



MOSS
ARTS
CENTER

Sunday, October 23, 2022, 2 PM

Acrobuffos

Air Play

Moss Arts Center
Street and Davis Performance Hall
Anne and Ellen Fife Theatre



SEASON

at a glance—2022-2023

Fri., Oct. 28, 7:30 PM

Farruquito

Íntimo

Fri., Nov. 4, 7:30 PM

Danish String Quartet

Tues., Nov. 8, 7:30 PM

Broadway in Blacksburg

Anastasia

Sat., Nov. 12, 7:30 PM

Ahuti

Nrityagram Dance Ensemble

Thurs., Nov. 17, 7:30 PM

Soweto Gospel Choir

Hope: It's Been a Long

Time Coming

Sat., Dec. 3, 4 PM

Roanoke Symphony Orchestra

Holiday Pops Spectacular

Thurs., Jan. 19, 7:30 PM

**Concerto Budapest Symphony
Orchestra**

András Keller, chief conductor

Zoltan Fejérvári, piano

Tues., Jan. 24, 7:30 PM

*An Evening with
Kevin Young*

Fri., Jan. 27, 7:30 PM

Machine de Cirque
La Galerie

Sat., Feb. 11, 7:30 PM

PUBLIQuartet

Tues., Feb. 14, 7:30 PM

Broadway in Blacksburg
Hairspray

Fri., Feb. 17, 7:30 PM

Sat., Feb. 18, 2 and 7:30 PM

Akutagawa

Co-created by Koryū Nishikawa V
and Tom Lee

Tickets are available now at the box office and online. See the complete schedule of performances, exhibitions, and engagement activities at artscenter.vt.edu.

Acrobuffos

Air Play

Writers and Creators

Seth Bloom and Christina Gelsone

Performers

Seth Bloom and Christina Gelsone

Kinetic Sculptor

Daniel Wurtzel

Director

West Hyler

Technical Director

Todd Alan Little

Stage Manager

Flora Vassar

Lighting Design

Jeanne Koenig

Costumes

Ashley Dunn Gatterdam

Sound Design

Seth Bloom and Christina Gelsone

Additional Sound Design

Phil Ingle

Props

Seth Bloom and Christina Gelsone

Representation

Boat Rocker Entertainment Aurora Nova

Air Play has been made possible with support from
Playhouse Square, New Victory Theater, Zoellner Arts Center,
and Flushing Town Hall

This performance is supported in part by a gift from Mrs. Candi M. Kelly
and Dr. J. Michael Kelly.

Note from the Creators

Our home of New York City has a long history of artists from different genres collaborating, most notably dancer Martha Graham and sculptor Isamu Noguchi. We followed suit, curious to see what combining our physical comedy with the air sculptures of Brooklyn-based artist Daniel Wurtzel would create. Over five years we worked together, developing new sculptures and object manipulations to create the genre-bending *Air Play*.

Is *Air Play* theatre, comedy, sculpture, or circus? Yes! Our show is rooted in our love of circus, clowns, aerialists, acrobats, and jugglers. Real people doing real things—defying gravity. If you tilt your head you'll see the circus in *Air Play*—the fabrics become our aerialists, helium balloons become juggling props, and the powerful fans gracefully defeat the same gravity circus performers work so hard to overcome.

Air Play is a visual poem, using no words. Just as a poem may have no literal story, *Air Play* is open to interpretation. We've performed across the U.S. and around the globe, from the southernmost opera house in the world in Chile, to London's Royal Festival Hall, Melbourne's State Theater, and Shanghai's Grand Theatre. Around the world, audiences tell us that the wonder and discovery of *Air Play* are bold reminders of their own childhood and growing up, of friendship, sibling rivalry, loss, and memory.

We invite you to breathe deeply, laugh, gasp, and find your own story.

—Seth and Christina

Biographies

THE ACROBUFFOS

The Acrobuffos—Seth Bloom and Christina Gelsone—are the creators, writers, and performers of *Air Play*. Bloom and Gelsone met at a circus in Afghanistan, became engaged while street performing in Scotland, married in China, and occasionally go home to New York City. Specializing in non-verbal physical theatre and comedy, Bloom and Gelsone have created seven shows together, competed in international circus festivals, performed in over 28 countries, headlined at the Big Apple Circus, and were even featured on a postage stamp. For more information, please visit acrobuffos.com.

SETH BLOOM, *creator and performer*

Seth Bloom grew up in India, Kenya, and Sri Lanka. Bloom spent many years touring the U.S. as a professional juggler and silent comedian, and worked extensively in Afghanistan with the Mobile Mini Circus for Children. He studied circus clowning at Ringling Brothers Clown College, Lecoq theatre at LISPA (MFA), and *commedia* at Dell'Arte School of Physical Theatre. A graduate of Wesleyan University, Bloom has performed in 30 countries and 49 U.S. states.

CHRISTINA GELSONE, *creator and performer*

Christina Gelsone grew up in Texas and has worked in 40 countries as a non-verbal clown, stilt walker, mask performer, juggler, puppeteer, and acrobat. Previously a ballet dancer, Gelsone majored in Shakespeare at Princeton University and studied corporeal mime at the Dell'Arte School of Physical Theatre. For years, Christina worked in multiple post-war zones with New York City-based Bond Street Theatre. Other professional adventures include starting a social circus program in Egypt and teaching at universities.

DANIEL WURTZEL, *air sculptor*

Daniel Wurtzel is a New York artist best known for his kinetic sculptures using air and lightweight materials that fly. Wurtzel's sculptures have been featured on Broadway, Cirque du Soleil, the Olympics, and with theatre directors such as Julie Taymor, Diane Paulus, Robert Lepage, and Zhang Yimou. Museums around the world—including the Musée Rodin, Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, and the Museu do Amanhã in Rio de Janeiro—display Wurtzel's work. For more information, please visit danielwurtzel.com.

Biographies, continued

WEST HYLER, *director*

West Hyler is a theatre director equally at home in the circus or on Broadway. In circus, Hyler was story writer and scene director for *Paramour*, Cirque du Soleil's first Broadway musical, and twice directed Big Apple Circus. As associate director for *Jersey Boys*, he staged the show on five continents. Hyler is the producing artistic director of the New York Musical Festival and continues to develop new work. For more information, please visit westhyler.com.

JEANNE KOENIG, *lighting designer*

Jeanne Koenig is associate lighting designer for *The Lion King* and has worked worldwide with more than 20 companies and in 14 countries. Koenig's other associate lighting design works include Broadway productions of *Side Show*, Twyla Tharp's *Movin' Out* and *Come Fly Away*, *Leap of Faith*, *Ragtime*, *The Times They Are A-Changin'*, *All Shook Up*, *Bells Are Ringing*, *Juan Darien*, and *Hughie*.

TODD ALAN LITTLE, *production manager*

Todd Alan Little has production managed more than 40 musicals for the Goodspeed Opera House in Connecticut, with several productions continuing to Broadway. Little assisted the creation of critically-acclaimed Japanese Kabuki shows for Western audiences, including *Kabuki Medea*, *Kabuki Othello*, and *Kabuki MacBeth*. Little also managed a record-breaking around-the-world solo balloon flight and writes new plays.

FLORA VASSAR, *stage manager and lighting assistant*

Flora Vassar is a stage manager, lighting supervisor, and prop maker. Vassar serves on the board of directors for The Resource Exchange, Philadelphia's creative reuse center, and helped pilot Pop Up Repair, a theatre-based intervention in the cycle of use-and-discard consumer goods.

This is the first performance by Acrobuffos at the Moss Arts Center.

Tell Us What You Think!

We'd love your feedback on this performance. If you complete the short survey, you can enter for a chance to win two tickets to *Āhuti* by Nrityagram Dance Ensemble in collaboration with Chitrasena Dance Company on Saturday, November 12, 2022.



bit.ly/acrobuffos-feedback

Engagement Events

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2022

POST-PERFORMANCE Q&A WITH THE ARTISTS

Members of Acrobuffos will field questions from audience members in this open discussion about *Air Play* and other pieces in their company's repertory, moderated by Mason Rosenthal, instructor and post-MFA fellow, School of Performing Arts.

MONDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2022

SCHOOL-DAY PERFORMANCE

Children in grades K-5 from public, private, and homeschools in Montgomery, Floyd, Pulaski, and Giles counties will enjoy a free performance of *Air Play* as part of the Moss Arts Center's school-day performance series.

Special thanks to Mason Rosenthal

Did You Know?

The Moss Arts Center's fly tower is 101 feet tall. Holding the system of lines, pulleys, and other devices, the fly tower allows staff to safely and quickly "fly" scenery and other equipment in and out of the audience's view into a large opening (known as a fly loft) above the stage.

K-12 Programs at the Moss



At the Moss Arts Center, we believe that arts experiences are a crucial part of a child's education. We've been dedicated to providing opportunities for children at no cost since we opened in 2013. A wide array of Moss programming and experiences to inspire, engage, and empower students of all ages and backgrounds. This season, we're offering five school-day matinee programs, in-school workshops and performances, and gallery tours with professional artists for learners of all ages. Learn more at bit.ly/moss-k12.

In the Galleries

Fall Exhibitions

Through Saturday, December 17



Craig Drennen: *First Acts, Scene 2*

Ruth C. Horton Gallery

Atlanta-based artist Craig Drennen is best known for his ongoing *Timon of Athens* series—inspired by the Shakespeare play of the same name—for which he has produced paintings, drawings, prints, videos, performances, and sculptures.

Steve Locke: *the daily practice of painting*

Miles C. Horton Jr. Gallery and Sherwood Payne Quillen '71

Reception Gallery

Throughout his artistic career, Steve Locke's work has questioned how we ascribe meaning to portraiture.

Craig Drennen ▲
Timon of Athens 3, 2009
Oil on canvas
72 x 108 inches
Courtesy of the artist

Land Acknowledgement and Labor Recognition

Virginia Tech acknowledges that we live and work on the Tutelo/Monacan People's homeland and we recognize their continued relationships with their lands and waterways. We further acknowledge that legislation and practices like the Morrill Act (1862) enabled the commonwealth of Virginia to finance and found Virginia Tech through the forced removal of Native Nations from their lands, both locally and in western territories.

We understand that honoring Native Peoples without explicit material commitments falls short of our institutional responsibilities. Through sustained, transparent, and meaningful engagement with the Tutelo/Monacan Peoples and other Native Nations, we commit to changing the trajectory of Virginia Tech's history by increasing Indigenous student, staff, and faculty recruitment and retention, diversifying course offerings, and meeting the growing needs of all Virginia tribes and supporting their sovereignty.

We must also recognize that enslaved Black people generated revenue and resources used to establish Virginia Tech and were prohibited from attending until 1953. Through InclusiveVT, the institutional and individual commitment to *Ut Prosim* (That I May Serve) in the spirit of community, diversity, and excellence, we commit to advancing a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive community.

Health and Wellness

The Moss Arts Center adheres to the guidelines of the Virginia Department of Health and Virginia Tech in its operations, including protocols for distancing, face coverings, and cleaning and sanitation. Our status may change according to changes in university operating procedures. Find the most up to date information at artscenter.vt.edu/visit.

We ask patrons to do their part in keeping our community healthy. If you feel unwell, please stay home.

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We are grateful for the generosity of our patrons and donors who sustain the Moss Arts Center with their annual gifts. The impact of all contributions, no matter the amount, is significant in helping us transform lives through exploration and engagement with the arts and the creative process. We are honored to have received donations during the period of July 1, 2021, through June 30, 2022, from the following:

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Friday, October 28, 2022, 7:30 PM

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VIRGINIA
TECH


A black and white photograph of two dancers in traditional Indian attire performing a dance outdoors. They are positioned on either side of a large tree trunk. The dancer on the left is facing forward, while the dancer on the right is seen from the back. Both are wearing ornate jewelry and have their arms raised in a graceful pose. The background shows a natural setting with trees and foliage.

MOSS ARTS CENTER

Saturday, November 12, 2022, 7:30 PM

Āhuti

Nrityagram Dance Ensemble
in collaboration with Chitrasena Dance Company



It was only in the
theatre that I lived.

- Oscar Wilde

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Visit the 53rd annual YMCA Craft Fair

Nov 11- Nov 12, 2022

at Christiansburg Recreation Center
1600 N. Franklin St, Christiansburg

Friday, November 11 from 11:00am-7:00pm
Saturday, November 12 from 9:00am-4:30pm



Willkommen Vitej Добро пожаловать! Benvenuto 欢迎 Bula Hoş geldin Ласкаво просимо

Community Welcoming Statement

The YMCA at Virginia Tech, alongside our partners and community members of the New River Valley, recognize the importance of welcoming, including and supporting all members of our global family. We promote mutual respect and cooperation through programs, services, and neighborly welcome so as to build a vibrant, safe and fun community for everyone to call home.

欢迎致辞

弗吉尼亚理工大学的基督教青年会 (YMCA)，联合我们在新河谷的合作伙伴及社区成员，认识到欢迎、包容和支持我们全球大家庭所有成员的重要性。我们通过开展项目、服务和邻里欢迎来促进相互尊重和合作，从而建立一个充满活力、安全和有趣的社区，让每个人都可以称之为家。

نرحب بكم

تؤكد الجمعية بالتضامن مع شركائها وأعضاء المجتمع المحلي على أهمية الترحيب بجميع أفراد مجتمعنا من جميع أنحاء دول العالم وأهمية دعمهم، ونحن نرسخ مبادئ الاحترام والتعاون المتبادل من خلال البرامج والخدمات والترحيب بالجيران الجدد وذلك لبناء مجتمع مفعم بالنشاط والأمن والمرح بشعره في وطنه

Declaración de bienvenida a la comunidad

El YMCA de Virginia Tech, junto con nuestros socios y miembros de la comunidad de New River Valley, reconoce la importancia de dar la bienvenida, incluir y apoyar a todos los miembros de nuestra familia global. Promovemos el respeto mutuo y la cooperación a través de programas, servicios y bienvenida entre vecinos para construir una comunidad vibrante, segura y divertida que todos puedan llamar hogar.

"सामुदायिक स्वागत वक्तव्य"

वर्जीनिया टेक में आईएससीए, हमारे भागीदारों और न्यू रिवर वैली के समुदाय के सदस्यों के साथ, हमारे वैश्विक परिवार के सभी सदस्यों का स्वागत करने और उनका समर्थन करने का महत्व पहचानते हैं। हम आपसी सम्मान को बढ़ावा देते हैं और कार्यक्रमों, सेवाओं के माध्यम से सहयोग और पड़ोसी का स्वागत करते हैं ताकि एक जीवंत, सुरक्षित और मजेदार समुदाय का निर्माण किया जा सके जहाँ सभी पर पर महसूस कर सकते हैं।

Tervetuloa Bienvenido ようこそ Dynnargh ddis Bem-vindo خوش آمدی

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Did You Know

Emily Stuart & the Craft Fair

- In 1970 Emily Stuart became the Director of YMCA at VT and began the International Programs and the annual Crafts Fair.
- Stuart brought the 1st craft fair to Blacksburg in 1969 to raise funds for the YMCA at Virginia Tech.
- In 1994 Stuart commented "It's like a community party, and when everyone helps to put it on it becomes a big occasion."
- 2022 marks our 53rd annual Craft Fair



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