

Appalachian State University's  
Performing Arts Series Presents

# THE PEKING ACROBATS

TUESDAY, MARCH 17, 2014 7PM

SCHAEFER CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS  
BOONE, NC





2015 North America Tour  
Featuring Special Guests, Jigu! Thunder Drums of China

**POLE POSITION**  
**BODACIOUS BODY BALANCING**  
**LET'S HAVE A BALL!**  
**DIVING DARING DO**  
**THE SOUND OF ROLLING WALNUTS (Featuring Special Guests JIGU!)**  
**IT'S A TIGHT SQUEEZE**  
**LET THE SPINNING PLATES SPIN**  
**WHAT A "JAR"-RING EXPERIENCE!**  
**ACROBATIC AMUSEMENT**  
**THE HAPPY CHEFS**  
**COLORFUL CONTORTION A "STRAPPING" A KUNG-FU CEREMONY**

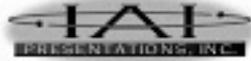
**Intermission**

**AERIAL ACROBATICS**  
**THE LION DANCE**  
**DARLING DIABLOS**  
**KEEP IT UNDER YOUR HAT**  
**THE BULL AND THE TIGER (Featuring Special Guests JIGU!)**  
**CONTORTION BY CANDLELIGHT**  
**IN THE HIGH CHAIR**  
**HUMAN PYRAMID / BICYCLE PAGODA**  
**FINALE**

*The program for this performance will be selected from the above. The Management reserves the right to make alterations in the order of the program or in the cast due to illness or any cause whatsoever. The use of cameras, flash or video photography, and tape recorders are strictly prohibited.*

*The Management recommends that parents advise their children that what they see on stage takes years of practice and should not be tried at home!*

THE PEKING ACROBATS are produced by



*P.O. Box 4, Pismo Beach, CA 93448, USA.*

*Telephone (805) 474-8422*

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*Mr. Don Hughes, President and CEO*

*Ms. Cynthia A. Dike-Hughes, Vice President and COO*

*AND*

*International Asia, Inc. ~ Mr. Ken Hai, President*

*Ms. Melinda Hai, Assistant to the President*

*Mr. Steven Hai, Assistant to the President*

*PO Box 546 ~ Walnut, CA 91788*

**STAFF FOR THE PEKING ACROBATS®:**

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*Group Leader: Mr. Jian T. Yang*

*Technical Consultant: Mr. Wan Shaokun*

*Technical Director: Cy R. Schumacher*

*Assistant to the Technical Director: Krista M. Shuff-Schumacher*

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*Orchestra Director: Ms. Zhao Wenxi*

*Translator: Mr. Zhang Weiping*

*Assistant Translator: Mr. Qin Shaobo*

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## Program Notes

Since their debut in 1986, The Peking Acrobats have redefined audience perceptions of Chinese acrobatics. They perform daring maneuvers atop a precarious pagoda of chairs; they are experts at treacherous feats of daring, trick-cycling, precision tumbling, somersaulting, and gymnastics. They defy gravity with amazing displays of contortion, flexibility, and control. They push the envelope of human possibility with astonishing juggling dexterity and incredible balancing feats, showcasing tremendous skill and ability. They are masters of agility and grace. Accompanied by live musicians playing traditional Chinese instruments with modern flair, high-tech special effects that coalesce with the music, and all of this, in harmony with the Acrobat's amazing feats! An exuberant entertainment event appears before your eyes, featuring all the excitement and festive pageantry of a Chinese Carnival infused with fresh, explosive energy!

As an added treat for their 2015 North American Tour, The Peking Acrobats are joined on stage by members of the drum and percussion virtuosos, Jigu! Thunder Drums of China. The performers in Jigu!, which in Chinese means to touch or beat the drum, make music with drums and percussion, and are an innovative new addition to this year's tour of The Peking Acrobats. Hailing from the Shanxi Province in China, this world-renown company of drummers, percussionists, and musicians has toured North America many times before, and thrilled audiences around the globe with their awe-inspiring performances. Audiences will be immersed in a wonderland of sight and sound, swept away by the incredible drumming power and astounding musicianship displayed by the talented performers of Jigu! Thunder Drums of China.

Many of the acrobatic acts we see today, despite their sophistication, were performed in ancient times. The history of Chinese acrobatics is rich in tradition and dates back over 2000 years. Throughout the history of China the acrobatic arts flourished, but in varying degrees. Originally, court entertainments were formal and monotonous, quite the opposite of the lively, folk arts of the people. It all begin with folk arts: tumbling, juggling ordinary household objects, and balancing. Myth and religion also influenced the acrobatic arts. The Lion Dance is Buddhist in origin. The lion was seen as the reincarnation of a woman, who was teased into revealing her true identity. This dance was a symbol of spiritual renewal and revered for dispelling bad luck.

Eventually, the excitement of the acrobat's amazing feats caught on and held the attention of the ruling classes. Acrobatic performers were routinely

invited to the court to entertain and impress visiting dignitaries. The varied acts of tumbling, singing, dancing, and juggling became known as “The Hundred Entertainments” during the Han Dynasty (206 BC - 220 AD). Records of acrobatic acts can be found as early as the Ch’in Dynasty (221 B.C. - 207 B.C.) and Chinese acrobats through the ages have continued to perfect what has become an evolving folk art form. The Peking Acrobats ability to perform the astounding is rooted in centuries of this Chinese history and folk art. No doubt, the Chinese acrobats of the Han Dynasty would be awe-struck and amazed at how their modern-day counterparts have elevated their art form, and the fact that their folk art tradition is still going strong, even into the 21st Century!

Tradition demands that each generation of acrobats add its own improvements and embellishments to their acts. Generations of families have carried on this highly acclaimed and popular tradition. Children begin training at a young age and adhere to a rigorous training schedule, which they follow over the length of their careers. Today the acrobat in China is considered an artist. Because of the unusual and difficult nature of the feats involved, high honor is conferred upon those skilled enough to become acrobats; in China, an acrobat is considered the Chinese equivalent of an opera star in the West. It is telling that the Chinese acrobatic tradition just gets stronger, due to the continued innovation of the artists and the endless enthusiasm from their adoring public.

The Peking Acrobats have been the featured performers on numerous television shows and celebrity-studded television specials including appearances on *The Wayne Brady Show*, *That’s Incredible*, ABC’s *Wide World Of Sports*, NBC’s *Ring in the New Year Holiday Special*, Nickelodeon’s *Unfabulous*, Ellen’s *Really Big Show*, hosted by Ellen DeGeneres and they set the world record for the human chair stack on Fox’s *Guinness Book Primetime*. Internationally, they appeared on ArtistGalla, a benefit show that was broadcast live across Norway, and filmed at the *Drammens Theatre* in Oslo. On recent European Tours, they have appeared on RAI TV in Italy, and in Holland on *Zapp Live* and *Limburg Vandaag* TV shows. The Peking Acrobats have also appeared in Steven Soderbergh’s hit film, *Ocean’s 11*.

The Peking Acrobats also continue to perform for symphony concert audiences across North America. They performed as part of the Hollywood Bowl’s Fireworks Season Finale along with the 100-member Hollywood Bowl Orchestra. They have also appeared with the San Francisco Symphony, the San Diego Symphony, the Buffalo Philharmonic, the Cincinnati Pops Orchestra, Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, Edmonton Symphony Orchestra and the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra to name a few.

The Peking Acrobats are proud to once again be on the cutting edge of entertainment technology, with the release of their performances in mind-bending 3D on NBC/Comcast's Xfinity Channel. The television special was taped live in concert at Popejoy Hall in Albuquerque, NM. This fun and informative program features The Peking Acrobats in performance, as well as interviews with the show's producers, cast, and crew. The Peking Acrobats released their Twenty-Fifth Silver Anniversary Tour DVD in 2011. This incredible DVD was filmed in High Definition format, which features amazing acts, beautiful costumes, traditional Chinese music played on exotic instruments. These quality DVD products are available at [www.iaipresentations.com](http://www.iaipresentations.com).

A performance by The Peking Acrobats brings with it the opportunity to view the epitome of a rich and ancient folk art tradition, highlighted by today's technology, melding the ancient and traditional with the modern wonders of the 21st Century. It is with much pride and pleasure that the acrobats embark on the Twenty Ninth North American Tour. Sit back, relax, and enjoy as the performers reveal to you their mastery of a fascinating and ancient art form, thousands of years in the making!



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# 2015 Performing Arts Series Upcoming Events

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## **Koresh Dance Company**

Choreography inspired by the Graham technique, Luigi jazz, classical ballet, hip-hop and Israeli folk dance.

**April 17, 8pm**

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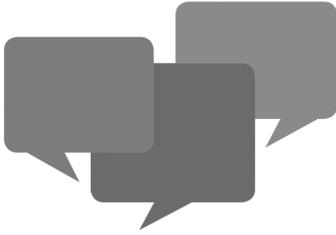
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## PERFORMING ARTS SERIES MISSION STATEMENT

The Performing Arts Series supports the teaching mission of Appalachian State University by presenting a diverse array of music, dance and theatre events designed to enrich the cultural landscape of the campus and surrounding region. By creating memorable performance experiences and related educational and outreach activities, the series promotes the power and excitement of the live performance experience, provides a "window on the world" through the artistry of nationally and internationally renowned artists and showcases some of the finest artists of our nation and our region.

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### Saturdays



After *Car Talk*, *Wait Wait ... Don't Tell Me!*,  
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**Radiolab @ 1pm**

**TED Radio Hour @ 2pm**

**The Dinner Party Download @ 3pm**



### Sundays

After *Bob Edwards Weekend*, *A Prairie Home Companion*,  
& *Wait Wait ... Don't Tell Me!* tune in for:

**Studio 360 @ 3pm**

**Triad Arts Weekend @ 4pm**

**Sound Opinions @ 6pm**

**American Routes @ 7pm**



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