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The Champion of the West

Topless dancers, explosions and lots of fun

By York Membery

FRENCH circus Archaos, banned from performing on Durdham Downs in Bristol, finally hit the city last night.

And the show lived up to expectations: It truly was a circus like no other circus.

Topless dancers, muscle men in G-strings and motor-cycles that caught fire were all there.

The show, in Bath Road, Brislington, was delayed for 20 minutes after customs men at Heathrow refused entry to an artiste.

review

But after three hours of negotiations and a mad dash down the M4 in a taxi cab, the performance went ahead.

The crowds of mostly young people were bombarded with explosions and daredevil antics.

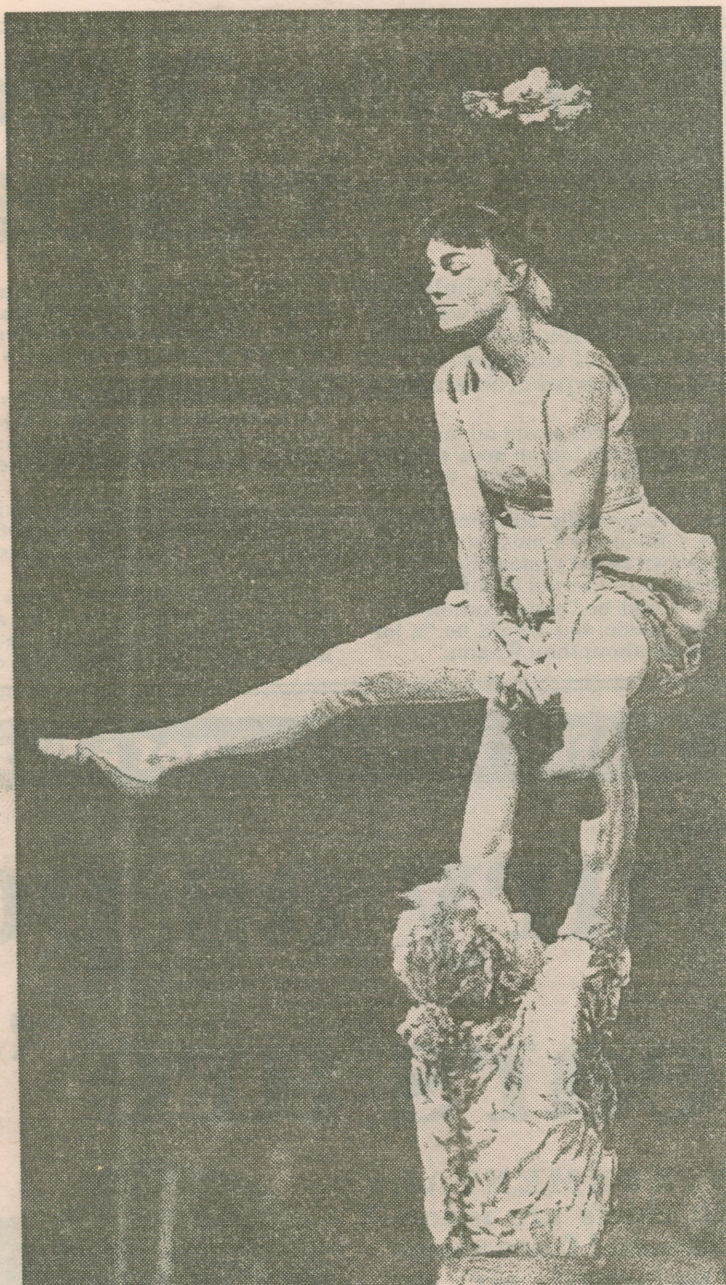
Dancers and acrobats ran on to the stage, twisting themselves to mindboggling positions, and leapt into action.

A motor-cycle ablaze with flames roared into the circus and span around on the stage.

Meanwhile men in tiny G-strings went through the crowds, kissing girls and clambouring up the scaffolding.

It certainly wasn't Chipperfields and it's not something I would take my children to see.

But for sheer spectacle you have to hand it to the crazy men and women in the French circus.



Archaos acrobats in action last night

Circus wins council blessing — for next year

BAN-beating French circus Archaos won Bristol's official approval yesterday — on the day it opened on private land.

The city council, whose Downs committee banned it from the Downs in July, agreed to invite it to council land next year.

The council said it regretted the committee's decision — made after Archaos's "offensive and inaccurate" publicity.

It would bring the make-up of the committee, dominated by members of the Society of Merchant Venturers, "more directly under public control."

That decision brought protest from Tories who feared the Downs would be threatened in the council's hands.

The Downs committee blocked Archaos when it advertised itself as a sex circus.

Committee member Labour Councillor Mrs Judy Patterson said: "I disagreed with its decision. But I feel Archaos brought a lot of this trouble on themselves with their offensive publicity that they took a long time to retract."

Liberal Democrat leader Councillor Charles Boney said Archaos's erotic dancing and semi-nudity could be found in any disco or on most beaches.

But Tory Councillor Peter Abraham, who voted for a ban, said the council had been duped into believing Archaos was family entertainment.