

# **Bike and Circuses 2024**

## **Final Report**







We are so proud to have presented Bike and Circuses 2024 to Winnipeg audiences.

From August 7-11, we welcomed people of all ages to Whittier Park, a gorgeous area where the Red and Seine Rivers meet and acres of naturized park space sit looking towards the urban landscape of downtown Winnipeg. Audiences arrived to a Bike and Pedestrian Safety Station and an active lobby area where community organizations hosted information and activities. Charismatic and colourful Hosts lead audience groups through the show, introducing performers and creating a sense of community between audience members as they travelled together. Eight performance areas were set up throughout the park, each featuring a performance inspired by climate change and the health of our planet. Topics included household chemical use, pollution, biodiversity, climate, connection to land/nature, future generations, food choices, active transportation and reducing consumption. Disciplines included acrobatics, clown, modern dance, theatre, hip hop and folk music, and sound art installation. The Greatest Show About Earth!

This spectacle was almost two years in the making, from commissioning the artists to researching and workshopping to creating connections with the community organizations and businesses who helped support this project. In May, we partnered with Green Action Centre to present an event we called Rolling Theatre in the Park, a free public performance produced as a celebration of Bike Everywhere Month and also a preview / promotion for Bike and Circuses.

Almost 700 people participated in Bike and Circuses 2024.



## Community Engagement

We hired a total of 37 Manitobans.

- 15 performers
- 4 director / designers worked to create the look and feel of the production
- 8 craftspeople worked to build all the set, prop and costume pieces
- 7 production staff worked to manage set and props builds, box office, marketing, and event set-up and tear down.
- 3 consultants helped guide us in our efforts to make the event accessible and to help strengthen and steer our efforts towards Reconciliation

Over 30 volunteers helped us as well. This volunteer opportunity provided work experience for high school students, and a chance to be social and get involved with the not-for-profit sector for others.

We collaborated with 10 community non-profit organisations. They participated in a variety of ways, from providing additional activities in our lobby area to lending supplies to helping with promotion.

Spending as much time as we did in Whittier Park this spring and summer, we came to know some of the regular park users, most often people living in St. Boniface. Many of the folks we met expressed their thanks for us doing the event in their neighbourhood and were especially appreciative that we included some French in the show.



Our Bike and Pedestrian Safety Station was well used by folks of all ages. It featured intersections, crosswalks and even a one-way cul-de-sac and provided a great opportunity to talk about cycling etiquette and the rules of the road. Animated by a clown who was serious about safety, it provided a fun activity while waiting to head into the show.



### Environmental Impact and Responsibility

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

All performers and staff were asked to avoid bringing single-use items to rehearsals and performances and to travel by active and public transportation when possible, or to consider carpooling. We provided reusable food containers, utensils and water bottles on site for cast and crew who needed to pick up food at local restaurants.

We hosted a compost collection on site, inviting patrons to bring their kitchen waste to us.

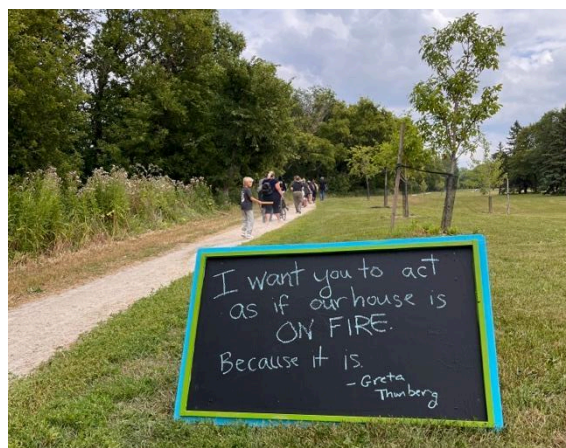
Most materials used in production, from set and costume pieces to signage, were reused, thrifted or salvaged. We collected donations of scraps of wood and paint ends from local theatres and borrowed most of our costume pieces as well. Almost all items and materials used in production will go on to be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

### Breakdown of Items Purchased New VS Purchased Second-Hand, Borrowed or Salvaged

Percentages are estimated and based on volume.

	NEW	REUSED, BORROWED OR SALVAGED
<b>Production / Office Supplies</b>	<b>10%</b> <u>Single Use:</u> Posters, Buttons, Handbills, Printer Toner, Paper	<b>90%</b> Paper, Bins, Wagons, Tables, Chairs, Cargo Bike, Hand Cycle, Sandwich Boards, Paint, Reuseable Water Bottles (for audiences or cast & crew)

	<u>Reusable:</u> Stop Signs	
<b>Set</b>	<b>20%</b> <u>Reuseable:</u> Staging Materials (Wood and Flooring) <u>Single Use:</u> Screws, Nails	<b>80%</b> Bikes, Bike Parts, Boxes, Furniture, Signage, Paint, Wood, Sub-Flooring for Stage
<b>Props</b>	<b>25%</b> <u>Single Use:</u> Glue, Templates, Ribbons <u>Reusable:</u> Umbrella	<b>75%</b> Paint, Door Knobs, Watering Cans, Hoses, Flower Pots, Basket,
<b>Costumes</b>	<b>5%</b> <u>Bought New but Reusable:</u> Dress, Sneakers	<b>95%</b> Many many pieces, notably a Couple's Sandwich Costume we repurposed into a Wand Costume and a few Sweaters took apart and made into a Suit



## Accessibility

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

We created 3 versions of the show:

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

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

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

Thanks to Accessible Sport Connection and Winnipeg Trails, a cargo bike and a hand cycle were available in the Lobby and at the Bike Safety Station for patrons to try. Our goal in showcasing modified bikes was to demonstrate that cycling can be for folks with varied physical abilities and needs.







## Organisational Growth

Bike and Circuses 2024 was Green Kids' 23rd original full-length production, but only the second created exclusively for the public. We are 34 years old but have spent most of those years working in schools across Western Canada and as such, have a very modest public profile. We are delighted by the number of new funders, partners and patrons we've met through this event, and humbled by those that have supported us time again.

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







Leading up to and even after the event, our social media presence has grown significantly. Our Instagram following increased by almost 20% and interactions on all of our platforms have increased 4-fold.

We were a newsworthy event and received plenty of television, radio and newspaper coverage. The public nature of Bike and Circuses has raised our profile with families, educators, environmental action organisations and advocates, and businesses.

We are also now becoming known as leaders in creating green productions and public events. In 2023, Winnipeg Studio Theatre hired Green Kids to help them create an eco-friendly, low impact production, and this fall, The University of Winnipeg has hired us as a consultant as they work to implement more responsible practices in their productions.

### **Next Steps**

We want to do it again! We received immensely positive feedback from audiences as well as our cast and crew. We also have a few ideas as to how to improve upon our model, artistically, logistically, and environmentally, and are eager to implement those. Bike and Circuses will be back - with all new performers and performances. Stay tuned!

**“I didn’t just like it, I LOVED it!”**

- Elias, Age 4

**“A fun concept, quirky, giggly and full of heart. Take your kids- or your inner kiddo!”**

- Barb, an adult

**“The show was awesome! My kids truly loved it!**

**The walk through of the forest along with the scenic views of sunset was the perfect addition to the wonderful performances.”**

- Ashley, an Adult

