



Grégoire Pennes

At the end of 2012, he joined Cirque du Soleil to embark on a new career as an artist after his busy career as a high-level trampolinist. Grégoire was kind enough to answer a few questions for us from Las Vegas.

Acrobaticsports. *What are the most memorable moments of your sporting career ?*

Grégoire Pennes

-The complicity with my partner Sébastien Martiny, the medals but above all the adventures.

-Meeting people, travelling, being exposed to the world and growing as a man.

-My first French Senior Championship title, after coming back from injury in 2006.

-My European Championship title in 2010, proving that gold was then possible

-My first qualification for the Beijing Games in 2008, which came as a surprise

-My final at the London Games in 2012, the crowning achievement ([Report on the London Olympics Envol N°21](#))

AS. *With the experience of your long career as an athlete, what advice would you give to young athletes who aspire to a career similar to yours?*



Sébastien Martiny et Grégoire Pennes

AS. *What lessons have you learned from your sporting career?*

G.P The experience of big events with big stakes. Working, performing under pressure, managing your emotions, finding the balance you need at a particular moment. Through failures, trials and successes, these lessons have become the pillars of my life.

G.P Enjoying yourself, remembering the reasons why it all started, putting into perspective the importance and pressure of top-level sport. At the end of the day, you do what you love, the results are just as important as your career in general, so you might as well enjoy it with a smile on your face.

AS. *It's now twelve years since you left the competition arena, how do you see Trampoline evolving since your retirement?*



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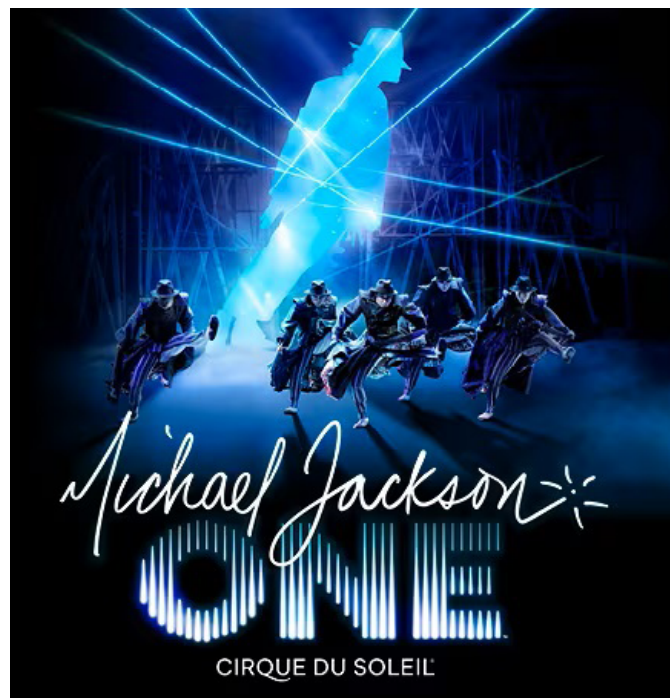
G.P The athleticism of the new trampolinists is very impressive, the sport continues to evolve: flight time, difficulty, etc... It reinforces the timing of my retirement LOL

AS. *It's easy to imagine that becoming a Cirque du Soleil 'artist' after being a member of the French Trampoline team for many years must have changed your daily life a little. How did you manage the transition from competing to joining Cirque du Soleil?*



G.P The time was right for me, my artistic appetite and the feeling that I had arrived at the 'prime' of my career reinforced my decision. Once I arrived at Cirque du Soleil, I was prepared to become a student again and take the time to learn the codes of this new world, to be humble and ready to give of myself, and the rest would come naturally, with the support of the teams on site.

AS. *You started with the show Mystère at Teasure Island when you first arrived in Las Vegas, and now you're doing Michael Jackson One at Mandalay Bay. Tell us about your role in the show.*



G.P As an artist, I'm now one of the main characters in the show. His name is 'Clumsy', and he wanders through different scenes, stumbling, he is clumsy, awkward and funny, until he discovers his own unique talent. Movement and acrobatics are at the heart of his personality. As a manager, I manage, develop and integrate the Trampoline and Slackline acrobats. My main mission is to maintain and even raise acrobatic standards, get the best out of the teams I manage on a daily basis, and give them different sources of inspiration in their transition from athlete to artist.

AS. *10 years ago you told us about your desire to gradually move into directing. How far have you got with this project?*

G.P I take part in various artistic projects throughout the year. Most recently as an artistic and acrobatic consultant, I really enjoy working as part of a team, including casting, budgeting and creation. Apart from these creations, I'm sometimes cast for other projects, as a dancer, actor and/or acrobat, for example for Johnny Hallyday's last posthumous video clip, which was produced in Las Vegas this winter.

AS *Johnny Hallyday! You've either said too much or not enough. You've gotta tell us how you ended up in this video?*
G.P *After working with A&A (Arnaud Boursain and Alexis Ochin), French directors/choreographers, here in Vegas, on various productions, we created a bond that went beyond 'work'. When they were hired to choreograph Johnny Hallyday's video, they asked me*



to apply, thinking that my profile would be interesting (and I am French too, which is great for Johnny).
AS. As someone who has taken part in two Olympics, Beijing 2008 and London 2012, what advice would you give to the French athletes taking part in the Paris Olympics this summer?

AS A big thank you to you Greg for granting us this interview, we wish you all the best for the rest of your career.



Photo credits : Grégoire Pennes - Damien Dorna
- Cirque du Soleil - Pelican
Picto Johnny Hallyday : Internet

G.P No specific advice, I imagine that the athletes will be ready to fight on their own soil. The Olympics at home are something special, and if it means having the support and strength of those close to you during this event, I'd be sure to take advantage of the moment and share it.



[Click here \(Johnny Hallyday - Un cri \(Clip Officiel\)\)](#)

