



Fetes of Magic: Singapore's Illusionists Lawrence and Priscilla Khong lead Grand Finale of Chingay Parade Singapore 2009

NOVEMBER 27, 2008- Followers of Singapore's well-loved annual street parade will once again find themselves spellbound by the craft of Lawrence and Priscilla Khong as the renowned homegrown illusionists takes centre stage for the grand finale of the Chingay Parade Singapore 2009.

Featured in the finale act "Banquet" inspired by the lavishly spectacular and visual masques of the traditional courtly entertainment given a futuristic touch, the pinnacle of the 2009 parade will showcase for the very first time big scale magic items from the lauded father-daughter magic tandem.

Attempting acts that have never before been seen in the region and in Singapore, Lawrence and Priscilla set the bar to a whole new level as they hit the streets with their death-defying acts, fearless stunts, and remarkable physical feats.

In an electrifying and shocking challenge routine, Lawrence becomes the first Asian to attempt to burn himself alive. Master illusionist Lawrence will attempt the never-before-seen Burning Man as he enveloped himself in flames, pushing human endurance to its ultimate limits in this death-defying act. Feel the intense heat on Lawrence as he stretches his physical grit to withstand the scorching flames beyond what is humanly possible, in an act where he is fully restrained, wrapped in kerosene-soaked cloth and set on fire. This fearless & audacious exploit has an astonishing surprise that will leave all the spectators' minds utterly boggled.

"Training for this act is a rigorous and painstaking process. More so, it is demanding both physically and mentally. As with all endurance stunts, it is all about mind over

matter. Without proper mental preparation prior to and mental alertness during the performance, it can lead to serious injuries or fatal repercussions. It took me almost 6 months to get ready for this. I can truly say the outcome of all the hard work is something that will move the audience,”

Viewers of the parade will also witness as Priscilla flouts the realms of visual perception in Torch Box Illusion. She sets foot into a box and is pierced with fiery torches. The public is then left to wonder the heroine's fate as the torches are pulled out of the box.

Distinctively the largest contingent in the parade, audiences will be regaled by the magic expertise and unique skills from Lawrence and Priscilla in this amazing performance. Accompanying the dynamic twosome for a head-turning and crowd-drawing display are more conjurers making the 305 people that comprise this delegation garner a place in the Guinness world book of record for the biggest group performing magic during a parade.

It involves a panoply of colorful performers—55 sky runners, 30 floating men, 30 supporting magicians on foot, buggies and 160 ground dancers. To further heighten the pageantry, this massive group requires a whopping 170 support crew.

The yearly held Chingay Parade Singapore is a platform for showing the myriad colors of Singapore's culture and traditions. Tracing back 37 years of festive celebrations and revelry, the 2009 Chingay Parade takes things to a higher level by gunning for more innovative and thrilling displays and performances. Holding a passion for world-class echelon when it comes to production, that Lawrence and Priscilla share, the Chingay Parade outdoes itself each previous year.

Mr Nah Juay Hng, Chairman of Chingay Parade Exco says "Lawrence is not just a highly acclaimed illusionist reputed for producing the most spectacular magic shows at international standard, he is the first social entrepreneur who mooted the idea of using magic as a language of sign to bring smile and love to the less privileged and the community. Through Project SMILE he pioneered, thousands of his students have volunteered their performances at welfare homes and charity events locally as well as overseas. Together with his daughter Priscilla and a 260-magicians contingent and as gift for all Singaporeans and visitors of Singapore, Lawrence will be staging one of his greatest illusion shows at the coming Chingay Parade. Acting as the "King" and "Princess" of the Magic World during the Chingay Grand Finale 2009, "The Banquet", he and Priscilla will help deliver Chingay next year to a greater height"

“It is an honor for my daughter and I to be part of an established Singapore tradition. The Chingay Parade has a history as colorful as the spectacle itself, and for us to be part of this is really exciting. This also challenges us to perform on a mobile platform one where the crowd has a full view of our acts in a large area. It demands a perfectly executed routine, and that is something the audience will see when they come and watch us perform at the grand finale,” says Singapore’s master illusionist Lawrence Khong.

FAST FACTS

Title: Chingay Parade Singapore 2009
Date: January 30 & 31 2009
Venue: City Hall performing area (Parade Route Area 1)
Time: January 30, 8:30pm and January 31, 8:00 pm

Ticket prices:

Category	Parade 1 Jan 30 '09	Parade 2 Jan 31 '09
Cat 1 (City Hall)	SGD 50.00	SGD 65.00
Cat 2 (City Hall)	SGD 40.00	SGD 55.00
Cat 3 (Raffles Ave)	SGD 30.00	SGD 45.00

Tickets available at: All SISTIC outlets

SISTIC Hotline: 6348-5555

SISTIC Website: www.sistic.com.sg

Tickets are also available at Singapore Visitors Centres at Orchard Road

20% discount for Passion Card members

For more info visit www.chingay.org.sg

BIOGRAPHIES

Lawrence Khong

Lawrence is perhaps Singapore's first magician who brought world-class magic entertainment to our local theatres. His insatiable passion and enterprising spirit to experiment greater and grander magic coupled with a rich artistry in magic had translated into various fine mega-magic productions, namely 'Magic of Love', 'An Evening of Enchantment', 'The Spook Show', 'The Great Escape' and 'From Illusion to Reality'. Co-produced and directed with Priscilla under their father-daughter magic label, Magic of Lawrence & Priscilla, he has raised and set the bar for homegrown entertainment for musical and theatre goers. His ambitious, inspiring and inventive style of magic has also earned partnerships and nods from internationally acclaimed maestros of magic. One such master illusionist is Jeff McBride, who started his close collaboration with Lawrence on 'Magic of Love'. After seeing his acclaimed work in 'From Illusion to Reality', he raved, "It is a huge show that impressed the professional magicians in Las Vegas, and I knew at that time that this man had a vision, a big vision for one of the most spectacular magic shows ever produced."

Lawrence is the creative brain behind his self-founded entertainment production house, Gateway Entertainment, which produced and promoted his magic productions to worldwide audiences and also made various revolutionary films for the local viewers. Under Lawrence, Gateway Entertainment has also pioneered several novel initiatives such as Project SMILE that have impacted the community at large in Singapore and the Asian region. He also founded and chairs TOUCH Community Services, a registered non-profit welfare organization which aims to serve the underprivileged and needy in Singapore. In recognition of his various contributions to the community, Lawrence was conferred the prestigious PBM Medal at the 1998 Singapore National Day Awards Ceremony. In 2007, he was selected as a finalist for the Schwab Social Entrepreneur of the Year, another mark of distinction for his remarkable efforts as a social entrepreneur through Project SMILE. That same year, TOUCH Community Services also clinched the Outstanding Nonprofit Organization Award, which recognizes best practices in the management of volunteers and donors, including fund-raising practices, in a non-profit organisation. Undeniably a man of numerous talents, Lawrence's many hats may perhaps arise from the combination of an almost sublime understanding of the artistry and his uncompromising stance in serving the community.

To top it off, at age 55, Lawrence, who has more than made his mark in the local and international scene, earned another coveted title of becoming a national polo player, a sport which he has been passionately practising for the past 15 years, when he was chosen to represent his country in the 24th Southeast Asian Games in Thailand in 2007. Lawrence, together with his team mates, proudly clinched the silver medal for Singapore. He also became one of the local sportsmen voted by Singaporeans to be Team Singapore's Top 20 Sports Idol.

Priscilla Khong

Born into a legacy of magic, Priscilla is today an internationally acclaimed professional female magician in her own right. Besides inheriting her father Lawrence's talent and passion for magic, and receiving training from him since young, she has also the privilege to learn from the legendary master magicians – the Great Tomsoni, Jeff McBride, Haruo Shimada, Jonathan Pendragon, and many more – where she deftly garnered the best skills of the trade and developed her own magic career.

Amazing everyone in her debut in the 'Magic of Love' in 2001, her love for magic has gone beyond performing on stage. As the Creative Director, Priscilla passionately works on the development of each show from its inception to the actual performance. With a trained eye, she designs the visuals of each performance, making it sharper than before through crafting and refining each routine and finally threading it all together with complementary music and props that appeal to a global audience. Trained in dance forms such as jazz, hip hop and ballet, Priscilla is able to infuse choreography and precision of movement into each magic act, making the final performance an all sensory "MTV Magic" experience.

In addition, she maintains her sharp magic skills by conducting classes for aspiring magicians in the duo's very own School of Magic. Believing in the power of magic as a universal communication tool that transcends across all ages and cultures, Priscilla has pursued Project SMILE passionately since 2002 in her bid to bring joy to others' lives. As the principal trainer and key driver behind each project, she has coached students, youths and adults in Singapore, Shenyang, Shanghai, Tokyo, Kota Kinabalu and other cities by combining magic with lesson objectives. This is to ensure that at the end of the class, each individual will walk away having acquired the magic techniques and also a set of life skills through service learning. Next year, 500 youths from Singapore whom she is responsible for training will join another 500 from China to go on an expedition in

various parts of China, and to share the joy and wonder of magic with the less fortunate there.

About GATEWAY ENTERTAINMENT

Founded in April 2000 by acclaimed illusionist-entrepreneur, Lawrence Khong, Gateway Entertainment is a Singapore-based creative entertainment production business, and has brought the island its first-ever mega magic musicals and theatre shows under its widely-acclaimed magic duo label, Magic of Lawrence and Priscilla, as well as various historic movies that became household names. These compelling and inspiring productions have revolutionized the local media scene and raised homegrown entertainment to a whole new level for cinema and theatre audiences.

Our productions have also travelled beyond local shores and played in places including China, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Taiwan, Thailand and the United States. Fuelling Gateway Entertainment's cutting-edge creativity has been our Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Lawrence, who continually positions us at the forefront of the industry, and inspires our highly entertaining, original and perceptive media content offered to our diversified audiences today.

In July 2008, our brand new magic show and musical – MAGICBOX, became a roaring success at the iconic Esplanade Theatre, Singapore. The highly anticipated production combines the world's most incredible magic expertise with a heart-warming tale of love, family and values in one spectacular show.

Our Social Mission

Bearing Lawrence's trademark social entrepreneurial spirit, Gateway Entertainment also makes social concerns part of its business. Today, we have pioneered a one-of-a-kind social initiative, Project SMILE, and staged various magic charity performances, which have impacted countless lives and supported positive social changes within the community at large in Singapore and the Asian region.