

NEW VICTORY Sensory-Friendly Performance

# Show Guide

# AANIKA'S ELEPHANTS

Feisty Elephant, Little Shadow Productions and Pam Arciero Productions



This guide will prepare you for the show *Aanika's Elephants*.  
It will help you know what to expect at the New Victory Theater.

# If I get nervous or feel scared, I can:

Cover or close my eyes.



Talk to my grown-up.



Cover my ears with my hands or put on headphones.



Use a fidget tool.



## A Sensory-Friendly Performance will offer the following:



Photo: Alexis Buatti-Ramos

### **A welcoming environment!**

NEW VICTORY audiences are invited to react to the performance any way that feels comfortable. You are invited to clap, use a fidget, chat with a neighbor, vocalize and safely move around the theater.

### **Lighting and sound adjustments**

**Sensory supports such as headphones, earplugs, fidgets and sunglasses**

**Cozy Zone, Activity Area and Accessibility Table found in the lower lobby**

**Aanika's Elephants** uses puppetry to tell the story of a Kenyan girl named Aanika who befriends a baby elephant she names Little.



The show was made for kids as young as 6, but the story does have a few upsetting moments.



Some elephants in the show are injured by hunters, or poachers. This is shown using puppetry.



Aanika's uncle treats her unkindly. The way he speaks and acts toward her is cruel.



The show includes the depiction of death of a parent when Aanika's father dies. This is shown using a puppet.



A poacher in the show hunts the elephants with a gun. Guns are represented in the show by using tree branches. No real guns are used in the production. There is a gunshot noise that sounds like a drum, which will be made quieter during the Sensory-Friendly Performance.



***Aanika's Elephants* is 60 minutes long.**

There is no intermission during ***Aanika's Elephants***. However, if you need to take a break you can leave the theater and return.

There may be some times when you have to wait a few minutes to re-enter because it is safer for the actors. The ushers will let you know when you can re-enter.

Please note that a few actors will make their entrance to the stage by walking down the aisle of the theater.

***Aanika's Elephants*** uses a blend of puppetry styles pulled from cultures around the world—including rod puppetry and glove puppetry—to tell the story of Aanika and Little.

### Rod Puppetry

A style of puppetry in which the puppet is manipulated by rods located at the bottom of the puppet.

### Glove Puppetry

A style of puppetry in which the puppeteer wears the puppet on their hand and manipulates it using their fingers.



The puppeteers will be wearing black costumes that will cover their entire bodies and faces.



Photos: Martin P. Robinson

# Meet the characters below!

## Aanika



A woman of African descent in her late 20's/early 30's. She plays herself as well as 10-year-old Aanika and 12-year-old Aanika in scenes from the past that happened when she was a young girl growing up. She speaks with an East African accent except when she's pretending to be a bold eight-year old American asking a question from the audience.

## Little



An orphaned elephant cared for by Aanika.

(portrayed by puppeteers)

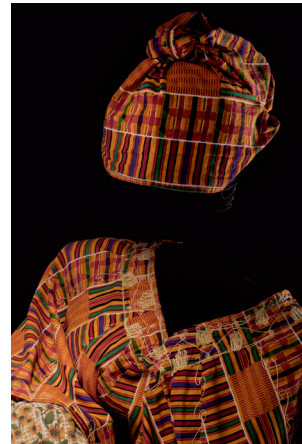
## Papa



Aanika's father and caretaker of the elephant orphanage.

(portrayed by a puppeteer)

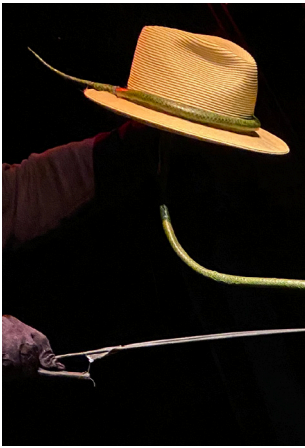
## Ms. Mutembi



The owner of the elephant orphanage. She is a friend of Papa and Aanika.

(portrayed by a puppeteer)

## Uncle



Aanika's cruel uncle who is her closest relative.

(portrayed by a puppeteer)

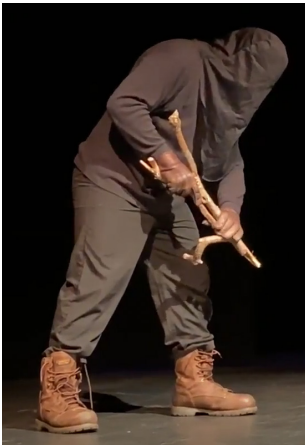
## Game Warden



A person who protects the wildlife living in the bush from poachers.

(portrayed by a puppeteer)

## Poacher



A hunter who illegally shoots elephants for their ivory tusks.

(portrayed by a puppeteer)

## Two Musicians



They are at a table on stage that has a keyboard, drums and other instruments. They create the gunshot sound effect at the table.

**Ant and Spider** Characters in a story that Aanika reads from a book. (portrayed by puppeteers)



Below is a plot synopsis for *Aanika's Elephants*.



Photo: Zach Hymen

The play opens in Kenya with Aanika and her Papa at an elephant orphanage, or sanctuary. Papa works at the sanctuary with Ms. Mutembi. Aanika frequently cares for and plays with the animals.

An injured baby elephant arrives at the orphanage and Aanika immediately connects with her. As the elephant heals, Aanika names her Little.



Over the next two years, Aanika and Little become more than friends as they grow up together—they become sisters.

One day, after a walk in the sanctuary, Papa grows weak and suddenly dies. Upon Papa's death, Aanika becomes the ward of her next-of-kin, her cruel uncle. He moves Aanika away from her home, removes her from school, and demands that she cook and clean for him.

Aanika decides to flee into the bush and bids Little goodbye.



While she is camping that night, she speaks aloud to Papa. She is interrupted by Little who has followed her into the bush.

Aanika and Little band together to survive in the wilderness and are faced with many dangers such as poachers who frequent the bush, hunting elephants for their ivory tusks. They hear gunshots and seek comfort in one another.



Aanika and Little stumble upon a small herd of elephants that Aanika recognizes as Little's relatives. The pair joins the herd.

The Matriarch of the herd, whom Aanika names Hapendi Mimi, does not trust Aanika and forces her to trail behind.



When Aanika rescues the herd's baby elephant from a pool of mud, Hapendi Mimi accepts her.

Aanika continues to fear the ivory-seeking poachers, especially since Mimi and the other elephants have long, beautiful tusks.



Aanika calls out to Papa and Mama and seeks their advice on what to do. She decides she will ask Ms. Mutembi at the sanctuary for help.

She goes to the sanctuary and leaves Ms. Mutembi a written note. Ms. Mutembi receives her note and enlists the Warden to help her find Aanika.

On Aanika's journey back to the herd, she encounters a poacher with a gun in his hand.

The herd of elephants burst onto the scene. The poacher fires his gun and there is a bang. Little is shot in the leg.



Ms. Mutembi and the Warden discover Aanika and Little. They quickly return them to the sanctuary to treat Little's wound.



Little survives the gunshot and her leg is able to completely recover over time. Back home again, Ms. Mutembi, Anika and Little live as a family once more.



We hope you enjoy *Aanika's Elephants* at the New Victory Theater!



Photo: Mark LaRosa

Please find the rest of our Sensory-Friendly Performance dates below:

### Public Performances



**I'm Possible**  
Sunday 4/28 at 5pm



**Four Go Wild in Wellies**  
Sunday 6/2 at 10am

### Education Performances



**I'm Possible**  
Friday 4/19 at 11am



**Four Go Wild in Wellies**  
Wednesday 6/5 at 11am

