

Higher National Vocational Diploma for Circus Artists (DNSP-AC) What are the knowledge and skills required for the entrance exam?

Every year, the CNAC receives nearly two hundred applications to join the circus artist diploma course. For many people, this is the culmination of a series of schools and training courses, most often spread over a period of about ten years or so.

Some 80 girls and boys will be selected to take part in the entrance exam that takes place every year at the beginning of May.

During these five days, the qualities and skills of the candidates will be assessed in order to welcome about fifteen future DNSP students according to the following criteria:

1 - Physical preparation.

It is essential for practicing the circus for an average of four to six hours every day. Applicants are asked to be aware of this important part of the work and to take responsibility for it. They are asked to practice their specific preparation in order to improve their level and preserve their body.

Three areas are complementary :

- Strength training exercises to gain strength, speed and resistance,
- Endurance activities such as jogging, cycling or swimming,
- Increasing the flexibility of the shoulders, back, pelvis and legs.

2 - The circus discipline

The CNAC stands for mitigating the dogmatism of a technical, artistic or pedagogical truth by sharing the teaching of a specific discipline between different teachers and contributors. It is requested that:

- the applicant has a solid foundation in the discipline for which he or she is applying;
- his/her level must be advanced;
- he/she has an open approach to work, attentive and receptive, as well as a willingness to listen and to be surprised.

It is very tempting to engage in a race to achieve technical proficiency from a very young age, which does not necessarily make it a good artistic project. Better guarantees of success will come from mastering the gesture, the figure. Respecting the various progression stages, through the methodical acquisition of the broadest and most complete bases of a circus discipline, builds and preserves what will become a working tool: the body.

Risk management is a key concept for technical progression. It means knowing our limits without exceeding them. The teacher's responsibility is to encourage the acrobat as close as possible to what he or she is capable of achieving, without hurting himself or herself. Precise knowledge of the many parameters, which lead to accident or injury, teaches us how to avoid the traps. A bad fall is not a fatality.

The mastery and control of an acrobatic movement will always be valued in relation to its performance.

Working on the writing, composition and interpretation of sequences, outlines the initial artistic approach for future circus artists.

3 - Dance

A natural complement to the circus gesture, all forms of dance build a solid foundation for the creation and interpretation of a piece of circus work. You must have learned at least one basic dance technique.

The exploration of different contemporary dance styles is the main axis of dance teaching at Châlons, which is directly linked to the writing of technical gestures.

4 - The theatre

Actor training is another pillar of our training.

The skills and ability to compose and interpret a circus sequence are developed through the practice of acting. The applicant is expected to be open to cross-disciplinary stage disciplines and to be awakened to "being on stage".

5 - Artistic culture

For thirty years, the CNAC's artistic identity has focused on the search for meaning and coherence, in the search for performance and virtuosity.

The artistic approach of a circus artist is a long-term construction, tested by the processes of creation and performance.

Knowing why we choose to step into the light, and how to set our circus artist's feet into the ring.

Understanding the history and creative environment of the circus as a nurturing source of our dreams.

6 -Other

The CNAC will also pay close attention to the way applicants complete their applications, their responsiveness to administrative requests, and their interaction with the institution.