973.

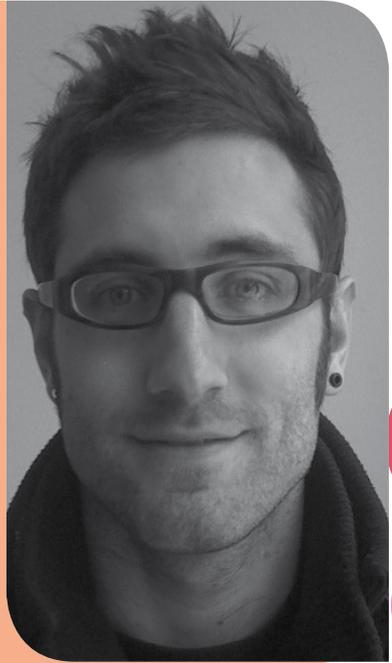
www.chassepierre.be



BRAM DOBBELAERE, ARTIST, CIE EAO AND CIE POL & FREDDY

**What are the most important challenges for circus/
street arts in your country and specifically when it
comes to audience and marketing development?**

It seems like circus and street festivals in Belgium have no problem reaching a large and diverse audience, while theatres struggle to fill their seats during the 'regular' theatre season. I think Belgian audiences are still a bit reluctant to go see contemporary circus in the theatre. Then again this might also have to do with a more general decline in theatre-going. As a Belgian company, we perform for bigger audiences in foreign countries than in our own. Sure, it's getting a bit better every year, with more theatres booking circus shows, but I thought this evolution would happen a lot faster.



CIRCUS AND STREET ARTS COMPANIES CURRENTLY WORKING IN THE COUNTRY

There are 229 companies and solo artists. That is the estimate if we're talking about street arts and circus artists that are living and working in Belgium. The 2015 Yearbook of Flemish Circus Companies indicates that there are 96 active circus companies in Flanders and the 2011 edition of *Le Nomade* tells us that there are 71 companies who reside in the Walloon provinces and about 62 in Brussels. Generally the split between street arts and circus artists is even, but we do see that in the Walloon regions there is a slightly bigger focus on street art and over the last couple of years there has been a general shift towards circus in the whole of the country. In Flanders there are six traditional travelling circuses left that play at their own risk, and six travelling circuses that are booked by organisations such as festivals and cultural centres. Besides these nomadic artists more and more companies play in the open air or 'in the box' depending on who books them.

Some examples:

Circus Ronaldo

Circus Ronaldo is Flanders' best known travelling circus and was founded in 1971. The current generation of this family of artists transformed the spectacles into a theatrical form of circus where commedia dell'arte is mixed with high-level circus disciplines.

www.circusronaldo.be

Collectif Malunés

Collectif Malunés is a nice example of a young group of artists who are willing to take the risk of starting up a new travelling circus. Four young artists, three Flemish men and one French woman, graduated from the AcaPA circus school in 2009. After premiering with the successful show *Sens Dessus Dessous* in 2010, they gathered family, friends and sponsors to buy their very own tent with

crowdfunding resources. This tent will be used for their next show, which will be ready for early showings in 2016 and will include five more promising young artists.

www.collectifmalunes.be

Claudio Stellato

Claudio Stellato was born in Milan but has been working and living in Brussels for some years. After a schooling in music he worked for a street theatre company and decided to study circus in Toulouse. His work has a lot of multidisciplinary characteristics and floats between dance, installation, performance and circus. In his first two shows he explores the relation between body and object by presenting familiar aspects of human nature.

www.l-autre.be / www.la-cosa.eu

▶
INTERVIEW
Claudio Stellato

Studio Orka

In 2004, **Studio Orka** started out as a group of installation- and stage-builders who wanted to make shows for children and grown-ups that still cherish their childish side. They make outdoor, indoor and site-specific theatre shows where they use small words to talk about big issues, and they always do it in their own unique way.

www.studio-orka.be









SARA DANDOIS, ARTIST, ROOFTOPTIGERS

What do you see as your most important task in circus/street arts in your country?

We are situated at the intersection of visual arts and performance and are investigating this domain in public space. By the combination of what is recognisable in the 'acting' on the one hand, with experimental, new forms of installation on the other hand, we draw the audience into our world, a world that questions their assumptions and makes them think intuitively about certain themes. We never present a story; instead we offer an experience in which the audience is often important in forming their own meaning. They are part of the whole. They are the antagonists. They often influence the course

of the performance. We see it as our task to intermingle live performance and visual art, to bridge audiences, to offer them startling experiences, and to accompany them in the rich world of our art. We want to contribute through art and culture to a better and more beautiful world.

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INTERVIEW
Sara Dandois



EDUCATION AND TRAINING

In Flanders it is possible to do drama studies, but unfortunately there are no real places where one can be trained in the field of street arts, so most artists help each other when they are creating a new show. Young artists at the start of their careers can rely on festivals and centres to get in touch with suggestions for interesting artists or mentors to learn from.

As for circus, in Belgium there are quite a few ways to get to know the art form as an amateur, and a couple of ways to become a professional circus artist. Flanders counts **22 circus ateliers**, at which all basic techniques are taught. The student groups vary from toddlers to grown-ups and from beginners to advanced pupils. Next to these circus workshops that receive students the whole year round, there are circus clubs and other unofficial ways to learn circus techniques. Every year a total of about 5,000 pupils enter circus workshops all across Flanders. In Walloon provinces there are some fifteen organisations that offer circus training programmes mainly for recreation. Another seven reside in Brussels.

Circus artists who want to get professional training can only do this in Brussels, where they can choose an artistic education or a pedagogic education. For those who want to make a professional career in circus arts, there is the **Ecole Supérieure des Arts du Cirque (ESAC)**, Belgium's best known school.

ESAC

This school is recognised by the French Community and presents an academy diploma. Students receive a three-year varied training that includes dance lessons, acting lessons, dramaturgy, music, stage design, art history... and circus techniques. The training seeks to integrate circus arts practice and high-level skill in a circus technique of the trainee's choice with the development of a

personal artistic project. Graduation students create a collective artistic project that is performed at the end of the course. At this moment, about 180 students have entered ESAC. Each term, an average of 17 - 19 students graduate.

www.esac.be

Espace Catastrophe

Espace Catastrophe is also located in Brussels and organises short-term courses open to everyone, mostly attended by amateurs who are already familiar with circus arts. These courses are organised twice a year, for about 350 participants per session. Amateurs are given the opportunity to attend teaching practice three times per year, for about 150 participants each time. For professionals, Espace Catastrophe organises three international teaching courses and a number of workshops, annually reaching about 100 professional circus artists.

www.catastrophe.be

▶
INTERVIEW
Catherine Magis



VIRGINIE JORAY, DIRECTOR, ESAC

What are the most important challenges for circus/street arts in your country and specifically when it comes to audience and marketing development?

In the Wallonia-Brussels Federation, one of the most important issues is the structuring of the circus and street arts sectors. The partners exist. They do a remarkable job that is being noticed. Unfortunately all of them rely on limited finances, and are further restricted by the absence of a global vision. Everyone tries to build the sector in their own way, but it is time to recognise how unhealthy it is to have only one's own structure and the 'good will' of others for support. The mission of the those working in the field should be to concentrate on developing their specificities and ensuring their relevance. If we really want this sector to become fully mature, we need to dare to work on a real cultural politics by founding a dedicated and independent organisation and giving it funding.

Other

In the Walloon province there is one training institute that can only be attended by professional circus artists, and in Flanders there is Circuscentrum, which organises a number of courses open to anyone older than eighteen. In Leuven there is one secondary school that offers circus as an option within their sports education program.

www.circuscentrum.be

If we look at pedagogic education there is the twenty-day course that Circuscentrum organises together with **Cirkus in Beweging**, and the one-year training education of the **Ecole de Cirque de Bruxelles** which presents instructors with an official diploma. The Ecole de Cirque de Bruxelles offers an advanced training – Artistic Pedagogics – to students who wish to be trained as professional circus artists. They also offer a couple of individual (refresher) courses and there is a recreation department where children and teenagers are given the opportunity to learn various circus techniques. They also organise a specific training for the mentally or physically impaired.

www.ecoledecirquedebruxelles.be





CREATION AND RESIDENCY CENTRES

There are no exact figures regarding creation and residency centres. *Le Nomade* (2011) mentions five creation support centres in the French-speaking part of Belgium. One of these is Espace Catastrophe in Brussels, being the first of three creation places for circus, street arts and clowning to be recognised by the French-speaking Community.

Espace Catastrophe

Located in the ancient ice cellars of Saint-Gilles since 1995, the organisation aspires to be a multi-faceted place for artists to perform, train, get educated and create. Every year between 60 and 70 projects are welcomed to receive one of four different types of support: use of work space, accompanied residency, partnership, and associate production. In 2015, plans for the construction of a brand new building for **Espace Catastrophe** were approved by the city. It is not yet known when it will be open.

www.catastrophe.be

Dommelhof

In Flanders there are no full-fledged creation centres or work places for circus and/or street arts worthy of that name. **Dommelhof**, home of Theatre op de Markt, is the only one that comes close, having the necessary infrastructure to welcome national and international circus and street art companies, although it is not specifically designed for those art forms. The production department of Theatre op de Markt is also one of Flanders' most important co-producers for the sector.

www.dommelhof.be

De Expeditie

A recent new player is **De Expeditie**. Located on an old industrial site in Ghent this building is the home of six (socio-)cultural organisations: Circuscentrum, Cie Cecilia, JES, MiramirO, Victoria Deluxe, and vrede.be. Besides office space there are also work spaces for rehearsal, creation, construction and presentation. Though the infrastructure is still under development, the partner organisations have already started to develop their activities in the building; for instance Circuscentrum and MiramirO occasionally welcome circus and street art companies to use the spaces.

www.de-expeditie.be



OLIVIER MINET, DIRECTEUR,
LATITUDE 50-PÔLE ARTS DU CIRQUE
ET DE LA RUE

What do you see as your (or your organisation's) most important task in the circus/street arts sector in your country?

In the last few years, quite a lot of circus has been created for theatres. While celebrating the evolution of circus in finding its way to the theatre, we like to defend a place for the travelling and tented circus. In our rural region we have the possibility to welcome residencies and presentations of tented shows, and we will continue to do this in the future to protect this form of presentation and to facilitate the nomadic arts.

ADVOCACY AGENCIES AND PROFESSIONAL INFORMATION PROVIDERS

In Flanders there are no organisations or networks dedicated specifically to the documentation or advocacy of street arts. It is mainly the bigger festivals and companies that play a role here. Street arts is not considered an independent art form.

Flanders Arts Institute

Flanders Arts Institute is a new organisation that opened on 1 January 2015. The Institute serves the arts sector in Flanders and is a merger of VTi (Institute for the Performing Arts in Flanders), BAM (Flemish Institute for Visual, Audiovisual and Media Art), and Flanders Music Centre. It is the new reference point for all questions about art in Flanders. The Institute's core functions include a focus on research, international activities, supporting the practice of art, and policy support. The Institute collects and distributes knowledge and expertise daily about and for the arts in Flanders, in an international context. It is the ideal contact point for foreign arts professionals in search of information on the arts in Flanders.

www.flandersartsinstitute.be

Circuscentrum

When the Circus Decree came into being in 2008, **Circuscentrum** was created as the official link between the government and the sector. Its mission: to turn Flanders into a flourishing circus region, with wide cultural support and the best possible development opportunities. The activities of Circuscentrum are built around five pillars:

- › Artistic support: Providing career support to Flemish circus artists – for new emerging talent and established performers alike. The keywords are creation, artistic advice, distribution and promotion.
- › Pedagogic support: Providing the necessary refresher training for teachers, artists and young artists. Monitor the artistic and educational value of the network of youth circuses.
- › Documentation centre: To protect, promote and honour Flemish circus heritage. Preserve and provide access to relevant literature and images.
- › Promotion & communication: Promoting the Flemish circus sector, Flemish circus policy and Circuscentrum itself through various channels. Put the circus arts higher on the agenda of policy-makers and the media, and raise awareness in other art sectors.
- › International branding: Position the Flemish circus arts as a high-quality brand abroad, and engage in relevant European networks and projects.

www.circuscentrum.be

Le Service général de la Création artistique

There are no organisations in the French-speaking part of Belgium that can be described as the Walloon counterparts of Circuscentrum or the Flanders Arts Institute. There is '**Le Service général de la Création artistique**', run by the government, which aims to support and encourage the artistic creation and production, promotion and diffusion of the performing arts. These are divided into six domains, of which 'carnival arts, circus and street arts' are one.

The first objective of this service is the professionalisation of the artistic sector through multi-annual support contracts with diverse stakeholders in the sector. Second, there is a specific focus on young contemporary creation, with specific budgets dedicated to this. Finally, the service works to improve the diffusion of the performing arts.

www.artscene.be

Except for the resource and documentation centre of Espace Catastrophe there are no information centres dedicated specifically to circus or street arts in the French-speaking part of Belgium. There are however several more broadly oriented organisations that also gather and diffuse information and documentation on these art forms, like **Centre de la Marionette** de la Communauté Française de la Belgique, **Centre de documentation et d'information sur la danse**, **Lézarts Urbains**, and Centre de Ressources Théâtre – **La Bellone**, to name a few.

KOEN ALLARY, DIRECTOR, CIRCUSCENTRUM

What are the most important challenges for circus/ street arts in your country and specifically when it comes to audience and marketing development?

There are quite a few interesting challenges for circus and street arts in Flanders:

- The recognition of circus and street arts within the cultural field. Circus is a contemporary art form which fits perfectly in arts and cultural centres.

- The recognition of circus and street arts by the public. In the minds of audiences circus is an elephant, a tent, or a clown, and it's for children. Well, NO, circus is a very rich contemporary art form with a deceptive simplicity. Circus is a form for adults where children are sometimes welcome. Street arts is an art form where the location determines the creation and the performance.

- A clear definition and clear grant opportunities for street arts is needed. Honestly, both art disciplines are still artistically fragile in Flanders. Flemish artists are creating good or even very good work, but it will take another ten years for Flanders to conquer the world. And YES, circus can save the world.





CASE STUDIES OF THREE SUCCESSFUL AUDIENCE AND MARKET DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Kalender – Benjamin Verdonck

In 2009 the Flemish theatre and sculptural artist Benjamin Verdonck executed a performance that lasted 365 days. In that entire year he accomplished some hundred acts, gatherings, happenings and accumulations in the city of Antwerp. By doing so he was present in the city for a long time and created a buzz around his artistic project. Some actions were planned ahead of time, but by also adapting to things that were happening in the city he was able to capture the interest of a wide range of inhabitants and passers-by.

In 2009 he installed new monuments, wrote letters to free political activists, tried to build houses, led a parade of consumer goods, collected lost properties, dressed up to do slapstick acts, started a vegetable garden in the middle of a busy crossroads... Online he kept a dynamic calendar in which he reported the different activities. At the beginning of the year a lot of the happenings involved only him; by the end of the year some gatherings included many inhabitants of the city. As the project grew, the amount of followers grew with it.

During the year he also presented the progress of his calendar in a couple of theatre venues, and at the end of the year he gathered all of his activities in an illustrated book as a souvenir for his funding bodies, partners and followers. His way of approaching the project changed a one-man calendar into a city-wide activity for all Antwerp's inhabitants.

www.kalender09.be

Kortrijk Congé

Kortrijk Congé is a festival organised by Kunstencentrum BUDA (arts centre) in cooperation with De Kreun (music centre) and vzw Wit.h (community arts organisation). Kortrijk Congé is built upon cooperation between artists, organisations and audiences. Without interaction, it wouldn't exist.

For ten years, Kortrijk Congé has been organising a series of very different editions. Collaboration and collective work are key words, forms differ. Another key interest of this festival is the city and its future. Kortrijk Congé had its last edition in 2015. The organisation is working out a new concept for the future.

In 2014, Stad in staat van uitzondering ('City in a state of exception') took place. The organisers invited their audience to come to the festival, asking that they stay for eight- hours, without knowing beforehand what would happen. A jury selected ideas coming from the whole country, and even further afield. Practical ideas about living together, as well as poetical concepts, formed the basis for experiments in community living. Visitors were challenged to cooperate in a system that was still inventing itself – to build up a self-sustaining community by means of what they themselves brought in, whether it was knowledge, food or something else. The system was based on an economy of action rather than money, and relied on responsibility as a common good. The 'city' this created existed for 25 hours.

The audience the festival reached in 2014 was a middle-class, white, educated one. But as they'd been thinking about the city in all its aspects, in 2015 they aimed for a greater inclusion of people from different backgrounds. That's why they invited the Russian art collective Chto Delat (which means 'What now?') and introduced them to different kinds of organisations in Kortrijk. They came up with the idea of a procession formed of performances, banners, costumes and so on, that would provoke ideas about our common future. The festival took place for only one day, but a ten-day programme of workshops prepared the event. Workshops were organised by different types of associations (social, artistic, etc) and were open to everyone. The procession and the subsequent gathering was meant to be a celebration of the future – a future still to be made by every citizen.

www.kortrijkconge.be

NEXT

NEXT has taken place every year since 2007, presenting international performing arts over sixteen days, and spread over the Eurometropole Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai-Valenciennes. NEXT is also involved in LEARN DO SHARE (2015), a one-day conference about stimulating citizen participation through innovation, creativity and digital technologies.

Five Flemish, Walloon and French art and cultural organisations (La Rose des vents, Villeneuve d'Ascq (FR), Espace Pasolini, Valenciennes (FR), Kunstencentrum BUDA, Kortrijk (BE), Cultuurcentrum Kortrijk (BE), La Maison de la culture de Tournai (BE) combine their strengths, presenting self-produced and hosted performances. The focus is on new art forms and on challenging the boundaries of performance art.

The aim of NEXT is to present performing arts in the region, and to let audiences and artists travel through the Eurometropole, showing its broad potential as a meeting zone for culture. The aim is to present and stimulate the Eurometropole as a region of international artistic creation and presentation. Recognised artists as well as promising new ones are invited. During the festival, the audience can take buses to and from the locations. Locations may also be outdoors or pop up temporarily. Workshops are organised to create spaces for audiences to meet artists (and vice versa) during the festival. Every workshop is outlined by an artist. Every edition ends with a big party bringing together the audiences and artists of the two weeks of presentations.

In 2015, NEXT was rewarded with the EFFE award by the European Festival Association for its trendsetting qualities.

www.nextfestival.eu



CASA is a new European support programme designed by five arts organisations to equip professionals from the contemporary circus and outdoor creation sectors to work and cooperate internationally, raising their ambition and capacity to work at international level.

This brochure focuses on the particular cultural context providing information and analysis of cultural policies, cultural infrastructures and local artistic realities.

www.casa-circuits.eu

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