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## BAOBAB BRINGS WEST AFRICAN FABLE TO LIFE AT THE NEW VICTORY THEATER



*Performances Begin March 11th  
Tickets on Sale Now!*

**March 1, 2023- *Baobab***, presented by Motus and SÔ Company, will perform at the **New Victory Theater** from March 11 through March 19. Celebrating the age-old West African tradition of passing knowledge down from generation to generation using storytelling customs based in the arts, *Baobab* presents a percussion-filled fable about a boy's heroic quest to save his village from drought.

Come hear the djembe drums dance and the ngoni's strings sing as the griots tell you a tale set long ago when the stars were still babies, and the trees and animals talked, passed down from generation to generation about a water-stealing sun and a baobab tree bearing an unexpected and unusual gift. With poetry, music, call and response, and dance, *Baobab*'s unique performance is brought to life through the magic of shadow puppetry and powerful storytelling.

"Baobab is a testament to the power of collaboration and creativity, bringing together music, puppetry, and storytelling in a poetic performance that transcends borders and language barriers," said Mary Rose Lloyd, New 42 Artistic Director. "This wonderfully unique production for younger audiences and their families marks an exciting return to the New Victory Theater's tradition of presenting great cross-cultural performances."

"We have been hoping to have a show at the New Victory for over 10 years now. It has finally happened!" said Hélène Ducharme, writer and director of *Baobab*. "I can't wait for the public to experience our play and all the pre- and post-show activities prepared by the New Victory staff. It's going to be such a complete theatrical experience."

***Baobab*** stars Philippe Racine as “Amondo/Griot,” Widemir Normil as “The Great Griot/The Witch/The Monkey/The Fireflies,” Aboulaye Koné as “The Crocodile/Griot,” and Salif Sanou (aka Lasso) as “The Crane/The Marabout/Griot.”

The show is written and directed by Hélène Ducharme in collaboration with Hamadoun Kassogué, adapted into English by Leanna Brodie, and features music by Aboulaye Koné and Nathalie Cora, lighting by Michel St-Amand, costumes by Louis Hudon, shadow theater by Marcelle Hudon, technical direction by Valérie Bourque, scenography by Ismaïla Manga and Hélène Ducharme, and puppets by Jean Cummings, Sylvain Racine, and Claude Rodrigue.

This show is produced by Motus, which specializes in original theater for young audiences that highlights the diversity of world cultures. Combining live music with different styles of puppetry, the company has collaborated with artists from Japan to Mexico to Senegal, telling tales that integrate other languages and foster cultural exchange. For *Baobab* in particular, they have joined forces with Mali’s SÔ Company to share this West African story authentically. Beyond their native Quebec, they have performed in 12 countries, translating their work into English, Spanish and Mandarin for audiences around the world.

***Baobab*** runs 55 minutes with no intermission and is recommended for ages 4-7.

Tickets start at \$25 and are available online ([NewVictory.org](http://NewVictory.org)) and by phone (646.223.3010). For box office window hours, please visit [NewVictory.org/BoxOffice](http://NewVictory.org/BoxOffice).

The show on stage is just one part of the visitor experience! For 45 minutes before and 20 minutes after every show, the lower lobby of the New Victory Theater features free do-together activities in which families can try new performance skills or explore the show’s themes. Whether they are wild, wallflowers or somewhere in between, New Victory will guide children through fun family engagement inspired by the show.

Powered by New 42, the New Victory Theater is supported, in part, with public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council; the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature; the National Endowment for the Arts; as well as the New 42 Board of Directors, and our dedicated foundation, corporate and individual donors.

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### **About New Victory Theater**

The New Victory opens new worlds to young people and families through extraordinary performances, education and engagement programs. Bringing kids to the arts and the arts to kids since 1995, this nonprofit theater has become a standard-bearer of quality performing arts for young audiences in the United States. Reflecting and serving the multicultural city it calls home, The New Victory is committed to arts access for all communities of New York to experience and engage with the exemplary international shows on its stages. A global leader in arts education, youth development and audience engagement, the New Victory Theater has been honored by the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities with the National Arts and Humanities

Youth Program Award, by Americans for the Arts with a national Arts Education Award, and by the Drama Desk for "providing enchanting, sophisticated children's theater that appeals to the child in all of us, and for nurturing a love of theater in young people."

### **About New 42**

Under the leadership of President & CEO Russell Granet, New 42 is a cultural nonprofit whose mission is to make extraordinary performing arts a vital part of everyone's life from the earliest years onward. Driven by a deep commitment to performing arts access, New 42 connects people to world-class performances, essential education and employment programs, and creative communities that push culture forward. Through New Victory and New 42 Studios, the nonprofit serves artists, educators and New Yorkers of all ages with invaluable arts engagement and resources in and beyond the performing arts. Together with our supporters, New 42 opens new perspectives, incubates new works and creates new opportunities to move us all.