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**The Center for Performing Arts at Governors State University Presents:
Family-Friendly Saturday Matinees – The Center Southland Spotlight (Oct. 11) and
Ballet 5:8's *La Llorona* (Oct. 18)**

University Park, IL – October 6, 2025 — This October, the Center for Performing Arts at Governors State University continues its 30th Anniversary Legacy Season with Saturday afternoon matinees that celebrate local artistry and cultural storytelling: **The Center Southland Spotlight** on **Saturday, October 11 at 2 p.m.** and **Ballet 5:8's *La Llorona*** on **Saturday, October 18 at 2 p.m.**

The Center Southland Spotlight

On October 11, audiences are invited to experience the magic of musical theatre in The Center Southland Spotlight—a showcase of the South suburb's top community theatres. This afternoon celebration features show-stopping numbers from beloved musicals including *Dreamgirls*, *Ragtime*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Cabaret*, *Hairspray*, and more. Alongside previews of upcoming 2025–26 season productions, audiences will also enjoy highlights from recent seasons.

Curated by theatre artists Cordaro D. Johnson and Joshua X. Miller, the afternoon celebrates the diversity, artistry, and community spirit of the Southland. Johnson, a multifaceted director, stage manager, and writer, brings recent experience from productions such as *Dreamgirls* (Chicago Heights Drama Group) and *For Colored Girls*. Miller, a Chicago-born playwright and performer, is dedicated to uplifting Black and Queer voices and currently developing his new play *At Arm's Length*.

Ballet 5:8 – *La Llorona*

On October 18, Ballet 5:8, Chicago's premiere female- and minority-led ballet company, presents its critically acclaimed production *La Llorona*.

Rooted in the Mexican folktale of Maria—a grieving mother doomed to wander in sorrow—*La Llorona* reimagines the myth through a deeply human lens, illuminating struggles of postpartum depression and maternal mental health too often hidden in silence.

Choreographer Julianna Rubio Slager, a Mexican American artist and mother of three, draws from her lived experience to ask: What if Maria had received help? What if her pain had been understood instead of condemned?

“Maria is not a ghost story to me—she’s a woman under pressure,” says Slager. “This ballet gives her back her voice.”

Following the performance, audiences are invited to participate in an optional talkback panel with artists and mental health professionals, creating space for reflection and dialogue.

Ticket Information

Tickets range from \$25 to \$74, with \$20 tickets available for students and children, and additional discounts for seniors and groups.

To purchase tickets, visit <https://www.centertickets.net/> or call the box office at 708.235.2222.

About Ballet 5:8

Ballet 5:8 is a Chicago-based professional ballet company led by Mexican American choreographer **Julianna Rubio Slager**. Known for original, story-driven works that speak to today's most pressing issues, the company has been featured in *Dance Magazine*, WGN, ABC, NBC, and *Modern Luxury*. A resident company of the Harris Theater, Ballet 5:8 is committed to making ballet more human, more diverse, and more redemptive.

About the Center for Performing Arts at Governors State University

The Center for Performing Arts at Governors State University has brought world-class arts programming to Chicago's Southland for 30 years. With a commitment to accessibility, equity, and community-centered programming, the Center serves audiences of all ages and backgrounds—from Broadway enthusiasts to first-time theatergoers. Located just 35 miles south of downtown Chicago, the Center is a cultural anchor in the region and a proud supporter of local, national, and international talent.

How to Purchase Tickets

- Online at [CenterTickets.net](https://www.centertickets.net/)

- Over the phone at 708.235.2222
- In person at the Box Office: 1 University Parkway, University Park, IL 60484

Regular Box Office Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.; Thursdays: 11 a.m. – 6 p.m. and two hours prior to all performances.

Summer Box Office Hours: Tuesday-Thursday: 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Know Before You Go

Ask about additional opportunities for box seating and special events. Discounts are available for students, children, seniors 65+, groups of 10+, and patrons purchasing tickets to three or more shows.

Parking is free. For best GPS directions, use the location search term "Governors State University."

Connect With The Center

Like The Center on Facebook @CenterAtGSU and subscribe on YouTube for updates on events, offers, and more. Share your experience at The Center on Instagram: @gsu_center #govstatearts.

Center for Performing Arts 2025 - 2026 Season Lineup

October 2025

11

[The Center Southland Spotlight](#)

From powerhouse vocals to genre-spanning sounds—jazz, pop, soul, and beyond—this celebration of local talent brings together the Southland's finest artists for one electrifying night of music and community.

16

Arts in Education - [Maddi's Fridge](#)

Based on the book by Lois Brant. Recommended for Grades 1-6.

18

[Ballet 5:8 La Llorona](#)

Ballet 5:8 engages communities in Chicago, the Midwest and across the nation in conversation of life and faith through innovative storytelling and breathtaking dance. Explore the Mexican myth of "La Llorona," where choreographer Julianna Rubio Slager reinterprets Maria's journey through a lens of compassion and nuance. With each poignant movement and evocative scene, "La Llorona" sheds light on the silent struggles faced by new mothers, fostering empathy, understanding and a call to action for greater awareness and support.

21

Arts in Education - [Maleta de Maebelle](#)

A bilingual adaptation of the celebrated & beloved *Reading Rainbow* picture book *Maebelle's Suitcase* by Tricia Tusa. Recommended for Grades K-6.

25

[The Rocky Horror Picture Show with Live Shadow Cast](#)

Feel the antici...pation! One of the highlights of the Halloween season, *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* with a live shadow cast returns to The Center's stage with this classic cult rock'n'roll, science fiction, horror satire. Come in costume or just come for the fun, the live shadow cast takes the film to the next level as audiences experience the action with the whole theatre involved. Whether it's an introduction to the camp or your 100th, get ready to do the "Time Warp, again!"

31

[John Waters](#)

The Center welcomes the king of camp, John Waters, for an unforgettable evening of cult cinema and twisted storytelling. Expect an endless bag of transgressive tales and hetero-non-aggressive wit that'll warm the dark little hearts of non-binary brats everywhere. Waters will screen one of his classic films with live commentary—sharing behind-the-scenes stories, real-life inspirations, and unfiltered observations. Over-sharing? Absolutely. Too much information? Probably. But airing his dirty laundry just makes him feel clean. Includes post-screening Q&A.

November 2025

6-9

[Anon\(ymous\) presented by GovState Theatre and Performance Studies \(TAPS\)](#)

Separated from his mother, a young refugee called Anon journeys through the United States, encountering a wide variety of people -- some kind, some dangerous and cruel -- as he searches for his family. From a sinister one-eyed butcher to beguiling barflies to a sweatshop, Anon must navigate through a chaotic, ever-changing landscape in this entrancing adaptation of Homer's "The Odyssey."

7

[CeCe Teneal's Divas of Soul](#)

Hop on the "Midnight Train to Georgia" over "River Deep, Mountain High" while award-winning vocalist CeCe Teneal delivers the "R-E-S-P-E-C-T" you deserve in *Divas of Soul*, a one-of-a-kind concert event! This spectacular celebration of fifty years of chart-topping music from artists like Aretha Franklin, Gladys Knight, Chaka Khan, Tina Turner, Whitney Houston and others has wowed audiences worldwide.

13

Arts in Education - [When Good Broccoli Goes Bad](#)

A foot-tapping children's musical that playfully encourages children (and adults) to make healthier choices. Recommended for Grades PreK-5.

22

[Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra presents: NIGHT MOVES: The Planets, E.T. and Star Trek](#)

Experience a celestial journey through music! IPO presents *Star Trek Through the Years*, *E.T. 's Adventures on Earth*, and Holst's epic *The Planets*, accompanied by stunning visuals from Adrian Wyard. This out-of-this-world concert will forever change how you see—and hear—the night sky.

December 2025

6-7

[Ruth Page's The Nutcracker](#)

Returning to The Center after sold-out performances in 2024, this beloved holiday family classic is the only production that recreates the original version's full-length staging. Little Clara, her mysterious godfather magician, a handsome prince, the battle between toy soldiers and mice, and a forest glade of dancing Snowflakes are all brought to life in this beautiful and joyful production. Featuring international guest artists alongside the Ruth Page Civic Ballet elite dancers, experience exquisite performances, Tchaikovsky's magical score, stunning costumes, and imaginative settings in the Land of Snow and the Kingdom of the Sweets!

13

[IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE: A Live Radio Play](#)

The holiday season continues with The Center's, *It's A Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play*. Rediscover the magic of Frank Capra's timeless masterpiece, "It's a Wonderful Life," in a fun and immersive way. With the help of an ensemble led by the Center's staff, this live radio play adaptation takes audiences back in time to the 1940s, perfect for the whole family, as everyone becomes part of a live studio audience attending a radio broadcast of this beloved holiday tale.

January 2026

29

Arts in Education - [Finding North](#)

Based on the stories of African-American Underground Railroad hero John P. Parker. Recommended for Grades: 6-12.

February 2026

5

Arts in Education - [South Chicago Dance Theatre presents Dancing Through the Great Migration](#)

This show uses the art of dance to educate about The Great

Migration: an iconic movement of about 6 million African Americans from the South to the North and West between 1910 and 1970. Recommended for Grades 5-12.

7 [**Opera Up Close presents: Halftime High Notes: Honoring the Opera Up Close Legacy with John Concepcion and Friends**](#)

After 16 years of incredible music and memories, John Concepcion takes his final bow with a program of halftime high notes and a celebration of the program that shares the beauty, drama and power of opera.

15 [**The Rat Pack**](#)

Featuring the timeless music and charisma of Frank Sinatra, Sammy Davis Jr., and Dean Martin, this high-energy show transports you to vintage Las Vegas. Enjoy a night of signature Rat Pack humor, classic songs, and maybe even a surprise visit from Marilyn Monroe! Whether you're sharing it with a special someone or the entire family, you'll be transported to a bygone era where love, laughter, and music collide.

March 2026

5 [**Arts in Education - All That Jazz presented by GovState Theatre and Performance Studies Dance Performance**](#)

6 [**Arts in Education - Click Clack Moo**](#)

Based on the Caldecott Honor Book by Doreen Cronin and Betsy Lewin. Recommended for Grades: K-4.

7 [**All That Jazz presented by GovState Theatre and Performance Studies**](#)

Celebrate the rhythms of American dance in this lively performance featuring jazz classics and fresh new works. Presented by GovState's Theatre and Performance Studies and Dance Company, the show highlights choreography by students, faculty and alumni in a tribute to jazz past and present.

21 [**Center Stage Icons – 30th Anniversary Legacy Celebration with The Rostons**](#)

Award-winning duo Alexis J. Roston & Kelvin Roston Jr. pay musical tribute to the Center for its 30th Anniversary. From Kelvin's unforgettable turn as Donny Hathaway in *Twisted Melodies* to Alexis' show-stopping vocals, this dynamic couple celebrates the music, memories, and moments that have shaped the Center's stage.

25 [**Arts in Education - Professor Wow's FUN-believable Science Show**](#)

When students experience the fantastic, 12-foot tall "Foam Monster," the impossible "Balloons in Orbit," the uproariously

funny “Bernoulli TP Wipe Out Challenge” and the “Super-Colossal Vortex Cannon,” they learn that nothing is impossible—as long as it obeys the laws of science! Recommended for Grades K-8.

28

***Unleash the Beats* by [Chicago Tap Theatre](#)**

Chicago Tap Theatre brings energy, artistry, and rhythm to the stage. With dazzling footwork and musicality, this celebrated company honors the tradition of Tap while making it fresh and fun for all ages. A joyful, high-energy performance perfect for dance lovers and newcomers alike.

April 2026

9-12

***By The Way, Meet Vera Stark* presented by [GovState Theatre and Performance Studies \(TAPS\)](#)**

This play by Lynn Nottage follows the life of Vera Stark, a headstrong African-American maid and budding actress, and her tangled relationship with her boss, a white Hollywood star desperately grasping to hold on to her career. When circumstances collide and both women land roles in the same Southern epic, the story behind the cameras leaves Vera with a surprising and controversial legacy that scholars will debate for years to come.

17

Arts in Education - [Pete the Cat](#)

Based on the book series written by Eric Litwin and illustrated by James Dean. Recommended for Grades PreK-3.

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