

These pages from a circus brochure contain information about some of the performers.

Circus Stars

Elena from Mongolia learned her circus skills in Moscow and has performed her awe-inspiring act, the Sky Goddess, all around the globe. Suspended high in the air without a safety harness, she defies gravity by spinning, floating and free-falling on shimmering, silk fabric, to the screams of delight of her enraptured audiences. Elena fell in love with circus skills when, at the age of eleven, she first experienced a travelling circus in her old village. Inspired by trapeze artists and a high-wire act, she began to develop a range of skills, such as juggling, handstands and her balancing abilities.



So many people have been wowed by the heart-stopping experience of watching, open-mouthed, as young **French Pierre** zooms down a steep ramp standing on a motorbike, soaring upwards into a loop-the-loop, then landing safely on another waiting ramp. Furthermore, Pierre is not limited to one act. He is multi-talented. In the past, he has impressed audiences with his knife-throwing and his expertise at juggling eight flaming torches. His career began in 1989, when he begged to be part of a double motorbike act called the Flying Tigers, with his brother, Antony.



Karla the Strongwoman is from Romania and an eager performer from the age of seven, when her role was to climb to the top of a human pyramid created by her sisters and brothers, known as Pharaoh's Eye. She has worked in circuses worldwide and speaks several languages. She impresses audiences by asking volunteers – usually the two biggest men available – to sit in slings tied to the ends of a long, wooden beam, which she then proceeds to lift up. The same volunteers are then invited to repeat the feat with two of her trained poodles in the slings. Always, they find it impossible.

Marco Gelato was once famous for a never-to-be-repeated stunt in which he somersaulted blindfolded from one galloping horse to another, with only the sound of the horses' hooves to guide his movement. But circus performers play many parts. Marco, from Italy, was also a skilled musician, playing trombone and guitar. An unfortunate accident, when his timing went badly wrong, led to injuries which ended his horse-riding career. Now he enjoys conducting the Big Top orchestra, often playing music in time to the rhythm of trotting ponies, scampering dogs and outrageous clowns.