

Minty Fresh Circus
PROGRAM COPY

Billing title(s), company names:

Minty Fresh Circus

Conceived & Directed by Monique Martin

Performers:

- Lex Alston
- Julia Baccellieri
- Isabella Diaz
- Hezekiah "Z Loco" Farrell
- Luciany Germán
- Ian "Drowzee" Robinson
- Tyshaun Thomas

Creative team:

- Monique Martin, Conceiver & Director
- Adesola Osakalumi, Co-Choreographer (*dance*)
- Traci Bartlow, Co-Choreographer (*dance*)
- Susan Voyticky, Co-Choreographer (*circus*)
- Kim Cook, Dramaturge and Creative Consultant
- Ashaka Givens, Costume Designer
- Ty Brooks, Costume Designer
- Amanda K. Ringger - Lighting Designer and Technical Consultant
- Kereni Sanchez - Production Stage Manager
- Luciany German, Technical Rigging Liaison
- Corey Action, Sound Designer & Music Supervisor
- Soul Science Lab, Original Music
- Dr. Fredara Hadley, Music Consultant
- Traci Bartlow, Music Research

Ritual & Music:

- **Departure:** Heart Music, Vol.1 – Album by The Ajanku Brothers; "Bid 'Em In" – Song by Oscar Brown Jr.; "The Creator Has a Master Plan" – Song by Pharoah Sanders; "Gimme Dat" (feat. Ismael Kouyate & Rasul A-Salaam) – Song by Soul Science Lab
- **Arrival:** "Have Some Love" – Song by Childish Gambino; "Beatbox Boom Bap" – Song by Hit Force; "The Reckoning" – Song by Christian Scott aTunde Adjuah
- **Learning:** "I Got the Chop" – Song by Tower of Power
- **Conjuring:** "Transcendental March (Creation Song)" – Song by Brother Ah
- **Surrender:** "River" – Song by Ibeyi; Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Speech: I'm Black and I'm Beautiful - with music by Corey Action; "Oya" - Song by Ibeyi
- **Adornment:** "I'll Be So Glad When the Sun Goes Down" – Song by Ed Lewis; "Black" (feat. A\$AP Ferg) – Song by Buddy; "Money" – Song by Leikeli47
- **Afro-Futurism:** "Deep Reset" – Song by Rashad X Soultribian; "Heaven Must be like this" – Song by Ohio Players
- **Joy:** "Joy (Unspeakable)" (feat. Pharrell Williams) – Song by Voices of Fire

About Minty Fresh Circus:

Conceived by **Monique Martin** in collaboration with the performing artists, *Minty Fresh Circus* is a US-based circus show performed by an all-Black & Brown cast, with a majority-Black & Brown creative team celebrating the healing power of Black music & movement, infused with the joy & resilience of those who traversed the transatlantic slave trade.

Grounded in Sankofa with an Afro-futuristic vibe, Minty Fresh Circus features movement, music, and circus arts in a time-bending journey of redemption. Inspired by abolitionist Harriet Araminta Tubman and the survival of generations of African Americans, the central question in Minty Fresh Circus is: what does freedom feel & sound like if your only access to it is through your imagination? The journey explores liberation spaces, oasis spaces, and joy spaces where Black & Brown bodies have found sovereignty. The show celebrates the power of Black music as a healing, alchemical, transformative force; a ritual, a portal to joy and an invitation to tap into your imagination. The energy of call-and-response within Black culture serves as a circular structure within the arc of the show.

Minty Fresh Circus is structured in eight rituals: Departure, Arrival, Learning, Conjuring, Surrender, Adornment, Afrofuturism, and Joy!

FUNDING CREDIT:

Minty Fresh Circus was made possible with funding by the New England Foundation for the Arts' National Theater Project, with lead funding from the Mellon Foundation and additional support from the Doris Duke Foundation. The creation of Minty Fresh Circus was made possible by co-commissioning support from: Arizona Arts Live/University of Arizona; Zoellner Arts Center/Lehigh University; ArtsEmerson, Boston, MA; and Penn Live Arts, University of Pennsylvania. The research and development of Minty Fresh Circus was made possible with support from: Lake Placid Center for the Arts; The Apollo Theater; Samuels Foundation; The MICC; Factory International, Manchester, UK; and La Grainerie, Toulouse, France.

PERFORMERS BIOS:



Lex Alston is a NY-based performing artist and teaching artist. Their solo clown show, *Falling On Purpose*, premiered at their alma mater, Purchase College, in 2019. Since then, they have had the honor of performing with Bindlestiff Family Cirkus, Circus Amok!, Clown Gym, Parallel Exit, AB Cirque and more. Lex is a proud Laughter League pediatric healthcare clown, and a circus arts instructor. @museomoflex



Julia Baccellieri was born and raised in the Chicago performing arts community and began dancing at age 5. Specializing in dance and trapeze, their work is grounded in storytelling with a blend of musicality, unique movement, and dynamic technique. Julia teaches workshops and classes to create a foundation for future aerialists and people of color who strive to make a living in circus. @julia.makes.art_



Isabella Diaz is a physical theatre artist hailing from Chicago, Illinois. As a child they were put into gymnastics; and with that deep love for movement, they went on to study dance at Western Michigan University. In 2016 they were a part of Pilobolus Dance Theatre's touring repertoire company. In 2020 they were introduced to the world of circus and began working with The 7 Fingers.

Through that they became a part of the original cast to the Broadway production 'Water for Elephants'. They are so excited to be a part of Minty Fresh Circus and embark on this new adventure!



Hezekiah "Z Loco" Farrell is a circus performer based in Philadelphia. Born into a hip hop family in Nashville, Z moved to New Mexico at 14 and joined 3HC Crew where he gained proficiency in breakdance, tumbling and performance. Performance credits include Wise Fool New Mexico, Santa Fe Opera, 505 Circus, and the Flynn Creek Circus. @bboyzloco



@luci anyyy

Luciany Germán, a dancer/aerialist born and raised in the Bronx, New York, attended Lehman College where she studied modern dance. She began her journey with The STREB Extreme Action Company through the SLAM Remote program in 2013. With STREB, notable engagements include WOMBADelaide Festival, Picasso Circus at the Musée d'Orsay, and FALLING & LOVING, a collaboration between the SITI Company and the STREB Extreme Action.



Ian "Drowzee" Robinson is a Brooklyn-born pro longboarder, parkour teacher, and dancer. He has been featured in videos and advertisements with Bustin Boards Co since 2014 and the Gap 2022 Summer Campaign. Drowzee has taught parkour at Brooklyn Zoo in Bushwick, Brooklyn since 2019. @shadow_pine



Tyshaun Thomas is a NYC/NJ-based dance and circus artist & teacher. He's been dancing as long as he can remember, but circus grabbed his attention intensely. Starting at The Trenton Circus Squad, his main focuses are choreographing, aerial, acrobatics, and juggling. He's performed/created in Take Care by Princeton University, Cirqovation's The Circus Nutcracker, Change (1&2) Trenton Circus Squad, Forbidden Fruit, and tours for Circus Culture and Trenton Circus Squad. @Tyshaun_Thomas

Creative Bios:

Monique Martin brings her passion and experience in community building through the arts to elevate and instigate. An independent creative producer, artist, curator and marketing consultant, she has partnered with and produced for Joe's Pub, Disney Theatricals, Apollo Theater, New Victory Theater, Southbank Centre/UK, The MET Museum, The Shed, Park Avenue Armory, NJPAC, Queens Theater in the Park and HBO. As Programming Director for the River2River Festival, SummerStage and Harlem Stage, she expanded the programming by including contemporary circus and international artists. She is an experienced commissioner of new work, working closely with artists from ideation to successful premier. She is an ardent facilitator of collaborations across cultures, sectors and genres, and has partnered with cultural consulates and embassies across the globe.

Martin is an artist and cultural worker creating projects at the intersection of imagination, sovereignty and joy. Her play '*Cracked*' was produced by Brava Theater's new playwright series in San Francisco during the height of the crack epidemic in the early 1990's. She has created two highly successful series for Joe's Pub: *Urban Griots* and *Soul Erotica* where she collaborated with some of New York City's disruptive artists in spoken word, music and dance. Her *Soul Erotica* series toured nationally.

She is thrilled and humbled to make her first circus show!! Gratitude to Lillian Faye Bell Bartlow, Paul Bartlow, Freddy Martin and Alassane Keita for inspiration and encouragement. Deep gratitude to my creative collaborators who caught the vision and brought incredible creativity and JOY!
moniquemartin.net

Kim Cook (dramaturg & creative consultant) creates: Impact. Shows. Stories. Community projects. Places. Experiences. Spectacle. Known for her ability to take conceptual work and translate it into results, Kim has established herself as a trusted collaborator and ally with a multitude of artists and organizations. She successfully builds urban, regional, national, and international projects that are dynamic, stimulating new possibilities for experience creation and public art initiatives. And sometimes she does things for the adventure, the learning, the discovery, the fun. She has a B.A. in Performing Arts, an M.A. in Arts & Consciousness, and a Certificate in Circus Dramaturgy from the French and Belgian National Circus Schools. She is a 9 time NEA award recipient and author of *What Remains is Love: 55 Letters to My Mother*. With *Minty Fresh Circus*, Kim has served as the dramaturg, and collaborative creative concept developer, she is grateful to know Monique, to support her vision, and happy to have been a part of this compelling project.
www.kimcookcreates.com

Susan Voyticky (circus advisor), a native Brooklynite, traveled far and wide to study at both Ecole Jacques Lecoq in Paris and The Circus Space in London. She has worked for the past two decades for a variety of circus companies; including Keith Hennessy's Circo Zero and the New Pickle Circus in San Francisco, touring the U.S. with the Universoul Circus, a year in Japan at Universal Studios and the Bindlestiff Family Cirkus and Circus Abyssinia in New York. For the past decade Susan could

also be found at the Circus Warehouse in NYC inspiring and training the next generation of circus artists.

Ashaka Givens (costume designer) is a visionary designer, milliner, and costume artisan celebrated for her innovative creations. Her statement hats, bold fashion pieces, and intricate costumes have graced the pages of Vogue and Essence and adorned notable figures such as singer/actress Erykah Badu, artist Nina Chanel Abney, and Essence CEO Caroline Wanga. With a deep appreciation for storytelling through design, Ashaka infuses each piece with cultural richness and individuality. Her work, showcased on runways, editorial spreads, and stages, redefines modern millinery and fashion. Passionate about authentic self-expression, Ashaka continues to craft timeless, transformative designs for clients and collaborators worldwide. www.ashakagivens.com

Ty Brooks (costume designer)

Adesola Osakalumi (choreography) Choreography: Skeleton Crew (MTC); Diary Of A Tap Dancer (A.R.T. Additional Choreography), Leroy & Lucy (Steppenwolf Theater); Cullud Wattah, Coal Country, Othello (Public Theater); Syncing Ink (Victoria Theater); runboyrun, Eyewitness Blues (NYTW); Good Grief (Vineyard); Jam on the Groove (City Center Fall For Dance & Minetta Lane Theater); School of Rock. (Paramount Pictures). Actor: Broadway: Skeleton Crew, Fela!, Equus. Off Broadway: runboyrun (NYTW); Syncing Ink (Victoria Theater). TV: Harlem, Endgame, Ice, Blue Bloods. Film: Red Pill, IBRAHIM, Enchanted, Across the Universe, Sex and the City 2. Upcoming: The Grove (Huntington Theater). Awards: Bessie Award. Special thanks to Monique for the vision! www.adesola.com

Amanda K. Ringger (lighting design) has been designing locally, nationally, and internationally for over 20 years with artists such as Faye Driscoll, Cynthia Oliver, Doug Elkins, Leslie Cuyjet, Molly Poerstel, Ivy Baldwin, Laura Peterson, Darrah Carr, Antonio Ramos, Alexandra Beller, Sean Donovan, and cakeface, among many others. She received a BA from Goucher College in Baltimore, MD and an MFA from Tisch School of the Arts at NYU. She is the recipient of a Bessie award for her collaboration on Faye Driscoll's 837 Venice Boulevard.

Traci Bartlow (choreography) is a native of Oakland, CA, and a passionate dance maker. Her performance career includes working with luminaries such as Debbie Allen, Micheal Peters, Amiri Baraka. She has served as guest faculty for UC Davis, UC Berkeley, and Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival. Her choreography has been commissioned by the Eastbay Community Foundation, Illadeph Legends Dance Festival, and is California Arts Council Creative Corps Fellow. In 2022 she was a contributing writer and story consultant for an Emmy award winning film, KQED's If Cities Could Dance - Oakland Boogaloo segment. The following year she received a proclamation from the mayor of Oakland as "a great woman of Hip Hop" recognizing her significant contributions in dance and photography. Currently she is the owner of B-Love's Guest House and continues her work of documenting and preserving black dance and culture through lecture, research, performance, and collaboration. www.iamtracibartlow.com

Corey Action (sound designer) is from Oakland, CA and has choreographed and provided Artist Development for a diverse group of artists. SOULTRAIN & GRAMMY AWARD WINNER Melanie Fiona and R&B Star Kehlani have trained with Action. He has traveled the globe to over 12 countries working as a producer, DJ, MC, costume designer, casting agent, lighting/sound designer, make-up consultant, choreographer, coach, and dancer. He was awarded the Bay Area Legend Award in Hip Hop in 2018, the International Isadora Duncan Dance Award for Best Performance by a Company in 2005/2006. And a Legendary Black Film Makers award in 2001. Hip Hop is his Life.

Laura Colby, Managing Producer. Recipient of NAPAMA's 2016 Liz Silverstein Award, Laura Colby secures funds to create new work via Elsie Management (which she founded in 1995). In 2020, Colby served as Creative Producer in the creation and delivery of Manual Cinema's *Christmas Carol* - a show that was live-streamed for 24 performances in December 2020, during the height of the pandemic closures. She served as Managing Producer for LaTasha Barnes' *The Jazz Continuum*. Colby's podcast, *The Middle Woman, a roadmap to managing the performing arts*, is available on all podcast platforms. www.elsieman.org

no intermission

Run time: 60 minutes

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www.elsieman.org

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