



Passing Zone Keeps Humor in the Air *Arkansas Democrat Gazette*

By Michelle Parks – 03.2009

FAYETTEVILLE - The challenging aspect of The Passing Zone's show wasn't the complicated juggling feats - it was the juggling while laughing.

The Passing Zone duo, Owen Morse and Jon Wee, kept Friday night's Walton Arts Center audience amazed with their juggling skills and in stitches with their hilarious banter.

Morse and Wee have been a team for 20 years, and that experience, comfort and trust clearly showed in their two-hour display. And the spectacular action was peppered with witty improvisation.

The men did variations on juggling six clubs between them as they faced each other, once giving the clubs a triple spin. Even more impressively, they juggled back-to-back with seven clubs. The crowd of all ages, including many children, begged them to try nine instead of eight clubs face-to-face, which they pulled off nicely.

In the harder-to-spot boomerang rubberband trick, Morse flicked a blue rubberband across the stage, and it rolled right back to him. It was a seemingly simple but impressive trick.

While Morse juggled flat white rings, Wee narrated the action, speaking as if he were doing the work. The interplay here was funny, and caused Morse to stop juggling at times. Morse grabbed the fifth ring from around his neck in the midst of juggling, adding it to the mix. And he tried several times to add a sixth ring Wee tossed to him. He kept after it until he executed it smoothly and to his satisfaction.

They then brought out a handful of torches, but didn't stop there. "You want to see us risk our lives for your amusement, right?" Morse asked the crowd. Wee stood on Morse's shoulders as Morse balanced atop a board on a cylinder - and they each juggled three flaming torches.

Then, they got an audience member on stage and used him as a prop. Onto the hardhat he wore, they attached a contraption holding five spinning torches, and they put the other two torches on their hardhats. They got four plates spinning on stands the guy was holding. Then, they juggled six sickles in front and back of the man.

Wanting to do an artistic, yet dangerous piece, they came up with their version of chainsaw juggling - while wearing fuchsia tights and dancing to Johann Strauss' "Blue Danube." They did lovely ballet moves holding two chainsaws, revving them with the music. Then, they juggled three chainsaws between them.

Though the juggled chainsaws were highly impressive and entertaining, even more fascinating was when they juggled people. Three audience members donning space suits and suspended by harnesses and cables were swung in a basic cascade juggling pattern. Then, with the three people swinging around in a circle, the men tossed three big beach balls back and forth.

These guys created quite a spectacle, and their mix of comedy show and daredevil tricks made for a very satisfying evening.