



INTERMEDIATE- UNITS 1-2

Reading

The circus artists of Vietnam

A

To Uruguayan photographer Christian Rodriguez, circuses are spectacular and fascinating places, and he has visited many of them over the years. They are places where audiences go to be thrilled by the impossible and the unusual, and to forget about their ordinary lives. However, although the performances on stage are marvellous, Rodriguez believes that the real drama and excitement of circus life happens behind the scenes. That's why he has published a remarkable collection of photographs of daily life in two circuses in Vietnam – photographs that show performers before and after their shows, dressing, washing and having a quiet moment. They are photographs that, from one image to the next, will make you laugh, smile or cry.

B

Rodriguez went on three trips to Vietnam between 2009 and 2012, and spent eight months in the country in total. During that time, he got to know performers in a circus in Hanoi, Vietnam's capital city, and performers in another circus in Ho Chi Minh City, in the south of the country. The circus artists in Hanoi had financial support from the government, and even free housing from the state. In contrast, the performers in Ho Chi Minh City had no help. Most circus artists in Vietnam make about \$150 a month, plus another four dollars for each performance. It's not enough to live on, so the majority of them perform at private parties or nightclubs to make a little extra money. And almost all the circuses go on tour. While most shows are in Hanoi or Ho Chi Minh City, there are also a lot of circus performances in the countryside. Circuses are still popular in Vietnam, especially in small towns and villages.

C

It wasn't easy for Rodriguez to get permission to take the kind of photographs he wanted to take. Although the circus performers were happy that an international photographer wanted pictures of their act or pictures of them in their colourful and glamorous costumes, they weren't keen on photos that showed them washing up or changing their shoes. As a result, Rodriguez had to take time to build relationships with the people he met, to gain their trust and their confidence. On his last trip, he lived with one group of circus artists in an old theatre in Hanoi. They moved into the old theatre and built their own rooms out of pieces of wood and plastic, and Rodriguez did the same. His approach worked. When he showed a real interest in his photographic subjects and tried to present their situation as honestly as he could, they invited him into their lives. Once they'd accepted him, he was simply there among them, taking pictures and sharing life each day.



5a You are going to read an article about circuses in Vietnam. Choose from the sections (A–C) to answer the questions 1–4. There is an example at the beginning (0).

0 Why do people go to circuses? A

1 How did Rodriguez really get to know the performers in his photographs?

2 In what ways are the lives of performers in one circus different from the lives of performers in another circus?

3 According to the writer, how will people respond to Rodriguez's photographs of circus performers?

4 Where in Vietnam are the circuses Rodriguez visited?

5b Read the article again. Are the sentences Correct (C) or Incorrect (I)? There is an example at the beginning (0).

0 Christian Rodriguez has been to a lot of circuses. C

1 More than anything else, Rodriguez loves taking photos of circus artists during their performances on stage.

2 Rodriguez's photos of Vietnamese circus artists produce a range of emotions in people who look at them.

3 Rodriguez was in Vietnam for three years taking photographs.

4 All circus artists in Vietnam are employed by the government.

5 The majority of circus shows take place in the biggest cities and not in the smaller towns.

6 When Rodriguez first met the circus artists, they didn't want him to take any kind of photographs of them.

(10 points)

Listening

6 [Track 105] You will hear five people talking about their favourite song. For questions 1–10, choose the best answer (A, B or C). There is an example at the beginning (0).

Speaker 1

0 What country does the speaker's favourite song come from?

A Britain

B France

C Spain

1 Who was the speaker with when he first heard the song?

A his friends

B He can't remember.

C his girlfriend



2 After hearing the song, what did the speaker do?

- A He learned the guitar. B He joined a band. C He became interested in hip-hop.

Speaker 2

3 How does the speaker feel when he listens to Fado?

- A He thinks of his country. B He feels sorry for other people. C He thinks of his personal problems.

4 How does the speaker listen to Fado?

- A He goes to concerts in London. B He sees live bands, but only occasionally.
C He plays in a band sometimes.

Speaker 3

5 What does the speaker say about musicals?

- A She only really likes one – and that's *Evita*. B Not many of their songs are memorable.
C Musicals often make her cry.

6 Why is her favourite song important to her?

- A Because it's from her favourite musical. B Because it reminds her of a special time.
C Because it makes her feel emotional.

Speaker 4

7 What does the speaker say about the song *It's Like That* when he first heard it?

- A He didn't feel it spoke to him. B He felt like a rock star. C He felt like a stronger person.

8 What does the speaker say about the song *It's Like That* now?

- A He doesn't like it so much. B Its words are still powerful. C It has become a bit old-fashioned.

Speaker 5

9 What does the speaker say about *In The Wee Small Hours Of The Morning*?

- A It's always been her favourite song. B She first heard it in a blues café. C It's a slow, moody song.

10 How does the speaker feel when listening to the song?

- A a little bit sad B very relaxed C happy and excited

(10 points)