

**Franco Dragone**  
**Founder and Artistic Director**

" I shall be gone and live or stay and die."  
(Shakespeare)

For over three decades, creative visionary and theatrical alchemist Franco Dragone has presented audiences around the world with dazzling images that stir the senses and the soul, leaving each person 'seeing' more than they did the day before.

In 1958 at the age of six, Dragone and his parents moved from their hometown of Cairano, Italy to the small industrial town of La Louvière, Belgium. Franco still lives in this quaint community, which is also the home of DRAGONE; an independent company he founded in 2000 designed to autonomously manage and create all aspects of a production.

Franco Dragone began his classical training in the performing arts at the Royal Conservatory of Mons. Longing to experiment and explore beyond the world of traditional theatre, Dragone pursued studies in street performance, the circus arts, commedia dell'arte, and political science. For ten years, as a writer, actor, creator and director, he collaborated with various theatrical companies throughout Europe, developing and refining his distinctive style which integrated theatre and circus through new forms of expression.

In 1982, he was invited to Canada to stage two consecutive year-end performances of Canada's National Circus School, which directly led to his first commission with Cirque du Soleil. From 1985 to 1999, Dragone's passionate, unique direction celebrated the depth of emotion, beauty and music of the human spirit in Cirque du Soleil's productions of *Le Cirque Réinventé* (1987), *La Magie Continue* (1989), *Nouvelle Expérience* (1990), *Saltimbanco* (1992), *Mystère* (1993), *Alegría* (1994), *Quidam* (1996), *O'* (1998) and *La Nouba* (1999).

To honor his heritage and the country that is his home, Dragone has created and produced several theatrical works with an Italo-Belgian theme. He directed music videos, and made his feature film debut with *Alegría: the Film* for which he also collaborated on the screenplay. Dragone is the winner of three Obie Awards and the Los Angeles Critics' Award for Outstanding Achievement, and was awarded the Insignia of Knighthood from the National Order of Quebec on September 25, 2002.

DRAGONE created *A New Day...* for, with and about Celine Dion. It is a subtle fusion of song, theatre, dance and technical innovation, heralding an unprecedented new genre of entertainment and has enjoyed unparalleled successes playing to over a million patrons.

For his next production, *Le Rêve*; A small collection of imperfect dreams, for Wynn Las Vegas, Franco once again pushes the creative envelope with a new form of visual theater, embracing artistic performance with multimedia effects, a seamless mix of humor and high drama, ethereal imagery and plain-speaking earthiness. Staged in a remarkable domed theater designed in-the-round, the first of its kind in Las Vegas, *Le Rêve* creates a uniquely intimate and personal experience that surrounds and involves the audience.

Dragone has taken a giant leap with this show. He speaks to the audience with images and body language and captures the open imagination of the audience. "*Le Rêve* is about us, about a world that's imperfect, but beautiful in its imperfection. Even in a dream, it's impossible to be completely happy. But we can feel healed. That is part of what dreams do. And it is, I hope, part of what *Le Rêve* does, too."

The vision of Franco Dragone, through his ongoing projects in theatre, film, music and live performance, continues to awaken the reality of the human beings who love, and honor human values—courage, love, simplicity, humanity.