

The New York Times

THEATER / THEATER REVIEW

By NEIL GENZLINGERD

Published: December 8, 2014

Things Not to Try at Home (Not That You Ever Could)

Golden Dragon Acrobats in 'Cirque Zíva'

Here's a fun experiment for you to try. Stand on one leg, then raise your other leg up until your foot is above your head, sole facing the ceiling. Now balance a bunch of glassware on the bottom of that upturned foot.

While you're waiting for the ambulance crew to arrive to treat your shredded groin and hamstrings and pick the broken glass out of your flesh, contemplate this: That is only the opening move in the crowd-pleasing contortionist routine that Ping Gao performs in "Cirque Zíva," the Golden Dragon Acrobats' show that has taken up residence at the New Victory Theater.



Ping Gao in "Cirque Zíva."
Credit Ian Douglas for The New York Times

By the time she's done, a whole kitchen's worth of glassware has been balanced on various body parts and she has bent herself into an amazing variety of gravity-defying positions and shapes. As the song continues, the point of view widens to embrace an older person's cynicism on Election Day: "One of them fools is bound to win/But it's the same old same old all over again."

Her routine is the highlight of the first half of this family-friendly show, which will dazzle the younger set but might also have them stacking up the dining room chairs and climbing the curtains when they get home. Those feats occur in other segments of the show. The Tower of Chairs is the second-half highlight, though Hui Yuan Zhu, the man who is balancing gymnastically atop those chairs, is so high up by the routine's end that someone made him wear a safety harness, which detracts from the derring-do.

Anyway, if you can keep the kiddies from trying to imitate what they witness, and if they haven't already seen enough similar stuff at Cirque du Soleil shows and the like, watching this troupe from China is a colorful way to spend two cold-weather hours. But adults should be forewarned: Seeing these athletic performers will almost certainly prompt you to consider a New Year's resolution to improve your own fitness. But you'll never be as fit as they are.

"Cirque Zíva" continues through Jan. 4 at the New Victory Theater, 209 West 42nd Street, Manhattan; 646-223-3010, newvictory.org.

A version of this review appears in print on December 9, 2014, on page C3 of the New York edition with the headline: Things Not to Try at Home (Not That You Ever Could).



The Golden Dragon Acrobats from China do the impossible (or at least the improbable) in "Cirque Zíva" at the New Victory Theater.
Credit Ian Douglas for The New York Times



Cirque Ziva brings Golden Dragon Acrobats of China to Paramount

Feb. 26, 2015 @ 12:01 AM | By DEREK HALSEY

The historic venue not only continues to bring in well-known American artists and performers, but this Tri-State treasure also always manages to book incredible talent from around the world.

A perfect example of this is Cirque Ziva, which will perform at 7:30 p.m. Friday, Feb. 27.

At the heart of Cirque Ziva is the amazing Golden Dragon Acrobats of China. This renowned troupe continues the centuries-old Chinese traditions of acrobatics, athleticism and artistry. They perform routines that push the boundaries of human ability, requiring years of constant training and immense concentration. Many of their stunts are thrilling because they are, indeed, dangerous should anything go wrong at any time. But because of their professionalism and skill, the end result is a show that will delight audiences of all ages.

History tells us that the art form known as acrobatics was created in China more than two thousand years ago. There are murals, pottery figurines and stone carvings that depict the ancient art of acrobatics and balancing feats going back to the Han Dynasty, although many historians trace the roots of this trade back to a

period 4,000 years ago during the Xia Dynasty. It has only been in recent history, however, that the professional acrobatics has been brought into theaters and lifted to a high level of appreciation.

The Golden Dragon Acrobats of China company was formed in the late 1940s by patriarch Lien Chi Chang. Chang originally brought his acrobatic skills from the mainland of China to Taiwan, but the civil war with the communists in 1949 forced him to remain on the island. So, he decided to create a family acrobatic business there and in 1967 the name was officially changed to the Golden Dragon Acrobats of China.

After 17 years, Chang turned over the reins of the troupe to his son Danny so the elder Chang could become the head coach at the National Taiwan College of the Performing Arts. Originally an Asian-based outfit, it was performer and artistic director Danny Chang who brought the company to the United States in the 1980s along with his wife and choreographer Angela. Since then, the Golden Dragon Acrobats of China have made their mark on American entertainment and around the world as well, performing in all 50 states as well as 65 countries

on five continents.

What is special about the Golden Dragon Acrobats of China is that along with their hair-raising acrobatics, they also incorporate traditional Chinese dance, beautiful home-country costumes and traditional as well as modern Asian music into the performance. The troupe really hit its stride in 2005 when it performed a six-week run on Broadway at the New Victory Theater in New York City. As a result, Danny Chang was nominated for a New York Drama Desk award for Unique Theatrical Experience and Angela Chang was nominated for Best Choreography.

From routines such as more than 10 people performing feats on a single bicycle to individual acrobats using their skills and strength to do balancing stunts high above the stage on ladders and chairs to body-bending displays of concentration using glass chandeliers, the edge-of-your-seat acts and colorful artistry comes at the audience throughout the show. Amidst the Asian glamour of the production numbers is the intensity of the performers who put it on the line with every move.

By ZOË LAKE

Published: Dec 4, 2014 | Updated: Dec 7, 2014

Golden Dragon Acrobats to play New Victory Theater in 'Cirque Ziva' — and the Daily News gets a high-flying lesson

Reporter gets to try out the German Wheel and other stunts. 'Cirque Ziva' show opens Friday in Midtown.

Look Ma, no hands!

And no skill either — but I got to live every child's dream of running away with the circus with the help of the talented Golden Dragon as they prepped their new show, Cirque Ziva, at the New Victory Theater.

The dream was a bit of a nightmare.

Angela Chang — the group's choreographer for the last 32 years — tried to show me the ropes, but you try riding a unicycle without a seat! And how should I know how to balance in the "German wheel" without face-planting?

Fortunately, I didn't have to worry once Chang taught me the key lesson: let everyone else do the work.

"Teamwork is very important, especially for the contortionist acts, and balancing," Chang told me during a break of the acrobats. "They start training at age 7. They have to trust each other."

Trust was especially important when Chang told the acrobats to climb on top of each other and hoist me into the air.

Then she screamed, "Jump!" — and suddenly I was suspended by the arms of two men who were balanced on top of two others. As long as I stayed motionless, we'd all be fine.

I should get a gold medal for motionless.

The Golden Dragon Acrobats, the only Chinese acrobatic company that tours the U.S., have been on the road for three decades — but remain excited about sharing the ancient practices with new audiences.

"We want the younger generations to come with their parents and grandparents, and to be able to have a conversation about what they are seeing, to share the love!" said Chang. "Also, the girls are all excited to shop!"



Daily News reporter Zoe Lake works with Cirque Ziva director Danny Chang and members of Golden Dragon Acrobats at New Victory Theatre. **Credit Jennifer Mitchell for Daily News**

BALL STATE DAILY BSD



The Golden Dragon Acrobats performed the show Cirque Ziva on February 19 at Emens Auditorium. DN PHOTO EMILY CUNNINGHAM

A brief history

The group that would come to be known as the Golden Dragon Acrobats began in 1949 under the direction of founder, Chang Lien Chi from Wujiao County in northeastern China.

His son, Danny Chang inherited the group in 1984 and brought the act to the United States of America.

Bill Fegan of New Mexico has managed the group since 1985.

Source: www.goldendragonacrobats.com

The rest of the show utilized flags swishing through the air, a unicycle wheeling across the stage floor and glowing cylinders steadied on string, like detached Yo-Yos. At one point, there were nine acrobats on top of a moving bicycle, stacked and hooked like human velcro. The performers sent gracious gestures to the crowd after each terrific stunt.

Audiences appreciated the skills they observed. Mark and Jeri McCorkle, who heard about the show through a friend, came on a whim.

“It was a good excuse to get out of the house in this weather. It was pretty spontaneous, for us,” said McCorkle.

Throughout the entirety of the show, children’s hushed voices floated through the music of “Whoa, cool,” “Mom, look” and “How did they do that?”

Knowing audiences love and welcome the unique showmanship of the team is just one thing tour manager Randy Williamson loves about his job.

“I love the people. I love touring. I love these guys, they’re great,” he said, but he made it clear that showtime is showtime.

“When it’s five minutes before the show, they’re backstage stretching,” he said while mimicking the performers. “There’s no holding hands and singing Kum-ba-ya,” he said with a chuckle.

Cirque Ziva is solemn and silly. Multi-directional. Multi-dimensional. One foot, two feet, no hands and dramatically dynamic. The art that started out in ancient China has evolved into a time-honored and contemporary craft with no end in sight.

Acrobats amaze audience with skilled stunts

The Daily News | Emily Cunningham Published 2/20/15 9:55am Updated 02/20/15 2:54pm

Audience members murmured in amazement Thursday night at Emens Auditorium as the Golden Dragon Acrobats performed their show “Cirque Ziva.”

The performers, part of a trained acrobatic group hailing from China, are the exception to the rules of what the human body is capable of handling. They jumped, twisted, juggled and teetered to a pulsing and majestic soundtrack that elegantly showcased what their website calls the country’s 2,500-year-old tradition.

Various backdrops depicting traditional Chinese art literally set the stage for each of the various combinations of performers. Under sharp spotlights, silhouetted by a starry-skied backdrop, or tinted by the jewel-toned stage lights, the performers’ energy radiated into the crowd with each movement. The collection of costumes shimmered as the beading and embroidery caught the lights.

Each stunt topped the previous one; a team of four female contortionists tilted and entwined their bodies to create human sculptures and other performers juggled various objects in inventive ways. A team of men dove through hoops of various heights, not so much as a hem brushing the hoop’s edge. Each of these feats was accentuated by the timpani rhythm, by the folk whistle and by traditional chanting.

A deep voice over the loudspeaker warned, “What you are about to see is extremely dangerous. Please do not attempt this in your own home.”

As the drum cadence fired up again, a short, muscular man, in yet another light-catching costume, began balancing on a chair. He stacked another on top, then another and another, until he was poised, upside-down, on one hand at the top of a six-chair tower. After he pulled his legs in and settled back onto his feet, he gestured to the crowd for more applause. With a mischievous grin on his face, he called out to the crowd, “Want more?”

REVIEW | By Michelle Parks | Published: February 24, 2014

‘Cirque Ziva’ is an impressive show of amazing skills and stunts

There’s a moment in Cirque Ziva where the eager desire to be impressed and wowed transforms into an almost routine expectation for the same. That moment happened sometime early on in the first act of the two-hour show that was presented Sunday night at the Walton Arts Center.

Many children were among the audience members lucky enough to catch this fantastic one-night showing of acrobatics presented by the Golden Dragon Acrobats. This troupe is so good that it was easy to quickly start taking their skillful acrobatics for granted as the show went on. But, in truth, they provided a high-energy evening of jaw-dropping, breathtaking acts that won’t soon be forgotten.

The Golden Dragon Acrobats, who hail from Cangzhou, in the Hebei province of China, have toured the United States regularly since 1978. Danny Chang, the group’s founder, producer and artistic director, is one of the world’s leading promoters of Chinese acrobatics. Cirque Ziva, created in 2011, is one of a series of theatrically elaborate shows created for specific U.S. markets. After a 10-week run at Asbury Park Boardwalk’s Paramount Theatre in New Jersey, this show toured across North America in 2103, and is now on its encore tour.

An important thing to remember about most of their stunts, an announcer reminded the crowd, is to not try them at home. But the thought was tempting, as the actors, athletes and artists employed familiar objects — such as umbrellas, balls, jump ropes, hats, vases and tables — in a variety of ways. The seeming ease and nearly flawless manner in which they approached and executed each trick made it easy to forget the many years of practice, and innate skill, it takes to do these feats.

So, once you recognized that you had no chance of doing most of these moves successfully yourself, you could just let this troupe overwhelm you with what they do best. Still, you could imagine placing yourself inside of a human-sized metal hoop and rolling that hoop around on a stage, while performing various stunts, as they did. You could also imagine fitting yourself in a regular-sized hula hoop to do the same.

For each segment of the show, they dressed in colorful costumes, very fitting to the flavor of the piece and the movements required of them. Traditional and contemporary music selections accompanied their movements — everything from drums to new-age music from Enigma and a bit of a guitar-heavy metal ballad.

Four women created a series of contortions and formed precarious poses, including forming a tower by layering their bodies in backbends. Another woman took a tiny chandelier made with water-filled shot glasses and kept it balanced on the foot she raised above her head, even while she rotated her body in concentric circles.

One man balanced himself on a board that sat atop a cylinder on a platform. He then proceeded to stomp one end of the board, catapulting a bowl from the other end of the board up and into a bowl already positioned on top of his head. Then, he flipped two more bowls at once, then three more, and then a can. His first attempt to flip a spoon into the can failed, but he succeeded with his next try.

For the hoop act, several men ran toward a vertical tower of hoops, leaping through them in a series of dives, forward and backward flips, and other moves. Five men lined up in handstands on one side of the hoop tower and collectively did the splits in the air, while another acrobat jumped through the hoop and over all of their legs.

With those hoops stacked six high, one man did a cartwheel and then propelled his body head first through the top hoop. He snagged the hoop, and the top portion of the tower fell away. But, he tried it again with success.

It was nice to see at least two examples of these performers making mistakes, but not being defeated by them. They tried again, and quickly got what they were looking for.

Another act, ball juggling, was dizzying and mesmerizing to watch. Five women laid on their backs with their feet in the air and balanced an orange ball on their feet. They eventually worked up to where they were each holding four balls — one with each hand and foot. Later, using stackable metal forms to make a tower, three girls positioned themselves in tiers on the tower, and they circulated the balls up one side of the tower and down the other.

For a particularly impressive stunt in the hat juggling act, one man threw his five hats diagonally out ahead of him and ran toward them to catch them as he juggled. Then, several members came out riding seatless unicycles, with one man leaping off of one unicycle, through the air over several guys lined up, and landing perfectly on the pedals of another unicycle. Also, two women jumped rope while on unicycles, and a man did two back flips with his feet clutching the pedals.

One of the more impressive parts of this constantly impressive night was the segment focused on diabolos — hourglass-shaped spools maneuvered using a string with two handles. The seeming effortlessness of this act is what made it so wonderful. Several women tossed the diabolos in the air and caught them, and they quickly tossed them back and forth between one another in various patterns.

So much of what these troupe members do involves careful precision and unbelievable balance — both of which keep them safe and make the timing with their partners work. If they wanted to make something more difficult or complicated, they just added some height to it and did it again.

A case in point is the man who performed the chair act. Atop a platform, he placed an upright wooden chair and then did a handstand. Then, he added a second chair — upside down, with the seats touching — and did another handstand. He added a third chair, with the chair legs touching, then added a fourth chair. In his handstand atop the fourth chair, his feet nearly touched the edge of the stage curtains.

Then, he paused, and the crowd asked for “more.” He didn’t add more chairs, he just made the feat more complicated. He positioned that top chair at various angles and did more handstands and other moves. His rock-solid balance as he changed positions while on that perch was simply perfect.

This show spoke to the playful, daredevil nature in all of us. And the array of stunts and skills exhibited by this troupe was nothing short of phenomenal.

“Cirque Ziva” was a one-night-only performance. For more information about productions at the Walton Arts Center, call (479) 443-5600 or visit the website at waltonartscenter.org.

The New York Times

DANCE REVIEW

Bending Backward, and More, to Please Golden Dragon Acrobats at Queens Theater

By BRIAN SEIBERT

Published: July 22, 2012

When the [Golden Dragon Acrobats](#) come to town, the wonders stack up. Cathedrals of contortionists in backbend rise before your eyes, body by body. Human obstacles, which tumblers flip over, widen in person-size increments. The thrill is escalation. These touring acrobats from China know how to keep topping themselves.

In the current two-hour production at [Queens Theater](#) there are also some less salutary causes for wonder. Why, for example, is the woman who balances pyramids of plastic wine glasses on her feet (Gao Ping) assisted by sinister monks in purple sequins? And why, above all, does the director, Danny Chang, think that the amazing skills of his company are enhanced by what sounds like world elevator music?

Fortunately the show's chintzy elements are offset not only by the performers' extraordinary abilities but also by their mostly self-effacing manners. If a man balancing on a board atop a roller fails at first to catch a spoon in the mug on his head, as Zhang Tian Jun did early in Friday night's performance — it happens to the best — he tries again. His calm inspires trust.

Some of the most breathtaking effects are relatively subtle. Notice the minute adjustments of aim made at the last instant by the men running through hoops. Marvel at the way, when approaching a small circle set progressively higher, they carefully regulate a string of flips so that the final release sends them through.

Still, overwhelming is overwhelming. In one number everyone rides wheels to which pedals are affixed. By the end a woman makes her wheel bounce, timing her hops to clear three jump-ropes — one that she is swinging, another being wielded by two wheel-riding friends who flank her, and yet a third rope outside that one.

At the Queens Theater all of the seats are close to the action. When women juggle umbrellas with their feet, the image is lovely and delicate. But when Hou Ya Nan juggles a table with her feet, you can feel the difference in weight of the spinning mass that could easily fly in your direction.

And when Mr. Zhang does a series of handstands atop a stack of chairs that eventually grows high enough that his toes can brush the zenith of the proscenium arch, the first few rows of the audience seem like a splash zone where more is risked than getting wet.

"One more?" Mr. Zhang asks, and everyone eggs him on except those directly below. Don't worry. He can be trusted.

Cirque Ziva Keeps Guests in Suspense

Acrobat show features challenging moves

By Marisa A. Sanfilippo :: July 19, 2011 :: ARTS

Bodies were tumbling, jumping through hoops, balancing on their hands, on others, and more at Cirque Ziva, an acrobat show of the Asian artists the Golden Dragon Acrobats.

This family friendly show that will run through July 30, can be seen at the Paramount Theatre in Asbury Park. Cirque Ziva entertains, delights and keeps guests in suspense.

The performances at the Paramount Theatre were created by impresario Danny Chang specifically for this venue.

Jeremy Chang, who spoke on behalf of Danny Chang, said "Danny's approach to the production was simple -- he wants to create a show that is eye catching and breath taking. In order to do so, the production was designed so that the audiences would not have time to relax between different acts. Danny wants the patrons to feel like the show is worth every penny they had spent."

The Golden Dragons are from Hebei, China and have been touring the world for the past 30 years. The majority of the Dragons on today's team are ages 17 through 22. The show features challenging acrobatic moves that the Dragons had to practice for years before being in a show, according to Dragon Lei Zhang of South Beijing.

"We had to take 6 years of training in school - music, dancing, acrobat, tumbling, handstands, etc. We went to acrobat school. Some people train for 10 years and still can not be in a show. The coaches work with us and direct us to where they think we would work best," said Zhang.

The show included plates that went spinning on heads and sticks, the Dragons jumping through hoops, climbing and balancing on one hand at 20 plus feet, tumbling through hoops, using an acrobat as a jump rope, and much more.

The show dazzled many in attendance.

"It was awesome! At one minute I thought they were going to break something," said Alicia Barina, Lakewood.

"My friend is getting married so we brought her here. We were sitting in the first row -- you can't beat that," said Barina.

With horror film like music and techno beats, the performances had viewers on the edge of their seats and in suspense. From every tumble and balance, the Dragons nailed their poses like perfectionists.

"Our goal is to continue delivering magnificent shows and touch the heart and mind of our viewers," said Chang.

Cirque Ziva Wows Audiences At The Paramount

Posted on: 07/08/2011, from Two River Times article on July 8, 2011

By Celia Belmonte

The critically acclaimed Golden Dragon Acrobats are astonishing audiences with Cirque Ziva, which has a limited engagement at the historic Paramount Theatre on the boardwalk in Asbury Park through July 31.

Direct from Hebei, China, the Golden Dragon Acrobats have been touring for 30 years, performing in all 50 states and 65 countries.

I attended the show on Tuesday night and can confirm its overwhelming praise.

One of the star performers, Cuixiao Ma, spoke with me before taking the stage. She casually lifted her leg straight up to her ear when describing her pre-show preparations. This was only a minor indication of what I was about to see. "The audience always says awesome, incredible," Ma said. "You will love it."

Ma was not wrong.

The performers were so strong, talented and made the most physically taxing and seemingly impossible stunts look effortless. For a majority of the time the acrobats wore ballet flats, but what they did in them is nothing you will ever see at the ballet.

The show began with a bang. The performers literally rolled on stage on what looked like hula hoops. However, instead of twisting these circles around their waists, their bodies rotated around inside them. They looked like Leonardo da Vinci's "Vitruvian Man" come to life.

"They do things with these props that I've never seen before," Erin Gaffney, 20, of Fair Haven said. "It's crazy."

Every act was so perfectly planned and designed, every maneuver so flawlessly timed and executed. The tiniest movement of the finger or toe could make or break the stunt; it was the performers' meticulousness, composure and control that were so alluring and unbelievable.

It's difficult to even articulate the contortionist act. The performer touched her head with her foot from behind her back, all while balancing a chandelier on the opposite foot. Can you even picture that? And that was before they came out with four more chandeliers...

Group choreography made the acrobats look like one multi-limbed organism. Their feats - like doing a handstand with one hand on someone else's head or riding a bike built for one with eight others - are things you'll never be able to try with your friends.

There was also an element of danger. Midway through one of the most astonishing acts, in which a performer was so high his feet brushed the tip of the ceiling curtain. A voice announced, "What you are about to see is extremely dangerous. Please do not try to attempt this in your own home." Yeah, right.

I looked for safety nets, hidden harnesses or springs on the floor, but found nothing. There was simply no limit to what these performers could and would do. I wondered if they ever dismissed a stunt idea because it seemed impossible. Then I realized that "impossible" was just not in their vocabulary.

The overwhelming reaction from the audience matched my amazement. Throughout the show I heard 'Oh my god,' several audible gasps, and even a few 'ouches.' The show was delightful for the eyes and quite laborious for the hands because you couldn't go two minutes without clapping.

Chris Drummond, 15, of Fair Haven came with his family, owners of Five Guys Burgers and Fries in Shrewsbury.

"It was so cool," Drummond said. "I didn't know it was possible to bend that way."

"It's amazing. I couldn't do that," said Emily Marcincavage, 10, from North Carolina, who saw the show with her grandfather.

Technical director Randy Williamson noted Cirque Ziva's family appeal. "I worked with Cirque du Soleil for eight years. But this show is more family orientated," Williamson said. "You can bring anyone five to 85."

Ma revealed that training starts between ages five and seven and at 26, she's considered old. "When you start out you do the fundamentals. A handstand for one hour is the very basics," Jeremy Chang, business development coordinator said. Cirque Ziva was designed just for Asbury Park, he added.

However, not enough people know about this gem. "I feel apologetic for the show and size of attendance. These performers put their heart and soul into it. Why it has not caught on in our area is a shame," Gerry Marcincavage, 67, of Wall said. "I know this isn't Broadway or Radio City [Music Hall] but it's local. Why not support the local theatre?"

Gaffney agreed. "It's something I would expect to see in New York City but was so surprised that it was half the price and so close to home."

I could go on about what I saw Tuesday night but there simply is not enough space or the right words to properly describe these acts. You really do have to see, and experience, Cirque Ziva for yourself.



'Cirque Ziva': Chinese acrobats perform amazing feats in Asbury Park

Published: Wednesday, July 06, 2011, 6:51 AM

By Peter Filichia/For The Star-Ledger

In addition to all the pretzels served on the beach at Asbury Park, a theatergoer can run into quite a few inside the nearby Paramount Theater.

Human pretzels, that is, courtesy of Cirque Ziva. The Golden Dragon Acrobats contort themselves into all sorts of twisted positions all in the name of entertainment.

One woman lifts her leg and balances a tiny chandelier on her foot as she coils herself into various positions. Soon she's adding four more mini-chandeliers, putting one on each limb and resting one on her forehead.

Another woman in this Chinese troupe sticks a long, thin rod in her mouth; that supports a thicker rod on which there's a ball. She is not to be confused with the woman who sticks one rod in her mouth and holds up three balls. To add to the fun, that performer spins two hoops on each arm while swiveling her pelvis so the hoop around her waist won't fall to the floor.

Five women position themselves on their backs and extend their legs up high before throwing soccer balls in the air which land atop their feet. One woman jumps rope while two swing it — except that instead of a rope, a person is swung around.

Men do well, too. One balances himself on a boogie board that's positioned over a ball. He has sherbet cups on the right edge of the board, and he forcefully stomps on the left so that each dish catapults and lands on his head. He does this six times, putting the metaphorical cherry on the top of the sundae by having a spoon land in the uppermost cup.

Each of seven men juggles three hats. No sooner does one land on a head than its owner is pulling it off so that a second later its replacement can take sole possession. The star of this sequence is the man who throws his hat in the air, then tumbles, and has it land on his head as soon as the tumble is done.

TRAINED BEASTS

Other men run and throw themselves through hoops, the way lions do. But seeing an animal do it is far more impressive, because we marvel at how the beasts had to be trained. With people, you say "Jump through the hoop" and you've already won half the battle.

To paraphrase what Holden Caulfield said in "The Catcher in the Rye," imagine someone endlessly practicing such gambits in order to master these skills. Nevertheless, the Golden Dragon Acrobats deliver what they promise. Those who look at a flight of stairs as if it's Kilimanjaro will be mightily impressed.

In a way, the show could be said to have choreography, because every move must be carefully planned or disaster will strike. Indeed, the cast takes enough chances to make a theater critic fear that after the show he won't be writing a review, but instead a news story on a tragic accident.

... read the full review at

http://www.nj.com/entertainment/arts/index.ssf/2011/07/cirque_ziva_chinese_acrobats_p.html

Presenter Comments

"In my twenty years of presenting, I have presented in my venues at least six different acrobatic troupes. The Golden Dragon Acrobats were by far the easiest to work with and highest quality I have seen so far."
-- Bill Fisher, Executive Director/Alberta Bair Theater (Billings, MT)

"The Dragons were fantastic and the audience loved them and I want to have them back."
-- David Asbell, Executive Director/Lobero Theater (Santa Barbara, CA)

"I couldn't have been happier with the quality of the show. Great performers. Great production values. Just spectacular." -- Jeff Brown/La Mirada Theater

"Everything went great!! We had a great crowd of about 3,700. Randy and the rest of the crew were great to work with! Have had nothing but positive feedback after the show. Thanks for working with us!!" -- Tim Danube, Student Union Director/University of Nebraska - Kearney

"The Golden Dragons were a tremendous success. They performed to the delight of all in attendance and brought to campus incite into the culture of China. In addition to the wonderful performance they were very gracious and a fine group to work with. Thanks for the heads up alerting me to bring them here." -- Ed Arnold, Director of Music and Fine Arts/Grove City College, Grove City, PA

Critical Comments

The New York Times

The Golden Dragon Acrobats have arrived....watch out Nutcracker!

NEW YORK POST

The 21-member company from Xian, China, delivers beautifully choreographed routines showcasing their amazing skills and physicality, accompanied by a musical score of traditional Chinese music filtered through a New Age sensibility. Juggling everything from umbrellas to soccer balls—and with props as varied as ladders and giant spinning wheels—the performers show just why they're world-famous.

nytheatre.com

All of the performers is consummate. Present, masterful, joyous, they communicate these ancient tricks as something brand new. And the powerful music, simple themes, and explosive choreography are about something that transcends culture—absolute joy in exploring the full potential of the human body.

AP Associated Press

Chinese Acrobats Offer Timeless Thrills! The impossible can be achieved, and once achieved surpassed, then surpassed again.

Newsday

The Cat in the Hat, with his cake on a rake, has nothing on the Golden Dragon Acrobats. Kids have every reason to love the Golden Dragons.