



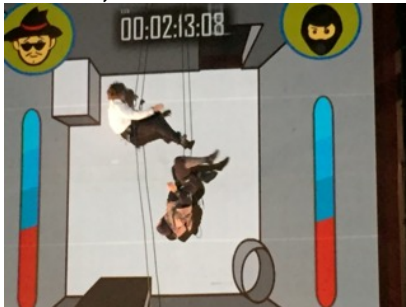
<http://www.cltampa.com/arts-entertainment/performance/article/20979880/eventi-verticali-wows-at-ringling-fest>

Review: Blam! eVenti Verticali's *Wanted* kicks off Ringling International Arts Festival (Update: VIDEO)

Introducing... the Super Piallini Bros!

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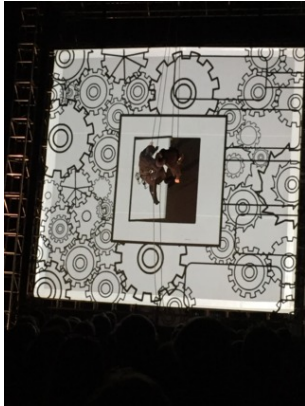


The Piallinis and their avatars. LARRY BIDDLE

The first show in the ninth annual Ringling International Arts Festival kicked off with an arrest — in the audience, no less. But that was all part of the considerable fun of eVenti Verticali's *Wanted*, in which the action proceeded from the audience to a three-story movie screen, where a pair of wacky aerialists rappelled, swung and bounced their way into an international police chase and the vintage gaming universe of Pac-Man and Super Mario Bros.

eVenti Verticali is itself the project of a pair of super Italian bro's: Luca and Andrea Piallini, whose unique style of "Vertical Theater" unites their respective skills in theater and circus. In *Wanted*, they merge their antics with the ever-changing animations of Fabio Lanza, so that they seem at one minute to be parkouring across rooftops, at another to be napping in bunk beds. It's all so ingenious that you tend to forget that the Piallini brothers are humans, not cartoon characters, and that their acrobatics would be pretty much impossible for most mortals. They flip, they grapple, they run, they climb, one stands on the other's shoulders, they both stand perpendicular to the screen, they even make costume changes — all while attached to harnesses and all in sync with the animation behind them. *Wanted* was the showcase performance of RIAF's kickoff gala, so the audience was perhaps a bit more subdued than it'll be

tonight and Friday, when eV performs *Wanted* again. But I suspect that if we hadn't all been so engrossed in the imaginary worlds they'd created — if we'd seen the same feats performed, say, under a circus tent — we'd have been yelling and shouting and giving regular standing o's.



Safecracking.LARRY BIDDLE

But what we *were* doing was laughing, because *Wanted* is flat-out fun, and frequently very funny. Luca Piallini sets the farcical tone early on as a detective hunting for suspects in the audience who match the Ninja-like criminals pictured in a huge "Wanted" poster on the screen. The "arrest" follows — tonight it could be you — and from there the pursuer and his prey morph into on-screen avatars, then reappear live in a kickfight punctuated on screen by comic-book starbursts of "Blam!" and "Klonk!" Eventually the two become a team, cracking a safe together and fleeing a flying police car to such farflung locations as Rio de Janeiro and (!) Tianenmen Square before finding themselves chomping on Pac-Dots and trying to survive the dreaded "Fatal Error."

If video games ain't your thing, don't worry. I ran into a friend at the show who's a historian of the genre and all he said was, "Well, they used very *old* games." In other words, you'll be able to recognize the allusions even if you've never played a video game in your life. And, like any good game, *Wanted* keeps you enthralled, entertained and hanging on to see the next move from beginning to end.