

CIRQUE DU SOLEIL®



Casting and Talent Development in the Circus and Performing Arts

*Bernard Petiot, Vice President of Artistic Products
IV International Forum on Elite Sport
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Objective

- *Present a point of view likely to inspire*



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And now, ladies and gentlemen ...



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Facts and Figures ...

- **Founded in 1984**
- **3,000 employees**
- **More than 750 artists**
- **More than 40 nationalities**
- **More than 25 spoken languages**
- **More than 90 cities visited on 3 continents**
- **More than 50 million spectators since 1984**
- **More than 10-year lifespan for each show**
- **More than 4,300 performances per year for all shows**
- **Over 360 performances per year per show**
- **More than 20,000 people reached every week by each show ...**



A Rendez-vous of Differences

*Promoting
collaboration and
cooperation while
drawing from a vast
pool of knowledge,
attitudes and
previously acquired
skills*



*"We aspire to
draw inspiration
from artistic and
cultural diversity."
Guy Laliberté,
founder and owner*

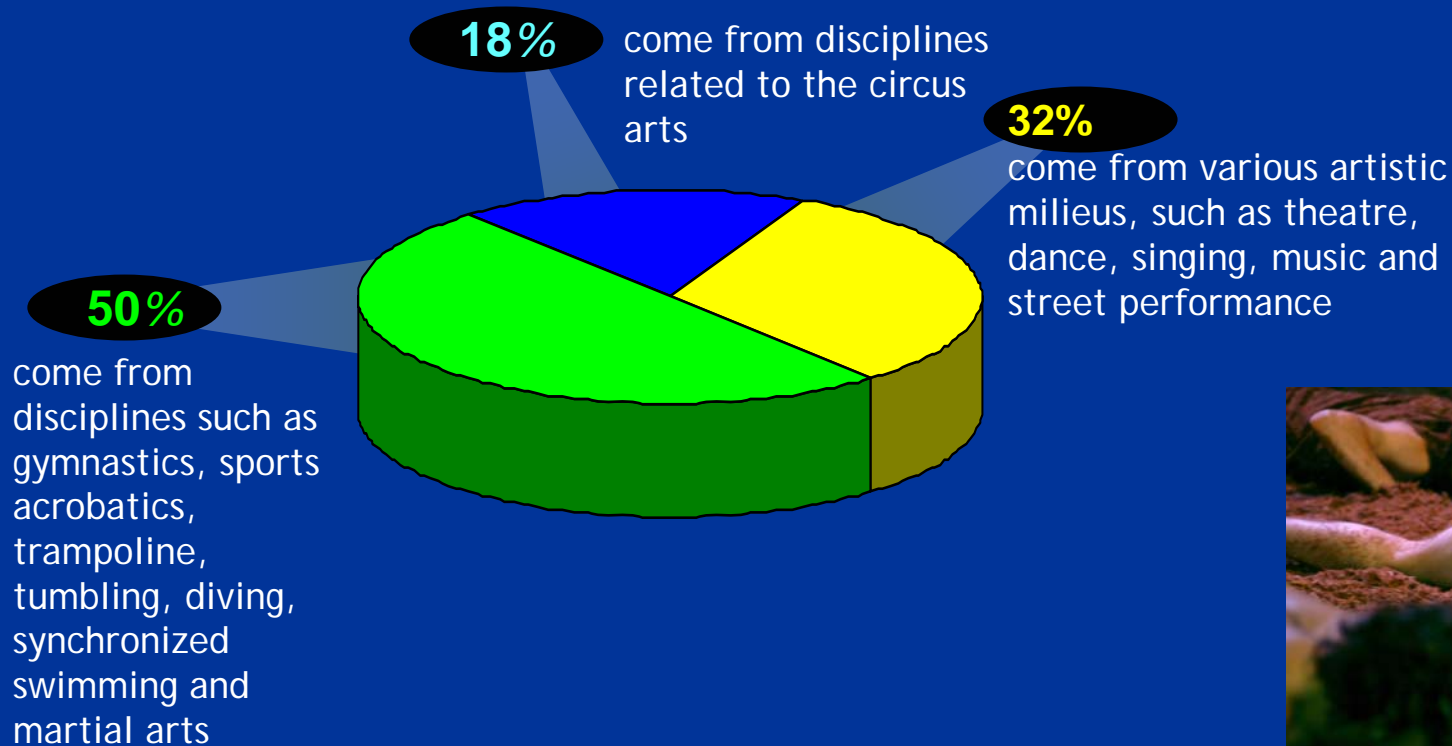


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Artist Backgrounds

Each show employs 50 to 90 artists



Cirque du Soleil Context

- **Candidates:**

- *Close to 50% of performing artists-acrobats are athletes from the sports world with no previous artistic training*

- **Training:**

- *Rigorous and structured*
- *Planning : reduction of uncertainty*
- *Performance-oriented*
- *Competition as a mindset*

- **Cirque du Soleil culture:**

- *Organization in the entertainment industry*
- *Cultural diversity and multidisciplinary approach*
- *Integration of acrobatic and artistic components*
- *Coexistence of ambiguity and unpredictability*
- *The show/audience is king*

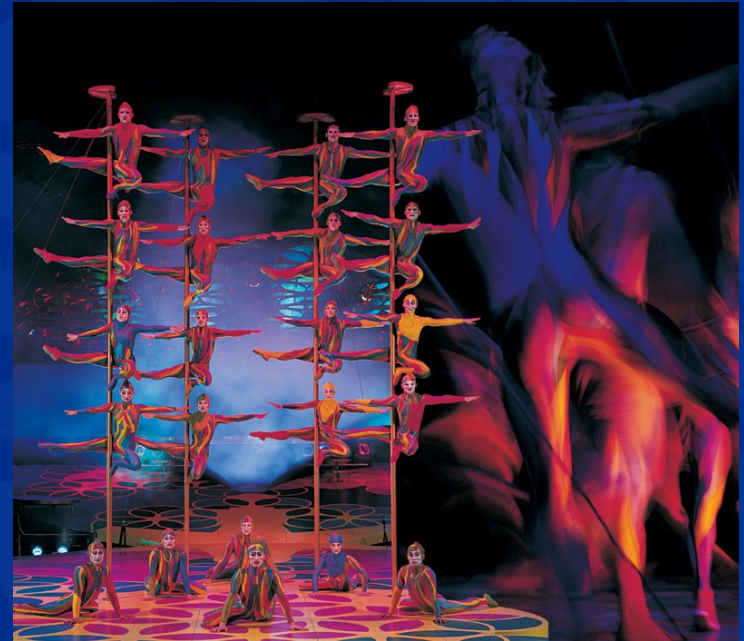
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A career at Cirque du Soleil ... Get set for a culture shock!

A choice requiring a mind shift!

- *Self-driven*
- *Individuality and collectivity*
- *The show is the star*
- *Audience-motivated*
- *Unpredictability and uncertainty*
- *Professional and cultural diversity diversity*



Recognizing and creating tension between

**SPORT
PERFORMANCE**



**ARTISTIC
PERFORMANCE**

EXPERT



NOVICE

**EMOTIONAL
MASTERY**



**EMOTIONAL
FREEDOM**

PREDICTABILITY



VARIABILITY


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Zèbre

+ Curious
+ Playful
+ Affectionate
+ Harmless
+ Simple



Training
Environment
+ Lights
+ Traffic
+ Props
+ Music
+ Relationship
with other
characters
Etc.



Competency set at Cirque

- *Acrobatic skills*
- *Artistic skills*
- *Performance-related skills*
- *Professional skills*



Professional

Self-reliance in relation to learning

Participation in the development process

Ability to adapt

Ability to establish effective professional relationships

Ability to establish affective relationships in the workplace

Ability to manage one's life

Ability to adapt to diversity

Acrobatic

Artistic

Active listening

Presence

Expression

Creativity

Performance

Concentration

Activation

Visualization

Emotion management

Thought management

Performance preparation

Fatigue and pain tolerance

Stress management

QUIDAM – *Spanish webs*

Men

Ideal weight 155-165 lb/70-75 kg

Ideal height 5'8"-5'11"/1m72-1m80

Background Artistic Gymnastic, circus

Characteristics

Gymnast, strong upper body, light weight lower segment. Fine lines, good flexibility from lower body, elegant. Anglophone and/or Francophone.

Women

Ideal weight 106-120 lb/48-54,5 kg

Ideal height 5'1"-5'4"/1m55-1m62

Morphology Ectomorphic, elegant

Background Artistic Gymnastic, circus

Characteristics

Gymnast or good aerial acrobat. Good strength and endurance from upper body. Fine body lines, good flexibility. Anglophone and/or Francophone.



«O» – CADRE

Ideal weight	Not important
Ideal height	Not important
Background	Artistic Gymnastic, or others
Characteristics	

The ideal candidate, man or woman, must have a relatively strong background in gymnastic and a good choreographic skills. Flexibility from upper body is necessary. Be aware of chronic shoulder problems due to upper body work. From experience, anybody could do the cadre, even swimmers.

Note : Cadre is a secondary discipline for acrobats.



The pursuit of excellence on stage

•Nurturing talent

- Provoke without giving it all away*
- Choice and personal investment*
- The key to keeping the stage performance alive is to understanding the interrelationship with others in relation to the piece*
- Beyond acrobatics ... interpretation and communication*

•Quality and consistency

- Focus on the present*
- Foster independence and individuality while maintaining a common objective*
- Look for the artistic element (vulnerability and sensitivity) rather than flawless acrobatic execution*



Source of Inspiration

ERICSSON'S TAKE ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF EXPERTISE

Deliberate practice (*self-regulation*):

- Deliberately set to go beyond previous performance;
- Relatively short in duration but requiring effort and a high degree of intensity with regard to concentration (cognitive intensity);
- Context and outcome-specific (i.e. final performance).

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Types of Expertise

- **Ongoing:** *the consistent achievement of specific objectives in a specific area*
- **Adaptive:** *the ability to react appropriately to an unexpected situation*



Athlete or artist...

Perhaps athlete and artist...



Discussion ...



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