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By Edwin P. Sallan, InterAksyon.com
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A trapeze artist performs as part of 'Le Grand Cirque' at the Smart Araneta Coliseum. (Photo by Yummie Dingding/InterAksyon)

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Aside from the ongoing Metro Manila Film Festival, there are also several live entertainment options that the whole family can enjoy.

One of them is “Le Grand Cirque” which will run at the Smart Araneta Coliseum until January 3. A large-scale touring circus production that has been touring all around the world for the last 15 years, the show is described by producer Graham King as “about what the human body can achieve and how it can push boundaries to the next level.”

Dubbed as “magical, mind-blowing and spellbinding,” King recently told InterAksyon that the show features “breathtaking stunts and performances of contortionists, aerialists, gymnasts, and acrobats in colorful costumes.”

“We have the best circus acts in the world. We have amazing performers from China, America, Russia, Ukraine, England and Australia. Some of them have reached the semifinals of ‘America’s Got Talent’ but all of them are at the top of their game and the best of the best,” King further revealed.

King said among the highlights of the show include the amazing Diabolo masters who have mastered the tossing of diabolo tops resembling that of a giant yo-yo; and the precise Foot Jugglers on Drums.

“We have a contortionist who balances five lit candelabras. The things she can do with the actual flames from those candelabras are simply amazing. We have a Strongman act where one guy is balancing over the head of another. And we also have one of the world’s best fire dancers who struts with a big burst of flames at the end of the show,” he added.



An acrobat performs as 'Le Grand Cirque' at the Smart Araneta Coliseum. (Photo by Yummie Dingding/InterAksyon)

As most of these stunts took a lot of work to perfect and should never be tried at home by anyone who is not trained to do it, King says the health and safety of the performers is their primary concern.

“The health and safety of our performers is our number one priority. We tour with a huge amount of crew. Over 50 of us came here which consists of our large cast and equally large crew in the background.

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Everything is tested before each show and even during the show, various checks that you don't see are being done backstage. We make sure that everything is one hundred percent safe."

Like most modern circus acts, "Le Grand Cirque" no longer includes animals as King shares the prevailing sentiments of people who believe "animals should be preserved and not used for entertainment."

That doesn't mean, however, that "Le Grand Cirque" have done away with what many kids consider the most important performer of any circus: the clown.

"Yes, we have one of the best clowns there is out there. He is a physical comedian who links the show with the audience. He even falls in love with a member of the audience. His presence is guaranteed to get the entire arena up and dancing and having fun," King promised.

The clown, who happens to be an American named Ross Steeves, is so far having fun with the Manila crowd and has gone as far as calling Filipinos, "the best audience ever."



A clown and (right) a fire dancer perform as part of 'Le Grand Cirque' at the Smart Araneta Coliseum. (Fire dancer photo by Yummie Dingding/InterAksyon)

Asked how difficult it is for the performers to be away from their families during Christmas, King says it is not as hard as people may think.

"We love what we do and we love being here in the Philippines. It is a privilege that we get to entertain people. Not too many people are aware of it but a lot of our performers and crew in the show are actually related like the strong men are actually brothers. We also have a husband and wife who work together in one act. There is so much trust involved in the show," he declared.

For ticket information on "Le Grand Cirque," visit www.ticketnet.com.ph.

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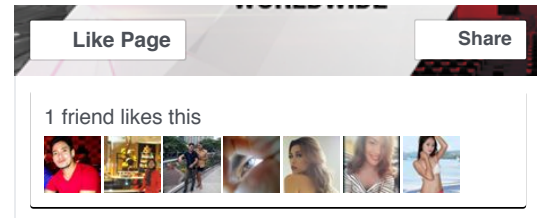
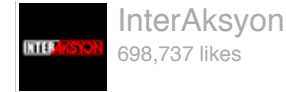
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