

## Director

Mark Shaub is artistic director for *Cirque Du Soleil: Corteo*. The touring show will be in Reno from March 21-24 at Lawlor Events Center, on the University of Nevada, Reno, campus. Learn more here: [www.cirquedusoleil.com/corteo](http://www.cirquedusoleil.com/corteo).

### So the performers are getting ready to rest up before Reno?

We actually have six shows to do this weekend just outside of Austin. Then we have a two-week break. And then we open and do a week of shows in Portland. And then we come to Reno.

### That's a ton of traveling.

We're usually on the road for about 10 weeks at a time—one city per week. Then, at the end of those 10 weeks, we have a two-week break when people go home and rest up, and then we're back out on the road again.

### How many performers are involved in *Corteo*?

*Corteo* has 51 artists that are on stage.

### Fifty-one artists—and it's your job to work with them all?

Yes, that's right. I work with the artists and with the artistic team, which is the coaches, the physiotherapists, the stage managers. [We] sort of manage and look after the show. I'm the one who's responsible, but it's very much a team effort.

### I've heard that *Cirque* shows take more than a hundred people.



COURTESY/CIRQUE DU SOLEIL

Yes, we're 109 people that are on the road. Fifty-one of them are on stage, but then we have at least 30 technicians and my team that I mentioned to you before. And then we have a crew management team that looks after travel accommodations, immigration, all of those types of things.

### I've also heard *Cirque* shows are ever evolving. Is that true of *Corteo*?

Yes. I mean, any live theater ... needs to breathe. It needs to grow, and it needs to mature. Our shows can tour for up to 10 years, and we can't always keep the same artists for those 10 years. So often when you bring in somebody new, they bring in new talents, new skills, new ways of doing things or looking at things. I look after that evolution of the show, but at the same time I'm always respecting the original concepts that were there and what the director was

looking for. Yes, the show does evolve, but it's very much the same *Corteo* it was when it was created in 2005.

### So this one has been touring for more than a decade?

It toured for 10 years as a big-top show. We have two types of touring shows. We have the ones in tents, in the big-tops. And then we have the arena shows. It did 10 years in a big-top, and then, last year, we retooled it in a way, refitted the show, to get it into arenas—where we tour in a much faster style. We have to set up the show quicker, pack it into trucks quicker and stay in a city for only a week, whereas a big-top can be in a city for anywhere from five to 12 weeks.

### What would you say first-time *Cirque* attendees should expect?

There's a couple of different ways to answer that question. The first thing, I think, is that you can expect to see a very beautiful show that combines acrobatics, theater, music, choreography, lighting, costumes—that come together to create something very magical and very beautiful. But, also, what I like to always suggest is to come without any expectations. Come with a very open mind, and see where this show takes you, because this show—like many of our shows—can appeal to different people in different ways. Some people can be transported by the storyline, others by the music. ... I think having that openness of spirit when you come to see it is the most fair way to let it take you wherever you want it to. □

## NOTES FROM THE NEON BABYLON

BY BRUCE VAN DYKE

## Echo chambers and first grade

The linguist and intellectual Noam Chomsky began a recent talk by diving right into The Big Picture of Climate Change. "It's now reached the point that the question will be answered in this generation. Your challenge to answer it can't be delayed. The question is whether organized human life will indeed survive."

A completely fair question, one worthy of much mulling. There are a lot of people walking around on this rock, breathing and eating and pooping and wanting stuff, and there's more every day. And more. And more. Recent measurements of atmospheric CO2 just coasted past 400, and if you talk to scientists who don't work for Rupert Murdoch, that's not good. Not good at all.

Robert Kraft—"I categorically deny that I lost my mind for Kim Sun Moon, gorgeous, slender, foxy

Korean masseuse who allegedly has some very magical oil and reportedly knows a variety of enchanting hand motions. I heard all of this from a friend who visits her regularly. This I swear upon a stack of Bibles. For real. I promise."

Dum Dum making shit up, part 359. In a tweet this morning, after watching Harry Reid roast his ass on CNN, Dump made up some crap about how Harry was "thrown out of the Senate." What absolute nonsense. Reid announced his retirement from the Senate in March 2015, after that horrific accident on a home treadmill. He was "thrown out" of the Senate only in the Cheeto-saturated mind of Mr. Putinpuppy.

Dum Dum making shit up, part 646. Speaking to a meeting of governors in the White House, Agent Orange uncorked this laffer: "My daughter's created millions of jobs.

I don't know if anyone knows that, but she's created millions of jobs." Right. Uh-huh. Got it.

Just makin' shit up like a first grader. Like a frickin' first-grader.

Speaking of echo chambers, hey, sure, I'm in one. Totally hangin' in that big lib bubble, sipping a fizzy water in a chamber dominated by the New York Times, Washington Post, MSNBC and so forth. I'm aware there's a Trumpian counterpart, and the Orange Folk get their echoes from Fox, Breitbart, Rush, etc. etc. etc. and, yes, these two constantly turbulent chambers butt heads on an hourly basis.

I bring this up in order to simply say—I'll be happy to put the journalistic accuracy of my echo chamber up against that of Foxjunk any day of the bloody week. We can hash it out in court and see who really is Fake News. You know what? I like my chances. □



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