



# Mesmerising MIRROR

| BY FELIX CHEONG |

What offers a heady feast for the eyes and also a high-class feast for the palate? Answer: The Crystal Mirror.

This is the latest dinner theatre event to hit town. Set up at the Padang at a cost of several million dollars by Shaksfin Entertainment, the impresario company manned by 46-year-old German Hannes Nimpuno and 28-year-old Austrian Gerhard Lanyi, The Crystal Mirror is based on a dinner theatre concept that's been in vogue in Europe since the 19th century.

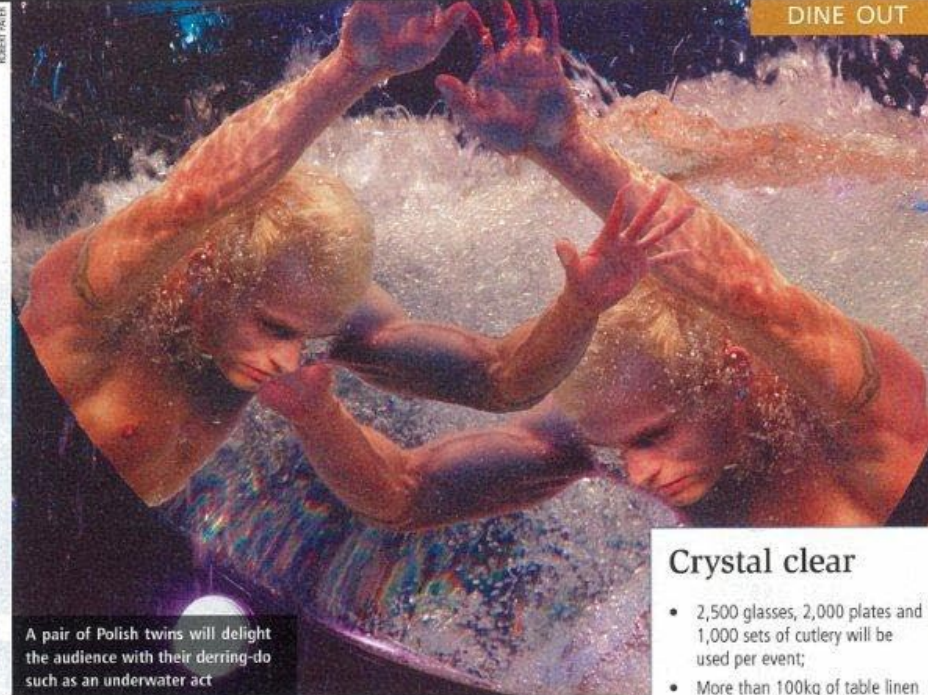
The art nouveau tent itself, handmade without the use of a single nail and lined with some 1,500 mirrors, harks back to an era of Old World graces and circus acts. The show promises to be an enjoyable 3½-hour evening of thrills and giggles. You'll gasp at a pair of Polish acrobats and a husband-and-wife roller-skating team, laugh with a free-wheeling comedian and

a bubble-blowing man. All this while, you're tucking into a four-course gourmet dinner prepared by two award-winning chefs, Frenchman Frank Mischler and Austrian Alfred Holzfiend, the Chef de Cuisine at the luxurious Grand Hotel Panhans in his home country. Mischler was awarded Young Chef of the Year Champereaud-Badoit 2004 and is chef de cuisine of the two-Michelin-star restaurant, Auberge du Cheval Blanc.

The food, however, isn't quite as substantial as the entertainment dished out in between the courses.

For starters, you'll be served a truffled trilogy, which consists of scallop and summer truffles carpaccio with celeriac julienne, scallop bisque and pan-fried scallop. Creamy, sweetish and a tad smoky, the dish should get your salivary glands working overtime for the next course, seared loupe de Mer.

This is Riesling seafood risotto served with lobster cappuccino. While the fish slices are evenly soft and juicy, the risot-



A pair of Polish twins will delight the audience with their derring-do such as an underwater act

to, which comes in a small serving, is soggy.

Several acts later, including a hilariously frenetic two-man skit involving matchboxes, cigarettes and hats, you'll finally be served the main course. The French supreme quail stuffed with duck foie gras is set on mango-kraut strudel and served with purple potatoes and tomato marmalade on spinach flan. The quail is almost bone-dry while the flan is a bit too rich and sour. The overall effect is a contrast that doesn't go down quite well.

Thankfully, the selection of four traditional Viennese desserts more than makes up for it, and the singing, dancing, juggling and hijinks ultimately make The Crystal Mirror a memorable experience.

The Crystal Mirror runs daily, except Mondays, till April 15. The show starts at 7pm on weekdays and 6.30pm on Sundays, with pre-dinner cocktails available half an hour before the show.

Tickets, costing from \$159 to \$350, are available via the Sistic

## Crystal clear

- 2,500 glasses, 2,000 plates and 1,000 sets of cutlery will be used per event;
- More than 100kg of table linen will be laundered every day;
- 10,000 candles will be used throughout the run;
- The champagne bar will serve more than 10,000 glasses; and
- The staff of 80 includes 12 to 15 chefs, three dishwashers, two prop masters, five musicians and one electrician.

website ([www.sistic.com.sg](http://www.sistic.com.sg)).

Dress code is smart casual. ■

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