

WORLD ACROBATICS SOCIETY

SPRING 2013 NEWSLETTER

FEATURING PROFESSIONAL ACROBATS

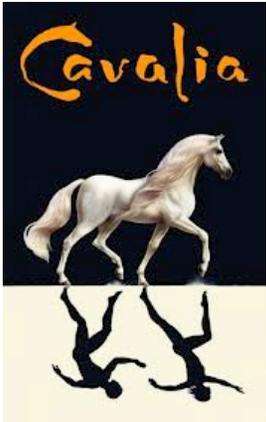
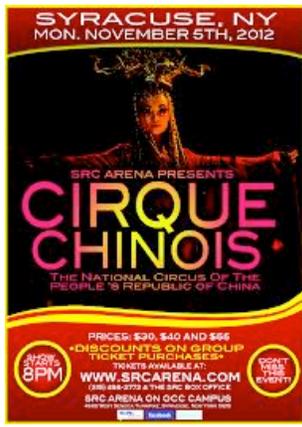
PART I



PART I

DOLLY JACOBS
CIRCUS SARASOTA

WRITTEN BY BRUCE DAVIS
EDITED BY DON LEAS



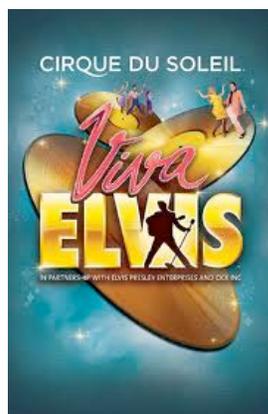
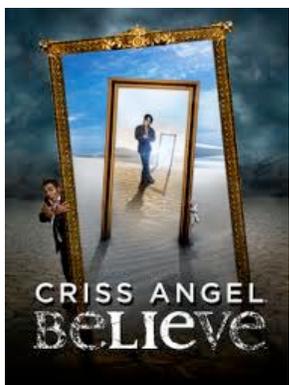
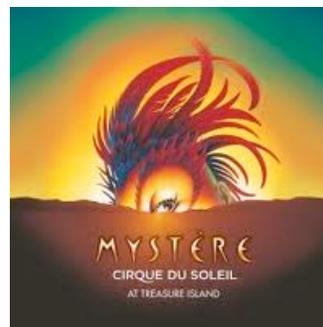
THE WORLD ACROBATICS SOCIETY

One of the acrobatic disciplines recognized by the World Acrobatics Society is **professional acrobatics**. Professional acrobatics is different from the other WAS acrobatics disciplines of acrobatic gymnastics, artistic gymnastics, diving, extreme sports, and trampoline & tumbling because professional acrobats **'perform'** rather than **'compete.'** If you were lucky enough to live in the Tampa Bay area you would have been able to take in all the performance venues and shows pictured on the previous page.

The WAS membership meets annually in Las Vegas and the membership has had the good fortune to attend Cirque du Soleil show rehearsals. WAS members have become familiar with what shows are available in Las Vegas that feature professional acrobatics. **Ka, Mystere, 'O,' Viva Elvis, Love, Criss Angel Believe, Zumanity,** and **Le Reve** (not a Cirque du Soleil show) all come to mind. Isn't it great that most of these shows have a cast numbering in the seventies to eighties. Yes, jobs galore for acrobats! Viva Elvis has finished its run at the Aria; however, a new Cirque show will begin at the Mandalay Bay in May. WAS is scheduled to visit a rehearsal for this new Cirque show. WAS has attended rehearsals for 'O,' Ka, Viva Elvis, and Mystere. Some of the cast members were coached by WAS members. It is wonderful to see reunions of coach and performer when they meet at the rehearsal.

In the past, doing acrobatics for pay was "risky" for athletes because the amateur code prohibited amateurs from accepting remuneration for "performing professionally" on threat of the athlete being declared a professional and ineligible for national and international competitions. Most acrobats from that time performed and received pay on the sly and battled to retain their amateur status when accused of being a professional by the ruling bodies of various sports. Once the 1992 Barcelona Olympic Games arrived and the amateur code was tossed, it was now okay to do whatever for pay unless the athlete was NCAA bound. Talk about a hypocritical organization that continues to adhere to the old amateur premise.

Cirque is not only in Las Vegas. Cirque du Soleil has tent and arena shows that travel the world, performing in cities all over North America and in Europe. Yes, more jobs! If Cirque productions are not enough, it has become fashionable for professional acrobats to perform in concert with a local Symphony Orchestra in stage shows in theaters and performing arts centers in a host of cities. Yeah, even more jobs!



CIRQUE SHOWS IN LAS VEGAS

The WORLD ACROBATICS SOCIETY

If you lived in the Tampa Bay area you would know that the Tampa Bay Rays play major league baseball at Tropicana Field in St. Petersburg. They also have a big parking lot and Cirque du Soleil returned to St. Petersburg last November and December with the tent show Kooza seven years after Alegria was on the same site. Kooza is a three hour show based on daring acrobatics, clownery, colorful costumes, and exciting musical scores. Yes, more jobs for acrobats.

Kooza means box in sanskrit. The storyline is built around the dreamworld created by the 'Trickster' for the 'Innocent' who is eager to learn about the world he lives in. Some other main characters include the King, the Pickpocket, Heimloss, two clowns, and the Bad Dog.



Kooza is more about the daring acrobats and the street clowns than the storyline. Featured acts include: Balancing on chairs, Charivari, Contortion, Hand to hand, High wire, Hoops manipulation, Solo trapeze, Teeterboard, Unicycle duo, and the Wheel of Death.

Kooza is also about wardrobe and costumes that number more than 1000. Characters were inspired from comic books, graphic novels, and Gustav Klimt paintings, including Indian and Eastern European art.

The talented Jason Berrent is the Trickster whose costume exudes status and masculinity while Cedric Belisle, the Innocent, represents all that is good and pure in the world. The show has a good amount of audience participation and sexual innuendo!



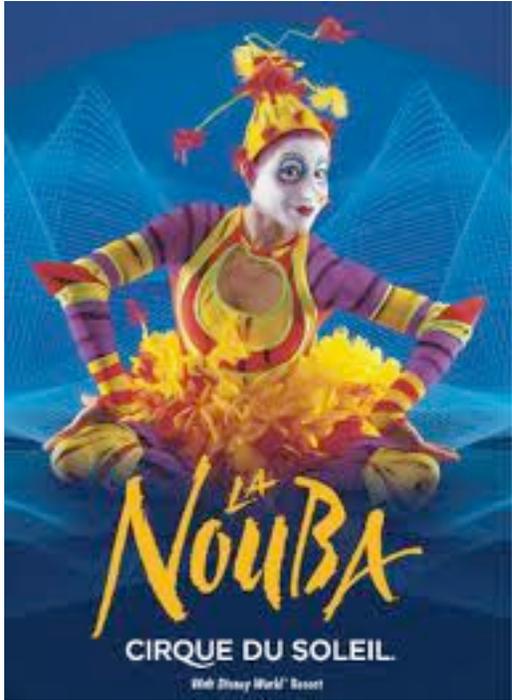
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If you lived in the Tampa Bay area you would also know that Tampa is just about as close to Disney World as Orlando is. You can be in Downtown Disney from Tampa in about an hour.

La Nouba has been playing in Cirque's first freestanding custom built theatre since 1998. The theater has five hydraulic elevator lifts and seats over 1500 patrons.

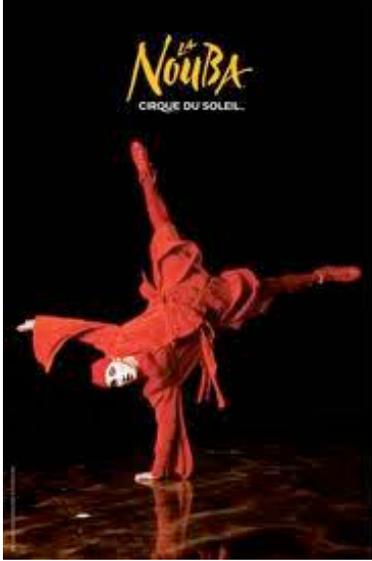
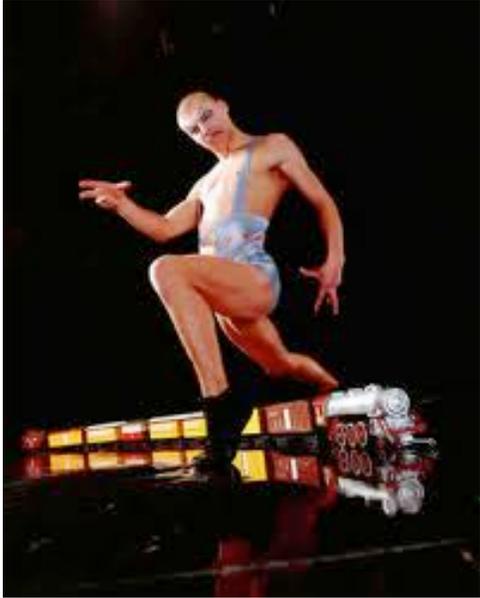
Many consider LaNouba as the sister show to Mystere in Las Vegas. The window trampoline act and the cross tumble-trac tumbling act are almost legendary. Tumblers execute double twisting double backs and triples with ease.

La Nouba means 'to live it up.' Two worlds collide in La Nouba. One is the world of circus people in bright fluorescent colors and the other is the urbanites in dark plain outfits. When they meet the feats of one sets the other on fire.



Franco Dragone was the Director of La Nouba which was created in 1998 the same year as "O." Michel Crete was a principle in the theatre design in Orlando and two other Cirque theaters in Las Vegas. Over six thousand performances of La Nouba have been conducted. The theater has an incredible height of 152 feet that allows equipment to be stored in the ceiling. Four retractable power track floors each weighing over 10,000 pounds can move at a rate of two feet per second. For safety, the entire floor deck is installed over the wood to prevent injury. The trapeze net is installed mechanically rather than using stage hands.

Memorable characters in the production include Titan the strong man, Acrobatic pierrot as the red acrobat and the Cons who dressed in white act as fools throughout the show. Yeah, Orlando has jobs for acrobats too!





When it comes to acrobatics and Disney, Cirque is not the only show on Disney property. Disney opened **Animal Kingdom**, it's fourth and largest park on April 22, 1998. The headliner show was to be Tarzan Rocks at the Theater in the Wild. The **Festival of the Lion King** was simply the support show in the other theater in Camp Minnie Mickey. Fifteen years later Nemo has replaced Tarzan Rocks and The Festival of the Lion Show is the number one show.

Originally in an open air venue, the show was often down due to weather that was too cold or too hot. Disney recessed the show and renovations took place. The theater was closed in and air conditioned. The audience sits in four bleacher sections designated by an animal name: Warthog, Elephant, Giraffe, and Lion. Arrangements can be made for VIP seating that includes early seating, audience participation, and a picture with the cast. This is a little kids paradise.

The show storyline varies from the original screen play and relies on a powerful musical score with excellent singing and a dynamic acrobatics performance by the **Tumble Monkeys**. A motorized raft is moved to the center of the theater. The raft has a trampoline with two bars and two sets of rings above. A trapeze is dropped above the raft from the ceiling. The Tumble Monkeys flip and swing on the equipment for more than five minutes. After a frenzy of activity one of the monkeys bounces and catches the trapeze thirty feet above. The second monkey bounces up and grabs the first monkey's legs. The third monkey bounces up and climbs up the other two monkeys of "the monkey chain" and ascends to a stand on the trapeze.

The Tumble Monkeys are just one element of the entire show. However, their skill level in acrobatics is something to be reckoned with.

**SINAISKY NUNEZ - FESTIVAL OF THE LION KING
TUMBLE MONKEY SINCE THE OPENING DAY OF ANIMAL KINGDOM**



Sinaisky Nunez, one of the Tumble Monkeys, has worked in the Festival of Lion King show since its opening day. You could say that most of his performance contemporaries consider him the "top monkey." Several years ago a driver lost control of his car and hit Sinaisky in his driver's side door. The doctors said that Sinaisky would not be able to perform again due to the severe injury to his left arm and shoulder. He was back performing six months after the injury and sporting a very ugly scar that descends from his left shoulder to his elbow.

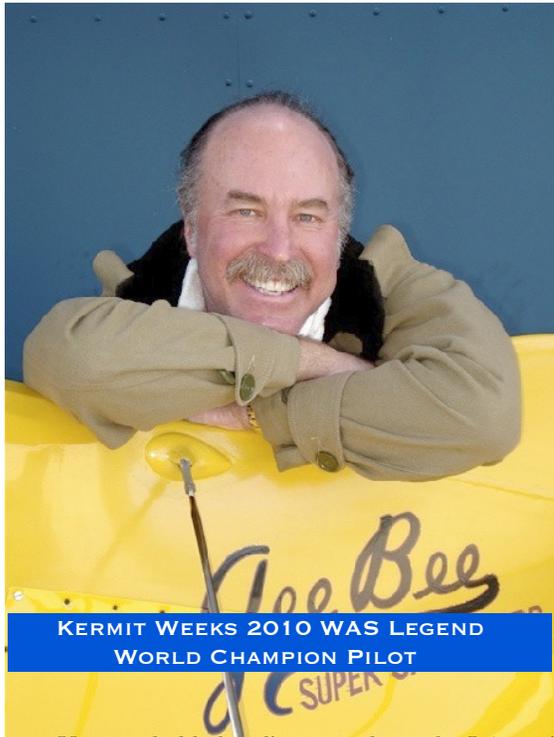
For those who know him, his recovery was remarkable, but not surprising. You see, Sinaisky gave up his dream of competing in the Olympic Games for Cuba. Nunez had competed on United States soil when he won the Junior Pan American Games in Tallahassee. He was second in the all-around behind the older Eric Lopez, the top Cuban gymnastics Olympian, when Cuba qualified for the coming World Championships in Puerto Rico. Nunez defected! In spite of his success in gymnastics, Sinaisky considered his freedom most important.

Once he arrived in Miami, Sinaisky enrolled in at the North Campus of Miami Dade College. He competed in the USA Gymnastics Collegiate Championships for three years compiling fourteen All-America certificates and winning the 1996 USAGCC all-around title competing against ten other four year universities. Along the way he defeated several US National Team members. He won four consecutive National Association of Intercollegiate Gymnastics Club All-around Championships. Having coached both athletes, Bruce Davis says: "Sinaisky is as talented as Kurt Thomas in the All-around. He showed me tricks in training that he did not use in competition. A great tumbler and vaulter, good on the support events of horse and parallel bars, and exceptional strength on rings with multiple releases on horizontal bar."

Besides Disney, Sinaisky previously dove from sixty feet as "the man on fire" at the Miami Seaquarium, dunked basketballs at NBA games with the "Extreme Team" and is a performer with "The Climbers," a Chinese pole act.



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KERMIT WEEKS 2010 WAS LEGEND
WORLD CHAMPION PILOT



BRUCE & RITA DAVIS WITH KERMIT AND THE P-51C



FANTASY OF FLIGHT

AN ATTRACTION ON A HIGHER PLANE

Your probably heading west down the I-4 corridor from Disney back toward Tampa, but you need to make one more stop. Exit 44 in Polk County will bring you to one of the most unique show parks in the world, **Fantasy of Flight**. There you will enter the world of aviation and aircraft. Orlampa Airport consists of two grass runways; a tarmac and two hangers housing at least 200 flyable vintage airplanes, immersion environments, the art deco administrative offices, and the Compass Rose Diner and gift shop; a convention complex; the Golden Hill storage facility; restoration and storage warehouses; and the “Wing Walk Air, a zip line attraction. Lake Agnes is used for seaplane operations. Look for the Douglas DC 3 that sits on the side of the roadside that advertises the park. It cannot fly; but it was positioned to advertise the location of the park.



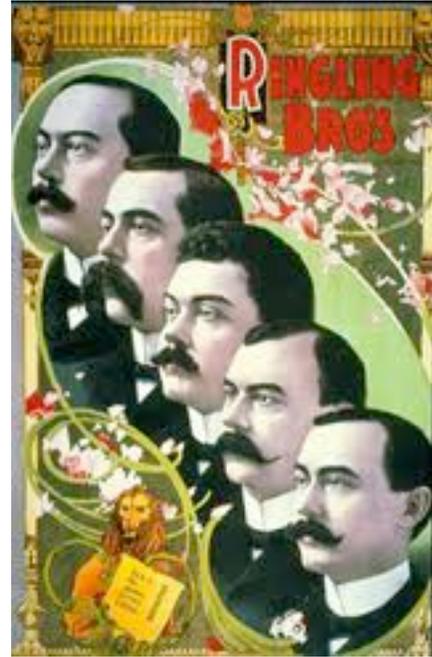
Kermit Weeks began building an airplane in his backyard in Miami when he was seventeen. He also took up gymnastics at Palmetto High School and continued at Miami Dade College, South Campus. He briefly attended Purdue University before returning to Miami to pursue his love of flying and building aircraft. He opened the **Weeks Air Museum at Tamiami Airport** in 1985 with money from petroleum royalties secured by his grandfather, Lewis G. Weeks. Hurricane Andrew wiped out his facility in 1992. In spite of reopening in 1994, Kermit bought 250 acres of land in Polk County and opened Fantasy of Flight in November 1995.

Weeks bought a Pitts S-2A so he could compete in aerobatics. He built his own “Weeks Special” by 1977. In 1978 he was the runner-up in the FAI World Acrobatic Championships in Czechoslovakia eventually earning twenty medals in WAC competition. He also won two US National Aviation Championships. Kermit became a 2010 WAS Legend.

During the summer of 2011, Weeks bought a Douglas C-47 Skytrain and flew it back to the United States taking eleven days due to weather, which is documented on the Fantasy of Flight Facebook page. In 2014 Weeks will duplicate the flight of Tony Jannus over Tampa Bay in the Bergoust Airbus. The original plane is not available and Weeks and his aviation team have built an identical aircraft. Please take the time to visit Fantasy of Flight. You will be glad you did. Perhaps you will be lucky enough to go flying with Kermit. He probably won't perform his spirals as he did in competition!

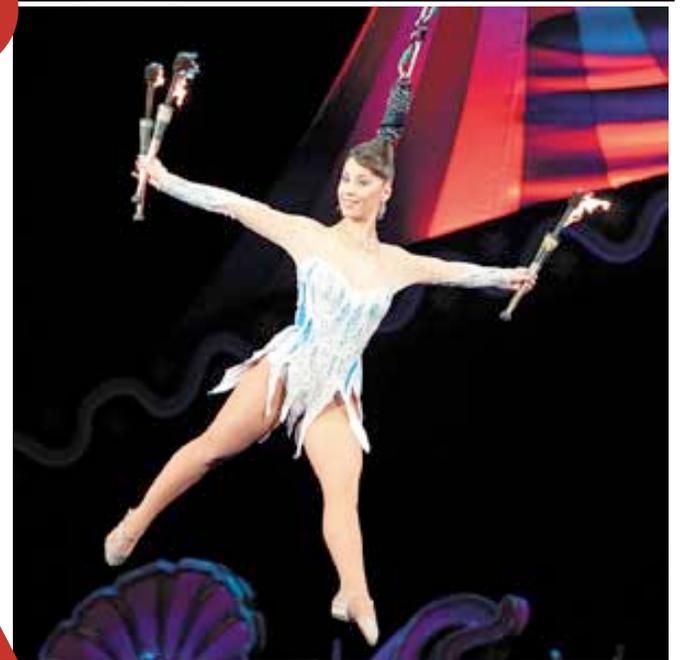
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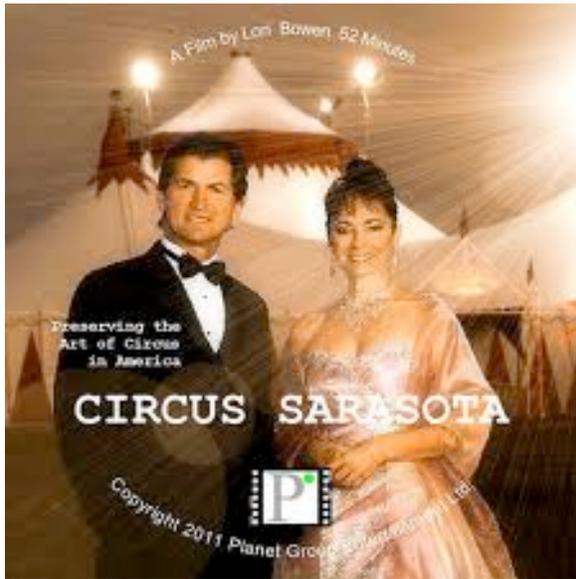
The **Ringling Bros. Barnum and Bailey Circus** has been playing for over 140 seasons and typically debuts in Tampa. "The Greatest Show On Earth" has been housed at the Florida State Fairgrounds, but will be moving gradually to a new 47 acre property in Ellenton, Florida. **Feld Entertainment**, who owns Ringling besides other entertainment venues such as Disney on Ice, will move their global headquarters from Vienna, Virginia, to the Manatee County location. Ringling, known for their circus animals; elephant, lions, and tigers, have followed the Cirque trend and they have modernized the circus by bringing in some of the best acrobatics acts in the world. The Feld sisters, Nicole and Alana, produced the two year touring show called Dragon. Acts include The Shaolin Warriors, the Globe of Steel (8 motorcycles in a 16 foot globe), Riders of the West, and the Hair-Hanging Wonders of the West.



For those who are not familiar with Tampa, each January fans travel downtown to see the elephants unloaded from the train and paraded to the Tampa Bay Forum that was formerly known as the St. Pete Forum because of name rights paid for by the St. Petersburg Times newspaper. The St. Petersburg Times newspaper recently changed its name to Tampa Bay Times. I hope your not confused. The Tampa Bay Lightning play National Hockey League games at the Forum. It is the biggest indoor seating facility in the Tampa Bay area and has hosted Cirque Arena shows like Saltimbanco.

Again, and I think more important, Ringling is hiring many acrobats and that means jobs and more Jobs. Ringling started in Sarasota, moved south to Venice and then north to Tampa, and is now going back south to the Bradenton/Manatee area!





Although Ringling left Sarasota, circus hasn't left by any means. Visitors go shopping at St. Armands and they discover the **'Ring of Fame'** on the inner circle of ninety or so elevated bronze plaques in concrete that proudly depict the history of many great circus stars who performed for Ringling Bros. A bronze statue of John Ringling on the circle walkway greets thousands of tourist passerbys who discover the charm of Sarasota and it's circus history.

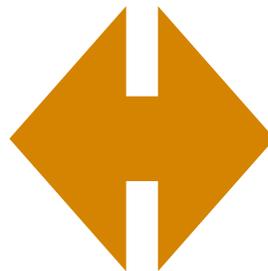
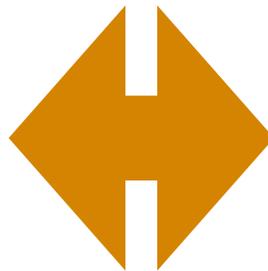


You can go on tour and visit **Ca' d'Zan**, John and Mabel's home completed in 1925 at a cost of a million and a half dollars. Look out the Ca' d'Zan back terrace across Sarasota bay and see the causeway John Ringling built. On the same Ca' d'Zan property you can peruse the art gallery, the **Circus Hall of Fame**, attend an event at the **Asolo Repertory Theatre**, or eat dinner in an upscale restaurant..

Sarasota served as the winter quarters for Ringling Bros. circus for 33 years from 1927 until 1959. The winter quarters then moved south to Venice. Circus performer's families often made their homes in Sarasota. The next generation of circus performer youth get their training at **Sarasota High School** in the **Sailor Circus**.

Many circuses have played in Sarasota, but one of the latest that is notable is **Circus Sarasota**. **Pedro Reis**, a trapeze artist from South Africa, and **Dolly Jacobs**, daughter of the famed Ringling clown **Lou Jacobs** and a product of the Sailor Circus, formed a nonprofit corporation in 1997. Circus Sarasota is 'broadening the artistic contribution of the circus while raising the level and perception of the American circus.' Annual performances are held for three weeks in February at **Al Smith Stadium**, the Cincinnati Reds spring training facility on Beneva Road.

Dolly regularly performs in the annual circus. Previously, she performed for the Ringling Bros. and the Big Apple Circus. She won the **coveted Dame du Cirque award** at the **International Circus Festival of Monte-Carlo**. She perfected a layout somersault catch to a vertical rope from a trapeze that earned her a center ring solo performance in *The Greatest Show on Earth* in 1979. She returned to Monte Carlo and earned the **coveted Silver Clown award** in 1988. Reis joined Ringling in 1984 as part of 'The Survivors' troupe. He was a solo performer for the Big Apple circus in the 'Cloud Swing' act. Dolly and Pedro performed an aerial duet called *On Wings of Love*. Their marriage in 2007 had been delayed for an inordinate amount of time due to Pedro's performance accident in 1990. Dolly was honored with a plaque on the Circus Ring of Fame in 1997.



CIRCUS SARASOTA

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TITO GAONA 2001 WAS LEGEND

RINGLING WINTER CIRCUS SITE

The Ringling Bros. circus left Sarasota in 1959 after over thirty years of winter quarters in the Sarasota location. When the circus left, the Sarasota property was redeveloped into the **Glen Oaks Estates** in 1963. A historical marker stands at the entrance of the residential property. The Ringling Bros. circus moved twenty-fives miles south to **Venice**.

Venice was originally scheduled to be the winter quarters of the Sparks Bros. circus when contracts were signed in 1946. The site was next to US 41 and just north of the airport. The Sparks Bros. Circus went on its national tour and never came back to Florida. The owner sold the equipment and assets in Tacoma, Washington. A new 55,000 square foot arena was under construction in Venice for the Sparks Bros. circus and the arena was finally finished in 1962.

Ringling Bros. Barnum & Bailey Circus made it's world premier in the '**Venice Circus Arena**' and continued to do so for thirty years. In 1963, Desilu Productions filmed its television series at the site called "The Greatest Show on Earth." Headliners were Jack Palance and Tuesday Weld. WAS member and diver Dick Gutting appeared in one of the shows episodes.

For thirty years Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus made their premier performance in Venice. Many great circus acts also

made their debut in Venice among which was **Gunther Gebel-Williams**, the trainer of the big cats. Gunther from Germany became Venice's favorite son. His twenty year career included appearances in 12,000 plus shows without missing one. Gunther died in 2001 and a bronze statue was place outside the Venice Train Depot by **sculptor Ed Kasprowitz** that depicts "The Greatest Wild Animal Trainer of All Time."



The deterioration of the rail spur from Sarasota to Venice forced the Ringling circus to relocate to the State Fairgrounds in Tampa. A family from Mexico had arrived in Venice in the early sixties. They had a great trampoline act. They embarked on a new quest developing a trapeze act and they became "**The Flying Gaonas.**" **Victor "Tito" Gaona** became a star executing the layout full in full out and the triple somersault

blindfolded a record number of times. After retirement, Tito continues to train young children on trapeze on his rig that is located on the Venice site. **The Venice Circus Arts Foundation** has been able to stop the demolition of the Circus Arena and the redevelopment of the prime five acre property on the South end of Venice. The buildings have deteriorated to the point that the City Council has given the Save the Venice Circus Arena only sixty days to find the money to preserve the site. Work has been done to clean up the site. However, a good amount of money still needs to be raised to make repairs to the entire complex. Tito serves as a spokesperson for the preservation group. Tito is an international representative on the WAS Board of Directors!

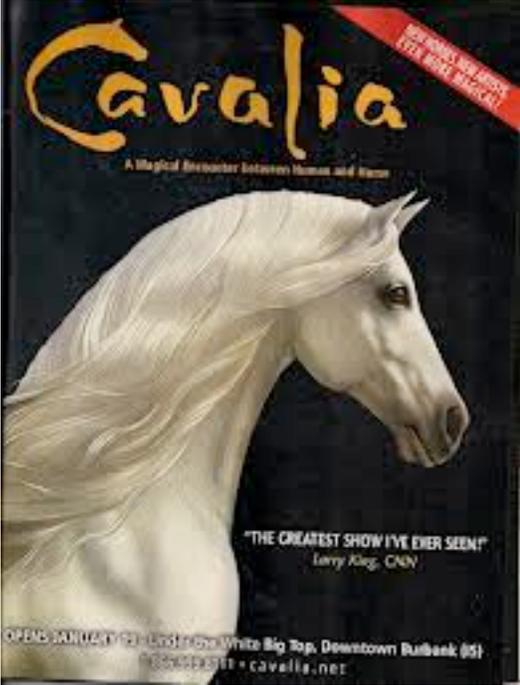


RITA DAVIS AT THE GUNTHER GOBELS- WILLIAMS TRAINING RING

TITO AND BRUCE AT THE GAONA HOME

GAONA TRAPEZE RIG

WORLD ACROBATICS SOCIETY

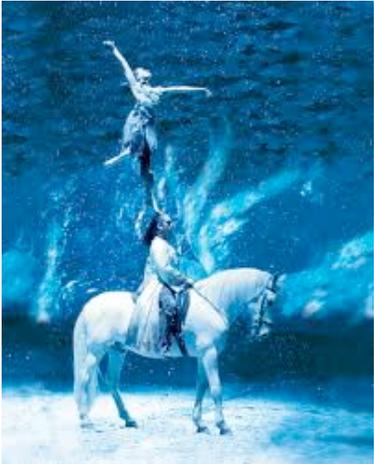


If you lived in Tampa you would know that not only is the soon to be departed Ringling Bros. Circus housed at the **State Fairgrounds in Tampa**, but there is an outdoor modern amphitheater, there are the fairgrounds themselves, and the city of Tampa is trying to get the Tampa Bay Rays to move there from St. Petersburg. It is a very large property. The fair is held there each year in February. They have the facilities to host all types of shows in the many buildings covering the grounds.

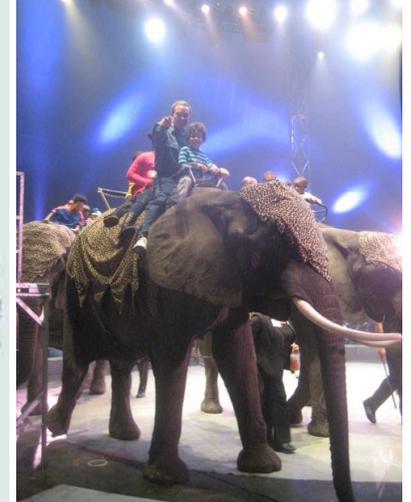
Last year you might have noticed that large white tents were suddenly there. Yes, **Cavalía** was in town having arrived from an earlier tour of Europe. What is Cavalía? If you said horses and acrobats, you were right. This is an extraordinary show that should be seen by everyone. The beauty and the variety of skills exhibited by the horses is exquisite. The musical score is wonderful. This show is definitely "Cirque on horses." A patron can choose for a ticket price of \$100.00, a drink and food cafe, up close parking, a visit to the stable area to see all the horses, and of course, a great show. Not a bad deal when you compare it to Cirque prices.



More important for the acrobatics community, Cavalía provides jobs for a large group of acrobats. Yes, jobs and more jobs. Please enjoy some of the highlights from the show in the photo gallery below.



WORLD ACROBATICS SOCIETY



Cedric Walker is a native of Baltimore, Maryland. He fell in love with circus at a young age. As a young man he tried to establish little business such as a shoe shine stand. After moving to Tuskegee, Alabama, Cedric teamed up with the musical group the **Commodores**. He worked his way up to Stage Manager. Later Walker became a promoter for the **Jackson Five**. He organized the **Fresh Festival**, a rapper tour, and produced two gospel plays, **“Wicked Ways”** and **“A Good Man is Hard to Find.”**

His idea was to explore the talents of African Americans beyond their usual fields of music and dance. His research led him to find only one black circus ownership operating in the year 1893. His ideas transformed into the decision to establish a circus tent show that became a reality in 1994. The first performance was in Atlanta, Georgia, at the old Fulton County Stadium.

The **Universoul Circus** is in its twentieth year and in its eighth year of promoting the successful **“Food for Soul”** program in the Atlanta school system. Students bring in can goods and foods to be distributed to the poor and homeless. Students are rewarded with tickets to the circus.

If you lived in Tampa you would know that the Universoul Circus annually appears at the **Raymond James Stadium** parking lot in the blue tent during February. The Raymond James Stadium is home to the **Tampa Bay Buccaneers** of the National Football League. You will definitely get your monies worth. It is a long show that includes tigers and lions as well as elephants. If you feel the need, you can ride an elephant like I did. Most important, there are many acrobats in the show. You know what I am going to say. Jobs, jobs, and more jobs for acrobats. Enjoy the pictures in the gallery!



WORLD ACROBATICS SOCIETY



If you were from Tampa you would realize that the **University of South Tampa** is on East Fowler Street. Down the street on E. Fowler you will find the **MOSI-Museum of Science and Industry**. Several cities have a MOSI museum and theater; however, the one in Tampa has been improving its ranking among like facilities in the United States. It so happens that this January that **Cirque Italia** put up its tent on the end of the MOSI property. It did not take long to realize that Cirque Italia has a ways to go to become a polished operation. The parking lot charge suddenly increased a whole dollar when the Cirque Italia operation realized it owed some fees to Hillsborough County; but what really counts is the circus itself. The owners of Cirque Italia come from interesting backgrounds in Italy and are considered experts in tent show equipment including the tents themselves. In the photo gallery you can see the unique setting featuring a water scene with fountains that features a center island where the performers perform. Remember we are in a tent! Where else can you see a **Ring Master (Gimmi Fornaciari)** who can sing perfect opera in Italian while balancing in a one arm handstand and twirling a ring on his foot! I think Abie Grossfeld would be impressed. I know I was. **Adam and Anton** were outstanding and near equals to the Alexis Brothers. The hand balancing on coat rack was also top notch. For the price it was a good show and as I always say: "Jobs, jobs and more jobs for acrobats."



WORLD ACROBATICS SOCIETY

If you were from the Tampa Bay area you would realize that there are some very good performing arts centers. The **Mahaffey Theater** in St Petersburg is right on Tampa Bay and it is a beautiful center in a scenic location. A popular thing to do is see a stage show of Cirque performances. **Cirque Chinois** is definitely a show to see. The **National Circus of the Peoples Republic of China** has sixty years of performance experience. The photo gallery speaks for itself. The little girl on the pedestal below spent five consecutive minutes in one arm handstands on either arm while contorting her body in every shape humanly possible. The best I have ever seen!





If you were from Tampa you would probably be familiar with the **David A. Stratz Performing the Arts Center** in downtown Tampa. Built in 1987, the Stratz houses **Carol Morsani Hall** (2,600 seats), **Ferguson Hall** (1,042 seats), **Jaeb Theater** (292 seats), the **TECO Energy Foundation Theater**, (250 seats), the **Shimberg Playhouse**. (130 seats), and the **Patel Conservatory** with 22 studios that have provided classes for over 60,000 students to date. Stratz sits on the bank of the **Hillsborough River** across from the **University of Tampa** and the old **Henry Platt Hotel** often pictured in sepia toned photos of Spanish American War troop encampments and President Teddy Roosevelt.

Rita and I attended a Cirque stage show at the Stratz featuring acrobats performing to music by a symphony orchestra. It makes for a wonderful display of the arts. Acrobats make up for the fact that they do not have any special hydraulic equipment or props by flying high over the orchestra and performing against a blank background of changing soft lighting of different colors. The popularity of Cirque and the need for philharmonic orchestras to offer something to look at has lead to this productive arrangement between two arts. See one of these shows if you get the opportunity. You will not be disappointed and it provides more jobs for acrobats.



WORLD ACROBATICS SOCIETY

Traces is a modern acrobatics stage show that most certainly will appeal to the young crowd. In the *Traces* production the seven member performing cast, six men and a woman, remain on stage for the entire ninety minute performance. They wear 'street clothes;' no costumes. They use simple props like a basketball, roller skates, a skate board, wood chairs, a beat up recliner chair, a piano on wheels, a couple of vertical poles and an old fashion microphone swinging from a wire from the ceiling. The set throughout the performance is the inside of an ashen and dilapidated warehouse. *Traces* has recently returned to the United States after a successful four month tour in Europe. The choreography is clever and interesting. A cast that was completely unknown to the every day audience, lets us know who they are by cleverly passing and swinging a mike that drops from the stage ceiling and introductions are made to the audience. Mason Ames of New Hampshire and Valerie Benoit Charbonneau of Montreal perform an adagio that is memorable for its style and athleticism. Both acrobats performed in *Viva Elvis* in Las Vegas. Parisian Lucas Boutin is a specialist on anything that is circular or has wheels. French Canadian Mathieu Cloutier is good on roller blades and plays the guitar and writes music. San Francisco native Bradley Henderson has special training in Chinese acrobatics. Phillippe Normand -Jenny of Montreal specializes in hand to hand, teeterboard, and trampoline. The remarkable L,J Marles of London started as self taught street and hip hop dancer and now specializes in aerial straps. The ability of the performers to move from one form of acrobatics to the next is amazing. One week earlier Rita and I saw traditional circus with Dolly Jacobs and the Wallendas and now we were seeing a modern form of circus and a form that will definitely attract the next generation. I guess I'm still young because I thoroughly loved it. Look at the picture gallery and you will see why!





I hope you have enjoyed reading about professional performers and cirque in the WAS 2013 Spring Newsletter. Cirque shows have caught on in a big way in the United States, Europe, and in some Asian countries. We can probably thank Cirque du Soleil for its major influence in stimulating the production of more cirque shows. The shows are on stage, at arenas, and in tents. Conventional circuses of the past have begun to include more modern cirque performances in their circus shows to compete with the Cirque du Soleil style show.

Florida is a Mecca of circus show productions and theme parks that offer forms of acrobatic entertainment. Cirque entertainment has continued to expand offering job opportunities to qualified acrobats. The history of winter quarters for circus in Florida may have been the catalyst for this future development of circus activity.

Acrobatic movements are being integrated into sports venues that did not have them in the past. For example, ski athletes are doing twisting somersaults in mogul skiing in today's competition. Extreme sports have gone on a rampage with athletes flipping on skateboards, snow mobiles, motorcycles, bicycles and whatever else they can rotate on. The Olympic movement is eager to add extreme sports acrobatic venues to the Games. The trampoline was once considered a most dangerous form of high level flipping and twisting. Today, trampoline looks almost tame compared to some other sports venues that have athletes performing three layout somersaults with four twists on skis in to a mound of snow. The four and a half has replaced the three and a half platform diving as the ultimate somersault skill. Some gymnasts have completed triple back somersaults on the spring floor and double somersaults have become the general standard for average tumbling passes in floor exercise. Power board tumbling has brought a new dimension to the meaning of tumbling. Acrobatic gymnasts are including more somersaulting movements than ever in their routines along with the balancing of the body.

New or improved equipment design in acrobatic sports has led to improved performance. The coaching of acrobatic sports and disciplines has become more experienced and more sophisticated. All of this activity bodes well for the future of acrobatic disciplines and the World Acrobatics Society is here to honor and report on the best acrobats in the world. Since the year 2000, the World Acrobatics Society has inducted professional acrobats into the Gallery of Legends as listed below

WAS Gallery of Legends Professional Acrobats

Fay Alexander	2004	Loren Janes	2003
Alexis Brothers	2010	George Paul	2001
(Marco & Paulo Lorador)		Dar Robinson	2006
John Bower	2003	Russ Sanders	2001
Joey Box	2007	David Sharpe	2012
Bob Brown	2009	Tony Steele	2002
Marco Cannestrelli	2007	Glenn M. Sundby	2000
Rudy Cardenas	2007	Nancy Thurston-	2007
Karl Carsony	2004	Hughhins	
Dan & Karen Castle	2009	Juan & Miguel Vasquez	2002
Terry Caveretta	2002	Bob Yerkes	2004
Alfredo Cadona	2003	Brothers Yong	2003
Tito Gaona	2001	Ken Kovach	2011
Lisa Hoyle	2008	David Sharpe	2012