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GOVERNOR'S SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS ANNOUNCES VIRTUAL SUMMER PROGRAM

Annual Program to be Hosted Online to Prioritize Student Safety

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (May 7, 2020) – The Governor's School for the Arts (GSA), a program of Kentucky Performing Arts (KPA), will be hosted virtually this year to maximize the safety of students, staff and faculty amid the novel coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. For more than 30 years, young artists from across the commonwealth have gathered each summer for three weeks of immersive arts instruction on a university campus. This year, GSA's programming will be brought to students in the safety of their homes.

Since 1987, more than 6,400 young rising high school juniors and seniors have descended on a college campus setting to immerse themselves in an arts intensive environment, with cross-discipline learning, special guest artist performances and lectures, and the opportunity to access critical life-changing college scholarships.

"The Governor's School for the Arts has long history of connecting students with Kentucky arts and culture through this prestigious three-week summer program," said Gov. Andy Beshear. "I commend our program leaders for their commitment to making this program available virtually for our students as we continue our efforts to protect the citizens of the commonwealth from the spread of the coronavirus."

The program was scheduled to be held at the University of Kentucky (UK). While UK will not serve as the physical home this summer, the university remains a close partner as GSA develops opportunities and resources for the 2020 program.

"The health and safety of the early career artists selected for the Governors School is paramount in all of our decision making to change the format for this year. Shifting to remote delivery helps to protect all involved and challenges our creativity, yet as the university remains "virtual hosts" our faculty and staff look forward to seeing the results of this creative force being unleashed in these exciting new ways," said Dean Mark Shanda of the University of Kentucky College of Fine Arts. "In addition, we are confident that our virtual welcome to campus will still introduce these important students to the exciting educational paths that we offer. We all look forward to both taking on this challenge and experiencing the resulting creative rewards."

GSA will be hosted online from June 29 to July 17 via video conferencing platforms. Students will engage in a dynamic series of virtual daily seminars, creative projects, master classes, and lectures. Instruction will be offered in nine disciplines: Architecture and design, creative writing, dance, drama, film and photography, instrumental music, musical theater, visual art and vocal music. GSA's expert faculty will

lead students through art form-specific learning in the window of 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. EDT Monday through Friday. Instruction will include one-on-one learning opportunities, presentations from guest artists, independent work time, and more. Opportunities to engage with guest artists will include a virtual Q&A with Kevin “K.O.” Olusola, member of the GRAMMY award winning group Pentatonix and a 2004 alumnus of GSA, as well as a virtual performance by acclaimed American Roots musician Martha Redbone, whose music is partially inspired by her childhood in Harlan County, Kentucky.

“While the in-person learning experience can never be replicated, this presents an exciting challenge in terms of creativity,” said Kim Baker, president and CEO of Kentucky Performing Arts. “As artists, they are tasked with being innovative and thought-provoking, and this change is reflective of how life sometimes forces us to think in new and different ways – a lesson students will learn first-hand this year and which may benefit them in the future.”

Although students will not be living in a residential hall together, they will still receive the mentorship of their own “Residential Advisor” and be assigned an “RA Group.” RA Groups will meet virtually at the conclusion of each day, providing students an informal opportunity to develop friendships with other young artists from across the state who are studying art forms other than their own. While there will be no formal programming on evenings or weekends, students may use this time to work on creative projects or engage in optional virtual student community activities (including online versions of mainstay GSA residential life activities, such as student talent shows or a virtual school dance).

“While not convening GSA in-person this summer will present new challenges, we are more committed than ever to working with our GSA students to focus on their art, their creative potential, and the unique role artists place in society,” said Nick Covault, director of GSA and a 2002 alumnus of the program. “Artists are relevant to today’s society in an unprecedented way – their innovation, empathy, and voice will help us persevere and heal. With resilience, the aid of technology, and guidance from an amazing roster of faculty and guest artists, we know the 2020 class will emerge from this summer’s experience as an engaged and empowered community of artists. We can’t wait to work with them.”

The new and innovative approach may likely create exciting new visual opportunities that will allow students and educators to share the experience and inspire other young artists from across the state to engage in the arts.

For more information about GSA’s virtual programming, visit the FAQ [here](#).

ABOUT GSA

GSA is a public/private partnership inaugurated in 1987 by The Kentucky Center (now Kentucky Performing Arts), The Commonwealth of Kentucky and numerous private supporters. Today, the vital funding required to make GSA a reality is provided by the state through the leadership of the Governor’s Office and the Kentucky Tourism, Arts and Heritage Cabinet, as well as The Kentucky Center Endowment Fund, Toyota Motor Manufacturing and more than 300 corporations, parents, educators, alumni and friends of GSA.

ABOUT KENTUCKY PERFORMING ARTS

The mission of Kentucky Performing Arts is to build lifelong relationships with the arts. As an integral member of the Kentucky Tourism, Arts, and Heritage Cabinet, Kentucky Performing Arts, along with the other agencies, seeks to preserve and promote the history, heritage and arts of the Commonwealth.

Three locations comprise the family of venues under The Kentucky Performing Arts umbrella:

The Kentucky Center is located at 501 West Main Street, Louisville, KY 40202

The Brown Theatre is located at 315 West Broadway, Louisville, KY 40202

Old Forester's Paristown Hall is located at 724 Brent Street, Louisville KY 40204

To learn more, visit KentuckyPerformingArts.org

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