



San Francisco Youth Circus

2018 – 2019 Registration Packet

Overview of Circus Center's Pre-Professional Youth Program

Circus Center's Pre-Professional Youth Program is a yearlong training program. *Students are asked to commit to the entire year.* The program is open to students ages 7–18 (exceptions for skilled younger students may be made). Students build a solid foundation in the basic skills of circus, including strength, flexibility, balance, and coordination. Our Pre-Professional Youth Program has four levels: Rising Stars-Level 1, Rising Stars-Level 2, Super Novas, and the San Francisco Youth Circus.

In Rising Stars-Level 1, students develop the foundational strength, flexibility, coordination, and discipline to train circus. In Rising Stars-Level 2, students learn the basic skills in the major areas of circus arts: balance, juggling, acrobatics, aerial arts, and clowning. In Super Novas, they begin to specialize, choosing two areas to focus on. Once students are accepted into the SF Youth Circus, students will train at an advanced level and develop a high level of technique and proficiency in their specialty. Throughout all the levels, students train acrobatics because we believe it is the foundation of all circus arts. Students will also study basic performance skills including dance, acting, and creativity to round out their circus training.

For those students who want it and work for it, Circus Center's Pre-Professional Youth Program has a long history of preparing young people for elite training and careers in the circus. Even for students who do not pursue a career in the circus, the exposure to high-level training builds discipline, commitment, and confidence that will serve them well in any path they choose.

San Francisco Youth Circus (ages 10-18) – The San Francisco Youth Circus is Circus Center's youth performance troupe. Ensemble members receive professional-caliber circus training. Most Youth Circus members focus on one specialty. In addition to training their specialty at an advanced level, students continue enhancing their tumbling, juggling, and performance skills. SF Youth Circus members also grow as artists as they focus more on act development and perform at events throughout the year.

- Students are required to complete 100 hours of training over the summer to prepare for the school year.
- From September-May, YC students attend Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 4:00-6:25 pm and are required to train on their own an additional day each week.
- The SF Youth Circus present a group ground act in the Winter Showcase and are expected to audition with a solo or duo act as well.
- In the Spring, the SF Youth Circus presents a fully produced circus show. The Spring show runs 7 shows over two weekends.
- Students have 12 allowed absences for September-May.

San Francisco Youth Circus Leadership Team

Felicity Hased - Program Director: Felicity is a director, performer, and educator. Her performance credits include *The Tangerine Family Circus* (Chicago), *The Pickle Family Circus*, *Cabaret Lunatique* with Teatro ZinZanni, and Bay Area Children's Theater's *Circus Adventure*. Felicity received her BA in Theatre Arts from Kalamazoo College, her MA in Education from DePaul University, and completed the Clown Conservatory program at Circus Center.

Veronica Blair – Head Coach, Tissu, Straps: Veronica is a professional circus performer with over 15 years of performing and teaching experience. She is currently Head of Soft Aerial Apparatus at Circus Center in San Francisco, as well as Head Coach of the San Francisco Youth Circus. With an emphasis on foundational excellence, Veronica helps students develop proficiency and confidence that allows students to develop their own unique aerial style. An aerialist of elegance and true excellence, Veronica Blair has studied with some of the most celebrated and prominent artists in her field, including trapeze great LaNorma Fox, Ringling Bros. first African-American Aerialist Pa-Mela Hernandez, and the renowned “God Father of the Tissu” Gérard Fasoli of Centre national des arts du cirque / Cnac. Veronica started her acrobatic career at the age of 14 with Make*A*Circus, a community based circus. In addition she trained Chinese Acrobatics under Master Lu Yi with the San Francisco Youth Circus. Her first professional performance was at the age of 17, making her one of the youngest professional African-American trapeze artists in the U.S. Shortly after, Veronica was personally selected by Cedric Walker, the founder of the Universoul Circus, as a single trapeze artist. Under Mr. Walker’s supervision, Veronica rapidly developed as an aerialist, and was the show's resident aerialist for 5+ years. Veronica has since performed with several other renowned groups and productions around the globe such as AntiGravity, Universal Studios Japan and Warner Bros. Music. She has been a part of Germany’s most successful circus show, “AFRIKA! AFRIKA!” Veronica also was the lead aerialist in KAMAU’s “BooDha” music video with over 100k views.

Xiaohong Weng - Head Coach, Acrobatics: Xiaohong Weng started training in gymnastics at the age of 7, before he joined the famed Nanjing Acrobatics Troupe. He had 4 years of professional training in gymnastics and was a high level competitive gymnast in China. He joined the circus and learned many traditional Chinese acrobatics acts, such as Chinese Pole, Chair-balancing, Hoop Diving, Chinese Lion Dance, and Partner Hand-balancing. As a skilled tumbler and hand-balancer, Xiaohong has performed extensively in China, the USA, and internationally. For the last decade he has been a senior instructor at Circus Center. He currently performs with Jennings McCown in an elegant double hand-to-hand acrobatics act.

Kris Carrison – Acrobatics: Kris Carrison brings nearly three decades of experience in gymnastics and circus/performance arts. Kris is an active, professional member of USA Gymnastics; Instructor Certified, Safety and Risk Management Certified, and USOC SafeSport Certified. He recently retired from 15 years with Cirque Du Soleil, where he invented acrobatic material, created solo acts and performed over 5,000 shows with

Saltimbanco, Quidam and The Beatles, LOVE. Kris holds a degree in English Literature from Stanford University where he was a member of the '92 NCAA Gymnastics National Championship Team. He lives with his Labradoodle Sage in the Dolores Heights neighborhood of San Francisco. Kris loves surfing, long distance backpacking, playing the piano and reading classics. Kris aims to provide quality coaching and guidance that empowers artists, gymnasts and circus performers to safely pursue their dreams and realize their greatest potential.

Elena Panova – Trapeze: Born in Murom, Russia, Elena Panova is a graduate of Moscow's Circus and Variety College, where she specialized as an aerialist. Under the guidance of the famous training tandem of Tereza Durova and Viktor Fomin, she created a groundbreaking swinging trapeze act that redefined swinging trapeze as it is performed today all over the world. Elena won a gold medal and the Ministry of Culture award at the Festival Mondial du Cirque de Demain in Paris in 1987, and the gold medal at the 1988 All-Union Circus Artists Competition of the USSR. For over twenty years, she has performed in major circuses and variety and theater shows on four continents, including the Moscow Circus, Circus Knie, the Cirque d'Hiver-Bouglione in Paris, Circus Carré in Amsterdam, the Victorian Arts Center in Melbourne, and the Big Apple Circus. She has also been a judge several times at the Festival Mondial du Cirque de Demain in Paris. Elena moved to the United States in 1991. She started teaching at Circus Center in 2004.

Caroline Wright – Aerial Hoop: Caroline Wright took to the air before she could walk on the ground, climbing curtains, furniture and anything else she could crawl to. She spent her early teens performing with Flying Gravity Circus, a touring youth troupe dedicated to helping communities start their own circus programs. A graduate of the Professional Track Program at New England Center for Circus Arts, she coached there for many years. Her teaching experience also includes SHOW Circus Studio, Circus Smirkus Camp and AYCO. She continued her training at the San Francisco Circus Center and L'ecole Leotard in Montreal, CA. Specializing in Static Trapeze, Hoop and Tissu, Caroline performed with many different companies across the country and internationally, including The Big Aerial Show, Aerial Experience, AcroArts and Nimble Arts. Caroline's passion for movement lead her to become a Certified Hanna Somatic Educator. In both her private practice and as a circus instructor, she uses her knowledge of the neuromuscular system to help others embody themselves more fully and achieve what they are capable of.

Catie Brier – Contortion: Catie has been a resident of San Francisco for over 8 years. She began her training at Dance and Circus Arts of Tampa Bay over 13 years ago, where she studied dance and contortion. During her time there she trained under choreographer Debra Brown and contortionist Laurence Racine. Upon moving to San Francisco she started training with Master Lu Yi at Circus Center. She went on to train with Mongolian contortionist Serchmaa Byamba and began performing all around the United States. She's been seen performing with companies such as Quixotic Fusion, Circus Bella, Trapeze World and New Pickle Circus. Throughout her career Catie has developed a passion for not only teaching the art of contortion but also inspiring people to push the limits of their bodies.

Jeremy Vik – Juggling and Balance: Jeremy Vik came to Circus Center in 2004 and graduated from the Clown Conservatory (directed by Jeff Raz) in 2005. Realizing that clowning is the hardest thing on Earth, he returned to acting and spent 5 years performing around the Bay in mostly Shakespeare and Musical Theatre. Then in 2010, he returned to Circus Center and completed the Professional Acrobatics Program, specializing in Handstands. Jeremy has performed for the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival, Shotgun Players, Goldenthread Productions, Marin Shakespeare Company, 42nd St. Moon, Virago Theatre Company, and many more. In addition to acting, Jeremy performs chair balancing and juggling all over the Bay. He has performed with Circus Bella, Sweet Can Productions, the Clown Cabaret, and more. Jeremy has a BFA in Performance from Southern Oregon University and is a proud member of Actors' Equity Association.

SF Youth Circus 2018-2019 Calendar

Below is a full list of important dates. While we hope to stick to this schedule, changes may be necessary. *Please add these dates to your personal calendar.*

FALL TERM: August 27 – December 14

- *Youth Circus Fall Session begins:* Monday, August 27
- *Youth Circus Parent and Student Orientation:* Wednesday, August 29 from 4:00-6:20 (parents join at 5:00)
- *No class for Labor Day:* Monday, September 3
- *YC & SN Gig (Cole Valley Fair):* Sunday, September 30 from 10:00 am-5:00 pm
- *Youth Circus Act Auditions:* Week of October 8-12 (exact date TBA)
- *Youth Circus Parent Observation Day:* Friday, October 19 from 5:00-6:25 pm
- *Youth Program Family Potluck Picnic:* Sunday, October 21, 1:00-4:00 pm
- *YC Rehearsal for Winter Showcase:*
 - Saturday, November 3 from 4-8 pm
 - Saturday, November 10 from 4-8 pm
 - Saturday, November 17 from 4-8 pm
- *No Class for Thanksgiving Break:* Wednesday, November 21 through Friday, November 23
- *YC Rehearsal or Gig TBA:* December 1-2
- *YC Rehearsal for Winter Showcase:*
 - Friday, December 7, 4-9 pm
- *Winter Showcase Performances:*
 - Saturday, December 8: Call 1:00 pm, Show 7:30 pm
 - Sunday, December 9: Call 12:00 pm, Show 2:00 pm
- *Last Day of Youth Circus before Winter Break:* December 14

WINTER/SPRING TERM: January 7 – May 24

- *Youth Circus Resumes:* Monday, January 7
- *Mid-Year Evaluations:* January 14-18 during class
- *Parent Teacher Conferences:* January-February
- *Discussion Group – Circus Careers:* Friday, February 8, 6:30-8 pm
- *Youth Circus Parent Observation Day:* Friday, February 15 from 5:00-6:25 pm
- *Youth Circus Team Building Event:* February or March TBA
- *Youth Circus Rehearsals for Spring Show:*
 - Saturday, March 2, 4-8 pm
 - Saturday, March 9, 4-8 pm
 - Saturday, March 16, 4-8 pm
- *No Class for Youth Circus:* Monday, March 25
- *Youth Circus Rehearsals for Spring Show:*
 - Saturday, March 30, 4-8 pm
 - Saturday, April 6, 4-8 pm – Designer Run
 - Saturday, April 13, 4-8 pm
- *No Class for Youth Circus:* Friday, April 19
- *Tech Schedule for Youth Circus Show:*
 - Friday, April 26, 4-9 pm - Tech
 - Saturday, April 27, 2-10 pm – Tech
 - Sunday, April 28, 4-8 pm – Dress Rehearsal
- *Performances for Youth Circus Show:* May 3-5, 10-11
 - Friday, May 3 – Call time 4:00 pm, Show 7:30 pm
 - Saturday, May 4 – Call time 12:00 pm, Shows at 2:00 pm and 7:30 pm
 - Sunday, May 5 – Call time 12:00 pm, Show 2:00 pm followed by Open House
 - Friday, May 10 – Call time 4:00 pm, Show 7:30 pm
 - Saturday, May 11 – Call time 12:00 pm, Shows at 2:00 pm and 7:30 pm followed by Strike and Cast Party
- *Last Day of Youth Circus:* Friday, May 24
- *End of Year - Pizza and Circus Movie Night:* Friday, May 31

SUMMER TERM: June 10 – August 16, 2019

- *End-of-Year Conferences:* throughout June
- *Advanced Camp:*
 - June 10-14
 - June 17-21
 - June 24-28
 - July 8-12
 - July 15-19
 - July 22-26
 - July 29-August 2
 - August 5-9
 - August 12-16

Attendance Policy

Circus Center's Pre-Professional students are expected to make a commitment to this intense and time-consuming program. Circus is an extremely difficult and demanding discipline that requires time, dedication, and focus. Students must manage their time so that they are able to complete their schoolwork and family commitments while also making time for circus. This requires a commitment from the family as well. It is imperative that students attend all classes and rehearsals. Missing class hampers students' progress in their training. Missing rehearsal slows down progress on the show and is unfair to the rest of the ensemble.

We understand that life happens and sometimes absences are necessary. Similar to adults in the workplace, students in our program are allotted a certain number of absences for the year. We hope that students will not need to use all of these. Absences may be used if the child is sick, has a mandatory school event, or an unavoidable family commitment. Students who miss more than their allotted absences will be put on Probation. If an additional absence occurs while on Probation, the student will not be able to perform in the show for that term. Additional absences while on Probation will result in the students being asked to leave the program. No refunds are given in this situation. **Youth Circus students are allowed 12 absences from September - May.**

There are some dates throughout the year that are mandatory. These include the orientation, evaluations, performances, and key rehearsals leading up to performances. Absences may NOT be used for mandatory dates. **If a student is absent on a Mandatory date, they will automatically be put on probation.** The exception is if the student is sick, has a religious holiday, or has a mandatory school commitment. In one of these cases, we expect a note from your doctor, religious community, or school. We encourage families to plan vacations and travel during our breaks. Please see the attached calendar for Mandatory Dates and Breaks.

We know that some students struggle to arrive on time for class due to commutes or late school dismissal. Students warm up from 4:00-4:30. Warming up is extremely important for safe training. If your child will regularly be arriving late, please be sure to note this in the registration form. **If your child is unable to arrive by 4:20 pm, this is not the program for them.** It is unsafe and disruptive to have students arriving past 4:20 pm.

We understand this is a strict policy. However, this commitment is necessary for students to effectively train at a high level. This program is NOT for everyone. If this seems beyond what you are able to commit to, we encourage you to consider training in our Recreational Program which has a variety of classes and levels.

Fees and Payment Policy

- **SF Youth Circus Tuition (required): \$5800**
All production expenses are included in your tuition. Additional classes/workshops, performance face makeup, undergarments, and shoes are not included and will need to be purchased separately.
- **Uniform/Costume Fee (required): \$100**
This fee helps to cover the cost of costumes for the shows and includes a Youth Circus t-shirt and sweatshirt for new students.

Payment Dates

July 1, 2018	\$500 (Deposit)
August 20, 2018	\$1920 (First Tuition Installment & Uniform/Costume Fee, Registration Form Due)
November 26, 2018	\$2030 (Second Tuition Installment)
January 28, 2019	\$1450 (Final Tuition Installment)

Program Withdrawal

Enrollment in Circus Center's Youth Program runs from August 27 through May 24. Payment for required Summer training is separate. Once committed to the program, students are expected to participate in the full year. It doesn't happen often, but unforeseen events can lead to withdrawal from the Youth Program.

Withdrawal Date and Associated Terms:

- Aug. 21 – Sept. 30: Any paid tuition will be refunded in full, less the nonrefundable \$500 deposit and \$50 uniform fee.
- Oct. 1 – Dec. 15: Tuition will be prorated to 50% of total fees and will be due payable immediately, less the nonrefundable \$500 deposit and \$50 uniform fee.
- Dec. 16 - May 24: Any remaining tuition balance will be due payable immediately. No refunds.

Financial Assistance

Circus Center has a limited amount of need-based financial aid available to qualifying students. Applications are available upon request. Please send Financial Aid Applications to Barry Kendall at barry@circuscenter.org by June 27 for priority consideration.

Discounts - *Discounts cannot be stacked. One discount per family please.*

- **Advance Full Pay:** Families who pay in full by August 20 will receive a 5% discount.
- **Sibling:** Families with more than one child enrolled in our Youth Program (includes Recreational and Pre-Professional Programs) receive a 5% discount on the younger child's/children's tuition.