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The Center for Performing Arts

Governors State University

[CenterTickets.net](http://CenterTickets.net)

\*Media passes, photographs, videos, interviews and additional materials available upon request.



## **THE CENTER FOR PERFORMING ARTS' 2025 - 2026 30TH ANNIVERSARY SEASON PROMISES LEGACY, LEGENDS, AND ICONS**

University Park, IL (May 29, 2025) – The Center for Performing Arts (The Center) at Governors State University (GovState), 1 University Parkway, University Park, is pleased to announce its 30th Anniversary season, aptly titled “The Legacy Season.” This celebratory season honors The Center’s history as a vital hub for Chicago Southland artistry and beyond while spotlighting legendary voices, iconic performers, and trailblazing artists who inspire artists across generations. Opening The Center’s 30<sup>th</sup> season is South Chicago Dance Theatre, representing the Southland’s rich cultural dance scene. South Chicago Dance Theatre is just one of the talents featured as part of the 2025 - 2026 season, along with season highlights that include powerhouse vocalist CeCe Teneal and cult icon John Waters, whose boundary-pushing storytelling defines what it means to be a living legend.” The season also features returning favorites such as “[The Rocky Horror Picture Show](#)” and “[Ruth Page’ The Nutcracker](#).”

The Center’s Executive Director, Scott Sowinski, shares, “Our 2025-26 season invites us to reflect on the legacy of the art that has defined and shaped us – as well as the emerging voices that continue to inspire and sustain us. This milestone season celebrates 30 years of world-class artistry: music, dance, theatre – multidimensional, wholly inspired, and all presented at your creative home – here at The Center. Our continued mission to place Art at the Center of Your Life continues to expand. Our passionate team has researched and surveyed the broad landscape of performances across the nation to bring you the very best. Together, our artists and our audience members secure and extend our legacy for generations to come.”

The Center is continuing its momentum in 2025 - 2026 with the following:

- The dance offerings for the 2025 - 2026 season will feature: [South Chicago Dance Theatre](#) and [Ballet 5:8 /a Llorona](#), the much-anticipated return of “[Ruth Page’s The Nutcracker](#)”; “[All That Jazz](#),” featuring the talents of the GovState Theatre and Performance Studies Dance Performance Students and [Chicago Tap Theatre](#).
- This season’s music offerings are split into two different categories: The Signature Tribute Concert Series and Southland Talent. The Signature Tribute Concert Series features [Cece Teneal’s Divas of Soul](#), [The Rat Pack Show](#) and [Lizzy and the Triggermen](#). The Southland Talent offerings include [The Center Southland Spotlight](#), [Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra presents: NIGHT MOVES: The Planets, E.T. and Star Trek](#), [Opera Up Close presents: Halftime High Notes](#) and [Center Stage Icons: 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Legacy Celebration with Kelvin and Alexis Roston](#).
- This season’s theatre and film offerings include the return of two favorites: “[The Rocky Horror Picture Show](#)” featuring a live shadow cast and audience participation just in time for Halloween as well as the beloved radio play [It’s A Wonderful Life](#) in December. Additionally, guests can enjoy [John Waters](#), in-person, as well as “[Anonymouse](#)” and “[By the Way, Meet Vera Stark](#)”, presented by GovState Theatre and Performance Studies.
- The Center also brings the return of the Arts in Education (AIE) series featuring weekday matinee performances that include: [Maddi’s Fridge](#); [Maleta de Maebele](#); [When Good Broccoli Goes Bad presented by MPAACT](#); [Finding North](#); [Click Clack Mog](#); [Professor Wow’s FUN-believable Science Show](#) and [Pete the Cat](#). AIE tickets start at \$9 each.

Mainstage pre-sale for flex passes and subscribers are on sale now. All tickets, subscriptions and single tickets, go on Tuesday, June 17 by calling 708.235.2222 or visiting [CenterTickets.net](#). Patrons may also make purchases at the box office. Summer box office hours are Tuesday-Thursday: 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. Flex Buyers qualify by purchasing any number of tickets to three or more 2025 - 2026 shows. Flex Buyers save 15% on tickets and enjoy flexible exchange privileges. Discounts are also available for students, children, seniors 65+ and groups of 10+.

For more information, ticket prices, and preview videos, visit [CenterTickets.net](#).

## Center for Performing Arts 2025 - 2026 Season Lineup

### September 2025

**27 at 7:30 p.m.**      [South Chicago Dance Theatre](#)

Led by South Chicago native and one of WBEZ’s breakout artists of 2024 -  
Kia S. Smith - South Chicago Dance Theatre will make its Center debut with  
a retrospective of its most acclaimed works including “IN/WITHIN” and “Soul  
Power”.

### October 2025

**11 at 2 p.m.**

**[The Center Southland Spotlight](#)**

From powerhouse vocals to genre-spanning sounds—jazz, pop, soul, and beyond—this celebration of local talent brings together the Southland's finest artists for one electrifying night of music and community.

**16 at 10 a.m. & 12 p.m.**

**Arts in Education - [Maddi's Fridge](#)**

Based on the book by Lois Brant. Recommended for Grades 1-6.

**18 at 2 p.m.**

**[Ballet 5:8 La Llorona](#)**

Ballet 5:8 engages communities in Chicago, the Midwest and across the nation in conversation of life and faith through innovative storytelling and breathtaking dance. Explore the Mexican myth of "La Llorona," where choreographer Julianna Rubio Slager reinterprets Maria's journey through a lens of compassion and nuance. With each poignant movement and evocative scene, "La Llorona" sheds light on the silent struggles faced by new mothers, fostering empathy, understanding and a call to action for greater awareness and support.

**21 at 10 a.m. & 12 p.m.**

**Arts in Education - [Maleta de Maebelle](#)**

A bilingual adaptation of the celebrated & beloved *Reading Rainbow* picture book *Maebelle's Suitcase* by Tricia Tusa. Recommended for Grades K-6.

**25 at 8 p.m.**

**[The Rocky Horror Picture Show with Live Shadow Cast](#)**

Feel the antici...pation! One of the highlights of the Halloween season, *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* with a live shadow cast returns to The Center's stage with this classic cult rock'n'roll, science fiction, horror satire. Come in costume or just come for the fun, the live shadow cast takes the film to the next level as audiences experience the action with the whole theatre involved. Whether it's an introduction to the camp or your 100th, get ready to do the "Time Warp, again!"

**31 at 8 p.m.**

**[John Waters: A Live Director's Commentary and Screening of \*Serial Mom\*](#)**

The Center welcomes the king of camp, John Waters, for an unforgettable evening of cult cinema and twisted storytelling. Expect an endless bag of transgressive tales and hetero-non-aggressive wit that'll warm the dark little hearts of non-binary brats everywhere. Perfect for Halloween night, Waters

will screen *Serial Mom* with live commentary—sharing behind-the-scenes stories, real-life inspirations, and unfiltered observations. Over-sharing? Absolutely. Too much information? Probably. But airing his dirty laundry just makes him feel clean. Includes post-screening Q&A.

## November 2025

6-9

### [Anon\(ymous\) presented by GovState Theatre and Performance Studies \(TAPS\)](#)

Separated from his mother, a young refugee called Anon journeys through the United States, encountering a wide variety of people -- some kind, some dangerous and cruel -- as he searches for his family. From a sinister one-eyed butcher to beguiling barflies to a sweatshop, Anon must navigate through a chaotic, ever-changing landscape in this entrancing adaptation of Homer's "The Odyssey."

7 at 7:30 p.m.

### [CeCe Teneal's \*Divas of Soul\*](#)

Hop on the "Midnight Train to Georgia" over "River Deep, Mountain High" while award-winning vocalist CeCe Teneal delivers the "R-E-S-P-E-C-T" you deserve in *Divas of Soul*, a one-of-a-kind concert event! This spectacular celebration of fifty years of chart-topping music from artists like Aretha Franklin, Gladys Knight, Chaka Khan, Tina Turner, Whitney Houston and others has wowed audiences worldwide.

13 at 10 a.m. & 12 p.m.

### [Arts in Education - \*When Good Broccoli Goes Bad\*](#)

A foot-tapping children's musical that playfully encourages children (and adults) to make healthier choices. Recommended for Grades PreK-5.

22 at 3 p.m.

### [Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra presents: NIGHT MOVES: The Planets, E.T., and Star Trek](#)

Experience a celestial journey through music! IPO presents *Star Trek Through the Years*, *E.T.'s Adventures on Earth*, and Holst's epic *The Planets*, accompanied by stunning visuals from Adrian Wyard. This out-of-this-world concert will forever change how you see—and hear—the night sky.

## December 2025

6-7

### [Ruth Page's \*The Nutcracker\*](#)

Returning to The Center after sold-out performances in 2024, this beloved holiday family classic is the only production that recreates the original version's full-length staging. Little Clara, her mysterious godfather magician, a handsome prince, the battle between toy soldiers and mice, and a forest glade of dancing Snowflakes are all brought to life in this beautiful and joyful

production. Featuring international guest artists alongside the Ruth Page Civic Ballet elite dancers, experience exquisite performances, Tchaikovsky's magical score, stunning costumes, and imaginative settings in the Land of Snow and the Kingdom of the Sweets!

**13 at 2 p.m. & 7:30 p.m.**

**[IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE: A Live Radio Play](#)**

The holiday season continues with The Center's, *It's A Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play*. Rediscover the magic of Frank Capra's timeless masterpiece, "It's a Wonderful Life," in a fun and immersive way. With the help of an ensemble led by the Center's staff, this live radio play adaptation takes audiences back in time to the 1940s, perfect for the whole family, as everyone becomes part of a live studio audience attending a radio broadcast of this beloved holiday tale.

**January 2026**

**29 at 10 a.m. & 12 p.m.**

**Arts in Education - [Finding North](#)**

Based on the stories of African-American Underground Railroad hero John P. Parker. Recommended for Grades: 6-12.

**February 2026**

**5 at 10 a.m.**

**Arts in Education - [South Chicago Dance Theatre presents \*Dancing Through the Great Migration\*](#)**

This show uses the art of dance to educate about The Great Migration: an iconic movement of about 6 million African Americans from the South to the North and West between 1910 and 1970. Recommended for Grades 5-12.

**7 at 2 p.m.**

**[Opera Up Close presents: \*Halftime High Notes: Honoring the Opera Up Close Legacy with John Concepcion and Friends\*](#)**

After 16 years of incredible music and memories, John Concepcion takes his final bow with a program of halftime high notes and a celebration of the program that shares the beauty, drama and power of opera.

**15 at 3 p.m.**

**[The Rat Pack](#)**

Featuring the timeless music and charisma of Frank Sinatra, Sammy Davis Jr., and Dean Martin, this high-energy show transports you to vintage Las Vegas. Enjoy a night of signature Rat Pack humor, classic songs, and maybe even a surprise visit from Marilyn Monroe! Whether you're sharing it with a special someone or the entire family, you'll be transported to a bygone era where love, laughter, and music collide.

## March 2026

5 at 10 a.m.

**Arts in Education - [All That Jazz presented by GovState Theatre and Performance Studies Dance Performance](#)**

6 at 10 a.m. & 12 p.m.

**Arts in Education - [Click Clack Moo](#)**

Based on the Caldecott Honor Book by Doreen Cronin and Betsy Lewin.  
Recommended for Grades: K-4.

7 at 2 p.m. & 7:30 p.m.

**[All That Jazz presented by GovState Theatre and Performance Studies Dance Performance](#)**

Celebrate the rhythms of American dance in this lively performance featuring jazz classics and fresh new works. Presented by GovState's Theatre and Performance Studies and Dance Company, the show highlights choreography by students, faculty and alumni in a tribute to jazz past and present.

21 at 7:30 p.m.

**[Center Stage Icons – 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Legacy Celebration with Kelvin & Alexis Roston](#)**

Award-winning duo Alexis J. Roston & Kelvin Roston Jr. pay musical tribute to the Center for its 30th Anniversary. From Kelvin's unforgettable turn as Donny Hathaway in *Twisted Melodies* to Alexis' show-stopping vocals, this dynamic couple celebrates the music, memories, and moments that have shaped the Center's stage.

25 at 10 a.m. & 12 p.m.

**Arts in Education - [Professor Wow's FUN-believable Science Show](#)**

When students experience the fantastic, 12-foot tall "Foam Monster," the impossible "Balloons in Orbit," the uproariously funny "Bernoulli TP Wipe Out Challenge" and the "Super-Colossal Vortex Cannon," they learn that nothing is impossible—as long as it obeys the laws of science! Recommended for Grades K-8.

28 at 7:30 p.m.

**[Unleash the Beats by Chicago Tap Theatre](#)**

Chicago Tap Theatre brings energy, artistry, and rhythm to the stage. With dazzling footwork and musicality, this celebrated company honors the tradition of Tap while making it fresh and fun for all ages. A joyful, high-energy performance perfect for dance lovers and newcomers alike.

## April 2026

**9-12**

**[By The Way, Meet Vera Stark](#) presented by GovState Theatre and Performance Studies (TAPS)**

This play by Lynn Nottage follows the life of Vera Stark, a headstrong African-American maid and budding actress, and her tangled relationship with her boss, a white Hollywood star desperately grasping to hold on to her career. When circumstances collide and both women land roles in the same Southern epic, the story behind the cameras leaves Vera with a surprising and controversial legacy scholars will debate for years to come.

**17 at 10 a.m. & 12 p.m.**

**Arts in Education - [Pete the Cat](#)**

Based on the book series written by Eric Litwin and illustrated by James Dean. Recommended for Grades PreK-3.

**25 at 7:30 p.m.**

**[Lizzy and The Triggerman](#)**

Dubbed “10-piece jazz sensations” (LA Weekly) and “one of the hottest swing bands in LA” (Good Day LA), Lizzy & the Triggermen is redefining vintage jazz for modern times. With sold-out shows at iconic venues like the Troubadour and a top 3 spot on the iTunes jazz charts alongside Miles Davis and Kamasi Washington, they blend old-school swing with contemporary edge.

## **ABOUT THE CENTER FOR PERFORMING ARTS**

The Center for Performing Arts was founded in 1995, culminating a 10-year quest to bring a world-class performing arts facility to the Chicago Southland. Since its inception, The Center has served more than 1.5 million individuals, introduced over 300,000 schoolchildren to arts-in-education experiences, and welcomed 8,000+ artists and touring companies, presenting dozens of local, national and world premieres. The Center annually serves over 50,000 residents from Cook, Will and Kankakee counties in Northeast Illinois and Lake County in Northwest Indiana. The state-of-the art facility seats 1,165 patrons and is located at a vibrant and dynamic university setting that also houses an on-site [Visual Arts Gallery](#) and [The Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park](#) (theNate) offering unique opportunities for pre-and post-show activities and gatherings.

## **How to Purchase Tickets**

- Online at [CenterTickets.net](#)
- Via Over the phone at 708.235.2222
- In person at the Box Office: 1 University Parkway, University Park, IL 60484

Regular Box Office Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.; Thursdays: 11 a.m. – 6 p.m. and two hours prior to all performances.

### **Discounts for GovState Students, Faculty & Staff\*:**

- **Students:**
  - Tickets: \$10 or \$20 each, depending on the show.
  - Requirements: Must present a valid GovState student ID at purchase or upon picking up tickets at will call.
  - Limit: Up to 4 discounted tickets per show.
- **Faculty & Staff:**
  - Discount: 15% off all tickets.
  - Requirements: Must present a valid GovState employee ID at purchase or upon picking up tickets at will call.

\*Some restrictions may apply

### **Flex Packages**

Patrons qualify for a Flex Package when purchasing three or more shows for the 2025 - 2026 season. Flex buyers save 15% off tickets, receive invitations to the exclusive Concierge Lounge prior to select performances and enjoy exchange privileges.

### **Know Before You Go**

Ask about additional opportunities for box seating and special events. Discounts are available for students, children, seniors 65+, groups of 10+, and patrons purchasing tickets to three or more shows.

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

### **Connect With The Center**

Like The Center on Facebook @TheCenteratGovState and subscribe on [YouTube](#) for updates on events, offers, and more. Share your experience at The Center on Instagram: @TheCenteratGovState #thecenteratgovstate #govstatearts.

The Center for Performing Arts' 2025-26 Season is proudly sponsored and funded by Governors State University Honors College, Sutton Ford, Westside Children's Therapy, Illinois Arts Council, Nicor Gas, and The South Suburban Chicago Links, Incorporated Chapter.

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