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REGIONAL AUDIENCE CELEBRATES YOUTH AND THE PERFORMING ARTS IN KANSAS CITY AT THE FIFTH ANNUAL FUTURE STAGES FESTIVAL

*More than 700 Young Performers Featured on Four Kauffman Center Stages
During Free Community Event*

Kansas City, MO – Today, the Kauffman Center's fifth annual Future Stages Festival showcased more than 700 youth artists performing on four Kauffman Center stages, including the Saint Luke's Outdoor Stage, Muriel Kauffman Theatre, Helzberg Hall, and new this year, an outdoor Community Stage dedicated to small ensemble performances and audience engagement activities.

Thirty-three performing arts organizations headlined the free event that welcomed the entire community. In addition to the wide range of performance styles featured at the festival, guests also enjoyed more than 15 free arts activities provided by community organizations. More than 5,000 patrons attended the annual celebration. The festival is presented by the Kauffman Center's Premier Partner, Saint Luke's Health System.

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

Future Stages Festival has been inviting all ages to experience the arts while showcasing diverse performance styles on the Kauffman Center's stages for the past five years. Since 2014, the festival has:

- Featured 3,500+ youth performers
- Highlighted 60+ community arts performance groups
- Welcome 25,000+ guests
- And presented dozens of arts activities for guests of all ages

"The Kauffman Center is thrilled to celebrate Future Stages Festival's fifth anniversary. This signature community event allows us to turn the spotlight on youth performances and family-friendly programming while supporting the growth of future Kansas City artists," said Kauffman Center President and CEO Paul Schofer. "We are committed to providing the Kansas City community access to performances on our stages. Future Stages Festival continues to support that goal by highlighting youth engagement and celebrating diversity in the arts."

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. Through its various initiatives, the Open Doors program is vital to the Kauffman Center's efforts to promote and invest in arts advocacy.

"The Kauffman Center is dedicated to creating a supportive environment that will allow Kansas City and the region to nurture its own artists. Placing the arts at the center of our vibrant community fosters creativity and vitality for generations to come," Schofer said.

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, the Kauffman Center is committed to recognizing local youth performers' 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.

The 2018 Future Stages Festival featured performances by:

AileyCamp
Caruthers Creative Center's Hot Stepperz
Charlie Parker Memorial Jazz Ensemble
Crescendo Conservatory's Crescendo in Motion
Fab 4 Quartet
Future Jazz KC
Harmony Project KC
Heart of America Shakespeare Festival: Team Shakespeare
Heart of America Youth Ballet
House of Dance / BEST Network
ICE Studios Youth Dance
Kansas City Aerial Arts
Kansas City Boys Choir/Kansas City Girls Choir
KC Ballet School
KC Institute of Chinese Dance and Language
KC Youth Percussion Ensemble
KC Young Audiences Dance Students
KC Young Audiences Garage Band
Kristi's Academy of Dance
Lawrence Ballet Theatre
Lily Zhang Li Dance Academy
Lyric Opera: LyriKids
Metropolitan Conservatory Orchestra
MTKC - SunRaise
Mudra Dance Academy
O'Riada Irish Dance Academy
Ottawa Suzuki Strings
Rhythm-scape
Starlight STARS
Take the Stage - Team EXCEL!
The Last Carnival
The Smithville Ringleaders
Traditional Music Society's Soundz of Africa

Arts Activities were provided by:

American Institute of Architects Kansas City
Girl Scouts of NE Kansas & NW Missouri
Great American Kites & Events
Heart of America Shakespeare Festival
The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Arts
Kansas City Ballet
Kansas City Chiefs
Kansas City Symphony

Kansas City Zoo
KCPT Kids
Lyric Opera of Kansas City
Museum at Prairiefire
Planet Play
StoneLion Puppet Theatre
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-price 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.

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.

Future Stages Festival is presented by Premier Partner, Saint Luke's Health System. Funding for Future Stages Festival comes from: The Marlese and Robert Gourley Children's Fund; The Hearst Foundations; Courtney S. Turner Charitable Trust; John H. Mize Jr. and Bank of America, N.A. Trustees; Richard J. Stern Foundation for the Arts; National Endowment for the Arts; the Missouri Arts Council; Neighborhood Tourist Development Fund of the City of Kansas City, MO; JE Dunn Construction and NuWin Care. Festival support is provided by Cumulus Media; KCPT Kids; and Southwest Airlines.

Visit the Kauffman Center's online press room for media resources, multimedia library, press release archive and more: kauffmancenter.org/about/press-room/

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

