

Cirque Mei

Saturday, September 21, 2019; 2 & 7:30 pm

Sunday, September 22, 2019; 2 pm

**Columbia Artists Presents
Cirque Mei
Producer: Tim Fox**



Elite Circus Artists and Acrobats from the Hebei Province, China

ABOUT

From The People's Republic of China, Hebei Province, Cirque Mei features traditional and contemporary Chinese circus acts in a colorful and lively celebration of the internationally renowned Chinese circus arts.

The performance, featuring a company of 40 elite circus artists and acrobats, includes many of the most popular Chinese circus routines including Hoops Diving, Lion Dance, Collective Bicycle Skills, Flying Meteors, Foot Juggling with Umbrellas, Female Contortion, and Ladder Balancing Act.

The troupe was founded in 1976 and supports a community of over 130 circus performers who tour throughout China and the world.

PROGRAM

1. Opening: *Balancing Skills on Ladder and the Charming of Peking Opera*

The Chinese acrobatic balancing act requires solid basic techniques. This program adopts the traditional Chinese Peking opera elements which provide the reference of character roles, such as the strong and powerful image Wusheng (a man with martial skills, or a warrior), the slim and slender image of Qingyi (a woman with a strict moral code) and Huadan (a vivacious woman). Their footwork (theatrical stage walk) and sleeve dance will also impress the audience. The base artist balances the ladder, with 2 layers on his shoulder, and a vase on the head of the top artist. The 3 artists will jump stairs and do a series of difficult tricks together. The Act won the Silver Lion Prize at the 15th China Wujiao Int'l Circus Festival in 2015 and the Silver Elephant Prize at the 6th Spanish Figueres Int'l Circus Festival in 2017.

Performers: *Miao Deyu, Yang Meixu, and others*

2. Solo Pole

With the rhythm of music, the artist does a series of difficult hand-balancing tricks on the pole. The act presents the combination of strength and beauty.

Performer: *Zhang Zihao*

3. Diabolo Girls

This is a very Chinese performance. The audience will be pleased by the lovely girls who play diabolos with light and graceful gestures accompanied by the bright rhythm of background music.

Performers: *Gao Yurong, Yang Meixu, Pan Yuanyuan, and others*

4. Hats Juggling in Rhythm

With the Jazz-melody music, the artists juggle with straw hats with throwing tricks, especially doing tricks on the human-pyramid-building.

Performers: *Liu Leilei, Wang Hao, and others*

5. Umbrellas - Foot Juggling Girls

It rains in mist and the breeze animates the bamboo leaves. There is a bridge with flowing water and a house in the distance. What a Southern China's landscape painting! With an umbrella in hand, a group of graceful and charming Southern China girls dance on the stage. Their nimble feet spin the umbrellas skillfully and steadily. The act won the Gold Lion Prize at the 11th China Wujiao Int'l Circus Festival in 2007, the Silver Prize at the 29th French Cirque de Demain Festival in 2008 and the Bronze Prize at the 11th Italian Latina Int'l Circus Festival in 2009.

Performer: *Liu Dan, Chang Qing, Cao Meizhuo, and others*

6. Hoop-diving

The talented boys stand in no fear of difficulty, defy hardship and danger, and have the courage to challenge. They do different tricks of back handspring, backward somersault, full turn, double layout and etc. until a boy passing through a 6-layer-hoop as the final trick. The act won the Silver Lion Prize at the 8th China Wujiao Int'l Circus Festival in 2001, the Gold Prize at the 4th Hungry Budapest Int'l Circus Festival in 2008 and the Gold Prize at the 24th French Cirque de Demain Festival in 2003.

Performers: *Wang Hao, Wang Xisen, Zhao Wenquan, and others*

Intermission

1. Lion Dance

The Lion Dance is one of the most widely spread folk dance in China. Lion is the king of animals. In Chinese tradition, lion is regarded as a mascot which can bring good luck and happiness. All the acrobatic artists come from Hebei province which is named as the hometown of the Lion Dance. By the high-skilled movements, the strong lions vividly show their majestic-looking image and figure on the stage. It was an awarded act at China National Acrobatic Festival and China Wujiao Int'l Circus Festival.

Performers: *Li Ming, Liu Liangliang, and others*

2. Plates Spinning and Ballet on Shoulders

Holding plates with poles of 3-foot-long and thin as pencils, a group of girls spin plates with light and graceful dance, and perform variety of tricks, movements and poses. Ballet on Shoulder is a good combination of the Chinese acrobatic art and the Western art element — Ballet.

Performers: *Yang Xuan, Du Jingru*

3. Happy Chef

The comic and humorous chef and waiter have a tacit cooperation with each other. They do the juggling tricks with pans, ladles and plates, presenting their sensational and outstanding skills.

Performers: *Xu Qingjun, Wang Jiahao*

4. Foot Juggling with Jars and Tables

Each Chinese acrobatic artist has his/her own special skills. By their feet, two skillful girls doing the spinning, passing, tossing and catching tricks with tables and big jars smoothly and steadily.

Performers: *Liu Lingling, Cui Chengshan*

5. Flying Meteors

Dancing and moving swiftly with enthusiasm and energy, each of the artists spins the meteors tied to both ends of a rope and throws them up in the air and catches. The act amazes the audience like seeing the meteors in the night sky. It is an awarded act at China Wuhan Int'l Circus Festival, Monte Carlo Young Acrobats' Festival and Hungry Budapest Int'l Circus Festival.

Performers: *Wang Xisen, Wang Hao, and others*

6. Adagio Duo

The two boys perform the act with amazing physical acrobatic tricks.

Performers: *Wang Zhiqiang, Liu Jinsheng*

7. Bicycle Girls

A group of girls in red costume, ride bicycles on the stage, as swift as swallows. They do tricks on two bicycles or on several bicycles. The climax will be the lotus-blooming pose and the peacock-flaunting-its-tail pose on one bicycle. It will bring good memories to all of the audience. In 2017, it won the Gold Chrysanthemum Prize at the 10th China National Acrobatic Festival and the Honorary Gold Lion Prize at the 16th China Wujiao Int'l Circus Festival.

Performers: *Yang Meixu, Yao Jiawen, and others*

8. Finale: All Artists

Back up act for rotation:

1. Contortion Girls

The act is gracefully created and choreographed. The girls show the audience the beautiful and elegant images of sculptures with their flexible skills.

Performers: *Liu Xinyi, Yangxuan, and others*