

THE INDEPENDENT

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CIRCUS / Siobhan Dolan

Archaos

Wembley Stadium Complex

A*rchaos aficionados* fidget uneasily at the start of *Metal Clown*, the punk circus troupe's latest show. Raised on a diet of flying chainsaws, noise and colliding cars, they wait in vain for the explosion marking the start of the show. Instead, three metal structures are slowly hoisted from the back of a lorry to form a trapeze frame. After an uneventful display, however, thunderous relief comes in the form of stomping metal clowns, clad in leather and crash-helmets, with sheets of corrugated iron on their backs. Their leader, a Gazza look-a-like, heads the cast of *Metal Clown*, a symbolic recreation of Brazilian history. In inimitable style *Archaos* (egged on by pounding rock music) careers from street circus to slavery. No coloured floats in this carnival procession but rogue shopping-trolleys, screeching motorbikes and exploding cars. The usual comic nonsense remains – a man nonchalantly undresses and takes a shower as Brazilian dancers perform the amazing *capoeira*. A ranting ringmaster on stilts and dressed in a pink plastic mackintosh is castrated and his balls lent to a passing juggler. Those strapped for cash but with a spare car should note *Archaos*'s offer of two free tickets for every car donated . . . "Crush your car for art" is the plea from the sign at the entrance.