



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## COCA ANNOUNCES 2022–2023 COCAPRESENTS SEASON

*Dance and Theatre Productions Exemplify the Best of the St. Louis Region  
and Inspire Multigenerational Audiences*

**ST. LOUIS (September 1, 2022)**—[COCA](#), the fourth largest multidisciplinary community arts center in the U.S. and a leader in innovative arts education, announced its [2022–2023 COCAPresents Season](#) which is comprised of thought-provoking programming for multigenerational audiences. COCAPresents, COCA’s signature performance season, features returning favorites and innovative new work. The season runs November 4, 2022–July 23, 2023.

“The dance productions this season include a behind-the-scenes look at a unique, creative choreographic development process; a reimagined version of the COCA holiday tradition, *The Little Dancer*; and an exciting spring repertoire created by some of the nation’s leading voices in dance,” said Kirven Douthit-Boyd, Associate Director of Dance Production at COCA. “Multigenerational audiences are sure to be inspired by our student artists as they present these new works on the COCA stage.”

The COCAPresents season kicks-off with the return of **Choreographic Lab**. Over a 7-week period, Choreographer Ryadah Heiskell leads a special residency utilizing student dancers from COCA’s Pre-Professional Division Dance Program and engages the dancers in a blend of movement vocabularies to construct contemporary dance works. The project includes mentorship from notable working professional artists and opportunities to sharpen pedagogical skills. Audiences have two opportunities to preview the work during informal showings and talk-backs with Heiskell.

In December, student dancers from COCA’s Ballet Eclectica bring *The Little Dancer* back to the stage as a full-length classical ballet. Reimagined as ***The Little Dancer: Moments in Time***, this performance offers a fresh perspective to the beloved holiday tradition by way of renowned Choreographer and Creative Director Kevin Jenkins. This brand-new production was conceptualized using stories from COCA’s young artists to put an innovative spin on the well-known classic and features original sound, set, and costume design.

**TRlumphant** makes a mighty return, showcasing the ever-evolving talents of COCA’s three student dance companies. The weekend of performances features the work of renowned choreographers Justin Conte, Nina Flagg, Tom Gold, Abdur Rahim Jackson, and Marcus Jarrell Willis across three different programs. Audiences get to view dance across many genres and experience the power and versatility of COCA’s young artists. **TRlumphant** also marks the final performance of COCA’s graduating class.

“At the forefront of this season is work that will challenge and ignite the imagination of our theatre students and audiences alike,” said Jennifer Wintzer, COCA Artistic Director of Theatre. “Under the guidance of local and national creatives, we are excited to invite our audiences to explore the boundless themes of both a contemporary work and a reignited classic, all while putting young people at the center.”

New this season, audiences are invited for an inside look at the training process of COCA’s Pre-Professional Division Theatre Artist Program through student performance and faculty dialogue. With the **Vocal Company Fall Concert** and **Improv Troupe Fall Performance**, audiences can see what COCA’s student artists on all

three tracks of study—Musical Theatre, Stage & Screen, and Design-Tech—are up to this season. For the ***Improv Troupe Spring Performance***, Theatre Artist Program students take their funny on the road with site-specific improv performances throughout the region. Audiences can witness some of the best young vocalists in the St. Louis area for the ***Vocal Company Spring Concert***. The Concert showcases a song-cycle of musical theatre and contemporary works.

In March, the COCAwrites Festival provides students and audiences the opportunity to learn more about documentary theatre and the adaptation process of new work with both a professional production and staged readings of student work based on companion text. Recommended for older teens and adults, the headliner ***The Wolves***, directed by Ashleigh Akilah Rucker, is the debut play of playwright Sarah DeLappe that chronicles a girls' high school indoor soccer team as they prepare for their games each week. In ***Student Voices***, Pre-Professional Division students showcase original works developed within the COCAwrites program that encompass the Festival's theme of adaptation and documentation.

COCA's annual summer musical concludes the season with ***Pippin***, the story of a young man's journey to be extraordinary. With an infectiously unforgettable score from Stephen Schwartz, this circus-inspired version of *Pippin* captivates and appeals to the young at heart. Pippin finds that happiness lies not in extraordinary endeavors, but rather in the unextraordinary moments that happen every day. COCA student artists perform alongside regional professional artists for this production of *Pippin*.

Tickets go on sale to COCA Membership on September 1 and the general public on September 6. For more information, visit [cocastl.org/coca-presents](http://cocastl.org/coca-presents) or contact the COCA Box Office at 314.561.4873 or [boxoffice@cocastl.org](mailto:boxoffice@cocastl.org).

## **2022–2023 COCApresents Season Productions**

### ***Choreographic Lab***

FRI, NOV 4 | 7:00PM

SAT, NOV 5 | 7:00PM

Catherine B. Berges Theatre

### ***Vocal Company Fall Concert***

FRI, NOV 18 | 7:00PM

Staenberg Performance Lab

### ***Improv Troupe Fall Performance***

SUN, NOV 20 | 2:00PM

Staenberg Performance Lab

### ***The Little Dancer: Moments in Time***

THU, DEC 8 | 10:30AM *Schooltime Performance*

THU, DEC 8 | 7:00PM

FRI, DEC 9 | 7:00PM

SAT, DEC 10 | 3:00PM & 7:00PM

SUN, DEC 11 | 1:00PM & 5:00PM

Catherine B. Berges Theatre

### **COCAwrites Festival: *The Wolves***

FRI, MAR 24 | 7:00PM

SAT, MAR 25 | 1:00PM & 7:00PM

SUN, MAR 26 | 7:00PM

Staenberg Performance Lab

### **COCAwrites Festival: *Student Voices***

SUN, MAR 26 | 1:00PM

Staenberg Performance Lab

### ***TRlumphant***

FRI, MAY 5 | 10:30AM *Schooltime Show*

FRI, MAY 5 | 7:00PM

SAT, MAY 6 | 3:00PM & 7:00PM

SUN, MAY 7 | 1:00PM & 5:00PM

Catherine B. Berges Theatre

### ***Improv Troupe Spring Performance***

FRI, MAY 12

COCA Offsite

### ***Vocal Company Spring Concert***

THU, MAY 18 | 7:00PM

FRI, MAY 19 | 7:00PM

Staenberg Performance Lab

### **COCA Summer Musical: *Pippin***

THU, JUL 20 | 7:00PM

FRI, JUL 21 | 7:00PM

SAT, JUL 22 | 1:00PM & 7:00PM

SUN, JUL 23 | 1:00PM & 7:00PM

Catherine B. Berges Theatre

### **2022–2023 Millstone Gallery Exhibitions**

COCA's Millstone Gallery season includes solo exhibitions by artists Lizzy Martinez and Lauren Younge. In *Everything Is Golden*, Martinez reclaims discarded materials to create feminist sculptural interpretations of mythological figures. Younge's *Breathe* is a collection of large-scale abstract paintings created through the unconscious combination of bold colors and free movement. All exhibitions in the Millstone Gallery are free and open to the public during building hours.

*Everything Is Golden* by Lizzy Martinez | SEP 16–NOV 6

*Breathe* by Lauren Younge | JAN 20–MAR 19

*Inspiration* by COCA Art & Design Teaching Artists | MAR 31–APR 23

*COCA Youth Vision* by University City High School Students | MAY 5–14

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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 more than 50,000 students, audience members, artists, and families from more than 200 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 more than 200 artists at the heart of their work in schools, community centers, local business, cultural organizations, and on-site at its campus in University City.

### **COCA HEALTH & SAFETY PROCEDURES**

COCA continues to monitor current COVID-19 conditions in the St. Louis region, and protocols are subject to change, as necessary, to address the conditions. To review COCA's current Health & Safety Procedures, visit [cocastl.org/our-campus/health-safety-procedures/](https://cocastl.org/our-campus/health-safety-procedures/).