

# The Dallas Morning News

Dallas, Texas, Friday, July 1, 2005

## Cirque a lively celebration

Astonishing feats  
abound in Scottish  
Rite's 'Extravaganza'

By NANCY CHURNIN  
Staff Writer

A sparkling pixie waves her wand at an old, hunched, black-cloaked man.

The man drops the cloak, straightens up into a young man in a shimmering costume, rises and flies in the air on two long, suspended shimmering silks.

The act, Bulgarian gymnast Sonya Petrova as the pixie introducing Angelo Rodriguez of Peru on aerial silks, sets the persuasive tone for the exuberant *Extravaganza le Cirque* premiering through Sunday at the Scottish Rite Cathedral. The show is all about the celebration of reawakenings.

There's new life in the show itself: the first Dallas-originated cirque, which uses a mix of Dallas performers with internationally renowned artists from Bulgaria, Russia, Argenti-

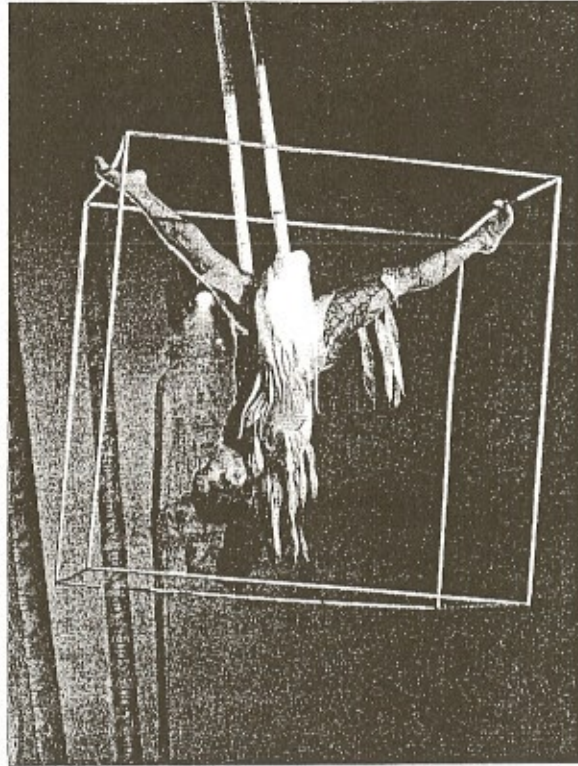


Edvard Yazlovsky skips rope with his uniwheel.

### THEATER REVIEW

na and Hungary. There's new life in the building: an exquisitely old-fashioned historic landmark with graceful pillars and carvings being used for the first time for a public performance. And there's new life — literally — in Fanny Kerwich, the show's writer and director. Ms. Kerwich, a seventh-generation circus performer who gave up touring to marry Mark Doyle of Dallas, is expecting their first child. That, of course, didn't stop her from doing her remarkable hula-hoop routine, in which she simultaneously spins four hula hoops up and down her body with ease.

Dallas clowns Slappy and Monday (husband-and-wife team Tiffany Riley and Dick Monday) slipped their acts between the larger acts, keeping the kids laughing with bits like Slappy crying tears that sprayed many feet into the audience. Another audience favorite was Johnny Peers and the Muttville Comix, a comedy act in which the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Clown College graduate works



Photos by JOHN F. RHODES/Staff Photographer

with a string of mutts he adopted from the Humane Society. Despite the many clever tricks — some of which involved dogs playing jump-rope — what the kids seemed to like best was the way the happy dogs wagged their tails and licked Mr. Peers' face in between stunts.

There were many moments, too, that astonished, including Moscow Circus School graduate Vladimir Tsarkov with his mesmerizing juggling act and husband and wife Alexander Petrov and Ludmilla Kirilova of Bulgaria with a perch-pole routine in which Mr. Petrov balances Ms. Kirilova on a metal pole that weighs 25 pounds. But 5-year-old Daniel Yazlovsky has to go down as one of the biggest scene stealers. When he walked onstage to give a uniwheel to his father, Moscow Circus School graduate Edvard Yazlovsky, the crowd admired his stage presence. But then when he got on a uniwheel

and started riding it himself, they just went wild.

The joy onstage, too, was also reflected offstage. The members of the Dallas Scottish Rite, which produced this first public show to build public interest in the upkeep of this historical landmark, also sit on the board of the Texas Scottish Rite Hospital for Children, which gives free treatment to children 18 and younger with orthopedic needs and learning disorders. Ninety of the 400 seats went to hospital patients and their families.

*Extravaganza le Cirque*, presented by the Dallas Scottish Rite at the Scottish Rite Cathedral, 500 S. Harwood St., through Sunday. Nightly at 8 with Saturday and Sunday matinees at 2. Runs 120 min. Tickets \$40 to \$60. Call Ticketmaster at 214-373-8000 or go to [www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com), or call 214-748-9196 for more information and group sales.

It's hip to be square when Peruvian Angelo Rodriguez is suspended in a cube during his aerial silks act. *Extravaganza le Cirque* runs through Sunday at the Scottish Rite Cathedral.