



# NEW VICTORY® SCHOOL TOOL®

RESOURCE GUIDE

# NEW VICTORY DANCE



## THE NEW VICTORY® THEATER

© The New 42nd Street

Powered by New 42

# NEW VICTORY® EDUCATION

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Bringing kids to the arts and the arts to kids since 1995, New Victory opens new worlds to young people and families through extraordinary performances, education and engagement programs both online and in its historic Times Square theater.

Powered by New 42, a cultural nonprofit dedicated to empowering artists, educators and families through the performing arts, New Victory subsidizes its education programs and resources during the school year for New York City Department of Education public schools and charter schools and makes NEW VICTORY Dance available for free for all summer partners. In 2022-23, the theater's Education program includes free classroom workshops, professional development, and digital resources to serve more than 1,500 classroom teachers and over 20,000 NYC kids through its school partnerships.

Featuring artistic disciplines and traditions from a multitude of cultures, New Victory has become a standard-bearer of quality performing arts for young audiences in the United States with theatrical stories and experiences that spark the imagination and broaden our understanding of the world and our place in it.

## NEW VICTORY® SCHOOL TOOL® Resource Guides

Filled with practical, engaging and ready-to-implement activities that allow any teacher to incorporate performing arts into their curricula, NEW VICTORY SCHOOL TOOL Resource Guides are designed to enrich students' arts skills and creative expression.

## Jobs for Young People

Discover the New 42 Youth Corps, a youth development program that pairs life skills training with jobs in the arts for high school and college students. Designed to meet students where they are, New 42 Youth Corps provides flexible paid employment through a mix of on the job experience as well as personal, academic and professional development through a series of workshops, speakers and networking opportunities.



Under the leadership of President & CEO Russell Granet, New 42 is a leading performing arts nonprofit whose mission is to make extraordinary performing arts a vital part of everyone's life from the earliest years onward.

Through our signature projects, New Victory and New 42 Studios, we serve young people, artists and educators with invaluable arts engagement and resources in and beyond the performing arts.

### Support for New VICTORY Education has been provided by:

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Council on the Arts

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# Our Guiding Pillars

*The Guiding Pillars on this page are the foundation of the ways in which NEW VICTORY Education strives to cultivate collaboration and creativity for everyone. As we continue to grow and evolve, so do our pillars, and we continue to rethink their meaning and overall impact. We hope these values offer inspiration as you engage in creative art-making through the unit plan brainstorms, activities and creativity pages in this School Tool!*

## Arts for All

Invite everyone to create art in ways that are accessible to and inclusive of everyone.

## Art Form

Honor and explore the technique of the art forms represented in the works we present.

## Community

Encourage ensemble and collaboration within the communities with which we engage.

## Create

Activate art-making and creativity to explore the art form in each production and beyond.

## Discovery

Employ methods and ask questions that encourage opportunities for curiosity, risk-taking, inquiry, meaning-making, deepening understanding, and learning about oneself, one's peers and the world around us.

## Play

Spark imagination, encourage joy in learning and evoke laughter.

# Learning Standards

This year, New Victory Dance features eight dance companies performing on the NEW VICTORY stage. Hosted by NEW VICTORY Teaching Artists, P. Tyler Britt and Patrick Ferreri, who guide audiences, both in person and digitally, through each each dance piece, sharing more about each company, the company’s work and their style(s) of dance. They also encourage the audience to dance from wherever they are watching. Use this guide to augment your live or virtual NEW VICTORY Dance experience!

## NEXT GENERATION LEARNING STANDARDS:

Reading: 1; 2; 3

Writing: 2; 3

Speaking and Listening: 1; 2; 3; 4; 5; 6

Language: 1; 2; 3

## NEW YORK STATE LEARNING STANDARDS FOR THE ARTS:

Creating, Performing, Responding, Connecting

## BLUEPRINTS FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING IN THE ARTS:

Theater: Theater Making, Developing Theater Literacy, Making Connections

Visual Arts: Art Making, Developing Art Literacy, Making Connections

Dance: Dance Making, Developing Dance Literacy, Making Connections







Dear Educator,

New Victory is thrilled to present NEW VICTORY DANCE! This year, we are so very excited to center and honor eight uniquely talented and diverse dance companies performing live on the NEW VICTORY stage. We look forward to welcoming you back to this exhilarating celebration of the art form, hosted by NEW VICTORY Teaching Artists P. Tyler Britt and Patrick Ferreri, during which audiences will watch each dance piece, discover more about each company, and explore the companies' works and their unique styles of dance. They also encourage the audience to dance from wherever they are watching.

The NEW VICTORY Dance SCHOOL TOOL® Resource Guide has been created in part to provide opportunities for dance and movement exploration outside of the theater; to augment the theater-going experience. Throughout this guide, you and your kids will be invited to explore the cultural traditions and artistic practices celebrated in this year's featured companies by learning about dance from across the globe, engaging in warm-ups, creating new dance pieces and taking an introspective look at how breath and movement work together to create a unique expression of self through art. This curriculum supports the New York City Department of Education's Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in the Arts, New York State Learning Standards, Next Generation Learning Standards and the Common Core State Standards.

New Victory, powered by New 42, has been in a process of deepening its antiracism, equity and justice practices within the institution, its programs and workplace culture. This work is ongoing and runs deep. One of the New 42's core values includes "Inclusive Community." We believe that our theaters belong to all, and want everyone to feel a sense of belonging in all of our spaces, wherever they engage with us, while folding antiracism practices into the New Victory Education Guiding Pillars of Art Form, Arts for All, Community, Create, Discovery and Play.

Thank you for all that you do to ensure performing arts are a part of your kids' daily lives. Let's get started!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Courtney Boddie".

Courtney J. Boddie  
VP, Education & School Engagement

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Christopher Totten".

Christopher Totten  
Senior Education Programs Manager

And everyone in NEW VICTORY Education





IMAGE, Photo: Veronica Beltran

# What is New Victory Dance?

## LET'S DANCE!

New Victory Dance features eight New York City-based dance companies performing on the NEW VICTORY stage. The performances are hosted by NEW VICTORY Teaching Artists, P. Tyler Britt and Patrick Ferreri, who guide audiences through the dance pieces! Both teaching artists share more information about each company, their dance piece or excerpt and dance styles. They also encourage the audience to dance from wherever they are watching! Use the activities and creativity pages in this guide to augment your New Victory Dance experience. Ready? Set. DANCE!

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Kinding Sirdaw, Photo: Corky Lee

Educators and kids can engage with the content in this NEW VICTORY SCHOOL TOOL Resource Guide with or without first experiencing New Victory Dance.

**Now, let's get creative!**

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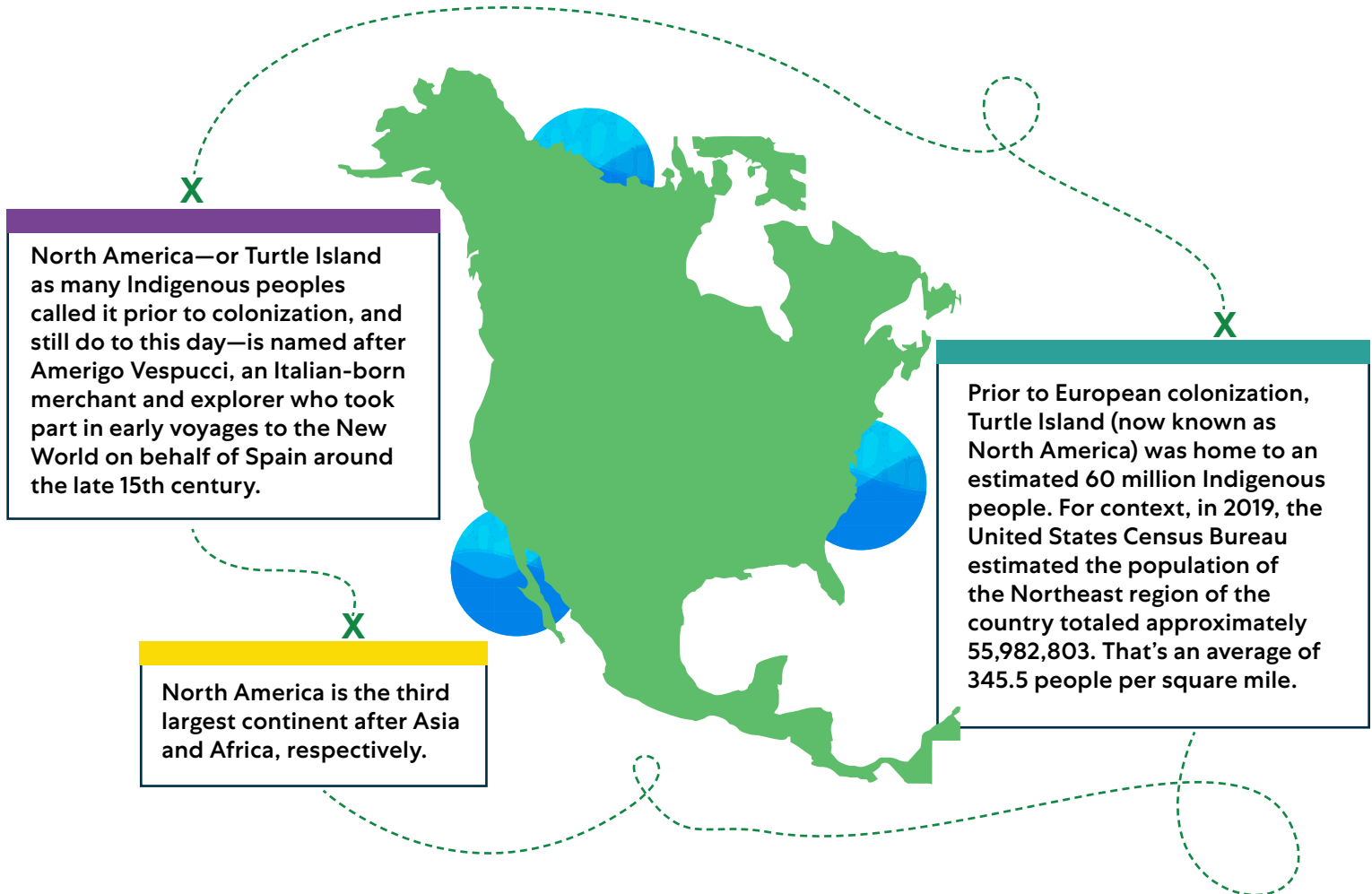




# ZOOM OUT/ZOOM IN: North America and New York City

All of the **NEW VICTORY** Dance companies you'll see performing are based right here in New York City. And each company, and each individual dancer, brings to their artistry and to the **NEW VICTORY** stage a unique lived experience. In this section of the School Tool, you'll learn more about those companies and the stories they tell through dance. But first, let's take a moment to examine our continent's, and our city's, rich past.

Before we zoom in on portions of New York City, let's zoom out and take a look at the continent in its entirety. North America, the third largest continent, spans 9.5 million square miles and consists of Northern America, Central America and the Caribbean. The population of this vast continent, as of 2020, is approximately 599 million across its 23 countries (including the U.S. territory of Puerto Rico) which accounts for about 4.73% of the world's population. Keep in mind that this number doesn't take into account non-sovereign territories like Bermuda and the British Virgin Islands.



Many thousands of years before Christopher Columbus's ships landed (unintentionally) in the Bahamas, beginning a long and troubled timeline of disease, violence and murder, the continent known now as North America was inhabited by millions of people indigenous to this land. These Indigenous people were the descendents of the nomadic people who actually discovered the Americas by traversing the Bering Land Bridge from Asia to modern-day Alaska over 15,000 years ago. In fact, by the time European colonizers arrived in the late 1400s CE, experts estimate that nearly 60 million people were already living in the Americas. Approximately 10 million of those people lived in what would become the United States. Over time, these migrants and their descendants made their way south and east, adapting to their environments along the way. Anthropological and geographical experts have divided these people into "culture areas," and North America, excluding what is now known as Mexico, has been broken into ten distinct culture areas: the Arctic, Subarctic, Northeast, Southeast, Plains, Southwest, Great Basin, California, Northwest Coast and the Plateau.



## ZOOMING IN: New York City

In 1664, at the time of New York's seizure, almost 9% of the 8,000 inhabitants were Africans, both enslaved and freed. Ownership of the enslaved was transferred to the British who made the enslavement of Africans an institution and classified these humans as personal property working involuntarily. In British New York City, killing an enslaved African was against the law. And, while enslaved Africans were able to marry in churches under Dutch rule, the British prohibited this and made it common practice to tear families apart.

Enslaved Africans continued to be an important source of the city's workforce well into the 18th century. This was a time when approximately 41 percent of white households enslaved Africans, making New York the largest slave-owning colony in the north. In 1711, a slave market was established at the foot of Wall Street (modern day intersection of Wall and Water Streets)—named after the wall built by enslaved Africans—and was a space created for hiring, buying and selling of enslaved Africans and became known as the Meal Market.

April 6, 1712 saw the first uprising of enslaved Africans as they set fire to a building on Maiden Lane in modern day New York City's Financial District. When white New Yorkers attempted to extinguish the fire, they were killed by those who started the blaze. British soldiers dispatched militia units and the 23 enslaved Africans were soon captured. Six of those humans took their own lives while the others were executed, most of them burned alive. Laws making it illegal for enslaved people to gather, and permit their enslavers to punish them at will, were quickly enacted. And yet, 1741 saw another uprising—known as The Conspiracy of 1741 or the Slave Insurrection of 1741—that would set homes and businesses, as well as the Governor's Fort George residence, ablaze. This uprising, led by enslaved Black people and poor white people, lasted six months. This ultimately led to the deportation of 72 Black men and the execution of 30 more. Manhattan's population of enslaved humans would see a slow decline leading up to the Revolutionary War, but not before peaking at 21%. The slave market on Wall Street was dismantled in 1762.

The enslavement of African peoples was extremely profitable for the city of New York. In fact, before the Civil War, the city's Mayor Fernando Wood proposed New York City declare itself a free city republic and secede from the Union rather than lose profits from the city's cotton trade with the Confederacy.



Depictions of the New York Conspiracy of 1741 – Alchetron

Communication

Racial justice

Sexual orientation

SOCIAL JUSTICE

Connection

BIPOC VISIBILITY

CULTURAL HERITAGE

RACE IDENTITY

DIVERSITY

THEMES INTRINSIC TO

NEW VICTORY DANCE

ISOLATION

GLOBAL CONVERSATION

RACISM COMMUNITY

LGBTQIA ACTIVISM

GENDER EXPRESSION

ART BORN OUT OF STRUGGLE

BELONGING Culture PANDEMIC





## PROGRAM A

### LES BALLET AFRIK

*“Because the company pulls from ballroom dance, it intersects with the House of Oricci. Four members of the company are in the House! They have to coexist. The company uses all the categories: how to sell face, runway, how to sell body...”*

Artistic Director and Founder—and legendary Father of the House of Oricci—Ousmane “Omari” Wiles always wanted to be an educator and now uses dance to defend people and to speak out for the LGBTQ Community. He was born in Senegal, West Africa, to parents who are also well-known in the dance world. Having started learning West African dance at the age of six, Omari has always been around the dance community and African culture. Les Ballet Afrik is a company that has embraced diversity, both in culture and in body size, and features dancers whose heritage is Korean, Japanese and Guatemalan, just to name a few! All of these backgrounds are respected in the company and used as inspiration for creating dance. It was at a very young age that Omari learned a variety of dance styles and then Afrobeats styles from a number of African countries. Eventually, he fell in love with House music and started clubbing and finding different styles of dance and seeing waackers, voguers, etc. all dancing with one another. Les Ballet Afrik, founded in 2018, has pioneered a new movement style called “Afrikfusion.” It is a multi-cultural dance company that explores the masculine and feminine energies within different dance forms.



Photo: Robert Altman

### KINDING SINDAW

*“I hope [this piece] speaks to other indigenous people and brings awareness to them. I hope young audiences see a deep appreciation for nature, storytelling and imagination which, in turn, creates curiosity.”*



Photo: Corky Lee

According to Potri Ranka Manis, this dance piece was born out of the Filipino tradition of oral storytelling and indigenous entertainment. Each dance tells a unique story and this particular piece employs three distinct art forms: Pangalay (hand movements), Silat (Indigenous martial arts) and Kulintang (Indigenous percussive instrument). Kinding Sindaw, founded in 1992, exists to educate and enlighten communities about the history and cultures of the Indigenous peoples of Mindanao, Southern Philippines. By recreating the dances, kulintang music and silat martial arts of these living traditions, the company aims to connect their oral traditions, ancient epics and present-day struggles and experiences to the NYC community. From conducting cultural workshops to producing full-scale theater dance dramas, the company uses music and movement to preserve, assert and empower Indigenous Filipinos and their traditions.

## BALLET BOY PRODUCTIONS

*“Contemporary ballet is ballet for a contemporary audience. Classical technique is used, the foundation is there. Ballet is not just women in tutus and you should expect the unexpected.”*



Photo: Julia Crawford

Ja' Malik discovered his love for dance at the age of four, when Michael Jackson's iconic and industry-changing "Thriller" premiered on MTV. He knew then that dance was a way to process emotion. After searching for some time for the right form of dance for him, he saw a video of the famous ballet, *Giselle*, by Adolphe Adam, Jules-Henri Vernoy de Saint-Georges and Théophile Gautier. It was then that he fell in love with the art form that would earn him the nickname "Ballet Boy," the namesake of Ja' Malik's thriving company, of which he is the Founder and Artistic Director. The inspiration behind and embedded in the piece *What Lies Beneath* is the murder of Trayvon Martin (and so many other BIPOC people that have been senselessly murdered). The piece is fueled by the questions: "How do you get rid of preconceived notions of people and find out who they are on the inside?" and "How do you get past them and get to the human and how can I learn who this is underneath the perception?" The company's mission is to provide young men of color access to classical and contemporary ballet performing opportunities,

training and mentoring as a means to express themselves, grow, thrive, create and

shape our world. Through the art form of dance, specifically classical and contemporary ballet, the company explores the experience of being a man of color through self-celebration and joy while also unveiling the injustices that have occurred throughout history and continue to occur. The company uses dance to touch and change lives and create avenues for a brighter future. A future of equal respect, justice, opportunities, inclusivity and diversity.

## PASSION FRUIT DANCE COMPANY

*“Groove is the auditory and physical manifestation of the Black experience... our aim is a physical exploration of Black culture, Black history.”*

Passion is dance. Fruit is the result. The company's Artistic Director, Tatiana Desardouin, who is from Switzerland and of Haitian origin, notes that Passion Fruit Dance Company exists as a collective of powerful women—all friends from Europe—who have come together with a purpose: to promote street and club dance style and culture, which is to say Black culture. *Trapped*, a piece directed and choreographed by Desardouin, was born during the height of the pandemic and developed during a Guggenheim "Works & Process" residency. It focuses on the individual stories and collective expression of a mosaic of five women. Through dance, these strong women who share similar journeys convey myriad tales and a range of emotions, from pain to joy, and set off on a quest to find their groove through street (e.g., breaking, flexing) and club (e.g., voguing) styles of dance. Passion Fruit Dance Company's mission is to promote the authenticity of street dance and clubbing styles, hip-hop and house cultures and their Black heritage, as well as their contribution to society, by exploring different social problems through their dance pieces and artistic practices.



Photo: Steven Pisano

## PROGRAM B

### IMGE

*“It’s a cross-cultural landscape of east-to-west dance forms and we use this movement to tell globally relevant stories.”*

In conversation with Ishita Mili, Director of IMGE Dance, she notes that she grew up with a deep connection to western dance styles and ideals and later found herself gravitating toward hip-hop. The artistic focus of IMGE Dance is Bharatanatyam and Indian contemporary fusion, a style that is both folk dance and a blend of classical forms. In *no(man)*, audiences will see a blend of Bharatanatyam, Odissi, Mayurbhan Chhau, hip-hop, dance hall and Bengali folk dance all channeled through each dancer’s groove, defined by Mili as “bounce and a feeling,” each of which cannot exist without the other. The piece employs different languages of music and rhythms from an amalgam of cultures from Bengali, to Indian drums, to Congolese drums, to ghungroos (bells worn on the feet in traditional Indian dance) and electronic DJ culture. The objective of their work: to amplify the interconnectedness of us all. IMGE is a performance company based in dance, film and music that uses cross-cultural vocabularies to share global stories with artists of diverse backgrounds. Founded by Ishita Mili, their work is influenced by Indian to Western classical, folk, street and contemporary movement vocabularies used to navigate social, cultural and environmental constructs.



Photo: Veronica Beltran



Photo: Dana Golan

### AKIRA UCHIDA WITH MADELINE WRIGHT AND JOSH STRMIC

*“Play-driven exploration was first. Then, building the work was about piecing the elements together...molding it together is intense and specific with sharp focus.”*

Akira Uchida has been dancing since he was a young kid. Madeline Wright came to NYC to dance in 2016. Josh Strmic has been playing drums since he was in the fourth grade. Each of them on their own journey but found each other here and formed a collective to create works of art. Akira, Josh and Madeline put play at the forefront of their exploration and creative process. During the summer of 2020, at the height of the pandemic, this trio came together to collaborate through a series of improvisational games in order to create art through a common language through which they could explore. They’ve been creating and playing ever since.

Their piece, *Full Stop. Start Again*, an abstract collection of vignettes, was born out of non-verbal play and idea-sharing in which the only languages involved are music and movement. Akira Uchida is a Canadian dancer, choreographer, creative director and teacher. Madeline Wright, originally from Toronto, Canada, is a New York City based professional dance artist. Josh Strmic, who currently resides in Brooklyn, performs and records with artists of various genres, most notably, indie singer/songwriter Aubrey Haddard.



# ZOOMING IN: NEW VICTORY Dance ARTISTS



Photo: Rebecca Oviatt

## JAMAL JACKSON

*“It’s about recognizing the individual while also recognizing how each of us makes up a larger group. How do we use different art forms to have deeper conversations?”*

Jamal Jackson, Artistic Director of Jamal Jackson Dance Company (JJDC), believes in the power of the integration of dance and education. His background is in West African Dance with a bit of contemporary dance in the mix and his creative process is centered on one essential question: “What is the question we’re asking and how can we create a dialogue with what we’re creating?” The piece the company is presenting is titled *846*, the initial reported time (8 minutes and 46 seconds) that former Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin

kneeled on George Floyd’s neck in the summer of 2020 (the official length of time is actually 9 minutes and 29 seconds), ultimately killing him and sparking a series of anti-racism protests and calls for police reform. Jamal Jackson describes the piece as the juxtaposition of success and sacrifice that employs West African Dance (Sandia and Koteba), the shoop dance, the whip and nae nae, the wop and whoa. The piece is set to Stravinsky’s 1913 composition *The Rite of Spring*. JJDC was founded in 2004 with the purpose of fusing various traditional African dance styles with modern and hip-hop techniques and diverse contemporary music styles in order to create a new, unique technique that is relevant to a multifarious community of Americans. The movement and storylines of JJDC choreography focus on redefining ideas of community and blurring divisive lines, while still celebrating the beauty of individual cultures.

## BLACK IRIS PROJECT

*“I wanted to find a different way to talk about youth incarceration and the long-term effects of isolation and imprisonment. [This piece] is about this young man affirming that his life has value.”*

Jeremy McQueen, founder and choreographer of The Black Iris Project (BIP), discovered his love of theater and dance after seeing *The Phantom of the Opera* when he was just eight years old. He began working professionally in theater at age 15 and dreamed of the day he would be able to combine his lived experiences, observations and passions into classical ballets driven by the Black experience. In 2015, while struggling to find opportunities to grow as a choreographer, McQueen formed The Black Iris Project—a collective space for Black artists to create, discuss their histories and learn from one another as a platform for individual growth. *WILD* has two primary inspirations: Maurice Sendak’s picture book, *Where the Wild Things Are*, and a single photograph in which a young boy’s prison cell is lined with affirmations and reflections. One of McQueen’s goals with this piece is to channel one’s creative inner child against a backdrop of stories from children within the juvenile justice system. In *WILD*, ballet serves as the foundational dance medium, while other styles of dance are incorporated to push the medium further into the 21st century. These other styles include modern, hip-hop, West African dance and inspiration from choreographer Martha Graham. Based in New York City, BIP hosts a team of predominantly artists of color. BIP delivers cross-disciplinary and original classical and contemporary ballet works that celebrate diversity and are rooted in Black history and community. The ballets that McQueen choreographs bring inadequately-represented stories to public attention through an art form that has only recently begun to expand meaningfully outside its privileged past.



Photo: Matthew Murphy

# ZOOMING IN: NEW VICTORY Dance STYLES

## BALLROOM

A fierce scene and vibrant form of expression born in New York City, ballroom culture (aka, ball culture), not to be confused with classic ballroom partner dance, has its origins in African American and Latino underground LGBTQIA subculture and community. Those participating in the scene dance, walk, pose, vogue, lip-sync and model in numerous drag and performance competition categories (selling face, selling body, etc.) for trophies and prizes. Many participants in ball culture also belong to small tight-knit communities known as “houses,” where chosen families live in households together, forming relationships and communities separate from their families of origin, for a true sense of love, connection and belonging.

## HIP-HOP

Hip-hop dance is a cultural movement and artistic movement created by African Americans, Caribbean Americans and Latino Americans in the streets of Harlem and the Bronx in New York City. This genre fuses elements of breaking, popping, locking and a host of other styles. It includes a wide range of styles created in the 1970s and made popular by United States-based dance crews, which were featured on TV’s *Soul Train* and a number of films in the 1980s. It was then that hip-hop went from cultural phenomenon to mainstream recognition.

## POPPING / STREET

This is a street dance from the Boogaloo cultural movement which began in Oakland, California and was popularized by the Electric Boogaloos. As Boogaloo gained in popularity, it was sometimes called Robottin, Strutting and Striking. Popping is rooted in Funk music and its movements are based in the Boogaloo’s technique of posing, contracting and releasing muscles causing a dancer’s body to jerk or suddenly stop. This is called a pose, hit or pop.

## CONTEMPORARY DANCE

This genre was developed in the mid-twentieth century and is now particularly popular here in the United States and in Europe. Originally informed by classical, modern and jazz dance styles, contemporary dance integrates elements from myriad dance styles and is often perceived to have commonalities with modern dance and ballet, among others. Additionally, this genre employs contract and release, floor work, fall and recovery and improvisation characteristics of modern dance, as well as elements of non-western dance cultures, such as African dance or Japanese contemporary dance.

## CONTEMPORARY BALLET

Contemporary Ballet is a combination of classical ballet and modern dance. Just as there are myriad types and styles of dance, there are also many different types and styles of ballet.

## BHARATANATYAM

One of eight classical dance forms of India, and the most recognizable, Bharatanatyam was originally performed exclusively by female temple dancers and was not brought to the stage for public performance until about 1930. Dance is one of the most ancient means of spiritual expression in India and embodies music, dance, drama, poetry and mythology to create a highly stylized artistic expression.

## What do your students know now?

Prior to learning about NEW VICTORY DANCE and exploring **DANCE, MOVEMENT** and **CHOREOGRAPHIC DESIGN** with your kids, find out how much they already know about these art forms. In addition, ask them to explore the theme of **COMMUNITY, TRADITION** and **COLLABORATION**.

*Have you ever seen a dance performance on stage, on film or on television?*

*Have you ever seen hip-hop, contemporary dance or traditional Indian dance before? What did you enjoy about it and why?*

*Where have you seen ballroom culture represented on stage or in mainstream entertainment?*

*What element(s) of dance do you like best? Why?*

*When you hear the word “community,” what comes to mind?*

*What does the word “tradition” mean to you?*

*What does the word “collaboration” mean to you?*

# Connecting to Unit Plan Brainstorms

## MOVING THROUGH SPACE (ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS, DANCE)

Explore space through dance! Ask your kids to walk around the space and find a location in which dance wouldn't typically be performed. This location will be known as a "site". Ask them to observe all of the objects and architecture within that site. Then, ask your kids to create a series of gestures and shapes with their bodies inspired by their site's objects and architecture. Encourage kids to use their gestures and shapes as inspiration for creating a sequence of movements reflecting the shapes or the function of the objects and architecture in their site. Finally, have kids share their movement pieces to the group in ways that illustrate how and why their dance can only be performed in their chosen site. After everyone has finished sharing, celebrate all the site-specific dance pieces with a communal dance party!

To support this unit, use the **Activity *Making Connections: A Warm-Up*** on page 17.

## THE ORIGINS OF HIP-HOP (ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS, HISTORY, SOCIAL STUDIES, DANCE)

Humans have been sharing stories since the dawn of time and dance is just one form through which we have been conveying those stories. So, our collective history, our cultures and myriad approaches to dance are intertwined. Ballet, for instance, described as a graceful and precise form of dance, was developed primarily in France from 17th century social dance, while flamenco, which originated in Southern Spain, is an intensely emotional dance made up of sharp staccato movements dating back to the mid-to-late 18th century. But this begs the question: *What forms of dance originated right here in modern-day United States, and how and why were they invented? What is their cultural or social significance? How have they influenced other forms of dance over time?* One excellent example is hip-hop, a form of dance born in the streets of New York City's Harlem and the Bronx. Work with your kids to explore the questions above and the history of hip-hop as a cultural art form—as opposed to mainstream or commercial hip-hop—and the historical and social significance embedded in this style of dance. As a bonus, use this opportunity to learn more about a specific style of dance your kids want to explore or the history of dance across the globe and how each style is intrinsically linked to its culture or society.

To support this unit, use the **Activity *Shape Up*** on page 18.

## TIME TO JAM (ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS, DANCE)

An artist's work, whether it be in the form of music, dance, visual art or dramatic play, is often inspired by events unfolding within and outside of an artist's personal sphere. At times, art is created as a means of observation and reflection. At other times, art is created as a form of activism, also known as artivism. For instance, Funk dance moves gave space for individuals to express themselves artistically in the 1970s. Also born in the 1970s and into the 1980s was hip-hop, steeped in activism and a form of expression for New York City's marginalized Black and brown youth who were disproportionately affected by poverty, racism and classism. *What forms of dance speak louder than words to your kids?* Have your kids work together in groups to create their very own dance piece. In small groups, have your kids choose a topic or issue that is important to them and, using sources at the library or reputable sources on the internet, have them collect photos and articles related to that topic. Work with your kids to brainstorm words and phrases that embody each image's or article's setting, characters, themes and emotions. Combining the images with the words and phrases, have each group create a spoken word piece advocating for their group's topic or issue. Then have each group create three tableaux (frozen pictures) that embody their spoken word piece and then connect them seamlessly, turning them into unique choreography. They've now created their very own Jam! If everyone agrees, take their Jams out into the community or record these fascinating dance pieces and share them with the world, helping to make your kids' voices and artistic works of art heard and seen.

To support this unit, use the **Activity *Dance Takes Effort*** on page 19.



## MAKING CONNECTIONS: A WARM-UP

Take a moment to create space for everyone to stop, breathe and connect with one another. Use this activity to connect, collaborate and explore breath through movement!

1. To begin, have your kids join you in a standing circle. Then, tell them that, as a group, you're going to be exploring the connection between movement, sound, thoughts and breath.
2. Lead a brief, non-verbal physical warm-up to calming music of your choice asking kids to pay close attention to their breath, their heartbeat and the thoughts that are coming to the forefront of their minds.
3. After you've finished warming up, choose to make eye contact (or other visual cue) with everyone and, without speaking, invite the whole group to take a deep breath, too. After you all exhale together, take an intentional step into the center of the circle and, without speaking, establish a beat, either by tapping one foot or tapping the middle of your chest with one hand. Invite the entire group to keep that beat while you continue to **Step 4.**
4. Invite one other kid into the center of the circle with you, offer a physical movement that keeps to the established beat and invite the volunteer to mirror that same movement, choosing the right moment to find an ending together by taking a deep breath and exhaling in unison. Slowly leave the circle while exhaling.
5. Helping to keep the established beat, invite the remaining kid to offer a visual cue to the circle's next volunteer. Continue with each kid entering the circle, mirroring each other's movements and changing places with an exhale.
6. Once each kid has had a turn in the center of the circle, come back to standing in neutral, asking everyone to look around the circle, make eye contact with their peers and acknowledge the joy that just ensued, nonverbally of course. Have kids stand still, acknowledge the silence in the room, close their eyes and place one hand on their heart. Ask them to focus on each of the following:
  - a. *The rhythm of their heartbeats*
  - b. *The way in which they're intaking breath*
  - c. *The thoughts they are having*
  - d. *The emotions they're feeling in this moment*Help guide this introspective, nonverbal exercise by asking questions like: *What did it feel like to lead and follow different movements? What emotions came up for you while moving and while standing in neutral? What was it like to stand in silence and notice the rhythm of your heartbeat? What was it like to think about how you intake breath? What was it like to connect your thoughts to your breath?*
7. Finally, invite kids to open their eyes, once again making eye contact with their peers to acknowledge them, and then discuss the experience of taking time to connect to our bodies and our breath during this activity.

### Reflection Questions:

*What does the term "connection" mean to you?*

*What was your favorite part of this activity?*

*Why is it important to think about and connect with our breath?*

*Why do you think an activity like this might be useful or important in daily life?*

*What did you find challenging about this activity?*

# SHAPE UP

Use this activity to help kids begin to create their own choreography using objects and shapes to inspire each kid to put different types of movement into their body!

**Materials Needed:** one object of varying shape per kid

1. To prepare, ask kids to choose an object of meaning to them. Tell kids that their object is going to inspire movement in different parts of their body.
2. When kids have their item and you're ready to explore, have kids start to get inspired to create shapes and movements with a specific part of their body. For example, a plate may inspire a kid to create a circle using their head, the curved handle of a mug might inspire to create a triangular shape and movement with their arm, for a more abstract choice: a door key may inspire a turning or spiraling movement with their knee, etc.
3. Once kids have had time to explore shapes and movements with their chosen body part, tell them to pick a different body part and try the same movement with that new body part. During this exploration, have them continue to pick new body parts for that movement until they find the one they like the most.
4. Continue this activity by having kids choose another gesture, movement or shape and put it into a different body part until they once again find what they like the most. Do this two or three times until kids have created three or four dance moves originating from different parts of their body.
5. Then, tell kids to combine these moves into a sequence. Ask them questions like: *Which move comes first? Which is last? How do you transition between those moves?*
6. Give kids time to rehearse their sequence individually. Then, have them share out their four-move dance piece!

## Reflection Questions:

*What was your favorite part of this activity?*

*What was it like to create shapes and movement inspired by shapes?*

*What are other methods you can use to create movement?*

*What did you find challenging about this activity?*



# DANCE TAKES EFFORT

In this activity, kids will learn how to create more nuanced dance moves! This activity should, at first, be done individually so that each kid is creating their own set of movements. Then, move into ensemble work with the **Activity Let's Jam!**

**Materials Needed:** movements created in the **Activity Making Connections: A Warm-Up** or **Shape Up** and a list of Laban's Efforts of floating, dabbing, wringing, thrusting, pressing, flicking, slashing and gliding to help inspire more nuanced choreography.

1. Using the moves created in the **Activity Making Connections: A Warm-Up** or **Shape Up**, have kids choose one of their movement sequences to explore further. **Note:** *If you did not do the activities in the previous section, you can also use simple shapes as inspiration. You can ask them to create a circle using their heads, make a triangle with their arms, create a spiral with their knees, etc.*
2. Now, have your kids play (individually for now) with creating more nuanced choreography by adding a variety of Laban's Efforts of Action Drive listed above and on the handout on the next page. For example, one might feel inspired to make a circle with their head applying the Effort of "Punch," making the movement more pointed and staccato. **Note:** *These eight Efforts, or qualities, were developed by Rudolf Laban, who identified them by breaking down movement into what he referred to as Motion Factors of Weight, Time, Space/Direction and Flow. To learn more before facilitating this activity, see the Teacher Tip below.*
3. Offer kids time to explore at least four of the eight Efforts and apply them to each of their movements. Then, have them rehearse their movements, ultimately resequencing them into a brand new, more nuanced and dynamic dance piece.
4. Next, ask kids to pair up and perform their sequences for each other and have them offer constructive feedback to one another. Guide this discussion by asking: *What did you notice? What did you like? and What do you wonder?* Then, have kids rehearse individually again incorporating the feedback from their peers.
5. Then, create dance ensembles of four, keeping pairs together. Invite each kid to pick one part of their movement sequence, remembering to employ Laban's Efforts, to teach to the other members of their group. Give each group time to learn each other's choreography and to rehearse each part a few times.
6. Once all the group members are confident with each other's moves, it's time to sequence the moves in a fun and interesting way. Give each group time to rehearse their moves in the new sequence.
7. Finally, have each dance ensemble share out their unique dance piece. Then, have a discussion about how using Laban's Efforts affected each individual's exploration of dance and each ensemble's dance piece!

## TEACHER TIP

To learn more about Laban's Efforts, and to get inspiration for different sequences your kids might use, watch these videos:

- > **Series: Laban Movement - The Drama Coach**  
(each Effort has a video devoted to it)
- > **Laban Movement Efforts - Tehya Malone**  
(combines Efforts with other elements of Laban movement)

## Reflection Questions:

*What did you find interesting about this activity?*

*What was it like to explore new concepts for movement and dance?*

*What are other methods you can use to add unique qualities to movement?*

*What did you find challenging about this activity?*

# LABAN'S EIGHT EFFORTS

## THE FOUR COMPONENTS

THE EIGHT EFFORTS

	DIRECTION	SPEED	WEIGHT	FLOW
PUNCH	Direct	Quick	Heavy	Bound
SLASH	Indirect	Quick	Heavy	Free
DAB	Direct	Quick	Light	Bound
FLICK	Indirect	Quick	Light	Free
PRESS	Direct	Sustained	Heavy	Bound
WRING	Indirect	Sustained	Heavy	Bound
GLIDE	Direct	Sustained	Light	Free
FLOAT	Indirect	Sustained	Light	Free



# LET'S JAM

Work with your kids to create a **NEW VICTORY** Dance Jam of your very own!

**Materials Needed:** a physical space, paper and writing utensils

1. To begin, tell kids that they are going to write and tell a collective short story about what they've learned in the last year and create expressive art in a physical setting.
2. Ask each kid to write one or two sentences about what they've learned the past year. Then, have them read over what they've written and ask them to consider the emotion(s) they feel when reading it.
3. Tell kids to think about how to convey their text outwardly by utilizing the emotions they felt while re-reading their own written text and by using their body in three different ways:
  - > First, using only facial expressions.
  - > Second, using one physical gesture.
  - > Third, using one full fluid movement that embodies their emotion(s).

**Note:** Give kids time to explore these three elements before moving on.
4. Next, put the movements away and collaborate to combine all of the written elements together into one cohesive story.
5. Now that everyone has contributed to create a written piece and had a chance to explore what it means to tell a story through movement, it's time to work together as choreographers to brainstorm the best physical shapes, gestures and movements to use to tell your story, word by word and line by line. **Note:** To add more nuance to your dance piece, use the Laban Efforts in the **Activity Dance Takes Effort**.
6. Once the group has come up with choreography, divide them up into different creative teams: set designers, choreographers, performers (narrators, actors, movers, dancers) and sound designers! Give each team a task, for instance:
  - > Set designers should choose objects, structures and furniture in your space to build the world in which your dance piece takes place.
  - > Choreographers should mold the movements created by the whole group and choose how to use them throughout the piece.
  - > Performers should decide who will be the narrators, movers and dancers, and when and where they speak or dance.
  - > Sound designers should choose a piece of music to act as your dance piece's soundtrack!
7. Once it's all been created, record it and post your dance masterpiece for the world to see! You could even choose to ditch the virtual world and take your dance piece out into the community (safely and using proper social distancing measures, of course) and share it with everyone!

## Reflection Questions:

*What surprised you most from this activity?*

*How did it feel to collaborate to create a movement piece?*

*What changed for you from writing and reading your individual text when it was combined with your co-creators' text?*

*How does it feel to turn personal notes into a theatrical dance piece?*

*Did you learn anything about yourself or your peers through the creative process?*







# THE DANCE MACHINE

In **NEW VICTORY** Dance, each individual performer possesses and shows off their most awesome, unique talents. What unique talents do you possess? Take the quiz below to find out if your dance talent lies in hip-hop, popping, contemporary dance, ballet or all of the above!

- If you could dance in any space, what would it be?**
  - On a subway train
  - A virtual space so nobody can see
  - Li'l Nas X's next live performance
- You have the chance to compete on World of Dance, so you:**
  - Choreograph a lyrical dance, accompanied by guitar
  - Put together a ballet number
  - Create an original number inspired by social or political issues
- Which city most represents your unique personality?**
  - Boston, kid!
  - Chicago, the windy city!
  - New York City, of course!
- What type of music gets you movin'?**
  - Rap
  - House
  - Funk
- From the list below, choose your favorite time of day.**
  - Morning
  - Twilight
  - Midnight
- If you were performing and noticed a sad audience member, what would you do?**
  - Bring them up on stage and improvise a dance for them
  - Do acrobatic splits to impress them
  - Fake a fall to make them laugh
- What makes you happiest?**
  - Helping others
  - Posting creative videos on Tik Tok
  - Learning a new art form
- You're on stage with your dance partner and something is about to go terribly wrong! What do you do?**
  - Stop in your tracks, whip out your phone and start recording
  - Improvise a brand new dance move to distract the audience, saving your partner from embarrassment
  - Run away from it and apologize later

**Add up your points and see what type of dance performer you are!**

Legend: A's = 6 points each | B's = 4 points each | C's = 2 points each

1-16 Points = You've got all the right moves and you know how to captivate your audience!

16-28 Points = You're a classically trained ballet dancer who can do most anything you put your mind to.

28-40 Points = You're a hip-hop artist! Who's got fantastic moves and you know how to level up!

40-48 Points = You're a contemporary dancer and audiences will be wow'd when they see your moves!



# Dancer Design Challenge

In dance, it's not just the moves that tell the story, it's also the costumes! If you were tasked with designing your own unique dance costumes for a show that was to be performed for an audience, what approach would you take? Put on your costume designer hat and use the three spaces below to draw three unique costume renderings! Think about the functionality of your costume, the era or style(s) that would inspire your design, the type of material or fabric your costume would be made of and what type(s) of designs would be featured. Most importantly, think of the ways your costume showcases who you are. Draw your unique costume below, then use the blank spaces below them to describe what story each costume helps to tell!

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## REFLECTION: Let's Chat!

Engage in a conversation with your kids to help them process their thoughts and feelings about the NEW VICTORY Dance content, Instructional videos and the materials in this School Tool. On a large piece of chart paper or whiteboard, draw the outline of a person and use the prompts below to guide kids through an active reflection. On the outside of the outline, have them write or draw their favorite moments of discovery from the content with which you and your group chose to engage. On the inside of the outline, have kids write or draw their own feelings about the content and the experience of learning about new places and cultures, and creating worlds and stories.

**Then, lead them in a discussion:**

*What was it like to learn more about dance?*

*What was it like to create new art?*

*What was your favorite thing to create or explore?*

*What were your favorite parts of the NEW VICTORY Dance content?*

*What did you enjoy most about the Activities and Creativity Pages in the School Tool?*

*What emotions did these activities make you feel?*

### TEACHER TIP

Engaging in dialogue, asking questions and recalling observations are skills that we believe should be fostered and encouraged. When leading a performance reflection discussion, try the following model of critical response:

**Describe** (*I saw...*)

**Analyze** (*I wonder...*)

**Interpret** (*I think/feel...*)

**Evaluate** (*I believe...*)

# SOURCES:

## NEW VICTORY DANCE ARTISTS:

Les Ballet Afrik  
Kinding Sindaw  
Ballet Boy Productions  
Passion Fruit  
IMGE Dance  
Akira Uchida  
Jamal Jackson  
Jeremy McQueen

## NEW VICTORY DANCE ART FORMS:

**Hip-Hop:** How Hip-Hop Transformed New York  
Laban's Efforts





# A Land Acknowledgement

## NEW VICTORY

The New Victory Theater is on the island known as Mannahatta, now called Manhattan, in Lenapehoking, the homeland of the Lenape people. These lands are the intertribal trade lands under the stewardship of many more Nations. We acknowledge the systematic erasure of many Nations and recognize those still among us.

New York City is home to over 115,000 intertribal Native American, First Nations and Indigenous peoples, the largest of any urban city across Turtle Island, known today as North America. Some were born here with family roots that go back generations within the area's surrounding Nations. Others have come to New York to find what couldn't be found anywhere else. All contribute to the rich and diverse culture that is New York City's urban Native community today.

New Victory respects all Native peoples past, present and future and their continuing presence in the homeland throughout the Indigenous diaspora. We offer our gratitude to the Indigenous peoples of many Nations who continue to act as stewards of the land and encourage everyone to learn more about these vibrant communities.

THE NEW VICTORY THEATER  
NEW YORK'S THEATER FOR KIDS AND FAMILIES

Photo: Mark LaRosa



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