



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (6/4/2020)

"Arts United STL" Benefit Concert Raises \$350,000 to Date for Regional Arts Commission's Artist Relief Fund, With Additional Donations Being Accepted Through June 26

Money raised from the benefit will go to local working artists in emergency relief grants of \$500 and \$1,000.

(ST. LOUIS) – 16 arts organizations came together on May 31st for Arts United STL, a free virtual benefit concert to raise funds for the Regional Arts Commission (RAC) Artist Relief Fund, which gives emergency grants to working artists whose livelihoods have been affected by the COVID-19 crisis. Arts United STL set a goal of raising \$250,000 and exceeded that with a total of \$350,000, including gifts and commitments made during and after the May 31st broadcast. The Arts United STL benefit performance can still be viewed in its entirety at bit.ly/ArtsUnitedSTL.

"The vibrancy, diversity, and strength of the St. Louis arts community was brilliantly displayed on Sunday evening," said Andréa Purnell, RAC Commissioner and host of the Arts United STL broadcast. "At this time when we need artists' voices more than ever, St. Louisans responded generously with love, hope, and vital support for artists across our region."

Thanks to Arts United STL, the RAC Artist Relief Fund recently re-opened applications for working artists in urgent need due to lost income resulting from the pandemic. Donations to the Artist Relief Fund can still be made through June 26th, by either visiting ArtsUnitedSTL.com or texting "Artist" to (202) 858-1233. Artists interested in applying to the RAC Artist Relief Fund should visit racstl.org/covid19/relief2020. The application will close on June 12th.

"We can only offer our deepest gratitude to all the donors, organizations, artists, and individuals who made this incredible evening happen," said Andrew Jorgensen, General Director of Opera Theatre of Saint Louis. "We are so fortunate to live in a community that cares so deeply for the arts. From the bottom of our hearts, we thank all our participants and supporters."

Arts United STL gratefully acknowledges Presenting Sponsors Noémi and Michael Neidorff for their additional \$50,000 challenge pledge to match any donations raised in excess of the \$250,000 goal up to \$300,000, and the Ferring Family Foundation for their generous donation of \$25,000 towards that challenge. Sponsors include Edward Jones, Emerson, and Switch, with additional support from Karen & Mont Levy, the PNC Foundation, John Russell, Terry & Sally Schnuck, the Staenberg Family Foundation, Pam & Greg Trapp, and Wells Fargo Advisors.

Additional media support was provided by partners HEC-TV, Guided: St. Louis, Curbside STL, Classic 107.3, St. Louis Public Radio, and WSIE 88.7 The Sound.

Arts United STL was produced by Opera Theatre of Saint Louis in partnership with the St. Louis Shakespeare Festival and was directed by Tom Ridgely. The broadcast featured performances from local arts organizations including The Big Muddy Dance Company, The Black Rep, Circus Flora, COCA, Jazz St. Louis, Metro Theater Company, The Muny, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, Saint Louis Ballet, St. Louis Children's Choirs, St. Louis Shakespeare Festival, St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, The Sheldon, STAGES St. Louis, the Tennessee Williams Festival St. Louis, and more.

STAGES St. Louis is the region's foremost not-for-profit company committed to preserving and advancing the art form of Musical Theatre through excellence in performance and education. In 2020, STAGES celebrates its 34th year of producing Broadway-quality theatre.

Single tickets for ALWAYS... PATSY CLINE will go on sale Monday, July 6, 2020. Single ticket prices range from \$25 - \$66. STAGES' Mainstage productions perform in the intimate, 377-seat Robert G. Reim Theatre at the Kirkwood Civic Center, 111 South Geyer Road in St. Louis, MO 63122. For more information or to purchase tickets call 314-821-2407 or visit www.StagesStLouis.org.

STAGES Performing Arts Academy is regionally renowned for its innovative and multi-disciplinary programs that transform lives through immersion in the Musical Theatre arts. Celebrating its 15th year, it is also the only such program in the St. Louis region to be connected to a professional theatre company. Whatever the age or experience level, whether a new or continuing student, aspiring performing artists throughout the St. Louis region have the opportunity to explore and cultivate their talent at STAGES, and set the stage for life changing experiences.

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