

CIRQUE DU SOLEIL®

# ALEGRÍA

IN A NEW LIGHT™

PRESS KIT



## A REIMAGINED CLASSIC

Undeniably the most iconic *Cirque du Soleil* production, *Alegría* is an all-time classic reimagined for a new generation to fall in love with. An uplifting immersive experience, *Alegría* whisks audiences away to a mystical world sprinkled with visual poetry and acrobatic extravagance.

At the heart of a once-glorious kingdom that has lost its king, *Alegría* witnesses the power struggle at play between the old order and the youth in strive for hope and renewal. As the court jester clumsily tries to take the throne, a growing desire for change emerges from the street to defy the status-quo and bring joy to the world.

With its unforgettable soundtrack, exciting acrobatics, surreal costume designs, vibrant sets, and playful humor, *Alegría* touches the soul and lives up to its global reputation of quintessential *Cirque du Soleil* spectacle.

### In A New Light

First premiered in 1994, *Alegría* ('joy' in Spanish) has become one of the most beloved *Cirque du Soleil* shows by mesmerizing over 14 million spectators in 255 cities across 40 countries in over 19 years of touring. Its Grammy-nominated soundtrack – featuring the iconic title track "*Alegría*" - is still the most purchased and streamed *Cirque du Soleil* album to date

In 2019, in celebration of its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, *Alegría* was restaged under the Big Top in a whole new light, ensuring that all its components - stage direction, music, acrobatics, sets, costumes, lighting & make-up designs - would be as inspiring for today's audiences as they were at the time of the original creation. Reenergized by a cast of 64 acrobats, clowns, musicians and singers, *Alegría* remains timeless and imbued with a joyous magical feeling.



# THE CHARACTERS



## Mr. Fleur

In absence of a king, the court jester, Mr. Fleur, pictures himself as the legitimate heir to the throne and clumsily tries to impose his authority on the kingdom. Fanciful and unpredictable, Mr. Fleur is forever caught between his playful urge to charm and his desire to control. As his grip on his subjects fades away, Mr. Fleur realizes that true power comes from within.



## The Aristocrats

Strange heirs to power, the Aristocrats seek to retain their privileges and maintain the status quo at all costs by siding with Mr. Fleur. On their faces, strangely distorted by the passage of time, one can see the fear of progress and the selfish desire for power.



## The Bronx

The Bronx spring forth from the street. Young and fiery, they try vigorously to defy the established order to trigger changes in the kingdom.



## The Angels

Beings from the afterlife, the Angels are the guardians of the kingdom and its inhabitants. Imbued with humanity, they generate a celestial energy to inspire hope and living in harmony.



# THE CHARACTERS



## The Nymphs

The Nymphs personify the purity of youth. Graceful and delicate, they navigate the space between earth and sky; bringing light into the darkness.

---



## The Clowns

At first Mr. Fleur's allies, the Clowns also have fun at his expense. Brothers in humor, this pair of zany Aristocrats is at ease in this crazy environment and make light of any situation through the power of friendship and imagination.

---



## The Singers

Opposite yet complementary, the Singers in Black and in White evoke resilience. The Singer in Black embodies commitment, tenacity and the indomitable power of hope. The Singer in White is naïve, yet wise in the face of adversity. Together, they become an unstoppable, inspirational force.

---

# THE ACTS



## Acro Poles

In this never-before-seen discipline combining the circus techniques of Russian Bars and Banquine, the Aristocrats balance and bounce on poles normally used for pole vaulting, which are held horizontally, enabling flyers to execute a stunning aerial ballet above the porters' heads.



## Cyr Wheel

Exhibiting both strength and acrobatic poetry, a Bronx uses his own impetus to make a large majestic hoop roll and spin across the stage while performing intricate feats of gymnastics inside its circular structure.



## Synchronized Trapeze Duo

Perched on side-by-side swinging trapezes, two Angels execute intricate spins and breathtaking leaps in perfect sync. This act features innovative vertical acrobatic sequences as well as variations in the height and swinging axis of the trapezes during the performance.



## Fire Knife Dance

In symbiosis with a powerful drummer, a daredevil Bronx brings to life a thrilling, traditional Samoan dance. He doesn't simply juggle with fire; he IS fire. He eats, breathes, and touches the flames, while his twirling knives become virtual extensions of his body.



## THE ACTS



### Snowstorm

The Clowns tell their own story of loneliness, love-lost and despair through poetry and physical comedy. With a surprising windstorm of paper snowflakes, they shake the kingdom at its core to make space for renewal.

---



### Aerial Straps

To the melody of the “Alegría” theme song, a dynamic couple soars through a delicate snowfall. The two aerialists, a Bronx and an Angel, separate and reunite in an embrace high above the stage, at times holding on solely to each other.

---



### Hula Hoops

Using all her limbs, indeed her entire body, a Bronx dazzles mixing feats of contortion with her ability to spin and twirl a multitude of hoops.

---



### Powertrack

A group of fourteen Bronx demonstrate their prowess as they soar into the air while executing dynamic gymnastic and tumbling displays in unison and in counterpoint, bouncing off two crisscrossing trampoline tracks embedded into the stage.

---

## THE ACTS



### Hand-to-Hand

The Nymphs show complete mastery of the hand-to-hand discipline by displaying exceptional strength and control. The flyer balances on top of her partner's hands, shoulders and even feet, before being flung into the air and caught with remarkable precision.

---



### Flying Trapeze

Set 10 meters above the stage, four trapezes become the aerial playground of daring flyers who perform incredible leaps to reach for the arms of mighty catchers suspended by their knees. Requiring flawless coordination, skill and timing, this breathtaking act culminates with impressive jumps into the net.

---



### Hand Balancing & Contortion (act in rotation)

Grace, strength and flexibility are astonished as an Angel fluidly balances on a series of strategically placed canes. With an acrobatic technique rooted in the Mongolian art form of contortion, she skillfully bends her body into intricate shapes while maintaining a delicate equilibrium.

---



### Juggling (act in rotation)

A charismatic Bronx exhibits dexterity and showmanship as he manipulates a multitude of clubs and bouncing balls at breakneck speed.





## THE KINGDOM

The set of *Alegría* is an evocation of the architecture of power, both past and present. It is inspired by handcrafted artistry and goldsmithing on a grand scale within a contemporary environment. It transforms the Big Top into the royal court of a timeless kingdom that has seen better days.

**The hierarchy of power** | The stage is spread out on two levels separated by three steps. The highest level symbolizes the monarchy overlooking the royal court, while the lower level represents the street. The old king's throne, which has lost some parts and a lot of its polish, stands at the top of the steps.

**The passage of time** | The first thing one notices upon entering the Big Top is the majestic Crown at the back of the stage with its organic curves and lighted branches. Lush vines have invaded the structure, as if nature was reclaiming its rights on this tired kingdom.

**From darkness to light** | The lighting design of *Alegría* is based on the idea of duality between light and shadow. The lighting goes from more traditional to more contemporary, with the use of mobile mirrors in Act II. Suspended lamps above the stage serve both as chandeliers and acrobatic apparatuses. LED lights placed in several of the Crown's 64 branches give the impression that light emanates from the Crown itself.

### The *Alegría* set in numbers

- The Crown located at the back of the stage has 120 spikes and 64 branches.
- The vines on the Crown total 975 meters in length.
- The Crown curtain, on which appears a salamander – symbol of the French Renaissance, was printed in Germany in a single pass on a giant, seamless piece of fabric that is 33.5 meters wide and 6 meters high.





# THE COSTUMES

The *Alegría* costume designs evoke a dusty kingdom in need of renewal. Adding humanity to this imaginary universe, the costumes and the make-up highlight the artists' natural shapes, facial features and hair.



**All that glitters is not gold |** The costumes of the Aristocrats have progressively become tattered, ragged and frayed. The colors and motifs have faded over time. The fabric of the artists' clothes and their bodies have cuts and scratches that mark the passage of time. These marks and textures were digitally printed on the fabric, and these features also found their way into the make-up design. One Aristocrat wears monocles in the form of a silicone-based prosthesis, while others' faces are ornamented with old jewels and crooked noses.

**Overcoming the difficulties of life |** The Bronx, dressed in earth tones, symbolize the youth from the street, deprived of any aristocratic privilege. Their costumes embrace the muscular bodies of the performers to illustrate the power and energy of this revolutionary movement.



**The scars of experience |** With the golden star they wear on their solar plexus, the Angels are humans of the afterlife with a past and a lifetime worth of experience. The scars of their life on Earth, symbols of their humanity, are printed on their luminous white costumes. Golden hues and sparkling jewels add a celestial touch to their bright outfits.

## A closer look at the costumes and make-up

- It took more than 20,000 hours of work to put together the costumes of the show.
- Artisans spent 300 hours making Mr. Fleur's costume, which contains 5 meters of electrical wire.
- More than 1,000 meters of fabric was printed using a technique called sublimation, which fixes the images in the fibers of the material.
- The mesh in the costumes of the Bronx is made of the same material used in making hockey nets.
- There are 96 costumes and 533 different costume elements in the show.
- There are close to 30 different make-up concepts in the show divided in three families of characters.
- Each costume is custom-fitted to the artist's body and handcrafted at the Cirque du Soleil Head Quarters in Montreal, Canada. The average lifespan of each costume piece is 6 months.







## THE MUSIC

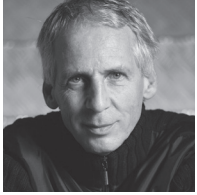
Brought to life by five musicians and two singers, the musical score of *Alegría* enhances the emotional impact of the production. The iconic songs of the original production have been passed through the prism of today's aesthetic to feature new arrangements. The score mixes electronic and rock sounds with acoustic and orchestral elements, including brass, strings and accordion sounds, all in sync with the acrobatics of the show.

The sounds associated with the Angels have more poetic undertones while the music connected to the Bronx has an underground feel. The powerful score is sung in English, French, Italian, Spanish and in the trademark *Cirque du Soleil* invented language.





# THE CREATIVE TEAM



**Gilles Ste-Croix**  
Creation Director (1994)



**Franco Dragone**  
Director (1994)



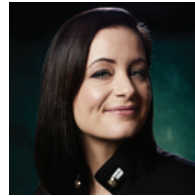
**Daniel Ross**  
Creation Director (2019)



**Jean-Guy Legault**  
Director (2019)



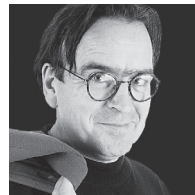
**Dominique Lemieux**  
Costume Designer



**Anne-Séguin Poirier**  
Set and Props Designer



**Mikki Kunttu**  
Lighting Designer



**René Dupéré**  
Composer



**Jean-Phi Goncalves**  
Musical Director and Arranger

# THE CREATIVE TEAM



**Émilie Therrien**  
Acrobatic Choreographer and  
Acrobatic Performance Designer



**Richard LePage**  
Senior Director - Human Performance  
Design and Management



**Jacques Boucher,**  
Sound Designers



**Jean-Michel Caron**  
Sound Designers



**Pierre Masse**  
Acrobatic Equipment Designer



**Nathalie Gagné**  
Make-up Designer



**Lucie Janvier**  
Production Manager



## CREATION PROCESS

At *Cirque du Soleil*, the creation process is organic and influenced by the creators and their experience. Each new production is first assigned a Stage Director, a Production Manager, and a Director of Creation, who liaise with freelance creators and the various *Cirque du Soleil* teams. This trio will develop the basic show concept before other creators join the team, including a set designer, a costume designer, a composer, a choreographer, a lighting designer, an acrobatic performance designer, etc. The concept of a show then takes form based on extensive exchange and discussion among members of the creation team. As these exchanges are taking place, the Casting team suggests artists to the Director. The creation may take from one to three years depending on the nature of the show to be developed.

Creation meetings, costume and set design, as well as the first rehearsals are held at *Cirque du Soleil* International Headquarters in Montreal. Artists from all over the world arrive in the city to begin workshops and rehearsals eight to nine months before the premiere, right up until the final staging sessions to be held in the big top or theatre.

## CASTING

*Cirque du Soleil* is constantly looking for talent for its shows in operations and its future creations. Talent scouts look for originality, talent and the unusual by holding auditions around the world and attending competitions, shows, festivals and various events. Potential artists are divided in three major categories:

**Sports Disciplines** | Around 40% of current *Cirque du Soleil* artists are retired competitive athletes from sports such as artistic, acrobatic and rhythmic gymnastics, trampoline, tumbling, synchronized swimming and diving.

**Circus Arts** | A majority of *Cirque du Soleil* artists aim from circus schools, contemporary circus companies, traditional circuses or even were born into families with generations of circus performers.

**Artistic Disciplines** | Singers, musicians, dancers, actors and clowns play a big role in creating magic in *Cirque du Soleil* shows through their musical talent, ability to convey emotion with movement, or aptitude for engaging the audience directly. All these artists are trained and experienced professionals from the performing arts world.



# TOURING OPERATIONS

**Tour Management** | An array of services is offered to the 112 cast and crew members of *Alegría*. The Tour Management department takes care of the travel and lodging of all individuals, working visas, insurance programs and provides supporting accounting services. Four chefs tour with *Alegría* and serve an average of 250 meals daily with the support of 10 local staff members. A Senior Publicist overseeing all PR, Direct Marketing & Social Media initiatives also travels with the show.

**Artistic Direction** | The Artistic Director of *Alegría* has the extensive mandate of ensuring the quality of each performance in respect of the original concept, overseeing the selection and integration of new artists, managing the creation of back-up scenarios and feeding the show's evolution through time. Supported by a team of Stage Managers, Coaches, Performance Medicine Therapists and Wardrobe Technicians, the Artistic Director oversees the well-being, workload, and daily motivation of the 64 cast members of *Alegría*.

**Performance Medicine** | Three Performance Medicine Therapists travel with *Alegría* to monitor the physical condition of the artists, procure treatment, develop targeted training programs, and suggest performance modifications when needed. On-site appointments with a locally-sourced Massage Therapist and a Pilates Coach are also offered to artists.

**Show Technical Department** | A team of 20 show technicians are required to operate the show and perform the daily maintenance on the equipment. The team is divided into 5 departments: Lighting, Sound, Rigging, Automation and Stage Carpentry.

**Site Technical Department** | As *Alegría* travels with its own canvas theatre, a team of 8 tent specialists, carpenters, welders, plumbers and electricians is responsible of the set-up, teardown and maintenance of the installations.

**Guest Experience** | A team of Box Office, Food & Beverages, Ushers, Merchandising and Security Team Leaders manage more than 150 local employees to deliver a high-standard customer experience.

## Fun Facts

- A total of 109 people from 22 countries are part of the cast and crew of *Alegría*.
- The 64 artists alone represent 19 different nationalities: Argentina, Belarus, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Croatia, Denmark, France, Germany, Mongolia, Russia, Samoa, Spain, Switzerland, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United State and Venezuela.
- 14 languages can be heard spoken on site.
- The cast & crew of *Alegría* live in company-provided corporate apartments and hotels.

