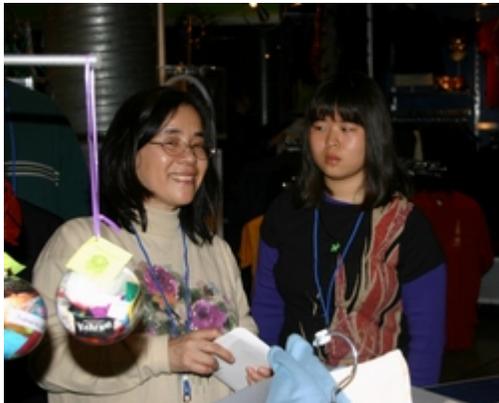


## Cirque Passionates at IHQ

CirqueCon Montreal 2005  
The second annual gathering of Cirque du Soleil fans  
April 23<sup>rd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup>, 2005  
Standard Membership Ticket  
Please return to your group leader.

The Internet Marketing team came up with an agenda for the day, including a tour of the Studio's lobby and cafeteria. In addition to discovering the International Headquarters, the super-fans were treated to a presentation by Michel Leblanc, Rigging Team Leader and a Cirquester since our beginnings, and Bernard Petiot, Vice-President of Artistic Products, who explained the process by which an athlete is transformed into a performance artist. Bernard was pleasantly surprised by the meeting, and says that he learned a lot from their impressions and comments. A happy meeting indeed!



True fandom is often made clear in the souvenir department, and this bunch certainly stepped up to the plate. In one hour, the Merchandising boutique, specially opened for the occasion, sold almost CAN \$8,000 worth of merchandise!

A buffet was provided by our partner Celebrity Cruises, and the fans were introduced to the concept of the Bar at the Edge of the Earth.

Keith Johnson (left on the photo) is the main organizer for the Cirque

Passionates. The first Cirque show he saw was *Mystère*, in 1997. "Before then, I'd seen shows on TV, on Bravo, but never on stage," he explained.

The first meeting of the Passionates took place when *Quidam* visited Vancouver in May and June 2004. Keith recounts: "A guy from the Yahoo Groups website talked about organizing a group to go see the show in Vancouver. I was organizing the same thing at the same time with friends, and had already made bed-and-breakfast reservations in Vancouver.



"So I went to the Yahoo group in question to say that if they moved their reservation to another weekend, I could reserve an adjacent bed-and-breakfast and we could go together. They agreed, and we joined forces. And that's how the Cirque fans met!

"André Bélanger then got in touch with one of us—the Yahoo group organizer—to say he could give us a hand. During our e-mail conversation, he offered us a tour of the site. André took charge of the concept of bringing together a fan group, and we had an excellent time.



"For the second meeting, I thought Las Vegas would naturally be the destination. But André suggested we come to Montreal to see the new show. We thought about it, we worked with André, and here we are!"

## Did you say "Cirque Passionates"?

An Australian couple stay in Montreal is the beginning of a ten-week journey that will take them all over the world to see almost every one of Cirque's shows!

They started in Perth, and headed to Montreal to see *Corteo*. Next, they're heading to Toronto and Niagara Falls, and then to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (to see *Varekai*). Then they go to New York, and will fly from there to Orlando for *La Nouba*. They'll hit Las Vegas and see Cirque's four shows there, and then hop over to Europe and visit Paris (where they'll see *Saltimbanco*) and London, followed by a final stop in Tokyo, where *Alegría* is visiting for the second time. Then they'll head home to Perth and finish things off in style with *Quidam*.

Now that's a trip!

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Kristi lives in Arizona. After seeing "O" a few years ago, she saw *Varekai* in December 2003, where the Atherton twins' act had a profound effect on her. Starting right then, she started to look for a way to work at Cirque, without having any knowledge of acrobatics. She checked the job openings on Cirque's website and saw a posting for a physiotherapist. From that moment on, she wanted to be a therapist. She sent a letter to the Atherton twins to thank them for having inspired her towards a professional goal. Since then, she's been exchanging e-mails with them every once in a while, and feels lucky to have become their

friend.

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Manuel came from Mexico just for this meeting. Once he entered the Studio, he asked to meet Kim Patenaude, from Cirque Club's customer service team, with whom he had exchanged a few e-mails. He was very happy to meet his correspondent, and gave her a candy he had brought specially from home for her.

After seeing *Corteo*, Manuel was blown away. "I've seen all the DVDs of the shows and live I've seen *Varekai*, *Mystère*, "O", *Zumanity* and now *Corteo*. My best Cirque experience had been *Varekai* but *Corteo* totally surpassed it. It is my top Cirque experience now. Everything was just amazing and the music was so great that I was sad that the CD wasn't available yet. I'll have to wait for it!"