



DARCY DURUZ AND GIRL CIRCUS

This One's for the Girls

CIRCUS DIRECTOR ADDS A PUNCH OF GIRL POWER TO THE FAIR BY LAETITIA BÉRAUD

Darcy DuRuz created Girl Circus in 2001, an all-age, almost all-female circus that performs every year at the Oregon Country Fair. Featuring performers in a variety of abilities from ballet to aerial silk, Girl Circus offers high-quality family entertainment.

"I really wanted a show that features more girls and women," DuRuz says. "There's a lot of underused female talent."

DuRuz, 54, helped by her husband, Dave Bender, has been the circus' director, producer, choreographer and major fundraiser since the beginning. The planning begins

as soon as September of the previous year. She begins to recruit and interview the professional performers in January. Rehearsals for the younger set usually come later.

"It's hard work, but it's incredibly delightful, fulfilling and joyful," she says.

Before creating Girl Circus, DuRuz was a professional singer, and she continues that profession by directing choirs and teaching singing at home and at Northwest Christian University. With her husband, a music composer and professional trumpet player, she writes new scores every year for the Girl Circus show.

This year, with her two children studying in college, she is also working on a new project: a musical theater piece.

Girl Circus will center performances on birth and birthdays this year. The show will feature more than 40 performers, including the band, 22 children, a couple of teenagers and seven adult professionals.

"If you're a little girl out at the Country Fair and you really want to be in Girl Circus, I'll let you in!" DuRuz says. "It's my extension of the Oregon Country Fair idea of Fair family." ■

You can attend Girl Circus performances at the Oregon Country Fair WC Fields Memorial Stage on Friday, July 12, at 6:30 pm; Saturday, July 13, at 2:30 pm; Sunday, July 14, at 1:30 pm.

PHOTOS BY TODD COOPER

