
TALES FROM THE FIRST OF MAY: CIRCUS SARASOTA BRINGS BELLO, BIG FUN TO BIG TOP

Welcome back, circus fans! For first time readers, “Tales from the First of May” is my way of introducing you (and myself) to all of the people that help make The Circus Arts Conservatory one of the shining stars of our community. From staff to student performers, valued volunteers to beloved patrons, there are many individuals that complete The CAC puzzle – and I’m here to connect all of the links piece by piece.

In what has got to be one of the most exciting parts of the season thus far, Circus Sarasota’s 2016 winter edition was, for me, a little over two non-stop weeks of artistry, camaraderie and a whole lotta coffee. But what a whirlwind it was! Between the back-to-back shows and variety of events from night to night, the Big Top was the best (and brightest – especially at night!) place to be in Sarasota!

Opening night was full of excitement and truly set the tone for the remainder of the run. I got to witness Annaliese Nock, an 8th-generation circus performer (and daughter of our headliner, Bello) set a new Guinness World Record for completing the most forward somersaults (four) in the Wheel of Death in one minute. Talk about being able to hear a pin drop! The crowd, though electrified, kept mainly silent as she completed this feat – but when she held up her hands in victory, the audience roared to life. It was an amazing moment to be a part of – and to share with the rest of our circus friends and fans!

Throughout the two weeks of the run, I assisted and helped plan a number of special events and VIP gatherings in the tent. In particular, I facilitated Culture Collective Night, where young professionals gathered in our VIP area to socialize before enjoying the circus – some for the first time. In addition, I escorted Jim Shirley, the Executive Director of the Arts and Cultural Alliance, backstage to help him get ready to



be Guest Ringmaster that evening. Both the event and the show went off smoothly and everyone had a great time – judging by the little boy who was screaming his praises for Bello throughout the night, I'd say that would be a safe judgement to make.

One of my favorite parts of being at the Big Top for a few weeks straight, though, was being able to share the circus with my family and friends. I watched the show several times with some of the people I am closest to; I got to see them experience everything that we had prepared, promoted, and presented firsthand. My baby cousins visited their first circus ever while I sat right next to them, and my parents were thrilled to take a selfie with me and Bello. I made some of my favorite memories that I've had working with The CAC so far showing off what we do to the people I love the most.

While "Red, White & BELLO!" may be over, the season is far from that. We have another show at the Big Top coming up, followed by another arena run from the students of Sailor Circus. The lights are still on, the ring is still set and there's more to do – but I'm taking the vibrant energy that has been building up for weeks and carrying it with me for the events to come. On with the show!

Source: <http://circusarts.org/blog/2016/03/>



Vocabulary

piece-by-piece (expression)

in order; one at a time

lotta (expression)

“lotta” is short for the words “a lot of”

whirlwind (noun)

a time of great activity

run (noun)

the time during which a show is presented

able to hear a pin drop (expression)

very quiet

feat (noun)

a challenging activity

ringmaster (noun)

the person who is the master of ceremonies

firsthand (adverb)

directly

Questions

Question 1

Name the four kinds of participants in The Circus Arts Conservatory.

Question 2

Name three components of Circus Sarasota's 2016 winter edition.

Question 3

Give two facts about Annaliese Nock.

Question 4

How long did the author say the 2016 winter edition of Circus Sarasota lasted?

Question 5

What Guinness World Record did Annaliese Nock set?

Question 6

Name two events that were part of Culture Collective Night.

Question 7

What was the author's favourite part of being at the circus for a few weeks?

Question 8

What are the author's favourite memories working with the CAC?

Question 9

Name three events happening this season.

Answers

Answer 1

1. staff
2. student performers
3. valued volunteers
4. beloved patrons

Answer 2

1. artistry
2. camaraderie
3. a whole lotta coffee

Answer 3

1. 8th-generation circus performer
2. daughter of the headliner, Bello

Answer 4

A little over two weeks.

Answer 5

She set the Guinness World Record for completing the most forward somersaults (four) in the Wheel of Death in one minute.

Answer 6

1. young professionals socialized in the VIP area
2. Jim Shirley, the executive director of the Arts and Cultural Alliance, was Guest Ringmaster for the evening

Answer 7

His favourite part was sharing the circus with family and friends.

Answer 8

His favourite memories are showing off what they do to people he loves the most.

Answer 9

1. the show "Red, White & BELLO!"; 2. another show coming up at the Big Top; 3. another arena run from the students of Sailor Circus

