

VUESCH e.V. - Revaler Str. 99 - 10245 Berlin

Press Release

Aerial Arts Festival Berlin 2018 cancelled

Berlin, 11 07 2018

The Association for the Overcoming of Gravity (VUESCH) - association for circus arts, professional artistry and circus pedagogy - unfortunately will not be able to present the third edition of the Aerial Arts Festival Berlin this year.

The Aerial Arts Festival Berlin is an international festival that serves both the circus scene with a networking opportunity, as well as the Berlin public, who still rarely get the chance to see the art form of contemporary circus, with a focus on aerial arts. It has already been held twice, each with different partners and priorities.

Despite long preparatory work, the 2018 edition cannot go ahead because there is no suitable place in Berlin which fulfils the technical, spatial and financial conditions of the festival. Our previous main partner the Staatliche Schule für Artistik (State School of Circus Arts), with an excellently equipped rehearsal space, is sadly no longer available.

Circus Artistry in Germany

The circus arts have experienced a boom in the last few years: In Germany and especially in Berlin, circus arts flourish in variety, in public spaces (street festivals, etc.), as well as in the educational field (youth circuses).

In theatre and in cultural-political perception, however, the genre still faces difficulties, and lags behind its other European counterparts. This is especially detrimental to the development of contemporary circus, as contemporary, innovative or experimental productions have few possibilities to present themselves. As a result an interdisciplinary approach and synergy between circus arts and other art forms also suffers.

In addition to a lack of performance spaces in Germany for this genre, there is also a gap in versatile qualified artistic training for contemporary circus. The Staatliche Schule für Artistik tends to help students prepare for performance-oriented stage artistry, specifically for variety and gala shows, since there is currently no professional field for contemporary circus in this country.

That is why Germany, in the eyes of other countries, is often ridiculed as a "developing country of circus". This is especially painful considering the rich historical tradition of circus in Germany.

An aerial festival in Berlin

Our aim as the Aerial Arts Festival Berlin has been to offer a link between these worlds – an interface between education and professional practice, between gala artistry and contemporary circus, between national and international trends. It is a festival with two strands:

Internally: Workshops, seminars, master classes, open exchange and networking, it is a matrix of various scenes of the aerial circus world in Germany and internationally.

**Luftartistik Festspiele
Aerial Arts Festival
Berlin**

Outwardly: Contemporary circus shows and performances are presented in professional theatres to a Berlin audience, but can also stimulate contemporary theatre discourse, thus advancing the perception of the circus as a serious performing art.

Cancellation for 2018

The Aerial Arts Festival Berlin, which was planned as a bridge between the variety and contemporary circus worlds, has now become the victim of various seemingly insurmountable problems for 2018.

One issue is the alleged incompatibility of performance-oriented gala artistry and the outdoors contemporary circus scene - both in the field of education and training. For this and other reasons it has been difficult to acquire any funding for the festival, as it can not be clearly assigned a pure sporting event or as an artistic event.

The festival has thus far been financed entirely from the funds of the association and participation contributions, which unfortunately would not cover the rent of a large commercial hall. After the cancellation of the state school as host, we could sadly not find a suitable hall within these financial restrictions in November.

Cooperation partners

We would like to thank from the bottom of our hearts our previous partners! These include the fantastic Pfefferberg Theater, which as a modern folk theatre has extended its focus to the genre of contemporary circus, and therefore is the perfect venue for our public events. In addition, we want to thank our patron Arnulf Rating and his Maulhelden office, who sustainably supported us particularly the first year, and opened the way to our other partners, the Wintergarten Varieté and Kleistforum Frankfurt/Oder. We are also grateful to the Staatliche Schule für Artistik for letting us use their artistic hall in the first year - which has set a high standard of how the festival can be presented in the future.

Other partners include: Catch It Ropes, Artistraum, Q-Space, RAW Kultur e.G. and last but not least our Vuesch gGmbH, whom we thank for their enthusiastic contributions, as well as our many volunteers and friends, and the support of the Berlin circus and theatre scene.

We hope that this cancellation only means a temporary suspension of the festival, and that we will come back with a great Aerial Arts Festival Berlin in 2019!

Jana Korb and Jessie Walters - artistic directors
Vuesch e.V.