

Circadium

SCHOOL
● OF
CONTEMPORARY
CIRCUS

Challenging Artists to Create Tomorrow's Circus

Circadium is the only higher-education program for circus artists in the United States.

We offer a full-time, three-year course that grants a Diploma of Circus Arts, recognized by the Pennsylvania Board of Education.

We are committed to radically changing the future of circus, and performing arts as a whole, by bringing a multidisciplinary and experiment-driven approach to creation and performance.

As a 501(c)3 organization, the school relies on individual contributions and foundation support to cover costs that cannot be offset by student tuition. We keep our tuition rates low to encourage students from different backgrounds to attend, and to ensure that they will not launch their artistic careers burdened by student debt.

Circus Arts are Thriving

Worldwide, contemporary representations of circus are thriving and expanding – from Cirque du Soleil, to Pink’s performance at the Grammys, to the wide array of theatre and dance groups that incorporate elements of acrobatics, aerials, and clowning into their performances. Circus is no longer confined to the Big Top, as artists in every discipline discover its rich potential for physical expression.

And yet, until now the United States lacked a dedicated facility for training contemporary circus artists. Students who wanted to train intensively in circus traveled to Canada, Europe, or Australia. They often stayed in those countries and established companies, meaning that now virtually all of the edgy, exciting, vibrant new circus companies are based overseas. There are a growing number of arts presenters in the U.S. who are clamoring for these kinds of shows – and the only way to get them has been to import them. These arts presenters have celebrated the arrival of Circadium, as has the entire American circus community.

A Strong Creation Team

Circadium unites some of the most highly-regarded names in American circus education (Shana Kennedy, Greg Kennedy, Aidan O’Shea, Richard Kennison and Adam Woolley) with two of Philadelphia’s premiere theatre and dance artists (Ben Grinberg and Andrea Murillo) to form the core faculty of Circadium. We have an additional roster of circus instructors specializing in everything from juggling to aerial straps. To complement this, Circadium’s academic department includes experienced instructors in writing, music, performance history, stage tech, and business.

To learn from the expertise of others, Circadium has joined the Federation Européen des Écoles de Cirque Professionnelles – a network of over 50 professional circus schools around the world. We regularly attend conferences, host visiting instructors, and share learning materials with these other schools.



An Unparalleled Facility

Circadium and our sister organization for recreational students, Philadelphia School of Circus Arts, established the extraordinary Circus Campus in September 2017. As a former Catholic church, the building and its soaring architecture are particularly suited to high-flying aerialists and acrobats. Outdoor green spaces provide space for picnics, special events, and flying trapeze and tightwire rigs.

Our facility hosts performances throughout the year – from our students’ end-of-year-shows, to the monthly works-in-progress series “Test Flights”, to holiday events produced by recreational youth and adult students.

Our location in West Mt. Airy provides ample opportunity for networking with local schools and other arts companies. From the Woodmere Art Museum, to Almanac Dance Circus Theatre, to the Keystone Boys Choir, there are always collaborators to be found. And for Circadium’s larger performances, we bring students to FringeArts and to the Kimmel Center.

A Vision of the Future

We are here because we believe



... that circus has the power to transcend social boundaries, communicate artistic concepts, and foster individual self-actualization.

... that higher education institutions greatly impact industries and cultures.

... that contemporary circus is evolving as an art form, and that young artists in the United States need a professional pathway.

... that circus's potential as an art form in the United States has yet to be fully realized, and that Circadium will be a vehicle for that realization.

Our goals:

- To **provide** a comprehensive curriculum, so that circus students build both artistic and technical skills.
- To **break** a vicious cycle in American circus:
(lack of funding → lack of challenging new work → lack of funding)
- To **graduate** students who are
 - ... the finest circus artists of their generation
 - ... independent thinkers and creators
 - ... innovators and experimenters
 - ... interested in self-expression
 - ... business-savvy, self-sufficient, and versatile
 - ... ready to work internationally
- To **create** a nurturing environment for students of all gender identities, sexual orientations, ethnicities, and cultural backgrounds.
- To **provide** regular opportunities to perform, so that students build the “muscle” of quickly creating and presenting work.
- To **practice** the skill of refinement, asking students, at specific intervals, to aim for precision and near-perfection in the work they bring to the public.
- To **utilize** tools from theater, dance, writing, visual arts and other disciplines to enhance creativity in circus.
- To **teach** a business curriculum that promotes long-term sustainability for circus arts and individual artists.
- To **commit** to higher education through licensure, accreditation, partnerships, and membership in the performing arts community, in order to increase the visibility and viability of our graduates.



For more information about Circadium and to find out how you can support us, please contact Executive Director Shana Kennedy at **215.392.4431** or **shana@circadium.com**