

# ALEGRÍA™

CIRQUE DU SOLEIL®



PRESS KIT

# OVERVIEW



*Alegría* is a classic *Cirque du Soleil*® production that has received international acclaim and wowed over 10 million people worldwide since it premiered in 1994 in Montreal. After 15 years performing under the big top, *Alegría* embarked on a new journey in May 2009 and is now presented in arenas throughout the United States and Canada.

A Spanish word for elation, joy and jubilation, *Alegría* features an international cast of 55 performers and musicians from 15 countries. *Alegría* has a baroque and operatic style with flamboyant costumes, original music performed live and an elaborate set that serves to enhance the astonishing spectacle of athleticism and artistry. The result is an impressive mix of skill, strength and speed combined with elegant, almost ethereal performances.

The 2½ hour spectacle (with intermission) showcases breathtaking acrobatics including the dramatically sensuous Synchro Trapeze and the high-energy Aerial High Bars where daring aerialists fly to catchers swinging more than 40 feet above the stage. Imagine two agile performers who bring alive the Mongolian art of contortion and artists manipulating flaming knives around their bodies in the rhythmic and dangerous Fire-Knife Dance.

The vibrancy of youth is alive in fast-paced Power Track, a brilliant display of synchronized choreography and tumbling on a trampoline system that is magically revealed under the stage floor. In Russian Bars, artists fly through the air with spectacular somersaults and mid-air twists, landing on 4-inch wide bars perched on the sturdy shoulders of the catchers.

*Alegría* is more than a show... it is an exciting and unique experience that will captivate all ages.



# ACTS



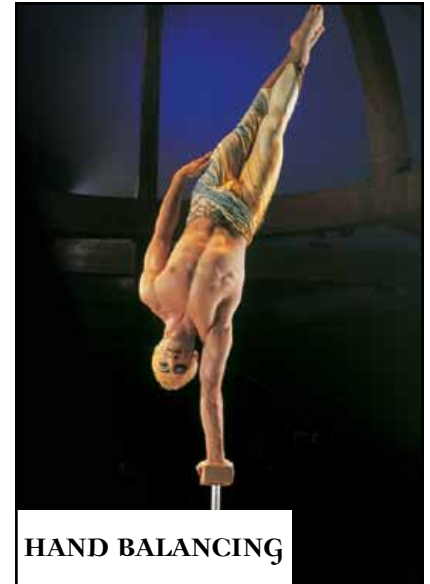
**SYNCHRONIZED  
TRAPEZE**

Youthful and free, the aerial duo swings in perfect sync as they complete mid-air twists and maneuvers. On their trapeze swings, these two artists defy gravity and create a remarkable harmony.



**POWER TRACK**

An ethereal group of performers soar in the air executing lively gymnastic and tumbling displays in unison and in counterpoint, reaching astounding heights and speeds on an elongated overlapping trampoline that magically appears from within the stage.



**HAND BALANCING**

Romantic and elegant, this act requires great strength and flexibility. Displaying impressive control, the artist balances on canes of various heights, slowly executing a series of astounding figures.



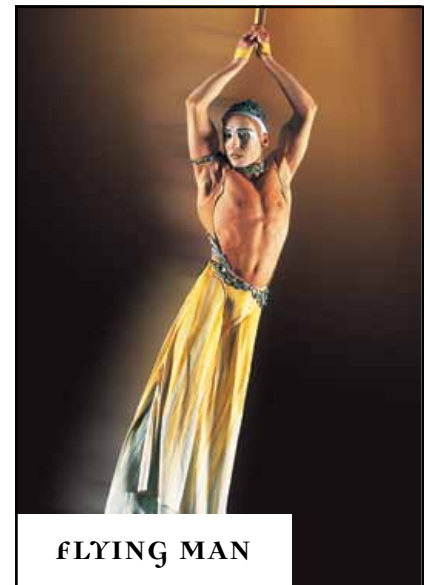
**FIRE-KNIFE  
DANCE**

Tribal and magical, this authentic ritual dance is performed with the pulsing rhythm of congo drums by artists weaving their baton-like fire knives around their bodies in a seductively dangerous dance.



**MANIPULATION**

This enchanting performer combines the artistry of rhythmic gymnastics, the flexibility of contortion and the grace of ballet into one act. Using silver hoops and beautiful silk ribbons, she dances and leaps across the stage.



**FLYING MAN**

This virtuoso defies gravity and explanation in his powerful and graceful performance. Combining the elasticity of the bungee with the power of the gymnastic rings, the artist soars through the air while performing acrobatic feats. His awe-inspiring performance is a combination of incredible skill, agility and strength.



**RUSSIAN BARS**

Amazing acrobatic flyers are thrust into the air from bars that are perched on the shoulders of powerful catchers. The sure-footed flyers perform multiple synchronized somersaults and mid-air twists at an unbelievable pace.



**CONTORTION**

These young but veteran performers bring the refined Mongolian art of contortion to life. They execute impressive and imaginative feats of extreme flexibility and balance. The fluid movements are masterful as they manipulate into extraordinary sculpted forms.



**AERIAL  
HIGH BARS**

Three high bars set more than 40 feet above the stage form the aerial playground for daring acrobats to fly to and from the arms of mighty catchers, suspended by their knees on a cradle swing. The astounding act culminates in an impressive plunge into the net.



**CYR WHEEL**  
(act in rotation)

Encircled within this large metal hoop, the artist propels the apparatus to create continuous movement with acrobatic flair. The simplicity of the Cyr wheel's line—a pure circle—sets off the intricate and energetic performance that relies on balance and control to create a seamless performance.

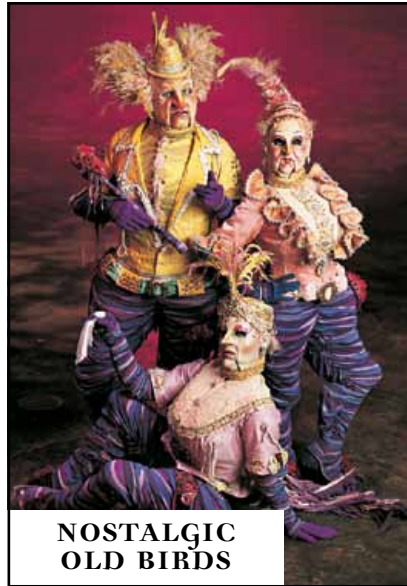


# CHARACTERS



**FLEUR**

Fleur, our guide through the world of *Alegría*, is unreliable, unearthly and unpredictable. Carrying his lighted staff, he parades around humoring the Old Birds who hover around him. He can appear fun loving, but the hunch-backed Fleur is jealous, petty and angry. He is rotten to the core, yet elegantly dressed in a red velvet coachman's jacket, black brimmed hat and jeweled vest that barely covers his protruding belly.



**NOSTALGIC  
OLD BIRDS**

The nostalgic Old Birds believe the idea that they are still young and beautiful and the future is still theirs. They admire their reflections in mirror-less frames but they are only empty shells, shadows of their former selves. They are the old aristocracy, still convinced of their power and beauty; but they are twisted, deformed and ugly. They wear fanciful hats and hide behind their flamboyant costumes covered with lace, jewels and embroidery.



**TAMIR**

Always available and ever helpful, Tamir is like a magical fairy who appears when he is needed, only to suddenly disappear when he has fulfilled his mission. Dressed in a distinctive gold coat, quilted white trousers and a bowler hat, his wide grin and sparkling eyes are windows into his generous soul.



**THE NYMPHS**

The Nymphs are youthful and ethereal. Their exuberance is infectious and their enchanting dance can melt the hardest of hearts. These gentle creatures exude sensuality and beauty as they glide across the stage.



**THE WHITE  
SINGER**

The White Singer is the storyteller who echoes in song everything she sees around her. She sings of melancholy and despair, of joy and happiness. Her luminous white gown is exquisite and she moves like a delicate porcelain doll in a jewelry box.



**THE BLACK  
SINGER**

The Black Singer is the White Singer's alter ego. While she too expresses in song the atmosphere of *Alegría*, there is wickedness about her. In her elegant black dress, which mirrors that of the White Singer, she hides many secrets in her dark heart.

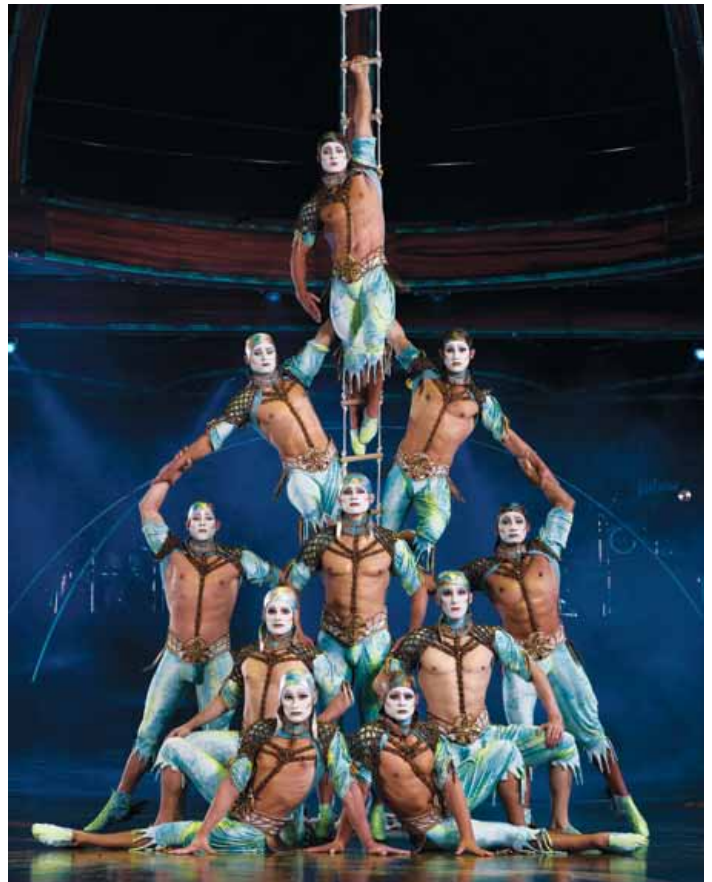
# COSTUMES

The lavish costumes for the characters representing the Old Order—Fleur, the Old Birds and the Singers—are made from richly-colored fabrics which are painstakingly hand-detailed with lace, feathers and sequins. They evoke the flamboyant costumes worn by the aristocracy at Versailles and other European palaces of the period.

The costumes for the New Order—the gold-clad Bronx, Nymphs and Angels—reflect the same rich tones, with less decoration, but more luminous for these young creatures. The materials are lighter and emphasize the agile bodies of these characters who will take control of the future.

## FACTS

- *Alegría* has over 400 costume pieces including custom-made shoes, wigs, hats and accessories.
- The costumes are produced in Montreal at the *Cirque du Soleil* International Headquarters where over 300 artisans are employed in the costume workshops.
- Lycra is one of the most-used fabrics for the costumes because it is flexible and comfortable for the artists and is easy to care for.
- It takes approximately 200 hours to create one Old Bird costume.
- Each of the singers' costumes includes more than 200 hand-sewn jewels.
- The *Alegría* wardrobe team includes 4 permanent touring staff and 2 or 3 local wardrobe employees in each city. They are responsible to maintain and repair all costumes.
- The *Alegría* tour travels with washers and dryers to make it easy for the wardrobe staff to clean and maintain the costumes.



# MUSIC

The lively and emotional musical score moves between jazz, pop, tango and klezmer. The band evokes the sound of traveling minstrels by using acoustic instruments, including an accordion, as well as the gravelly and genuine voice of the street. But in counterpoint the synthesizer arrangements also reflect the change that is imminent. The *Alegría* soundtrack is the best-selling *Cirque du Soleil* album to date.



# SET DESIGN

Topped with a giant dome and decorated with stylistic columns and balustrades, the *Alegría* set is an imposing monument. The structure does not represent any specific building, but the dome shape is an architectural symbol of many powerful institutions, such as churches and government buildings.

Spiral ramps on both sides of the stage lead downwards, symbolizing the unknown. The stage floor is dappled with splotches of impressionistic color and light. On the floor, one can discern the head of a salamander, which lives in all four elements. The lighting is designed to reflect a nostalgic atmosphere, like that of a 17<sup>th</sup> century ballroom. The autumnal tones create the luminous obscurity of the show.



# CREATORS



**GUY LALIBERTÉ**

**GUIDE AND FOUNDER**



**FRANCO DRAGONE**

**DIRECTOR**



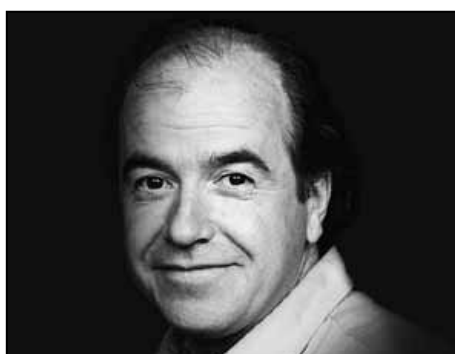
**GILLES STE-CROIX**

**DIRECTOR OF CREATION**



**DOMINIQUE LEMIEUX**

**COSTUME DESIGNER**



**MICHEL CRÊTE**

**SET DESIGNER**



**DEBRA BROWN**

**CHOREOGRAPHER**



**RÉNÉ DUPÉRÉ**

**COMPOSER**



**LUC LAFORTUNE**

**LIGHTING DESIGNER**

# AT A GLANCE

From a group of 20 street performers at its beginnings in 1984, *Cirque du Soleil* is a major Quebec-based organization providing high-quality artistic entertainment. The company has 5,000 employees, including more than 1,300 artists from close to 50 different countries.

*Cirque du Soleil* has brought wonder and delight to more than 100 million spectators in more than 300 cities in over forty countries on six continents. *Cirque du Soleil* International Headquarters are in Montréal, Canada. The company has received such prestigious awards as the Emmy, Drama Desk, Bambi, ACE, Gêmeaux, Félix, and Rose d'Or de Montreux.

For more information about *Cirque du Soleil*, visit [www.cirquedusoleil.com](http://www.cirquedusoleil.com)

## THE MISSION

The mission of *Cirque du Soleil* is to invoke the imagination, provoke the senses and evoke the emotions of people around the world.

## THE CREATION OF CIRQUE DU SOLEIL

It all started in Baie-Saint-Paul, a small town near Québec City in Canada. There, in the early eighties, a band of colourful characters roamed the streets, striding on stilts, juggling, dancing, breathing fire, and playing music. They were *Les Échassiers de Baie-Saint-Paul* (the Baie-Saint-Paul Stiltwalkers), a street theatre group founded by Gilles Ste-Croix. Already, the townsfolk were impressed and intrigued by the young performers—including Guy Laliberté who founded *Cirque du Soleil*.

The troupe went on to found *Le Club des talons hauts* (the High Heels Club), and then, in 1982, organized *La Fête foraine de Baie-Saint-Paul*, a cultural event in which street performers from all over met to exchange ideas and enliven the streets of the town for a few days. *La Fête foraine* was repeated in 1983 and 1984. *Le Club des talons hauts* attracted notice, and Guy Laliberté, Gilles Ste-Croix and their cronies began to cherish a crazy dream: to create a Quebec circus and take the troupe travelling around the world.

In 1984, Québec City was celebrating the 450<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Canada's discovery by Jacques Cartier, and they needed a show that would carry the festivities out across the province. Guy Laliberté presented a proposal for a show called *Cirque du Soleil* (Circus of the Sun), and succeeded in convincing the organizers. And *Cirque du Soleil* hasn't stopped since!

## CIRQUE DU SOLEIL®

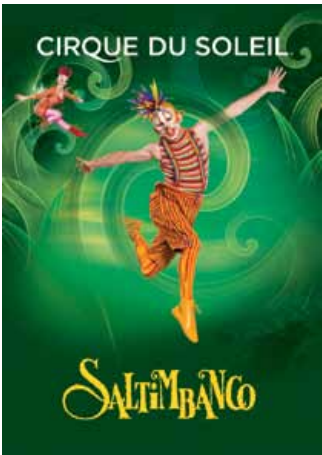


## A FEW STATISTICS

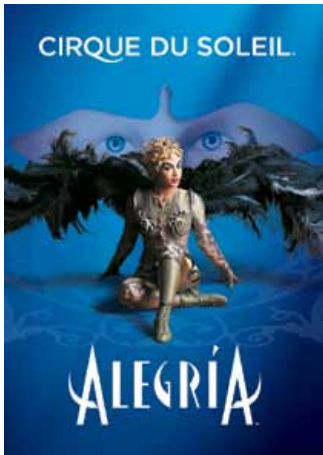
- In 1984, 73 people worked for *Cirque du Soleil*. Today, the business has 5,000 employees worldwide, including more than 1,300 artists.
- At the Montréal International Headquarters alone, there are close to 2,000 employees.
- More than 100 types of occupations can be found at *Cirque du Soleil*.
- The average age of employees is 37.
- The company's employees and artists represent close to 50 nationalities and speak 25 different languages.
- More than 100 million spectators have seen a *Cirque du Soleil* show since 1984.
- Close to 15 million people will see a *Cirque du Soleil* show in 2012.
- *Cirque du Soleil* hasn't received any grants from the public or private sectors since 1992.

TOURING SHOWS IN ARENAS

In 2012, *Cirque du Soleil* will present 22 different shows around the world.



Europe



Europe

TOURING SHOWS UNDER THE BIG TOP



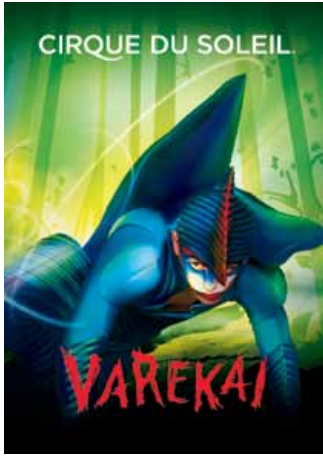
North America



North America



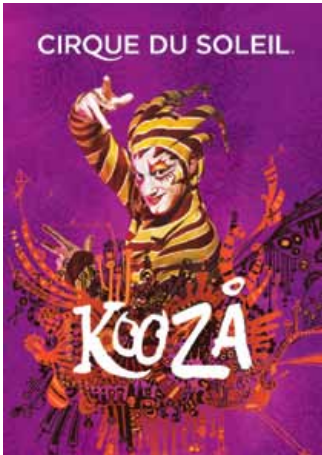
North America



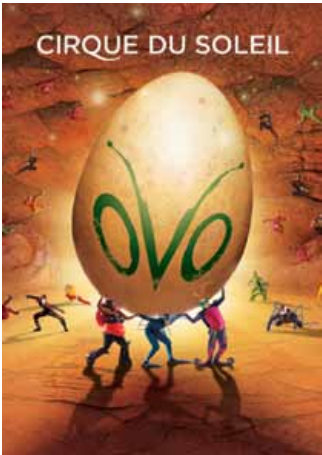
South America



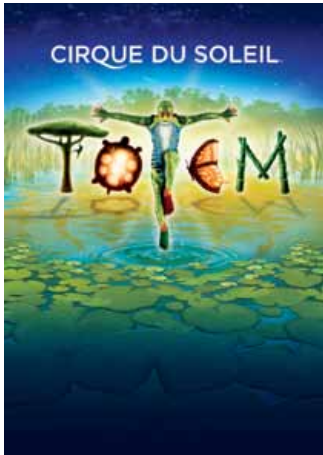
Europe



Japan



North America/Mexico

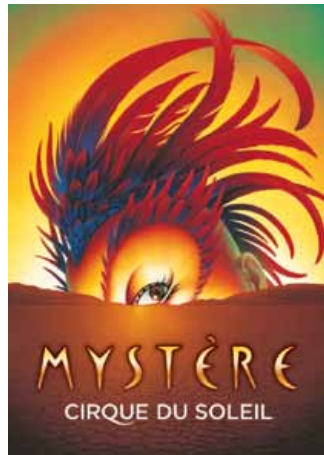


North America

**RESIDENT SHOWS**



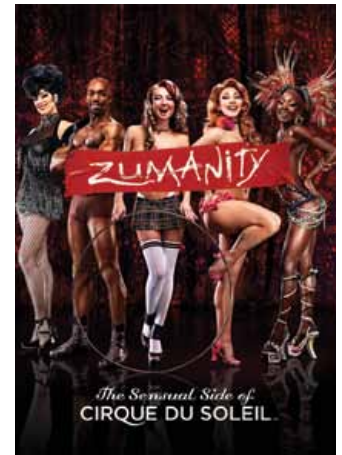
North America



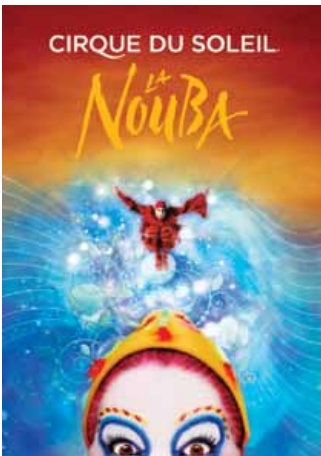
Treasure Island  
in Las Vegas



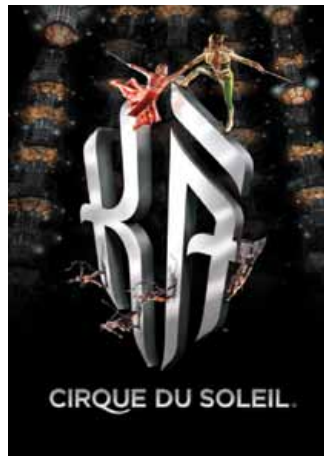
Bellagio  
in Las Vegas



New York-New York  
Hotel & Casino  
in Las Vegas



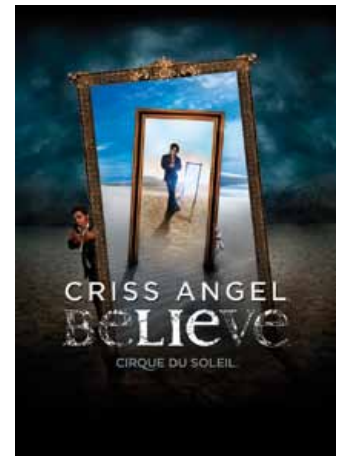
Walt Disney World® Resort  
in Orlando, Florida



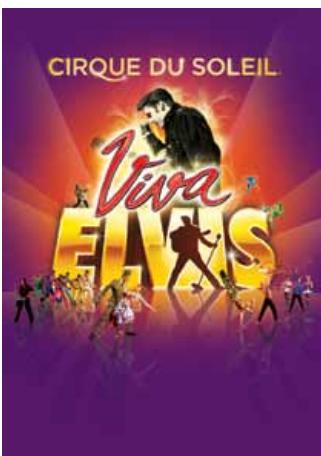
MGM Grand  
in Las Vegas



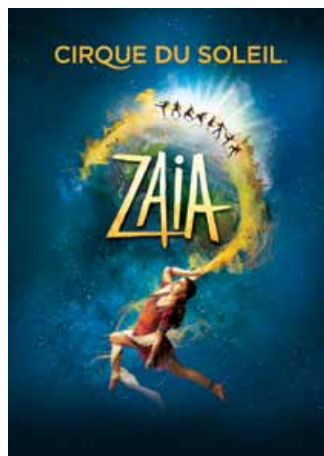
The Mirage  
in Las Vegas



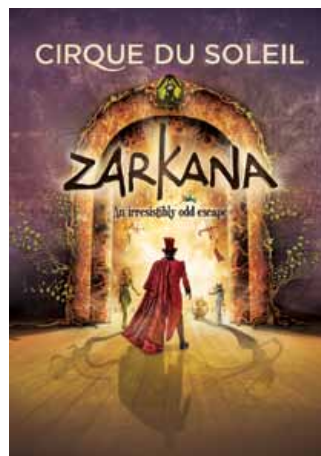
Ⓟ Luxor  
in Las Vegas



ARIA Resort & Casino  
at CityCenter,  
in Las Vegas



The Venetian  
Macao-Resort-Hotel  
in Macau SAR, China



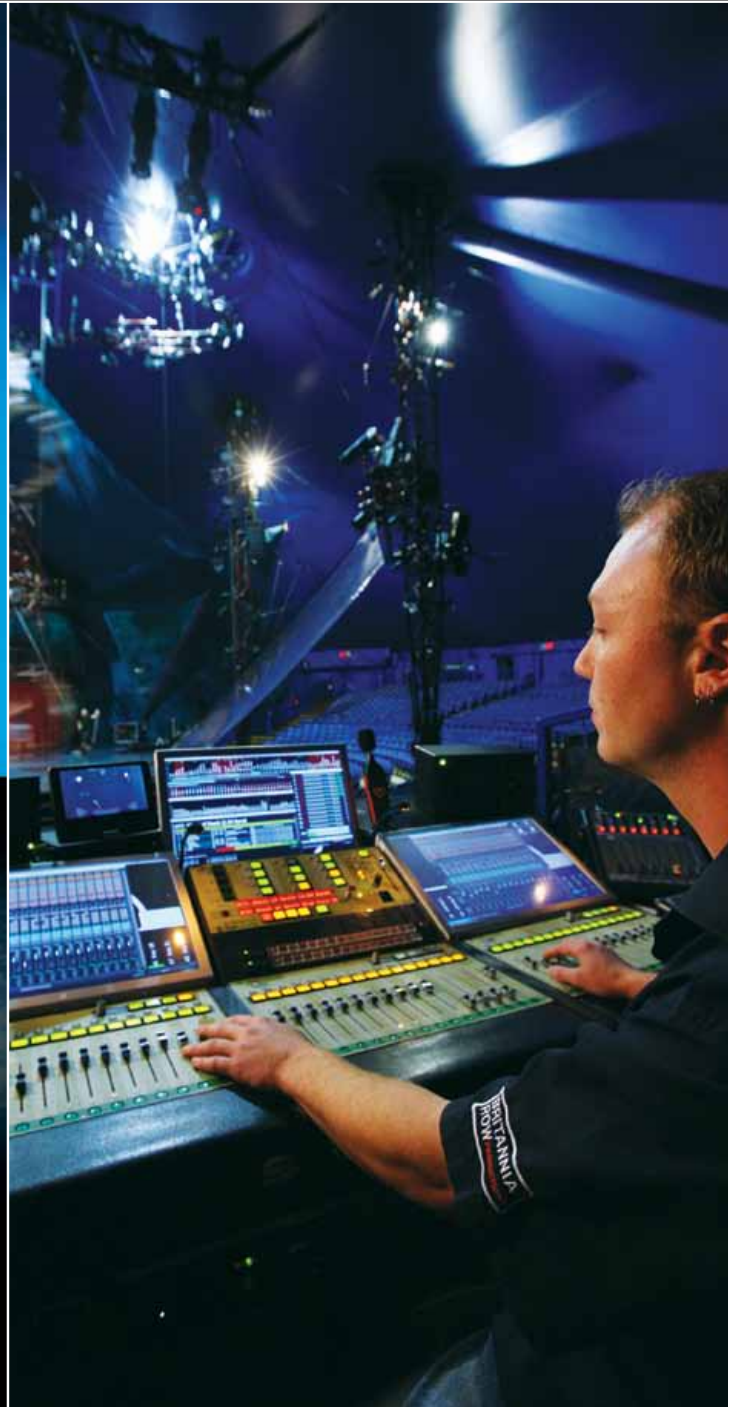
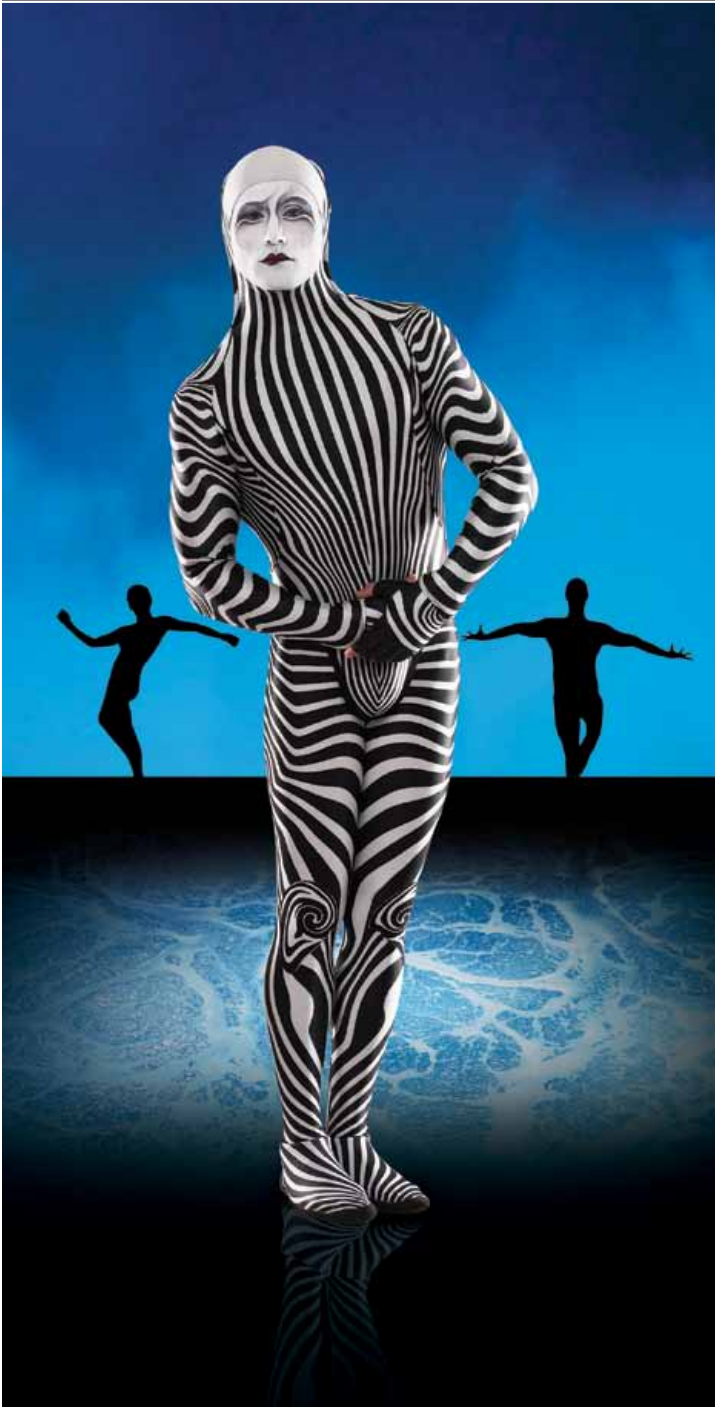
Radio City Music Hall  
in New York City



Los Angeles



# ON STAGE OR BACKSTAGE



IT'S YOUR TURN TO BE PART OF THE SHOW

[CIRQUEDUSOLEIL.COM/JOBS](http://CIRQUEDUSOLEIL.COM/JOBS)

