



Sylvia Toh Paik Choo
paikchoo@sph.com.sg

We catch the Crystal Mirror's first show at the Padang



Bowl me over

HOW would you like to have an intimate dinner? On the Padang. With performers skating on the edge of your glass of ice cubes. And acrobats diving into a fishbowl, adding water to your soup.

Some 300 people did just that, in a crystal mirrored tent.

Is there a catch? Plenty! Mostly between the acrobats, the skaters, the jugglers.

Crystal Mirror is a theatrical dinner show popular in European capitals in the 1920s. (First inspired by mediaeval street vaudevillians whose dinner may have consisted of the fruit tossed at them).

Why has it taken 80 years to reach the padang? Well, there are 1,500 pieces of precious 1920s crystal to individually pack in 30 containers... but seriously, it is a touring dinner troupe.

You will be surprised how intimate it can get, as more than 300 gather in the boudoir-like tent with its burgundy curtains and stained-glass crystals that remind one of Peranakan home windows.

Even the temporary toilets have Crystal

Mirror designer doors. (No, cannot buy after the tent pulls up.)

The European dinner is dramatically announced by its multi-talented emcee, course-by-course, a la mode a verse, or even the blues.

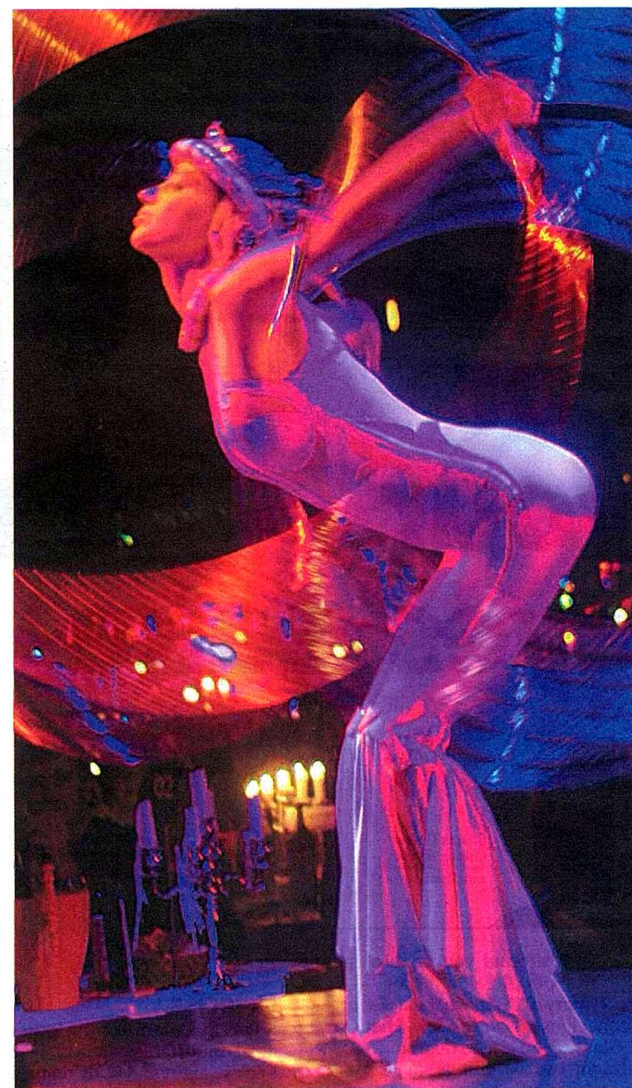
The scallop and the quail on the menu are no match for the performers on stage, each of the 11 artistes breath-takingly awesome.

If your mullet is perched on fork enroute to your gullet, eat later, watch the show.

Everyone will have his favourite — the bubble guy, the fab abs of the identical acrobatic twins, the spit and polish of the King Kong of ping pong, the double-jointed singer who would've been a cinch at serving 300 four-course meals in record time.

The real marvel is the size of the stage, no bigger than a round table like those for 10-course Chinese meals.

Amazing things happen on it — see our pictures — and if you are sitting close to it, better come equipped with... well we won't spoil it for you.



pictures | david tan, reuters

Wet and wild: (Top left) The Caesar Twins of Poland bring a different kind of bowl to the table, while another performer (above) puts a new spin on table art.