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by Arthur Miller



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## performing arts BY DANTE ZUÑIGA-WEST

# Cirque du Eugene

Local circus performers raise the tent

In Eugene we don't have to wait for the circus to come to town; it's already here. A sensational family-oriented and acrobatic show (a la Cirque du Soleil) has sprung up in our backyard, and it's about to take off.

*Kaleidoscope: Cirque-Curious*, a full-blown circus extravaganza is the brainchild of a performer/producer/choreographer who goes by the name Francia. "Trapeze, rope, fabric, floor routines, acro-balance, contortion, hooping, stilts, even some juggling, it's all in there," Francia says.

A product of the Bounce Gymnastics and Circus Arts Center, this mixed-bag buffet of all things circus has somehow all been crammed into a little over an hour's worth of showtime.

Francia, a former research assistant turned burner (yes, Burning Man) and marathon runner, says she ran away to the circus years ago. She is an alumnus of Circus Center San Francisco, arguably the nation's premier circus school, and has trained all over the country. A trapeze artist, Francia specializes in aerial acrobatics.

*Kaleidoscope: Cirque-Curious* is Francia's third production, and she held strict auditions. Co-choreographed by the many talented performers and costumed by the designers of Deluxe Fashion Shop, this will be the Circus Arts Center's largest show yet.

"It's been so awesome to see what is out there in Eugene," Francia says, "There is so much talent."

With a theme of exploring curiosity through circus, *Kaleidoscope: Cirque-Curious'* storyline grants Francia and company a wide-open expanse of creative liberties. "It's about two little girls dreaming, and we are her toys that come to life," Francia explains.

Fifteen performers in 10 separate pieces will wow audiences with displays of art and athleticism. The show is geared toward kids and community, which is one of Francia's primary goals.

"It's not burlesque," she says. "It has sensuality in it, but I wanted it to be kid-friendly. So it's very playful," she says. "We're looking forward to the community coming out to support us, because that's really what keeps us going."

*Kaleidoscope: Cirque-Curious* is 7 pm Saturday, March 10, at Bounce Gymnastics and Circus Arts Center; \$12 adult, kids 10 and under \$5.



PHOTO BY TODD COOPER AND TRASK BEDORTHA