

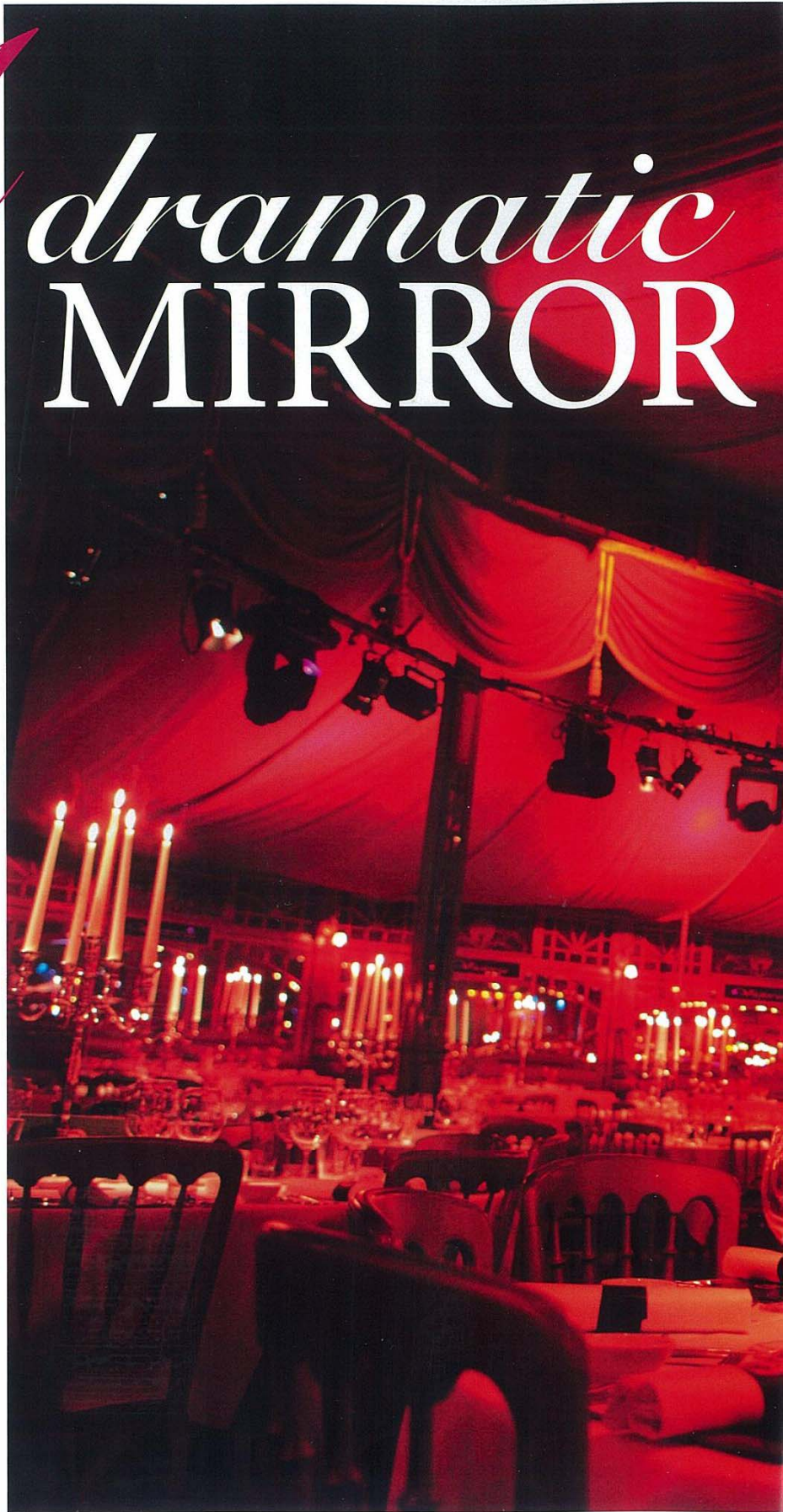
A dramatic MIRROR

Savour a world affair of gastronomical and arts feat rolling onto our shores this month. **Germaine Lim** reaches out to the heart of Singapore for a continental slice of an extravagant pie

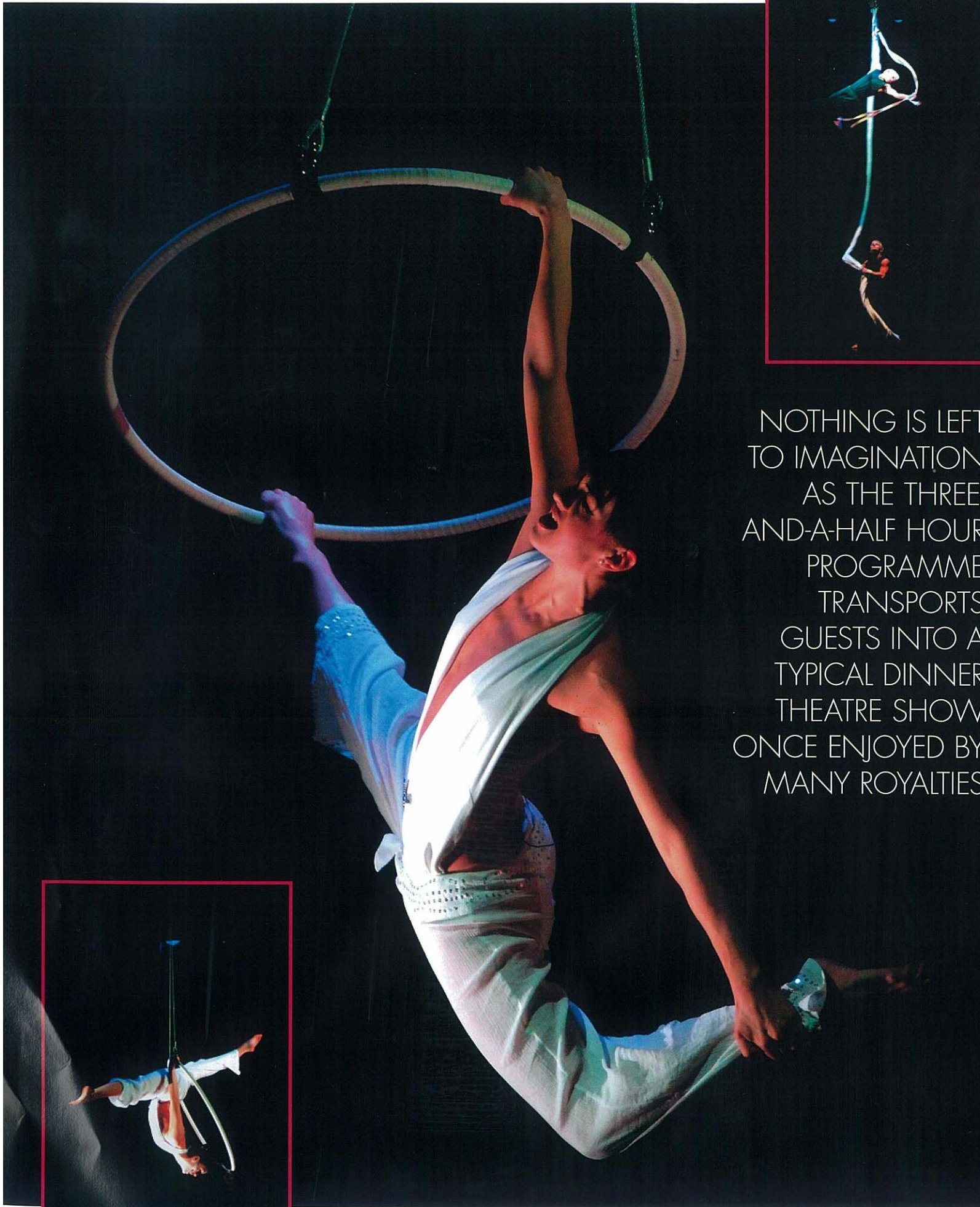
Excess never goes out of style. Since time immemorial, opulence has always enticed the spectacle-hungry crowd. The kings and queens of the old world feasted on lavish dinner theatre productions where entertainers pandered to their fantasies of a mystical world. An insatiable appetite grows as it is fed because nothing else lives up.

The Padang is playing host to some of the world's finest performing artistes and chefs this month when Crystal Mirror reaches Singapore's shores. The newly-produced gourmet dining and arts affair promises an unparalleled experience that evokes the bygone era of the 19th century. Director of Shaksfin Entertainment and co-producer of Crystal Mirror, Hannes Nimpuno assures that every detail is carefully planned to create the desired impact.

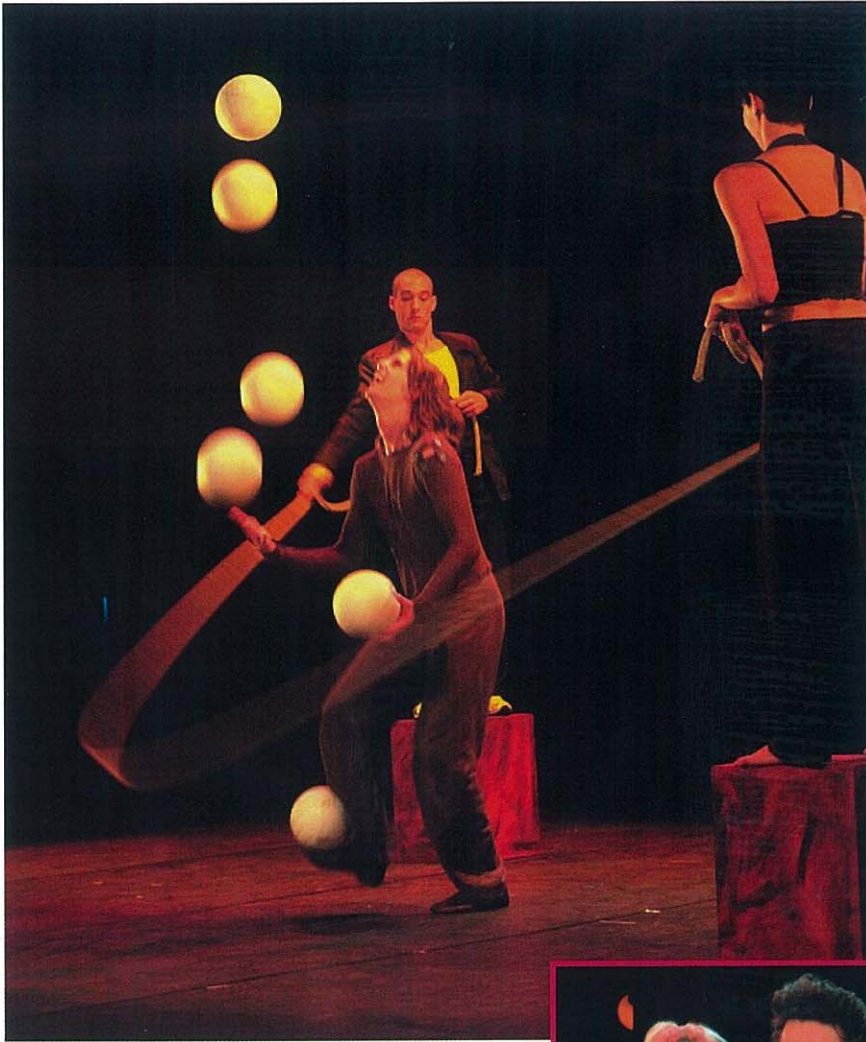
"Being able to produce The Crystal Mirror excites me in many ways. Introducing the old European tradition of classy and genuine entertainment into a hand-crafted, exquisite venue; paired with haute cuisine from two of the world's most heavenly gourmet regions Vienna and Alsace — helps me forget about the complexities and challenges the production brings. Like in a good play or concert performance, every evening is slightly different due to the various extraordinary personalities of the artists in the show."







NOTHING IS LEFT
TO IMAGINATION
AS THE THREE-
AND-A-HALF HOUR
PROGRAMME
TRANSPORTS
GUESTS INTO A
TYPICAL DINNER
THEATRE SHOW
ONCE ENJOYED BY
MANY ROYALTIES



TOP: Andreas Wessels surprises with his juggling expertise
RIGHT: British skaters The Skating Willers have even performed for the Queen of Denmark
BELOW: From Poland comes The Ceasar Twins with precise moves

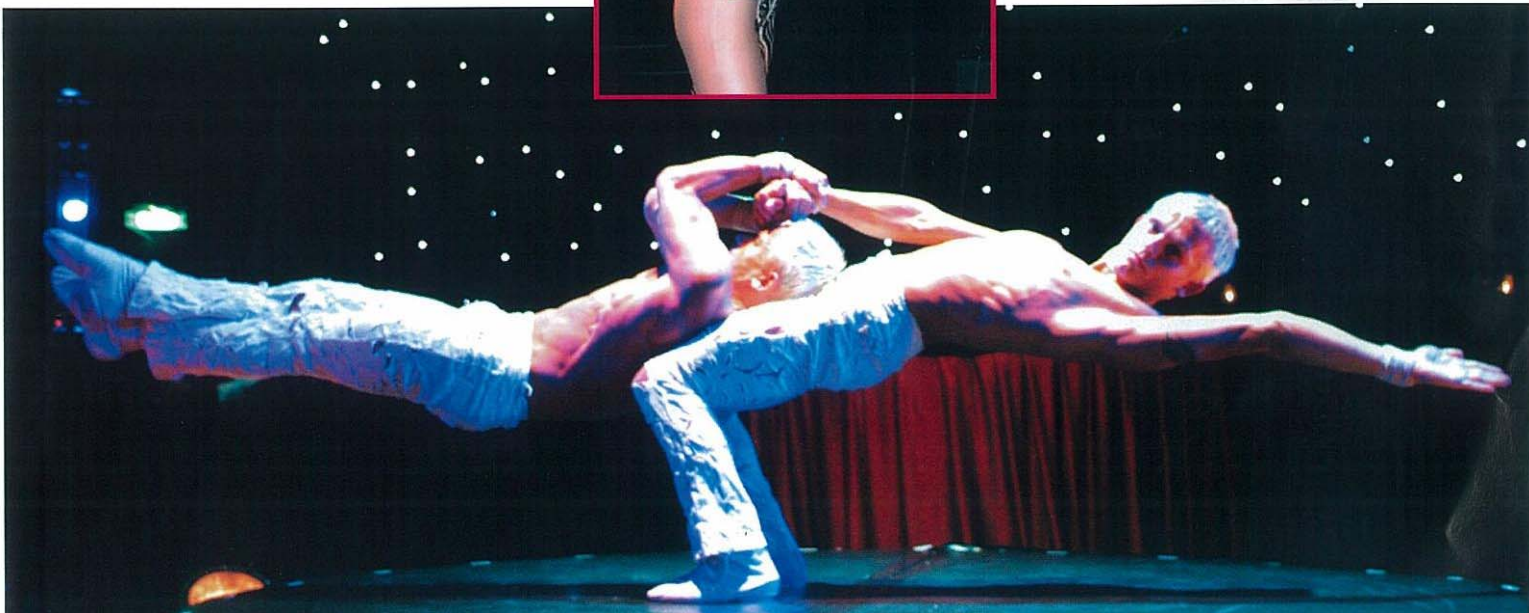


Where art deco meets the perfect synchronisation of world-class performing acts, it is not difficult to understand why Crystal Mirror has garnered international attention. A 19th century-styled marquee, constructed by fourth-generation Belgian tent company, Het Spiegelpaleis, stands on a bed of green grass in front of the Parliament structure, quietly withholding the grandeur of its interior. Drapes hang low and crystal flutes reflect the flickers of candlelight that adorn the dinner tables, evoking the resplendence of 1920s art deco's innovation and romance.

No nail has been used in the construction of this architectural masterpiece where columns and wall panels have been inlaid with 1,500 mirrors diligently polished daily. Tableware is aligned to exact coordinates each evening. All fine wood, crystals and glassware have been handcrafted.

Franck Mischler and Alfred Holzfeind form a formidable culinary team which is headed by director, Jean-Georges Beck of two-Michelin-star restaurant, Cheval Blanc. Mischler, of the two-Michelin-star establishment Alsace restaurant, Auberge du Cheval Blanc, has honed his craft alongside industry greats for over a decade and was awarded the *Jeune Chef de l'Annee 2004 Champerard Badoit*. Holzfeind comes from Austria to introduce a touch of Viennese magic to Singapore's palette. Together with Mischler's Alsatian cuisine, they present a four-course haute cuisine that boasts such delectable Viennese and French influences as scallops prepared in three ways and glazed French quail with foie gras stuffing.

Nothing is left to chance as the three-and-a-half hour programme transports guests into a typical dinner theatre show once enjoyed





TOP: Tal Balshai makes magic with music for Crystal Mirror
ABOVE: Hannes Nimpuno ensures that every detail is meticulously handled and prepared

by royalties. Art director, Markus Pabst, is a keen developer of physical talent. Having not only impacted and modernised the German variety scene, the ‘Tarantino of variety’, as the German press hails Pabst, brings with him an air of innovation that has brought international attention. Israeli musical director, Tal Balshai, enjoys the possibilities of combining different musical styles to achieve compositions that have garnered critical acclaim. With strong jazz leanings, Balshai is not afraid to rearrange jazz standards to explore an emotional music, a style that he is best associated with.

As guests tuck into a scrumptious meal, performing acts run throughout the evening. Crystal Mirror’s artistes represent more than ten nationalities. German juggling artist Andreas Wessels needs no introduction. With a skill honed since he was 15, Wessels’ jaw-dropping acts have won multiple awards. Identical twin brothers, Roman and Slava reinvent the energetic step-dancing routine with their impeccably-timed comedic performances. Every skit packs a punch to bring guests a night filled with belly laughs. On the other end of the spectrum, Polish acrobats, The Ceasar Twins, are the epitome of precision — of movement, artistry and physique. While they seem to perform with ease, their

gravity-defying stunts command great focus. This is the making of a class act.

For Hannes Nimpuno, Crystal Mirror plays a pivotal role in Singapore as well.

“It’s an almost forgotten art form from the golden age in Europe which will set a benchmark in the current entertainment and art industry which caters today, primarily to the masses. It will certainly make a bold and vibrant statement in Singapore’s (and indeed Asia’s) art scene and give the discerning visitor a fresh alternative to previous and existing entertainment offerings.”

Opening on March 9 in Singapore, regional audiences can expect Crystal Mirror to tour Hong Kong, Taipei and Indonesia after its run on April 15. Stationed at Connaught Drive, each show seats 378 guests.

Promising it to be a stunning showcase, Hannes Nimpuno adds, “This is Singapore’s first foray into a marriage of gourmet dining and top-notch theatrics. We are here to set a benchmark for the quality of dining — it’ll be a feast for the senses.”

For ticket sales and admission details, contact SISTIC at 6348 5555 or through www.sistic.com.sg. Alternatively visit any authorised ticketing agents.

DID YOU KNOW?

- The Mirror Tent gets its name from the 1,500 mirrors within it that are polished daily
- Exemplary of an architectural feat, the tent is constructed without a single nail
- Mirror tents were popular in the Netherlands and Belgium around the end of the 19th century and later on at music and theatre festivals in the 1970s
- Belgian tent-maker, Rik Klessens is the fourth generation owner of Het Spiegelpaleis whose heritage harks back to constructing tents for European aristocracy and royalty in the 1920s
- Het Spiegelpaleis uses pre-war marquees restored at the company's own workshop
- 2,500 glasses, 2,000 plates and 1,600 sets of cutlery are used at each event
- More than 100kg of table linen are laundered daily
- The champagne bar will serve more than 10,000 glasses to guests
- 10,000 candles will be used throughout the run of Crystal Mirror.
- Asia Pacific Breweries created a special *The Crystal Mirror* brew just for the event
- The delectable goose liver pâté is a traditional Austrian family recipe of producer and promoter Gerhard Lanyi's mother 🍷



Alfred Holzfeind brings his Viennese magic to the dazzling experience

Menu

STARTER

A Trilogy of Scallops: Scallop carpaccio, scallop mousse and panfried scallop on truffled celeriac crème and its julienne

ENTREE

Sea Wolf on Alsace riesling and seafood risotto with a lobster and crab cappuccino

MAIN COURSE

Glazed French quail with foie gras stuffing served with a spinach flan, tomato marmalade and small seasonal vegetables

DESSERT

Royal Viennese dessert selection

CHAMPAGNE

Piper-Heidsieck