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Code of Ethics for Circus in Aotearoa

"Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi, engari he toa takitini."

"My strength is not mine alone, it comes from the collective."

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Introduction

It is accepted that ethics are a fundamental part of being human, that an innate understanding of ill-action causing reprimand is emblazoned into the core of all human beings. Plato's conception of ethics states that happiness or well-being (eudaimonia) is the highest aim of moral thought and conduct, and the virtues (aretê: 'excellence') are the requisite skills and dispositions needed to attain it.

This code investigates applied ethics within circus arts specifically in the context of our Aotearoa sector at our current time. As you'll be well aware, the amount of social change the world has rapidly gone through in a short space of time is unprecedented. This is a wero, a challenge to all of us that we must always be listening, reflecting and changing.

The guidelines in this document are intended to benefit the sector by helping it grow into an ethically and morally supportive environment which supports ALL of its members. This document has been developed with industry consultation and it's guiding principles should be used as a reference point for ethical matters in the circus community.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi

Understanding Te Tiriti o Waitangi in order to embed it into our practices and daily lives will be a process of study, self-reflection and behavioural change for all those living in Aotearoa.

ANZCA acknowledges Māori as tangata whenua across Aotearoa and actively commits to practicing mana whenua, the consultation with and acknowledgement of iwi Māori of the area where major meetings are going to take place. ANZCA understands that this practice of mana whenua creates important mutual, collective humility.

History

Circus adjacent traditions have existed in all indigenous cultures and in some cases have combined together through colonization into what we think of as circus today. In many cases, there now exists both the indigenous artform as well as the version we see as part of circus.

Animals and Modern Circus

Even though European style circuses have been travelling Aotearoa since the late 1800s, it wasn't until 2009 that there was public outcry around incorporating elephants. There have been no exotic animals toured with circuses here since. Despite that, there is currently no legislation against it as long as the standards in the Code of Welfare for circuses is met.

Human Exploitation / Freakshow

Circus often features international acts from around the world. Even a person's race and culture was once used as a money making tool to attract the predominantly white audience.

Humans with unique physical characteristics were in some cases given safe haven, acceptance and employment in the circus but there are many stories of exploitation, capture, and slavery.

It is important to look into the past, to see where it has led us, and what lessons we can learn from our history. This hindsight can be a powerful agent of change. Whatever your discipline is, we encourage you to look into its origins.

Perspective

Before heading further into this document it is important that you take stock and understand the perspective from which you are engaging in circus in Aotearoa. Where do you sit?

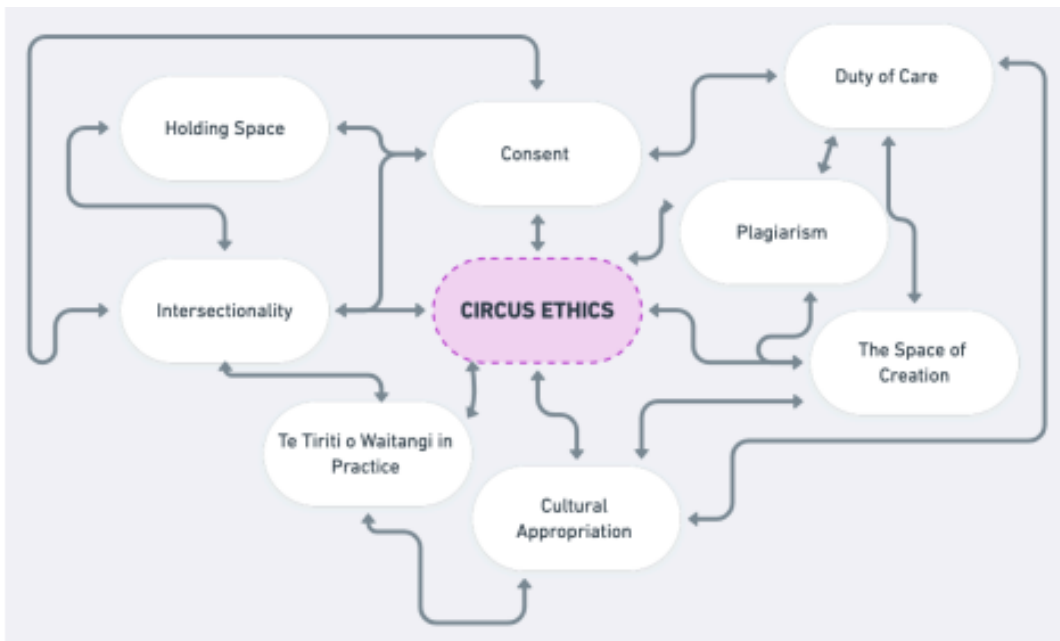
Is circus your profession? Do you lead a community organisation?
To whom does your duty of care extend?

Context

This guide to ethical practice has had many contributors across Aotearoa and has had multiple periods of industry consultation in coming to this published version. Acknowledgements can be found at the end of this document.

Anyone is welcome to feedback, represent suggestions, additions or changes at any time. These will be considered, discussed and incorporated on a semi-regular basis.

Almost all aspects of ethical practice intersect with others, making it impossible to create a complete and succinct guide in one document. In addition to this ethics is not linear or hierarchical in its nature, but more like the web of a spider with strands connecting multiple points. The information at the start of this guide is equally as relevant as the material at the end.



Health and Safety

Mechanical safety is an aspect of ethical practice which we will not be dealing with in this document. Although we recognise that Health and Safety practice is an ethical consideration, Circus Safe - a best practice guidance for circus in Aotearoa is an in depth guide to mechanical safe practice.



Duty of Care

Understanding who your Duty of Care includes

As a circus practitioner you have an ethical obligation to maintain the hauora of those within your duty of care. Those within your duty of care could include students, performers, teachers, community members, audience members or members of the public. Note that your duty of care will always include yourself.

Hauora

Hauora is a Māori philosophy of health unique to Aotearoa. Te Whare Tapa Whā is a model of the four dimensions of wellbeing developed by Sir Mason Durie in 1984 to provide a Māori perspective on health.

With four walls, the wharenui (meeting house) is a symbol of these dimensions with the connection of the wharenui to the whenua (land) forming the foundation.

The four walls/dimensions are:

- taha tinana (physical wellbeing)
- taha hinengaro (mental wellbeing)
- taha wairua (spiritual wellbeing)
- taha whānau (family wellbeing)



The Māori holistic model of health, Te Whare Tapa Whā, reminds you to take care of all the different aspects of your life to support your wellbeing. By nurturing and strengthening all four tapa and maintaining connection with whenua, you support your health and wellbeing, as well as the health and wellbeing of your whānau. If something in your life is challenging the wellbeing of one wall or dimension, you can draw on the foundation and other walls until you can strengthen that wall again.



Reputation: Yours and that of the Circus Sector

How we represent ourselves has an instant, unmissable and un-retractable impact on how those we are engaging with view the circus sector/industry/community/whānau in Aotearoa. Therefore ethically our obligation (in addition to our self-interest) is to maintain and uplift that reputation. Always be authentic and honest about who you are, and what you are providing.

This includes being truthful and transparent about your level of skill, experience, qualifications, and performance capabilities. Misrepresenting your abilities can create unrealistic expectations, compromise safety, damage professional relationships, and undermine trust in both yourself and the wider circus community. Being honest about your current level of competence allows others to make informed decisions, supports a culture of continuous learning and growth, and demonstrates professional integrity. By accurately representing your skills and experience, you help protect and strengthen both your own reputation and the reputation of the organisations, companies, and communities you represent.

Business Practice

If any business or organisation within circus falls within your duty of care it is your ethical responsibility to understand what is legally required of you. This will include things like; how you treat private information such as email addresses, what policies you have in place around how you treat people, how the people you work with treat others, and your health and safety compliance. If you require assistance or further information on these matters, please contact ANZCA. We're here to help.

Charging and Rates of Pay

Each booking, event, gig or contract is unique, as are the range of skills that circus encompasses. This makes it difficult to set standard rates. Be open to communication with peers around prices. This will help you understand where you sit with your pricing and avoid undercutting the industry, while also reflecting your personal/professional level of experience.

As a guide we've prepared this table*:

- These rates only represent base wages for the tutor/practitioner, and do not reflect hireage, rent, costs, administration, insurance, overheads etc -
- you may also need to consider travel, setup/packdown time and studio hire costs

*Rates guide reflects suggested wages as at July 2026.

This guide was developed after a survey of industry rates for organisations and sole traders.



Tuition

Circus tuition for ongoing classes	Between \$40 - \$60 per hour
Circus tuition for one off events or workshops	Between \$70 - \$150 per hour
Private Tuition (1 - 3 students)	Between \$80 - \$150 per hour

Event Performance

Roving/Ambient Performance - non-circus-specific-skill character/promo/art	\$200 - \$250 per performance hour / spot
Roving/Ambient Performance - skilled	\$300 - \$900 per performance hour / spot
Ground Based Feature performance	\$700 - \$1500 per act
Aerial Feature Performance	\$900 - \$1500 per act
Fire Performance Feature Performance	\$900 - \$1500 per act (breathing/eating \$2000 - \$2600)
Fire Performance Ambient (eg entry)	\$650 - \$900

Other Rates

Weekly Wage for a company member Rehearsal/creation/touring/show	\$1300 (\$32.5/hr) - \$1700 per week (42.5/hr)
Per dieums	\$70 - \$80
Rigging	Day rate \$450 - \$800 or \$1800 - \$2000 per week

Rangatahi Rates

Circus tuition	Not under the living wage \$30
Event Performance	Not under \$150

Community, Charity Rates and Self-Producing

While circus work has and should have financial value, there are times you might choose to be flexible. Lower rates may reflect a willingness to support a specific community or cause, or a desire to increase the accessibility of circus to wider audiences.

Discount Transparency

Recognizing and understanding industry standard rates should be vital to both you and the organization you are providing your services for. When engaging in charitable work, it's essential to ensure everybody understands and is aware that you are lowering your rates, including informing them of the specific discount offered.

In-Kind

There are situations when you might accept in-kind payment (meaning payment in products or services rather than in money). In-kind offers should always exceed the monetary value of the performance offered (for example, a performance might be worth \$1500 but you might accept a \$2000 item instead).

Profit-share

A profit-share model is relatively common. Following all expenses being paid, any remaining profit is split according to the agreement, each person or party having a certain number of shares.

A profit-share model should still take into account industry standard rates, but it's a way of sharing risk and investment in a project. The important things here are that the budget is transparent and understood by all parties and that the collective are clear on the purpose or value that the work is bringing them.

Undercutting

When artists charge below market rates, they contribute to a culture of undercutting. Whether intentional or not, this devalues not only their own work, but that of their peers and the entire industry. Charging a lower rate might reflect lack of experience, eagerness to perform, or simply not recognizing the market value of the skills they are offering.

Within the Aotearoa circus and creative community it is imperative that we continue to support and educate each other on the importance of valuing ourselves and our mahi within the circus arts sector.

If you require assistance understanding pricing and market rates, we are here for you. Please contact ANZCA for advice or talk to practitioners within your community.

Conflicts of Interest

Aotearoa's circus sector is small, so conflicts of interest are likely within most careers. Ethically conflicts of interest must be disclosed in both directions.



A conflict of interest is a situation in which a person or organization is involved in multiple interests, financial or otherwise, and serving one interest could involve disadvantaging another.

Examples of possible conflicts of interest include, but are not limited to:

- Being offered a higher paying contract for work on a date which you are previously booked.
- Serving on an advisory / funding board whilst also operating as an arts practitioner.
- Operating as a practitioner with a spouse or other romantic partner.
- Teaching the same classes for different studios in the same area.
- Self-promotion while performing under contract to another circus company, event company or promotions company, in a manner which undercuts that company.

Open communication regarding conflicts of interest before the fact are central to avoiding personal or professional conflicts. A prompt disclosure if/when a conflict occurs can (in most cases) minimise or resolve any personal or professional conflicts involved.

Honouring Contracts

There are two ways to work in Aotearoa:

- As an Employee you and your employer are governed by law around hours of work, minimum pay, work cancellation, holiday pay etc.
- As a Contractor (which the majority of circus practitioners will be) you and whomever you are working with are governed by the contract you have between you.
- Self Employed (mostly will be a contractor) doing your own thing.

Having a contract that has clear health and safety considerations, safe delivery timeframes and reasonable cancellation clauses in place allows every practitioner to ensure that in any given situation you have no incentive to put yourself or anyone else in danger.

When working under contract it is essential to honour those who booked you; following their policies and procedures and promoting their services if new clients approach you while working.

Once a contract is in place it is understood that the stipulations within the contract guide the relationship between the two signed parties. Ethically, reputationally and legally, it is important to honour any contract in play. Be sure to read contracts fully and raise any issues before signing.

That having been said, even as an independent contractor no terms in an agreement are legally binding if they are otherwise in breach of the law. For this reason, it is important to know your rights and obligations as an independent contractor.



Intersectionality

Intersectionality refers to how multiple identities like race, class, gender and economic position intersect to create unique life experience. Intersectionality expresses how this intricate mesh of privilege and oppression can't be simplified.

It is ethically imperative for all practitioners within circus in Aotearoa to have an acute intersectional awareness.

Leah Whiu expresses the dilemma of forming an alliance with Pakeha feminists with absolute clarity: *"What affinity can we share with white women if they refuse to acknowledge and take responsibility for their colonialism?" She points out to these women: "It seems to me that my struggle necessarily takes account of your struggle. I can't ignore patriarchy in my struggle. Yet you can and do ignore the "colour" of patriarchy, the culture-specificity of patriarchy. And in so doing you ignore me."*

We must not only understand where our own privileges and biases sit, but understand the intersectionality of those within our duty of care. To practice manaakitanga is to uplift a person's mana, particularly around integrity, trust and sincerity.

Cultural Intersectionality in Aotearoa

We are a multicultural society and have a responsibility to understand and respect all the cultures we live with. We begin by acknowledging that the Western / Pākēha / NZ European perspective should not be considered the default. Moving forward we stand to gain more by centering the diversity of stories and histories that make up Aotearoa.

Te Ao Māori and Circus

It is vital to acknowledge that when dealing with the application of Te Ao Māori into existing non-Māori constructs, it is highly complex work that will remain an ongoing journey.

We can apply certain broad Māori kaupapa to our process' with understanding that this will vary slightly or greatly between Iwi and hapū, we must make sure that we ignore the impulse to homogenize the tangata whenua experience under the Pākēha created banner of 'Māori'. We must remain flexible and malleable while our whole country are in this discovery phase.

Below you will find some commonly accepted tikanga/ideologies among tangata whenua from a generic standpoint, but if you are engaging with Māori in your work, enquire after their Iwi, Hapū and whether that comes with any specific cultural nuances. (Note: Not everyone will have this information, so tread carefully and kindly as you approach this space.)



To gain a greater understanding of how circus and te ao Māori interrelate it is first important to understand the kawa (the policy) and tikanga (the procedures of how a policy is realised) of Tapu and Noa.

Tapu is considered by some to be a powerful force within Te Ao Māori. It has numerous meanings and references. Tapu can be interpreted as 'sacred', or defined as 'spiritual restriction', containing a strong imposition of rules and prohibitions. A person, object, occasion or place that is tapu may not be touched or, in some cases, even approached.

Noa is the opposite of tapu, and includes the concept of 'common'. It lifts the 'tapu' from the person or the object. Noa also has the concept of a blessing in that it can lift the rules and restrictions of tapu. In Te Ao Māori a person's body is tapu, especially the head. Food and things associated with food, like tables, are noa.

Consideration, consultation and ceremony around circus acts which involve tapu elements or interrelations is needed to practise ethically.

Inclusiveness

Radical inclusion is something that circus has the potential to be great at.

Radical Inclusion: The intentional inclusion of persons directly or indirectly excluded (from circus) due to actions or inactions by individuals, society or institutions. Sometimes silence and systemic infrastructure added to other intentional actions, exclude.

Radical inclusiveness in the Aotearoa circus sector embodies a commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi, diversity and accessibility and ensuring that individuals from various backgrounds, abilities, and identities can participate and train in circus arts.

It is ethically important that we respect the different needs of each person in order to have effective inclusion.

Factors which contribute to Inclusion;

- **Access** explores what options we make available for people from differing backgrounds and what steps we have in place to provide access to our spaces.
- **Communication** examines the way we let people know about the options to get involved and about the culture within a space.
- **Culture** explores the importance of a welcoming environment and the habits that create it.
- **Attitude** looks at how willing people are to embrace inclusion and diversity and to take meaningful action.
- **Choice** is all about finding out what options people want and how they want to be involved.

- **Partnership** looks at how individual and organisational relationships are formed and how effective they are.
- **Policy** considers how an organisation commits to and takes responsibility for inclusion.

Representation

Circus finds a large part of its origins in the celebration of unique identities, abilities, and perspectives. As modern practitioners we carry a responsibility to continue those efforts. If you represent an organisation you hold the ethical duty to uplift equitable representation within your policies, your workers, and your public imagery. This could include costuming which considers each individual and the casting of your performance work.

Equality means each individual or group of people is given the same resources or opportunities. Equity recognizes that each person has different circumstances and allocates the exact resources and opportunities needed to reach an equal outcome.

Diverse representation within circus means actively representing minority groups. These include, but are not limited to; ethnic minorities, sex and gender identities, the range of body-types, neuro-diverse individuals, and people with disabilities.

If you are unable to accommodate these groups within your work, then as a majority voice we have a duty to examine what in our training and performance spaces is limiting accessibility, and if we have the means to address those inequalities.

Communication

One of the core fundamental skills for ethical practice is communication. Every relationship, no matter how formal or how intimate, can be treated ethically or unethically through communication. Always endeavour to communicate with clarity, respect, and honesty, taking necessary pauses for reflection and feedback.

Inclusive communication looks like finding out how each person wants to be referred to including their preferred name, pronouns and personal identifiers. Some people will outwardly tell you how they wish to be referred to, and for some you must take the responsibility of finding out.

Pro Tip: It's really great to default to using they/them pronouns. It costs you nothing, and helps any gender nonconforming humans you encounter to feel more valued.

Consent

Consent should be embedded into all circus activities. This ensures that consent is sought of all people engaging with circus, that everyone has clear pathways around the communication of consent and therefore everyone maintains body autonomy.



Body autonomy is the right for a person to govern what happens to their body without external influence or coercion.

CONSENT IS:

- C** Chosen Freely
- I** Informed
- R** Revokable
- C** Communicated
- U** Understood
- S** Specific

Providing spaces/times for consent and consent processes to be communicated clearly is paramount. Consent will help navigate all relationships, most notably those with an inherent power imbalance, including but not limited to; teacher/student, student/student, artist/director, staff/business owner, performer/audience etc.

Consider developing a consent policy which will assist you and those you work with towards a stronger consent-based culture and practice.

There is a workshop available in Aotearoa in Consent Based Tuition for Circus. Speak to ANZCA.

Power Dynamics & Holding Space

The Position of Influence

Understanding power dynamics allows new ways of working which can empower those around you and avoid misuse of your influence.

If you are holding influence it is your ethical duty to make sure there are ways for the people around you to communicate what is working and not working for them. Within an organization, this can be through a complaints process, specific structures for accountability, or making explicit who people can speak to for support if they feel unable to speak directly to you or other people in positions of influence. As a person of influence it is important to be able to give and hold space to those around you to communicate and be heard.

"We are all biased and privileged (but may not know it yet). Our own privilege and bias is invisible to us, so we don't realize the power it gives us." — Tatiana Mac



An ethical practitioner will consider their unique context, and act with an awareness of intersectionality.

Conflict Negotiation and Resolution

People come into conflict, particularly within demanding physical training and creative practice. Circus organizations and individual practitioners should have procedures for conflict resolution in place. It is the responsibility of ethical practitioners to use those systems and communicate should additional resources be required.

The Process of Creation

The process of creation is a vulnerable place for many of the people engaging with it and comes with a whole raft of ethical considerations.

The creation process exists in a classroom environment, a rehearsal space or on the street.

Collaboration with Others

When entering a collaborative process it is ethically important a set of collective values be agreed upon and understood by all prior to work being started. This allows for the safety of all those within your duty of care, and for those within the duty of care of the other organisation.

If a contract isn't put in place between the two practitioners or organisations an MOU (a memorandum of understanding) is often helpful as a guideline of joint understanding.

Working with vulnerable people in creation and performance

From a legal standpoint whenever working with young people or vulnerable adults a safeguarding policy must be in place. When working in a creation space with vulnerable people extra care and attention must be paid to communication and consent practice.

Each situation will likely differ from all others making it important to be flexible, have a good understanding of the safeguarding policies and a commitment to documentation.

Content and Wellbeing

Defining Success

A useful tool to whakamana individuals or a group within a creative process is to define what success looks like for any given moment or section of time.



Trigger/Content Warnings

Trigger, or Content warnings allow everyone experiencing the content of a piece to consent to the experience, which is why they're important.

Let us view strobe warnings as a parallel. These warnings allow strobe-sensitive people, the opportunity to either remove themselves from, or prepare themselves for, a potentially hazardous situation (and are a H&S requirement in most cases). Trigger or Content Warnings allow people with specific traumas and sensitivities the option to either remove themselves from, or prepare themselves for, a potentially hazardous situation.

Content warnings should also be present in the process of creation.

These warnings should be present at any juncture where someone might be joining the engagement of a work;

- Before performances of the work
- Within creation spaces (including for those who aren't directly involved)
- When performing in public special effort must be taken due to the flux and makeup of the audience.

Feedback

Due to the vulnerable nature of creating, while a work is in progress people might not want feedback. Ask for consent before giving feedback.

Intimacy within Creation

The acting industry has quickly adapted to having intimacy co-ordinators on all projects where sexual content or nudity is involved. Circus, in many cases by necessity and for safety, involves working within each other's immediate personal space.

Consent protocols, regular check-ins and time given to communication processes will all allow for a safe environment of creation for everyone's wellbeing.

There are workshops in best intimacy practice available. Please enquire.

Sexualisation

This is clearly an entirely contextual topic, but in ethics what isn't! Again we come back to communication and consent. No one should be expected to either explore sexualisation or perform in a sexualised manner without their full, adult consent.

Children should not ever be expected to perform sexual movements, perform in revealing costumes nor be subjected to sexualising comments / environments.



Overtraining Culture

Like many other physical practices, there has been a significant shift in how to train circus and teach training in Aotearoa. A few myths still exist which ethically we should work to dispel.

- Pain isn't the pathway. Pain is not a necessary requisite to becoming a better circus practitioner.
- Over-working or over-training yourself or other practitioners is unsafe. Each person has different limits to their workload, both physically, mentally and socially. These are to be respected by both individuals and organisations alike. Communication is vital to understand and negotiate in this regard.
- The glamorising of suffering is not accepted practice. Great artists do not have to suffer to be great and the process of creation does not have to break anyone down. We have a responsibility to ourselves, our fellow practitioners and those whom we're guiding to actively prioritize wellbeing.

Burnout

It's not ethical to work yourself, your employees or contractors to the point of burnt out. A standard minimum of 10 hours between shifts is industry standard, as is a 7 show week with a minimum of one day off per week.

If you feel your physical or mental health is being impacted by work-load, reach out to other practitioners or ANZCA for advice.

Creative Content and Ethical Practice

Comedy

You can say what you want but you have to understand that you will be responsible for what you say.

A useful rule of thumb can be found in this quote by Terry Pratchett:

"Satire is meant to ridicule power. If you are laughing at people who are hurting, it's not satire, it's bullying."

Note: Please also see Cultural Appropriation below.

Plagiarism

Artists can and will be inspired by others, and create work influenced by others. When work is inspired by others due credit, attribution, or acknowledgement should be given in whichever manner is reasonable (ie tagging the originating artist on Instagram).



As was said at the very beginning of this document humans have an innate understanding of when they're being sneaky or not. Directly copying, without permission, someone's act, significant sequences, concept or idea is unethical.

Accidentally plagiarizing someone's act, concept or idea is absolutely possible but can be avoided by research and being an active part of the global creative community. Artists often look for inspiration within a different artistic discipline in order to feel confident their work is unique.

Use of Artificial Intelligence

Using AI ethically requires treating the technology as a collaborative amplifier of human capability rather than a replacement, prioritizing transparency, and rigorously fact-checking outputs to prevent the spread of bias and inaccuracies.

While AI can be a valuable tool for administrative tasks such as project management, logistics, scheduling, and developing mood boards or early-stage concepts, it should not replace the work of circus artists, designers, photographers, or other creative professionals in producing promotional artwork, posters, or artistic content.

The circus sector is built upon human creativity, craftsmanship, and authentic artistic expression; relying on AI-generated imagery/documentation risks diminishing the visibility of working artists, misrepresenting the unique nature of live performance, and eroding the cultural and creative integrity that defines our industry.

ANZCA recommends developing an AI policy which outlines what it will and will not be used for.

Cultural Appropriation

If you are benefiting, financially or otherwise, from the use of a culture that isn't yours then you are appropriating it.

All due care should be taken to ensure your work is respectful of any cultures that may be referenced or represented. There is a difference between cultural exchange/cultural diffusion and cultural appropriation. The understanding gained from respectful engagement provides a wealth of knowledge that can bring depth and breadth to your practice.

Things that are considered sacred by a culture (and these things will be different for each culture) are generally considered off limits or should be carefully approached.

Stereotypes should be avoided and appropriate research, including significant consultation should be conducted to ensure that you are treating all cultures, cultural icons, beliefs, and cultural issues appropriately.



Te Tiriti o Waitangi in Practice

As humans living in Aotearoa we have a responsibility to engage with iwi and Māori to give effect to and realise the promise of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Achieving this will require time, openness to listening and adaptation in our thinking both as individual practitioners and as organisations.

Allow this set of principles to provide guidance on ways to incorporate the principles of The Treaty of Waitangi / ngā mātāpono o Te Tiriti;

Tino Rangatiratanga / Self-Determination: The second Article of the Treaty guarantees to iwi Māori the control and enjoyment of resources and taonga that it is their wish to retain. This provides for Māori self-determination and mana motuhake and expects the circus sector to honour this in our policies and actions.

Mana Taurite / Equity: The third Article of the Treaty constitutes a guarantee of legal equality between Māori and other citizens of New Zealand. This Article has implicit assurance that social rights would be enjoyed equally by Māori with all New Zealand citizens of any origin.

The principle of equity invites circus practitioners and organisations to commit to achieving equitable access, pathways and outcomes for Māori within circus arts.

Pātuitanga / Partnership or Cooperation: This Article understands that with two peoples in one country both duality and unity are significant. Duality implies distinctive cultural development and unity implies common purpose and community. The relationship between community and distinctive development is governed by the requirement of cooperation which is an obligation placed on both parties by the Treaty.

Reasonable cooperation can only take place if there is consultation on major issues of common concern and if good faith, balance, and common sense are shown on all sides. The outcome of reasonable cooperation will be partnership.

The principle of partnership invites circus practitioners and iwi/Māori to work with each other in a strong and enduring relationship.

Whakamarumarutia / Active Protection: The principle of protection is about actively protecting Māori knowledge, interests, values, and other taonga. Identity, language, and culture are important expressions of what it means to be a culturally located practitioner.

In order to practise Active Protection circus practitioners and organisations should be sufficiently informed in Te Ao Māori, Māori culture, tikanga Māori, Māori performance arts and the practice of

cultural safety.

Kōwhiringa / Options: The principle of kōwhiringa acknowledges Māori rights to pursue their own personal direction, whether that be in accordance with tikanga Māori or not. The principle of options expects circus practitioners to ensure their services are provided in culturally appropriate manners that recognise and support the expression of te ao Māori.

Our success as a sector going forward will be shaped by an ability to operate with tikanga Māori.

Acknowledgements

It was instigated in 2018 by Rosalie Ducharme through her position on the steering committee of ANZCA, following the publication of Circus Safe, in response to that document's focus solely on mechanical safety and the decision to not delve into ethical discussion. A group was formed which put down the beginnings of the document. Call outs for contributors were made widely and open discussions were undertaken at ANZCA's annual general meetings in 2019 and 2020.

The project was taken over by Michael Armstrong, also of the national steering committee, and the next wave of contributions was made. After the changes imposed by Covid-19, in 2021, the document was rearranged and re-written via another open call for contributions by Eve Gordon, also as part of the ANZCA steering committee.

It was reviewed by members of the steering committee (Eve Gordon, Lauren Dance, Tania Bracey-Brown) again in 2026 and opened to the wider sector to review.

Special thanks to Kahurangi Bronsson-George, Charles Dolbel, Sarah Fairbrother, Andrew Gibson, Andre Goldsmith, Eli Joseph, Krirana Sheree, Tainui Tukiwaho, Rosalie Ducharme, Micheal Armstrong, Eve Gordon, Lauren Dance, Tania Bracey-Brown.

Further Resources:

History:

<https://www.philipastley.org.uk/>

<https://www.mpi.govt.nz/animals/animal-welfare/codes/all-animal-welfare-codes/code-of-welfare-circuses>

Hauora:

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hauora>

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Examples can be found in kaupapa Māori models of resolution like;

<http://www.rangahau.co.nz/ethics/167/>



<https://www.tutiramai.co.nz/blog/dispute-resolution-a-tikanga-based-approach>

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<https://onlinepublichealth.gwu.edu/resources/equity-vs-equality/>

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<https://mbsse.gov.sl/> - The Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education - Sierra Leone - National Policy on Radical Inclusion in Schools 2021

<https://inclusivesportdesign.com/planning-for-inclusion/7-pillars-of-inclusion-using-commonalities-as-the-start-point-for-inclusive-sport/>

Intersectionality:

https://www.waikato.ac.nz/law/research/waikato_law_review/pubs/volume_2_1994/7

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<https://www.iponz.govt.nz/about-ip/maori-ip/concepts-to-understand/>

Consent Practice:

<https://thegymter.net/2018/01/05/contact-sports-teaching-touch-and-consent-to-young-athletes/>

<http://www.yogabasics.com/connect/yoga-blog/consent-in-yoga-class-to-touch-or-not-to-touch/>

Cultural Appropriation:

<https://www.commisceo-global.com/blog/how-to-avoid-cultural-appropriation-promote-cultural-awareness-instead>

Te Tiriti o Waitangi:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Principles_of_the_Treaty_of_Waitangi

<https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/maori-hub/ako/te-tiriti-o-waitangi/principle-of-kowhiringa-options>

https://www.nursingcouncil.org.nz/Public/Treaty_of_Waitangi/NCNZ/About-section/Te_Tiriti_o_Waitangi.aspx?hkey=36e3b0b6-da14-4186-bf0a-720446b56c52

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<https://www.centreforsocialimpact.org.nz/knowledge-base/developing-an-ai-policy>