

NEW VICTORY

THEATER

# NEW VICTORY® SCHOOL TOOL®

RESOURCE GUIDE

# CIRCUS ABYSSINIA

## ETHIOPIAN DREAMS



2018-19 SEASON

# THE NEW VICTORY® THEATER

New York's Theater for Kids and Families

A PROJECT OF THE NEW 42ND STREET

# THE NEW VICTORY THEATER

The New Victory Theater brings kids to the arts and the arts to kids. Created in 1995 on iconic 42nd Street, this nonprofit theater has become a standard-bearer of quality performing arts for young audiences in the U.S. Reflecting and serving the diverse city it calls home, The New Victory is committed to arts access for all students, teachers, kids, families and communities of New York to experience and engage with the exemplary international programming of theater, dance, circus, puppetry and opera on its stages. A leader in arts education, youth employment and audience engagement, The New Victory Theater has been honored by the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities with the 2014 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."

The international productions on NEW VICTORY stages inform and inspire the work of the award-winning NEW VICTORY Education Program through a dynamic combination of school and public programs. Our school programs serve over 40,000 Pre-K through 12th grade students and teachers each season at almost no cost to the kids or their schools. Many of our partners are NYC-area Title I schools, with a high percentage of students who would be unable to experience live theater if it weren't for The New Victory. This nationally-recognized program exemplifies the organization's long-standing commitment to the intrinsic value of cultural participation in the lives of New York City kids.

The NEW VICTORY Education Department is committed to building impactful and long-lasting relationships with schools and after-school programs. We believe that creating strong and meaningful partnerships between schools and arts organizations allows school communities to deeply enrich their arts programs and infuse creativity across the curriculum. By annually enrolling in the unique and award-winning NEW VICTORY Education Partnership Program, schools take advantage of \$2 tickets to NEW VICTORY school-time and after-school performances, free classroom workshops led by highly skilled teaching artists, in-depth resources and professional development that allow teachers to incorporate the arts into their classrooms.

## NEW VICTORY® SCHOOL TOOL® Resource Guides

Available to Education Partners for every show in our season, NEW VICTORY SCHOOL TOOL Resource Guides provide educators with comprehensive materials that explore the artistry and key themes of each production. Filled with practical, ready-to-implement activities that allow any teacher to incorporate The New Victory into their classroom, the NEW VICTORY SCHOOL TOOL Resource Guides are designed to enrich the performance experience before, during and after the students' trip to the theater.

Please be advised that the unauthorized reproduction or distribution of NEW VICTORY® SCHOOL TOOL® Resource Guides for any purpose other than educational, such as for commercial or monetary gain, may constitute copyright infringement and may be punishable by law. For more information, please contact the NEW VICTORY Education Department at [Education@NewVictory.org](mailto:Education@NewVictory.org)

## CONTACT INFORMATION

209 W 42nd Street, New York, NY 10036  
[Education@NewVictory.org](mailto:Education@NewVictory.org)  
646.223.3090

## Making Connections to Learning Standards

NEW VICTORY SCHOOL TOOL Resource Guides align with the Common Core State Standards, New York State Learning Standards and New York City Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in the Arts. We believe that these standards support both the high quality instruction and deep engagement that The New Victory Theater strives to achieve in its arts education practice.

## The NEW 42ND STREET® Youth Corps

Available for high school and college-age youth, the NEW 42ND STREET Youth Corps offers paid employment, job training, academic support and mentorship through jobs in the arts. At The New Victory you are greeted by the NEW VICTORY Usher Corps, a rigorous three-year program for New Yorkers ages 16-22, and at The Duke on 42nd Street you are greeted by the NEW 42ND STREET College Corps, a program offered to current CUNY students pursuing graduation. Participants of these programs are paid for their time as front of house staff and for participating in professional development workshops. In our administrative offices, the NEW 42ND STREET Apprentice Corps employs college and graduate students who want hands-on experience in the daily operations of a nonprofit performing arts organization. They are joined by members of the NEW 42ND STREET Fellows Corps, which provides career-launching employment and networking opportunities for former NEW VICTORY Ushers who are actively pursuing non-performing theater careers. Together, these four programs of the NEW 42ND STREET Youth Corps expose students to invaluable life skills and the power of live performance.



NEW VICTORY® SCHOOL TOOL® Resource Guides are made possible by a generous gift in memory of Fr. John R. Scarangelo, OFM whose lifelong passion for the theater was a powerful influence on all who were fortunate to know and love him.





# CIRCUS ABYSSINIA

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## ETHIOPIAN DREAMS

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# WHAT GUIDES NEW VICTORY EDUCATION: **OUR GUIDING PILLARS!**

*Want to know what guides the work we do in New Victory Education? We'll tell you!  
The Guiding Pillars on this page are the foundation of how we strive to cultivate  
collaboration and creativity for everyone!*

## **PLAY**

How is the work sparking imagination,  
encouraging joy in learning  
and evoking laughter?

## **DISCOVERY**

What methods are we employing and questions  
are we asking to encourage opportunities for  
meaning-making, deepening understanding, inquiry,  
curiosity, risk-taking and learning about oneself,  
ones' peers, and the world around us?

## **COMMUNITY**

How are we encouraging ensemble and  
collaboration within the communities  
we work with?

## **ART FORM**

How are we honoring and exploring  
the technique of the art forms  
presented on our stage?

## **CREATE**

How can we activate art-making and creativity  
to explore the art form in each production?

## **ARTS FOR ALL**

How is the work accessible  
to and inclusive of everyone?

# INSIDE

A behind-the-curtain look at the artists, the company and the art form of this production

## COMMON CORE STANDARDS

**Reading:** 1; 2; 3; 4; 5; 6; 7

**Writing:** 2; 3; 4; 6; 7; 9; 10

**Speaking and Listening:** 1; 2; 3; 4; 5; 6

**Language:** 1; 2; 3

## NEW YORK STATE STANDARDS

**Arts:** Creating, Presenting, Performing,  
Responding, Connecting

**English Language Arts:** 1; 2; 3; 4

**Social Studies:** 1; 2; 5

## BLUEPRINT FOR THE ARTS

**Theater:** Theater Making  
Developing Theater Literacy  
Making Connections

## Summary

This holiday season, wishes do come true! Growing up, real-life brothers Bibi and Bichu wanted one thing: to someday join the circus. Now they're here to share their dream with you and your students. Everyone will be grinning from ear to ear as agile tumblers ricochet around the stage, elastic contortionists twist into unfathomable shapes and expert jugglers exchange an endless array of objects. Let the infectious joy and effervescent energy of Ethiopia's astonishing circus artists warm your heart and inspire you to dream big.



# CIRCUS ABYSSINIA ETHIOPIAN DREAMS

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Where in the world is  
**CIRCUS ABYSSINIA:**  
**ETHIOPIAN DREAMS** from?

**ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA**



### FUN FACTS:

There are more than 80 different ethnic groups in Ethiopia with just as many languages. Over 200 dialects are spoken throughout the country.

Addis Ababa, which means “new flower” in Amharic, has a lot going on. It is the capital of Ethiopia and the diplomatic capital of Africa. It’s altitude of 2,355m (7,726 ft) makes it the 3rd highest capital city in the world.

In 2016, 350 Ethiopian Airlines employees stood in formation at the Addis Ababa Airport to accurately outline an Airbus 350 XWB and set the Guinness World Record for the biggest human replication of an airplane.

Bibi and Bichu hold the record for being the longest-serving act in England’s Giffords Circus! Prior to developing CIRCUS ABYSSINIA: ETHIOPIAN DREAMS, the brothers traveled all over the UK with the acclaimed troupe for 11 seasons from 2002 to 2016.

The world-famous duo has dazzled audiences in dozens of countries from London’s 20,000 seat O2 Arena to Japan’s Fuji Rock Festival and in shows that span the spectrum of the circus arts, from children’s television to Olivier Award-winning opera. Be sure to catch them in Tim Burton’s upcoming film adaptation of *Dumbo* (2019).

In November 2017, CIRCUS ABYSSINIA: ETHIOPIAN DREAMS appeared on the Royal Variety Performance, and one of their youngest artists, Ezra Nigusse, presented the Duchess of Cambridge with flowers in the royal receiving line.

Juggling as a duo, Bibi and Bichu work in absolute sync. This can be attributed to an absolute trust and wordless intuition of each other’s moves and instincts. The connection between these two brothers provides an electric synchronicity of juggling.

CIRCUS + ACROBATICS × ASPIRATIONS =

# CIRCUS ABYSSINIA

## ETHIOPIAN DREAMS

### A closer look:

As teens, brothers Bibi and Bichu Tesfamariam caught sight of a teacher juggling oranges on the school playground, and, after joining in the action, the pair haven’t stopped since. Inspired by their own childhood dreams of joining a circus, the duo has sponsored Circus Wingate, a circus school in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, since 2010. There, they discovered the talented Konjowoch Troupe and formed Circus Abyssinia, the first Ethiopian circus made by and for Ethiopian artists.

Bibi and Bichu eventually moved to the UK and met with more success than they ever could have imagined. Over the years, they have performed in thousands of events in dozens of countries, in shows that span the spectrum of the circus arts, from children’s TV to opera. In 2017, the brothers established their own company and teamed up with a troupe of talented acrobats to create the production, Circus Abyssinia: Ethiopian Dreams.



## MODERN CIRCUS

Modern circus has a variety of skills like acrobatics, juggling, clowning and other physical feats. Although traditional circus is often performed under a tent and includes both human and animal acts, many modern circuses are performed on a stage and do not use animals as part of the performance. CIRCUS ABYSSINIA: ETHIOPIAN DREAMS is a modern circus that combines traditional circus acts (including jugglers, acrobats, contortionists and unicycling) with music and dance that celebrates the culture and people of Ethiopia!

## ACROBATICS

In CIRCUS ABYSSINIA: ETHIOPIAN DREAMS, elements of acrobatics and movement are combined and used as a means of storytelling. Acrobatic performance entails feats of strength, agility, coordination and balance. Examples of acrobatics are when performers are seen climbing atop one another, flipping over each other and using each other as human counterweights. This type of performance dates all the way back to the Minoan civilization around 2000 B.C.E., when everyday citizens would perform acrobatic feats on top of bulls!

## CLOWNING

Clowning is an ancient form of theater that is rooted in physical comedy. This art form embraces and highlights the absurdity of everyday situations and has the power to transcend verbal language and cultural barriers through visual spectacle. Although no one knows who first bore the title of “clown,” the Native American Pueblo nation called the Zunis dubbed this type of character the “Contrary.” Adorned with a striped costume and sporting a cone-shaped hat, the Contrary’s sole task was to draw attention to the absurdity of everyday life by highlighting, through physical action, the clumsy, inarticulate, badly-behaved mirror image of humanity.

## JUGGLING

The art of juggling is the oldest of the disciplines of circus. Juggling as an art form has existed for about 4,000 years! The oldest known depiction of juggling was found in the Beni-Hassan tombs from the middle-kingdom of the ancient Egyptian civilization. Jugglers were found amongst acrobats and dancers in one of the crypt’s wall paintings. The drawing itself was made about 2000 years B.C.E. Between the fourth and fifth centuries B.C.E., many jugglers began appearing in Greek art, usually as pottery decoration.

## WHAT DO YOUR STUDENTS ALREADY KNOW?

Prior to exploring CIRCUS ABYSSINIA: ETHIOPIAN DREAMS with your students, find out how much they already know about **MODERN CIRCUS** and **ACROBATICS**. In addition, allow them to explore the theme: **DREAMS**.

*Have you ever seen a modern circus before? What did you enjoy about it and why?*

*Have you ever seen an acrobat perform?*

*What element(s) of circus do you like best? Why?*

*What laws of physics might make acrobatics possible?*

*What is a dream or aspiration you have?*

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# INSIDE / THE ACT LIST!

Here are some of the acts you might see as you watch  
CIRCUS ABYSSINIA: ETHIOPIAN DREAMS on the  
NEW VICTORY stage. Prepare to be amazed!



## HAND VAULTING

Balancing and acrobatics.



## JUGGLING

Performers toss one  
or more objects,  
keeping them aloft,  
using their hands.



## HULA HOOP

A toy hoop that is twirled  
around the waist, limbs  
or neck.

## ROLLA BOLLA

A balancing act with a  
board teetering on objects  
layered underneath.



## CHINESE POLE

A vertical pole that circus  
performers use to climb  
upward, slide downward  
and hold daring poses.



## CLOTH SPINNING

A performer spins fabric on  
their hands and feet without  
allowing them to fall off.

## CONTORTION

A performer bends and  
twists into unusual shapes  
and positions.



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## EXPERIMENTING WITH CIRCUS (SCIENCE)

Believe it or not, acrobatics wouldn't be possible without science! Explore the physics behind these tricks with your students as part of a science unit! Lead activities, followed by reflective discussions, about concepts such as gravity, velocity, inertia, centripetal force and balance. A few leading questions to help you get started are: *How could we study the ability to toss and catch different objects of varying size? What factors influence the speed at which an object is moving? How can we affect change on our ability to balance?* To support this unit, use the **Activity: Circus School: Juggling 101** in the **Before** section.

## CIRCUS ACROSS THE GLOBE (SOCIAL STUDIES, THEATER ARTS)

CIRCUS ABYSSINIA: ETHIOPIAN DREAMS, which features performers from Ethiopia, employs elements of modern circus. Explore different circuses around the world with your students! Give them the opportunity to research the different kinds of circuses affiliated with different countries and cultures. Have students review their findings, citing similarities and differences in the circuses from different cultures. Then, have them write about or draw what they've learned about different circuses and then present their findings to the class or a partner. To support this unit, use the **Activity: All the World's A Circus!** in the **After** section.

## BEYOND CIRCUS: THE ARTS OF ETHIOPIA (ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS, HISTORY, SOCIAL STUDIES)

Circus is a relatively new arrival to the world of the arts in Ethiopia, however the country has a long and rich history of other art forms. Explore some of these art forms as a class or through independent student research. Take a trip to the local or school library to search for literature, photos or videos, then have a class information share! Encourage students to do further research on their own about Ethiopian art forms, visual or performative, and their origins. Or, make connections to similar art forms found in their culture(s). A few suggestions to get you started are: art forms unique to Ethiopia, art forms adopted and/or adapted by different Ethiopian cultures, or examining root commonalities between uniquely Ethiopian art forms and similar art forms found in different cultures across the African continent or across the globe! To support this unit, use the **Activity: All the World's A Circus!** in the **After** section, or the **Creativity Page: Cirque Couture** in the **After** section.



**CIRCUS  
ABYSSINIA  
ETHIOPIAN DREAMS**



# BEFORE

Ready-to-implement classroom activities that explore the themes and artistry of the show

## COMMON CORE STANDARDS

**Writing:** 3; 4

**Speaking and Listening:** 1; 2; 6

**Language:** 1; 2; 3

## NEW YORK STATE STANDARDS

**Arts:** Creating, Presenting, Performing,  
Responding, Connecting

**English Language Arts:** 1; 2; 3; 4

## BLUEPRINT FOR THE ARTS

**Theater:** Theater Making

Developing Theater Literacy

Making Connections



# CIRCUS ABYSSINIA ETHIOPIAN DREAMS

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# CIRCUS SCHOOL: JUGGLING 101

The performers in CIRCUS ABYSSINIA: ETHIOPIAN DREAMS make juggling look easy! That's because they have years of experience and schooling under their belts.

**Use the activity below to help students open their eyes to the world of juggling, or at least some of the basics. You and your students may even discover abilities you didn't even know you had!**

**Materials Needed:** Juggling scarves, plastic bags and sheets of tissue paper (enough for each student to have one), instrumental music (optional)

1. To begin, gather students in a circle, giving each student a piece of lightweight material: juggling scarves, tissue paper or plastic bags, and tell them they're going to be learning the basics of juggling.
2. Next, have students practice these fundamentals by telling them: *pinch a small portion of your juggling item between your index finger and thumb, raise it above your head, release it and then catch it at your waist.* Allow them to do this a few times, letting them know that this series of actions forms the basics of juggling: the manipulation of one or more objects for entertainment!
3. Next, divide students into three groups, delineated by the materials they've been given (Group 1: Scarves; Group 2: Tissue paper; Group 3 Plastic bags).
4. Give students some time in their groups to practice juggling their materials. Ask them questions like: *What do you notice about the ways in which your materials move? What do you notice that is different about the ways in which other groups' materials move?*
5. Next, ask the groups to set their materials down in front of them and move to the next juggling material. Repeat Step 3.
6. Then, rotate clockwise so that each group has time to experience and make discoveries about each material. Ask questions like: *What do you notice about the ways in which your materials move? What do you notice that is different about the ways in which other groups' materials move? What makes it easier or more difficult to juggle with this material?*
7. Once each group has had a chance to work with each of the materials, gather together in a standing circle, leaving the materials in three separate corners of the room and reflect on the experience of juggling with different materials.
8. Ask students to think about which material was their favorite to work with and have them stand in the corner of the room where that material was left. Now, reflect on the experience of practicing the basics of juggling using various materials.

## BONUS:

*As a way to further scaffold this activity, as each group travels from material to material, you can also challenge students to juggle with two items at staggered times. Then, reflect on the experience of using multiple items!*

## REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

*What was your favorite part of this activity?*

*Did this activity change how you look at juggling?*

*What did you learn about juggling that you didn't know before?*

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### Be a part of your kid's field trip to CIRCUS ABBYSSINIA: ETHIOPIAN DREAMS!

## WATCH

Check out the video trailer and a message from CIRCUS ABBYSSINIA: ETHIOPIAN DREAMS!

[www.NewVictory.org/CIRCUSABYSSINIA](http://www.NewVictory.org/CIRCUSABYSSINIA)

While you're there, do the suggested Family Activities to learn more about the show.



## ASK

**After your kid visits the New Vic, talk with them about their theater-going experience! Use the prompts below to engage in a conversation with them about what they saw and how the show made them feel!**

### BEFORE the show:

*What do you think modern circus is?*

*How do you think the performers discovered their talent for juggling?*

*What are you most excited about for your trip to The New Victory Theater?*

### AFTER the show:

*What was your favorite part of the show?*

*How would you describe a visual spectacle?*

*Did anything about the show surprise you?*

## VISIT

The New Victory is New York City's only performing arts theater exclusively devoted to kids, their families and classmates, bringing exhilarating stories, innovative art forms and unparalleled performers from around the world to its historic stage in Times Square. For a full list of shows in the New Vic 2018-19 season, visit [www.NewVictory.org](http://www.NewVictory.org).

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A LETTER TO YOU:

# REACH FOR THE STARS!

When Bibi and Bichu, the real-life brothers who created CIRCUS ABYSSINIA: ETHIOPIAN DREAMS, were kids, they dreamed of being circus artists. And their dream came true! *What dreams do you have? What and who do you want to be? What do you want to do?*

**In the space below, write a letter to your future self about what you want your life to be like in 5, 10 or even 15 years. Use the large space above to draw your imagined future self.**

**Bonus:** *In the small box below, describe how you are going to make your dream happen.*




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# EN ROUTE

Trip logistics and a brief student activity to be completed shortly before seeing the show

Provide this section to all teachers and chaperones attending the show!

## COMMON CORE STANDARDS

Reading: 1

## NEW YORK STATE STANDARDS

Arts: Creating, Responding, Connecting

## BLUEPRINT FOR THE ARTS

Visual Arts: Art Making  
Making Connections

## Heads up!

CIRCUS ABYSSINIA: ETHIOPIAN DREAMS combines high flying acrobatics and dance with the themes of dreams and aspirations. Be aware that these are professionals and their stunts should not be tried at home. Prepare your students to watch how two performers make their childhood dreams a reality.



## CIRCUS ABYSSINIA ETHIOPIAN DREAMS

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# TRIP GUIDE

Provide this resource to the School Trip Leader and all teachers/chaperones attending the performance.

## Before you leave school

We advise you to LEAVE ALL BAGS AND LUNCHES at school, if possible. If not, bags will be collected by NEW VICTORY staff and stored during the performance.

Plan to arrive at the NEW VICTORY venue at least 30–45 minutes before curtain time. The building opens one hour prior to curtain (i.e. 10am for an 11am performance). If you realize that your group is running late, please contact the theater DIRECTLY at **646.223.3020**. If you will be arriving by bus, please ensure that your driver drops your group off on the **north side** of 42<sup>nd</sup> Street between 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Avenues.

## Arrival

When you reach 42<sup>nd</sup> Street, a member of the NEW VICTORY Front of House staff wearing a green vest will check in with the school trip leader.

If you arrive by bus, they will direct your bus to a location on the street where it is safest to unload the students.

It is important to wait until our staff checks in the School Trip Leader and Bus Driver before unloading the students.

They will record the bus number and give the School Trip Leader and the Bus Driver correlating tags.

**Please remember to have the School Trip Leader and the Bus Driver exchange cell numbers.**

The Front of House staff will give a time for the bus to return to pick up your school group.

## The question of lunch

NEW VICTORY venues are not equipped to host lunch/snacks. In the early autumn and spring months, nearby Bryant Park (42<sup>nd</sup> Street at 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue) offers a pleasant place for lunching, and there are also public restroom facilities.

## Seating

In order to make your experience at the theater as efficient and safe as possible, you will not be issued tickets. Your group will be assigned seats in advance by the Education Department. Your seating assignment will not be available prior to the performance. If you have any questions, please contact the Education Department at: [Education\\_Tickets@NewVictory.org](mailto:Education_Tickets@NewVictory.org).

## Accessibility

Wheelchair accessibility: Wheelchair seating must be requested in advance, at the time of the ticket request, and is subject to availability. Assisted listening devices are available for patrons who have hearing impairments.



# TRIP GUIDE

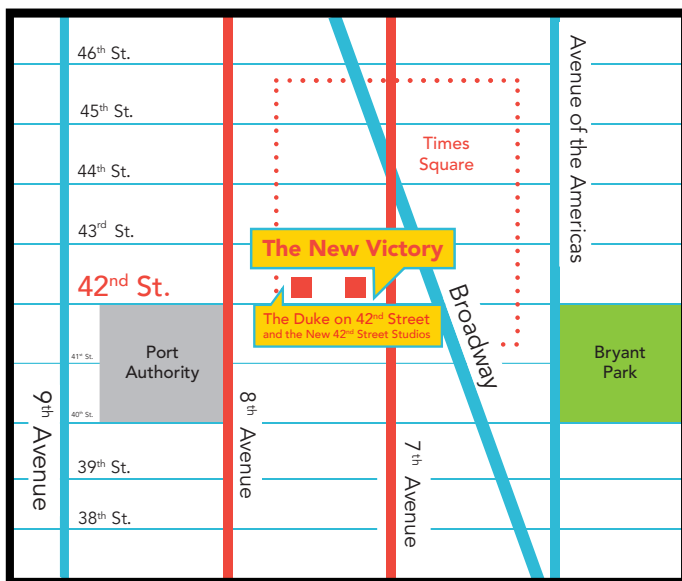
If you are traveling by bus, please also share this important information with the bus driver.

## Directions to

THE NEW VICTORY THEATER OR THE DUKE ON 42ND STREET/  
NEW 42ND STREET STUDIOS  
**209 West 42nd Street**  
**229 West 42nd Street**

### BY SCHOOL BUS

It is safest to drop off and pick up your school group on **the north side of the street** in front of the venue. Turn onto 42nd Street from 7th Avenue so students can unload in front of the theater.



### During the show

42nd Street is extremely congested and has a high volume of traffic. According to the New York City Department of Transportation, vehicles are not allowed to sit idle or park on the street without special permission. Once your bus is empty, it is important that the bus driver find parking at a nearby location—see possible parking locations below.

If a driver chooses to park on 42nd Street, they do so at their own risk of being ticketed by the police. The New Victory Theater is not responsible for bus drivers who receive parking tickets.

### Possible parking locations

8th Avenue (both sides) between 38th and 39th Streets  
11th Avenue (both sides) between 39th and 40th Streets

### Pick up

Taking Midtown traffic into consideration, bus drivers should leave their waiting location approximately 10 minutes prior to the return time given by the Front of House staff. Front of House staff will also help find a spot on 42nd Street to safely load your student group after the show has ended.

### BY MTA, SUBWAY OR BUS

#### 1/2/3 N/R/Q/W/7

Exit the station at 42nd Street/7th Avenue. When you come out of the turnstile, take the stairs to your right. All NEW VICTORY venues are directly to the west of the subway station.

#### A/C/E to Port Authority

Exit at 42nd Street/8th Avenue. Walk to 42nd Street, turn east, and continue walking until you arrive at NEW VICTORY venues.

#### B/D/F/M

Exit at 42nd Street/6th Avenue. Walk west on 42nd Street until you come to 7th Avenue. The venues are on the north side of the street at 7th Avenue, next to the subway station.

The M10, M16, M27, M42, M104 buses all stop within one block of the venues.



# ARE YOU A CIRCUS STAR?

In CIRCUS ABYSSINIA: ETHIOPIAN DREAMS, each performer showcases their very own unique talents. What talents do YOU have? What kind of circus performer would you be? Take the quiz below to find out if you're an acrobat, a juggler, a hand vaulter or an expert at balancing!



- If you were a professional juggler, what would your specialty be?
  - Juggling balls
  - Folding chairs
  - Scarves
- You have the chance to walk a high-wire between two skyscrapers. What do you do?
  - Take the elevator to the top floor and perform death-defying acrobatics
  - I can try but let's be realistic about this. We'll see how far I make it.
  - No, no. I'm good. Someone else can take this one.
- Which color do you like best?
  - Electric Yellow
  - Zesty Orange
  - Hot Pink
- What type of dance do you enjoy the most?
  - Hip Hop
  - Breakdancing
  - Ballet
- From the list below, choose your favorite New York City borough.
  - Queens
  - Brooklyn
  - The Bronx
- When you make it big, how will you reach out to audience members who are not having the best day?
  - Wave to them
  - Do a backflip to WOW them
  - Fake a fall to make them laugh
- What makes you happiest?
  - Making people laugh
  - A snow day
  - Learning a new skill
- You're on stage and something is about to go terribly wrong with your partner's act! How do you respond?
  - Offer assistance
  - Improvise a brand new act to distract the audience, saving your partner from embarrassment
  - Run away from it and hope it solves itself

**Now, add up your points and see what type of acro-performer you are!**

## LEGEND:

A's = 6 points each

B's = 4 points each

C's = 2 points each

## 1 - 16 POINTS

### YOU'RE A JUGGLER!

You've got excellent moves, you know how to entertain an audience!

## 17 - 28 POINTS

### YOU'RE A BALANCING AFICIONADO!

You create a good school/social life balance for yourself!

## 29 - 40 POINTS

### YOU'RE A HAND VAULTING AFICIONADO!

Look at you goooooooo!

## 41 - 48 POINTS

### YOU'RE AN ACROBAT!

WOW, you have abilities beyond comprehension! People will do backflips when they see YOU in action!

## BONUS:

After you've finished tallying up your points, draw yourself as a circus star in the space provided!



# AFTER

Ready-to-implement classroom activities that offer the opportunity to reflect on and extend the experience of attending the performance

## COMMON CORE STANDARDS

**Reading:** 1

**Writing:** 2; 3; 4; 5

**Speaking and Listening:** 1; 2; 3; 4; 6

**Language:** 3

## NEW YORK STATE STANDARDS

**Arts:** Creating, Presenting, Performing,  
Responding, Connecting

**English Language Arts:** 1; 3

## BLUEPRINT FOR THE ARTS

**Dance:** Dance Making  
Developing Dance Literacy  
Making Connections



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## AFTER / PERFORMANCE REFLECTION

Following your trip to The New Victory, you may find that your students want to discuss the performance and their own opinions. Reflecting on the show and voicing an aesthetic response is an important part of the theater-going experience. Allowing your students the opportunity to articulate their own thoughts and hear the ideas of their classmates will increase the impact of the theater experience.

**Engage in a conversation** with your students to help them process their thoughts and feelings about the show by leading students in a discussion:

*What was the story about?*

*Who were the characters?*

*What were they in search of? Did they find it?*

*What were your favorite parts of the show?*

*What shapes and colors did you see?*

*What did you think about the performers' circus talents?*

*What different production elements (music, lighting, costumes, etc.) did you notice in the show?*

*How did the show make you feel?*

## TEACHER TIP

Engaging in dialogue, asking questions and recalling observations are skills that we believe should be fostered and encouraged. When leading a performance reflection discussion, try the following model of critical response:

**Describe** (*I saw...*)

**Analyze** (*I wonder...*)

**Interpret** (*I think/feel...*)

**Evaluate** (*I believe...*)

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# ALL THE WORLD'S A CIRCUS!

When Bibi and Bichu were growing up in Ethiopia, their country didn't have a circus tradition—so the two brothers started a circus tradition of their own! In this activity, students will use their creativity to combine talents and put on a class circus!

1. Start by letting students know that they will be designing their own acts and combining them to form a class circus. Ask students to brainstorm their talents and come up with one or two they might like to showcase.
2. If students are stuck, let CIRCUS ABYSSINIA: ETHIOPIAN DREAMS inspire them! Ask students: *What are some talents you saw onstage that you have or would like to try? Can you dance? Do you know how to use a hula hoop? Are you exceptional at juggling?*
3. Have a class discussion about the different talents or skills they want to explore and scribe their suggestions on a large sheet of butcher paper. Allow each student to choose from the generated list which talents they want to focus on. Once everyone has chosen their specialty, divide the class into small groups—or circus troupes!
4. Next, tell the students they're going to create artwork depicting the style and content of their circus. Provide each group with a large piece of butcher paper, markers and crayons to design their troupe's unique poster. To guide them in their creative process, ask them questions like: *What does your circus look like? What colors or shapes are present in set design? What acts are you most excited to perform?*
5. Now it's time for students to get on their feet and give their talents a try! Allow each circus troupe time to rehearse their act. **Bonus:** The acts of CIRCUS ABYSSINIA: ETHIOPIAN DREAMS are supported by dynamic background music. Ask students to think about what kind of music they would want to accompany their acts. Then, enrich their performances by playing the circus music of their dreams!
6. And now, it's show time! Designate one area of the classroom as the performance space and one area for spectators. Each troupe should now take turns presenting their very own acts to the class! Encourage students to cheer on their classmates as each circus troupe wows the audience. Performers love applause!



## REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

How did it feel performing for your peers?

What was it like being in the audience?

What did you learn about your peers that you didn't know before?

What did you learn about yourself?

What elements of this activity reminded you of CIRCUS ABYSSINIA: ETHIOPIAN DREAMS?

What made you successful in this activity?

What were some challenges you encountered?

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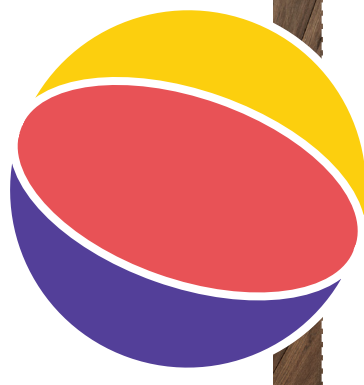


# CIRQUE COUTURE

Now that you've seen the colorful costumes in CIRCUS ABYSSINIA: ETHIOPIAN DREAMS, it's time for you to put yourself at center stage of your very own circus and design your dream circus attire! *What unique materials could your outfits be made of? Where did they come from?* Let the colors and patterns from the show inspire you, and get creative! For instance, some costumes in this production are made to look like snake skin and other unique patterns.



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## BONUS:

Add even more elements to your circus masterpiece! *Design a costume with your specific tricks in mind! Who else in your class is in your circus? What daring feats could they do, and what would they wear to make your dream circus amazing?*

## Sources

<https://www.bibiandbichu.com/circus-abyssinia>

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