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***AANIKA'S ELEPHANTS* BRINGS PUPPETRY CENTER STAGE AT THE NEW VICTORY THEATER**



*Performances Begin at the New Victory Theater on March 29
Tickets on Sale Now!*

March 21, 2024 - A transformative tale of courage and compassion comes to life in *Aanika's Elephants*, presented this spring at the **New Victory Theater** and produced by the tri-state area's own Feisty Elephant, Little Shadow Productions, and Pam Arciero Productions. Created by a team of acclaimed writers, designers, and puppeteers from television's most beloved children's programs, including *Sesame Street*, this moving story about the present-day plight of Africa's elephants runs at the New Victory Theater from March 29 through April 7.

Adventure into the African savanna with Aanika, a Kenyan girl who befriends a baby elephant she names Little. As the tight-knit twosome grows together the way only two young girls can - even if one has a trunk - they must learn how to protect their chosen herd's sanctuary from poachers. Joined onstage by a cast of gorgeous interpretive puppets made from natural materials, their bond of sisterhood shows that a family can be anything—an animal sanctuary, a herd of hunted elephants, an orphaned girl and calf. *Aanika's Elephants* runs 60 minutes with no intermission and is recommended for ages 6 and up.

Aanika's Elephants is written by **Annie Evans**, a 13-time Emmy Award-winning writer for *Sesame Street*, and is directed and choreographed by **Pam Arciero**, a veteran *Sesame Street*

puppeteer and Artistic Director of the National Puppetry Conference at the O'Neill Theater Center. The production features sound design and composition by Emmy Award-winning composer **Paul Rudolph**, lighting design by **André Allen** for BlackLight Productions, and production, set, puppetry, and costume design by **Martin P. Robinson**, who has served as the celebrated puppeteer of “Mr. Snuffleupagus” and other characters on *Sesame Street* for over 40 years.

“We are completely honored to have this all-star cast and creative team bring their decades of puppeteering and storytelling mastery to the New Victory,” said **Mary Rose Lloyd, New 42 Artistic Director**. “*Aanika’s Elephants* is an invitation for audiences to experience this special art form at the highest caliber, and to stoke their sense of wonder and compassion in powerful new ways.”

“The extraordinary talents of our cast and creative team, who combine their years of experience on *Sesame Street* with fresh innovations in puppetry at the New Victory Theater, lends *Aanika’s Elephants* a wonderful sense of heart and sincerity,” said **Co-Producer and Director Pam Arciero**. “This show resonates deeply with the imaginations of older kids, offering them a chance to use their own inspirations and insight to immerse themselves in the incredible narrative of elephants and their culture.”

Tickets start at \$24 and are available at the New Victory Box Office (209 W 42nd Street) leading up to the performance and starting two hours before curtain time on performance days. For box office hours, please visit NewVictory.org/BoxOffice. Tickets can also be purchased online at NewVictory.org and via phone by calling 646.223.3010.

Photos for *Aanika’s Elephants* can be downloaded [HERE](#).

Photo Credit: Zach Hyman

The show on stage is just one part of the visitor experience! For 45 minutes before and 20 minutes after every show, the 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.