

The New Victory Theater Presents
Acrobuffos'
AIR PLAY



Where Circus and Science Take Flight
March 30 - April 15

Written, Created and Performed by Seth Bloom and Christina Gelsone
Air Sculptures in collaboration with Daniel Wurtzel
Directed by West Hyler

New York, NY (February 28, 2018) -- Watch in absolute wonder as umbrellas take flight, balloons sprout minds of their own and shimmering silks ripple to the rafters in the modern spectacle **AIR PLAY**, playing at The New Victory Theater from March 30 - April 15, 2018. With knowing smiles and suitcases full of surprises, the globetrotting **Acrobuffos** (*Big Apple Circus*, *Waterbombs!*) elicit gasps and giggles in equal measure as they animate airflow, goad gravity, and make buoyant, beautiful and really, really, really high art out of the very thing we breathe.



Created, written and performed by husband and wife team **Seth Bloom** and **Christina Gelsone**, **AIR PLAY** features the Acrobuffos' signature mix of circus and street theater with the sculptural artistry of **Daniel Wurtzel** (*Finding Neverland*, *Sleep No More*, Radio City Rockettes' *New York Spectacular*, Cirque du Soleil's *Amaluna*), the world's only professional air sculptor whose "Magic Carpet" airflow piece went viral on YouTube with over two million views.

Using aerodynamic science, mathematics and a carefully positioned circle of fans, every performance of **AIR PLAY** is affected by the slightest changes in atmosphere--from humidity to the heat of the audience--a discovery made while in

development with **NEW VICTORY LabWorks**, the theater's new work development program. Created to foster exciting and original works for family audiences here in the U.S., NEW VICTORY LabWorks invites its artists to share their work, while in development, with young audiences made up of New Victory Member families whose feedback proves invaluable.

AIR PLAY, with direction from **West Hyler** (Cirque du Soleil's *Paramour*, Big Apple Circus' *Metamorphosis*, *Legendarium*), lighting design by Jeanne Koenig (Associate Lighting Designer, *The Lion King*, *Side Show*) and sound design and props by Seth and Christina, took off around the world in 2015 and has been seen on five continents. Highlights include London's *Royal Festival Hall*, Shanghai's *Grand Theater*, and Melbourne's *State Theater*. Todd Alan Little (Production Manager), Flora Vassar (Stage Manager), Ashley Dunn Gatterdam (Costume Designer) and Phil Ingle (Additional Sound Designer) complete the creative and production team.

Seth and Christina met at a circus in Afghanistan, were engaged while street performing in Scotland and married in China. In 2005, they co-founded the Acrobuffos, an award-winning theater company specializing in non-verbal comedy performed in outdoor festivals, circuses, arenas and theaters. Since then, Seth and Christina have created five shows, competed at international circus festivals, performed together in 23 countries on 6 continents, juggled on *Late Night with David Letterman*, headlined at the Big Apple Circus and were featured in *The New York Times*. Their work for street, circus and stage includes *The Acrobuffos: Madame & Monsieur* and *Waterbombs!* When not on tour, Christina and Seth live in Harlem, New York City. Learn more about **AIR PLAY** at NewVictory.org.

Public Performance Schedule:

Friday, March 30 at 2pm
Saturday, March 31 at 11am / 3pm
Sunday, April 1 at 11am / 3pm
Wednesday, April 4 at 2pm
Thursday, April 5 at 2pm
Friday, April 6 at 2pm / 7pm
Saturday, April 7 at 11am / 3pm
Sunday, April 8 at 11am / 3pm
Friday, April 13 at 7pm
Saturday, April 14 at 11am* / 3pm
Sunday, April 15 at 11am / 3pm

* autism-friendly and sign-interpreted performance

AIR PLAY has a running time of 60 minutes with no intermission, and is recommended for ages 5 and up.

Ticket Information

Full-price tickets for **AIR PLAY** start at \$16. Tickets are available online (<http://www.newvictory.org/boxoffice>) and by phone (646.223.3010).

To purchase tickets in person, the New Victory box office is located at 209 West 42nd Street (between 7th / 8th Avenues). Box office hours are Sunday & Monday from 11am-5pm and Tuesday through Saturday from 12pm-7pm.

More About the Acrobuffos

Seth spent his childhood in Kenya, India and Sri Lanka. His college years were interrupted multiple times with national tours as a professional juggler and silent comedian. He worked extensively in Afghanistan with the Mobile Mini Circus for Children, creating performances with visual theater to carry social messages in often-illiterate Afghan rural areas. Seth received his MFA in London for Lecoq theater technique, and co-founded Split Knuckle Theatre, a 5-star physical theater company. Seth is a graduate of Wesleyan University, Ringling Brothers Barnum & Bailey Clown College, Dell'Arte School of Physical Theatre and LISPA (MFA). He has performed in 28 countries and 48 U.S. States.

Christina grew up in Texas and has worked in 38 countries as a non-verbal clown, stilt walker, mask performer, juggler, puppeteer and acrobat. Originally a professional ballet dancer, she majored in Shakespeare at Princeton University and then studied corporeal mime at the Dell'Arte School of Physical Theatre. For many years, she worked with New York City-based Bond Street Theater in multiple post-war zones including a wordless *Romeo and Juliet* in Kosovo and Albania, and a non-verbal theatrical depiction of war and survival in Afghanistan. Other professional adventures include starting a social circus program in Egypt, creating curriculum-based comedy and teaching at universities.

Learn more about the Acrobuffos at acrobuffos.com and airplayshow.com.

More About New Victory LabWorks

Through New Victory LabWorks, the goals of the theater are to: expand the canon of high-quality family performing arts made in America; encourage NYC artists to make live art works that challenge notions of what theater for young audiences can be; and provide emerging artists with opportunities to hone their craft, expand their skills, meet contacts in the field, take artistic risks, and make bold choices with their work. Hosted in the New 42nd Street Studios, LabWorks equips artists with tangible resources, such as rehearsal space and basic technical assistance, as well as exposure to new creative processes and artistic principles through The New Victory's community of leaders in the field of performing arts for families. Perhaps most importantly, New Victory LabWorks Artists have opportunities to interact with their target audience: kids themselves.

New Victory LabWorks has helped develop over 34 projects on their journey to the stage, including currently running productions by The Civilians (*The Abominables*), Dead Puppet Society (*Laser Beak Man*), The Village (*The Village of Vale*), Blessed Unrest (*The Snow Queen*) and Acrobuffos, whose *Air Play* is the first of what the theater hopes will be many occurrences where a LabWorks project comes home to The New Victory.

About 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 United States. 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 more 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."

About The New 42nd Street

Founded in 1990, The New 42nd Street is an independent nonprofit organization charged with the continuous cultural revival of 42nd Street between 7th and 8th Avenues, building on the foundation of seven historic theaters to make extraordinary performing arts and cultural engagement part of everyone's life. The New 42nd Street fulfills this purpose by ensuring the ongoing vibrancy of 42nd Street's historic theaters; supporting performing artists in the creation of their work at the New 42nd Street Studios and The Duke on 42nd Street; creating arts access and education at The New Victory Theater, New York's premier theater for kids and families; and through the New 42nd Street Youth Corps, its model youth development initiative, which pairs life skills workshops and mentorship with paid employment in the arts for NYC youth. Inspired by the city it serves, The New 42nd Street is committed to the transformational power of the arts.

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