



Friday, November 29, 2019, 2pm
Saturday, November 30, 2019, 2pm
Sunday, December 1, 2019, 3pm
Zellerbach Hall

Peking Acrobats

This performance will include one intermission.

Cal Performances recommends that parents advise their children that what they see on stage takes years of practice and should not be tried at home.

Cal Performances' 2019–20 season is sponsored by Wells Fargo.

For the past 33 years, the **Peking Acrobats** have redefined audience perceptions of Chinese acrobatics. They perform daring maneuvers atop a precarious pagoda of chairs and display their technical prowess at such arts as trick-cycling, precision tumbling, juggling, somersaulting, and gymnastics. They push the limits of human ability, defying gravity with amazing displays of contortion, flexibility, and control. The Peking Acrobats are often accompanied by live musicians who skillfully play traditional Chinese instruments; the time-honored Chinese music coalesces with high-tech special effects and awe-inspiring acrobatic feats, creating an exuberant entertainment event with the festive pageantry of a Chinese carnival.

Since their founding in 1986, the Peking Acrobats have been featured on numerous television programs and celebrity-studded specials. These include Nickelodeon's *Unfabulous*, *Ellen's Really Big Show* (hosted by Ellen DeGeneres), *The Wayne Brady Show*, *That's Incredible*, ABC's *Wide World of Sports*, and NBC's *Ring in the New Year* holiday special. They have also appeared on HDNet TV's *In Focus* series, and regularly on NBC/Comcast's 3D Channel. The Peking Acrobats set the world record for the human chair stack on FOX Network's *Guinness Book Primetime* television show in 1999: they balanced six people precariously atop six chairs 21 feet up in the air without safety lines, astounding audiences with their bravery and dexterity. The Peking Acrobats have also made their way onto the silver screen—company members were featured in Steven Soderbergh's hit film *Ocean's Eleven*, playing alongside Julia Roberts, Brad Pitt, and George Clooney. Peking Acrobats alumnus Shaobo Qin also appeared in that film's two sequels, *Ocean's Twelve* and *Ocean's Thirteen*.

The Peking Acrobats achieved another milestone in the fall of 2003, when they made their orchestral debut at the Hollywood Bowl in Los Angeles. There they performed as part of

the Hollywood Bowl's fireworks season finale, where the company blended its unique brand of acrobatics with the majestic sound of the 100-piece Hollywood Bowl Orchestra, conducted by John Mauceri. Since their Hollywood Bowl debut, the Peking Acrobats have performed with many of the most prestigious symphony orchestras in North America. These include the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, the Ravinia Festival Orchestra (featuring members of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra), the San Diego Symphony, the Cincinnati Pops Orchestra, the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, and the San Francisco Symphony. The Peking Acrobats return often to the Hollywood Bowl, where they perform with the Hollywood Bowl Orchestra as special guest artists.

Over its 33-year history, the Peking Acrobats have achieved international acclaim, dazzling audiences around the world. In February of 2005, the group debuted in Italy on a five-week, 12-city tour. The group's opening in Milan became a spectacular media event that was covered nationally by the Italian press. In city after city, the Peking Acrobats took to the stage before sold-out crowds, and the reviews were filled with accolades attesting to their superb performances. Since their Italian debut, the Peking Acrobats have performed in seven European countries on six European tours.

The Peking Acrobats are part of a time-honored Chinese tradition, rooted in centuries of Chinese history and folk art. Tradition demands that each generation of acrobats add its own improvements and embellishments, and high honors are conferred upon those skilled enough to become acrobats. The Peking Acrobats seek to uphold this rich and ancient folk-art tradition, bringing it to new technical heights while integrating 21st-century technology. In the words of Clive Davis of the *New York Post*, "The Peking Acrobats [are] pushing the envelope of human possibility," combining agility and grace in remarkable feats of "pure artistry."