



CIRQUE DU SOLEIL  
**CRYSTAL**™

**A BREAKTHROUGH ICE EXPERIENCE**

**PRESS KIT**

## SHOW OVERVIEW

### ABOUT THE SHOW – A breakthrough ice experience

CRYSTAL is *Cirque du Soleil*'s 42<sup>nd</sup> creation and explores the artistic possibilities of ice for the first time. This unique production pushes boundaries of performance by combining stunning skating and acrobatic feats that defy the imagination.

Watch as world-class ice skaters and acrobats take their new frozen playground with speed and fluidity as they challenge the laws of gravity with never-before-seen acrobatics.

Follow our lead character, *Crystal*, on an exhilarating tale of self-discovery as she dives into a world of her own imagination.

CRYSTAL invites you to suspend reality and glide into a world that springs to a colorful life with astounding visual projections and an original score that seamlessly blends popular music with the signature sound of *Cirque du Soleil*.

CRYSTAL features an international cast composed of figure, extreme and freestyle ice skaters, acrobats, musicians and a comic character. Eighteen different nationalities are represented in the cast.

## STORYLINE AND THEME

*Crystal* is a creative young woman who feels misunderstood and out of sync with herself. To escape her reality, she ventures out on a frozen pond and falls through the ice into an upside world. In this underwater world of her imagination she sees a reflection of herself. Her reflection guides her through this new world and wakes her up to her own creativity. As *Crystal* continues her journey she turns her quirks into creativity with the stroke of her pen. With this newfound power, she is able to find her true self and journey back up to reality.



The show CRYSTAL is about looking at things from fresh angles, peeking through the veneer of everyday life, reframing one's daily reality to see what one might have missed. Sometimes the only way to appreciate things is to look at them sideways. Discovering one's individuality and uniqueness requires venturing out on thin ice.

## MELDING CIRCUS ARTS AND ICE SKATING

**BLURRING THE BOUNDARIES** – With this new creation *Cirque du Soleil* explored the essence of skating, bringing its signature style of acrobatics into uncharted territory – a sheet of ice – and blurring the boundaries between gliding sports and circus arts.

In *CRYSTAL*, acrobats and skaters perform acrobatics on the ice and in the air, seamlessly combining multiple disciplines together. Synchronized skating, freestyle figures, and extreme skating are featured alongside circus disciplines such as swinging trapeze, aerial straps, and hand to hand. Figure skaters learned how to be pushers on Chinese poles, while circus artists learned how to skate, and extreme skaters learned figure skating moves.



## THE MAIN CHARACTERS



### CRYSTAL

Crystal is an eccentric young woman with a charming quirkiness and a restless imagination. Feeling misunderstood in her everyday life, she ultimately finds her footing and turns her quirks into a creative force, radically changing her own narrative through her writing.



### CRYSTAL'S REFLECTION

This character is Crystal's shadow self – a dark yet helpful side of her personality that enables her to access her strengths and creativity. The Reflection she carries inside her – which usually appears as a separate, distinct entity in the underwater world – is more mischievous and headstrong than she is, encouraging her to take control of her life.



### THE SHADOWS

The shadows represent the forces within her subconscious mind that pull all the strings of her life, either helping her along or hindering her progress.



### CRYSTAL'S ENTOURAGE

**Crystal's family** – Crystal's mother, father and brother are her warped version of a suburban family: impassive, stoic individuals mesmerized by the television. The school kids and the business people who appear in Crystal's subconscious world all seem passionless and robotic to her.



**Comic character** – The Clown stalks Crystal's subconscious world. He is Crystal's imaginary friend, motivating her whenever she needs a friendly push.

# SCENES & ACROBATIC PERFORMANCE

## ACT ONE



### TEMPÊTE

*After falling through the ice, Crystal is swept into a swirling vortex of wind and snow as her imagination wanders in free-fall.*

Acrobatics and skating collide in this high-energy number where banquine, hand-to-hand and tumbling are interwoven with jumps, flips, spins and figure skating.



### A DAY IN THE LIFE

*Crystal is caught up in a warped, exaggerated version of her life where she feels out of sync – at home, at school, on the playground, on the street, and in the city.*

This large-scale choreographic storytelling number blends acrobatic language with various skating forms.



### REFLECTION

*After chasing away her flashbacks, Crystal decides to take control of her world when she catches sight of her Reflection again, who hands her a pen. “I wonder what’s inside?” Crystal says, and her quest for self-discovery begins. She is about to discover her voice through the power of her own words as she performs a poetic skating duo with her Reflection.*



### JUGGLING

*In a joyful, celebratory scene driven by lively klezmer-infused music, Crystal explores her newfound talent as she gives shape to the impulses of her soul, willing characters into existence with the mere stroke of her pen.*

In this juggling act, a juggler display an incredible set of skills while joined by groups of acrobats and skaters.

# SCENES & ACROBATIC PERFORMANCE

## ACT ONE



### HOME SWING

*While her family sits absorbed in front of the TV, she swings back and forth on her backyard swing set and soars above the landscapes of her everyday life.*

As Crystal reinvents her home environment, she flies up on a trapeze flips and spins while wearing ice skates – a first in a *Cirque du Soleil* show. She is joined by her Reflection who performs a dynamic skating solo.



### PLAYGROUND / HOCKEY

*Crystal revisits her neighborhood playground, which she transforms at will as she learns to master her new powers.*

Children frolic on a frozen playground while a hockey game on the pond turns into a highoctane romp on ramps where extreme skaters do crazy flips, twists and jumps at full speed, turning the ice into a giant pinball machine.

# SCENES & ACROBATIC PERFORMANCE

## ACT TWO



### BIG CITY

*Trapped in the underwater world of her imagination, Crystal travels from her town to the big city.*

Caught in a life-size maze of transparent panels on the ice, Crystal sees her Reflection again. She skates through the constantly shifting maze in an attempt to catch up with her elusive alter ego while a group of skaters crisscross the ice with synchro skating choreography.



### PENDULAR POLES

*Crystal is jostled around in a world of her own creation inspired by the frenzy of the city.*

This swinging poles act, a first at *Cirque du Soleil*, combines synchro pole work, pole-to-pole jumps, and impressive Russian-swing-style dismounts.

# SCENES & ACROBATIC PERFORMANCE

## ACT TWO



### TAP DANCE

*Four of the Businesspeople characters try to one-up each other in a friendly competition.*

Wearing mics on their skates, four artists exhibit their technical prowess by showcasing their unique talents leading up to a crowd pleasing tap dance number.



### AT THE OFFICE

*Using the typewriter as her instrument, Crystal continues to explore the power of her imagination by turning a sterile environment into something beautiful.*

Inside an oppressive office environment where typewriters rule, the cast performs group choreography that leads to a jaw-dropping chair balancing act.



### COURTSHIP

*Crystal pictures herself in a romantic setting in a park where couples swirl and waltz together on skates.*

Three couples perform an enchanting ice dancing number as Crystal searches for her own partner amongst the group.



### BALLROOM

*Crystal transforms the park into an elegant ballroom as her suitor appears from above and whisks her off her feet.*

The couple performs a spellbinding aerial straps/skating pas de deux that blurs the boundaries between ice and sky.

# SCENES & ACROBATIC PERFORMANCE

## ACT TWO



### RETURN OF THE REFLECTION

*Crystal's Reflection brings her back to reality and makes her realize that real life is above the surface and not in this make-believe world.*

As Crystal's reflection multiplies, the four female skaters perform a group skating number with stunning interactive video effects.



### REFLECTION'S CLUMP

*Crystal struggles to journey back up to the light and life above the pond while the Shadow characters help and hinder her progress.*

In a breathtaking number that melds hand-to-hand techniques on ice with duo trapeze.



### BREAKTHROUGH

Having summoned the courage to reach her true potential, *Crystal* finally breaks through the ice and resurfaces, at one with her inner self, where she is greeted by her family and friends. The finale features an exhilarating ensemble of acrobats and skaters as they create a giant pinwheel in a nod to classic ice shows.



# COSTUMES AND MAKEUP

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Blending with the set design of *Crystal*, the overall look of the costumes is one of frivolity laced with surrealism in a fantastical world of ice.

## CRYSTAL AND HER REFLECTION

With her flamboyant red hair, Crystal is clad in a vintage plaid skirt in blue, a light turquoise cardigan-style shirt and a red scarf that echoes her quirky creativity and unpretentious nature. Her Reflection wears a darker version of the same outfit, but with shiny wave patterns as a nod to her underwater world. Her costume is the mirror image of Crystal's where everything is reversed.

## THE SHADOWS

The Shadow's costumes transition from black to white with washed out ink spots and crystal patterns.

## CRYSTAL'S FAMILY

Spectators see Crystal's family through her eyes in a warped version of reality. Her mother, father and brother wear whimsical, art-deco-inspired costumes with a sense of suburban nostalgia. Coral pink, mint greens and banana yellows are the chosen color palette. Added to the front of their costumes is a simple appliqué representing a full-size, childlike drawing of each of them as seen through Crystal's eyes.

## HOME SWING

Crystal is seeing her world from above. In this scene, some of the character's wear clouds or houses on their heads to represent Crystal's surreal inner world.

## BUSINESS AT THE OFFICE

In a scene that evokes the rigidity of everyday life at the office, businessmen wear very clean cut navy blue suits, while the businesswomen wear costumes that feature an intricate pattern made of standard typewriter letters.

## BIG CITY FLATS CRYSTAL EXTRAVAGANZA

Angular crystal and origami effects are used throughout the costumes as a unifying component. 3D paper effects were used to create a prism pattern to give the sleeves volume during the Big City and Poles acts.

## TAMING THE ICE

The costume in *CRYSTAL* were designed to withstand the rigors of ice, while keeping the artists safe. Catchers wear special padding on their shoulders as well as gloves made of Kevlar equipped with polymer cuffs that absorb shock and protect their forearms from the razor-sharp skate blades.

Some artists slide on the ice and the materials used are water resistant, non-absorbent, and preserve the gliding properties of the costume.

Some of the acts in the show involve high-level floor acrobatics such as banquine and hand to hand that require stability on the ice. The acrobatic shoes have been developed incorporating a combination of small metal spikes and crampons into the soles of the shoes to enable them to walk, slide, run, and so many other things that are normally not possible on ice. Because of this they can keep their stability.

# COSTUMES AND MAKEUP

## QUICK CHANGE COSTUMES

All artists (Acrobats and Skaters) wear three to four different costume outfits every performance which means quick changes between every scene. The costumes are equipped with full length zips that run from ankle to ankle along the inside seam to allow the skaters to change without removing their skates.

We have also used some magnets to enable quick changes between scenes.

## THE SKATES

- All types of skates are used in the show including figure skates, ice dance, and hockey skates. Those used by figure skaters have toe picks for control and flatter blades while hockey skate blades are curved for increased maneuverability and speed.
- To achieve a uniform look with so many pairs of skates throughout the show, we created covers that zip on and off the skates and painted the covers so they have the same look as the shoes.

## GLOVES AND CRAMPONS

The gloves have a piece of Velcro across the palm of the hand; we attached a plastic plate that has crampons so that the artists can put their hands on the ice and breakdance.

## COSTUME CREATION AT *CIRQUE DU SOLEIL*

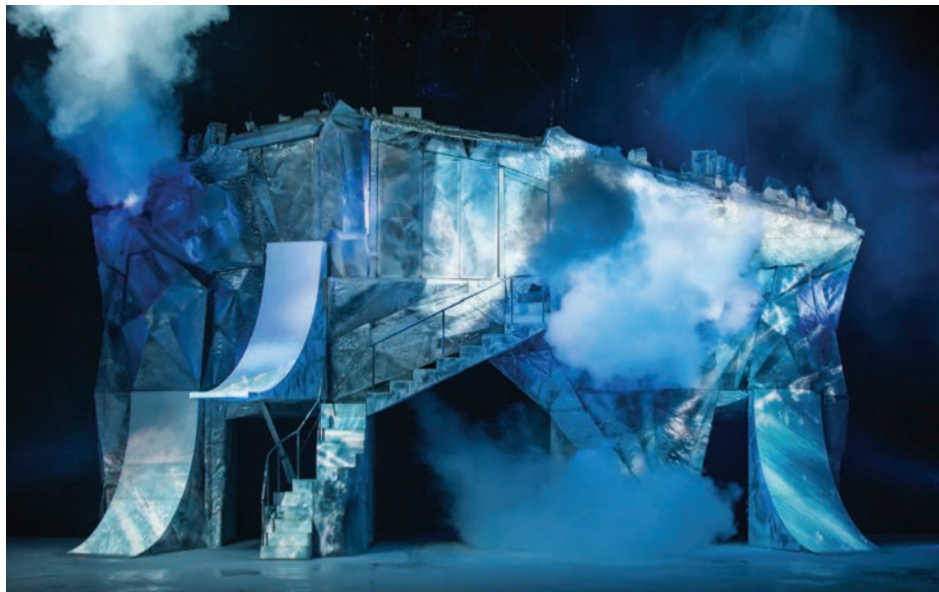
- Costumes and their props needed for the various shows are hand-created in Montreal, in the production workshops of the International Headquarters.
- The Cirque du Soleil workshop is the only one of its kind in North America.
- Approximately 300 artisans of every description (including master shoemakers, milliners, textile experts, sewers, lace makers, carpenters, etc.) are employed full-time making the Cirque du Soleil props and costumes.
- 16,000 or so items (hats, shoes, dresses, bodysuits, etc.) are created for Cirque du Soleil's shows every year.
- It takes close to 50 kilometers of fabric just to make the shows' costumes.
- 80% of the fabric required for the costume creation is originally white, before being dyed in the Cirque du Soleil workshop by the textile design team.
- Shoes are hand- and custom-made for all artists by the artisans of the Shoe Workshop.
- Approximately 1,200 pairs of shoes are produced by the workshop every year.

# CARVING CRYSTAL – BEHIND THE SCENES

## SET DESIGN

**A living scrapbook** – In a décor that can be described as “vintage poetic,” the CRYSTAL stage evokes a town square next to a frozen pond. Upstage is a huge quartz wall that contains all the familiar places in Crystal’s life in which she experiences meaningful moments through a series of flashbacks.

**Effects of scale and perspective** – On top of the wall is a miniature train that travels to the various places in the story through a series of temporal shifts. Inside the wall, effects of scale reinforce the idea that we are in a world of memories and flashbacks.



**A frozen playground** – On the ice, the show’s versatile stage changes from a schoolyard to a playground to a giant pinball machine to an office tower in a big city, in large part due to the use of video projections and props.

**Crystal’s pen is a fountain of imagination** – The world of CRYSTAL spills from its main character’s pen. Cut-outs, origami, streams of paper, and pop-ups of all sorts are some of the features that make up the show’s visual aesthetics as Crystal navigates through her imaginary world of skewed perspectives.

## MUSIC

The music of CRYSTAL is cinematic in scope while supporting the narrative and pulsing to the rhythm of the action on, “below”, and above the ice. With its sweeping, atmospheric and romantic soundscapes, the score moves from grand orchestral sounds to klezmer-style chamber music to melodic folk and rocktinged beats.

**Stirring emotions through music** – Cover versions of well-known pop songs specifically recorded for the show were added to Cirque du Soleil’s signature-style music – a first for a *Cirque du Soleil* touring show. These riveting songs were added to stir the emotions of spectators and enhance key moments in the narrative. The interpreters were chosen not only for their ability to capture the feeling of the original songs, but also to heighten the emotional charge of the scenes they accompany, thus adding the “Cirque du Soleil touch” to the songs themselves.



# CREATION TEAM – CIRQUE DU SOLEIL CRYSTAL

**YASMINE KHALIL**  
Executive Producer



**DANIEL FORTIN**  
Executive Director Creation



**STEFAN MILJEVIC**  
Creative Director



**SHANA CARROLL**  
Show Director



**SÉBASTIEN SOLDEVILA**  
Show Director



**FRED GÉRARD**  
Acrobatic Equipment  
Designer



**STÉPHANE ROY**  
Set Designer



**JOHNNY RANGER**  
Video Content Designer



**MAXIM LEPAGE**  
Music Composer



**ÉRIC CHAMPOUX**  
Lighting Designer



**ANNE-SÉGUIN POIRIER**  
Props Designer



**MARIE CHANTALE  
VAILLANCOURT**  
Costume Designer



**VÉRONIQUE ST-GERMAIN**  
Make-up Designer



**GENEVIÈVE  
DORION-COUPAL**  
Choreographer



**KURT BROWNING**  
Skating Performances  
Senior Designer



**BENJAMIN AGOSTO**  
Skating Performances  
Designer



**MARILYN LANGLOIS**  
Synchronized Skating  
Designer



**RAPHAËL CRUZ**  
Performance Designer



**MARK VREEKEN**  
Sound Designer



**EISA DAVIS**  
Dramaturg Text

## ABOUT CIRQUE DU SOLEIL ENTERTAINMENT GROUP

Cirque du Soleil Entertainment Group is a world leader in live entertainment. In addition to producing world-renowned circus arts shows, the Company brings its creative approach to a large variety of entertainment forms, such as multimedia productions, immersive experiences, and special events. Going beyond its various creations, Cirque du Soleil Entertainment Group aims to positively impact people, communities and the planet with its most important tools: creativity and art. Since its creation in 1984, more than 378 million people have been inspired on 6 continents and 86 countries. The Canadian company now employs more than 4000 employees, including 1200 artists from 80 different nationalities. For more information about Cirque du Soleil Entertainment Group, please visit [GroupeCirqueduSoleil.com](http://GroupeCirqueduSoleil.com)

