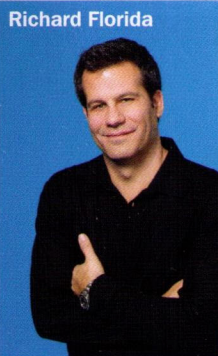


Top to bottom:
Aleksandr Deev spins the cube.
Karen Sipe performs mime work. Alexander Efimof and Victor Nikiein performing with aerial silks.

world of trapezes, trampolines, unicycles and tightropes.

Joined by young Russian circus artists—Alexander Efimof, Viktor Nikiein, Aleksandr Deev and Natalia Logvinova—who volunteered to teach their art to the growing troupe, the circus school was up and running in full swing, teaching juggling, stilt walking, tumbling, traditional mime, music and dance performance.

"It's truly fun for the whole family," says Karen Sipe, whose four boys, aged five to nine, are enthusiastic participants in the expanding family enterprise. "You have no idea of the discipline that goes with the fun, the noncompetitive atmosphere of putting on a really great show. And what can be more fun than the circus?"



Richard Florida

AUDACIOUSLY CREATIVE ECONOMICS

The Economic Development Council of Collier County declares that the Southwest Florida community cannot thrive putting all the economic eggs into too few baskets. To help power the local economy, the EDC established Project Innovation, a series of programs begun in December. The project is all about businesses, government and citizens taking innovative, audacious, creative ideas off the shelf and putting them to work, stimulating

a shared vision and action plan for a strong economy.

In May, the series concludes with speaker Richard Florida completing the roster of speakers that has included University of North Florida President and former Jacksonville Mayor John Delaney and other university presidents; Representative Tom Grady and other elected officials; Dale Brill of the Governor's Office of Tourism, Trade and Economic Development; and other community leaders. In that spirit of creative cross-pollination and collaborative enrichment, the program, "It Pays to be Creative," will also feature works by regional artists organized by the United Arts Council of Collier County.

Internationally hailed as a pioneer in economic philosophy, Florida is the best-selling author of *The Rise of the Creative Class*, for which he received the Washington Monthly Political Book Award. The *Harvard Business Review* lauded the book as a major innovative idea. Florida is founder of the advisory services firm, the Creative Class Group, and director of the Martin Prosperity Institute. The prolific writer's 2008 book, *Who's Your City?* is being hailed as an international best seller for its breakthrough ideas on economic gardening, and the importance of place in global development.

"There is a belief that because of technology, place is not as crucial to an economy," says Steven Perdigo, director of research and spokesperson for the Creative Class Group. "But in the rising creative economy, the importance of place is about quality ... making a community a place where people want to live. How can a specific community tailor itself to attract the best creative talent, use its already existing talent?" Perdigo asks. "Not every place can

be—or wants to be—an Austin, San Francisco or Seattle. They need to think in terms of authenticity." ♦



Mother's Affection, by Clare Candelori, one of the featured works in the program.