

Cirque du Soleil at a Glance

From a group of 20 street performers at its beginnings in 1984, Cirque du Soleil is a major Quebec-based organization providing high-quality artistic entertainment. The company has more than 4,000 employees from over 40 different countries, including more than a 1,000 artists.

Cirque du Soleil has brought wonder and delight to close to 90 million spectators in over 200 cities on five continents. In 2009, Cirque du Soleil will present 19 shows simultaneously throughout the world. The company has received such prestigious awards as the Emmy, Drama Desk, Bambi, ACE, G meaux, F lix, and Rose d'Or de Montreux. Cirque du Soleil International Headquarters are in Montreal, Canada.

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

The mission

Cirque du Soleil's mission 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 Quebec 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  chassiers 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 – who included one Guy Lalibert  who became founder of Cirque du Soleil.

The troupe went on to found Le Club des talons hauts (the High Heels Club), and then, in 1982, organized La F te 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 F te foraine was repeated in 1983 and 1984. Le Club des talons hauts attracted notice, and Guy Lalibert , Gilles Ste-Croix and their cronies began to cherish a crazy dream: to create a Quebec circus and take the troupe travelling around the world.

In 1984, Quebec 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 Lalibert  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 more than 4,000 employees worldwide, including more than 1,000 artists.
- At the Montreal International Headquarters alone, there are close to 1,800 employees.
- The average age of employees is 35.
- Cirque's employees and artists represent over 40 nationalities and speak 25 different languages.
- Since 1984, Cirque du Soleil's touring shows have visited over 200 cities around the world.
- Close to 90 million spectators have seen a Cirque du Soleil show since 1984.
- More than 15 million people will have seen a Cirque du Soleil show in 2009.
- Cirque du Soleil hasn't received any grants from the public or private sectors since 1992.

Cirque du Soleil Shows

In 2009, Cirque du Soleil will present nineteen different shows around the world :

Touring shows

- Varekai (Europe)
- Dralion (Asia -Pacific)
- Quidam (Europe)
- Alegría (Asia and Middle East until April 2009)
- Corteo (Japan)
- KOOZA (North America)
- Cirque 2009 (North America)

Arena shows

- *Saltimbanco* (North America)
- Alegría (North America starting in May 2009)

Resident shows

- "O" (Las Vegas, Nevada)
- Mystère (Las Vegas, Nevada)
- ZUMANITY- The Sensual Side of Cirque du Soleil (Las Vegas, Nevada)
- La Nouba (Orlando, Florida)
- KÀ (Las Vegas, Nevada)
- LOVE (Las Vegas, Nevada)

- ZAIA (Macau, China)
- CRISS ANGEL Believe (Las Vegas, Nevada)
- ZED (Tokyo, Japan)
- A show inspired by the life and music of Elvis Presley at Aria Resort and Casino at City Center

Seasonal show

- *Wintuk* (New York, New York)
from November to January each year

Other Cirque du Soleil shows since 1984 that are no longer presented:

- Cirque du Soleil
- La Magie continue
- We Reinvent the Circus
- Nouvelle Expérience
- Fascination
- Pomp Duck and Circumstance
- DELIRIUM

Resident Theatres

- Walt Disney World® Resort in Orlando, Florida (La Nouba)
- Treasure Island in Las Vegas, Nevada (Mystère)
- Bellagio in Las Vegas, Nevada ("O")
- New York New York Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas, Nevada (ZUMANITY)
- MGM Grand in Las Vegas, Nevada (KÀ)
- The Mirage Resort in Las Vegas, Nevada (LOVE)
- WaMu Theater at Madison Square Garden in New York (Wintuk)
- The Venetian Macao-Resort-Hotel in China (ZAIA)
- The Cirque du Soleil Theatre Tokyo in Japan (ZED)
- The Luxor in Las Vegas, Nevada (CRISS ANGEL Believe)
- A new theatre at Aria Resort and Casino at City Center in 2009

Areas of Activity

Cirque du Soleil's 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:

1. Through its multimedia division called Cirque du Soleil Images, Cirque 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. 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.
3. Cirque du Soleil's Merchandising Division seeks to leverage the unique Cirque du Soleil experience through the development of high quality products which meet the expectations of our 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 on 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. The REVOLUTION LOUNGE at The Mirage Hotel in Las Vegas is a case in point.