

Circus promises really big feats - 'Dream' should leave Evanston audiences awestruck and amused

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It's circus time! The family-friendly "Dream: A Circus in One Act" is under way at the Actors Gymnasium at the Noyes Cultural Arts Center in Evanston.

Flights through the air, daring feats of skill, physical comedy and live music are all part of the show, which continues through May 17 with performances Fridays through Sundays. The one-hour circus bonanza will feature a cast of 20 performers, including children and teens from the Actors Gymnasium, a circus and performing arts school.

"The entire show is based on dreams in one form or another," said Sylvia Hernandez-DiStasi, co-artistic director of the Actors Gymnasium. "We'll have nonstop entertainment with everything from aerial feats, gymnastics and contortionists to clowns, hand balancers and unicyclists."

The dream sequences include stuffed animals and dolls coming to life, being caught in your underwear and a knock on the door with nobody there. All the acts are original pieces developed by the cast.

"This show is definitely for families, and we'll have something for everyone to enjoy. I think we're at a time in our community where people need to get away and go see a show that feels good, nothing too heavy. Just something to take the family to have a good time and laugh afterward," Hernandez-DiStasi said. "It's a show where people can lighten up a little and see something non-violent."

The circus features the Actors Gymnasium's Elite Teen Circus Ensemble and Lauren Hirte from the Lookingglass Theatre Company. It also will debut original music by Greg Hirte. Actors Gymnasium co-artistic director Larry DiStasi will direct, with Hernandez-DiStasi choreographing.

Show times are 7:30 p.m. Fridays, 4:30 and 7:30 p.m. Saturday and 2:30 p.m. Sunday. Tickets are \$20 for adults and \$10 for kids.

The cultural center is at 927 Noyes in the northern suburb. For tickets or details, call (847) 328-2795 or visit www.actorsgymnasium.com.

Caption: Color Photo: Will Howard (left) and Paul Lopez are among the performers in "Dream: a Circus in One Act," which runs through May 17.;

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