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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Marcus Performing Arts Center Launches “Culture Collective,” Showcasing Prominent Artists of Color

As part of the 2023/24 MPAC Presents Series, the Culture Collective features 7 shows

MILWAUKEE (Dec. 19, 2023) – The [Marcus Performing Arts Center](#) (MPAC) announced today the **Culture Collective**, an exciting addition to its performance lineup designed to celebrate and elevate the contributions of artists of color across a spectrum of artistic disciplines.

The Culture Collective aligns with MPAC’s commitment to [Racial Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion \(REDI\)](#) in the performing arts. This year’s Collective features seven performances from prominent Black artists ranging from award-winning musicians and dance companies to theatrical performances. Both public performances and student matinees are included in the Collective.

“The Culture Collective reinforces MPAC’s mission to foster an inclusive and vibrant cultural community,” said **MPAC President & CEO Kevin Giglinto**. “As we elevate the voices and talents of Black artists, we aim to create a space where everyone feels seen, heard, and celebrated.”

Single tickets are available now for all shows. To purchase tickets, visit www.MarcusCenter.org, call 414-273-7206 for personal service, or visit the MPAC Box Office at 929 North Water Street, Downtown Milwaukee. Groups of 10 or more receive perks and discounts and can secure their seats by calling 414-273-7207. Student Matinee performances require [advance reservations](#).

The Culture Collective is generously supported by the Greater Milwaukee Foundation and Show Sponsor MGIC. Additional support is provided by Saint Kate – The Arts Hotel, Bader Philanthropies, Inc., and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Following is a chronological listing of the shows as part of this season’s Culture Collective.

[DRUMLine Live](#)

Jan. 6, 2024 | 7:30 p.m.

DRUMLine Live embodies the soulful, high-stepping style of the Historically Black College and University (HBCU) marching band tradition. With riveting rhythms, bold beats, and ear-grabbing energy, this stage show is a synchronized musical showcase of the HBCU experience. Incorporating original compositions and soul-infused interpretations of top 40 hits, group performances range from colorful, choreographed routines to heavy doses of drum riffs and cadences.

[40th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Celebration](#)

Jan. 15, 2024 | 4:00 p.m.

Free Community Event

This cherished community event is dedicated to preserving the impactful legacy of Dr. King. For four decades, young people have been the heart of this celebration, expressing Dr. King's timeless messages through art, speech, and writing contests. This program has impacted the lives of countless Milwaukee youth, providing a platform for creativity and fostering a deeper understanding of Dr. King's teachings. Since 1984, Milwaukee has proudly stood alongside Atlanta as one of the only cities in the country to host an annual celebration in honor of Dr. King's birthday.

[Cécile McLorin Salvant](#)

Jan. 27, 2024 | 7:30 p.m.

Acclaimed jazz vocalist Cécile McLorin Salvant is a composer, singer, and visual artist. Three-time GRAMMY® winner for "Best Jazz Vocal Album," Salvant has a deep passion for storytelling and finding the connections between music spanning genres and decades. An eclectic curator, Salvant unearths rarely recorded songs with strong narratives, interesting power dynamics, unexpected twists, and humor. In 2020 she received the MacArthur Fellowship and the Doris Duke Artist Award, two of the most coveted recognitions in art.

[Black Violin](#)

Feb. 9, 2024

10:30 a.m. – Student Matinee performance (advance reservations required)

7:30 p.m. – Public performance

Black Violin is composed of classically trained violist and violinist Wil Baptiste and Kev Marcus who invoke a mystifying musical fusion of exquisite classical sounds and exhilarating hip-hop beats. Audiences are immersed in a sound that transcends categories and celebrates ingenuity and ambition, proving anything is possible. Together they are reconceptualizing what a violin concert looks and sounds like, building bridges to a place where Mozart, Marvin Gaye, and Kendrick Lamar harmoniously coexist.

[Dance Theatre of Harlem](#)

February 14, 2024

10:30 a.m. – Student Matinee performance (advance reservations required)

7:30 p.m. – Public performance

In 1969, at the height of the civil rights movement, Arthur Mitchell and Karel Shook founded Dance Theatre of Harlem. After making history in 1955 as the first black principal dancer at New York City Ballet, Mitchell's impulse to start Dance Theatre of Harlem is said to have been spurred by the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. on April 4, 1968. At the height of the civil rights movement, in a graceful moment of artistic resistance, he created a haven for dancers of all colors who craved training, performance experience and an opportunity to excel in the classical ballet world.

A singular presence in the ballet world, the Dance Theatre of Harlem presents a powerful vision for ballet in the 21st century. The 18-member company's forward-thinking repertoire includes treasured classics, neoclassical works by George Balanchine and resident choreographer Robert Garland, and innovative contemporary works that use the language of ballet to celebrate African American culture.

[Delfeayo Marsalis & The Uptown Jazz Orchestra](#)

February 29, 2024 | 7:30 p.m.

Sponsored by MGIC

Delfeayo Marsalis & the Uptown Jazz Orchestra are a highly entertaining ensemble, focused on maintaining important jazz traditions such as riff playing, New Orleans polyphony, and spontaneous arrangements. Formed by Marsalis in 2008, the Uptown Jazz Orchestra stretches the boundaries of what is expected from big bands, playing with an extraordinary sense of joy and fun that could only come from New Orleans. Featuring up to 18 accomplished musicians, the Uptown Jazz

Orchestra sets the global standard for celebrating jazz in its authentic musical form, inspiring the next generation of jazz musicians and promoting a culture of diversity, inclusion, and accessibility in the arts.

[Show Way The Musical](#)

Mar. 21, 2024 | 10:30 a.m.

Sensory-Friendly; Student Matinee Performance

Soonie’s great-grandma was just seven years old when she was sold to a big plantation without her ma and pa, with only some fabric and needles to call her own. She began to stitch a Show Way, a quilt with secret meanings to show enslaved people the way to freedom. As each generation passes, the Show Way shines a light on the past and paves a road to the future, stitching together possibility and promise. From Kennedy Center Theater for Young Audiences, Jacqueline Woodson’s award-winning story of history, love, and resilience becomes a world premiere stage adaptation directed by Schele Williams with new music by Tyrone L. Robinson.

Recommended for grades 3-12. Advance reservations required. To be added to the waitlist, [click here](#).

[MPAC REDI Action Plan](#)

The Marcus Performing Arts Center commits to creating a more racially representative and equitable community at MPAC so that we may continue to build bridges between diverse members of our community through high-quality arts and entertainment. We strengthen our commitment through our Racial Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (REDI) Action Plan, with the following pillars: Representation, Inclusion and Investment

Embodying “Representation,” the Culture Collective highlights shows featuring artists of color, again exceeding MPAC’s original pledge for 30% of annual programming dedicated to BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) voices.

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About Marcus Performing Arts Center

A mission-based non-profit organization located in downtown Milwaukee, the Marcus Performing Arts Center (MPAC) brings high-quality arts and cultural programming to Southeastern Wisconsin. MPAC strives to act as an energizing force that connects the community to the world through collaboration, innovation, social engagement, and the transformative power of the performing arts. Through multiple performance series, community events, and educational experiences, MPAC brings a diverse range of celebrated artists to the region. A fixture in Milwaukee for over 50 years, MPAC is proud to be part of the Milwaukee Theater District as well as a dedicated War Memorial facility. Learn more at www.MarcusCenter.org.