

## Budget Restraints Don't Hold Back `Circus' Fun

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By Nancy Maes. Special to the Tribune.

"The Flying Griffin Circus" is like the Cirque du Soleil on a shoestring, a Fellini movie on a small [budget](#).

But what it lacks in extravagant sets and costumes and big name stars, it makes up for with heart and humor and a troupe of talented professionals from The [Actors](#) Gymnasium in Evanston.

The [cast](#) includes a forlorn white-faced clown who falls in love with a beautiful young woman who is always just beyond his reach as she does spectacular acrobatic feats far above him. The Bumblini Brothers push the stereotype of macho Italian men to the extreme with exaggerated accents and gestures of bravado, even though they admit that their bumbling performance is "under-rehearsed." A life-size puppet who doesn't have a head--but does have a mind of his own--tries to wrest control of the act away from the puppeteer.

But the show ends on a joyous note as most of the members of this delightfully dysfunctional group of friends perform some [precision](#) acrobatics using numerous jump ropes. But one of the Bumblini Brothers upstages them all with his own idea of what a grand finale should be.

After they've seen the show, kids who feel like they would like to run away and join the circus don't have to go far, because the Actors Gymnasium gives [classes](#) in the circus arts for children.

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"The Flying Griffin Circus" runs through Nov. 26 at The Actors Gymnasium, 927 Noyes St., Evanston; \$10. Call 847-328-2795 for more information.