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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Local Dance Recitals Light Up Weinberg Center Stage After More Than a Year Dark

FREDERICK, MD, [May 18, 2021] — When the Weinberg Center for the Arts closed its doors on March 12, 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, staff thought it would just be a matter of weeks before they re-opened. Now over a year later restrictions from the State of Maryland, Frederick County and the City of Frederick are being lifted to allow the Weinberg Center for the Arts to carefully reopen.

First on the schedule are community dance recitals. Mid-Maryland Performing Arts Center (MMPAC) kicked off the season with their recitals this past weekend, to the excitement of dancers and their parents. Executive Theater Manager, John Healey, commented, “Thousands of young dancers have had the opportunity to perform on this professional stage in front of sold out houses of families and friends. One of the most frequent comments I hear from adult patrons coming to shows at the Weinberg is ‘I danced on that stage when I was young.’ When COVID-19 shut everything down last March, dance students from area companies lost an important arts experience. As restrictions have started to slowly ease, we felt it was important to the Frederick dance community to give their students the chance to perform at the Weinberg Center for the Arts.”

Gina Korrell owner of 24/7 Dance Studio shared her thoughts on returning to live performances this spring, “Last year we were heart broken when we were unable to have an end of the year performance. We are very excited to have the opportunity to perform in our "home" theater again. We have been hosting our shows at the Weinberg Center for the past 15 years and it just seems fitting.”

Donna Grimm owner of Dance Unlimited told us, “This past year has been one of change on so many levels. While it's been challenging, we have navigated the twists and turns with success, so to close out our dance season on stage at the Weinberg is a fitting opportunity for celebration and to thank all who have helped us get to this point. This will be our 32nd Recital Showcase at the Weinberg, which we've appropriately titled Unstoppable.” Joining MMPAC, 24/7 Dance Studio & Dance Unlimited for recitals at the Weinberg Center will be Center Stage Performing Arts Academy, The Dee Buchanan Studio of Dance, YMCA and Elower-Sicilia Productions of Dance (ESP).

Many improvements were made to the building over the past year to ensure theater patron’s safety upon the theater’s reopening. Ultraviolet lights and Hepa filters were installed in the heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems. These systems have been proven 99.9% effective in removing airborne viruses such as COVID-19. Touchless paper and soap dispensers were installed in all the theater restrooms. Hand sanitizing stations have been placed throughout the lobby areas. Automatic door openers were installed in the front doors, so patrons can enter the building without touching the door handles. Automatic light sensors were installed in the bathrooms, and floor markings are in place throughout the building to encourage social distancing.

Although capacity restrictions for indoor venues were relaxed on May 15th by Governor Hogan the Weinberg Center for the Arts will continue to follow Frederick County Health Department guidelines, requiring masks at all times and social distanced seating for the safety of our performers, staff and patrons. Tickets to the dance recitals are sold in pods of 2, 3, and 4 with every other row blocked and two seats empty between parties for adequate social distancing. In addition, arrival and departure times will be staggered to reduce crowds in the lobby areas. Masks will be required for anyone in the building and temperature checks will be done upon entry. No concessions will be sold or allowed in the theater for these performances in May and June, but the Weinberg plans to resume concession sales when the theater opens for its new season in Fall 2021.

The Weinberg Center's full 2021-22 Season will be announced August 5, 2021. More information about programming at the Weinberg Center for the Arts can be found at WeinbergCenter.org.

ABOUT THE WEINBERG CENTER FOR THE ARTS

The Weinberg Center for the Arts is one of the region's premier performing arts presenters, offering film, music, dance, theater, and family-focused programming. Located in the historic Tivoli movie theater in downtown Frederick Maryland, the Weinberg Center strives to ensure that the arts remain accessible and affordable to local and regional audiences alike. Weinberg Center events are made possible with major support from the City of Frederick, the Maryland State Arts Council, Plamondon Hospitality Partners, and other corporate and individual donors.