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JUST TUBULAR



BRUNO SCHLUMBERGER, THE OTTAWA CITIZEN

Miguel Costa, 43, stacks wire mesh used for concrete pipes at M-Con Products off Carp Road in Ottawa on Wednesday. The wire tubes created an unusual pattern almost like that of a modern art sculpture.

Carnival troupe to move after losing NCC site

Lune Bleue's old fashion big top to relocate to outside of Montreal

BY TONY LOFARO

Ottawa's carnival troupe is packing up and moving its big top to a resort area near Montreal after being unable to secure a NCC site it used in 2009.

Carnivale Lune Bleue performed at Hog's Back Park last summer mystifying thousands of visitors with its old-fashioned big top, freak shows and a vintage carousel. The troupe's opening weekend even featured an appearance by Hollywood actress Adrienne Barbeau who played a snake dancer in the acclaimed HBO series Carnivale.

The troupe was to return to Hog's Back this summer but was informed by the NCC that a \$3-million redevelopment of the park will continue until next spring. The work includes a rehabilitation of the park's concession building, the circular open-air shelter and a service building on site.

"I'm certainly disappointed that we can't return there," said Carnivale Lune Bleue president and founder Wayne van de Graaf, about losing the Hog's Back site.

"We built a fan base here through word-of-mouth," he said, adding he'd like to return to Ottawa next season. The carnival performed in its first year at a rural Kars fairgrounds near Manotick, and moved to the Hog's Back site in 2009.

Van de Graaf said the company was considering presenting shows

in the Montreal-area for part of this summer season, so when the Hog's Back site became unavailable a decision was made to move to Quebec.

The carnival will begin presenting shows June 17 in Bromont, Que., a resort area about 40 minutes east of Montreal. The shows will be presented at the same site where a horse show called Saka and a flea market are staged, said Van de Graaf.

He said the troupe is producing new acts this year including a sideshow called Alive on the Inside featuring a sword swallower, a human pincushion and contortionist, a circus-type show called La Vie, and a cabaret with the band The Unsettlers.

Van de Graaf said he's also interested in making a pitch to the winning bidder of the Lansdowne Park redevelopment project for a permanent carnival museum of artifacts, old-fashioned rides and a carousel at the site.

"The idea is not dead but we're going to be proposing a carousel house and museum for Lansdowne. It would fit into the mandate that the park has been given and not take up any retail or any other space. It would be a standalone structure," he said.

He hopes to get corporate donations as well as funds from Heritage Canada and private donors for the project.

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