

CIRQUE DU SOLEIL®



CIRQUE DU SOLEIL AT A GLANCE

From a group of 20 street performers at its beginnings in 1984, *Cirque du Soleil* is a major Québec-based organization providing high-quality artistic entertainment. The company has 5,000 employees, including more than 1,200 artists from close to 50 different countries.

Cirque du Soleil has brought wonder and delight to close to 100 million spectators in 300 cities on five continents. *Cirque du Soleil* International Headquarters are in Montreal, Canada. The company has received such prestigious awards as the Emmy, Drama Desk, Bambi, ACE, Gémeaux, Félix, and Rose d'Or de Montreux.

For more information about *Cirque du Soleil*, visit www.cirquedusoleil.com.

The mission

The mission of *Cirque du Soleil* is to invoke the imagination, provoke the senses and evoke the emotions of people around the world.

The Creation of *Cirque du Soleil*

It all started in Baie-Saint-Paul, a small town near Québec City in Canada. There, in the early eighties, a band of colourful characters roamed the streets, striding on stilts, juggling, dancing, breathing fire, and playing music. They were Les Échassiers de Baie-Saint-Paul (the Baie-Saint-Paul Stiltwalkers), a street theatre group founded by Gilles Ste-Croix. Already, the townsfolk were impressed and intrigued by the young performers – including Guy Laliberté who founded *Cirque du Soleil*.

The troupe went on to found Le Club des talons hauts (the High Heels Club), and then, in 1982, organized La Fête foraine de Baie-Saint-Paul, a cultural event in which street performers from all over met to exchange ideas and enliven the streets of the town for a few days. La Fête foraine was repeated in 1983 and 1984. Le Club des talons hauts attracted notice, and Guy Laliberté, Gilles Ste-Croix and their cronies began to cherish a crazy dream: to create a Québec circus and take the troupe travelling around the world.

In 1984, Québec City was celebrating the 450th anniversary of Canada's discovery by Jacques Cartier, and they needed a show that would carry the festivities out across the province. Guy Laliberté presented a proposal for a show called *Cirque du Soleil* (Circus of the Sun), and succeeded in convincing the organizers. And *Cirque du Soleil* hasn't stopped since!

A Few statistics

- In 1984, 73 people worked for *Cirque du Soleil*. Today, the business has 5,000 employees worldwide, including more than 1,200 artists.
- At the Montréal International Headquarters alone, there are close to 2,000 employees.
- More than 100 types of occupations can be found at Cirque.
- The average age of employees is 37.
- The company's employees and artists represent close to 50 nationalities and speak 25 different languages.
- Close to 100 million spectators have seen a *Cirque du Soleil* show since 1984.
- Close to 15 million people will see a *Cirque du Soleil* show in 2010.
- *Cirque du Soleil* hasn't received any grants from the public or private sectors since 1992.

Cirque du Soleil's Areas of Activity

Cirque du Soleil presents simultaneously twenty different shows around the world. Its challenge is to continue to grow while offering its creators the freedom to dream the wildest dreams and make them come true. The heart of *Cirque du Soleil's* activity remains creating live shows and presenting them under big tops or in theatres. Since 1984 close to 200 creators from the four corners of the globe have contributed their talents to this end.

In the past few years *Cirque du Soleil* has been developing business initiatives based on its shows. Through its Events and Images division:

1. *Cirque du Soleil* creates original and innovative content for television and DVD. Its creations have been awarded numerous prizes and distinctions: among them are *Cirque du Soleil presents Corteo* (Emmy and Gémeaux in 2007); *Midnight Sun* (DVD Excellence Award in 2006 and a Gemini Award in 2005); *Cirque du Soleil Fire Within* (DVD Excellence Award in 2005, a Primetime Emmy Award and two Gemini Awards in 2003); and *Cirque du Soleil Presents Dralion* (three Primetime Emmy Awards in 2001).
2. *Cirque du Soleil* has acquired extensive experience in organizing unforgettable private gatherings as well as major public events (Expo Zaragoza 2008, the show-event for the 400th anniversary of Québec City). For the past few years the *Cirque du Soleil* Events team has brought its creativity to a most discriminating clientele with the same energy and spirit that characterizes each of the company's shows.

The company's Merchandising division seeks to leverage the unique *Cirque du Soleil* experience through the development of high quality products which meet the expectations of fans. While offering a full range of products for retail sale under the Big Top, at resident show boutiques and on the Internet, *Cirque du Soleil* is seeking reliable partners to design, develop, market and distribute unique products which will bring "artful living" into the daily lives of *Cirque du Soleil* aficionados.

Cirque du Soleil is also diversifying its commercial activities by targeting another niche: licensing. The organization also wishes to extend its creative talent to other spheres of activity. With the collaboration of business partners, *Cirque du Soleil* is developing innovative projects, particularly in the field of hospitality (restaurants, bars, spas, etc.). Through its own unique approach, *Cirque du Soleil* extends its creative energy to other types of initiatives in order to create a new form of entertainment: (e.g The REVOLUTION LOUNGE at The Mirage and the Gold Lounge at ARIA Resort & Casino at CityCenter in Las Vegas, as well as the women's fitness program JUKARI).