

JuggleMania With Shoehorn Program Copy

In this rare collaboration, these two hyperactive extroverts share the unique life skills that have made them international touring artists and nationally renowned performers.

“Eye candy and brainfood” are served up in the uniquely versatile combination of juggling scholar Rhys Thomas and tap dancing saxophonist Shoehorn. It’s an interactive jazz circus with toe tapping music and daredevil comedy for the whole family. Over 40 years of combined international touring experience unite to present tricks and melodies from around the world. Two eccentric geniuses, one hilarious show.

The Artists

Rhys Thomas – Improbable Juggling, Unique Comedy, Amazing Acrobatics

Rhys Thomas defines juggling as “*dances with stuff.*”

The Wall Street Journal defines Rhys as being, “*in touch with your inner buffoon.*”

JuggleMania is a “tour de farce” of circus skills in which the audience takes an active roll. In Rhys’ own words, “We live in a world of stuff. We can trip on it or balance on it, drop it or fly it, battle with it or dance with it. Gravity or levity, the choice is yours.”

Since 1987, Rhys has performed his unique blend of hilarity and dexterity in such diverse venues as The Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. (as Artist in Residence); the World Cup Street Performer Competition in Shizuoka, Japan (twice); a live world-wide television broadcast teaching the mathematics of juggling with a Nobel Laureate; The European Juggling Convention in Svendborg, Denmark; and at theaters, festivals, and corporate banquet shows on three continents.

Rhys was Juggling columnist for America’s premiere family entertainers’ magazine, “LaughMakers”, until they folded due to scandal. He’s the author of “*Meteors*,” a juggling manual published internationally in both English and Japanese. Highly respected in the juggling world, Rhys is a recipient of the Ben Linder Memorial Award for Inspiration and has twice been profiled in “Juggle” magazine.

To learn more, surf www.JuggleMania.com.

(If applies:) As an educational outreach activity organized by [organization], Rhys has been performing his “Science Circus” show in local schools. The Science Circus explores the physics of motion and balance using circus arts to demonstrate gyroscopics, inertia, centripetal force, and other Newton concepts. Students and teachers leave the show with a descriptive vocabulary and an understanding that art and science are not mutually exclusive, but aid each other in interpreting our wacky world.

(If applies:) As an educational outreach activity organized by [organization], Rhys has been performing his “Readers’ Circus” show in local schools. The show encourages reading by sharing the books that Rhys learned his skills from and by using tricks to illustrate stories from the 4,000 year history of juggling. The message is simply, “If you can read, you can learn about anything.”

Shoehorn – Tapdance, Etap, Saxophone, Keyboards, Clarinet, Percussion, etc.

Michael “Shoehorn” Conley is a phenomenal entertainer. He simultaneously creates music with his feet and dance with his horn. He performs this organically, with no set routine, improvising on standards, blues, rock, world music and his own compositions.

Inspired by Gene Kelly and John Coltrane, it’s clear that Shoehorn is operating on his own concept in tap dance, which he refers to as Tappercussion™, a term he also uses for his electronic tap (“etap”™) instruments. Besides shoes and sax, he features clarinet, harmonica, percussion, and “etap”, xylophone or vocals.

Shoehorn’s music reflects his personal investigations and interpretations of cultures he has immersed himself in, including Latin American, Asian and European flavors and the variety of his native USA. He also draws deeply on nature for inspiration and validation, carrying his sax to the mountains and seaside.

Shoehorn, performing tap and sax simultaneously, was featured in Emmy-nominated JUBA: Masters of Tap and Percussive Dance on PBS TV. Director Lane Alexander called him “the discovery, the hit of the festival”.

“The man they call Shoehorn not only plays the alto sax amazingly well, he also does some expert tap-dancing as he plays. That’s some serious multi-tasking.” - Stan Hall - The Oregonian