

PRESS RELEASE**For Immediate Release: July 30, 2024****Media Contact:**

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**Children's Theatre Company Announces Performers and Creative Team for
MOYA by Zip Zap Circus****September 12-October 20, 2024**

Minneapolis— July 30, 2024 — Children's Theatre Company (CTC) is pleased to announce the performers and creative team for *MOYA* by Zip Zap Circus, a thrilling spectacle from Cape Town, South Africa that will be the first production of CTC's 2024-2025 Season.

MOYA by Zip Zap Circus features an original soundtrack composed by Josh Hawks. Audiences will soar into the visual spectacle of this pulsating acrobatic performance set against the Cape Town skyline! Comic jugglers, unicycle dancers, and an authentic gumboot dance will take you on a freewheeling journey that explores the spirit and vitality of township life. Watch as a simple city bench becomes a sidesplitting spark for a newfound friendship, and feel the energetic beat of South African pop music. You'll relish this thrilling feat of acrobatics and rhythmic movement that celebrates the joy of sharing community with one another.

"Having our troupe and show *MOYA* come to Children's Theatre Company in Minneapolis this September fills me with pure excitement, pride, and gratitude," said Laurence Estève, co-founder and CEO of Zip Zap Circus. "I can't wait for our performers to share their genuine spirit on stage, inspiring both young and old alike. Through workshops and collaborations, we hope to create meaningful connections and spread joy throughout Minneapolis. This journey is not just about entertainment; it's about fostering understanding and sparking creativity in every heart we touch."

MOYA by Zip Zap Circus will play from September 12-October 20, 2024, on CTC's UnitedHealth Group Stage (2400 3rd Ave S, Minneapolis, MN 55404). Opening Night is Saturday, September 14, 2024, at 7pm. Tickets may be purchased online at childrenstheatre.org/zipzap or by calling the Ticket Office at 612.874.0400. Ticket prices start at \$15.

"CTC's commitment to introducing our audiences to the voices of young people from around the world continues with Zip Zap Circus," said CTC Artistic Director Rick Dildine. "With abounding energy and acrobatics, *MOYA* is a story straight from the heart of South Africa. Created to give local students the opportunity to stretch their talents and pursue their dreams, *MOYA* celebrates the land these circus performers call home. This story is inspiring and entertaining!"

The performers for *MOYA* by Zip Zap Circus are Bridgette Berning, Jason Barnard, Matthew Risk, Lukhanyo Samson, Masizakhe Kovi, Luqmaan Benjamin, Phelelani Ndakrokra, Vuyani Lottering, Akho Narwele, and Jacobus Claassen.

The creative team for *MOYA* by Zip Zap Circus includes Brent van Rensburg (artistic director), Brin Schoellkopf (artistic coach and artistic director), Sabine van Rensburg (virtual director and artistic consultant), Nikolas Pulka (artistic coach and creative director), Josh Hawks (musical director), Adele Bank (choreographer), Kieran McGregor (lighting designer), Beaura Jacobs (costume designer), and Sbonakaliso Ndaba (gumboots act choreographer).

Ticket Information

Tickets to *MOYA* by Zip Zap Circus may be purchased online at childrenstheatre.org/zipzap or by calling the Ticket Office at 612.874.0400. Ticket prices start at \$15.

School groups interested in attending *MOYA* by Zip Zap Circus can contact schools@childrenstheatre.org for more information.

MOYA by Zip Zap Circus has a running time of 80 minutes with no intermission.

MOYA by Zip Zap Circus

Best for all ages!

- *MOYA* by Zip Zap Circus features high energy acts that are captivating for both younger and older audiences.
- Much of the show is non-verbal and accessible to early learners and those not fluent in English.
- There will be flashing lights and loud music that may be overwhelming for those with sensory sensitivities. We offer [sensory friendly performances](#) for those who prefer less sensory impact, or you may request noise cancelling headphones or visit our quiet room.

MOYA by Zip Zap Circus
Original Soundtrack Composed by Josh Hawks
September 12-October 20, 2024
United Health Group Stage
Best for all ages!

Creative Team and Production Staff

Artistic Director | Brent van Rensburg
Artistic Coach & Artistic Director | Brin Schoellkopf
Virtual Director & Artistic Consultant | Sabine van Rensburg
Artistic Coach & Creative Director | Nikolas Pulka
Musical Director | Josh Hawks
Choreographer | Adele Bank
Lighting Designer | Kieran McGregor
Costume Designer | Beaura Jacobs
Gumboots Act Choreographer | Sbonakaliso Ndaba

Performers

Bridgette Berning
Jason Barnard
Matthew Risk
Lukhanyo Samson
Masizakhe Kovi
Luqmaan Benjamin
Phelelani Ndakrokra
Vuyani Lottering

Akho Narwele
Jacobus Claassen

Musicians

Drums | Lumunyano Mzi
Bass, Guitars, Keys, Synths, Programming, Vox | Josh Hawks
Keys, Synths | Blake Hellaby
Keys, Synths | Fender Rhodes
Guitar, Vox | Chris Bakalanga
Trumpet | Lee Thompson
Saxophone | Buddy Wells
Traditional Drums, Talking Drum, Vox | Sabu Jiyana
Percussion, Khoisan Bow, Vox | Nceba Gongxeca
Vox | Luvo Tamba
Vox | Zolani Mahola
Vox/Raps | Jason Barnard

PERFORMERS

Bridgette Berning

Bridgette made her professional debut in Paris, undertaking 94 shows in three months, while performing two aerial acts, two acro-dance pieces, and more. “Hardworking” is an understatement for this young lady, as audiences of *MOYA* will witness.

Jason Barnard

Jason is a multi-disciplinary circus performer with a captivating stage presence and is undoubtedly the best bounce juggler in South Africa. However, Jason’s top achievement is his gift of caring and sharing which is evident in the telling of the *MOYA* story. Jason is also a role model to many of his younger brothers and sisters back home at Zip Zap.

Matthew Risk

Matthew is a unicyclist extraordinaire! From 10 years old he never missed a rehearsal or show at Zip Zap. Dedicated, persistent, with strong attention to detail and an ultimate team player, he brings an incredible energy to every performance of *MOYA*.

Lukhanyo Samson

Unlike most of his fellow *MOYA* performers, Lukhanyo did not start at Zip Zap at a very young age. But, oh boy, did he make up for it! His natural ability to move, and willingness to learn, allowed him to find his wings and learn to fly.

Masizakhe Kovi

Known as Masi, this young man started Zip Zap at the tender age of 9. Very quiet and somewhat shy, Masi honed his handstand skills over time. His ability to draw an audience into his world on stage is uncanny and far beyond his years.

Luqmaan Benjamin

Luqmaan is *MOYA*'s "twister" and solid base. His acrobatic skills were born on the streets of Cape Town. After entering and winning most of the local and international tricking competitions he joined Zip Zap. He is now a consummate performer and rock-solid base man.

Phelelani Ndakrokra

When asked why he likes to be called "Ree" he says, "Because it's important to remember my humble beginnings and be grateful for the opportunity to fly." This young man brings unbridled passion, energy rarely seen, feelings from another life, which will take you on a journey with him every second he's on stage.

Vuyani Lottering

Vuyani started juggling at an afterschool program in a township called Nyanga, just outside of Cape Town. This led him to Zip Zap, from student to teacher, teacher to staff member, now an integral part of *MOYA* bringing his skill, personality, effortless movement and radiant smile.

Akho Narwele

Our gentle giant, soft-spoken, humble and kind, Akho brings a calmness, sense of security and soft touch, not only to the stage but also to the team offstage. This is the glue that makes *MOYA* so special.

Jacobus Claassen

Affectionately known as "Trompie," Jacobus joined Zip Zap in 2009. After a tough start in life, he quickly discovered his passion, the circus. Excelling in many different disciplines, he was drawn naturally to comedy. This young man has performed globally, including 94 shows in Paris, where he had his face on over 400 busses and metro stations combined. But one of his fondest memories was performing at the White House for Barack Obama.

CREATIVE TEAM & PRODUCTION STAFF

Artistic Director

Brent van Rensburg

Brent, co-founder and artistic director of Zip Zap, has over 45 years of circus experience. He began with a trapeze act in Europe, worked in the United States, and returned to South Africa 1992 to start Zip Zap. Zip Zap has performed for numerous celebrities and dignitaries globally.

Artistic Coach and Artistic Director

Brin Schoellkopf

Brin, a multidisciplinary artist from the USA based in Montreal, specialized in tight wire and acrobatic/dance at the National Circus School of Canada. After graduating in 2018, he toured with Les 7 Doigts De La Main. During the pandemic, he formed the performance collective People Watching.

Virtual Director and Artistic Consultant

Sabine van Rensburg

Sabine is a Montreal-based circus artist, daughter of artists Brent and Laurence. She graduated from the National Circus School of Canada in 2018 and has toured with Les 7 Doigts De La Main. She founded the acrobatic movement collective People Watching and directed *MOYA*, an acrobatic art film, in 2021.

Artistic Coach and Creative Director

Nikolas Pulka

Nikolas, a French acrobat specializing in straps, grew up in the Amazon rainforest of French Guiana. Trained at Ecole Nationale des Arts du Cirque and National Circus School of Canada, he has performed with Cirque du Soleil, Cirque Éloize, and Cirque Alfonse, becoming a renowned multidisciplinary circus artist.

Musical Director

Josh Hawks

Josh, born in Cape Town, toured with the marimba group Amampondo in the 1980s. He's been a professional musician since 1990, joining Freshlyground (2003-2019), known for hits like "Waka Waka" with Shakira. Josh has performed globally, sharing stages with legends including Aretha Franklin, Stevie Wonder, and Wyclef Jean, and composing for film and live shows. He lives in Cape Town with his family.

Choreographer

Adele Bank

Adele Blank is a choreographer, dance instructor and director of Free Flight Dance Company, which she formed in 1987. She is a recipient of the Arts & Culture Trust Lifetime Achievement Award for Dance. Adele has volunteered and worked with Zip Zap for over 20 years. She was elected Director of Dance and Choreography at Performing Arts Workshop in 1985. She is also a recipient of the United States Information Services (USIS) program award for community development work, training under-privileged dancers and the choreography thereof. She received an FNB Vita nomination for a dance piece titled SWING, choreographed in 1995. She also received the FNB special award for contribution to dance and has officially been named Mother of Contemporary Dance in South Africa.

Lighting Designer

Kieran McGregor

Kieran is a versatile production designer, manager, and creative producer whose work explores darkness, shadow, space, and storytelling. Specializing in live performance, he crafts immersive worlds tailored to each production's needs. With a diverse portfolio spanning indie projects to large-scale events and international tours, Kieran's expertise ensures every project tells a compelling story and leaves a lasting impact on its audience.

Costume Designer

Beaura Jacobs

Beaura, has an N Dip in Performing Arts Technology and has been a costume designer and manufacturer in the South African entertainment industry for 10 years, working on shows like *West Side Story* and *Kinky Boots*. She designed for Cape Town Carnival 2022 and 2023 and worked on TV series, including *Donkerbos*. She excels in design, pattern making, and manufacturing.

Gumboots Act Choreographer

Sbonakaliso Ndaba

"Sbo" is an award-winning dancer and choreographer who is recognized as one of the leading choreographers for contemporary African dance. She trained at Jazzart Dance Theatre in Cape Town under the direction of Alfred Hinkel. She has co-founded non-profit dance companies over the past 30 years, including Phenduka, Indoni Dance Arts and Leadership Academy and most recently, Sbo Ndaba Dance. Awards include the Kwa-Zulu-Natal Dance Link award for Best Choreographer, the Playhouse Company award for Women in the Arts and the Daimler Chrysler award for South African Choreography.

MUSICIANS

Drums

Lumunyano Mzi

Bass, Guitars, Keys, Synths, Programming, Vox

Josh Hawks

Keys, Synths

Blake Hellaby

Keys, Synths

Fender Rhodes

Guitar, Vox

Chris Bakalanga

Trumpet

Lee Thompson

Saxophone

Buddy Wells

Traditional Drums, Talking Drum, Vox

Sabu Jiyana

Percussion, Khoisan Bow, Vox

Nceba Gongxeca

Vox

Luvo Tamba

Vox

Zolani Mahola

Vox/Raps

Jason Barnard

Children's Theatre Company (CTC) is the nation's largest and most acclaimed theatre for young people and serves a multigenerational audience. It creates theatre experiences that educate, challenge, and inspire more than 200,000 people annually. CTC is the only theatre focused on young audiences to win the Special Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre and is the only theatre in Minnesota to receive three Tony nominations (for its production of *A Year With Frog and Toad*). CTC is committed to creating world-class productions at the highest level and to developing new works, more than 200 to date, dramatically changing the canon of work for young audiences.

CTC is the most significant provider of theatre education opportunities in the region. Every year, thousands of children experience theatre for the first time at CTC. Our student matinees and education programs demonstrably benefit the community, from the intergenerational conversations sparked by our world premieres, to the sequential skill-building that happens in our Theatre Arts Training, to the pre-K focus of our Early Childhood Initiative. ACT One is CTC's comprehensive platform for access, diversity, and inclusion

in our audiences, programs, staff, and board that strives to ensure the theatre is a home for all people, all families, reflective of our community. childrenstheatre.org

FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:

WHAT: *MOYA* by Zip Zap Circus
Original Soundtrack Composed by Josh Hawks
September 12-October 20, 2024
United Health Group Stage
Best for all ages!

WHEN: from September 12-October 20, 2024 (Opening Night is Saturday, September 14, 2024 at 7pm)

WHERE: CTC's UnitedHealth Group Stage (2400 3rd Ave S, Minneapolis, MN 55404)

AGE RECOMMENDATION: This production is best enjoyed by all ages. Lap passes are available for children 3 years and younger.

RUNNING TIME: 80 minutes with no intermission.

TICKETS: Starting at \$15 and available at childrenstheatre.org/zipzap by calling the ticket office at 612.874.0400.

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