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JUNE 12 & 13 VIRTUAL FUTURE STAGES FESTIVAL

FREE EVENT FOR ALL AGES!

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PRESENTED BY PREMIER PARTNER: Saint Luke's

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ONLINE AUDIENCE CELEBRATES YOUTH AND THE PERFORMING ARTS IN KANSAS CITY AT VIRTUAL FUTURE STAGES FESTIVAL

Kauffman Center Featured More than 500 Young Performers During Free Virtual Community Event

Kansas City, MO – This weekend, the Kauffman Center's eighth annual [Future Stages Festival](#) showcased more than 500 youth artists virtually through the Kauffman Center's digital and social media channels. The festival highlighted video performances, including some from the Kauffman Center's stages, and family-friendly activities.

Twenty-two performing arts organizations headlined the free virtual event that welcomed viewers from across the city and beyond. Audiences reveled in more than a dozen youth performance videos via the online portal. Five special YouTube Premiere videos debuted on June 12 showcasing prerecorded performances filmed on the Kauffman Center stages. Guests also interacted with community partner-led [Facebook Live](#) segments on June 13 and enjoyed a family-friendly activity booklet full of coloring pages, matching games, do-it-at-home crafts and more. Video content from the two-day festival has been viewed more than 4,500 times so far. Virtual Future Stages 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](#).

For the past eight years, Future Stages Festival has invited artists of all ages to share their diverse performance styles on the Kauffman Center's stages, ranging from traditional Indian dance to classic American Jazz. Since 2014, the in-person festival has:

- Featured 4,000+ youth performers
- Highlighted 70+ community arts performance groups
- Welcomed 30,000+ guests to the Kauffman Center
- Presented dozens of arts activities for guests of all ages

In 2020, Future Stages Festival embraced a virtual format to keep the community safe. This virtual festival:

- Reached nearly 35,000 users via Facebook livestreams from debut, on June 14, through July 30
- Welcomed more than 6,000 views on Future Stages Festival webpages
- Featured more than 700 youth performers in video content
- Garnered more than 600 Festival Guide views and more than 300 Activity Booklet views as of July 30, 2020

“The Kauffman Center is so proud to share Future Stages Festival with our community for an eighth straight year,” Paul Schofer, Kauffman Center President and CEO, said. “This signature community event allows us to create family-friendly programming that supports the growth of our young Kansas City artists. While we would certainly prefer to have everyone at the Kauffman Center in person, we virtually turned a bright spotlight on these talented performers, and we are so excited by how determined our community was to join us as we celebrated Kansas City’s vast diversity in the arts.”

Through activities like Future Stages Festival, the Kauffman Center's Open Doors Spotlight on Youth program welcomes young performers to the Kauffman Center’s stages. Building a professional on-stage experience filled with support and encouragement allows these young performers to grow and challenge themselves in their art.

In addition to Spotlight on Youth, the Kauffman Center's Open Doors program offers transportation subsidies so students from all schools can 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 continues to nurture a supportive environment that welcomes performing artists locally, nationally and beyond. It is exciting to see the next generation of performing artists share their talents with audiences near and far,” Schofer said. “Young people are the future of the arts. Investing in our future and demonstrating our ability to support young artists amid these unique times builds resilient and inventive youth that will transform our future.”

Kansas City and its surrounding region is home to thousands of talented young artists, each with a dream of performing on the big stage. The Kauffman Center is committed to recognizing the talents of youth performers at the annual Future Stages Festival, helping local artists dance, sing and perform their way into living rooms across the city. With viewers commenting in real time on livestreams and putting their hands together virtually by posting on social media with the hashtag #VirtualFutureStages, the community continued to show these young performers how much they appreciate and support them.

The 2021 Future Stages Festival featured performances by:

18th Street Combo from Kansas City Jazz Academy	KC Youth Percussion Ensemble
AileyCamp the Group	Lawrence Ballet Theatre
Chilanka School of Dance	Lily Zhang Li Taylor Dance Academy
Crescendo Conservatory	Metropolitan Youth Orchestra of Kansas City
Gurukul Dance Company	MSA Crescendo Project Orchestra
Heart of America Youth Ballet	Pythons Drill Team
HK Chinese Folk Dance Group	String Sprouts KC
Harmony Project KC	The A-Flat Youth Orchestra
ICE STUDIOS School of Dance	The Culture House Conservatory of Dance Youth

Kansas City Ballet School
 Kansas City Boys Choir/Kansas City Girls Choir
 Kansas City Movement

Ensemble
 Youth Symphony of Kansas City, Symphony Orchestra

Arts Content and Activities provided by:

American Institute of Architects Kansas City
 American Jazz Museum
 American Theatre Guild
 Drum Safari
 Global FC (Fútbol Community)
 Heart of America Shakespeare Festival
 Jan Kraybill
 Kansas City Ballet
 Kansas City PBS
 Kansas City Public Library
 Kansas City Symphony
 Kathak Aura

Katie Minion, DoodleStation
 Lyric Opera of Kansas City
 Mattie Rhodes Center
 Saint Luke's Health System
 Science City
 StoneLion Puppet Theatre
 The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art
 The Whole Person
 Three Trails Taiko
 UMKC Conservatory Academy
 Vania Soto

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 offers year-round programs and engagement opportunities that connect young people with the Kauffman Center.
- The Open Doors [Community Tickets](#) program offers free and reduced-price performance tickets to underserved audiences through local social service agencies and schools.
- The Open Doors [Transportation Fund](#) helps schools offer high quality performing arts experiences to students by eliminating or defraying the costs of bus transportation.

More information about Open Doors programs 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.

Virtual Future Stages Festival is presented by Premier Partner Saint Luke's Health System. Additional funding provided by: Richard J. Stern Foundation for the Arts – Commerce Bank Trustee; Anonymous; The Marlese and Robert Gourley Children's Fund; Frank and Margaret McGee Fund; National Endowment for the Arts; the Missouri Arts Council; JE Dunn Construction; and The NuWin Foundation. In-kind support is provided by Cumulus Media; The Kansas City Star; and KCUR 89.3 FM.

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.



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