

Acrobatic-dance circus headlines St. Albert Kids Festival

BY LIZ NICHOLLS, EDMONTONJOURNAL.COM MAY 30, 2011 COMMENTS (1)

STORY

PHOTOS (3)



© Copyright 2007 Imagination Entertainment

[More Images »](#)

Il Circo's Viaggi headlines at the St. Albert Kids Festival.

Photograph by: Supplied

EDMONTON - Fifteen years ago an enterprising singer/dancer/director with a certain instinctive savvy about producing turned his attention to the world of circus.

Michigan-born Sam Trego had been on the road in musicals since he was 15. He'd been a "commercial music and composition" major (business minor) at university. And he'd already chalked up major credentials into custom-making unique special events for big corporations and mega-resorts in Vegas.



Click [here](#) for the top stories being read by people in your neighbourhood and across the country.

[Learn more](#)

MORE ON THIS STORY

- Children's entertainers invade St. Albert for annual festival

STORY TOOLS

E-mail this Article

Print this Article

Comments (1)

Share this Article

Font: [A](#) [A](#) [A](#)

HAWAIIAN
— AIRLINES.COM —

SAN DIEGO TO HAWAII-OAHU
FROM \$729* RT
TRAVEL: 8/22 - 11/17/11

BOOK YOUR FLIGHT

*BOOK BY 6/10/11

MOST POPULAR NEWS

MOST READ **E-MAILED** **COMMENTED**

- Alberta apartment renters have a lot of choice at a high price
- Alberta aware of health-care queue jumping, government document shows
- Skull linked to missing woman
- Mixed reviews for road construction delay idea
- McCauley homicide possible case of mistaken identity: Edmonton police
- Edmonton shoppers give big love to Apple Store

[more »](#)

BREAKING NEWS ALERT

Sign up to receive e-mail alerts on breaking news from The Edmonton Journal.

SUBMIT

- [Our Privacy Statement](#)

As Il Circo's founder and creative director explains from his San Diego head office, Viaggio (which comes to the Kids' Fest in St. Albert this week) was designed to be not the Cirque du Soleil. "They were street performers originally," he says of the Cirque's founders Guy Laliberté and Gilles Ste-Croix. "We were more from the Broadway stage. So we had a very different approach."

Viaggio, which premièred in 1996 and gathers its 22-member travelling cast from around the world and premièred in 1996, "is more of Broadway-type show, since that's what we're good at." Trego describes the show as "largely dance theatre" and amends that to "dance meets acrobatics meets the theatre."

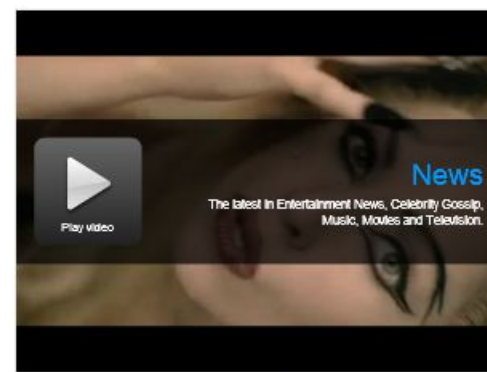
"We were inspired," he says, "by Italian renaissance commedia ... which has inspired everything from Puccini opera to Shakespeare characters." This stylized form, with its broadly comic, masked character types and furious action, is always extravagantly visual. "We took commedia costumes and put them on steroids; we kept, verbatim, the commedia masks," Trego says. Viaggio enlists "a brilliant Chicago mask-maker, who works in leather, then paint."

The heightened characters are woven into a story, which begins in a little girl's dream that draws her into a surreal world that changes her life. As Trego explains, she first sees a three-metre puppet character, Marioneta, who has a proscenium (framed) stage in her skirt. First you see the characters as small puppets on that stage, then they come to life, thanks to the circus arts, as full-sized living breathing acrobats, contortionists, aerialists, hand balancers, and the rest.

"Marioneta's costume cost tens of thousands of dollars," says Trego. "It's stunning; it would look great in a museum."

Trego created the music and the show with particular performers in mind. And despite Viaggio's longevity — it's played in 14 countries to more than eight million people — they don't tend to leave. "The performers are like my family," he says. "Recasting would be difficult.... It would take years for a gymnast to be able to do our show."

"The thing is, Viaggio hits an emotional level; it speaks to human potential. And that's my philosophy of entertainment: If it doesn't have the heart, it probably isn't worth going to." He sighs. "When you live in the U.S. you know that they call it a Depression for a reason. People are beat-up, down, in the dumps. Their spirits need to be lifted, and for that there's nothing like a good positive escape, something that's entertaining and means something to the two- and the 70-year-old."



1-4 of 87



Swift wins best video, Gaga album tops charts
June 9 - The day's top showbiz news and headlines including ...



The Career of J.J. Abrams: from Lost to Super 8
This Hollywood mastermind is able to juggle several different ...



Michael J. Fox: From Back to the Future to Spin City
He rose to fame as the star of the sitcom Family Ties, and went ...



Biography of Donald Trump: Life and Career
Born June 14, 1946 in Queens, New York, Donald Trump has become ...



FREE SHIPPING + FAST DELIVERY
*within the continental U.S.

Receive \$50
on select sets of Firestone® Tires

Offer Valid May 26 - June 25, 2011