

Flea Circus

The World's Smallest Artists

Manufacturer: Popp Fahrzeugbau Nuremberg

Year of construction: 1948

Owner: Lydia and Robert Birk, Hohenwart

The earliest evidence of show performances with fleas can be dated back to the middle of the 19th century. While human fleas were used in the beginning, most showmen switched to dog and cat fleas over time.

The Birk flea circus is one of only two travelling flea circuses in Germany. This flea circus was founded in the mid-19th century by Roloff Otava as a travelling circus. Among the most famous guests were Queen Victoria, Pope Leo XIII and Kaiser Wilhelm II. In 1948 Otava handed over the flea circus to his great-nephew Peter Mathes, who presented it for the first time at the Oktoberfest in Munich in the same year. The current appearance of the flea circus, which was set up at the Wies'n in Munich until 2009, dates from this time. Since 2010, the flea circus has been owned by the Birk family.