

Circus in Progress, An Evening of Daring New Work Review - Aerial Acts and Much More

By [Debra Davy](#)

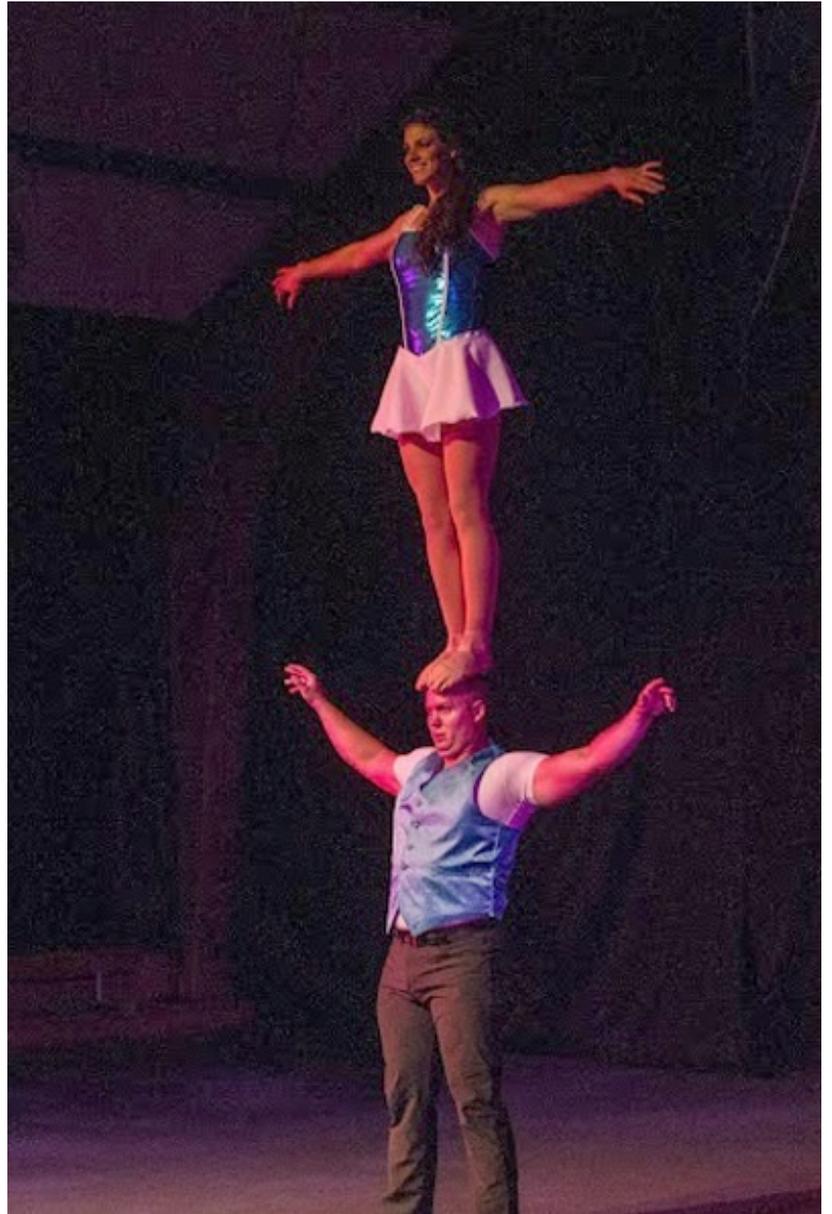
The Evanston Actors Gymnasium Circus Performing Arts School at 927 Noyes St, Evanston hosted "Circus in Progress, An Evening of Daring New Work" on Saturday, May 30, 2015. The 90-minute program showcased 14 special events featuring the faculty, alumni and students from the school as well as performers from the **New England Center for Circus Arts**, **Benjamin Barnes Magic**, **Foster Dance Studios**, **Theatre Zarko**, and **Gamma Phi Circus**. Aerial acts predominated, but the show also featured modern and jazz dance, juggling, song, card tricks, mime, unicycles and a life- size puppet.



"Special duet"

"Headstand"

The acts were varied, and included a wide range of training levels, demonstrating the full range of possibilities of this programs dedication to excellence not just in circus and aerial art, but also in the full range of “physical theatre art”. All of the acts were engaging, many were enthralling, , and some were absolutely breathtaking, but they all were tied together by a common link...the multiplicity of skills ! In the early days of Hollywood, actors and actresses all used to be able to sing and dance, and today we are used to seeing highly developed muscles on dancers, but this show featured a ballerina miming to her partner while stepping over bowling pins on a table during a Pas de Deux.! Where else could one see a modern dancer contorting AND juggling? The mime-unicyclist later showed up on the rings, a duet was performed spectacularly on the trapeze, and a young aerialist contorted one- handed with straps while miming to French music! All of the dance performance was spectacular, and special mention must be made of “Heresay”, starring **Nicole Salerno**, choreographed by **Ronn Stewart**, and along with Nicole Salerno, this was a lovely and uplifting piece of modern ballet.





"upside down"

There was juggling throughout, mostly masterful and always suspenseful, including and starring **Tommy Tomlinson** of the Actors Gymnasium Faculty. The show featured a plethora of aerial acts (as one would expect), without a net, and centering on rope use, including the truly spectacular "les Deux" on Trapeze starring **Paul Bozek** and **Becka Colon**, from Gamma Phi Circus. "Silk Knot Duet" a touching mother-daughter act starred intermediate class aerialist and Board of Directors Vice President **Jennifer Breen** with her Una; Breen never took her eyes off the young performer, while both of their hands and feet were busily entwined in the ropes.!



"Balance"

The zenith, if not the finale of the show was “Group Silk Knot”, performed by the Actors Gymnasium intermediate Aerial Class (Instructor: **Jill Heyser**). This maypole-reminiscent spectacle of entwining bodies and LONG silken cords featured 6 women and one man in couples and singly twirling, tumbling, .twisting and depending about in seemingly effortless gymnastic feats.



"Trapeze"



"The jump in air"

The last piece starred the virtuoso **Eric Allen** whose miraculous aerial work brought down the house.

The [Actors Gymnasium website](#) has more information

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Photo credit Cole Simon