



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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COCA ANNOUNCES 2021–2022 COCAPRESENTS SEASON *Performance Season to Provide Thought-Provoking Programming for St. Louis Region*

ST. LOUIS—[COCA-Center of Creative Arts](#) announces its [2021–2022 COCAPresents season](#), which runs from November 5, 2021–July 24, 2022. COCAPresents, COCA’s signature performance series, is comprised of returning favorites and COCA premieres for audiences of all ages.

“The 2021–2022 COCAPresents season marks a welcomed return to live theatre at COCA. Last season, we safely reopened with a modified performance lineup and limited audiences,” said Kelly Pollock, COCA Executive Director. “After a year of transition, we are thrilled to offer our audiences a full season of in-person, live theatre programming. The new season centers around our commitment to developing new talent while elevating the artistry of professionals who call COCA home.”

Back by popular demand, **wUNDERland**, an original dance production with creative direction and choreography by Anthony “Redd” Williams, puts a hip-hop spin on Lewis Carroll’s *Alice in Wonderland*. Audiences will experience this upside-down tale through a completely new lens with dazzling costumes, visual effects, contemporary music, and cutting-edge hip-hop choreography. This version of *wUNDERland* is getting scaled up to maximize the technical capabilities of the new Catherine B. Berges Theatre stage.

The COCAwrites Festival, which focuses on the writing and development of new plays for multi-generational theatre audiences through collaboration and learning among professionals and students, will include two productions—**The Butterfly Room**, written by St. Louisan and Music Director of COCA’s Vocal Company Colin Healy, and **COCAwrites Student Musical**, a production where COCA students adapt a written work with incorporations of song, scene, and dance.

“Multigenerational audiences will find a carefully curated selection of thought-provoking work this season,” said Jennifer Wintzer, COCA Artistic Director of Theatre. “Through a showcase of partnerships, national artists, and student-work, this season brings us back with a combination of traditional audience favorites and innovative new work for theatre and dance lovers across the St. Louis region.”

COCA’s three Pre-Professional Division student dance companies, Ballet Eclectica, COCA dance, and COCA Hip-Hop Crew, all come together to perform for the end-of-year repertory concert and audience favorite **TRlumphant**. The show will feature works staged by Lauren Anderson, former principal dancer with Houston Ballet; Madison Hicks, choreographer and former member of LA Dance Project; Amy Hall Garner, internationally known choreographer; and Anthony “Redd” Williams, Artistic Director of COCA Hip-Hop Crew.

Students in COCA’s Pre-Professional Division theatre artist ensembles will showcase their talents in four performances this season: **Fall Vocal Company Concert**, **Improv Troupe Winter Performance**, **Spring Vocal Company Concert**, and **Improv Troupe Spring Performance**. The talented young vocalists in COCA’s Vocal Company will perform a repertoire of musical theatre and pop favorites. COCA’s Improv Troupe brings a little bit of the unexpected as the student-artists weave comedy and sketch together.

The COCAPresents season concludes with two theatrical pieces—**Matilda**, based on the popular children’s book by Roald Dahl, and **The Wolves**, the debut play of playwright Sarah DeLappe that chronicles a girls’ high school indoor soccer team as they prepare for their games each week.

Ticket prices range from \$5–25; Buy more and save on tickets. Tickets go on sale to the general public September 9. COCA Members receive early access to purchase tickets September 2. For more information, visit cocastl.org/coca-presents or contact the COCA Box Office by phone at 314.561.4877.

2021–2022 COCAPRESENTS SEASON LINEUP

Choreographic Lab Showcase

NOV 5–6, 2021

FRI 7:00PM | SAT 5:00PM

Staenberg Performance Lab

This performance presents the culmination of COCA alumnus Mason Cummings' Choreographic Lab experience at COCA. Under the guidance of Co-Artistic Directors of Dance Kirven Douthit-Boyd and Antonio Douthit-Boyd, Cummings has worked with COCA's Ballet Eclectica and COCAdance to present a showcase of his choreography and share his experience of his 6-week journey at COCA.

COCAwrites Workshop: Kaleidoscope Crown

NOV 13, 2021

SAT 7:00PM

Catherine B. Berges Theatre

Kaleidoscope Crown, by playwright Ashleigh Akilah Rucker, tells the story of a young girl who awakes with a shocking new ability: with every new feeling her hair is catapulted into multicolor tresses. Her new development throws the uniformity and peace of her small traditional village into disarray. Rucker draws inspiration from the art and traditions of the African diaspora bringing the culture to the forefront of this new work.

Fall Vocal Company Concert

NOV 19–20, 2021

FRI 7:00PM | SAT 7:00PM

Staenberg Performance Lab

COCA's Vocal Company takes the stage with a cabaret-style performance featuring some of the best young vocalists in the St. Louis area. These talented signers will perform a repertoire of musical theatre and pop favorites. Also enjoy a sneak preview of the songs and stories to be highlighted in the company's season-culminating performance in Spring 2022. COCA's Vocal Company is directed by Colin Healy, with Alicia Revé Like.

Improv Troupe Winter Performance

DEC 3–4, 2021

FRI 7:00PM | SAT 7:00PM

Staenberg Performance Lab

Enjoy a night of improv fun with COCA's Improv Troupe! Get ready for a little bit of the unexpected as these improv artists weave comedy and sketch together. Under the direction of Ed Reggi, COCA's Improv Troupe puts their talents on full display for a performance your whole family will not want to miss!

wUNDERland

DEC 16–19, 2021

THU 7:00PM | FRI 7:00PM | SAT 3:00PM & 7:00PM | SUN 1:00PM & 5:00PM

Catherine B. Berges Theatre

Fall down the rabbit hole again with *wUNDERland*! Back by popular demand, this re-imagining of Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland* puts a hip-hop spin on this fantasy classic. Featuring creative direction and choreography by COCA Hip-Hop Crew Artistic Director Anthony "Redd" Williams, view this upside-down tale through a completely new lens with dazzling costumes, visual effects, contemporary music, and cutting-edge hip-hop choreography. This version of *wUNDERland* is getting scaled up to maximize the technical capabilities of the new Catherine B. Berges Theatre stage.

COCAwrites Festival: The Butterfly Room

APR 14–16, 2022

THU 7:00PM | FRI 7:00PM | SAT 3:00PM & 7:00PM

Catherine B. Berges Theatre

At a General Motors automobile factory in 1924, a worker has big dreams of going to college and breaking free of the factory town. In an effort to escape the overwhelming frustrations of the factory, the worker discovers an off-limits storage room to find respite, calling it the butterfly room. The past becomes parallel with the present. *The Butterfly Room* is written by St. Louisan and Music Director of COCA's Vocal Company, Colin Healy.

COCAwrites Festival: COCAwrites Student Musical

APR 16, 2022

SAT 3:00PM

Staenberg Performance Lab

Drawing on inspiration from a written work, COCAwrites students adapt the selected work with incorporations of song, scene, and dance. Guided by playwright and composing mentors, Delaney Piggins and Syrhea Conaway, the COCAwrites students will bring a story to the stage with ingenuity and inspiration.

Spring Vocal Company Concert

APR 22–23, 2022

FRI 7:00PM | SAT 7:00PM

Staenberg Performance Lab

This signature culminating performance by COCA's Vocal Company is sure to be filled with unique songs and stories created by COCA's student vocalists. Special guests help to shape these works and craft an exciting look into the up-and-coming generation of theatre artists. Students are coached and directed throughout the year by professional theatre artists, and the COCA Vocal Company is under the direction of Colin Healy, with Alicia Revé Like.

TRlumphant

MAY 12–15, 2022

THU 7:00PM | FRI 7:00PM | SAT 3:00PM & 7:00PM | SUN 1:00PM & 5:00PM

Catherine B. Berges Theatre

Experience the immense talent and versatility of COCA's Dance Ensembles—Ballet Eclectica, COCADance, and COCA's Hip-Hop Crew—in the season-culminating repertoire, *TRlumphant*. Showcasing choreographic works staged by Lauren Anderson, Madison Hicks, Amy Hall Garner, COCA Hip-Hop Crew Artistic Director Anthony "Redd" Williams, and COCA alumnus Mason Cummings. Presented by Lee Bohm.

Improv Troupe Spring Performance

MAY 20–21, 2022

FRI 7:00PM | SAT 7:00PM

Staenberg Performance Lab

Capping off their season, COCA's Improv Troupe takes sketch and comedy to the next level in this final performance. After a year of honing their comedic chops under the direction of Ed Reggi, the Improv Troupe is sure to bring out all of the smiles and laughs. Enjoy an evening of family friendly fun with COCA's Improv Troupe.

The Wolves

JUL 15–17, 2022

FRI 7:00PM | SAT 3:00PM & 7:00PM | SUN 1:00PM & 5:00PM

Staenberg Performance Lab

The Wolves chronicles six Saturday mornings in the lives of a girls' high school indoor soccer team, The Wolves, as they prepare for their games each week. The nine girls converse about everything from genocide and menstrual cycles to drugs, boys, literature, and each other. The team members first seem indistinguishable as each is referred to by only her number, but each quickly becomes identifiable and different. The Wolves deal with love, loss, and identity in ways that real teenagers do. Pulitzer Prize finalist *The Wolves* is the debut play of playwright Sarah DeLappe.

COCA Summer Musical: Matilda

JUL 22–24, 2022

FRI 7:00PM | SAT 3:00PM & 7:00PM | SUN 1:00PM & 5:00PM

Catherine B. Berges Theatre

Matilda Wormwood, a young girl with extraordinary powers, uses her love of reading and storytelling as an escape from her life with her neglectful and abusive parents. Matilda is sent off to school where she struggles under the reign of the school's cruel headmistress, Miss Trunchbull, who punishes children for not abiding by her strict rules. Matilda befriends her kind teacher, Miss Honey, who realizes Matilda's talents and encourages her to embrace her uniqueness. Matilda learns how to stand up to the adults in her life and discovers her own remarkable powers. Presented by Mary Strauss.

2021–2022 MILLSTONE GALLERY EXHIBITIONS

Exhibitions in COCA's Millstone Gallery include St. Louis contemporary pop-artist Jared Minnick's *Make it Pop*, which exhibits large-scale portraiture that "pops" with color, and St. Louis-native Brock Seals' *Artivism*, which showcases work at the intersection of art and activism. Other exciting additions include COCA YouthVision exhibitions, featuring the work of COCA student Norah Brozio in a solo show and group shows by advanced teen participants from COCA's Manga classes and teen participants in University City High School's residency. All exhibitions in the Millstone Gallery are free and open to the public during building hours.

Make it Pop by Jared Minnick
SEP 17–NOV 7, 2021

COCA YouthVision: Norah Brozio
NOV 29–DEC 12, 2021

Artivism by Brock Seals
JAN 21–MAR 20, 2022

COCA YouthVision: COCA Manga Students
APR 1–17, 2022

COCA YouthVision: University City High School Students
MAY 6–22, 2022

The 2021–2022 COCApresents season is made possible by the Berges Family Foundation, Hearst Foundations, Mary Ranken Jordan & Ettie A. Jordan Charitable Foundation, Mary Strauss, Lee Bohm, Missouri Arts Council, Spry Digital, and Theatre for Young Audiences. The Millstone Gallery is made possible by The Millstone Foundation and Bernoudy Foundation.

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ABOUT COCA

COCA's mission is to *enrich lives and build community through the arts*. With a commitment to equity and access, COCA serves as a regional hub for learning in and through the arts for all ages from all backgrounds. One of the most diverse cultural institutions in St. Louis, COCA serves over 50,000 students, audience members, artists and families from over 220 zip codes across the St. Louis region every year. The fourth largest multi-disciplinary arts organization in the country, COCA is committed to supporting the vitality and creativity of over 200 artists at the heart of its work in schools, community centers, local business, cultural organizations, and on-site at its campus in University City.

COCA HEALTH & SAFETY PROCEDURES

COCA's Health & Safety Procedures have been approved by St. Louis County. Guests should expect the following health and safety protocols: COCA has increased seating capacity for the Catherine B. Berges Theatre and Staenberg Performance Lab; Guests must wear masks at all times on the COCA campus in both indoor and outdoor spaces. For a full list of COCA's current health and safety protocols, visit cocastl.org/campus-safety.