



Promoting the Art of Happiness

Circus Around the World

Monaco, September 2009

For the past thirty-five years, Monaco has provided the highest platform in the world for the celebration of circus arts. In January of each year, at the *Festival International du Cirque de Monte-Carlo*, artists from around the globe compete with the best-of-the-best before an international jury for the coveted gold, silver and bronze clowns awarded to the winning acts.

The Festival was founded by my father, Prince Rainier III, in recognition of the importance of circus arts as part of European and, indeed, world culture, and now operates under my direction. In selecting the acts we invite to compete, great care is taken to feature in our competition shows the full range of circus arts, including classical and contemporary presentations. Among the classical acts invited each year are artists working with animals. Such acts often are among the winners of the competition, selected by the professional, children's and public juries.

The presentation of animals has always been an important part of the circus tradition and remains symbolic of the circus for many people. While I am aware of the issues surrounding animals in the circus, my personal experience is with animal trainers and presenters who dedicate themselves to high quality animal care and lifelong relationships with their animal partners. If there are instances where this is not the case, I believe, as my father did before me, that the best way to ensure the health and welfare of circus animals is through governmental regulation and strict enforcement. We, at the Festival, also do our part by inviting only those acts that ensure that their animals are healthy, are kept in compliance with applicable regulations, and are well-cared for.

Stringent regulations and inspection systems make it possible to protect the classical circus as a cultural institution while simultaneously ensuring that animals' health and welfare needs are being met. This is important because circus is a very special kind of performing art. It offers not only the possibility for high quality artistic expression but also a performance that families can experience and enjoy together.

Princess Stephanie of Monaco