



CIRCUS DAYS AND NIGHTS

World premiere May 29, 2021

A CIRCUS OPERA BY PHILIP GLASS

Libretto by David Henry Hwang & Tilde Björfors

Based on the poems by Robert Lax

Directed by Tilde Björfors

CIRKUS
CIRKÖR



MALMÖ OPERA

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*"I have had the rights to the poems for about ten years, but forgot to write the piece.
But when I saw Tilde's staging of "Satyagraha" it struck me: They could do it!"
says Philip Glass about Cirkus Cirkör and the collaboration.*

In 1941, Robert Lax, then a 27 year-old writer and poet, met a family of traveling circus performers, the Christiani's. Over more than a decade that followed, he continued to correspond with the family and visit them, forming a particularly close bond with the eldest son, an acrobat named Mogador. Lax even traveled with the Cristiani's, and these experiences led to the creation of his iconic works *Circus of the Sun* and *Mogador's Book*. Lax portrays circus as a transcendental act, a ritual which mimics the cycle of creation and destruction inherent in life itself.

Lax's circus writings have long inspired composer Philip Glass as well as director Tilde Björfors, who has broken new ground by incorporating circus acts into traditional theatre. Along with co-librettist David Henry Hwang, this creative team will bring Lax's poetry and transcendental vision to the stage, through an innovative and highly-accessible fusion of circus and opera. Faithful to Lax's poetry and spiritual world view, *Circus Days and Nights* will take audiences into the world of the circus and the performers who dedicate their lives to this art, capturing a day in their lives as a spiritual ceremony, one which honors the cycle of life and death. Religious ritual is often regarded as the foundation of theatre; this show presents theatre as the foundation of religion.

Circus Days and Nights will be a stunning and surprising theatrical event,
marking the debut of an entirely new form: a new Circus Opera.

Circus Days and Nights world premiere May 29, 2021 Malmö Opera, Sweden.

CIRCUS DAYS AND NIGHTS

Circus Days and Nights is a co-production between Malmö Opera and Cirkus Cirkör.
Available for touring from 2022.

PRODUCTION DETAILS:

Cast & Orchestra:

2 soloists: soprano and a baritone.

4 ensemble quartet: tenor, soprano, baritone and mezzo-soprano.

7 musicians: incl. bandmaster: accordion, cello, violin, clarinet, percussion, bass trombone and trumpet.

7 circus artists: several disciplines e.g. acrobatics, aerials, equilibristics and fire.

Crew:

2 x Light Technicians
2 x Sound Technicians
2 x Riggers
Stage manager
Costume Technician
Tour Manager

A total of 29 people will tour with Circus Days and Nights.

Possibility to collaborate with local choir.

Please let us know if you want to receive the Technical Rider.

Stage requirements, In-the-round version:

Circus ring: 13 m ø
Hight to grid 13 m

Stage requirements, Frontal version:

Proscenium opening 12 m
Performance area 15 x 15 m
Wing space 2 m
Hight to grid 13 m

Rigging points needed, will be supplied in a separate riggplot.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

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www.cirkor.se

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About Philip Glass

The musical style that Glass has evolved has been dubbed “minimalism.” Glass preferred to speak of himself as a composer of “music with repetitive structures.” In the past 25 years, Glass has composed more than twenty five operas, large and small; twelve symphonies; three piano concertos and concertos for violin, piano, timpani, and saxophone quartet and orchestra; soundtracks to films and string quartets; a growing body of work for solo piano and organ.

The operas – *Einstein on the Beach*, *Satyagraha*, *Akhmaten*, and *The Voyage*, among many others – play throughout the world’s leading houses, and rarely to an empty seat.

Through his operas, his symphonies, his compositions for his own ensemble, and his wide-ranging collaborations with artists ranging from Twyla Tharp to Allen Ginsberg, Woody Allen to David Bowie, Philip Glass has had an extraordinary and unprecedented impact upon the musical and intellectual life of his times.

About David Henry Hwang

David Henry Hwang’s stage works includes the plays *M. Butterfly*, *Chinglish*, *Kung Fu*, *The Golden Child*, *The Dance and the Railroad* and *FOB*, as well as the Broadway musicals *Elton John* and *Tim Rice’s Aida* (co-author), *Flower Drum Song* (2020 revival) and Disney’s *Tarzan*.

Hwang is a Tony Award winner and three-time nominee, a three time Obie award winner, and a two-time Finalist for the Pulitzer Prize. He is also the most-produced living American opera librettist, whose works have been honored with two Grammy awards, co-wrote the Gold Record Solo with late pop icon Prince, and has worked since 2015 as Writer/ Consulting Producer for the Golden Globe-winning television series *The Affair*.

Hwang serves on the Board of the Lark Play Development Center, as Head of Playwriting at Columbia University School of the Arts, and as Chair of the American Theatre Wing, founder of the Tony Awards.

About Tilde Björfors

Tilde Björfors is the founder and Artistic Director of the Swedish company Cirkus Cirkör. Björfors has over 20 years of experience directing cross border stage performances in opera, theatre, circus, movies and exhibitions. Björfors has directed a majority of Cirkus Cirkör’s large scale productions, including *Epifónima*, *Satyagraha*, *Limits*, *Borders*, *Knitting Peace*, *Wear It Like a Crown* and *Inside Out*.

Her work has been presented on stages and theatres all over the world and she has been awarded with numerous of prestigious awards for her artistic achievements, among others: The Swedish H.M. The King’s Medal of the 8th dimension with blue ribbon and most recently the Premio Europa per il Teatro Prize New Theatrical Realities.

Björfors trademark is to always involve circus art in her work, and she has been pioneer and a driving force in establishing contemporary circus as an art form in Northern Europe.

