

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE! PLEASE PRINT OR LIST!**

# **ACME MINIATURE CIRCUS**



*Pulex Irritans* Magnified 157 times Actual Size

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For Immediate Release  
Request For Coverage  
Listing Request  
KILL DATE JUNE 13, 2004

## **Trained Fleas Perform at Piccolo Spoleto**

CHARLESTON, SC: This summer, the stars treading the boards at Charleston's world famous Piccolo Spoleto Festival will be rather difficult to see. That's because they will be insects. Trained insects. Fleas, to be exact.

The show, the Acme Miniature Flea Circus, is an authentic Victorian flea circus, features fleas Midge and Madge (stars of the show) that perform spectacular circus stunts as seen before (and on top of) the crowned heads of Europe. Midge and Madge will perform in Charleston at the Chapel Theatre at the College of Charleston June 2-13, 2004.

Details magazine called the show "One of the top alternative circuses in the country." The New York Times said "The appeal is irresistible... Gertsacov is every bit the fantastical impresario, in his purple top hat and cash-register voice, introducing us to the wondrous insects itching (sorry) to perform" And the Los Angeles Times says that "Professor Gertsacov holds the audience (and the stars of the show) in the palm of his hand."

According to Professor A.G. Gertsacov, ringmaster and proprietor of the Acme Miniature Circus, flea circuses were popular entertainments during Victorian times, but had nearly disappeared since the advent of television. The last popular American flea circus was Professor Heckler's of Time Square, which left New York in 1957. The rumor is that Heckler thought that the nude shows were giving his fleas a bad name.

There are now only a handful of flea circuses still performing throughout the world. Gertsacov's is arguably the most famous. The Rhode Island native and his amazing insect stars have performed throughout the country, and in Canada, Chile, and Brazil. He recently spent three months performing in Times Square, less than two blocks from where Professor Heckler once had his fleas. Gertsacov has also been filmed for documentaries on the History Channel, the Travel Channel, and numerous news programs. He's even been a question on Jeopardy!.

Gertsacov's educated insect stars pull chariots, dance on a tightwire, and perform other circus-like stunts. While he does not reveal his method of training (a proprietary secret, he explains), he assures the curious and the civic minded that he uses only methods of positive reinforcement to teach the insects their routines. "I treat them as if they are my own flesh and blood," Gertsacov says. "And in some ways, they are."

Professor Gertsacov will bring his miniscule marvels to perform in their South Carolina premiere at the Piccolo Spoleto Festival in Charleston South Carolina June 2-13, 2004. He invites all curious parties to come and see what Canadian Public Radio deemed one of the top theatre events of 2003. But he asks that you leave your dogs and cats at home. Gertsacov quips, "I don't want anyone to steal the show."

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### **LISTING:**

The **Acme Miniature Circus**, a Victorian style flea circus starring "Midge and Madge, Trained Fleas Performing Spectacular Circus Stunts As Seen Before (and on top of) the Crowned Heads of Europe" Piccolo Spoleto Festival June 2-13 ( June 2,4,6,8,10, 12 at 5:30 pm, June 3,5,7,9,11 at 8 pm and June 13 at 1 pm )at the Chapel Theatre , 172 Calhoun St, Charleston. Tickets are \$10-12 and are available through Ticketmaster 843-554-6060. For more information, call the Piccolo Spoleto Office 843-724-7305 or visit [piccolospoleto.com](http://piccolospoleto.com) or [trainedfleas.com](http://trainedfleas.com). No Dogs or Cats will be admitted to the shows.

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The General Public including Knowledgeable Onlookers and their Families  
are Hereby Invited to Witness An Astonishing Exhibition Of A  
**Curious Natural Wonder:**

KNOWN FAR AND WIDE AS THE

**ACME  
MINIATURE  
CIRCUS**



BEING A PRESENTATION OF

**Trained Fleas**

OF THE SPECIES *PULEX IRRITANS*

Performing **Spectacular** Circus Stunts  
**As Seen Before (And On Top Of)**  
**The Crowned Heads of Europe!**



As presented by the Internationally Acclaimed and  
WORLD RENOWNED AUTHORITY Professor A.G. Gertsacov  
OF PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND IN AMERICA  
Psycho-Entomologist & Flea Trainer Extraordinaire.

**POSITIVELY NO DOGS  
WILL BE ADMITTED TO THE SHOW**

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

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

**Piccolo  
Spoleto**  
CHARLESTON, SC

**JUNE 2-13, 2004**  
Chapel Theatre 172 Calhoun St  
**TICKETS JUST \$12/\$10\***

\*SENIORS/STUDENTS

CALL [ticketmaster](#) **843-554-6060 FOR TICKETS**  
**CALL PICCOLO HQ 843-554-6060 FOR MORE INFO**

Piccolo Spoleto is the official outreach program of Spoleto Festival USA & is administered by the City of Charleston Office of Cultural Affairs.

# Our Flea-ting Moments Of Fame

some critical acclaim for the Acme Miniature Circus

## NEW YORK TIMES



The appeal is irresistible... a high-spirited glance back at an entertainment form that had been dead as a doornail since Professor Heckler's show at Hubert's Dime Museum closed in 1957.

## NEW YORK PRESS



Professor A.G. Gertsacov and his Acme Miniature Circus will amaze and astound even the most cynical and near-sighted of visitors.... So maybe something good is finally happening in Times Square.

## LOS ANGELES TIMES



Professor Gertsacov holds the audience (and his performers) in the palm of his hand...Audience reaction builds from bewilderment to fascination and glee.

## SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE



An Ironist of the Insect Realm... a 'psycho-entomologist' with an encyclopedic knowledge of flea lore... the show sparkles with wit.

## BOSTON PHOENIX



Biting Entertainment... a cross-generational crowd, ranging from mesmerized kids to kitsch-loving, tattooed twentysomethings to nostalgia-driven seniors.

## PROVIDENCE JOURNAL



A charming show that flashes us back to Victorian times.... The Professor's fleas have the power to amuse.

## MONTREAL GAZETTE



#1 SURE BET... This Rhode Island act wins hands down as the curiosity of the festival... Pure feel-good nonsense, amusing for adults, suitable for children.

## MINNEAPOLIS STAR-TRIBUNE



**PICK OF THE LITTER**  
...This one man introduction to the flea and its performing capabilities is what the Fringe should be all about. It's funny, off-beat and skillfully delivered by Circus Master Professor A. G. Gertsacov of Providence, RI. You have probably heard of a flea circus, but have you ever attended one? Bring the kids and avail yourself of this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. No bug spray allowed!

## PHILADELPHIA CITYPAPER



Provides the springboard for thoughts on our oppression of the species (through the use of soap) and the psychology of two microscopic divas. Brilliantly warm-hearted: ... suitable viewing for your "inner child."

**A WACKY  
WITTY  
CREATURE  
FEATURE !**

MINNEAPOLIS STAR-TRIBUNE

**A  
GEM OF  
A SHOW...  
DEFINITELY  
DON'T SCRATCH  
THIS ONE OFF YOUR  
LIST!!**

**SAN FRANCISCO FRINGE GUIDE**

**ONE OF THE TEN  
BEST ALTERNATIVE  
CIRCUSES IN THE  
COUNTRY!**

**DETAILS MAGAZINE**

**Part Sideshow, Part Exhibit, and a Whole Lot of Fun!**

**VISIT [www.trainedfleas.com](http://www.trainedfleas.com) for more information  
articles , photos, and references available on request.**