



Wild, weird world: Saltimbanco's like no circus act you've ever seen

By Naples Daily News staff report

Tuesday, May 19, 2009

Have you seen Saltimbanco? What's the best part? Send a review to [CLICK HERE ... features@naplesnews.com](mailto:features@naplesnews.com).

In Italian, it doesn't sound like much: Saltimbanco, taken from the phrase "saltare in banco."

Translated, literally, it means "to jump on a bench." But in the case of Cirque du Soleil and its legendary performances, it's a whole lot more than that.

The troupe's Web site calls Saltimbanco "a Cirque du Soleil signature show inspired by the urban fabric of the metropolis and its colorful inhabitants. Decidedly baroque in its visual vocabulary, the show's eclectic cast of characters draws spectators into a fanciful, dreamlike world, an imaginary city where diversity is a cause for hope."

But, still, it's more than that. It's an acrobatic spectacle on steroids.

Cirque du Soleil is bringing its Saltimbanco Arena Tour to the Germain Arena for a limited engagement — from July 8-12.

The world premiere of Saltimbanco was held in Montreal on April 23, 1992, and it featured a cast of 36 performers. During its 14-year tour under the big top, the show has visited 75 cities on five continents, for a total of more than 4,000 performances before a combined audience of 10 million people.

The new tour allows Cirque du Soleil to bring its shows to additional cities, like Estero, giving more people than ever the opportunity to enjoy a Cirque du Soleil show in their own town.

Here are some highlights from a review written by Chris Welch and posted on www.al.com, after an April Saltimbanco show in Huntsville, Ala.:

n The Chinese Poles featuring 26 multi-colored, monkey/acrobats looked like something out of "Planet of the Apes" as the acrobats jumped, crawled and slid all over the poles in an amazing display of agility and talent.

n The clowns are hilarious, doing a lot of skits you might not see in a typical circus. They also like audience participation, so it might be worth a few extra bucks to sit close.

n You swingers should like this: the Russian Swing catapults characters up to 30 feet in the air onto the ground or their partners' shoulders.

n There's also great juggling, a duo trapeze, performers on bungees who swing, drop and fly up to a trapeze bar, and even eye candy for the women, with two muscular, shirtless men pushing their bodies to the limit.

See what we mean?

Tickets are now on sale at www.cirquedusoleil.com or by calling (239) 334-3309. Prices range from \$35-\$90 for adults and \$28-\$72 for children (12 and under).

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