

AANIKA'S ELEPHANTS

In a time when children are feeling so much division and stress, Aanika's Elephants is a play about compassion, love and conservation.

Available Now
Family Audiences



Written by Annie Evans

Directed by Pam Arciero

Presented by
Feisty Elephant
Pam Arciero Productions
and Little Shadow Productions
Brooklyn, NY & Connecticut USA
www.littleshadowproductions.com

TO BOOK THE SHOW
contact Robin Klinger Entertainment, LLC
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RobinKlingerEntertainment.com

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**This production originated at the
Center for Puppetry Arts**

Special Thanks to
Tryon Fine Arts Center
Jim Henson Foundation
Ridgefield Theater Barn

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ABOUT THE SHOW



RUN TIME

55 minutes



INTENDED AUDIENCES

Family Audiences (6+)

Aanika's Elephants is the story of a young Kenyan girl who meets a baby elephant (Little) at the orphanage where her father works. They grow together the way only two young girls can, even if one has a trunk. When Aanika's father dies (gently presented with gloves and hat removed by elephant trunks), she becomes the ward of an uncle who wants her to quit school to cook and clean for him. She flees into the bush making one final farewell to Little. Camping that night in the bush the way her father taught her, she is frightened by crashing branches and discovers Little has followed her. They become a herd of two, working together to survive and steer clear of humanity. Adopted by a small herd of elephants, Aanika learns their very beautiful, civil ways. She is finally tested when she must save her new family from poachers.

In a time when children are feeling so much division and stress, *Aanika's Elephants* is a play about compassion, love and conservation. It's a story that shows how family can be anything -- a beloved, widowed father or even a herd of elephants. The audience can use their imaginations to fill in the large rattan-framed elephants, adorable baby elephant and people represented by just hats and gloves. With music, a variety of puppets and humor, *Aanika's Elephants* entertains and educates both adults and children on the plight of the elephant and our world.

Jimmica Collins leads our very experienced cast as Aanika. She guides us through the story playing herself at ages 10 and 12. The puppeteers play all the other characters from huge elephants, an evil uncle to a trap door spider. Two live musicians add an underscore of sounds and drumming.

CREATIVE TEAM



Director

Pam Arciero is a multi-ethnic, multicultural director, born and raised in Hawaii. She directs for live theater, television, film, as well as being a performer on "Sesame Street" and the Artistic Director of the National Puppetry Conference at The Eugene O'Neill Theater Center..



Writer

Annie Evans has written children's television for the past twenty-five years, most notably for Sesame Street (13 Emmy Awards) as well as for shows on Nickelodeon, PBS, Discovery Channel, Disney Channel and Animal Planet. She has taught writing for children around the world and story edited for Sesame Street co-productions in Bangladesh, India and Indonesia.





Production Designer

Martin P. Robinson has had an extensive career as a performer/designer/puppet builder including designing Audrey II for the original Orpheum and Broadway productions of Little Shop of Horrors (Drama Desk, L.A. Drama Critics, Villager Awards), The Frogs (designer) at Lincoln Center and Go, Diego Go! (national tour, puppet designer). For forty-three years, he has performed the roles of Mr. Snuffleupagus, Telly Monster, Slimey, etc. for Sesame Street as well as trained Muppet performers for Sesame Street international productions. Other film and TV work include Muppets Take Manhattan, Follow That Bird, Elmo in Grouchland, Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles and The Producers. Currently, he is playing Mr. Primm on the new Sesame Street/Apple TV show Helpsters.

Lighting Designer

André C. Allen was born and raised in Queens, New York. He moved to Atlanta to attend Morehouse College in 1989. There he discovered the art of storytelling with light and later founded BlackLight Productions Inc. in 1990. He has designed for many artists and organizations including productions for the Freddie Hendricks' Youth Ensemble of Atlanta, the Atlanta Falcons, and India.Arie. You can also find his work on the small screen with networks such as Netflix, BET, TVOne, OWN, and REVOLT TV. André is committed to teaching the next generation of designers through his role as the lighting design professor at Spelman College. www.BlackLightProductions.com "Gen. 1:3"



Composer

Paul Rudolph is a composer, arranger, instrument builder, and vocal music director/recordist/composer for "Sesame Street", where he received 3 Emmy nominations for Music Direction, and won 3 Emmys for music editing.

THE PRODUCORIAL TEAM

Elephants in Suitcases, LLC



ANNIE EVANS **Feisty Elephant**

has written children's television for the past twenty-five years, most notably for Sesame Street (13 Emmy Awards) as well as for shows on Nickelodeon, PBS, Discovery Channel, Disney Channel and Animal Planet. She has taught writing for children around the world and story edited for Sesame Street co-productions in Bangladesh, India and Indonesia. She is also a playwright having had plays produced at such theatres as New York Stage and Film Company, Manhattan Class Company and the Circle Repertory Lab.
www.FunnyGirlsScopingwithboys.com;
www.Annieevans.com.
She is a graduate of Brown University.

PAM ARCIERO **Pam Arciero Productions**

is a multi-ethnic, multicultural director, born and raised in Hawaii. She directs for live theater, television, film, as well as being a performer and producer. Pam choreographs and directs live walk-around (the big versions of the puppets) shows for Sesame Workshop in such far flung places as Jamaica, Turks and Caicos, Barcelona, and Saudi Arabia, Sesame Place, PA and Sea World, USA. She performs for film, television and theater, notably as a puppeteer with Sesame Street (Grundgetta Grouch, Oscar's girlfriend, and assorted characters) and for the Muppets for over 30 years. Pam has taught puppetry all over the world, from New York to Hong Kong, Hawaii to South Africa. Her love and joy of Puppetry is contagious. She is the Artistic Director of the National Puppetry Conference at the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center.

JEAN MARIE KEEVINS **Little Shadow Productions**

is an Emmy nominated puppet artist, producer and professional coach whose puppetry work spans from film ("The Muppets") and television ("Helpsters" and "The Muppets: A Letter to Santa") to the stage. She has produced or co-produced award-winning and critically acclaimed works such as Martin P. Robinson's *All Hallow's Eve*, *Riddle of the Trilobites*, *Zwerge* (co-writer), *The Flatiron Hex*, *Lunatic Cunning* and *The Joshua Show: Volume 2*, *The Adventures of Liverwurst Girl*. Her production company, Little Shadow is known for its excellence in shepherding original productions, as well as education through its academy and Lil' Talks series. The majority of her time is spent coaching unique, forward thinking people to create their new narrative and the life and careers that they want. Jean Marie is a proud graduate of the University of Connecticut's Puppet Arts program and serves as the Artistic Producer of the National Puppetry Conference.

PERFORMERS



JIMMICA COLLINS

Jimmica is an actor/puppeteer with a love for Children's Theatre. She graduated from NYU (Tisch) with a B.F.A in Theatre and a minor in Children's Mental Health. Jimmica has performed in many TYA productions over the years including Stellaluna, Harold and the Purple Crayon, Fancy Nancy the Musical, among others. She trained with the Jim Henson Company and performed in Brian Henson's Puppet Up! Improv show. Jimmica is currently a puppeteer on Donkey Hodie (PBS) and is a Muppet performer on Sesame Street (Grandma Nell).

BRADLEY FREEMAN, JR

Bradley Freeman, Jr is the performer of Tamir and Wes on Sesame Street as well working with the Disney Muppets. He has worked on shows like The View, Helpsters, Michael Bubl 's Christmas in the City, The Muppets Mayhem and more.



LATORYAH ALEXANDER

Latoryah Alexander acts as Kayla on Sesame Street. She nurtured her arts and education passion at New Stage Theatre, then spent a decade with Kaiser Permanente Educational Theatre, inspiring choices and communities. Now mentoring in Sesame Street's program.

LEILA GHAZNAVI

Leila Ghaznavi is a puppeteer, actor and playwright of American-Iranian descent. A MFA graduate of the California Institute of the Arts, her work has been featured both internationally and across the US. She leads the multi-disciplinary theatrical company, Pantea productions. To learn more about her work please visit www.panteaproductions.com



PERFORMERS



CEDWAN HOOKS

Puppeteer Cedwan Hooks, originating from Kansas City, KS, holds a global reputation in puppetry. He has contributed to diverse projects including "The Curse of Bridge Hollow" (Netflix), "Helpsters" (Apple TV+/Sesame Workshop), "Moon and Me" (BBC), and others. As Percy the Rooster, he represents Primrose Schools. His innovative designs have graced Aerosmith, Warner Brothers, and more.

JEAN MARIE KEEVINS

Emmy nominee Jean Marie Keevins is a puppet artist, producer, and coach known for TV ("The Muppets," "Helpsters") and stage work ("All Hallow's Eve," "Riddle of the Trilobites"). Her Little Shadow production company excels in original shows and education. A UConn Puppet Arts graduate, she's also Associate Artistic Director at the National Puppetry Conference.



JARED BRODIE

Jared is back at the Center for Puppetry Arts, adding to their new production. His past credits include Beauty and the Beast, Old MacDonald, and more. Trained at Georgia Perimeter College and Brenau University, he's also an Atlanta-based consulting manager and friendly neighborhood podcaster on Open Canvas Live.

ARIANNA HARDAWAY

You might recognize Arianna from her roles in productions like Zombie Prom, Xanadu, and The Play That Goes Wrong. Now, she's excited to debut at Puppetry Arts. Her past work includes playing Clarice in Rudolph at Casa Manaña and understudying Nun/Maria at the Tony-winning Dallas Theater. Stay updated on her upcoming projects by visiting her YouTube or Instagram page (notesfromash).



RESOURCES

Watch the video, read the script and get the tech specs here



PRODUCTION SIZZLE:

[Aanika's elephant sample video.MOV](#)

FULL PRODUCTION VIDEO:

<https://youtu.be/PGFmaHmLiL4>

SCRIPT:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mzIHuRGLRkdg8NPZnrWNuIB7lotkVOxb/view?usp=share link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mzIHuRGLRkdg8NPZnrWNuIB7lotkVOxb/view?usp=share_link)

PUPPETRY STYLES are best described as an amalgam pulled from cultures around the world. In particular we highlight large masks, direct manipulation, rod puppetry and glove puppetry.

REACH OUT

We believe in this show and want it to tour.
Want Aanika to come to your city, state or country?
REACH OUT and let's talk about it!



CONTACTS:

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