

Innovation Issue

# AAI

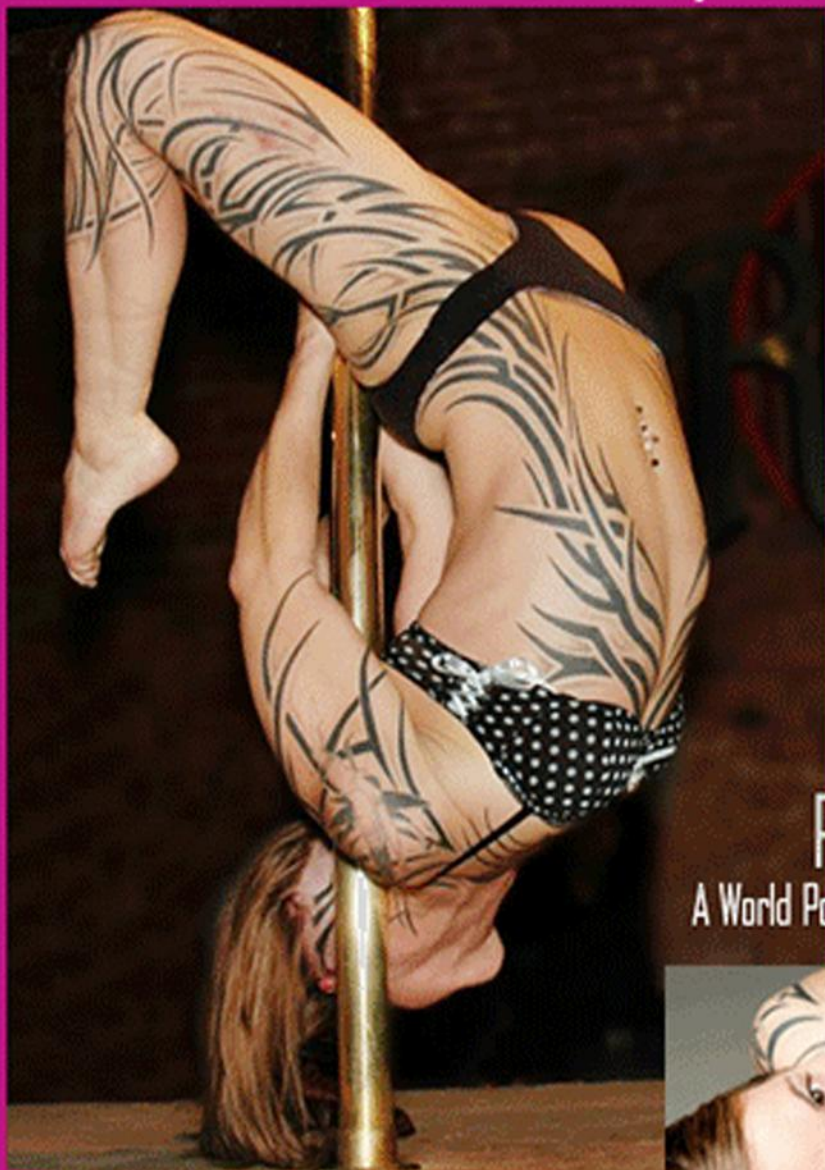
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INTERNATIONAL



*Jen Bricker*  
Innovator and Inspiration



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Welcome & Intro: Innovation Issue-

Studio Feature: Australia's Aerial Divas-

Performance Feature: Quynbi, Innovative  
Artist-

Feature Story: Making The Best Of It-

COVER: Jen Bricker- Innovation & Inspi-  
ration-

Feature Article: KamiKaze, Innovative  
Rigging-

Article: The Show Must Go On! By:  
Heather Hammond, Heliumm Ent.-

Spotlight: VJ Pablo, Innovative Design-

Q&A: Tips for locating a stellar studio-

Product Reviews: Latest & Greatest-

Showstoppers: Must-See Cirque Sensa-  
tions-

Global Events Calendar-

Look What I Can Do! Reader Photo Sub-  
missions-

That's A Wrap!-

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### Content:

Welcome & Intro: Innovation Issue- pg.5

Studio Feature: Australia's Aerial Divas- pg.6

Performance Feature: Quynbi, Innovative Artist- pg.8

Feature Story: Making The Best Of It- pg.12

COVER: Jen Bricker- Innovation & Inspiration- pg.14

Feature Article: KamiKaze, Innovative Rigging- pg.20

Article: The Show Must Go On! By: Heather Hammond,  
Heliumm Ent.- pg.24

Spotlight: VJ Pablo, Innovative Design- pg.25

Q&A: Tips for locating a stellar studio- pg.27

Product Review: Aerial Essentials- pg.29

Showstoppers: Must-See Cirque Sensations- pg.31

Global Events Calendar- pg.34

Look What I Can Do! Reader Photo Submissions- pg.35

That's A Wrap!- pg.37





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# Welcome

AERIAL ARTS INTERNATIONAL

We want to formally welcome and introduce you to Aerial Arts International Magazine.

Aerial Arts International was created in 2010 as a 'sister' publication to Pole Dance International. We felt it was important to add a partner to our rapidly expanding magazine in response to the increased interest by pole fitness participants in the aerial arts. As many of you are well aware, pole sport and fitness training often combines technique that is interchangeable with other aerial and acrobatic apparatus's and styles. The cross-over was quickly embraced, thus leading to an incredible global growth in aerial classes and training facilities of over 400% in 2011 alone.

Aerial Arts International has given a voice to our evolving industry. We are excited to facilitate the education, celebration and sharing of inspiration with the world through this publication.

In Issue 2, we are excited to share the talent and insight of our cover artist, Jen Bricker. Jen has a phenomenal background and an inspiring story. Against all odds, Jen has shown the world how persistence and innovation can lead to great triumphs in life. Our talented photographers from Alloy Images portray her beauty and soul. We know you'll fall in love with her as we did!

We will also take you to Australia to visit one of the world's most visionary aerial training studios, introduce you to behind-scenes production artist, VJ Paublo, share Trent Sherrell of Kamikaze's professional rigging advice and share examples with you of how aerial artists are transforming their communities through their performance. Issue 2 holds a plethora of intrigue, insight and excitement from cover to cover, and we are sure you'll love reading it as much as we have loved giving it wings! Here's to You!



# Innovative Studio: Aerial Divas Australia

Written by:  
Aerial Divas Marketing Team

Pole Divas took inspiration from various roots of gymnastics and exotic dance to create their award winning pole dancing franchise, and now they look to the circus for their new venture, Aerial Divas.

Aerial Divas is one of the world's first dedicated aerial hoop fitness studio's, bringing 'Circus Fitness' to the masses.

Launched in Richmond, Australia, in February 2011, Aerial Divas offers everyday women the opportunity to take their fitness to new heights by learning how to master moves and poses in a hoop suspended a meter and a half off the ground.

Alongside their sister pole fitness workouts, the aerial hoop exercise regime has been described as 'one of the most intense core workouts possible.' And, the Aerial Divas Studio is unique in that it is set up to offer each participant their own apparatus. The Principal Instructor for the class, Rachel Kmetko loves the idea of being able to give each of her student's a dedicated space for learning and achieving their fitness goals with the hoop. Formerly of Cirque Du Soleil's 'O' Production in Las Vegas, Rachel is responsible to direct and oversee the content, safety and success of the aerial hoop courses.

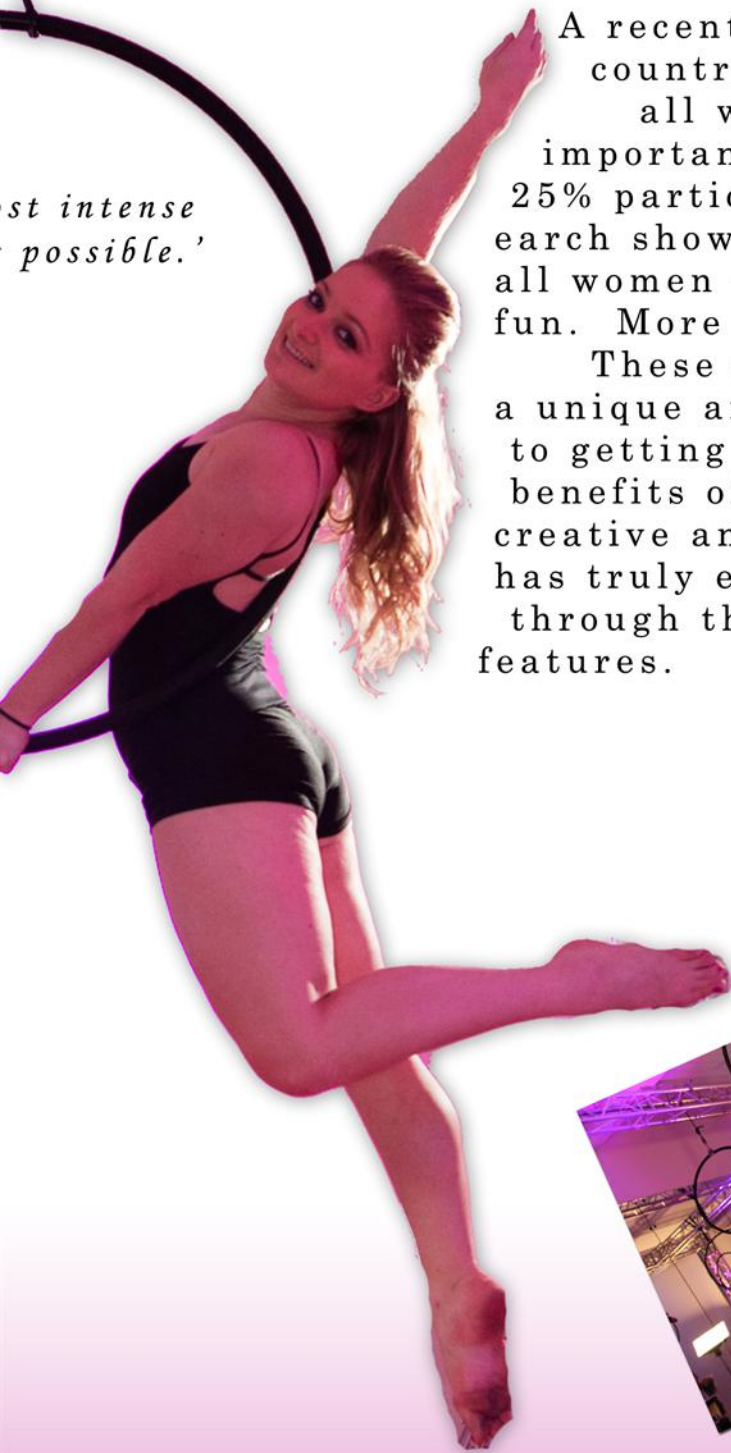
Expanding into other aerial arts is a natural progression for pole dancing studios and many alternative fitness schools around the globe. Numerous facilities are beginning to include aerial options in their syllabi, as instructors and students alike recognize the multiple similarities and benefits of each popular exercise apparatus. Aerial Divas is among the first to offer a fully dedicated aerial hoop feature to their studio, with ten hoops in the classroom space.

*'one of the most  
core workouts*





*st intense  
possible.'*



A recent survey of 15,000 women across 25 countries found that while almost half of all women realize that exercise is very important to their overall health, less than 25% participate in fitness often. Further research showed that nearly two thirds (61%) of all women would workout more if it was more fun. More than half felt exercise was a chore

These insights prove that making fitness a unique and inspirational experience is key to getting more and more women to enjoy the benefits of a healthy and fit lifestyle. As a creative and proactive business, Aerial Divas has truly exhibited the theme of 'Innovation' through their distinct studio and instruction features.



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1

Rachel Kmetko, Aerial Divas Principal Instructor and  
Cirque Du Soleil Performer.

2

GFK/Roper Worldwide survey of 15,000 women in 25 countries



## Meet Quynbi, A True Original

In keeping with our 'Innovation' theme for this issue, we wanted to share our discovery of one of the aerial world's most glamorous artists-with a style all her own. Meet Quynbi, a true original in her own right.

In her words, here is Quynbi's recollection of how her journey as an aerial performer began:

Years ago, I did an internship at 'Performance Space 122' in New York's East Village in conjunction with Karen Finley's Shut Up and Love Me show (I had the honor of cleaning up the honey). While there, I came across a flyer in the lobby that caught my eye, which advertised Low-Flying Trapeze taught by Julie Ludwick of Fly-By-Night Dance Theater. I signed up and was hooked. I quickly discovered that hanging upside down and flying in the air was so much fun! Following an informal performance during class one day, Julie took me aside and told me that if I wanted to get serious with aerial work I could perform professionally. I was fascinated and excited.

As Quynbi became more involved in the world of aerial arts, she was quickly introduced to new apparatus's. She recalls the following regarding her discovery of aerial silks.

"I remember sitting in the audience at an aerial showcase and watching the first aerial silks performance I had ever seen. The artist was this gorgeous woman with long, shiny red hair dressed in shimmering white on a white tissu. Her piece practically moved me to tears and took my passion for aerial arts to the next level. I returned to class with renewed dedication and commitment."

Shortly thereafter, Quynbi made the acquaintance of Esther Edelman of UMO Ensemble fame. Of her primary aerial coach and mentor, Quynbi shares the following: "Esther has been a huge source of inspiration and opportunity for me and I am so grateful for her guidance and support." She continues.

Shortly thereafter, Quynbi made the acquaintance of Esther Edelman of UMO Ensemble fame. Of her primary aerial coach and mentor, Quynbi shares the has been a huge source of inspiration and opportunity for me and I



pursuit of my performance dreams, including an amazing family (all of which are talented performers themselves), and an awesome boyfriend."

Quynbi has been performing on and off all her life- acting and modeling commercially, singing and playing guitar in punk bands, and dancing professionally. She admits that she finds the most freedom in her aerial performance and career, where she feels she can fully express herself. Quynbi loves the experience of feeling like she has wings, and that she can be truly innovative as an artist. When we asked her to recall some of her most memorable moments in the air, and she had this to say:

"This year at Seattle's Moisture Festival- performing to an original song composed for me by my talented brother Patrick McGuire (of the band Flashbulb Fires). He and my beautiful Mother were in the audience this year and brought me a giant bouquet of pink roses!"

"Also, my boyfriend, David Rose, is a gifted photographer and shoots all my shows. I can recall many moments onstage when I would pose for his lens and we would end up with an amazing shot. I like to search out his camera through the spotlights when I'm performing."

*"Esther has been a huge source of inspiration and opportunity for me and I am so grateful for her guidance and support."*





Regarding her experience as an aerialist, Quynbi concludes "Aerial work is always a challenge- there is always something new to learn and explore. I love that I can transform and reinvent myself with each new opportunity to perform."

Living in Seattle has added to Quynbi's artistic inspiration and creativity. "The moody skies of the Emerald City exhilarate and provoke me," she admits. Furthermore, she adds, "I'm fascinated by finding grace and beauty in darkness." With this criteria as a backdrop for her personality, the Northwest atmosphere certainly seems to suit Quynbi's ideal. And, Seattle has definitely proved to be a prosperous canvas for her work. Some of her opportunities for showcasing her art under the NW skies have included working with the Museum of Flight for the Seattle Science Festival, the infamous 'Moore Theater,' Seattle Arts Museum, Seattle Moisture Festival, Teatro ZinZanni's Dinner Theatre, Emerald City Trapeze Arts and numerous other businesses, musicians and industry professionals.

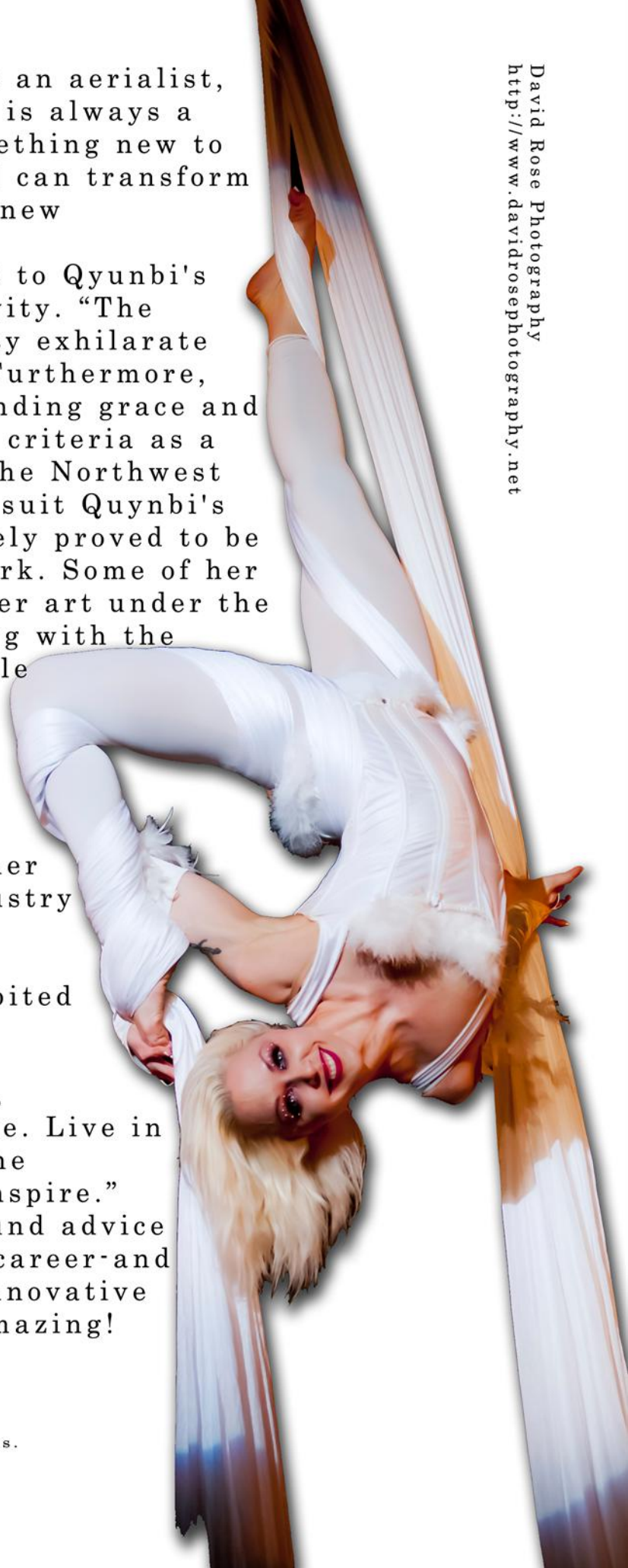
As a master creator and perfectionist, Quynbi has exhibited the highest level of skill as an aerialist. As for her secrets to success, she advises: "Practice, practice, practice and be unique. Live in gratitude and be honored for the opportunity to entertain and inspire."

We found this to be very sound advice from someone who has made a career-and a beautiful life- out of being innovative creative, unique and utterly amazing!

A few fun facts about Quynbi:

I happen to be a licensed skydiver,  
I am currently learning to ride a motorcycle,  
I was once a tattoo artist, and  
I sported a multicolored Mohawk for several years.

Quynbi's Aerial Nemesis:  
Injuries and Perfectionism





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# Making the Best of It

*Innovative cirque group bands together after major lay-offs*

Last October 2011, over 200 employees were unexpectedly laid off from their jobs in Salt Lake City. When they showed up to work at the popular Mayan Adventure and Spaghetti Mama's Restaurants, the doors were locked. No explanation. No one saw it coming.

Now what?

One group of unique employees decided to make the best of a bad situation, band together and keep doing what they do best: Performing Aerial and Acrobatic Stunts.

These employees are the elite entertainers who performed during dinner at the Mayan Adventure Restaurant in Sandy, Utah. For years, when you ate at the Mayan, you would be delighted and amazed by divers, fire dancers and aerialists on the trapeze, Lyra, silks and even a suspended pole. Their performance and skilled added awe and excitement to the atmosphere at the Mayan.

Initially, the Mayan solely focused on their dive shows for patrons. In 2008, Diver and Aerialist, Mary Wolfe, made a push to add more variety to the restaurant, suggesting aerial and fire acts to accompany the popular stunt divers.

The additions were a huge hit. However, the effects of the recession wore on the establishment during recent years, and despite the amazing entertainment, the restaurant was closed.

Most of these entertainers who worked at the Mayan have been training and performing in various formats for at it a long time, and plan to continue what they love to do. They also have created a special bond while supporting each other, and want to keep building that relationship.

They've joined together under the name Cirque de la Soul. The group will stay attuned to their skills through weekly practices, held at select gyms and fitness facilities that are able to accommodate their rigging needs. They practice aerial silks, hoop, rope, pole, trapeze and even chains and a cube suspended from the air.



*"The new Cirque de la Soul will  
add a great deal to the community"*



Their ground acts consist of various dance and acrobatic forms, traditional circus skills-like juggling and unicycle- magic, hula hoop, poi and fire.

Regular performers with the newly formed group include: Chastitie Lujan, Mary Wolfe, Tyce Nielsen, Kevin Seal, Hope Banrion, Roilan Hernandez, Erica Petty, Tori Baker-Brough, Amanda Bennion, Rebecca Rasmussen, Charly Aguirre, Lance Nielsen, Samantha Nielsen, Charlee Wagner, Holly Jarvis, Wyatt Davis, McKenzey Simper, Heidi-Lynn Butterfly, Michael Danger and Holden Roskelley. They will continue their unique style of entertainment through dinner theater shows, community and corporate events and even family, church, school and other group functions.

The new Cirque de la Soul will add a great deal to the community, as well as facilitate training and educational opportunities for those interested in learning more about the world of aerial arts.

Written by: Chastitie Lujan  
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To contact Cirque de la Soul: [www.cirquedelasoul.com](http://www.cirquedelasoul.com)





# Jennifer Bricker

*Innovator and Inspiration*

'Whose childhood idol turns into their biological sister?' Jennifer Bricker's does. And that's just one fascinating part of this amazing artist's 'Hollywood' style tale that is her life.

If you haven't heard her name -or seen her amazing arm muscles yet- on *Inside Edition*, *Real Sports with Bryant Gumball*, *Brittany Spear's World Tour*, *Glee* or at Walt Disney World...well, time to climb out from under that rock!

Jen was given up by her biological parents at birth. They were a serious family of athletic talent, and when her father saw that their baby had been born without legs, it was more than he wanted to accept. In fact, Jen's biological mother was never allowed to even see or hold her baby, and the decision by her husband was firm. Jen never even left the hospital. Subsequently, she was adopted and brought up by Sharon and Gerald Bricker in the small Illinois town of Oblong.

Growing up, Jen had a great enthusiasm for life and being active. She was interested in tumbling and acrobatics from a very young age. In fact, it was her passion. So, when she told her family that's what she intended to do with her life, they never second-guessed her. Instead, they signed her up for classes and supported her all the way. According to her family, she was no different than any other kid, and was never made to feel that way. 'We didn't dwell on the fact that she didn't have legs. Can't was a four letter word she couldn't use,' said Sharon Bricker, in a prior interview with another source. 'My parents made me feel everything but handicapped growing up,' Jen conceded. With the support of those who cared for her, Jennifer excelled at volleyball, basketball and softball in addition to her dream of becoming a gymnast - even winning titles for her incredible tumbling skills at the Jr. Olympics.

Throughout her years of acrobatic practice, Jen always idolized the infamous Dominique Moceanu. It was during the 1996 Atlanta Olympics that Jen began to watch her idol avidly. It was also during this time that her adopted parent's realized who Jen's biological family was and it wasn't long before the story of her childhood unfolded.

Jen realized that Dominique Moceanu was not only her gymnast idol, but also her biological sister.



To contact Jen:

[www.facebook.com/JenBricker1](http://www.facebook.com/JenBricker1)

[www.modelmayhem.com/1057439](http://www.modelmayhem.com/1057439)



After a lifetime of not knowing one another or having the opportunity to spend any time together, Jennifer Bricker finally reunited with her unlikely new best friends- Dominique and Christina Moceanu, her sisters. Despite a flood of emotions from rage to disbelief and elation, the newly-found siblings began a fresh chapter in their lives. Finally, they are able to share their adult worlds with one another in addition to their numerous talents and similarities.

Currently, Jen lives in Hollywood and works as an aerialist at Universal Studios. Decades of overcoming the odds has led her to multiple opportunities to improve upon and share her immense acrobatic skills and her passion for life. In California, she works out regularly at Gymnastics Olympia and XMA and performs dual aerial silks with her partner, Nathan Crawford, at Universal Studios. Jen has truly taken what many people would view as an extreme disability and turned it into an ability. She has overcompensated for now having legs, by training hard and building her arm and upper body strength in order to support her desire for athletic achievement. When asked how often she utilizes a wheelchair to get around, Jen answered, "I really don't like to use a chair-it just slows me down. I prefer to use my arms. The only time I use the chair is to keep from getting my butt dirty!" The goal may as well be the moon when it comes to things Jen can accomplish. Her positive attitude and limits know-no bounds!

Jennifer Bricker truly epitomizes the 'Innovation' theme for the current issue of Aerial Arts International magazine. From the very beginning, Jen has been saying 'yes' to the challenges she has faced and has used her drive, her creativity and strength to improvise and invent solutions for whatever obstacles stood in her way. We also credit her parents, Gerald and Sharon Bricker and her three brothers, Greg, Brian and Brad, for being innovators and inspirations themselves. Their encouragement and support have been a driving force for the sister they accepted and loved from the beginning. Jennifer would surely agree that, without them, her life may have taken a very different path. In fact, it is evident by her birth father's decision to give her up. He looked at the challenges of bringing up a child with a 'disability,' and was fearful of what that might entail. And, certainly, the road has not been paved in gold. However, Jen's life is a testament to the fact that success is a possibility in any scenario. The choices we make each day are important-no matter how big or small they may seem-and they build our character. The Bricker family has definitely proven that character is key. Jennifer Bricker will continue to inspire, as an aerialist, acrobat, sister, daughter and friend. We are thankful for the opportunity to meet her, to hear her amazing story and be touched by her strength and insight. Her life of innovation speaks volumes about who she is, who she has been supported by and the path of her bright and shining future.









A woman with long dark hair is suspended in the air, holding onto a thick purple fabric that forms a hammock-like structure. She is wearing a black lace top and black bottoms. Her head is tilted back, and her arms are extended, holding the fabric. The background is solid black, making the purple fabric and the woman stand out.

Our amazing Cover Artist, Jen Bricker, was photographed by Joe Woods of Alloy Images in California. Photography was done using Gymnastics Olympia and XMA Studios facilities, for which we are very grateful. Jen also met up with her aerial partner, Nathan Crawford, for some shots of their amazing duo act. One of our reporters, Erica Verner also had a chance to catch up for some 1:1 time with Jen on camera. Check out some of our favorite 'Jen' moments, and keep an eye on our website for the live interview where Jen tells all!

Thanks to everyone for their hard work and support! We love you!  
Your AAI Staff

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# KAMIKAZE

*Innovative Production & Rigging*

In light of our 'Innovation' theme this issue, we felt it was important to shine the spotlight on those in the industry who truly epitomize the definition.

In an ever-evolving global community of aerial and cirque arts, there are multiple contributors- with artists and performers naturally finding themselves in the center of the ring. However, it is often what takes place behind the stage, on the edges of the bright lights, that makes or breaks the big show. Furthermore, with safety as the key factor, every cirque event needs a savvy rigging specialist on hand. This is where innovators such as Trent Sherrell and his team at Kamikaze, Inc. come in.

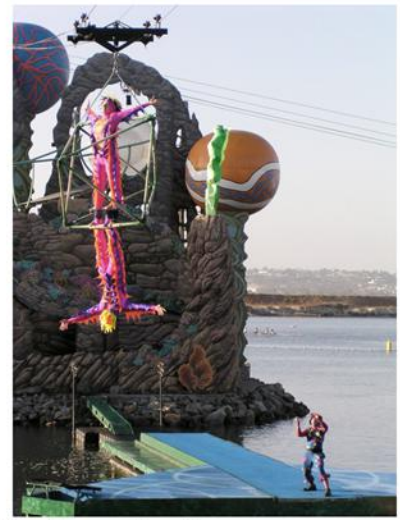
First things first. KamiKaze is a name that makes a strong point. Trent chose the name 'Kami-Kaze' for his company with great care. He explains, "when people hear the name 'kamikaze' they think immediately of a drink, or a crazy Japanese fighter pilot from WWII." Although these images may be somewhat applicable, KamiKaze actually translates to 'divine winds.' This name was given to the hurricane winds that wiped out the Mongolian naval fleet in the 1200's, preventing them from taking over Japan. The name was then reused in WWII for the fighter pilots (who were to navigate their planes on the divine winds) that are commonly associated with it." With this history lesson in mind, Trent continues, "I chose the name KamiKaze because, first, it's an awesome name! In addition, it fits my company to a certain degree in both definitions. In one way, we do a lot of things that many people would call 'crazy'-even though everything we do is calculated and planned. We are also a company that gets called to 'blow in' at the last minute and save the day, or show, whether it be rigging things that others companies aren't willing to do or are out of the ordinary, or putting acts together that others are unable to do."

Kamikaze is a live production and rigging company with an impressive resume, based in Las Vegas, NV. Kamikaze Incorporated President and head innovator, Trent Sherrell, has a lifetime of experience associated with aerial and acrobatic art forms, which are key to his success. He has developed his careful craft for over a decade, through servicing patrons with production and rigging requests of every size and format and venues of all types. In the description of the mission of his company, Trent shares, "We strive to set the standard for the industry, providing unique and diverse services such as live production shows, consultations, choreography and aerial rigging. From the innovative look of aerial artistry to the urban feel of today's X-Games, KamiKaze can develop, deliver and fully support the most versatile events."

Key elements such as diversity and versatility are definite necessities to the success of any company that prides itself on the title of innovative and standard-setting. And, with a mission like that backing up this company, it's no wonder they are known for excellence.

As previously described, 'KKI' is largely a two-fold company, offering expertise in both live production and rigging. When it comes to live production, the caliber of talent is the life-source of the business. Trent describes the types of artists he utilizes for live productions as the following:

"KKI's talent are some of the finest in the industry- with performance experience with names like Cirque du Soleil, The Moscow State Circus, Beijing Circus, Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey." He continues, "Our stunt men are seasoned veterans with current experience in the Hollywood film industry, as well as the most popular live stunt shows across the country." However, this doesn't mean there isn't room for new hopefuls. Trent explains that "anyone who wants to be known by KKI may send us their information. The more, the better! Pictures such as head shots are always appreciated and needed, but videos are still the most helpful for us when deciding how beneficial





When defining the various acts and apparatus's that are popular with KKI,'s productions, Trent has this to share: "Some of our most popular arts include aerial (suspended) pole, Chinese poles, flying silks (men), aerial chiffon (women), contortion, adagio and hand-to-hand balancing, bungee, floor bungee, Lyra, Spanish web and the Kamago. We are continually developing new acts and talent, Trent adds, and have numerous acrobats, dancers, choreographers and stunt persons available- including some older acts that have never been seen before..."

Trent reminds us that there are numerous production companies out there with great artists, however, there are important aspects to developing that talent. "Someone may have an amazing aerial act, but if there's no one to put it in the air, it is useless," which is why KKI's most sought after skills often reach beyond live production.

The other major focus of the KamiKaze business is it's expertise with rigging. Understanding rigging needs in the cirque and aerial industries is an important topic. Many aerialists have learned various aspects of rigging safely through trial and error and out of practice and necessity. As cirque entertainment and training grows in popularity, it is becoming more and more vital to embrace the knowledge and experience that go into these skills. One way to assess the standards of safety associated with rigging needs is to always use quality equipment and accessories. The other is to rely upon the knowledge of those who have a solid foundation based on years of practice. Whether it be circus rigging, production rigging, safety, fall prevention or stunt rigging, high speed cable winches or other fabrication needs, KKI offers top-notch services for nearly any occasion and need.

When it comes to the creation of a strong company that can truly survive the trials and tests of time, and do so with professionalism and class, innovation is key. Constantly pushing the limits and viewing challenges with an open mind sets the standard for growing improvements in practice. The aerial industry requires the utmost in seeking new levels of safety and skill. There are many pioneers of cirque and aerial arts who have helped lead the way to smarter solutions for accomplishing such amazing ventures. KamiKaze definitely exceeds the standard and expectation when it comes to achieving the highest level of quality in production and rigging.

The amount of forethought and level of innovative thinking associated with KKI is probably best summarized in their slogan: "The Divine Wind of World Wide Entertainment." Now, it all makes sense!

AAI Magazine would like to thank Trent Sherrell and KamiKaze for taking the time to share insight and contribute to this feature.

For more information on professional rigging and live production services:

[www.kamikazeinc.com](http://www.kamikazeinc.com)

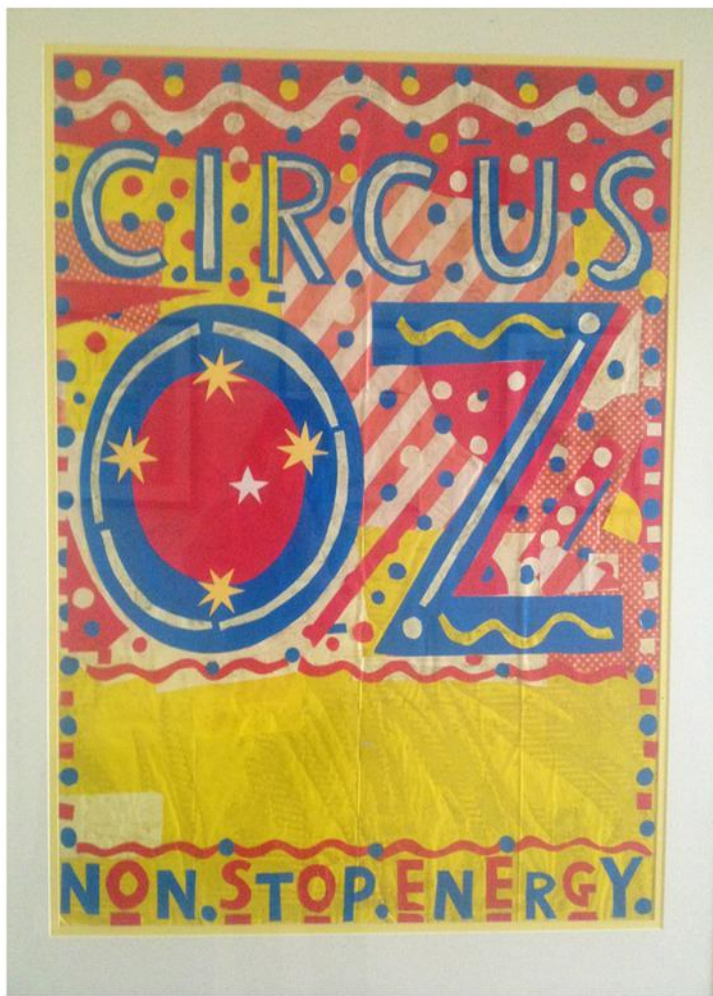
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A man in a red cape and shiny pants is performing a stunt, suspended in the air with his legs spread wide. The background is dark, and the lighting highlights the man and his cape.

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**KAMIKAZE**



# *The Show Must Go On... Or Not!*

## 'Using Innovative Thinking to Solve Problems of Aerial Capacity'

Written by: Heather Hammond, Heliummm Aerial Dance & Entertainment

There's something romantic and glamorous about that 'the show must go on!' mentality. And, many times, we professional aerialists have pulled out all the last-minute stops to make that happen. A favorite show-must-go-on moment comes from working with Noemie Lafrance on her piece, Rapture, in 2008. A site-specific masterpiece, this work had five dancers, suspended on the beautiful undulating surfaces of the Frank Gehry-designed Fisher Center for the Performing Arts. Each of us had a very unique rigging system, based the different slopes and varied architecture of the building, and the performer's weights.

When one of the performers pulled a muscle in his back, the choreographer re-jigged the remaining dancers. After teaching another talented dancer my role, I spent the afternoon learning the injured dancer's role on a roof with a completely different incline and a much different rigging system. We had to make some last-minute modifications given that the rigging system was designed for a 175 lb man and I'm a 112 lb woman...And, we pulled it off, thanks in part to the injured dancer calling me cues from the rigging station behind my spot during the 50 min show!

But what about those times when the show really can't go on?

Last December 2011 brought the East Coast a record snow storm that paralyzed NYC and its environs for days. This threw a wrench into one of our wedding gigs in late 2010, given that the guests, the caterer, myself, not to mention the bride and groom, couldn't make it to the venue on the wedding day. So, the wedding (and performance) was postponed till until January, when the streets were clear and everyone could get there safely. We were happy to accommodate this client on another date.

This holiday season has brought another unexpected event delay. A delightful Sweet 16 was supposed to occur between Christmas and New Year's, but alas, the young lady became quite sick. The event planner and venue owner luckily has a couple of free dates in January. So we're wishing our celebrant a prompt recovery and we'll be whooping it up for her and her friends later in the month. Acts of God and germs are not the only reasons to postpone a show. As professional aerialists, we carry a significant responsibility to our clients, the guests, and ourselves to make the appropriate calls to keep everyone safe.

If you're ever confronted with an unsafe rigging situation, do yourself and our community a favor, and bring in an experienced aerial rigger to remedy the situation. Or, simply decline the gig. While it can be hard to say 'no' to work, it's better for us all in the long run to put safety first. I've been in situations where the venue has said they've had aerial before, but the rigging points looked questionable to me. When I brought my rigger in and he entered the crawl space to examine the point anchors, he said he wouldn't even hang a flower basket from them! Luckily the client was willing to pay for our rigger to install proper points and the show did go on.

And, let's not forget that at some parties and night club events, the rowdiness and proximity of the crowd can also create an unsafe situation. When it doubt - don't. Or wait till things have calmed down and there's security in place to protect you, before beginning your next set. Better to wait 15 minutes or a half hour, than to clock someone in the face with a toe.

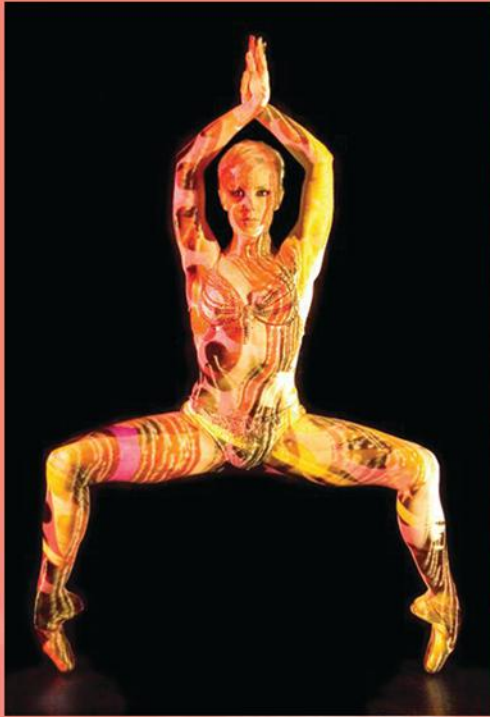
The message? Go with the flow. Do what the situation requires, not what your ego wants. Postpone or delay when you need to. Put safety first, and you'll be rewarded with good will, good gigs and a great career!





# *Innovative Design*

VJ Pablo Illuminates the Air



*"Light is the artist's sole mode of expression. He must mold it by optical means, almost as a sculptor models clay. He must add color, and finally motion, to his creation. Motion, the time dimension, demands he must be a choreographer in space."*

Paul Ackerman, aka 'VJ Pablo,' shares this quote on his professional pages, and celebrates it as part of his innovative design work with aerialists.

Paul Ackerman is an internationally recognized media artist with a professional background in graphic design, illustration, video editing, dance theater, corporate theater, multimedia, computer graphics and photography for over 25 years. His recent work with aerialists in major productions is what enticed the AAI team to have him share his work in this 'Innovation' issue.

In his own description, Paul shares "I specialize in illuminating performers with 'body projections' by utilizing unique video imagery. This innovative lighting design is a cross-over approach and an alternative to ordinary stage lighting. It is a very precise art form in itself. The concept of portable, video projection lighting for stage productions is a very 'next generation' idea. It is something that hasn't even begun to be explored in the realm of creating captivating and exclusive visual artistry."

*"I specialize in illuminating performers with 'body projections' by utilizing unique video imagery"*







For the more inquisitive viewer, Paul continues, sharing the science of his work: "At first I explored how to transform an image with a simple illustration, then with a single line of color. Next, I added actual lighting to a still image, working initially with individual shades and beams. Through trial and error, my understanding of light, shadows and 3D imagery was enhanced. I utilized all my education and experiences as a designer to bring the image, and finally the person, to life." Paul explains that people often mistakenly assume that what they are seeing is merely a picture, or stencil, being projected onto someone. He clarifies, "At no point is photography ever utilized. What is being viewed is actual etched, solid and hand painted lines, designed to surround the dancer with multiple projection points of light."



It may sound very complex, and it is, scientifically speaking. However, the result of all the intricate ingredients is a culmination of beauty, fascination and breathtaking awe.

In the San Francisco Bay area, Paul's productions were presented at the Palace of Fine Arts, Vorpahl Gallery, Oakland Civic Auditorium, Stanford University, College of Marin, San Francisco Dance Theater, Japan Center, and The Intersection in North Beach.

In Seattle, his work has been seen in Best of Choreography, On The Boards, Broadway Performance Hall, Seattle International Fountain for Arts, Edge 97, and with multiple live shows and bands.

Paul Ackerman, and VJ Pablo Productions are also popular names in the corporate and aerial industry's in Las Vegas.

Paul offers his skills for live productions as well as still -image design shoots.

As a true innovative creator, Paul Ackerman is an excellent resource for taking your aerial performance and artistic dreams to a whole new level.

Recent Work in SF:

VJActs Demo: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H9wgHbWtHGk>

Aerial Quixotic: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-czHic5yWcw>

Paul Ackerman aka VJ Pablo

<http://www.facebook.com/vjpablo>

cell: 702-336-5207



# Q @ A *Merging fitness and fun, and tips for sifting out sound aerial instruction*

The world of 'cirque' has been around for hundreds of years. Creative artists from places all over the globe have practiced a variety of aerial, side show, circus, dance and acrobatic endeavors in the name of performance and entertainment that have evolved and grown throughout the decades. Most recently, aerial apparatus's have gained huge momentum in the fitness industries. Everywhere you look these days, there are classes for aerial silks, Lyra, trapeze and anti-gravity yoga. It seems that people from all walks of life are discovering the many benefits that utilizing aerial equipment, resistance, inversion, acrobatics and dance technique can add to their health.

As the demand for aerial fitness grows, the need for quality training, safe rigging and sound instruction also increases. Incidentally, many of these needs are being met by the partnering of various fitness styles and professionals. Evidence of such collaboration can be seen in exercises such as yoga, Pilates, acrobatic dance and cross-fit workouts. However, the 'coming together' in the name of fitness and fun is most pronounced with the fusion of the pole and aerial industries.

Pole Fitness has proven to be a highly effective form of exercise with measurable results. Pole workouts bring the basics of strength, flexibility and technique to the table through acrobatics and dance. Coincidentally, the same elements are found in the utilization of aerial apparatus's. In fact, the crossover from the pole to other aerial equipment is currently about 50%. Pole athletes quickly discovered such similarities, even coining their style of acrobatic-infused pole dancing as 'aerial pole.'

'Aerial pole,' as it has been termed recently, refers more to the way that various tricks and moves are combined on a metal pole, rather than it's true definition, which is 'a pole suspended in the air.' An actual 'aerial pole' does exist, and is gaining popularity in both the pole fitness and aerial arts communities.

Despite the overlap of some of the definitions of 'aerial' devices, the fitness craze continues. As previously mentioned, this growing trend brings demands of it's own to the forefront- such as the need for solid instruction. Numerous studios and fitness facilities around the world are now offering both pole and aerial classes. And for those without a studio nearby, there are online courses available. But, buyer-beware! As with any trend, the need to sort out the quality from the quantity is key.

Just because a specific class is offered, doesn't mean that those instructing it are adequately trained or prepared to handle the needs that are exclusive to pole and aerial exercises. Safety is a major concern when participating in these activities, and studio-owners and instructors alike need to understand the how-to's of proper rigging, equipment use, spotting and injury prevention.

We wanted to assist current and potential patrons in finding the best facilities and outlets for aerial and pole training, so we created a list of things to include in your quest for fitness and fun. Here's our tips to help separate the 'fads' from the facts:





- **Reputation:** A good reputation is earned, that's why it's important. Before taking a class at a local studio, do some research. Ask around, read online reviews, search for testimonials and familiarize yourself with the people in charge of the business—both administratively and as trainers. Even if it's a new studio, whoever is opening it should have a resume and portfolio that follows them. If you're not sure, ask to see it, references included.

- **Experience:** A good studio owner will practice what she/he preaches. They should have some background in what they are teaching, and should always be a step ahead—or more—of their best students. Their instructors should offer the same. It's not safe or reliable to run an aerial studio, or take a class from one, that doesn't bring solid experience and their own training to the table.

- **Credentials:** This goes hand-in-hand with experience. A quality studio will be able to produce proof of education and certification for themselves and their instructors. This may be in the form of formal dance curriculum's, fitness certifications or other degrees—but it's vital to the quality of what you'll be learning.

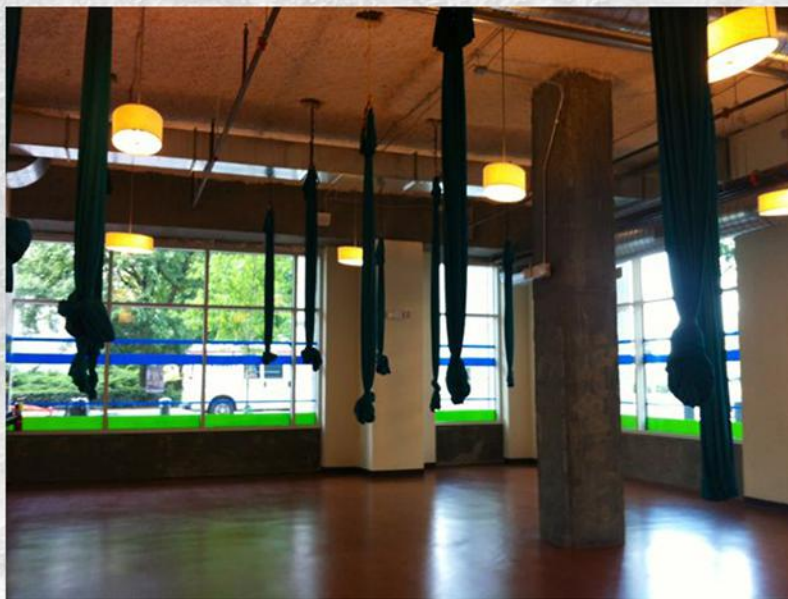
- **Industry Approval:** Another form of credentialing is 'approval' or 'endorsement' by the industries that the facility supports. There are numerous agencies, associations, groups and federations available that offer support for business owners, trainers and students alike in both the aerial and pole fitness communities. A good studio will have ties to its industry through memberships to such associations, regular communication and support of other aerial and pole professionals and events, access to industry-endorsed publications, books and manuals and adherence to universal community standards, ethics and policies.

- **Curriculum:** Facilities that truly cater to the needs of their clients will offer structured, organized curriculum's that are built on industry standards and progressive training. Classes should be offered in a variety of formats that support different styles of learning, such as group and private training, 'open' (supervised) practice time, 'block' sessions (4-8 wk increments with specific weekly learning goals and skill sets), drop-in classes and specialized workshops. Every class format should always include an opening warm up and stretching, a clear outline of the skills being taught that day and a cool-down period. All instructors should be trained to 'spot' their students at every level and be able to adjust class skills based on the individual needs of students.

- **Class Size:** Class sizes may vary depending on the level of the students training and what they are learning. However, there are still some solid guidelines for determining the quality of experience you'll get in a given class. Any classes that require the need for spotting shouldn't exceed a ratio of 1:6. Classes that include skills like climbing, inverting, difficult trick combinations or introduction to new skills require spotting. Many studios will even offer a 'spotting coach' in addition to the key instructor for these types of courses. Acrobatics, tumbling and balance classes should always have spotting coaches at a ratio of 1:4-1:6, depending on the level. Without exception, any class of more than 10 students (whether it be dance, cardio, aerobics, flexibility or yoga) is too many for 1 instructor. Class sizes should accommodate the students and instructors safely, and allow for adequate feedback, individual needs and progression. Class size is a great way to assess how your studio views its students and how seriously they take learning.

The bottom line when choosing an aerial or pole fitness studio is finding a place that meets your needs, offers good quality instruction in a safe environment and is somewhere you can go to escape the stress of your regular activities and enjoy your passion.

By: Chastitie Lujan





# AERIAL ESSENTIALS

AAI Magazine-Approved

## PRODUCT REVIEW

This section is where we offer information and educated reviews on products in the aerial market. They can be old favorites or new items being introduced for the first time. This is a phenomenal opportunity for both businesses and for our readers. Business owners can send their products for review by our professional team of experts and have a chance to share them with our base of over 20,000 people in 52 countries. Our supporters get to learn about the items we spotlight and gain insight that will enable them to make smart buying decisions that support their practice.

We accept products of all types for review-including apparatus's, equipment, accessories, clothing, costuming pieces, stage set and performance-supporting items and ideas (like original music, mix-mastering, lighting, portable rigging devices, etc), marketing and promotional efforts, teaching manuals, dvd's, industry-related jewelry, grip agents and more! If you are interested in-or know of a great product you'd like to recommend for submission...Please just contact us! It's easy! AerialArtsInternational@gmail.com

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Aerial Essentials is a strong, educated company that provides hardware and essential accessories for aerial rigging. Their quality is top-notch and their pricing is fair and market-friendly. The company is run by capable industry professionals, headed by Cheetah Platt, who have first-hand experience in the business and understand the importance of offering the best-and safest-products. Aerial Essentials is based in Hollywood, California in the United States. They offer easy-ordering from their online website, or by phone. In their own words, they describe their business:



"Equipment from The Aerial Essentials is trusted by circus schools, touring productions, and individuals worldwide.

We have shipped our equipment to every continent and are proud to have our products currently hanging in over fifty countries.

We provide quality hardware to those who seek to expand the horizons of flight and aerial arts. From large studios and cirque schools, to individuals setting up their first set of fabric in the living room- our equipment is always safe, reliable, and affordable.

To contact AE and place your orders:

www.aerialessentials.com info@aerialessentials.com  
orders@aerialessentials.com 323-454-3151  
Also on Facebook!!



We always work with our clients to ensure all needs are met- both in equipment as well as information and assistance from our experienced staff of aerialists, and professional riggers. Do not hesitate to ask any questions or request advice on your specific situation."

Aerial Essentials offers two types of aerial fabrics, non-stretch and medium stretch, in numerous color and length options. They also offer multiple types of quality hardware, both fully set up or as individual pieces, as well as popular accessories for aerialists- such as tape and grip spray. In addition, AE offers training and instruction manuals and dvd's from some of the industry's best! Full descriptions of all of their items are available on their website.  
[www.aerialessentials.com](http://www.aerialessentials.com)

Catering to patrons all over the world, Aerial Essentials has managed to build a solid company based on sound industry knowledge and expertise. Here are some customer testimonials straight from their site:

"I was referred by a good friend I trust in safety standards. Since I deal mostly with kids, I am uber conscious on safety and good products. My equipment arrived, and I am coming back for more! Great products, good service, nice people!"

~ Nathalie Gaulthier

Founder: Le Studio - Los Angeles, California

"Absolutely happy with the products you have send me. So helpful and quick. Thank you very much and from now on you will be the one I would address to for all

Aerial Equipment."

~ Aaliyah Makhmad

Creator: Aaliyah Art - Dubai, United Arab Emirates

"It's great to work with a company that not only sell their products but also use them to perform. It definitely shows in the way Aerial Essentials treat their customers and know their stuff! Thanks Cheetah!"

~ Michael Saab

Creator: Modern Gypsies - Brooklyn, New York

"Loved placing orders with Aerial Essentials! Staff was friendly and helpful, prices were great, speedy shipment and high quality products! Not to mention the videos were very helpful...I am so happy to have found this company."

~ Robynne Sharko-Stapley

Founder: The Vertical Gym - British Columbia, Canada

Aerial Arts International Magazine is adding their seal of approval to the long list of satisfied users of AE products! Cheetah Platt was educated and great to work with. He was willing to provide our team with quality samples for our review and did so in a quick and easy manner. We utilized the items AE sent our panel for numerous classes, training and performances, and felt they were top-notch and well worth our recommendation to our readers.

We want to thank Aerial Essentials for their time and participation and for the products provided to our team. They will continue to be utilized for the positive education, growth and sharing of aerial arts to many people in and outside of our industry. We appreciate the chance to work with AE and proudly present them to our supporters all over the world.





# Showstoppers

Aerial Arts International magazine has some amazing opportunities to check out cirque shows and events all over the globe, big and small! We would love to support your upcoming event by paying you a personal visit! Our talented staff is able to assist with reviews, promotion, marketing, photography, graphic design, venue scheduling for practices in many places and even opportunities to help warm up and train with performers as needed! We do top notch video and written media interviews and would love to shine the spotlight on you and your event!

Interested? Let us know!

Here are a couple of our favorite recent events we had the opportunity to be a part of:

## CIRCUS OZ- 'Steampowered'

Circus Oz is definitely in a league of their own. This group of eccentric 'Aussie's' makes a masterpiece out of mixing athletics, acrobatics, comedy, politics and song with a high-energy stage extravaganza and a sassy storyline to make 'Steampowered.'

Representatives from Aerial Arts International magazine had a chance to view the antics and talent of the Circus Oz artists first-hand during their stop in Salt Lake City, Utah. We were thoroughly impressed and endlessly entertained. The 'story' of the 'Steampowered' theme is based on the past industrial world which was once fueled by coal. They dance, sing, flip, hang and even roller skate their way through their slightly political storytelling that starts over a century ago and moves loudly into a brand new world of high tech power. The moral of the story is remembering our roots, while investing in our future.

Most notable though, are the insane skills of each and every performer in the show. From the breathtaking dives, jumps and climbs to the strength in acrobatics, this is truly a group of powerful people. The real trick of the Circus Oz entertainers is their un-ending ability to keep the energy in the room at an all-time high for the entire length of the production. It's smiles, laughs and unforgettable fun for the whole family! Our credit for this amazing group and their work goes to:

Ania Reynolds - Musician  
Steve Mills - Performer  
Tristan Bourke - Lighting Operator  
Ruby Rowat - Performer  
Pippin Remi - Classes Coordinator  
Olivia Blackburn - Director of Marketing & Communications  
Mike Finch - Artistic Director  
Mason West - Performer  
Mel Fyfe - Operations and Tour Manager  
Margaret Murray -  
Linda Mickleborough - General Manager  
Lesley Adeney - Administrator  
Jeremy Davies - Performer  
Joshua Bond - Artistic Associate & Koori Programs Coordinator  
Ghenoa Gela - Performer  
Fiona Poletti - Director of Special Projects  
Ed Boyle - Associate Director  
Dizzy Zhao - Financial Manager  
Debra Adamidis - Philanthropy & Development Manager  
Dale Woodbridge - Performer  
Chad Albinger - Rigger  
Bev Parker - Front House Manager  
Carl Polke - Musician and Musical Director  
Annie Stephens - Community and Corporate Programs Coordinator  
Thanks to Circus Oz for their kindness in sharing their talent with us and for allowing us to be a part of their artistic journey!  
Beautiful work!  
www.circusoz.com

Anna Pidgeon - Stage Manager  
Tim Coldwell - Senior Circus Artist & Founding Member  
Shane Witt - Performer  
Robyn McGregor - Digital Marketing Manager  
Pete Sanders - Rigger

Michael Baxter - Props Design / Maker  
Matt Hughes - Programming Director

Luke Taylor - Performer

Laurel Frank - Costuming Engineer-Founding Member  
Hazel Bock - Performer

Flip Kameron - Performer

Erica Heller-Wagner - Marketing & Communications Coordinator  
Darryl Cordell - Set designer

Claire McKenzie - Intl Program Director  
Cath Hedge - Assistant Production Manager  
Beck Matthews - Musician  
Antonella Casella - Artistic Associate





## CIRQUE DREAMS- 'Pop Goes the Rock'

AAI Magazine also had the pleasure of seeing Cirque Dreams: Pop Goes The Rock. What an experience! It was absolutely breath-taking and exciting! The "Pop Goes The Rock" theme incorporated both the Jack-in-the-Box and the musical theme of POP music. This is a very talented group of international performers that definitely had us on the edge of our seats throughout the entire show.

The scenery was very colorful, lively and eye-catching. The performers were superbly skilled! We were beyond impressed with all of their hard work, and their ability to take the audience on an memorable adventure!

Thanks so much to Cirque Dreams for their willingness to share their talent with us. Please catch our amazing interview on the details of creating a Cirque production with artist Neil Goldberg in an upcoming issue.

[www.cirqueproductions.com](http://www.cirqueproductions.com)

[info@cirqueproductions.com](mailto:info@cirqueproductions.com)





Cirque De La Soul



David ROSE  
P H O T O G R A P H Y





# Global Events Calendar

If you have an event you are interested in adding to our Global Calendar, please send us your information!! [AerialArtsInternational@gmail.com](mailto:AerialArtsInternational@gmail.com)

-Albania- 'Entry of Freedom' Show- November 2012 by: Cirka Kombetar

-Turkey- New Art Circus Performances through 2012

-Cirque Francori- Italy- Global and regional performances-

[www.davidburlet.com](http://www.davidburlet.com)

-'Aerialize' by Sydney Aerial Theater- Australia

-Dumbo Days; Juggling, Acrobatic and Circus Convention- Belgium-

Nov. 23-25th

-Cirque du Pole- Virginia, USA- DefyinGravity-

-Black Friday Extreme Air Camp- by Extreme Air Sports Co.

Nov. 23- Florida, USA

-Rip-Roaring Burlesque- Tasmania- Dec. 7th

-Aloft Circus Arts- Auditions- Jan. 2, 2013- Chicago, ILL, USA

-Carnivale Torrelavega- Training Courses every Saturday through

January 2013- Spain

-Zen Arts- Event- Nov. 18th- California, USA

-UK Pole Showcase- 2013- Northern Pole Dance

-ExtraPole- Nov. 26-27-Quebec CAN, by Julie Dowell

-Spin On Fitness- 6 Week Pole-Fit Training starts Jan. 8

-Aerial Divas presents: 'Aerial Unleashed' in Australia-

Nov. 17th [www.aerialdivas.com.au](http://www.aerialdivas.com.au)



*Look  
What  
I Can Do!*



Adrienne Wise- USA



Ilaria De Novalis- Italy



Dominic LaCasse  
(Flag Man)- France



Jennifer Curry/Cheetah Platt  
(Aerial Essentials)- USA



Caroline Rochefort



Lynn- International  
Umbrella Juggling  
(Cirque du Soleil)



Chastitie Lujan  
Erica Petty- USA



Rebecca Starr (Cirque Dreams)- USA



Flgiri Luli (Cirku Kombetar)-  
Albania



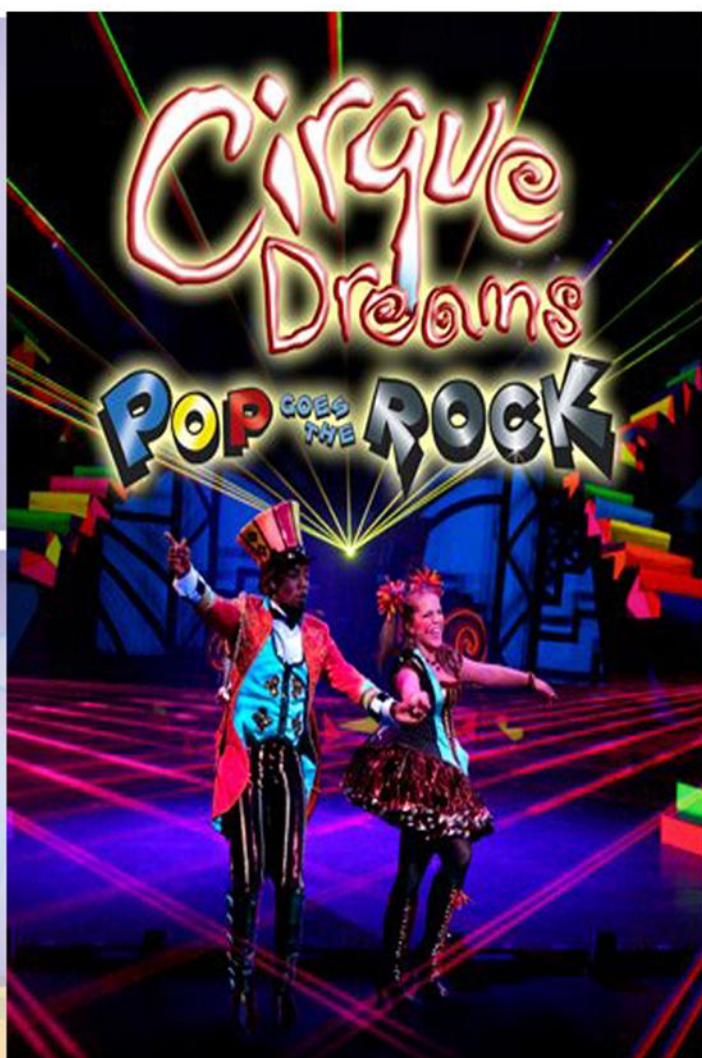
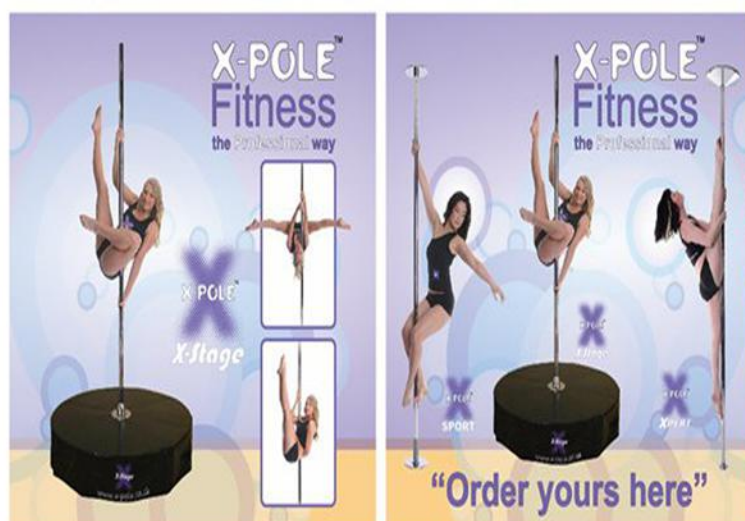
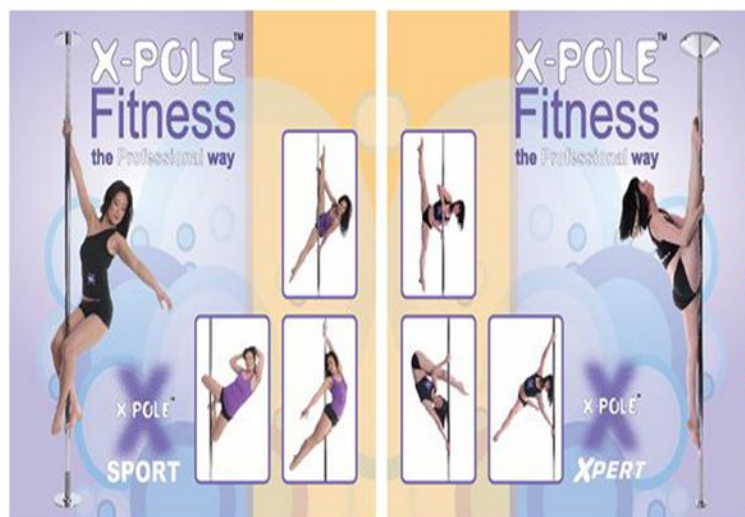
New Art Circus- Mongolia



Cirque Verdun- Quebec, CAN

Send your best shots to: [AerialArtistsInternational@gmail.com](mailto:AerialArtistsInternational@gmail.com)  
New Online Photo Uploader Coming Soon! [www.AAImagazine.com](http://www.AAImagazine.com)





APPROVED BY  
ACE, AFAA  
the PFA and  
the PDC

# Discoveries Dance

Instructor Training

Premier Training Courses for POLE INSTRUCTORS



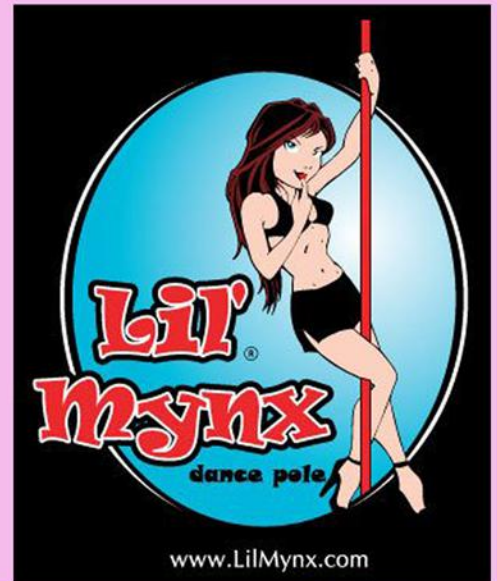
# That 's A Wrap!!

Aerial Arts International Magazine Staff wants to thank you- our beloved friends and readers for all of your support! We appreciate each of you so much and thank you for being patient and for standing by us and supporting our effort to produce a positive and through media resource for our industry! AAI Magazine is the first and only publication that focuses on our international aerial and cirque community-which is a HUGE one! There are so many amazing people all over the world who embrace circus, acrobatics, aerial, cirque, alternative arts, fitness and performance and all of the unique aspects of what we each do that make us who we are! We are excited and honored to be a part of such a wonderful and talented group! You are all beautiful, amazing and important to the whole.

We hope you feel like a part of our aerial family. Your thoughts and ideas are always welcome at AAI!

Please drop us a line, send us your stories, thoughts, photos, inspirations and dreams!  
We are here for you!

Wishing you the BEST until next time!  
Your AAI Staff



THE WORLD'S PREMIER AERIAL AND  
THEATRICAL RIGGING COMPANY...

# KAMIKAZE

"THE DIVINE WIND OF WORLDWIDE  
ENTERTAINMENT"

**etcp**  
TRENT SHERRELL  
Setting the stage for safety.

POLE AND AERIAL RIGGING | TRAINING AND  
CHOREOGRAPHY | DESIGN AND FABRICATION

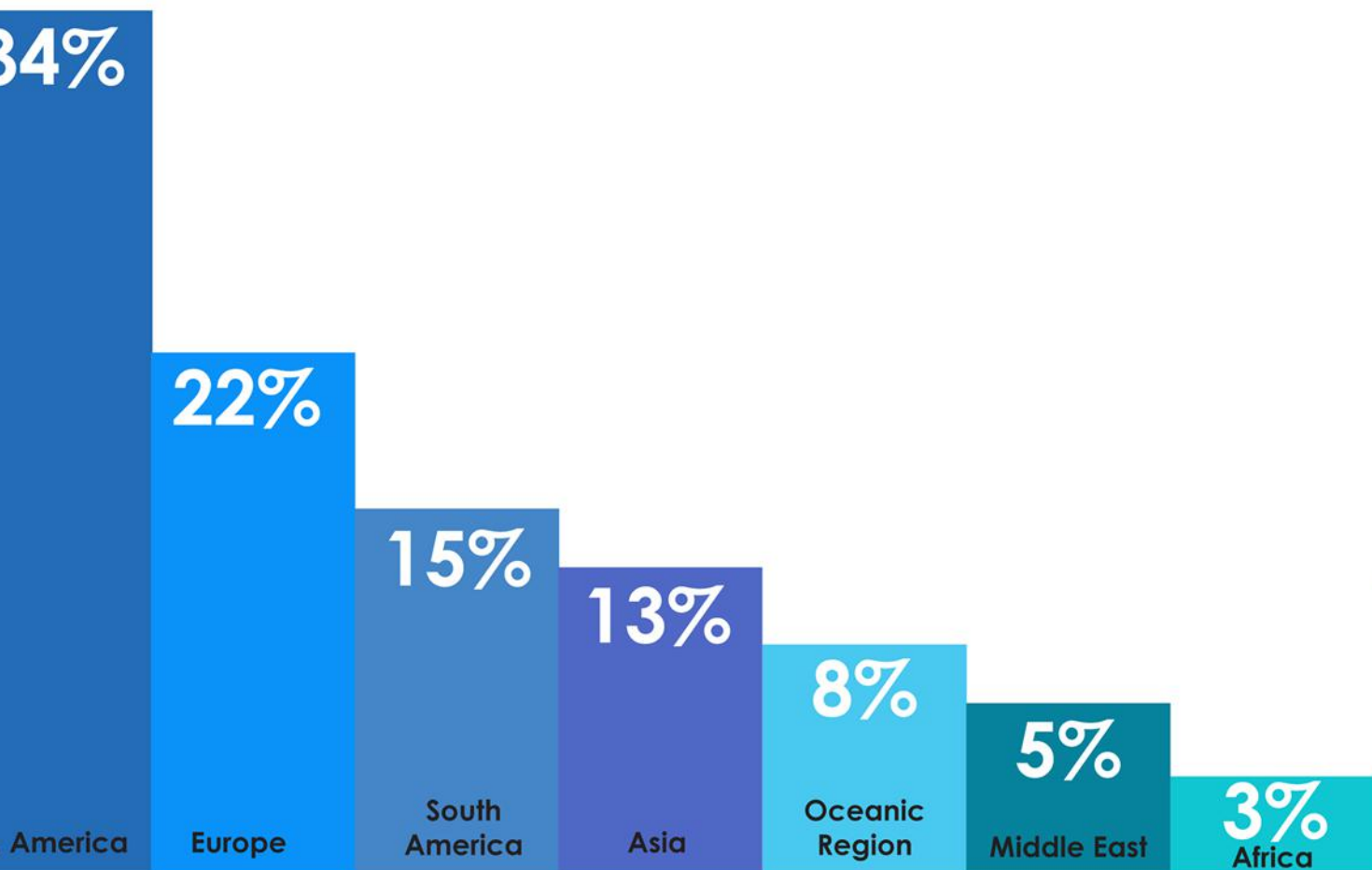


# READERS

erial Arts International Magazine's circulation began in the USA, though it features various, different countries and locations to ensure global coverage, appeal and diversity.

AAI's current subscription demographics are divided into 7 continental regions: North America, South America, Europe, Asia, Africa, Oceania and the Middle East.

**AAI's total circulation consists of over 20,000 readers in more than 50 countries.**





# READERS

**AAI readership is comprised of 65% females:**

Under 18 **9%**  
18-24 **29%**  
25-32 **21%**  
33-39 **17%**  
40-46 **14%**  
47-55 **6%**  
56-64 **3%**  
65+ **1%**

**AAI readership contains 45% males:**

Under 18 **11%**  
18-24 **26%**  
25-32 **18%**  
33-39 **22%**  
40-46 **16%**  
47-55 **4%**  
56-64 **2%**  
65+ **1%**

About 95% of AAI's audience consists of those who actually participate in the cirque and aerial industries, performance and production, and use of aerial products or apparatus's for exercise or professional training. The remaining 5% are avid fans of the circus and aerial arts.

**Over 50% of male AAI readers fit into the age brackets of 25-45.**

At least 50% of AAI magazine readers also read PDI magazine.

AAI appeals to men, women and even youth. The diverse readership of AAI is attributed to the popularity of aerial arts, acrobatics and circus-themed events worldwide, which features a large variety of apparatuses and styles to choose from.



# **PDI**

**POLE DANCE**  
**INTERNATIONAL**

[PDImagazine.com](http://PDImagazine.com)