

Outstanding acrobatics, circus skills coming to Evanston

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We won't reveal how it happens -- don't want to spoil the surprise -- but an usher is transported to the magical world of the circus in "Dream: A Circus in One Act." The Actors Gymnasium presents the family show at 7:30 p.m. Fridays, 4:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Saturdays, and 2:30 p.m. Sundays, through May 17, at Noyes Cultural Art Center, 927 Noyes St., Evanston.

Once the circus begins, the usher and the audience view a diverse range of breathtaking aerial and ground acrobatics, plus many other circus skills, performed by a 20-member cast. That includes five professional circus performers, among them Lauren Hirte, best known for playing the title character in "Lookingglass Alice" at Lookingglass Theatre.

The 12-member Actors Gymnasium Teen Circus Ensemble is also featured. Director Larry DiStasi noted that some ensemble members have been studying at The Actors Gymnasium for as long as 10 years. Three young children, also well schooled in the circus arts, complete the cast. "They play music, do clowning and acrobatics and follow the through-line of the entire show," DiStasi said.

Tickets are \$10-\$20 from www.brownpapertickets.com.

For details, call (800) 838-3006.

Magic meets dance

Illusions by magician Bob Kadera are interwoven through "Metamorphoses," Balle Entre Nous' Mother's Day weekend concerts, 2 p.m. Saturday, May 9, and Sunday, May 10, at Winnetka Community House, 620 Lincoln, Winnetka. Complimentary baked goods will be served or bring refreshments. Tickets are \$15 for general cabaret seating.

For details, call (847) 446-0537.

Unforgettable journey

Sixty shadow puppets lead audiences nearly halfway around the world in "A King's Journey," by Germany's Theater Handgemenge, as part of the Chicago Humanities Festival. Show for ages 8 through adults is at Northwestern University's Josephine Louis Theater, 20 Arts Circle Drive, Evanston, May 9-14. Performances are 2 p.m. Saturday, 5 p.m. Sunday, 10 a.m. Monday-Thursday, plus 7 p.m. Wednesday. Advance tickets are \$10 for adults, \$5 children, \$2 more at the door.

For details, call (312) 494-9509 or see www.chfestival.org.

Red all about it

Clifford will show his true colors when the Big Red Dog, hero of Norman Bridwell's popular series of children's books, visits the Deerfield Public Library, 920 Waukegan Rd., 3:30-4:30 p.m. Friday May 8. A brief story-time for young children, with a caregiver, will be followed by a chance to meet Clifford and a craft project to do at the library or take home.

For details, call (847) 945-3311.

Chugging into town

The Model Railroad Garden, "Landmarks of America," returns to the Chicago Botanic Garden, 1000 Lake Cook Road, Glencoe, on Saturday, May 9. Seventeen model trains ride past nearly 50 miniature landmarks including Independence Hall, the Indiana Dunes and Wrigley Field. Admission is \$5 for adults, \$3 children, \$1 off for members.

For details, call (847) 835-5440.

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