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## **Regional Audience Celebrates Youth and the Performing Arts in Kansas City at the Fourth Annual Future Stages Festival**

*More than 800 Young Performers Featured on Three Kauffman Center Stages During Free Community Event*

Kansas City, MO – Today, the Kauffman Center's fourth annual Future Stages Festival showcased more than 800 youth artists performing on three Kauffman Center stages, including Saint Luke's Outdoor Stage, Muriel Kauffman Theatre and Helzberg Hall. Nearly 5,000 patrons attended. Twenty-six performing arts organizations headlined the free event that welcomed the entire community.

At this year's Future Stages Festival, more than one-third of the performances were presented by community groups that had never performed at the Kauffman Center. In addition to the wide range of performance styles featured at the festival, guests also enjoyed more than 20 free arts activities provided by community organizations.

"We are committed to providing young artists opportunities to perform and engage year-round at the Kauffman Center. Future Stages Festival offers young artists the experience of performing at a venue that national and international performers share," said Kauffman Center President and CEO Paul Schofer. "Opening the Kauffman Center's doors to visitors of all ages, Future Stages Festival invites all to experience the diversity of the performing arts and shine the spotlight on the talented young performers that are in our community."

Presented by the Kauffman Center's Premier Partner, Saint Luke's Health System, Future Stages Festival is part of the Kauffman Center's Open Doors *Spotlight on Youth* access program designed to share the Kauffman Center's stages with a wide range of local artists and youth performers.

In addition to *Spotlight on Youth*, the Kauffman Center's Open Doors program offers transportation subsidies for schools to attend matinee programs, provides free community tickets to non-profit agencies, and designs opportunities for students to engage with Kauffman Center staff through workshops and internships.

"Complementing the diverse programming presented throughout the year, the Kauffman Center is dedicated to creating an environment that celebrates its future artists. Placing the arts at the center of our vibrant community fosters creativity and vitality for generations to come," Schofer said.

Greater Kansas City and its surrounding region is home to thousands of talented youth artists, each with dreams of performing on the big stage. Sharing the stage and spotlight with national and international performers throughout the year, the Kauffman Center is committed to supporting young aspiring Kansas City performers by recognizing their talents at this annual event. Future Stages Festival provides young people from all performing art disciplines and styles the opportunity to perform at Kansas City's most recognized performing arts venue.

**Photos of this year's event for media use are available [HERE](#).**

**The 2017 Future Stages Festival featured performances by:**

5 Star Jazz Band  
Ailey Camp - The Group  
Crescendo Conservatory - Crescendo in Motion  
Grupo Axe Capoeira  
Harmony Project KC  
Heart of America Shakespeare Festival - Team Shakespeare  
House of Dance and BEST NETWORK  
Ice Studios School of Dance  
Kansas City Ballet School  
Kansas City Youth Percussion Ensemble  
KC Boys Choir & KC Girls Choir  
KC Institute of Chinese Language and Culture Dance Group  
Knox Church Celebration Choir  
Lily Zhang Li Taylor Dance Academy  
Lyric Opera of Kansas City  
Metropolitan Strings Academy Orchestra  
Music Theatre Kansas City, SunRaise  
Ottawa Suzuki Strings  
Starlight STARS  
Take the Stage Outreach Program  
The Pulse Performing Arts Center Competition & Performance Company  
The Smithville Ringleaders  
Traditional Music Society's Soundz of Africa Youth Ensemble  
United Dance Performers

**Arts Activities were provided by:**

American Institute of Architects Kansas City  
Drum Safari  
Great American Kites and Events  
Heart of America Shakespeare Festival  
Kansas City Ballet  
Kansas City Symphony  
Kansas City Zoo  
KC Chalk and Walk Festival  
Keys 4/4 Kids: Pianos on Parade  
Lucia Aerial  
Lyric Opera of Kansas City  
Mattie Rhodes Center  
Museum at PrairieFire  
Saint Luke's Health System  
StoneLion Puppet Theatre  
The Last Carnival

The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art  
UMKC Conservatory of Music and Dance

### **ABOUT THE OPEN DOORS PROGRAM**

The Kauffman Center Open Doors program connects young people to the arts through three major components:

- The Open Doors *Spotlight on Youth* initiative contains several programs that inspire and nurture the next generation of artists, arts patrons, and arts professionals with access to the Kauffman Center's staff, stages, and resources.
- The Open Doors *Community Tickets* program offers access to programming at the Kauffman Center for youth and families through reduced prices or free tickets.
- The Open Doors *Transportation Fund* offers funding to schools in the metropolitan area so that bringing students to the Kauffman Center for school matinee performances is more affordable.

More information is available at [kauffmancenter.org/open-doors](http://kauffmancenter.org/open-doors).

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

The Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts – a major not-for-profit center for music, opera, theater and dance designed by Moshe Safdie – opened in 2011. Serving as a cultural cornerstone for Kansas City and the region, the Kauffman Center delivers extraordinary and diverse performing arts experiences. Honored as one of the World's 15 Most Beautiful Concert Halls, the Kauffman Center attracts some of the world's most renowned performers and entertainers.

Through educational outreach programs and community enrichment, the Kauffman Center supports Kansas City as a cultural destination. More information on the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts is available at [kauffmancenter.org](http://kauffmancenter.org).

Follow the Kauffman Center on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram to get details about upcoming performances and behind-the-scenes access.



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