

# 'Wow' from start to end

**Taipan Circus shines with a brilliant show of skill and mastery**

*By Aaron Lye*

A **STANDING** ovation — that's what the performers of the Taipan Circus received from an extremely appreciative audience on opening night. And this, more than any number of words, best describes their outstanding performance.

Based in Switzerland and performing in Singapore for the first time, the cast put on a two-hour performance that was a blast from start to finish.

As a circus without performing animals, the Taipan has had to look elsewhere to generate the "wow" factor. And it has succeeded — there was no shortage of "wow" throughout the night.

The troupe prides itself on putting on an intimate show. Com-

pared with the scale and glitz of bigger Big Tops, it's a small outfit. But that has no bearing on the quality of the performance. Indeed, some may say it enhances the entertainment experience. The audience isn't separated from the performers by a great distance and, as a result, can take part in events — cast members choose "volunteers" to take part in the less death-defying, more comic moments.

And plenty of comic moments there are. Interspersed between gripping displays of balance and poise, funnyman Clown Andre draws laughter as easily as water flows from a tap. His antics, such as fighting an inflatable shark in a bathtub and putting audience "volunteers" in awkward situations, are memorable moments.

Yet to single out any one performer as outstanding is a tough call — as well as a grave injustice to the rest. All routines are executed with grace and poise, and the effort put in by the entire team is patently obvious from the ease with which everyone performs. From BMX bicycle acrobatics to graceful aerial stunts, from impressive juggling to mind-boggling balancing, everyone involved in the production shines.

The Taipan Circus has a lot going for it — huge potential and a dedicated, stellar cast. With Singapore having joined the ranks of countries that bar circuses with animals, it seems this is the face of the Big Top to come.

And if the Taipan is the yardstick by which we measure future circuses, there certainly seems to be little to regret, or miss, about the circuses of old.

*The Taipan Circus performs at the Park at Bugis Junction at 8 pm from Tuesdays to Sundays, with additional performances at 2:30 pm on weekends. In Singapore until Jan 14, tickets are priced at \$40, \$25, \$20 and \$19, available from all SISTIC outlets and via the SISTIC hotline at 348 5555.*

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