

## Don Stacey WORLD'S FAIR January 31 - February 6, 2003

By Don Stacey

Mme Christiane Bouglione wife of Emilien Bouglione, one of the owners of the Cirque d'Hiver-Bouglione in Paris, celebrated the tenth anniversary of her Christmas Circus, 'Passion Cirque' this winter season, with the show's customary stand at Porte Maillot from November 23 to December 18.

Members of her large family always assist here in the show's immaculate presentation, and this year on hand were son Sampion, daughter-in-law Vicky and Guy Manetti. who played his usual role of a genial clown cum Santa Claus character. Presented in a four mast small big top, the show always plays to sold out Christmas gala houses and thus does not advertise in the Parisian press.

On the several occasions it has been my pleasure to visit this show, I have always come away with a deeply satisfying feeling of having seen good, honest circus entertainment with a nice Christmas flavor.

Over the years I have also seen some very fine acts at Passion Cirque, among them Joseph Bouglione's wire act, Angelo Ballan's unicycle number, the Shepherds' clown entree, the Folco animal acts and a lot more besides. This winter I was by no means disappointed with what I saw at what is always a charming presentation. It is also notable for the smart appearance of the staff, in keeping with the Bouglione's Cirque d'Hiver standards and, although the music is recorded, it is always of a high standard, like the lighting and effects.

It must be 40 years since I first saw the remarkable mixed animal and bird act of the German trainer Krenzola and the number is still going strong and the number is still going strong and as good as ever.



It is today shown by his protege, Jochen Krenzola Jnr, who has a bewilderingly varied group of creatures to his command, all apparently living in perfect harmony. Among them are cats, dogs, pigeons, doves, cockatoos, parrots, chickens, geese, fox and a huge fierce looking vulture. The personable young trainer presents them with ease and charm and the act is sure to captivate audiences wherever it appears. As an opening act in Passion Cirque it was a real winner with the public.

Clowning throughout the show, as for the past few winter seasons, was the clown Tony Carlini. With a light make up and expressive face, some good material, he is always popular at Passion Cirque and in the summer months has spent the past few years in Switzerland, an important ingredient in the success of Circus Medrano there.

Willer Nicolodi, the Italian ventriloquist from a famous circus family is working at Cirque d'Hiver-Bouglione this winter, and his young son was at Passion Cirque, showing for the first time his new handstand equilibristic act. In a sailor outfit and naked torso he resembled a young Chippendale in his impressive number, a mixture of dexterity and strength that should ensure he will be in constant demand for work in the years ahead.

Tony Carlini induced a man and a woman from the audience for the 'suitor with the rose' painting spoof before the main musical clown entree of the evening, the Trio Salvini. Two augustes and a female whiteface clown in stunning peacock design costume, they had plenty of musical numbers to dispense, on saxophones, cornet, bells, xylophone, trumpet and tuba, as well as a lively slapstick number in their version of the boxing robot machine.

Jochen Krenzola Jnr returned, this time to display the limited but fascinating talents of his flocks of dwarf and Indian runner ducks in a liberty routine. His two bird/ animal acts can truly be said to be outstandingly novel.

Closing the first half, Tony Carlini presented the comic skit with four men from the audience on four chairs, always, it seems, a real winner with the public.

Opening the second part came a very attractive young Russian girl, Joulia Tchakanova, who has appeared in the Circus Princess festival in Stockholm, with her delightful yet simple dog act, with a single small poodle as her companion. This is an act which evens the most hardened opponent of animal circus acts could not possibly criticize.

Tony Carlini's major entree spot was the spoof band, with three men, a woman and a little girl from the audience as musicians and singer. A long number, Tony knows just how much humor to wring from this routine, and he does it very well indeed.

Duo Cazar was the one aerial act with Passion Cirque, a competent but standard aerial perch number.

To my chagrin (there being no printed program) I was unable to find out the name of the young juggler who came next and who I believe is making his solo debut in Paris. He worked to modern disco music and incorporated acrobatics into his routines with one, two and three diabolos, up to five and six balls, or was it seven or eight? He worked with such speed that at times it was difficult to tell. A splendid star to what should be a very promising career for this young French artiste, whoever he was.

Featured in the final spot of the evening was the outstanding animal illusion number of Sandrine and Thierry Bouglione, which was a feature of the 'Piste' presentation at Le Cirque d'Hiver-Bouglione in 2000. Impeccably dressed and staged, this is always an immaculate number, mystifying too, and the more impressive and attractive for its introduction of black panthers Bagheera and Tarane and tigers Indiana and Rambo.

'Santa' Manetti distributed sweets to the children before the final parade with balloons by the company, to the strains of 'I'm Dreaming of a White Christmas', the clowns and Santa, as well as the Christmas clad showgirls forming a final tableau to bring to a conclusion Christiane Bouglione's memorable 10th anniversary Passion Cirque.