

[Click here for if you would like to sponsor this magazine](#)

# BOHÈME VÉRITÉ

Everything is art — Art is everywhere

Volume 1 Issue 7

Online Magazine

Photography & Art

Poetry & Music

Theater & Film

Fashion & Dance

Speak & Travel

HOME

SUBSCRIBE

EVENTS

SUBMISSIONS

ADVERTISE

MISSION

CONTACT US

ABOUT US

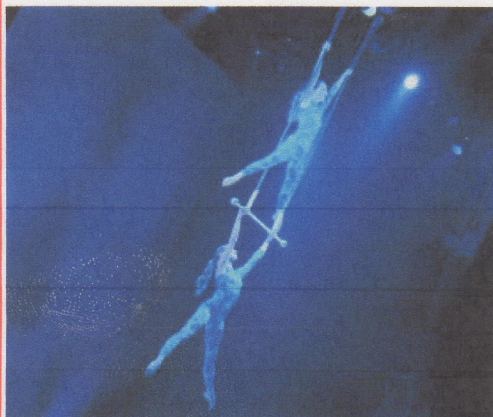
ARCHIVES

## Fashion & Dance

### Glace: Cirque on Ice – A New Kind of Circus

By Bethel Swift

Chicago Editor



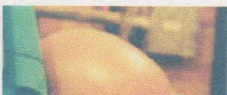
**CHICAGO** – City theaters replaced circus tents this month in a five week, 12-city tour for the multi-talented cast of *Glace: Cirque on Ice*.

“I love that it is in a theater setting because it makes it seem more performance-oriented than regular ice shows,” says Gia Alteri, 28, one of the show’s three principal skaters.



*Glace: Cirque on Ice* combines the aesthetic splendor of magnificently costumed and choreographed individual and synchronized skating numbers, with the astonishing feats of strength, agility and wit exhibited in circus acts. To top it all off, the skaters perform on synthetic “ice” - a surface that works well as a substitute because of its ease of transportation (the 35X40 ft. arena breaks into giant 4X8 ft. puzzle pieces). “It enables us to do a show with things you couldn’t do on a cold surface,” says Production Stage

Manager, Ken Samuels. He notes that a real ice arena is not an ideal atmosphere for the aerialists, contortionists and other circus performers in the show, who need to keep their muscles and ligaments warm to protect against injuries.



Touring with synthetic ice also has benefits for the show’s skaters. “It’s great to have on your resume,” says Lia Stephanos, 21, the show’s youngest primary skater, who performs several lovely numbers throughout

Google

Web  www.bvmagazine.com

Search

Ads by Google

**Cirque Du Soleil Tickets**

Cheap Priced Cirque Tickets. We Beat Everyone's Price.

[www.TicketLiquidator.com](http://www.TicketLiquidator.com)

Advertise on this site

Ads by Google

**Cirque du Soleil - Vegas**

Reserve Your Tickets Now! The Official Vegas Travel Site™

[www.VEGAS.com](http://www.VEGAS.com)

Advertise on this site

Ads by Google

**Cirque Du Soleil O**

Get Choice Tickets To All Of The Shows in Vegas! Huge Selection.

[LasVegasTickets.com](http://LasVegasTickets.com)

Advertise on this site

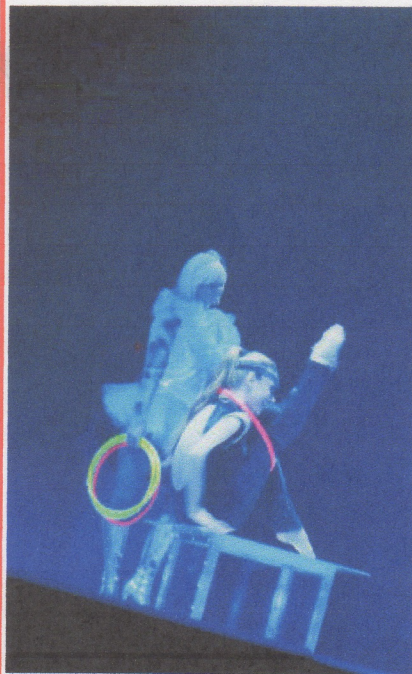
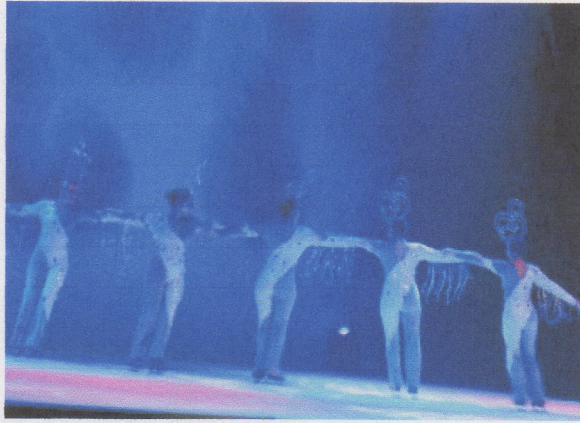
**Advertise with us!**



the two-hour show. Ben Blandford, 24, is the show's only male skater. Although it only took him 10 days to get used to the surface, he good-humoredly recalls it as a "real learning experience." Blandford has 13 years of skating experience and has appeared in numerous shows. His expertise was especially evident when, despite the small ice surface, he was able to perform jumps and maintain a high level of speed.

*Glace: Cirque on Ice* is produced by Michael McPherson (formerly of *Cirque du Soleil*), Patrice Marques (*Broadway on Ice*, *Lido de Paris*) and Carol Bresner (*Swan Lake*, *Cinderella* and *Romeo and Juliet on Ice* for the St. Petersburg State Ballet). The show opened at the City of Morganton Municipal Auditorium in Morganton, NC on November 16, and closes this month at the Crest Theatre in Del Ray, Florida.

The second stop on the tour was the Rialto Square Theatre in Joliet; an 80-year-old venue that was as well suited to the show, as a rubber nose to a clown. The Theatre's beautiful Barton Grande Theatre Pipe Organ, played by Jim Patack during the prelude and intermission, harmonized delicately with the show's circus soundtrack. The auditorium's high ceilings gave the effect of even more height to aerialists suspended high above stage. Scagliola and ornamental plasterwork on the columns, ceiling and walls played up the designs on the performers costumes. The human chandelier act, performed by Cherrise Pawlak, was accompanied by dozens of real glittering chandeliers hanging from the ceiling.



Reminiscent of the 1970 *Ice Capades*, *Glace: Cirque on Ice* has no narrated plot – but there *is* an underlying fairy-tale. "The whole thing is my dream," Alteri says of her pajama clad character (something like Clara's in the *Nutcracker Ballet*). The production unfolds in dream like fashion – with characters emerging, performing and, without actually telling a story, drawing the audience into the dream as well. The chief characters are a physical comedian, played by Jason McPherson (who quickly became a crowd favorite), the Ice Queen, Rachel Moon, and a small troupe of her personal entertainers.

Most of the performances are to the tune of techno/circus music – which surprisingly, doesn't get old. The Ice Queen never dons a pair of skates herself, but struts around in skin tight tie dye pants, a tiara, tutu and a pair of silver platform boots circa 1970. Her artistes include a contortionist (Michele Morrison) who ends up, as contortionists do, inside a small glass box with the Queen seated on top. There's even a hula hoop artist (Alesia Gulevich), who manages more than a dozen hoops and wows the crowd by becoming a virtual human slinky. A hand balancer, two aerialists and seven skaters round out

the cast.

"I'm the Ice Queen's minion," jokes Cory Tabino, 33, hand balancer and all-around assistant during the show. Tabino saw *Cirque du Soleil* at the age of 19, while still an astrophysics student at University of Arizona. After seeing the show, Tabino left school and began training in gymnastics. Tabino notes that with many hand balancers "you don't see their faces that much." In his act, Tabino varies his positions to actually allow for interaction with the audience.





Although the cast is young, they are all accomplished performers. Aerialists Cherrise Pawlak, 29, and Amanda Ritchie, 23, say they spend two hours a day on physical conditioning and run-throughs of their routines. And just how long did it take before they could entrust each other with their lives? "Right away," says Ritchie.



In most circuses the audience doesn't see an aerialist hook up the rope that she will momentarily hang from by her foot, but in this circus the audience did – and they liked it.

"It's all part of the 'New Circus'" says Tabino. *Cirque Nouveau* in French: Where every movement is choreographed and the shows pull music, dance, theater, circus and performance acts out from under one big top show.

Above photos by Carmel Swift:

1) Amanda Ritchie and Sherrse Pawlak perform their twin trapeze act, 2) The cast of *Cirque on Ice* waves au revoir at the end of the November 19 presentation at the Rialto Square Theatre in Joliet, Illinois, 3) Production Stage Manager, Ken Samuels listens as principal skaters Gia Alteri, Lia Stephanos and Ben Blandford discuss the pros and cons of skating on Teflon Ice, 4) Skaters perform a synchronized number during a November 19 performance of *Cirque on Ice*, 5) Contortionist woos the audience, 6) Hand balancer Cory Tabino demonstrates skill and precision as he balances over his bent arm while rotating and keeping his body parallel to the ice, 7) Ice Queen emerges from her sleigh and opens a surprise for the audience - a light snow fall.

[Back to Fashion and Dance](#)



[Photography & Art](#) [Poetry & Music](#) [Theater & Film](#) [Fashion & Dance](#) [Speak & Travel](#)

[HOME](#) [SUBSCRIBE](#) [EVENTS](#) [SUBMISSIONS](#) [ADVERTISE](#) [MISSION](#) [CONTACT US](#) [ABOUT US](#) [ARCHIVES](#)

You are visitor number 91