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COMMON CORE STANDARDS

Speaking and Listening: 1; 2; 6
Language: 1; 3; 4; 6

NEW YORK STATE STANDARDS

The Arts: 4
ELA: 1; 4

BLUEPRINT FOR THE ARTS

Theater: Developing Theater Literacy; Making Connections

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WHERE IN THE WORLD IS CIRQUE ZÍVA FROM?

Daring Feats +
Discipline and Strength
+ Stunning Spectacle =
CIRQUE ZÍVA

The Chinese Golden Dragon Acrobats sparkle in a stunning spectacle of breathtaking skill and beauty in CIRQUE ZÍVA. Captivating acts of ancient artistry and dazzling showmanship are on display when acrobats teeter and dive through hoops in energetic ensemble performances. A gifted contortionist, neon German wheels and a festive lion dance join the impressive lineup to compete for crowd favorite in this thrilling theatrical experience. Under the expert eyes of impresario Danny Chang and choreographer Angela Chang (Drama Desk nominees), CIRQUE ZÍVA is unlike any other show you'll see this holiday season.



HEBEI PROVINCE, CHINA

- Traditional circus in Hebei Province has existed for over 2,000 years. The city of Wujiao is considered the birthplace of Chinese circus. Every circus troupe in China has at least one member who was trained in Wujiao!
- Hebei Province is the only province in China that has highlands, mountains, plains, lakes and a coastline. It also possesses more historical and cultural relics than any other province in China.



CLOSER LOOK AT CIRQUE ZÍVA

- CIRQUE ZÍVA is a fast-paced, modern take on traditional Chinese circus acts. The show features 25 performers who juggle with their feet, spin plates and contort their bodies into unbelievable positions.
- Performed by the Golden Dragon Acrobats, CIRQUE ZÍVA combines centuries-old Chinese art forms with suspenseful music, technicolor lighting and rich, colorful costumes. The Golden Dragon Acrobats have toured the world, performing in 5 continents, over 65 countries and in all 50 states. On average, the company performs about 200 times in 150 venues each year. The Golden Dragon Acrobats were last seen on the New Victory stage in 2005.
- Although every Chinese circus is different, there are several acts that are mainstays of this time-honored artistic tradition. Watch CIRQUE ZÍVA carefully for classic acrobatic acts!



HERE ARE SOME CLASSIC CHINESE CIRCUS ACTS YOU MIGHT SEE IN CIRQUE ZIVA!

CONTORTIONISM Using strength and balance, contortionists gracefully bend themselves into beautiful and bewildering poses. Flexibility plays an important role in traditional Chinese art forms such as dance, acrobatics and martial arts.

CYCLING FEATS This includes unicycles, on which solo dancers balance on bicycles. Numerous performers climb aboard to create unbelievable stage pictures and poses. These skills don't date as far back as others but still fit with the theme of creating beauty with everyday objects.

DIABOLO With a history dating back 2,000 - 3,000 years, diabolos are among the oldest acts performed today. Diabolos are both a Chinese sport and a folk toy. A string runs between two sticks that are held in a performer's hands. The string supports a spinning spool, which can be made to do all sorts of tricks by adjusting its speed.

HANDWALKING ON SUSPENDED STRIPS Originally developed by sailors maneuvering on sailboat rigging, this act requires endurance and strength. Relying on their wrists and forearms for support, performers balance and pose upside-down at dizzying heights on long woven strips.

HOOP DIVING During harvest time, field workers used a tool shaped like a large tambourine. The large hoops with a woven mesh bottom were used to shake and divide the grain from the leaves and stems. It became a tradition to see who could dive through the tallest stack of hoops.

JAR JUGGLING As they do today, ancient Chinese pottery makers would spin jars to make them uniformly round and smooth. However, the potter who added a few high tosses and juggling tricks would attract a crowd and sell more jars.

POLE CLIMBING The first description of this famous Chinese act dates back more than 1,000 years ago. Performers on doublefixed poles jump from pole to pole, climb adeptly and descend at breakneck speeds.

TOWER OF CHAIRS During this act, a performer will stack multiple chairs over 20 feet high, balance them on wine bottles, climb the tower and proceed to perform hand balancing and other gymnastic acts. The startling ascension is a phenomenal act executed by only a rare few performers.

UNICYCLING WITH BOWL PILING This act first gained popularity in the 1950s. A performer on a tall unicycle rides about on a tabletop and kicks bowls, kettles and spoons from the table into a perfect stack on top of his or her head.

WUSHU Performers in these acts tumble, flip, jump, kick and create intricate poses reminiscent of Chinese martial arts—the tradition from which wushu stems. The agility, precision and rhythm of wushu movements convey a sense of vigor, strength and beauty.



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WHAT DO YOUR STUDENTS KNOW NOW?

Prior to exploring CIRQUE ZÍVA with your students, find out how much they already know about **Chinese circus** and **contortion**. In addition, allow them to explore the themes of **teamwork** and **discipline**.

Have you ever been to a circus? What kind of acts did you see? Based on images and what you know, how do you think CIRQUE ZÍVA might be different from other circuses?

Do you know what contortion is? How is it different from acrobatics? What do you think is a contortionist's daily training?

What kind of costumes do most acrobats wear? Why do they wear them?

What are the benefits of working as a team or in an ensemble? What are the challenges? What is the most important part of teamwork? What could happen to a team or ensemble if one member leaves?

