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For Immediate Release

**Live, In-Person Events Return to Governors State University
Center for Performing Arts this Fall**

University Park, IL (August 20, 2021) – Following an unusual season of streaming concerts, plays, opera and dance productions directly to patrons’ homes, [Governors State University’s Center for Performing Arts](#) (the Center) will return to in-person, live events this October.

“Safety is very important to us. This season may *look* a bit different; with new arrival and dismissal procedures, added safety protocols, and more touchless transactions. Yet, the experience of live connection will *feel* familiar and joyful,” says the Center’s Executive Director Lana Rogachevskaya, “The Center for Performing Arts’ staff look forward to returning to what we do best: bringing together artists and audiences to share diverse voices and stories that connect and inspire our community. We cannot wait for this reunion. The pandemic has illuminated the importance of shared human connection. While we have worked hard to maintain a virtual connection to our community over the past year and a half, we are anxious and excited to once again be together. To hear the buzz of the audience and their fading murmurs as the house lights dim, the curtain rises, and our shared journey on stage begins.”

Since its opening in December of 1995, the Center has provided the GSU and south suburban community with world-class entertainment and educational enlightenment. The Center will continue its 25th Anniversary celebration with an eclectic season of programming. Features include the international, critically acclaimed Momix, the dancer-illusionist company that elevates the human form to heights of inventive artistry as well as socially relevant dramas such as *Mike Wiley’s Breach of Peace: Stories of the Freedom Riders of 1961*, and *12 Angry Jurors* presented by GSU’s own Theatre and Performance Studies. From Grammy-Award-winning vocalist Karen Clark Sheard paying tribute to Aretha Franklin, to Emmy-Award-winning artist Orbert Davis and his Chicago Jazz Philharmonic showcasing jazz legends and up-and-coming musicians, the season celebrates the magic of live performance.

The 2021-22 Season opens October 10 with *Opera Up Close: Viva La Zarzuela! Featuring Ensemble Español*. Opera Up Close Series curator and Lyric Opera tenor John Concepcion will host an afternoon of operatic songs from the Iberian Peninsula to Latin America. In addition to outstanding vocal performances, two dancers from Ensemble Español Spanish Dance Theater (in residence at Northeastern Illinois University) will perform. Seated on stage with the performers, only 130 audience members will have the opportunity to experience the awesome power of the unamplified human voice.

In November, the Southland Area Theater Ensemble (SLATE) returns to the Center's stage with a global event celebrating theatre: *All Together Now!* This joyous musical revue features songs from Music Theatre International's beloved authors from iconic musicals including *Company*, *Ragtime*, *Les Misérables*, *Sister Act*, *Waitress*, *Rent*, and more. In February, the tributes to Broadway continue with the GSU Dance Company looking back at *25 Years of Broadway and Beyond...* showcasing original dance routines inspired by Broadway's most groundbreaking choreographers.

Orbert Davis' Chicago Jazz Philharmonic returns with *Forward Momentum* on November 20. This cross-generational concert features award-winning vocalist Maggie Brown and her sister Africa paying tribute to their legendary father Oscar Brown Jr., as well as a tribute to the late, great Freddie Hubbard from GSU honorary degree recipient and Emmy-Award-winning composer and trumpeter Orbert Davis. In addition, GSU alumni saxophonists Mwata Bowden (MA '79) and Justin Smith (BA '18) share the stage.

Families can celebrate the holidays with Lightwire Theater's production of *A Very Electric Christmas* on December 11. Featured as semi-finalists on NBC's America's Got Talent, Lightwire combines performance, puppetry, dance, and modern light technology to bring stories to life in complete darkness. A free STEAM workshop with Santa and Lightwire artists is included.

In January 2022, Momix: known internationally for works of exceptional inventiveness and physical beauty, will transport audiences to a fantasy world of magical lighting and imagery, athletic dance, astonishing acrobatics, outrageous costumes, and inventive props. In celebration of Momix's 35th Anniversary, *Viva Momix Forever* will present favorites from all six Momix shows plus four new pieces.

The celebration continues in March 2022 with *A Tribute to Aretha Franklin: The Queen of Soul* conceived by musician, vocalist, composer, and Franklin's mentee: Damien Sneed. Backed by a cast of jazz, gospel, and soul musicians, Gospel music legend and four-time Grammy-Award winner Karen Clark Sheard will lend her signature, multi-octave voice.

The Center for Performing Arts thanks our generous partners, funders, and individual contributors, including The National Endowment for the Arts, Arts Midwest, First Midwest Bank, WDCB 90.9 fm, and the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency.

Tickets are now on sale to flex buyers (patrons who purchase tickets to three or more shows).

All tickets for 2021-22 shows are on sale Tuesday, August 24.

GSU students, faculty, and staff qualify for discounted tickets with a valid GSU email address or i.d.

For more information, ticket prices, and preview videos, visit CenterTickets.net.

Center for Performing Arts 2021-22 Season Lineup

October 2021

- 10** **Opera Up Close: Viva La Zarzuela! Featuring Ensemble Español**
A tribute to the traditional Spanish genre: Zarzuela. Hosted by John Concepcion with rising Chicago opera stars.

November 2021

- 4-6** ***A Delightful Quarantine* presented by GSU Theatre and Performance Studies (TAPS)**
This dark and timely comedy interweaves the stories of residents of a suburban town forced to quarantine due to an extraterrestrial invasion.
- 14** ***All Together Now***
This joyous Broadway musical revue features songs Music Theatre International's iconic musicals.
- 20** **Orbert Davis' Chicago Jazz Philharmonic: Forward Momentum**

December 2021

- 11** **Lightwire Theater: *A Very Electric Christmas***

January 2022

23 **Opera Up Close: Happy Birthday, Mozart!**
Lyric Opera vocalists perform beloved arias and duets from Mozart's most beloved operas.

29 **Viva Momix Forever**

February 2022

11-12 **GSU Dance Company presents *25 Years of Broadway and Beyond***

22 ***Breach of Peace:***
Stories of the Freedom Riders of 1961
Presented by Mike Wiley
This one-man play is a living monument to the remarkable young men and women of various races, religions, and backgrounds who rose to face the dangers of fighting for justice and equity.

March 2022

14 **A Tribute to Aretha Franklin: The Queen of Soul**
Featuring Damien Sneed. With Special Guest Karen Clark Sheard.

April 2022

7 & 9 ***12 Angry Jurors* presented by GSU Theatre and Performance Studies (TAPS)**

How to Purchase Tickets

- Online at CenterTickets.net
- Over the phone at 708.235.2222
- In person at the Box Office: 1 University Parkway, University Park, IL 60484

Box Office Hours: Tuesday–Friday, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Open until 6 p.m. on Thursdays and two hours prior to show times.

Flex Packages

Tickets are currently on sale to Flex Buyers (patrons who purchase three or more shows). Flex buyers save 15% off tickets, receive priority seating, and enjoy exchange privileges.

Know Before You Go

Your health and safety are our priority.

Face masks are required on campus, even if vaccinated. Reduced capacity and socially distanced seating may be in place based on Governors State University and State mandates. Hand sanitizer will be made readily available throughout the venue and patrons are strongly encouraged to make use of them. If you are experiencing any of these symptoms of COVID-19, stay home and do not attend an event.

Center for Performing Arts' COVID-19 policies are mandated by Governors State University. For the most updated COVID-19 policies being implemented across campus please visit:

<https://www.govst.edu/coronavirus/>

Tickets range from **\$10 to \$80**. Ask about additional opportunities for box seating and special events. Discounts are available for students, children, seniors 65+, groups of 10+, GSU faculty and staff, and patrons purchasing tickets to three or more shows.

Parking is free. For best GPS directions, use the location search term "Governors State University."

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