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CPA E-Blasts Patrons Weekly Cultural Events

Office of Marketing and Communications

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CPA E-Blasts Patrons Weekly Cultural Events



By mid-March 2020, the [Center for Performing Arts](#) (CPA) at [Governors State University](#) (GSU) had welcomed more than 17,000 patrons, a testament to the power of live performance. But when a pandemic abruptly closed its doors, the CPA staff pulled together a rich list of [virtual resources](#) to keep the community connected with the fine arts and provide a spotlight for hope.

“We’re so used to supporting so many artists who come through our doors,” said Lana Rogachevskaya, director of the CPA. “When artists and production companies began to move performances online, my email in-box overflowed with this news. But not everybody has access to the kind of high-quality artists we see because we’re in the industry.”

To spread the word to CPA patrons, community members and educators, CPA staff began sending weekly emails dubbed [Theatre Thursday](#), [Family Fun Friday](#) and [Opera Up Closer](#) to offer patrons a glimpse of cultural events they can enjoy from home.

"During trying times the performing arts are beacons of hope. Until we can gather again for live performance, we remain committed to connecting you with diverse artists," said Rogachevskaya who called the CPA staff and former students "personal ambassadors."

Their recorded personal messages open many of the emails the CPA sends to the delight of patrons.

Also among them is John Concepcion, member of the center’s Board of Advisors and curator of Opera Up Closer, the popular annual CPA event that brings audience members onto the stage for an intimate performance. Concepcion shared his own operatic talents and also invited performers to do the same. The top of the May 10 email featured Desiree Hassler, a full-time chorus member with Chicago’s Lyric Opera, who shared a video clip of herself singing in her bathroom, “the best acoustics I have

around, and without my four kiddos running around,” she said. Her video topped a page that featured links to six featured opera performances.



The June 4

Theatre Thursday email listed two upcoming streaming productions including “Almost Maine” and “Coriolanus” by the National Theatre Company. The email was topped by a personal message from Nekia Driver, who graduated in 2020 with a [Bachelor of Arts in Theatre and Performance Studies](#). In the video, Driver performed lines from “Almost Maine” and added, “This is a play that’s going to take you on an emotional roller coaster. It’s by Plays in the House Teen Edition. Please tune in!”

The Family Fun email features activities and resources from across the country, with content ranging from Lincoln Center Pop-Up Classroom with hands-on activities for children to streaming productions like “The Snow Rabbit” marked with suggested viewing ages. One email starts with a video of Kimberly Gonzalez, concessions and group concierge manager, with her daughters Winter and Lucy, urging viewers to take “the Nate Challenge,” reproducing artwork from the [Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park](#) at GSU.

Material is being updated continually. Emails sent out in early June acknowledged the recent social unrest, providing links to resources to help people talk about racism with their children and acknowledging a lack of diversity in the world of opera.

Community members are welcome to forward suggestions.

“We miss gathering together under one roof and experiencing the beauty of the performing arts,” Rogachevskaya said. “But the show must go on.”

Even if it’s on a virtual stage.

To sign-up for a specific list or campaign, email tickets@govst.edu with the subject line: Theatre Thursday, Opera Up Closer, or Family Fun. Also, please follow the CPA Facebook page at facebook.com/centeratgsu/ and join the [Theatre Thursday group](#) on Facebook.