

Controversial Elephants Return to Cole Bros. Circus of the Stars

The return of elephants Tina and Jewel to Cole Bros. Circus settles a year long controversy between PeTA and Cole Bros. Circus that began when Cole Bros. Circus debuted its 2005 performance sans tigers and pachyderms. PeTA swiftly sent a communiqué to its donors and the media, proclaiming that the circus had retired its elephants due to the efforts of groups like PeTA that lobby to eradicate performing animals and eliminate ownership of animals. Cole Bros. management vehemently disagreed, stating they crafted their 2005 edition without wild animals to feature extraordinary human artists in a show with a “Cirque du Soleil look but affordable admission prices for families.”

The return of the elephants, along with camels, ponies, poodles, Frisbee dogs, and even snakes to the 2006 edition of The World’s Largest Circus Under the Big Top, Cole Bros. Circus of the Stars, no doubt will ignite a new round of attacks on the circus from organizations like PeTA, which has itself been cast in a negative spotlight following the arrest of two of its employees, Andrew Cook and Adria Hinkle, who were each indicted on with 22 felony counts of cruelty to animals and 3 counts of obtaining property by false pretenses. Ahoskie County, NC deputies had discovered 18 dead animals in a dumpster; when they apprehended Cook and Hinkle they located 13 more dead animals, two of them kittens, in the PeTA owned van driven by the couple. PeTA is also up its own house before launching another attack on the traditional American circus that features under investigation by the FBI for its connection with and financial support of domestic terrorists.

Cole Bros. Circus management hopes that PeTA will devote time to tidying animals. Circus spokesperson Renee Storey states: “Animal activists can be not only zealous but downright unpleasant, going beyond the subject of animals to assault the character and reputation of the good people who work in the circus industry. Regardless, our job is to provide the best in family entertainment, and the public has spoken, saying that they disregard the activists as should the circus. Parents want to see the circus the way it was when they were children and share that magical experience with their kids. Patrons overwhelmingly asked us to bring back the elephants, and we agreed. Ingrid Newkirk and America, here we come, bringing The Biggest Stars on the Planet!”