



# **Bike and Circuses 2022**

## **Final Report**

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We are so proud to have presented Bike and Circuses to Winnipeg audiences.

From June 6-12, we welcomed people of all ages to Whittier Park, located in St. Boniface where the Red and Seine Rivers meet. Audiences arrived to an active lobby area where various community organisations hosted information and activities for patrons as they waited to go into the show. Once the show started, audiences would be set off to ride, roll or walk the active transportation path through the park. Along the way, they encountered 8 multi-disciplinary performances inspired by climate change and the health of our planet. Topics included water, biodiversity, climate, pollution, active transportation, future generations, food choices, composting and more. Disciplines ranged from acrobatics and contortion to modern, hip hop and hoop dance, to clown and juggling. It truly was The Greatest Show About Earth.

It was a hit with all who attended. So much so The Forks engaged us to remount the show for their July 1<sup>st</sup> celebrations. We reimagined the experience for this event, bringing on 2 Ringleader Hosts who escorted crowds on tours every 30 minutes.

More than 1,000 people participated in Bike and Circuses.



## Community Engagement

We hired a total of 37 Manitobans.

- 17 artists worked to create and perform 8 unique pieces
- 12 craftspeople worked to design and build all the set, prop and costume pieces
- 3 director / designers worked to create the look and feel of the production
- 2 production staff worked to manage ticket sales and event set-up
- 3 consultants helped guide us in our efforts to make the event accessible and to help strengthen and steer our efforts towards Reconciliation

Over 40 volunteers helped us as well. This volunteer opportunity provided work experience for high school students and a chance to be social and get involved with the not-for-profit sector for others.

We collaborated with 7 community non-profit organisations. They participated in a variety of ways, from providing additional activities in our lobby area to lending supplies to helping with promotion.



Our Bike and Pedestrian Safety Station was well used by folks of all ages. It featured intersections, crosswalks and even a one-way cul-de-sac and provided a great opportunity to talk about cycling etiquette and the rules of the road.



## **Environmental Impact and Responsibility**

It was imperative we create as little waste and pollution as possible with this project.

All performers and staff were asked to avoid bringing single-use items to rehearsals and performances and to travel by active and public transportation when possible, or to consider carpooling.

We hosted a compost drop-off on site, collecting approximately 20 kg of waste over a 6-day stretch.

We surveyed all Bike and Circuses audience members, staff, volunteers and food vendors as to how they arrived at the park, and when folks drove, we recorded how many kilometers they travelled and in what sort of vehicle they used. We then calculated our carbon footprint associated with all transportation for the production, from pre-production to clean-up. We also calculated the carbon footprint of all materials we purchased new for the production, from printer ink, to signage, to a pair of socks. And finally we calculated the emissions from all food vendors including the food production, packaging and transportation footprint. In total, all the driving amounted to 4,400 pounds (2 metric tonnes) of carbon, while all the materials purchased new amounted to an additional 11,000 pounds (5 metric tonnes) for a grand total of 15,400 pounds (7 metric tonnes).

It was interesting and educational for us to see that the carbon emissions from (425 people) traveling to and from the event only accounted for 28.5% of the carbon footprint. The remaining 71.5% was associated with supply purchases and their manufacturing and delivery. The lesson here is that transportation footprint is obviously important, but our consumption choices have a larger impact. We will include this enlightening messaging in future study guides, shows and educational content where appropriate.

In order to offset the carbon footprint of the event to a net impact of zero Green House Gas emissions, we purchased 30,800 pounds (14 metric tonnes) of carbon offsets credits for the event, making Bike and Circuses 2022 Winnipeg's first 100% Carbon Neutral Live Theatre production. (Note: To be certain that we didn't underestimate our numbers and to account for any mathematical errors or oversight by any of the respondents to the surveys, we purchased an extra 100% carbon offsets for a total of 14 metric tonnes of carbon offsets, twice what we calculated was required to be net zero carbon emissions.)

Most materials used in production, from set and costume pieces to the paper we printed waivers on, were reused, thrifted or salvaged. We collected donations of scraps of wood and paint ends from local theatres and borrowed most of our costume pieces from local theatres as well. Almost all items and materials used in production will go on to be used again or its parts reimagined; we discarded very little into recycling or trash bins.



### Breakdown of Items Reused or Purchased

	NEW	REUSED or SALVAGED
<b>Production / Office Supplies</b>	<b>35% New</b> <u>Single Use:</u> Posters, Stickers, Buttons, Handbills, Computer Ink <u>Reusable:</u> Mason Jars (water for audiences), Mirrors, Tent Pegs, Stop Signs, Umbrellas	<b>65% Previously Loved</b> Reused, Salvaged, Borrowed: Paper, Bins, Wagons, Tables, Chairs, Cargo Bikes, Sandwich Boards, Paint
<b>Set</b>	<b>10% New</b> <u>Single Use:</u> Printed Signage	<b>90% Reused or Salvaged</b> Boxes, Street Sign Bases, Signage, Frames, Paint, Compost
<b>Props</b>	<b>25% New</b> <u>Single Use:</u> Stickers, Glue <u>Reusable:</u> Mason Jars, Mirrors	<b>75% Reused or Salvaged</b> Paint, Notions, and other small props
<b>Costumes</b>	<b>10% new items or material</b> Bought New but Reusable: Material for Hoodie, Socks, Legwarmers, Rain Capes	<b>90% borrowed or thrifted</b>

## Accessibility

Bike and Circuses celebrated not only cycling, but active transportation in general. It was important to us to create an event that was accessible to all audiences regardless of their level of mobility or comfort riding a bike.

We created 3 versions of the show:

Bike Shows – Audiences biked along the trail through the park, stopping for each performance.

Walk / Slow Roll Shows – Audiences walked or slowly rolled along the path. This option was best for pedestrians, folks pushing strollers, and cyclists who prefer to go slowly, like little learners.

Physically Accessible Show – Performance stops were moved closer together and audiences walked or rolled a shorter distance, along a path free of ruts or hills.



## Artistic Merit

We commissioned 15 Manitoba artists to create 8 4-minute pieces, with the invitation to use their artforms to express thoughts, facts or stories inspired by our planet. They were supported by 3 directors, 2 environmental scientists, and 2 costume, set and props designers.

The performances presented were:

### A MAD WORLD

WITH KIAH VERINDER  
& DUNCAN MCGREGOR

Using contortion, acrobatics, and bottle walking this piece tells a story of waking up to the mess we have made. With an excess of garbage and little food all around us, it can be hard to imagine a clean and sustainable society. But the journey there is worth it.



### PRACTICE MAKES POSSIBLE

WITH KARRIE BLACKBURN

Karrie's passion for circus arts and organic waste diversion come together in a performance designed to inspire change through daily practice. In a society that demands perfection, Karrie reminds audiences that practice makes possible and dedication makes progress. Turns out juggling and composting aren't so different after all.



### JUST ONE HAMBURGER

WITH ADY KAY

We all love the scrumptious perfection of a good hamburger...  
but do we know the massive amount of natural resources used to make...  
just one?



**HOW HUMANS INTERACT WITH  
EARTH...FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE**  
WITH EUGENE "GENIE" BAFFOE

An interactive experience with International Street Dancer GeNie Baffoe. Audiences will create sounds that will take them through the 3 states of water. Keep the beat and you will see!



**FORAGING FORWARD**  
WITH EMMA BEECH  
& ANAÏS BOSSÉ

A playful and curious exploration into the beauty of the world using contemporary dance and gymnastics. Two fairies forage forward into the unknown and collect precious resources in the hopes of sustaining and preserving a future world that is not promised.

**PEDAL EN PLACE**  
WITH AMBER O'REILLY  
& JOHN HIRST ANDERSON

This piece weaves together object theatre and bilingual spoken word poetry in a testament to the history and future of the performance site, Whittier Park, on the shores of the Red River. The bicycle will also be part of the storytelling, as modern means of transportation on land, whereas water levels and weather incidents are rising globally due to climate change. Delving into questions of place, memory, and the legacy our species will leave behind on this planet, Amber invites audience members to reflect on the places and waterways they interact with on a daily basis.





**INTERCONNECTED**  
WITH SHANLEY SPENCE  
& DARRYL BUCK

This performance uses Indigenous traditional hoop dance and drumming to bring forward powerful teaching about our relationship to the land and the importance of protecting mother earth for future generations.

Highlighting the importance of interconnectedness, the impact that will be left behind for our children, and how it is all of our responsibility to take action.



**FINDING HARMONY**  
WITH DUNCAN COX,  
KARA JOSEPH,  
NATHAN SAWATZKY-DYCK  
& JEAN VAN DER MERWE

Three unique creatures play together in their natural habitat, creating music and dancing together. When a human appears, bringing their own music, the creatures and the human will need to work together to find harmony if they hope to share the habitat and live together.

**“That was the best thing since Christmas!”**

Scott, Age 10

**“Thank you very much for this amazing experience!”**

Rea, an adult

**“We enjoyed the show so much!!! I hope it’ll be an annual thing.”**

Kelly, a teacher

## Organisational Growth

Bike and Circuses was Green Kids' 22nd original full-length production, and our first created exclusively for the public. We are 32 years old but have spent most of those years working in schools across Western Canada. As an organisation with a modest public profile, we are delighted by the number of new funders, partners and patrons we've met.

Our list of funders, in-kind supporters and community partners is impressive. We are immensely grateful for all the support.



Leading up to and even after the event, our social media presence has grown significantly. Our Instagram following went from ~800 to 1,050 and our Twitter following from ~400 to 510. Interactions on those platforms have increased 6-fold.

We were a newsworthy event and received plenty of television, radio and newspaper coverage. The public nature of Bike and Circuses has raised our profile with families, educators, the environmental action organisations and advocates, and businesses. Since wrapping the project, we have received multiple unsolicited donations from environmentally conscious companies to support our work moving forward.

Creating this carbon neutral production has also got us the attention of local theatres looking for mentorship in the area. We have been approached by Winnipeg Studio Theatre and Manitoba Theatre for Young People to work with them this season to create and execute the design for a planet-friendly production of the 80's classic Fame, The Musical.

## **Next Steps**

We want to do it again! We received immensely positive feedback from audiences as well as our cast and crew. We also have a few ideas as to how to improve upon our model, artistically, logistically, and environmentally, and are eager to implement those. We will be applying for funding and sponsorship over the next few months and hope to present Bike and Circuses 2023 next August.

**"A very lovely evening of thoughtful entertainment!"**

Suzie, an adult

**"A lovely, joyful and inspiring little adventure in Whittier Park."**

Bequie, an adult

**"A triumph!"**

Johanna, a parent

**"A wonderful show! My son and I both loved it!"**

Ash, a parent

**"I hope you do this every year!"**

Inez, a teacher

**"A great concept and excellent execution!"**

Carly, a teacher

**"That was everything I needed."**

Amanda, an adult

