

Join us as we celebrate the richness of African cultures with this dazzling show that blends acrobatics, dance, and music by incredibly disciplined performers trained in Kenya and Tanzania. Described as an African-style Cirque du Soleil, the artists of Zuma Zuma combine breathtaking feats of balance and dexterity with colorful costumes and unbridled enthusiasm to thrill, chill, and wow their audiences!

Dance and variety shows reflect the deepest roots of Africa's civilization. The precise movements and flexible showmanship of the performers have provided entertainment to people from all walks of life for centuries.

Associated with the esteemed "Bomas of Kenya," the 8 to 25 members of the African Acrobats International Academy carries on a 2,500 year tradition of dancing, acrobatics and celebrates African cultural history.

Cirque Zuma Zuma and Cirque Afrika Afrika, was established in late 2005 to tour the world and to teach the world about African cultures. African Acrobats International now has three performer training schools in Tanzania, Ethiopia, and Kenya. The Academy is working on collecting and publishing numerous African opera scripts, dramatic historical textbooks, and also issuing DVD and videos. All of these materials are for the purpose of education, promotion and research of traditional arts, and to support the Academy's mission.



As an integral part of the Performing Arts Series, APPlause! offers a variety of performances at venues across the Appalachian State University campus that feature university-based artists as well as local, regional and world-renowned professional artists. These affordable performances offer access to a wide variety of art disciplines for K-12 students. The series also offers the opportunity for students from the Reich College of Education to view a field trip in action without having to leave campus.

Among the 2013-2014 series performers, you will find those who will also be featured in the Performing Arts Series along with professional artists chosen specifically for our student audience as well as performances by campus groups. All shows in the 2013-2014 series are performed at the newly renovated Schaefer Center for the Performing Arts.

Before you arrive. . .



Familiarize your students with what it means to be a great audience member by introducing these theatre etiquette basics:

- Arrive early enough to find your seats and settle in before the show begins.
- Remember to turn your electronic devices OFF so they do not disturb the performers or other audience members.
- Remember to sit appropriately and to stay quiet so that the audience members around you can enjoy the show too.
- Show appreciation to the performers by applauding and reacting to funny or impressive feats.



Try these activities that will prepare your students for the performance:



- Using the list of provided resources, research, learn and share about Kenyan and Tanzanian culture and history.
- Familiarize students with activities that they may see at the performance, such as gymnastics, jump rope, juggling, limbo, balancing and human pyramids!
- Brainstorm ways in which movement or performance can convey emotions and tell a story or cultural history. What are examples of this in our own culture?

Once you are here. . .



What should you look/listen for throughout the show?

- Watch for the Flag Dance and Zulu Dance and reflect on the emotions and stories told through these traditional African Celebrations.
- Observe how the performers use their feet to create their own beats in the Gumboot Dance.
- Be inspired by the skill and concentration it takes to perform the acrobats throughout the show.
- Notice the different props used to perform some of the acrobatic movements. Think about how they enhance the performance.
- Think about the differences and similarities between the cultures that are shared here at the performance and the culture that you live in. How are your culture's traditional arts the same or different from the African traditional arts of dance, music and storytelling?

Back at school. . .

- Reflect on favorite aspects of the show. Discuss what you liked best about the performance and why.
- What did you learn today that you didn't know before?
- What did you see during the performance that tied into the cultural history you explored before the show?
- Think back to the discussion you had before the performance about the differences between American circuses and an African-style Cirque De Soliel. What other differences did you find that you did not think of? Were there any similarities between the two?

Activities that connect with the show.

- Create an illustrated advertisement for the show that describes some of the highlights from the performance.
- Write a story or narrative that connects to one of the acts you saw and explore an aspect of African cultural history in your narrative.
- Research acrobatics and learn how much time and practice it takes to perform some of the acts you saw at the performance.
- Imagine that you can create your own circus. What types of acts would you have? How would it be different from the performance you saw? How would it be similar?
- Create a Mankala board so that you can take home one of Africa's oldest and most popular board games. (see pdf attachment taken from Croze, Harvey. *Africa for Kids: Exploring a Vibrant Continent, 19 Activities*. Chicago, Ill: Chicago Review Press, 2006. Print)

Resources

Elementary

- *Drumbeat in Our Feet* by Patricia A. Keeler and Júlio T. Leitão • Illustrated by Patricia A. Keeler (ASU IMC Stacks 793.3196 K26dr)
- *Count Your Way Through Kenya* by Jim Haskins & Kathleen Benson • Illustrated by Lyne Lévêque (ASU IMC Stacks 967.62 H351co)
- *Colors of Kenya* by Fran Sammis • Illustrated by Jeni Reeves (ASU IMC Stacks 967.62 S189co)

Middle & Secondary

- *Kenya* (Globetrotters Club Series) by Sean McCollum (ASU IMC Stacks 967.62 M129ke)
- *Kenya* (Enchantment of the World Series) by Sylvia McNair and Lynne Mansure (ASU IMC Stacks 967.62 M169ke)
- *Kenya* (National Geographic Countries of the World Series) by Bridget Giles (ASU IMC Stacks 967.62 T164ke)
- *Tanzania* by Joan Vos MacDonald (ASU IMC Statcks 967.8 M135ta)
- *Tanzania* (Cultures of the World Series) by Jay Heale & Winnie Wong (ASU IMC Stacks 967.8 H434ta 2010)

Reference

- *Africa* (Cultural Atlas for Young People Series) by Jocelyn Murray and Brian A. Stewart (ASU IMC Stacks 960 M982af)

Multimedia

- *Children's Stories from Africa* – DVD (ASU IMC Stacks 398.2096 C536)
- PBS Africa-www.pbs.org/wnet/africa
- National Geographic- kids.nationalgeographic.com/kids/places/find/
- National Museum of African Art - <http://africa.si.edu/>

This study guide was constructed with the help of the Management of Cirque Zuma Zuma, Appalachian State University's Belk Library and Information Commons Education Librarian and the Office of Arts and Cultural Programs.
Header artwork, "School Days" by Dacia Trethewey.

Play the Oldest Board Game in the World

In this activity, you will make a simple *mankala* board, learn the basic rules, and play the game with a friend. Once you get the hang of it, you can play according to the rules of national variations of the game.

M*ankala* is the oldest board game in the world. Africans have been playing it for more than 3,000 years. The basic *mankala* board has two rows with six circles each and one circle at each end. Each player owns the row in front of him or her and the *mankala* on the right. Four pebbles are placed in each of the 12 holes in the two rows. The *mankalas* are left empty to start with. The players move stones from hole to hole according to the rules below.

You'll need

Scissors

1 empty (one dozen) egg carton

Paintbrush and paints in various colors (optional)

2 small bowls or cups

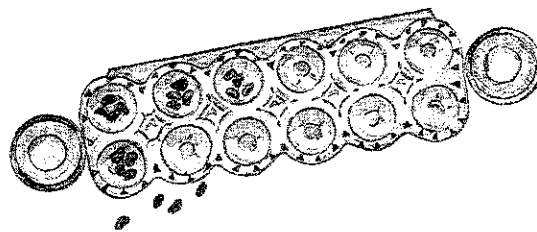
48 small pebbles (or other small round objects, such as dried beans)

1. Using the scissors, cut the lid off the egg carton. You may want to decorate it with the paints. You now have a *mankala* board.

2. Place one small bowl or cup at each end of the board. These are called *mankalas*.
3. Find an opponent. The board and cups should be placed between you. Your *mankala* is on your right; your opponent's *mankala* is on your left.
4. Put four stones in each of the 12 small holes.
5. Flip a coin to decide who moves first, then follow the rules below.

General Rules

Player 1 starts by scooping up all the stones from one of his or her small bowls. (Never start from a



mankala or from any of the opponent's six bowls). Player 1 drops one stone into the next egg cup on the right, one stone into the second

cup on the right, and continues around the board (left to right, counterclockwise) until he or she has no more stones. If Player 1 reaches his or her own *mankala*, he or she drops a stone into it. Players do not drop stones into their opponents' *mankalas*; they skip them and continue around the board dropping stones, one at a time, until they run out of stones. If the last stone in any turn lands in an empty bowl, that player picks up the stone, plus all of the stones in the opponent's cup immediately opposite the bowl that was empty, and puts them all into the player's *mankala*. Players take turns moving. At the end of the game, players count the stones in their *mankalas*—the player with the most stones wins.

There are many different variations of the game—Egyptian, Ethiopian, Nigerian, etc. If you are interested, you can find them on the Web. Search on Google (www.google.com) for "*mankala* rules."