



An IAI Presentations Production

THE PEKING ACROBATS®

2016 30th Anniversary North American Tour Short Program
~ Celebrating 30 Years of Awesome Entertainment ~

- THE LION DANCE
- LET THE SPINNING PLATES SPIN
- DIVING DARING DO
- IT'S A TIGHT SQUEEZE
- DARLING DIABLOS
- KEEP IT UNDER YOUR HAT
- CONTORTION BY CANDLELIGHT
- AERIAL ACROBATICS
- HUMAN PYRAMID
- BICYCLE PAGODA
- FINALE

As this program represents our short program, there will be NO intermission.

*Actual program content for all performances will be selected from the above.
This program is subject to change without notice and at the discretion of management.*

For educational shows, we recommend that instructors visit www.iaipresentations.com and our Client Resources page, for Study Guides to give students a cultural reference point for experiencing the performance.

The Management reserves the right to make alterations in the order of the program or in the cast and crew through illness or any other cause whatsoever. The use of cameras or recording devices of any kind during the performance is strictly prohibited. The Management also recommends that you advise children that what they see on stage takes years of practice and should not be tried at home!

(Program Credits on Next Page...)



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(Program Notes on Following Pages...)



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2016 30th Anniversary North American Tour Program Notes

For the last 30 years, **THE PEKING ACROBATS** have redefined audience perceptions of Chinese acrobatics. They perform daring maneuvers atop a precarious pagoda of chairs; they are experts at treacherous feats of daring, trick-cycling, precision tumbling, somersaulting, and gymnastics. They defy gravity with amazing displays of contortion, flexibility, and control. They push the envelope of human possibility with astonishing juggling dexterity and incredible balancing feats, showcasing tremendous skill and ability. They are masters of agility and grace. Accompanied by live musicians playing traditional Chinese instruments with modern flair, high-tech special effects that coalesce with the music, and all of this, in harmony with the Acrobat's awe-inspiring feats! An exuberant entertainment event appears before your eyes, featuring all the excitement and festive pageantry of a Chinese Carnival infused with fresh, explosive energy! ***With their 2016 30th Anniversary North American Tour, THE PEKING ACROBATS celebrate 30 years of awesome entertainment with their fans, young and old, in this, the Year of the Monkey!***

Many of the magnificent acrobatic acts we see today, despite their sophistication, were performed in ancient times. The history of Chinese acrobatics is rich in tradition and dates back over 2000 years. Throughout the history of China the acrobatic arts flourished, but in varying degrees. Originally, court entertainments were formal and monotonous, quite the opposite of the lively, folk arts of the people. And, it did all begin with folk arts: tumbling, juggling ordinary household objects, and balancing. Common games of the people, such as "Rang Hitting," or throwing a small wooden strip the size and shape of a shoe sole at a target, developed accuracy. Modern day Whip Feats are traced back to this game. Myth and religion also influenced the acrobatic arts. The Lion Dance is Buddhist in origin. The lion was seen as the reincarnation of a woman, who was teased into revealing her true identity. This dance was a symbol of spiritual renewal and revered for dispelling bad luck.

Eventually, however, the excitement of the acrobat's amazing feats caught on and held the attention of the ruling classes. Acrobatic performers were routinely invited to the court to entertain and impress visiting dignitaries. The varied acts of tumbling, singing, dancing, and juggling became known as "The Hundred Entertainments" during the Han Dynasty (206 BC - 220 AD). Records of acrobatic acts can be found as early as the Ch'in Dynasty (221 B.C. - 207 B.C.) and Chinese acrobats through the ages have continued to perfect what has become an evolving folk art form. **THE PEKING ACROBATS** ability to perform the astounding is rooted in centuries of this Chinese history and folk art. No doubt, the Chinese acrobats of the Han Dynasty would be awe-struck and amazed at how their modern-day counterparts have elevated their art form, and the fact that their folk art tradition, begun so many thousands of years ago, is still going strong, even into the 21st Century!

Tradition demands that each generation of acrobats add their own improvements and embellishments to their acts. Generations of families have carried on this highly acclaimed and popular tradition. Children begin training at a young age and adhere to a rigorous training schedule which they follow over the length of their careers. Today the acrobat in China is considered an artist. Because of the unusual and difficult nature of the feats involved, high honor is conferred upon those skilled enough to become acrobats; in China, an acrobat is considered the Chinese equivalent of an opera star in the West. It is telling that the Chinese acrobatic tradition just gets stronger, due to the continued innovation of the artists and the endless enthusiasm from their adoring public.

Over the years, **THE PEKING ACROBATS** have been featured on numerous television shows and celebrity TV Specials including *The Wayne Brady Show*, *That's Incredible*, ABC's *Wide World Of Sports*, and NBC's *Ring In The New Year Holiday Special*. They appeared on NICKELODEON'S hit show *Unfabulous*, and *Ellen's Really Big Show*, hosted by comedian and talk show host, Ellen DeGeneres. They set the world record for the Human Chair Stack on FOX's *Guinness Book Primetime* TV show where they astounded audiences with their bravery and dexterity as they balanced six people precariously atop six chairs 21 feet up in the air without safety lines! Internationally, they appeared on *ArtistGalla*, a benefit show that was broadcast live across Norway, and filmed at the *Drammens Theatre* in Oslo. On recent European Tours, they have appeared on RAI TV in Italy, and in Holland on *Zapp Live* and *Limburg Vandaag* TV shows.

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THE PEKING ACROBATS have also made the Hollywood scene on the silver screen as some company members were featured in director Stephen Soderbergh's hit film *Ocean's 11*, playing with Hollywood's elite such as Julia Roberts, Brad Pitt, and George Clooney. Qin Shaobo, a current member of **THE PEKING ACROBATS**, also appeared in that film's two blockbuster sequels, *Ocean's 12*, and *Ocean's 13*. **THE PEKING ACROBATS** were the featured performers at the glamorous Hollywood Premiere Party of *Ocean's 13* where they impressed the star-studded audience with their incredible acrobatic feats!

THE PEKING ACROBATS are proud to once again be on the cutting edge of entertainment technology, with the release of their performances in mind-bending 3D on NBC/Comcast's Xfinity Channel. Fans that may have missed this exciting program on TV should check their local listings for more information on this amazing 3D TV special to experience **THE PEKING ACROBATS** like never before! **THE PEKING ACROBATS** are also thrilled to announce that a home version of their 3D DVD TV special is currently available. This DVD can be viewed on any DVD player, and so everyone, even those without 3D equipment, can enjoy this all-new video. The television special was taped live in concert by Center City Film & Television on **THE PEKING ACROBATS** at Popejoy Hall in Albuquerque, NM. This fun and informative program features **THE PEKING ACROBATS** in performance, as well as interviews with the show's producers, cast, and crew.

THE PEKING ACROBATS released their Twenty-Fifth Silver Anniversary Tour DVD in 2011. This incredible DVD was filmed in High Definition format, and those who enjoyed their first DVD release should not miss this thrilling DVD, which features amazing acts, beautiful costumes, traditional Chinese music played on exotic instruments, and the high quality production values expected from **THE PEKING ACROBATS**, all in crystal-clear High Definition. **THE PEKING ACROBATS** still enjoy the continued success of their first consumer DVD, initially released on their 2006 North American Tour, as a television special for HDNet. This DVD, also in High Definition format, has aired many times on HDNet television. All three of these quality DVD products are available at most public performances by **THE PEKING ACROBATS** and always on the internet at www.iaipresentations.com and they make great gifts for family and friends.

THE PEKING ACROBATS continue to perform for Symphony Concert audiences across North America. Fans will recall that this milestone in their career was achieved when they made their debut at the Hollywood Bowl. They performed as part of the Hollywood Bowl's Fireworks Season Finale, where the company blended their unique brand of acrobatics with **THE PEKING ACROBATS'** Orchestra and the majestic sound of the 100-member Hollywood Bowl Orchestra. The acrobats infused Bowl audiences with their powerful maneuvers in a multi-cultural, multi-media spectacular. Between the 'fireworks' on stage and the fireworks in the air, audiences experienced theatrical alchemy at its finest! **THE PEKING ACROBATS** returned to the Hollywood Bowl for three separate appearances over the last 12 years. Concerts such as these have led to many other performances with Symphony Orchestras across North America such as the San Francisco Symphony, the San Diego Symphony, the Buffalo Philharmonic, the Cincinnati Pops Orchestra, and the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra to name a few.

Continuing their tradition of innovation with Symphony Concerts, in May 2011, **THE PEKING ACROBATS** performed in sold-out Symphony Concerts with the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra and the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra in Canada. As part of their 2011 New Year's Eve Gala, **THE PEKING ACROBATS** performed with the 80-member Duluth-Superior Symphony Orchestra, treating the celebratory crowd at the Amsoil Arena to their unique acrobatic and musical artistry. All of these elements combined to make for a magical New Year's Eve of entertainment and fun!

In April 2014, **THE PEKING ACROBATS** returned to perform with the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, back by the popular demand of their adoring Winnipeg fans. And, in April 2015, **THE PEKING ACROBATS** debuted with the Rochester Symphony Orchestra and the Houston Symphony Orchestra. All of these engagements will undoubtedly lead to many other such performances with Symphony Orchestras across North America and, in between their theatre tours, **THE PEKING ACROBATS** continue to bring their special brand of entertainment to a completely new audience of theatrical patrons. **(Continued on Next Page...)**



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THE PEKING ACROBATS have also expanded their reach into the European market. For the past seven years, they have toured throughout the Continent and visited such countries as Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Switzerland. They have traveled to several of these countries two and three times over the years, visiting many exciting cities such as Milan, Bologna, and Naples in Italy, Bruges in Belgium, as well as Amsterdam and The Hague in the Netherlands. In November 2014, **THE PEKING ACROBATS** debuted in Portugal as part of their Seventh European Tour and thrilled Portuguese audiences with their incredible talents and amazing showmanship!

Here again, is another triumph for **THE PEKING ACROBATS** as they share their culture with ever-widening audiences, building their reputation as the finest Chinese acrobatic troupe in the world. On each of their seven European tours, the performers endeared themselves to the European audiences. So, it is no surprise that they are asked to return there by popular demand. The warmth and appreciation of the European people makes **THE PEKING ACROBATS** feel right at home, and no doubt the future holds many more such successful tours for **THE PEKING ACROBATS**, much to the delight of their growing numbers of European fans!

A performance by **THE PEKING ACROBATS**, therefore, brings with it the opportunity to view the epitome of a rich and ancient folk art tradition, highlighted by today's technology, melding the ancient and traditional with the modern wonders of the 21st Century. It is with much pride and pleasure that we embark on the 30th Anniversary 2016 North American Tour of **THE PEKING ACROBATS**, and our **Year of the Monkey Celebrations!** So, sit back, relax, and enjoy as our performers reveal to you their mastery of a fascinating and ancient art form, thousands of years in the making, and **celebrate with us 30 years of awesome entertainment by THE PEKING ACROBATS!**

As the Seattle Times reports: "Nearly everything **THE PEKING ACROBATS** did last night was amazing - and stunning, and breathtaking and WOW!"

The New York Post sums it up thusly: "**THE PEKING ACROBATS** [are] pushing the envelope of human possibility...Pure artistry!"

Dance Insider raves: "The physical feats of **THE PEKING ACROBATS** seem almost...surreal, defying laws of body mechanics and physics. It's like watching 'Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon' LIVE, without camera tricks creating special effects. When a show can fill you with the wonder of a 10 year-old, you know you have had a good time...that's success!"

Marin News-Pointer of Berkeley, California exclaims: "**THE PEKING ACROBATS** rate a single word: Fabulous...Extraordinary, Inspired, Breathtaking...and...Fabulous! The acts are indescribably complex, to be believed, they must be seen. I'd say the crowd found The Peking Acrobats, well...Fabulous!"

The People's Critic of Houston, Texas stated: "The Houston Symphony Orchestra + **THE PEKING ACROBATS** = Pure Magic! [It was] a night of astoundingly athletic physical displays somewhere between the magical and the seemingly impossible...Allow me to use that most overworked word: AWESOME!"

(End of Program and Notes)

Revised October 2015.