



**WASHINGTON  
PERFORMING ARTS**  
We make it happen

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
July 15, 2021**

## **WASHINGTON PERFORMING ARTS ANNOUNCES SUMMER 2021 DIGITAL PROGRAMMING**

**Premiering July 21:**

**2020 Ambassador of the Arts Awardee, violinist Midori, presents a special production debuting two new works and featuring a masterclass and a panel discussion**

**Premiering Thursdays, July 22–August 19:**

***Family Art Moments* returns for a third series, highlighting global arts and cultures**

**Premiering nightly, July 27–30:**

***Mars Arts D.C.: Virtual* follows the creative process of four D.C. artists in *Creator's Notebook***

(Washington, D.C.) — Washington Performing Arts today announced its summer programming, including a rich variety of digital events that will appeal especially to those eager to explore and support D.C.'s artistic community, families in search of learning opportunities, and classical music lovers. The summer 2021 highlights include a presentation by the violinist Midori, who was the 2020 recipient of Washington Performing Arts's Ambassador of the Arts Award; a new season of *Family Art Moments*, designed to engage, educate, and entertain kids ages 5–8; and *Creator's Notebook*, the next iteration of *Mars Arts D.C.: Virtual*, focusing on local creators. The programs will stream for free from Washington Performing Arts's online channels (more details appear below).

“Washington Performing Arts's summer programming spotlights the variety and depth of our year-round programming—spanning arts education, global cultural programs, classical music, and local collaborations with dynamic artists and businesses through our family programs and *Mars Arts D.C.*,” said Washington Performing Arts President and CEO Jenny Bilfield. “We're excited to set this in motion with a unique program featuring Midori, an artist with whom we have a decades-long relationship. Her career as a performer, educator, global ambassador, and creative entrepreneur inspires us and resonates so deeply with our founder's ethos of ‘everybody in, nobody out.’”

## **AMBASSADOR OF THE ARTS SPOTLIGHT: MIDORI**

In 2020, Washington Performing Arts named celebrated violinist, educator, and 2021 Kennedy Center Honoree Midori as the recipient of its Ambassador of the Arts Award. The accolade recognizes extraordinary achievement, service, and advocacy in the performing arts. In celebrating these awardees each year, Washington Performing Arts produces programs that showcase their talents but also highlight an important aspect of their artistry and work. Midori's program will shine a light on the [Partners in Performance](#) (PiP) program, which she founded in 2003 to engage chamber music presenters across the country and to increase community interest in classical music.

On Wednesday, July 21 at 7:30pm ET, Midori's presentation as part of Washington Performing Arts's summer programming will feature performances—recorded exclusively for Washington Performing Arts—of solo works by two composers-violinists: the late Fritz Kreisler and contemporary American composer Jessie Montgomery. The program continues with footage from a masterclass in which Midori instructs past Washington Performing Arts Feder String Competition winner, Miyabi Henriksen (17). The performance and education segments will be followed by a panel discussion with two PiP presenters, Lance Ozier of Music in Corrales and Sandra Nikolajevs of Chamber Music Charleston, covering their continued work in the program and with Midori as well as their pivot into virtual programming during the pandemic. This conversation will be moderated by Washington Performing Arts President and CEO Jenny Bilfield. The *Ambassador of the Arts Spotlight: Midori* video will stream from the Washington Performing Arts [website](#) and [YouTube](#).

“Perhaps no other artist of our time has had a more profound impact on the development of string musicians and audiences throughout the world,” stated Washington Performing Arts President Emeritus Douglas H. Wheeler. “Her supreme musicianship, inspirational commitment to excellence, and tireless advocacy for her chosen art form make this a must-see experience for all music lovers.”

## **FAMILY ART MOMENTS**

Following successful presentations in summer 2020 and spring 2021, Washington Performing Arts brings back *Family Art Moments* (FAM) as its family-friendly offering for this summer, with a focus on children ages 5–8. On Thursdays at 11am ET from July 22–August 19, Washington Performing Arts will publish a series of videos on its [website](#) that center around the theme of traveling the world, with supplemental materials such as a reading list and a downloadable activity page. The artists featured in FAM are masters of their craft who are based in the D.C. area and collaborate frequently with Washington Performing Arts's Education and Community Engagement Department.

“As an educator, performer, and a mom, I know how impactful it can be when family members share creative arts experiences. That's why we're thrilled to share new performances from some of the D.C. area's most talented artists through our FAM series,” shared Washington Performing Arts Director of Education and Community Engagement Michelle Hoffmann. “These programs are fun

and engaging and designed with our youngest audience members in mind. Because they're available through our website, families can enjoy the shows, learn about music and dance from countries around the world, and complete activity pages wherever and whenever they choose!"

### **THE ARTISTS & PROGRAMS:**

#### **Literacy Through Art**

**Thursday, July 22, 11am ET**

Explore letters and sounds through performing and visual arts with Carla Perlo and her team! Participants will learn letter-building through dance and construction. Get up and move with Sylvia Soumah to the beat of the drums and learn to create letters with your body. Grab your hardhat as Lisa Paul teaches you to build letters and words with items all around you. Carla Perlo will help you make your own letter toolbox to keep all your creative materials organized so you're ready to continue building!

#### **2 Divas on a European Vacation**

**Thursday, July 29, 11am ET**

Travel to France, Italy, Spain, and Austria through song with opera singer Karin Paludan and National Symphony Orchestra violinist Marissa Regni. Children of all ages will enjoy listening to the music of Europe and using their imaginations to explore!

#### **Exploring Africa with Sylvia Soumah**

**Thursday, August 5, 11am ET**

Trek through several regions of Africa with the music and movement of Sylvia Soumah of Coyaba Dance Theater. Participants will explore color, shapes, language, and music. Sylvia helps children of all ages learn through call and response and moving their feet to the beat of the African drums.

#### **Visiting Québec with Ariana Ross and Veronneau**

**Thursday, August 12, 11am ET**

Join Arianna Ross of Story Tapestries on a musical adventure to Canada, featuring performances by the Québec duo Veronneau. Participants will call upon their imaginations to travel, experience some Canadian folklore, learn some French, and enjoy the music of Québec!

#### **Travel to India with Kalanidhi Dance Company**

**Thursday, August 19, 11am ET**

Members of Kalanidhi Dance Company will teach the basics of Kuchipudi dance, from gestures to steps and garments. They will show participants how to use their bodies to tell stories and empower them to create their own stories through movement.

**For more details, please visit [the FAM webpage](#).**

*Support for Family Art Moments is provided by Pepco, An Exelon Company, and the Québec Government Office in Washington.*

*Performances related to Washington Performing Arts's education programs are made possible by Jacqueline Badger Mars and Mars, Incorporated.*

## MARS ARTS D.C.: VIRTUAL – CREATOR’S NOTEBOOK

On the heels of the first-ever *Mars Arts D.C.: Virtual* series—which featured D.C. performers and businesses in two distinct programs during fall 2020—Washington Performing Arts continues its commitment to spotlighting and supporting local talent with the multi-part *Creator’s Notebook*. With one video premiering each evening at 8pm ET from July 27–30, this latest video series explores the perspectives of four D.C. artists as “creators,” while offering audiences a behind-the-scenes look at their sources of inspiration and creative processes. The goal of these short films, all of which culminate in a performance or presentation, is to share intimate moments in the artists’ trajectories and to gain deeper understanding and appreciation of their art. All *Creator’s Notebook* videos will premiere on the Washington Performing Arts [website](#), [YouTube](#), [Facebook](#), and [Instagram](#).

The D.C. artists featured in this upcoming iteration of *Mars Arts D.C.: Virtual – Creator’s Notebook* are singer-songwriter Justin Trawick, visual artist Khalid Thompson, musician and storyteller Be Steadwell, and photographer and DJ Violetta Markelou. Curated by *Mars Arts D.C.* Manager Alex Galiatsatos, the series will continue into next year with a second set of videos (premiere dates TBA) that delve into a different set of local artists’ additional roles as leaders, producers, and performers.

“I view *Creator’s Notebook* as a multi-faceted origin story,” said Galiatsatos. “We not only get to dive deep into specific works curated by the artists themselves, but we also get to see how these works relate to who these artists are as a whole, why they do what they do, and how they view their roles as artists in the greater community. As an independent ‘DIY’ musician myself, all of these artists inspire me, not just with the amazing work they create, but by how they thrive on what they do. My hope for *Creator’s Notebook* is that it entertains in the traditional sense, but also shines a light on all that goes into the art we consume daily, particularly from local artists.”

### **THE ARTISTS & PROGRAMS:**

#### **[Justin Trawick](#)**

**Tuesday, July 27, 8pm ET**

**Filmed at St. Vincent Wine**

Justin Trawick has been performing in the Washington, D.C. area and along the East Coast since 2006, citing musical influences like Bob Schneider, Greensky Bluegrass, The Tallest Man on Earth, G. Love, Old Crow Medicine Show, and David Gray. Trawick won “Song of the Year” at the Washington Area Music Awards (a.k.a. “The Wammies”) for his solo recording of “All the Places That I’ve Been.” In addition to his solo performances, he is the leader of Justin Trawick and the Common Good. Founder of the nationally touring show “The 9 Songwriter Series” and co-founder of “The Circus Life Podcast” with guests such as Kevin Eubanks, Chris Thomas King, Ernie Halter, Yarn, and Snuffy Walden, Trawick has built a brand that extends far beyond his home base in D.C.

### **Khalid Thompson**

**Wednesday, July 28, 8pm ET**

**Filmed at Art of Noize**

Born and raised in Richmond, VA, Khalid Thompson discovered a passion for poetry during creative writing classes in high school. Post-graduation, he sought to challenge his solitary nature via performance outlets such as acting and acoustic guitar. However, there persisted a deep desire within him to find an artistic path more suited to his inherent personality. In the spring of 2006, he decided to move to Washington, D.C. to gain inspiration from a culturally diverse, international city. After a serendipitous meeting with a charismatic visual artist from the Ivory Coast, Khalid began to reinvestigate a childhood love of drawing. The steady encouragement of this new friend coupled with a renewed sense of self led Khalid to explore his own abstract style of art. The creative freedom of improvisational painting became a perfect fit.

### **Be Steadwell**

**Thursday, July 29, 8pm ET**

**Filmed at Lee's Flower Shop**

Be Steadwell is a musician, filmmaker, and storyteller from Washington, D.C. In her live performances, she utilizes looping, vocal layering, and beatboxing to compose her songs on stage. Be's original music features earnest lyricism and affirming LGBTQ content. She has shared stages with fellow artist-activists Big Freedia, Nona Hendryx, Nikky Finney, and Gina Yashere. In 2017, Be sang at The Women's March on the National Mall behind Maxwell and Janelle Monáe in Toshi Reagon's Big Lovely Band. In 2019, she composed the music for The Alvin Ailey Dance Company's production of *the gone* and wrote and directed the musical *A Letter to My Ex*.

### **Violetta Markelou**

**Friday, July 30, 8pm ET**

**Filmed at Common Thread in Union Market**

Violetta Markelou creates one-of-a-kind visual experiences for individual, editorial, and corporate clients. Not only a photographer but a stylist and visual director, she creates shoots with a strong fashion emphasis that was cultivated many years prior, influenced by photography masters Herb Ritts and Richard Avedon. Markelou's current body of work focuses on raw portraiture and photojournalism. To experience a photoshoot with her is a transformative experience. She notes that the most rewarding part of the process is that her subjects become disarmed. Feeling safe, empowered, abandoning vulnerabilities, and capturing the true essence of each individual is the experience Markelou strives to create.

**For more details, please visit [the Mars Arts D.C.: Virtual webpage.](#)**

*Creator's Notebook is made possible through the generous support of Gary and Silvia Yacoubian and SVS Home Audio.*

*Mars Arts D.C. is a partnership of Mars, Incorporated and Washington Performing Arts, with support from Jacqueline Badger Mars.*

## **ABOUT WASHINGTON PERFORMING ARTS**

One of the most established and honored performing arts institutions in America, Washington Performing Arts has engaged for more than half a century with artists, audiences, students, and civic life. The city is truly our stage: for decades, in venues ranging from concert halls and clubs to public parks, we have presented a tremendous range of artists and art forms, from the most distinguished symphony orchestras to both renowned and emerging artists in classical music, jazz, international genres, and more. We also have an ever-expanding artistic and educational presence on the internet, addressing the programming challenges of this time of pandemic while envisioning ongoing opportunities for online connection and community in a post-COVID world.

Washington Performing Arts deeply values its partnerships with local organizations and other arts institutions. Through events online and in myriad performance venues and neighborhoods, we engage international visiting artists in community programs and introduce local artists to wider audiences. We place a premium on establishing artists as a continuing presence in the lives of both young people and adults through residencies and education programs.

Our achievements have been recognized with a National Medal of Arts and with three Mayor's Arts Awards from the DC Government. We have now embarked upon our second half-century, ever inspired by the motto of our founder, Patrick Hayes: "Everybody in, nobody out."

###