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### Cirque du Soleil: Amaluna

by Winnie McCroy EDGE Editor

EDGE Editor Tuesday Apr 1, 2014



The Peacock Goddess, the Moon Goddess, the Balance Goddess, the Valkyries and the Amazons are a strong female presence in 'Amaluna' (Source:http://www.cirquedusoleil.com)

Rejoice, lesbians! The circus is in town, and this time, there's no need to stand outside with picket signs. The acrobatic "Cirque du Soleil: Amaluna" is under the Grand Chapiteau in the parking lot of Citifield in Queens. It guarantees thrills and chills in its story about Princess Amaluna, who lives on a strange island filled with enchanted lizards and warrior women, until the day that a shipwreck brings the man of her dreams to her shores.

The theater-in-the-round setup of the Cirque tent ensured that everyone had a good seat as the menacing warrior women roamed the aisles in preparation for the show's beginning. An impish lizard also roamed the crowd, stealing guests' popcorn and scurrying to the platforms high above to lick mouthfuls of the treat, before dumping the contents

on people's heads.

The retinue of warrior women, with menacing bows and staffs and a horsehair whip in the back, reminded one of a Madonna concert. An aerialist descended from the ceiling in a crescent moon, while the female ringmaster sang.

The addition of live singers and instrumentalists enriched this show more than other Cirque presentations I have seen. In addition to the main singer, there were two female electric guitar players sporting full length, purple crushed velvet coats, a cello player suspended in air, a sax player, and drummers of both the hand and kit variety. It was like a very well funded womyn's festival.

The thrills continued with Chinese acrobats flipping while spinning glowing orbs connected by a cords, silk dancers, lizard pole climbers, an aerialist on a hoop, and a woman who looked a lot like Lena Horne in her prime, and did very muscularly controlled dancing.



Eventually, a pirate and his crew wash up on the island, and Amaluna makes eyes with one of the sailors. The pirate captain -- also portrayed by a woman -- adds comic relief to the very serious circus by pulling an audience member to the stage several times to flirt, dance and ask her to marry him.

Toward the end of Act I, Amaluna does some amazing contortionist work while standing on the edge of a large chalice of water. Her Amazon sisters finish up the act with an impressive example of tumbling on the parallel bars.



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### Cirque du Soleil Set to Sparkle in the Mexican Riviera

By Margaret Nichols | May 22

Cirque du Soleil arrives in Mexico this fall with a brand new, culturally immersive show titled "JOYÀ." Expect a transformative (and theatrical) guest to

discover the secret of life through traditional Mayan culture.

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In Act II, the shipwrecked sailors have some fun catapulting each other into the air with a bouncy see saw. The tiniest one looked like an eager Tom Cruise, milking the applause for all it was worth. All were cut and hunky, but to the show's credit, the men did not overshadow the women's splendor.

And what splendor it was! Quietly, a woman arranged huge, bone-like pieces of wood into a living Calder model, all balanced precariously. Asian dancers in black with big silver headdresses capture Amaluna and her man. Pole climbers help him reunite with her again. The lizard ditches his tail (don't worry, I heard they grow back) and does some amazing juggling tricks. Aerialists fly through the air doing splits, and in a grand finale, they all come together to show their stuff. The girl gets the guy in the end, and everyone lives happily ever after. Most importantly, the audience.

Amaluna is hands-down the most women-positive circus-themed show I've ever seen, championing strong women, female artists and love -- on their terms. It's great for kids, and ever better for lesbians, so grab your flannel shirt and head to Queens.

"Cirque du Soleil: Amaluna" runs through May 18 at Citifield, Willets Points, Queens. For information  $or\ tickets,\ call\ 1-800-450-1480\ or\ visit\ http://www.cirquedusoleil.com/en/shows/amaluna/tickets$ /new-york/offers.aspx.

Winnie McCroy is the Women on the EDGE Editor, HIV/Health Editor, and Assistant Entertainment Editor for EDGE Media Network, handling all women's news, HIV health stories and theater reviews throughout the U.S. She has contributed to other publications, including The Village Voice, Gay City News, Chelsea Now and The Advocate, and lives in Brooklyn, New York, where she writes about local restaurants in her food blog, http://brooklyniscookin.blogspot.com/



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