

For Immediate Release



#OurTownBaltimore

A Celebration of Theater & Community

Featuring a Full Program of Events and Local Partnerships

Centered Around BCS's Upcoming Production of *Our Town*, directed by Stevie Walker-Webb

Media tools for download: <https://bit.ly/3wV5McA>

BALTIMORE, MD: Baltimore Center Stage (BCS) is thrilled to announce #OurTownBaltimore, a series of multigenerational artistic events and exciting local partnerships that reflect the vibrancy of Baltimore, intersecting with the company's upcoming staging of **Thornton Wilder's *Our Town***, directed by **Stevie Walker-Webb** (*The Folks at Home*), which runs September 15 through October 9, 2022.

#OurTownBaltimore will celebrate the rich cultural and artistic communities by continuing Baltimore Center Stage's commitment to amplifying, hosting, and supporting local community organizations and events. The program aims to bring the relationship between theater and community to a new level, inspired by one of the most acclaimed and beloved American plays about community.

"With #OurTownBaltimore, BCS is grounding our 60th Season in our mission: Inspired by our home city, Baltimore Center Stage acts as a cultural catalyst for all communities to access theater in every form and engage in compelling conversations," notes **Artistic Director Stephanie Ybarra**. "At BCS, we believe the arts don't exist in a vacuum and that arts institutions should be integral parts of the civic fabric of our communities. Whether someone is a long-time Baltimore Center Stage fan or if it's the first time in our space, we hope Baltimoreans enjoy this celebration of our wonderful city."

As a way to kick off the company's 60th Season, #OurTownBaltimore highlights Baltimore Center Stage's long-term commitment to creating community-driven shared space by partnering with and welcoming a wide variety of local organizations and small businesses, including Made in Baltimore, *AFRO* News, Baltimore Rhythm Festival, Creative Alliance, Baltimore Alliance for Careers in Healthcare, Murphy Enterprises, Blk Swan, BTST Services, BTST Cares, and others to be announced. In addition to original programming, BCS is offering a series of Community Nights where artists, small business owners, healthcare workers, high school families, and others can purchase \$5 tickets to *Our Town* with a complimentary drink.

#OurTownBaltimore will feature:

#OurTownBaltimore Lobby Community Mural Installation (September-October)

During the run of *Our Town*, BCS's Deering Lobby will be home to a growing community mural featuring the phrase #OurTownBaltimore. Audiences and guests will have the opportunity to add their own expression to the mural at any time during the months of September through October.

Made in Baltimore Shop Kiosk (September-October)

During the months of September and October, the BCS Deering Lobby will feature the **Made in Baltimore** Kiosk featuring a specially curated selection of handcrafted goods for sale made by Baltimore artisans and makers. This mobile retail display brings a curated mix of locally-made products to BCS. Guests will be able to purchase products familiar to Made in Baltimore fans, as well as newer and lesser-known brands that have been hand-selected for BCS.

"The Thing I Love About Baltimore" Playbill Content (September-October)

The *Our Town* program features specially curated content in partnership with **AFRO News**, including excerpts of their recent book, *The Thing I Love About Baltimore*. The AFRO provides readers with good news about the Black community not otherwise found.

Baltimore Rhythm Festival (September 17, 7PM)

BCS will host the **Baltimore Rhythm Festival** for an evening concert featuring Kulu Mele African Dance & Drum Ensemble and the Osagyefo Dance Company. For over twenty years, the Baltimore Rhythm Festival has been welcoming attendees to a free event that brings people together, inspires, and changes lives. Tickets are \$15 for General Admission, and \$10 for students, seniors, and those in need.

Baltimore Butterfly Sessions: Looking Back to Look Forward (September 19, 7PM)

As we celebrate Baltimore Center Stage's 60th Season, we're using our Baltimore Butterfly Sessions to think 60 years into the future! But in order to look forward, first we need to look back on how we got to the present. In our first Baltimore Butterfly Session of the season, Dr. Durryle Brooks of Blaq Equity and Gavin Witt, BCS's former longtime resident dramaturg and associate director, will help us reflect on BCS's historical role as a cultural anchor in the changing contexts of the social and political movements which have shaped our city. Admission is Free.

Bmore Artists & Makers Night (September 21, 6:30PM)

Local artists, artisans, and creators are invited to join Baltimore Center Stage for a night of celebration and creative community inspired by their production of *Our Town*. Use code "BALTIMOREARTISTS" for \$5 tickets and a complimentary drink.

Kerplunk! Artmaking Workshop (September 24, 11AM-1PM)

Creative Alliance will present a series of free, family friendly art making workshops at BCS' Deering Lobby. Attendees will learn how to make corn husk flowers during this interactive and fun session.

Baltimore Small Business Night (September 27, 6:30PM)

Baltimore Center Stage is thrilled to partner with to welcome local small businesses and business owners for a pre-show mixer, fellowship, and performance of *Our Town* for \$5. Use code "BALTIMORESMALLBUSINESS" for tickets. This evening will be hosted by **BTST Services**, **Murphy Enterprise**, and **Blk Swan**.

Baltimore High School Family Night (September 28, 6:30PM)

Baltimore High School families can take advantage of \$5 tickets to *Our Town* and a free pre-show beverage by using the code "BALTIMOREFAMILIES."

Baltimore Healthcare Workers Night (October 4, 6:30PM)

Baltimore Center Stage and partners **Baltimore Alliance for Careers in Healthcare**, **BTST Services**, and **BTST Cares** say "Thank you" to Baltimore's frontline healthcare workers with \$5 tickets to *Our Town* and a free pre-show beverage by using the code "BALTIMOREHEALTHCARE."

Mt. Vernon Neighborhood Night (October 5, 6:30PM)

BCS' doors are always open to the Mt. Vernon neighborhood. Residents can enjoy \$5 tickets to *Our Town* and a free pre-show beverage by using the code "MTVERNON."

Baltimore Pre-Show Performances (OUR TOWN Community Nights)

As part of the *Our Town* community nights, BCS will feature special guest performers from across Baltimore for pre-show performances in the lobby. Performers include poet Mecca Verdell, musician Alena Ciera, and other artists from the Baltimore area.

Additional partners and sponsors will be announced at a later date: visit centerstage.org for a most up-to-date list.

ABOUT OUR TOWN: Re-discover the Pulitzer Prize-winning classic play as you've never seen it before, drawing inspiration from our town, Baltimore. Helmed by Obie Award-winner Stevie Walker-Webb (director of BCS's acclaimed *The Folks at Home*), *Our Town* tells the story of a community: in their growing up and their marrying and their living and their dying. Widely regarded as the finest American play ever written, this Thornton Wilder masterpiece lifts up the beauty of ordinary human life and reminds us of how extraordinary each moment can be.

Tickets for *Our Town* can be purchased at www.centerstage.org/plays-and-events/our-town/. For general information, visit centerstage.org or call the Box Office at 410.332.0033

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Baltimore Center Stage's first priority is the health, safety, and well-being of our audiences, staff, artists, and guests. Our current policy is that masks must be worn at Baltimore Center Stage and may only be removed in designated eating and drinking areas. Proof of vaccination – or a negative COVID PCR test within 72 hours of show time – is required. For the most up to date COVID Safety Guidelines, visit our website: www.centerstage.org/visit/covid-19-response.

Designated the State Theater of Maryland in 1978, Baltimore Center Stage provides the highest quality theater and programming for all members of our communities, including youth and families, under the leadership of Artistic Director Stephanie Ybarra. Baltimore Center Stage ignites conversations and imaginations by producing an eclectic season of professional productions across two mainstages, through engaging community programs, and with inspiring education programs. Everything we do at Baltimore Center Stage is led by our core values—chief among them being Access For All. Our mission is heavily rooted in providing active and open accessibility for everyone, regardless of any and all barriers, to our Mainstage performances, education initiatives, and community programming.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT BCS:

www.centerstage.org

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