

# Circus and Climate Change: Metaphor to Performance

Peta TAIT

La Trobe University, Melbourne (Australia)

ORCID: 0000-0002-1081-2710

[p.tait@latrobe.edu.au](mailto:p.tait@latrobe.edu.au)

**BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE:** Professor Peta Tait is an academic scholar and playwright with an extensive background in theatre, dramatic literature, performance theory and creative arts practice. She is a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Humanities and her interdisciplinary fields include emotion, body theory and gender and cultural identity. She regularly receives international invitations to present on the phenomenology of circus bodies.

## Abstract

This article explores some of the ways in which circus encompasses political perspectives and specifically climate change in the twenty-first century. The first part of the article points out that a process of expansion was foundational to the circus form historically, and that contemporary circus with a political purpose expanded on classic or traditional circus. Contemporary circus, however, often reflects and comments on social values but nonetheless remains within a broad definition of circus typified by innovation and diversity. Australia's Circus Oz aptly illustrates a type of contemporary circus that combines acrobatic skill, comic mayhem and commentary about socio-political issues. Circus Oz productions at the turn-of-the-twenty-first century are outlined briefly to explain its longstanding socio-political approach that leads to a production on the politics of climate change. The 2019 Circus Oz production can be aligned with circus performance about climate change internationally, and notably in Nordic countries.

The second part of the article explains that circus is used in commentaries about international climate change meetings to convey negative connotations of a thwarted purpose and seemingly chaotic events. Circus is evidently being identified with the classic clown act – and less obviously with risk and danger. But the significance of circus within society is layered since acrobatic skill is often masked when, for example, slapstick interactions belie an underlying precision. It is argued in this article, therefore, that describing climate change meetings as circus establishes an association that actually offers the converse interpretation; circus requires disciplined action over time by the group working together. Moreover, there are recent examples internationally in which circus about climate change literally shows the collaborative process through acrobatic balance. Contemporary circus is particularly suited to highlighting contradictory emotional attitudes to climate change.

**Keywords:** circus, Circus Oz, climate change, clown, COP

Peta TAIT

## Circus and Climate Change: Metaphor to Performance

### An Expanding Form

At the turn-of-the-twentieth century, circus audiences could expect to see a varied programme of discrete acts dominated by trained exotic animals, clowns and trapeze performers. By then, action across the three rings in American circus was setting precedents internationally for twentieth-century ideas of circus in culture (Weber, Ames and Wittmann, 2012). Kenneth Ames explains that circus had become a “highly complex, multifaceted enterprise” and it was more “form than content that distinguished American circuses” because acts were interchangeable between circuses that were addicted to “immensity” (2012: 11, 14, 17). The circus form had developed over the previous century from a display of skilled riding and athleticism for audiences to admire and comic acts on horseback intended to amuse. A contrast of solemn and comic acts became typical. The original equestrian form at Astley’s Circus from 1768, absorbed more longstanding acrobatic and rope acts from the fairground into its programme, and acts multiplied as circus continued to grow throughout the nineteenth century. By the 1890s, some of the exotic animal species of the travelling menageries had become reliably trained for routine presentation in every performance in the circus ring (Tait, 2016). Nineteenth-century circus also travelled throughout England, Europe and North America and to far colonial regions. It arrived in Sydney in 1841 when Luigi Dalle Case and his troupe travelled across the Pacific Ocean to the British colonies of Australia, and then followed the trading routes northwards by ship to Hong Kong (St. Leon, 2011). Circus expanded as a global entertainment during the nineteenth-century, which meant that circus economics became complicit in the practices of colonialism.

The form of circus was always dynamic and opportunistic; from the staging of war battles to the co-option of new apparatus and rigging such as trapeze (Tait, 2005; 2016). Spectator perception of perilous action enhanced the allure of circus through the invention and development of daring feats. While skilled riding and acrobatic and aerial acts conveyed impressions of

risk and danger, these were also displays of control and mastery. Such attributes were masked, however, when clowning acts — performed by skilled acrobats — gave impressions of losing control and failed action.

The association of the circus with both comic and risk-taking action remained in culture even as circus diverged in the later decades of the twentieth century. Gillian Arrighi and Jim Davis point out that “the ways in which circus has been disseminated through the arts or through the nostalgia of childhood recollection has, until recent years, tended to emphasize traditional circus and its history” but this is no longer possible, and it is now important to consider “the social purpose of circus events” (2021: 4, 6). The increasing popularity of social and contemporary circus over fifty years ensures the continuation of a performance form based on circus arts.

By the turn-of-the-twenty-first century, urban audiences for circus were likely to be familiar with a smaller troupe presenting circus arts in theatrical ways with a unifying aesthetic or a theme or a narrative thread. For example, in productions by Cirque Plume, the apolitical Cirque du Soleil, and Circus Oz. Contemporary circus — also termed “new” circus — developed in Europe, England and North America as well as Australia during the 1970s as the anti-Vietnam war and anti-authority protest social movements of young people were gaining momentum (Mullett and Tait, 2022). The advent of contemporary circus also coincided with campaigns for social justice and gender, racial and sexual equality and these influenced its approach and artistic choices. Although contemporary circus also changed over time, it remained recognizably skilled circus with acrobatic, aerial and clown acts and typically without the nonhuman animals of the traditional circus. An animal-free circus program was compatible with the pro-animal liberation politics that were developing in tandem with 1970s movements for human social justice. The contemporary circus became political simply by omission of the animal act.

Circus history provides examples of practices that anticipate the politics of contemporary circus so that its development was more an expansion of the form rather than a radical departure, and because artistically and athletically skilled performers continued to create acts that can seem transferable to other circus programs. Moreover, early contemporary performers often learned performing and rigging skills by working in the traditional circus (Mullett and Tait, 2022). Yet as Louis Patrick Leroux points out, contemporary circus reinvented, if not also reinvented, the circus tradition including its business entrepreneurship, and in particular Cirque du Soleil travelled globally and became “one of the largest, live entertainment companies in the world” (2016: 5). Leroux contends this company’s success, however, should not overshadow the achievement of the innovative smaller groups and freelance performers who create the artistic milieu that makes contemporary circus so diverse in scale and approach. Although contemporary circus is often more theatrical in its narrative and staging, traditional circus has long co-opted aspects of other forms including theatre, ballet and opera. The history of traditional circus reveals constant innovation and adaptation so that contemporary circus fits into the broad form of circus that adjusts to cultural change.

In considering how to accommodate some of the ways in which traditional and contemporary circus intersect and influence each other within a working definition of twenty-first century circus, Peta Tait and Katie Lavers ask questions about whether the label “circus” is determined by performer training in acrobatic skills, which differs from performer training in, for example, dance and theatre. Yet performers in contemporary circus can have training in other performing disciplines. Tait and Lavers ask if the social context was and is important, but decide that constant change in acts to engage audience interest and remain socially relevant, was a longstanding circus attribute. For example, there was political satire in nineteenth-century clown acts (Huey, 2012: 298) and the suffragist “new woman” nomenclature was used to promote acts at the beginning of the twentieth century (Tait, 2005: 64). As Anna-Sophie Jürgens and Mirjam Hildbrand comprehensively explain, “avant-garde artists – including Futurists and Dadaists, Bauhaus protagonists but also Russian theatre reformers and Czech graphic designers – discovered circus and its aesthetics as a treasure trove” of defiant bodies and bodily action for the “recasting of the existing artistic practices” within modernism (2022: 1). Classic circus inspired other art forms and influenced social ideas. Political theatre continues to reference circus as popular performance, and for ecological performance about the environment (Coppola, 2020).

In recognising a multitude of circus “subgenres”, Jean-Michel Guy suggests that the “circus does not exist” since the common division between classic or traditional and contemporary is inadequate, and confuses the public when circus acts do not follow such a schema and continue to be “infinitely diverse” from single disciplines to hybrid arts (2023: 21, 25). Yet the umbrella term circus does have wide recognition with longstanding cultural and emotional associations so that there are benefits from the use of circus nomenclature for performers and audience communication. There is considerable value in maintaining a broad idea of circus in performance practice while noting one distinctive attribute. Franziska Trapp finds “a self-referential discourse” is common within contemporary circus, one that critiques the circus form (2023: 1). Contemporary circus usefully recognizes that it is circus.

It can be argued that the apparatus involved with acrobatic action from weight-bearing belts and floor mats to elaborate trapeze rigging set circus apart from other types of contemporary performance without apparatus. In agreement with Pierrot Bidon that extreme action in circus can reflect the social world, a working definition by Tait and Lavers recognizes a range of skills with apparatus performed by animal, human and posthuman bodies that challenge the limits of physical action and defy cultural and species identity categories in small and big enterprises that might also have music, costuming and other technical and technological effects (2016: 6). They point out that audiences also shape circus with expectations of specialised physical action as well as a vital component of direct audience engagement. An explanation of the umbrella term, circus, needs to encompass diverse artistic endeavours and indicate a responsiveness to contexts and audiences

— which has always typified circus. Circus performance acknowledges its circus qualities. In the twenty-first century, classic or traditional circus coexists internationally with artistic contemporary circus that has also acquired national distinctiveness.

### Contemporary Mayhem

The Australian circus, Circus Oz, offers a comparative glimpse of what a contemporary smaller circus troupe was programming by the turn-of-the twenty-first century. The company developed a reputation for social and political commentary and it became internationally influential despite a distinctly Australian sensibility. Circus Oz was foundational to the contemporary circus movement in which the acrobatic and aerial techniques of human performers dominate, and it remained a leading example of circus with a social conscience for over forty years. Circus Oz was always political and controversial in both its content and in the creative process, pioneered by a generation of performers who wanted to change both society and theatrical performance. Circus was perceived as popular entertainment with a capacity to reach a wider audience than that attending theatre. Circus Oz, however, remained irreverent and outrageous in its circus action, upholding forward-looking politics and anti-authoritarian values. At the same time it was the ongoing practice of Circus Oz to champion gender equity on and off stage and challenge stereotypes as well as promote ethnic and racial diversity. Circus Oz sought social inclusiveness, and regularly toured to First Nations remote communities in the Australian outback. Perhaps it was to be expected that climate change would feature in a production.

The annual shows of Circus Oz were developed by an ensemble of about 12 performers and musicians working with a director to create a cabaret circus presenting verbal and nonverbal social satire. At times Circus Oz parodied circus itself. Based in Melbourne from 1978, the company toured internationally during the 1980s and was widely recognized by the 1990s for a brand of comic mayhem that seemed to celebrate chaos. Circus Oz grew into a major performing arts institution in Australia involving nearly eight hundred artists over the decades until a recent disruption in its annual artistic schedule suggested it might be disbanded. The future is unclear. Circus Oz productions were always comic as performers seemed on the verge of losing control which often became a political point. By 2001, a Circus Oz show could sell out a venue in Australia and London, and the Victory Theatre in New York. Australian circus and physical theatre performers became known for performance that took social risks as well as physical risks.

The combination of serious topics and slap stick humour in Circus Oz shows continued into the twenty-first-century under the leadership of artistic director Mike Finch. In a snapshot of some of the political messages of the annual shows around that time, the 1998 Circus Oz production presented an unemployed person on government benefits grappling with the absurdity of work alongside recognizable acts that included trapeze, juggling, upside down roof walking and unicycling retained over several annual seasons. (See

Circus Oz Living Archive; productions outlined here were viewed live by the author during the opening season in Melbourne.) Circus silliness was reflected in a bass player in an aerial harness playing his bass on high above the circus ring, and a near naked clown playing a tune on honkers inserted into all the crevices of his body. While the 1999 production satirized Australia's obsessive nationalistic fervour for sport and track and field competition in the lead up to the Olympics held in Sydney in 2000, it also had female clowns in black leather being trainers cracking whips and chasing a human-dog onto a wire in a wire-walking act. An act with a pool of water was particularly pointed with its combination of comic sight gags and serious points about asylum-seekers arriving in boats.

Productions by the turn of the twenty-first century juxtaposed less direct comments about federal and state government politics with visual action in which, for example, a cross-dressed strongman was chased by a female performer. This was juxtaposed with basic humour when, for example, the wire walker could not reach the toilet at the end of the wire. The 2001 show included an official "Welcome to Country" and specifically to the Wurundjeri Country of the First Nations peoples of the area of Melbourne (Naarm). This inclusion set a precedent in circus, and in the performing arts more broadly, well over a decade before this became common practice in Australian culture.

Circus Oz featured strong women being outrageous and doing risky acts which modelled different ideas of female physicality and exploited the comedy of having male performers appear weak and ridiculous. A message rejecting gendered physicality was a staple of Circus Oz although performers also conveyed ambiguous sexual tensions. In 2001, a strongwoman lined up with male performers in a skills competition, while the antics of the bad-girl clown sabotaged every act and caused chaos. The clowning violence between males and females overturned convention with aggressive female clowns causing mayhem; the meaning was conveyed visually through circus bodies in action rather than verbally.

In adhering to principles of gender, sexual, ethnic and racial inclusiveness and expanding on the circus capacity for queering of identity in its artistic strategies, Circus Oz productions acquired more subtlety over time with less direct political address. In 2002, critic Helen Thomson writes: "Gone is the political satire that once lashed the Right with laughter and contempt. I for one miss it, but the group has not changed political orientation, just altered its mode of expression" (Thomson, 2002). While the 2019 Circus Oz production continued to physicalise a message critical of government inertia on climate change, it also revived the practice of rhetorical delivery.

The 2019 Circus Oz production, *Aurora*, directed by Kate Fryer from the group Dislocate, focused throughout on climate change in what is described as "a highly political and opinionated piece" that nonetheless injected "fun" and remained hopeful in mood (Bloom, 2019). The title refers to the southern (Australis) and northern (borealis) lights and the show featured human-sized penguins from Antarctica on trapeze and a talking, singing polar bear (Tara Silcock). The human-bear repeatedly appeared and did acrobatic

action and a clever trick of extracting a plastic bag from her stomach. Tim Byrne writes that the production “integrates its political messaging into the substructure of its acts” and *Aurora* ‘feels genuinely political’ (Byrne, 2019). The circus skills reinforced the nonverbal message so a performer on straps was a hunter trying to shoot the bear, a performer upside down in a trapeze Washington act wore a gas mask, and a performer on a rope was cleaning up litter (Woodhead, 2019). Digital projections made the floor into an ice sheet and, in one part, radioactive material was displayed. A hoop act restored the upbeat mood that typifies Circus Oz productions.

Circus Oz’s *Aurora* suggested the absurdity of the human inability to reduce carbon emissions and environmental pollution and damage. The performance offered a sequence of impressions that made fun of what is happening as it reinforced serious consequences and reminded audiences of all ages about what has to be done. Humour made the show enjoyable even with a strong message; the comic effect is a strength of circus. *Aurora* suggested global interconnection as it also pointed to foreseeable changes in the weather that create the northern and southern lights and within the local habitats for all species from polar bears to penguins. Circus presents important political issues in highly memorable ways.

### “The Climate Circus”

Circus is associated with efforts to redress climate change in both metaphorical and literal ways that are striking but also confused. In response to the 2010 “conference of the parties” to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP15) in Copenhagen, and a succession of film documentaries on the topic, Zoë Cormier states that the “high stakes meeting” was “a circus – colourful and dramatic, but politically futile” (Cormier, 2010). As she aligns circus with conflicted politics, she is pointing out that the science of climate change had been widely disseminated including by the high profile Al Gore documentary, *An Inconvenient Truth*. Cormier outlines how tens of thousands of representatives from 192 (up now to 198) nations attended the meeting but suggests that those looking for an agreed way forward would be disappointed, and circus in this context stands for spectacle and show. Cormier also notes that a street demonstrator was dressed as a clown – a presence that reinforced a sense of comic mockery. The agreement or accord of the 2010 meeting was not legally binding, and therefore ineffectual. Although there had been a precedent set by the concerted international action taken after the 1987 agreement that banned the chemicals damaging the ozone layer, this type of unified action had not been realised through climate change meetings. The level of carbon emissions continues to rapidly increase rather than reduce – so the six percent reduction sought by the 1997 Kyoto COP agreement became indicative of largescale failure. Cormier accepts that reducing carbon emissions is more complicated than ozone reduction since climate change “impacts on every facet of our lives” and “all the threads of culture, society, politics, and, above all, economics” (Cormier, 2010). At the same time, however, climate change redress is about

unequal risks facing places and peoples and therefore social justice, and fraught street protest demonstrations highlight human rights as much as the threat to polar bears.

A metaphoric association of circus performance and climate change meetings reflects a selective view of circus. Perhaps a succession of separate acts seems applicable to nation states but circus is being deployed to suggest a lack of control and grotesque behaviour. If this is comic in the circus, the stalled progress of climate change negotiations with so much at stake seems tragic. Instead, there is a deadly effect to contemplating the risks associated with climate change in relation to risk and danger in circus. But it is clowning mayhem that is associated with ineffectual COP meetings. The clown becomes embedded in ideas of thwarted climate change action, which Tony Elliot (2020) deploys with his “enviroclown” to explain how an appearance of progress on climate action is repeatedly undermined and betrayed in insidious ways.

A circus clown might also suggest pathos but the Climate Guardians from Australia choose to embody the cultural icon of the angel (of death) at the 2015 COP in Paris, dressed in white with wings silently standing in public spaces to emotional effect (Varney, 2018). In a detailed analysis of political figures in attendance including Barack Obama, Suzanne Goldenberg writes that it is difficult to “grasp the degree of dysfunction that took hold” at the meeting (Goldenberg, 2015). It was as if countries were engaging in battle although negotiators describe themselves as better prepared in Paris than in Copenhagen. Goldenberg writes that, “[t]he climate circus would be farcical, if the fate of billions were not at stake” (Goldenberg, 2015). Goldenberg is conceding that there is no clown humour in climate change inaction. If this association hints instead at the dark underbelly of violence in the traditional whiteface clown act, it also highlights the ambiguous emotional impact of clowning in which spectators laugh at clown aggression and pity a victimised figure.

In public performances prior to the 2015 COP in Paris and in New York in 2014, philosopher Bruno Latour collaborated with playwright Pierre Daubigny in the creation of the performance, *Gaïa Global Circus* about climate change (Coppola, 2020). *Gaïa Global Circus* was a series of “vignettes” that were performed in a “flying tent” with a silk roof as apparatus that became “a shelter, a shade, a big top, a safety blanket, a funeral shroud” (Coppola, 2020: 38-9). The performance style ranged from slapstick action to allegory and both amused and shocked. The space and contradictory emotional effects were self referentially associated with circus even though the aesthetic effect might equally have been grouped within contemporary theatrical performance. Latour’s eight lectures from around this time revisit Lovelock’s Gaia theory in relation to climate change in the Anthropocene to point out that the human is inseparable from the nonhuman world (Latour, 2017). Latour is also concerned about the gap between human emotional feeling about the consequences of climate change and the stalled adjustment to the unfolding reality so that feelings of anxiety fail to become an impetus for organized political action. Latour’s approach is unravelling emotional contradictions



that can be aligned with the contradictory effects of circus. *Gaia Global Circus* was influenced by Latour's thinking about dialogic exchange and the attribution of agency to nonhuman entities so that an environment such as an ocean should have a comparable status to a nation state — and therefore COP delegate rights — with “atmosphere” listed before Australia (Coppola, 2020). The attributing of rights to nonhuman environments is acceptable to a circus world or world as circus in which absurdly comic and dangerous precariousness indicate climate change.

### Environmental Circus Change

Interestingly, circus performance is omitted from some summaries of the arts focused on climate change even though contemporary circus is also contributing to public awareness. For example, when climate scientist Mike Hulme argues that the arts can achieve much more than information sharing by evoking affect and emotions. At least circus is prominent in artist oriented overviews (see Artists for Climate Change [2019]; Artists for Climate Change [2020]), and it does differ from theatrical performance which often depicts the impasse of emotional responses to climate upheaval and disaster and an overwhelmingly bleak future. Common tropes across artistic representation envisage a dystopian world because destruction and extinction reflect scientific predictions unless action is taken. Hulme argues, however, that “[a]rt that is inspired by the idea of climate change should therefore be just as likely to problematise scientific realities, attitudinal changes, or prospective solutions as it is to successfully implant pre-packaged concern” (2022: 155). It is important to imagine different ways of conceiving of climate change events within culture because it impacts on all aspects of life. Circus arts allow for contradictory emotional responses with duplicitous clowning and precarious acrobatic action that models facing up to dangerous extremes, and acrobatic holds and balances highlight human interdependence.

Some artistic forms rely on a format that does not really reflect a sense of what is happening in the twenty-first century with climate change. Amitav Ghosh asks of art in the climate crisis of the Anthropocene era: “Is it possible that the arts and literature of this time will one day be remembered not for their daring, nor for their championing of freedom, but rather because of their complicity in the Great Derangement?” (2016: 121). Ghosh is criticising artistic silence as if climate change is not happening. Conversely, circus that has been addressing climate change exemplifies daring and a cultural association with social freedom as it invites an embodied response to what the abstract large concept of climate might mean for human interaction with the nonhuman world.

Circus skills convey how responses to climate change are embodied and visually interpreted, and can reflect the social conscience of the performer. For example, Eliana Dunlap aligns the ideas of risk in circus and in climate change in her performance on the “German wheel”, and she is founder of the Circus Action Network (Dunlap, n.d.). Dunlap has a podcast series with performers who perform at the nexus of circus and climate change called

“Changing the World and other Related Things” (Dunlap, 2019; n.d.). She points to the intrinsic collaborative practices around safety and circus performance to face up to high risk situations such as those of climate change.

The “Acting for Climate” website presents a number of groups and performers in the Nordic region who are undertaking performances and workshops about climate change (Acting for Climate, 2019). These include the Riga Circus for young people in Circus for Climate, and BARK, which presented environmental elements such as trees and soils in a collaboration between physical theatre performers, dancers, sound artists, and poets responding to science. The nonhuman dimension of traditional circus is being innovatively reinstated in this type of contemporary circus performance that uses environmental elements as objects. The *Kime* production presented two circus performers, an opera singer and a dancer in a performance that conveys a way forward from disaster. It moves from the chaos of “200 newspapers” and a straw bale on the ground to soaring aerial action above ground on ropes and tree branches (Kime).

The 2019 project, *Into the Water* took place on the deck of the sailing ship, Hawila, and up on two masts, and combined circus performance with the minimizing of carbon emissions in travel (Into the Water; Artists for Climate Change, 2019). The performance on the sailing ship sought to highlight the interconnections between water and life as well as develop new ways of working by performing on a ship. Images of the performance show performers in a three-tier shoulder balance at the front of the ship and performing aerial work on ropes from the masts as well as clowning in flippers and paraphernalia on the deck. This circus demonstrates collaborative approaches that encourage understanding of the collaboration needed in a climate change future.

The circus, dance and physical theatre performance *Ripples*, created in Denmark with director Hanne Trap Friis, was about climate change and overcoming “ecological grief” (see *Ripples*). It was first performed in 2022 on a two-mast 1926 sailing ship, SV Swallow, which provides a site-specific stage in a harbour for audience viewing from the dock, and a mode of transport for the tour to Nordic countries. As well as providing accommodation for the seven performers, they travel by sail boat to support carbon emission reduction through transport. Audiences are invited to become participants in a “mourning ritual” for past damage to the environment and to question the present and to look to more hopeful moments for the future. This circus was recognizing conflicted emotional feelings about climate change.

In reporting on COP 27 in Sharm el-Sheikh in Egypt in 2022, Michael Jacobs points out that journalists had filed their “‘What’s the point of this annual circus?’ articles” before a “last-minute crisis” developed (Jacobs, 2023). But he rejects the proposition that the ineffectual COP meetings could be abolished and the international work left to the scientific meetings of the technical experts and officials, because the COP meetings allow maximum coverage of public declarations and political exchanges about intentions and accord prominence to the crisis. Jacobs suggests instead that circus provides a model of development that the climate change meetings should follow. He

points out that circuses have changed since the traditional turn-of-the-twentieth-century circus with its animal acts, and COP meetings should reflect a comparable significant development. Twenty-first-century circus arts can highlight how even political shows require disciplined collaboration and embodied practices. Contemporary circus productions convey the absurdity of human behaviour as they demonstrate how risk and danger are faced, and they evoke contradictory emotional effects that are comparable to those arising with climate change. As explained here, circus offers an ideal art form with which to frame responses to climate change.



### Bibliographical references

- ACTING FOR CLIMATE. <<https://www.actingforclimate.com/circusforclimate>> [Last accessed: 30 September 2024].
- ARTISTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE. <<https://artistsandclimatechange.com/2019/12/02/acting-for-climate-goes-into-the-water/>> [Last accessed: 30 September 2024].
- ARTISTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE. <<https://bit.ly/48dAPSa>> [Last accessed: 30 September 2024].
- ARRIGHI, Gillian; DAVIS, Jim. "Introduction. The Circus: Reflecting and Mediating the World". In: Gillian Arrighi and Jim Davis (eds.). *The Cambridge Companion to The Circus*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021, pp. 1-15.
- AMES, Kenneth. "Introduction". In: Susan Weber, Kenneth Ames and Matthew Wittmann (eds.). *The American Circus*. New York/New Haven: Bard Graduate Center/Yale University Press, 2012, pp. 10-21.
- BLOOM, Heather. "Aurora, Circus Oz". *AustralianStage* (30 September 2019). <<https://bit.ly/4obg8Vo>> [Last accessed: 30 September 2024].
- BYRNE, Tim. "Circus Oz: Aurora Review". *Time Out* (24 September 2019). <<https://www.timeout.com/melbourne/theatre/circus-oz-aurora-review>> [Last accessed: 30 September 2024].
- Circus Oz Living Archive. <<https://circusozlivingarchive.com>> [Last accessed: 30 September 2024].
- COPPOLA, Al. "Latour and Balloons: Gaïa Circus and the Theater of Climate Change". *Configurations*, no. 28 (2020), pp. 29-49.
- CORMIER, Zoë. "Copenhagen's Climate Change Circus". *POV (Point of View) Magazine* (1 February 2010). <<https://povmagazine.com/copenhagens-climate-change-circus/>> [Last accessed: 30 September 2024].
- DUNLAP, Eliana (n.d.). ElianaDunlap.com
- DUNLAP, Eliana. "Eliana Dunlap Explores the High Stakes of Climate Change through Circus Arts". <<https://artistsandclimatechange.com/2019/08/05/eliana-dunlap-explores-the-high-stakes-of-climate-change-through-circus-arts/>> [Last accessed: 30 September 2024].
- ELLIOT, Tony. *Enviroclowns: The Climate Change Circus*. Amazon CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2011.
- GOLDENBERG, Suzanne. "Paris Climate Summit: The Climate Circus Comes to Town". *The Guardian* (26 November 2015). <<https://bit.ly/4hg9zqe>> [Last accessed: 30 September 2024].

- GHOSH, Amitav. *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2016.
- GUY, Jean-Michel. "Circus Does Not Exist". In: Franziska Trapp (ed.). *360° Circus*. London: Routledge, 2023 pp. 21-33.
- HUEY, Rodney. "The Americanization of the Circus Clown". In: Susan Weber, Ames Kenneth and Matthew Wittmann. *The American Circus*. New York/New Haven: Bard Graduate Center/Yale University Press, 2012, pp. 293-307.
- HUME, Mike. *Climate Change*. London: Routledge, 2022.
- INTO THE WATER. <<https://www.actingforclimate.com/intothewater>> [Last accessed: 30 September 2024].
- JACOBS, Michael. "Circuses Have Evolved and So Must UN Climate Summits", 5 February 2023. <<https://www.climatechangenews.com/2023/02/05/circuses-have-evolved-and-so-must-un-climate-summits/>> [Last accessed: 30 September 2024].
- JÜRGENS, Anna-Sophie; HILDBRAND, Mirjam. "Arts for All Senses: Circus and the Avant-Gardes – introduction". In: Anna-Sophie Jürgens and Mirjam Hildbrand (eds.). *Circus and the Avant-Gardes*. London: Routledge, 2022, pp. 1-15.
- KIME. <<https://www.actingforclimate.com/kime>> [Last accessed: 30 September 2024].
- LATOUR, Bruno. *Facing Gaia*. Translated from French by Catherine Porter. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2017.
- LEROUX, Louis Patrick. "Reinventing Tradition, Building a Field: Quebec Circus and its Scholarship". In: Louis Patrick Leroux and Charles Batson. *Cirque Global*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2016, pp. 3-21.
- MULLETT, Jane; TAIT, Peta. "Political Clowns, Strong Women and Animal-free: Circus Reimagined through 1970s Avant-Garde Political Performance". In: Anna-Sophie Jürgens and Mirjam Hildbrand (eds.). *Circus and the Avant-Gardes*. London: Routledge, 2022, pp. 215-231.
- RIPPLES. <<https://www.actingforclimate.com/ripples>> [Last accessed: 30 September 2024].
- ST. LEON, Mark. *Circus: The Australian Story*. Melbourne: Melbourne Books, 2011.
- TAIT, Peta. *Circus Bodies: Cultural Identity in Aerial Performance*. London: Routledge, 2005.
- TAIT, Peta. *Fighting Nature: Travelling Menageries, Animal Acts and War Shows*. Sydney: Sydney University Press, 2016.
- TAIT, Peta; LAVERS, Katie. "Introduction: Circus Precedents, Perspectives, and Presents". In: Peta Tait and Katie Lavers: *The Routledge Circus Studies Reader*. London: Routledge, 2016, pp. 1-11.
- THOMSON, Helen. "Circus Oz Still Takes Breath Away". *The Age* (22 June 2002), p. 18.
- TRAPP, Franziska. "Introduction". In: Franziska Trapp (ed.). *360° Circus*. London: Routledge, 2023, pp. 1-17.
- VARNEY, Denise. "Climate Guardian Angels: Feminist Ecology and the Activist Tradition". In: Lara Stevens, Peta Tait and Denise Varney (eds.). *Feminist Ecologies: Changing Environments in the Anthropocene*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018, pp. 135-153.
- WEBER, Susan; AMES, Kenneth; WITTMANN, Matthew (eds.). *The American Circus*. New York/New Haven: Bard Graduate Center/Yale University Press, 2012.
- WOODHEAD, Cameron. "Chilling Message Cuts Through Circus Oz's Cold Comforts". *The Age* (23 September 2019). <<https://bit.ly/4hhxINt>> [Last accessed: 30 September 2024].