



*Atlantic Cat Hospital Ltd.*

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Mrs. Jessica Hunt  
NS Society For the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals,  
Bedford, NS

Dear Mrs. Hunt,

I am writing this letter to inform the SPCA of a number of events I personally witnessed on Friday, June 20, at the *George Cardin Russian International Circus* which is currently on tour in Nova Scotia. I observed the elephant trainer as he unloaded the three elephants behind the Halifax Forum. This observation period was approximately between the hours of 11 AM and 3PM. I also attended the 4:30 PM show. I took approximately 40 photographs throughout the day.

The following is a summary of my observations:

1. After unloading three elephants from their trailer, the trainer was in the process of cleaning them when he ordered one of them (Janice) to stay in place. When she did not comply, he used his ankus (a pole with a pointed end and a hook on its side) to grab her inside the mouth and firmly jerk her face toward him as he hollered at her to obey. Next he ordered her to lie down, at which point she began to urinate (a common stress response in animals). He continued to order her to lie down and roll over on her side in her own urine as she was still in the process of urinating. After he finished hosing her off, he ordered her to get up. Again, she did not comply to his satisfaction, and he subsequently kicked her in the face with force equivalent to what I would use to kick a soccer ball.

I also saw him whip one of his human assistants (a young man from New Brunswick) across the back with the elephant leg chains when he wasn't satisfied with his work.

2. During the four hours I was watching the elephant trainer, there were a number of ponies tethered to the chain link fence behind the forum building. They were in direct sunlight without any shade or water during the entire time I was there. Nobody checked to see how they were doing throughout this time.

3. When the elephants were performing in the ring I observed the trainer repeatedly driving the pointed end of the ankus into the tissue above the foot of one of the elephant's left hind legs. He continued for at least 8-10 times before the elephant performed to his satisfaction. This was done with both hands on the shaft of the ankus and his full body force thrown into the movement.

4. I witnessed the tiger trainer use his black whip on at least 6 occasions to hit the tigers in the face when they were not performing appropriately in the ring. I was within 20 feet of the circus ring and I saw actual contact and an obvious reflex grimace in pain from these animals.

5. Another part of the act was to pull a tiger by the tail a few feet across the floor of the circus ring. The tiger was lying on its side as this was being done.