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Ban Performing Animals Events

All around the world, people are beginning to look beneath the surface of the circuses, rodeos, aquariums and zoos where animals are forced into captivity for entertainment. The purveyors of these events adamantly defend their exhibitions, insisting that their animals are having a great time, but slowly but surely, people are becoming aware of the suffering and indignity these animals endure.

A Step Forward in Orange County

In Santa Ana, California, city council has officially banned wild and exotic animal performances. In 2004, by unanimous vote, the mayor and council answered a call from the community and agreed that animal circuses are inhumane and pose a risk to both the animals and the general public.

Circus shows that use animals are no longer welcome in Israel's busiest urban center, either. After a successful campaign by animal welfare lobby groups in 2005, Tel-Aviv's mayor

This sends a very strong message to the circus industry that what they consider to be fun and entertaining is ... duping the public for profit.

— Dr. Allison Stanley, Santa Ana, California

instructed his municipality to avoid any future contracts with circuses involving performing animals. This move is an evolution from Israel's previous law banning wild animal acts and now protects all animal species from being used for human entertainment in the city.

Burlington, Vermont, Sao Paulo, Brazil, Windsor, Ontario, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Kamloops, BC, and Redmond, Washington, have all followed suit. It's time for all cities to make this move.

Consider the Alternatives

Still want a circus to come to town? There are plenty of highly entertaining circuses that don't use animals that are just as exciting and a lot more humane. Montreal-based Cirque du Soleil is one of the best-known circuses in the world, wowing international audiences with their spectacular productions. There's also California's Earth Circus, Hawaii's Hiccup Circus, Laser Vaudeville in Colorado, the Mexican International Circus, Ontario's Little Russian Circus, No Fit State Circus in Wales, Circus Oz in Australia and Cirque Plume in France.

A Victorious Vote for the Bulls

In Barcelona, Spain, the city council has also taken a courageous choice and listened to its conscience and its electorate. In defiance of what many consider to be Spain's national pastime, the City has banned bullfighting. Nearly 250,000 people signed the petition that led to the 2004 vote.

Every year, over 100 bulls were killed during the bullfighting exhibitions. However, a city

- Animal-Free Circuses: www.circuses.com/pdfs/AnimalFreeCircuses.pdf
- Born Free Foundation: www.bornfree.org.uk
- Captive Animal Protection Society: www.captiveanimals.org
- Cities with legislation prohibiting animal performances: www.circuses.com/pdfs/AnimalActs_Legislation.pdf
- Dawnwatch: www.dawnwatch.com/entertainment.htm
- Performing Animal Welfare Society: www.pawsweb.org

council spokesperson says there has not been a large bullfighting following in the region since the 1960s.¹ Apparently, those who watch the events are generally curious tourists. Nonetheless, the move has angered supporters of the sport who have vowed to fight the new law.

Put It on the Ballot

In 1997 the city of Vancouver, BC, let their citizens have the final say on the fate of a public zoo by holding a referendum. Organized by the group Friends of Stanley Park, the question was asked whether or not Vancouverites supported the Stanley Park Zoo, and to the surprise of both sides, people voted 54% in favor of closing the zoo. Flowerbeds and walkways now greet visitors where over 50 animals were once held in captivity.

The move reflects Vancouver's concerns over animal welfare. Thanks to public pressure, performing animal circuses have been banned, along with the capture of wild whales and dolphins for the city's aquarium. The aquarium lives on, however, and remains a center of controversy for animal welfare advocates, city councilors and many residents.²



SHARK

Many rodeo events, such as calf roping, cause intolerable suffering, injury and death to animals. At the world's most famous rodeo — the Calgary Stampede — more than 50 animals died between 1986 and 2006 from injuries sustained during the event.

Maui Gives Whales Their Freedom

In 2002 Maui County Council passed a bill banning the captivity of cetaceans. Maui is world famous for its wild whales and dolphins, a reputation that will continue, thanks to the timely legislation being introduced before the construction of a new resort and aquarium in Maui.

Aquariums, particularly marine mammal circus acts, are bound to disappear as the public is educated and revolts against it.

— Jean-Michel Cousteau