



Walton Arts Center

OnStage

Fall/Winter 2025/26



Mrs. Doubtfire



Dog Man: The Musical



Kimberly Akimbo



The War and Treaty

also inside:

- > Cocktail Classes
- > Broadway Bridges
- > The Comedy Zone
- > West Street Live 10th Anniversary



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Walton Arts Center



From the President/CEO

Bringing the World to Northwest Arkansas

Northwest Arkansas deserves world-class arts and entertainment, and so do you! That's why Walton Arts Center exists; so you can experience something magical and transformative when you see a show. Whether you're here for Broadway or a 10x10 Arts Series show or any performance in-between, our entire team has worked hard to make sure this performance is extraordinary for you.

Every season here is special, and this one is no exception. Straight from New York City, several Broadway productions are stopping here on their first national tours, including *Kimberly Akimbo* (most Tony Award®-winning show on our season) and *Water for Elephants*. Spend an evening with two of Broadway's leading men, Mandy Patinkin and Norbert Leo Butz; each will bring their own showcases and stories to Baum Walker Hall. We also look forward to the return of fan-favorites Blue Man Group and a new show by Irish phenomenon Riverdance. And this season we are celebrating the 10th anniversary of our singer-songwriter series West Street Live presented by Neal Pendergraft with performances by The War and Treaty and returning favorite Marty Stuart.

While our mission is to connect and engage the community with world-class arts, we are also committed to introducing students to the life-changing world of the performing arts. On average, 30,000 students annually, from more than 90 local schools, enjoy free live performances as part of our Classroom Series. For many of these students, this is their first time experiencing live performances in a theater.

Thanks to the support of patrons like you, we launched three new initiatives last season and are expanding them this year. Hip-Hop 101 is a free after-school program that introduces students to the basic elements of hip-hop and connects them with teaching artists who are working professionals in the music industry. The Diamond Awards recognize achievement and excellence in high school musical theater programs throughout Northwest Arkansas and introduce students to careers in theater. Best actor and actress winners from this program will go to New York City to compete in the annual Broadway League Foundation's National High School Musical Theatre Awards® and receive training from Broadway professionals. And Broadway Bridges helps high school students see Broadway shows at deeply discounted prices. These programs reach deeper into our community to share the power of the arts and create a new generation of theater fans.

Thank you for joining us and we hope you return throughout the season with family and friends. Walton Arts Center is your performing arts center, and we are happy you are here!

Peter B. Lane
Walton Arts Center President/CEO

Cover clockwise:
U.K. company of MRS. DOUBTFIRE – photo by Johan Persson;
The War and Treaty; Ann Morrison in the National Tour of KIMBERLY AKIMBO – photo by Joan Marcus; L.R. Davidson, Crystal Sha'nae, Brian Owen, DeShawn Bowens, Jamie LaVerdiere, Dan Rosales in DOG MAN: THE MUSICAL – photo by Jeremy Daniel.

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& JULIET



Some Like It Hot



Mandy Patinkin



Wynton Marsalis



Blue Man Group



DUNGEONS & DRAGONS
The Twenty-Sided Tavern

Welcome to our 2025/26 Season!



Solas

Procter & Gamble Broadway Series

**A Beautiful Noise: The
Neil Diamond Musical**
Oct. 14-19

Kimberly Akimbo
Dec. 9-14

Water For Elephants
Feb. 24-March 1

Some Like It Hot
March 17-22

MAMMA MIA!
April 21-26

& JULIET
May 26-31

Land O'Lakes Concert Series

Straight No Chaser:
Holiday Road Tour
Nov. 4

**Jazz at Lincoln Center
Orchestra with Wynton
Marsalis: Big Band
Holidays**
Nov. 10

**Old Crow Medicine Show's
Holiday Hootenanny**
Dec. 3

**Mandy Patinkin in
Concert: JUKEBOX
with Adam Ben-David
on Piano**
Jan. 29

Solas
April 8

Chris Thile
April 12

Coca-Cola Night Out Series

**Avatar: The Last
Airbender in
Concert - The 20th
Anniversary Tour**
Sept. 13

**Halloween Films:
The Craft & Scream**
Oct. 31

Mrs. Doubtfire
Dec. 19-21

**German Cornejo's
Tango After Dark**
Jan. 21

**Richard Thomas in
Mark Twain Tonight!**
Jan. 23

**Riverdance 30:
The New
Generation**
June 9-11

Off-Dickson Series

Clue
Nov. 7-9

The Choir of Man
Jan. 27

**The Simon &
Garfunkel Story**
Feb. 19

**DUNGEONS & DRAGONS
The Twenty-Sided Tavern**
March 13-15

Blue Man Group
April 14-15



MAMMA
MIA!



← Scan here for the
most up-to-date
calendar listing!



Riverdance



**Dinosaur
World Live**



Skerryvore



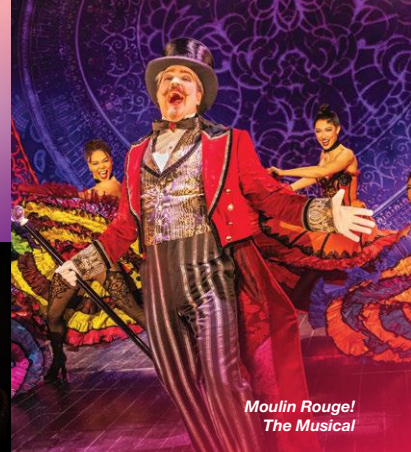
Camille Thurman



Soweto Gospel Choir



**Marty Stuart & His
Fabulous Superlatives**



**Moulin Rouge!
The Musical**

Pringles Family Fun Series

The Remember Balloons
Oct. 1

Wicked Sing-Along
Nov. 15

Dog Man: The Musical
Nov. 22-23

**WAC & SoNA present
The Snowman: A
Family Concert**
Dec. 7

**Holiday Films: Home
Alone & The Muppet
Christmas Carol**
Dec. 23

**Meredith Willson's
The Music Man**
Jan. 16-18

**Cahoots NI:
Secrets of Space**
March 10

**Mermaid Theatre of
Nova Scotia: Billy Goats
Gruff and Other Tales**
March 31

Dinosaur World Live
April 28

**Theater Unspeakable:
The American
Revolution**
May 3

10x10 Arts Series

Skerryvore
Sept. 23

**Reduced Shakespeare
Company: All The Great
Books (Abridged)**
Oct. 7

Soweto Gospel Choir:
Peace
Nov. 16

**The Fabulous Equinox
Orchestra: A Holiday
Equinox**
Dec. 17

Norbert Leo Butz:
Broadway or Busk
Feb. 21

BODYTRAFFIC
March 5

Voctave
April 10

**Australian Chamber
Orchestra**
April 18

**National Geographic
Live: The Wild Wolves of
Yellowstone**
May 12

**Curtis Chamber
Orchestra**
May 19

West Street Live Presented by Neal Pendergraft

**The 1 Oz. Jig &
Friends: A Tribute to
The Last Waltz**
Sept. 19

Nashville Songwriters
Oct. 2

**The War and Treaty
with Thunderstorm Artis**
Nov. 5

**Marty Stuart & His
Fabulous Superlatives**
Dec. 4

Sunny Sweeney
March 6

Mary Gauthier
May 16

Starrlight Jazz Club

André Mehmar
Sept. 20

Tuck & Patti
Oct. 3

Camille Thurman Quartet
Oct. 24

**Mike Stern Band
with Leni Stern,
Bob Franceschini,
Jimmy Haslip &
Steve Pruitt**
Nov. 15

Michael Mayo
Feb. 21

**African Rhythms
Alumni Quintet**
March 13

The Comedy Zone

Kevin Bozeman
Sept. 18

Myles Weber
Oct. 23

Dustin Ybarra
Nov. 21

Aida Rodriguez
Jan. 31

Brad Upton
March 5

Andy Woodhull
April 18

More Great Shows!

Ali Siddiq
Oct. 11

Whitney Cummings:
Big Baby! Tour
Oct. 24

Joe Bonamassa
Nov. 25

**Disney's Beauty
and the Beast**
Feb. 3-8

John Crist
March 28

VoiceJam Competition
April 11

**Diamond Awards
Ceremony**
May 23

Henry Cho
June 6

Moulin Rouge!
The Musical
July 8-12



Walton Arts Center Box Office
495 W. Dickson Street / Fayetteville, AR 72701
Located just inside the West Ave. entrance
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All ticket prices in this publication are all-in standard pricing and subject to change.

Whitney Cummings

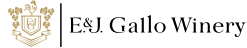


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Walton Arts Center Council Board and Foundation Board members denoted in **bold**.

Special thanks to all those who wish to remain anonymous and to the following companies who match employees' donations and foundations that support Walton Arts Center.

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Friends Spotlight

Amelia Catanzaro

Walton Arts Center Volunteer and *Friend*



How long have you been attending shows at Walton Arts Center?

I've been attending shows at Walton Arts Center for as long as I can remember. *Les Misérables* was the first show I remember attending in 2004. I have been collecting my tickets and Playbills since I was little – I attended a Classroom Series education show through my school that was sponsored by *Friends*. It is really special for me to be able to pay it forward to the next generation of students who can come see shows through my donations now.

What benefit do you most enjoy as part of the *Friends* program?

My favorite *Friends* benefit is the lounge. Every show the food is spectacular, and I've actually made a lot of new friends and mentors there over the years. I didn't expect to get anything back from donating but it's been so incredible to meet so many amazing

supporters of the arts. There is something special about being surrounded by people that love and support the things that you do.

What do you want other people to know about the *Friends* program?

When you support Walton Arts Center through the *Friends* program you are directly impacting the community around you. It's plain and simple: people need the arts. Everyday life can be hard, but giving back through the *Friends* program isn't just giving tickets to shows. It gives hope, love, light and the ability to leave the real world behind for a few hours and escape into a place where dreams are made. Don't you want to be a part of giving that feeling to someone? I know I do.

Light the way. Set the Stage. Become a *Friend*!

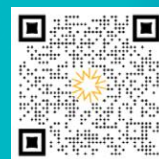
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The Stage is Set – Just Off-Dickson



Off-Dickson is Walton Arts Center's twist on the Off-Broadway experience, where you can expect entertaining and innovative theater. This series is inspired by the imaginative, trailblazing spirit of Off-Broadway productions. Step into performances that will lift your spirits and remind you why you love live theater.

Clue

Nov. 7-9 / 5 performances!

Based on the fan-favorite 1985 Paramount Pictures movie and inspired by the classic Hasbro board game, *Clue* is the ultimate whodunit that will leave you dying of laughter and keep you guessing until the final twist.

Premier Broadway Series Support: *Bob & Becky Alexander*

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The Choir of Man

Thursday, Jan. 27

Featuring pop, classic rock, folk melodies and pub anthems from Adele, Paul Simon, Katy Perry, Red Hot Chili Peppers, Luther Vandross and more, *The Choir of Man* is 90 minutes of feel-good entertainment that has something for everyone!



The Simon & Garfunkel Story

Thursday, Feb. 19

/ Limited Tickets Remain

This immersive concert-style theater show tells the story of folk-rock duo Paul Simon and Art Garfunkel using huge projection photos, original footage and live performances of the songs you know and love.

Show Sponsor:

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Show Underwriter:

Cynthia Jones | Travis & Shelly Mauldin
Brock & Natalie McKee



DUNGEONS & DRAGONS The Twenty-Sided Tavern

March 13-15

3 performances!

The global phenomenon DUNGEONS & DRAGONS is now live on-stage in an interactive fantasy adventure where you choose the heroes and battle monsters on an epic quest to save the world.

Blue Man Group

April 14-15 / 2 performances!

Dive into the thrilling Blue Man Group experience – a fun and disruptive blend of captivating music, interactive art and audience engagement.





The Department of Theatre 2025-2026 Season

Twilight Bowl

by Rebecca Gilman

Sept 26 - Oct 5 @Global Campus

Little Women

Music by Jason Howland,
Lyrics by Mindi Dickstein,
Book by Allan Knee
Adapted to a musical from the
original story by Louisa May Alcott
Nov 7 - Nov 16 @University
Theatre

Arktype New Play Festival

Feb 26 - Mar 15 @Global Campus

Peter and the Starcatcher

By Rick Elice

Apr 10 - Apr 18 @University Theatre

Evolutions

Apr 24 - Apr 26 @University Theatre

And a special collaboration
with TheatreSquared!

Pride and Prejudice

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The Making of *Kimberly Akimbo*

with Composer Jeanine Tesori



Jeanine
Tesori

A new musical about growing up and growing old (in no particular order), *Kimberly Akimbo* is the winner of five Tony Awards® including best musical. It features a Tony Award-winning book and lyrics by David Lindsay-Abaire (*Shrek*), choreography by Danny Mefford (*Dear Evan Hansen*) and direction by Tony-nominated director Jessica Stone (*Water for Elephants*).

Kimberly is about to turn 16 and recently moved with her family to a new town in suburban New Jersey. In this “howlingly funny heartbreaker of a show” (*The New Yorker*), Kim is forced to navigate family dysfunction, a rare genetic condition, her first crush ... and possible felony charges. Ever the optimist, she is determined to find happiness against all odds and embark on a great adventure.

Keep reading to learn more about the show that *Hollywood Reporter* calls “your new favorite musical” from the show’s Tony-winning composer Jeanine Tesori.

***Kimberly Akimbo* started out as one of David Lindsay-Abaire’s plays. What about the play *Kimberly Akimbo* “sang” to you?**

What struck me about *Kimberly Akimbo* was the contrast between the essence and the identity of the characters.

There’s a significant difference between who these characters are and how the world perceives them. This gap often gives rise to the need to sing. In *Kimberly Akimbo*, everyone is misunderstood and ill-equipped to deal with their circumstances.

“The characters sing from a place of great desire, loss and hope.”

- Jeanine Tesori





Ann Morrison, Miguel Gil, Skye Alyssa Friedman, Pierce Wheeler, Darron Hayes, Grace Capeless, Laura Woyasz, Jim Hogan and company in the National Tour of *KIMBERLY AKIMBO*. Photos: Joan Marcus.

Collaborating with the playwright was invaluable because he provided the foundation, allowing me to ask, “What were you thinking when you wrote this?” Initially, he wrote from a young perspective, similar to Kimberly’s. But when we revisited the material, we approached it from the vantage point of parents and middle-aged individuals. This evolution in perspective was fascinating. The characters sing from a place of great desire, loss and hope.

Could you talk about a song that you “spotted” while creating the musical?

One song I like to highlight is Kim’s “Make a Wish.” It’s an interior monologue where Kim sings about what she wants—to travel the world and experience everything—but what she truly needs is to feel safe and loved within a family. From that moment, Kim knows she has to leave to find what she needs, because she can’t find it where she is.

How do you see the music in *Kimberly Akimbo* contributing to the overall messages or themes of the show?

Kim is a delicate character who must be tough because she looks much older than she is. When my daughter was 16, I noticed it was like a second toddlerhood—a time of discovering who she

was, filled with whims and vulnerabilities. This phase inspired the beginning of Kim’s music, which has a marionette-like, almost Pierrot theme. It reflects the delicate dance of first crushes, balancing toughness with a tender heart. The music tries to capture that complexity within her.

Premier Broadway Series Support:

Bob & Becky Alexander

Broadway Series Support: *Friends of Broadway*

Show Underwriter:

Seth Malleg & Luke Bridges

8 SHOWS /

Dec.
9-14



Mary Miller

Facilities and Housekeeping Supervisor



Can you describe your primary role and typical day at Walton Arts Center?

I arrive at 7 am to ensure the building is ready for both the in-house staff and visiting cast and crew, and that all spaces are clean and ready for any meetings and events. I open the building to the public at 10 am, and during the rest of my day, I jump between meetings about upcoming events, am on call for all Walton Arts Center deliveries and lead the dayside housekeeping staff through daily cleaning duties. I also represent the facilities team on our sustainability committee. We focus on reusing, reducing and recycling a variety of supplies and products that we donate to other local nonprofits who support our unhoused community in Fayetteville. At the Walmart AMP I started an initiative to retrieve and clean all the blankets left in the venue after shows and then donate them to local animal shelters throughout Northwest Arkansas.

How did you get into this industry?

My brother, Roger Ramirez, asked me to help out at the Walmart AMP in 2017. At the time he was the lead supervisor for housekeeping at both Walton Arts Center and Walmart AMP. What started out as just helping on a few shows turned into a full-time role!

What is the most interesting thing about your job?

I enjoy the pace of the work and seeing Walton Arts Center's stages go from being dormant during the summer to being full of life during the season. At the AMP, I love the heat in the summer and watching the trucks roll in at 6 am. In all facets, I enjoy meeting new people every day.

We focus on reusing, reducing and recycling a variety of supplies and products that we donate to other local nonprofits who support our unhoused community in Fayetteville.

What would you like patrons to know about Walton Arts Center?

I love living in Northwest Arkansas, and having this arts center in my backyard adds so much to my life and to the culture of Fayetteville. Many of the people here are now lifelong friends and didn't know that I needed them until we met. I'm proud to be a part of the Walmart AMP and Walton Arts Center team!



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Kevin Bozeman

Thursday, Sept. 18 / 7:30pm

Credits: Comedy Central's "Premium Blend," NBC's "Last Comic Standing"

Comedy Special: *Clean and Unfiltered* (Dry Bar)

What to Expect: Drawing inspiration from growing up as the youngest of 10 children, working many odd jobs and now fathering three children himself, Kevin Bozeman is out to prove that laughter is the best medicine.



Aida Rodriguez

Saturday, Jan. 31 / 8pm

Credits: "Shaquille O'Neal Presents: All Star Comedy Jam," Netflix's "They Ready," *The Comedian* starring Robert De Niro

Comedy Special: *Fighting Words* (HBO Max)

What to Expect: A longtime favorite on the standup circuit, Aida Rodriguez's distinct brand of poignant comedy is ripped from the pages of her own incredible story.



Myles Weber

Thursday, Oct. 23 / 7:30pm

Credits: MTV's "Greatest Party Story Ever Told"

Comedy Specials: *A 90s Kinda Love* (Amazon Prime), *Mr. Bright Side* (Amazon Prime), *When You're A White Dude From the Hood* (Dry Bar), *Pug Life* (Dry Bar)

What to Expect: Want your vibe raised? Your funny bone tickled? Weber's relatable material and positive stories connect with and uplift audiences of all generations.



Brad Upton

Thursday, March 5 / 7:30pm

Credits: Las Vegas Comedy Festival, HBO Comedy Festival, Grand Ole Opry

Comedy Specials: *Boomer Triggers*, *Gen-Z Snowflake* (Dry Bar), *I'm Not Done Yet* (Dry Bar)

What to Expect: With a career spanning over 37 years, comedy veteran Brad Upton is just getting started. The former fourth grade teacher and part-time track coach is experiencing a resurgence unlike anyone else with the second most viewed comedy special on the planet.



Dustin Ybarra

Friday, Nov. 21 / 7:30pm

Credits: "The Goldbergs," "Home Economics," "Californication," "Kevin (Probably) Saves the World," "Gotham," "The Tonight Show," *We Bought a Zoo*, *Us*, *21 & Over*, *Easter Sunday*.

Comedy Special: *That Will Not Do* (YouTube)

What to Expect: With a wide grin and a naturally uproarious sense of humor, Dustin Ybarra's comedy is effortlessly relatable and laid-back, winning over audiences without resorting to shock value or gimmicks.



Andy Woodhull

Saturday, April 18 / 7:30pm

Credits: CW's "Totally Funny Animals," "The Late Late Show with James Corden," "Conan."

Comedy Specials: *The World's Greatest Step-Dad* and *Middle Parent Syndrome* (Dry Bar), *Beach Brain* (YouTube)

What to Expect: Andy Woodhull was the first comedian to make his network television debut on "The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon," and the first comedian to return here at The Comedy Zone. Fans rave about his clean delivery and creative call backs.





Quiz: Discover Which Cocktail Class is Right for You

Back by popular demand, cocktail classes are available before select Broadway shows throughout the season, and are the perfect way to stir up a night of creative discovery. Whether you're center stage or dancing in the wings, there's a cocktail class that matches your vibe – answer the questions below to reveal the class for you!

How do you enter the room?

- A** / With a curated walk-in song.
- B** / Confident and full of personality.
- C** / Cool, collected and mysterious.

Which lyric speaks to your soul?

- A** / "Money talks but it can't sing and dance, and it can't walk."
- B** / "I've got my groove on, we're rocking now!"
- C** / "This train is bound for everywhere, don't care much where we end up."

What is your ideal Broadway role?

- A** / An American rock icon.
- B** / A lovable and comedic nanny.
- C** / A runaway circus veterinarian.

What is your Broadway post-show ritual?

- A** / Listen to the musical's cast recording on your way home.
- B** / Debrief with family and friends.
- C** / Head out to Dickson Street because your night has just started!



Food provided by



Mostly A / *A Beautiful Noise* Cocktail Class

You're everyone's best friend and have the right song for any mood. Your perfect cocktail? Something classic with a twist – like you! Learn to make a cocktail as bold as you at the ***A Beautiful Noise: The Neil Diamond Musical*** cocktail classes, Oct. 16-18.



Mostly B / *Mrs. Doubtfire* Cocktail Class

You're curious and sentimental with a deep appreciation for the classics. You go for bold flavors, fragrant finishes and just the right amount of drama! Stir up something fun at the ***Mrs. Doubtfire*** cocktail classes, Dec. 19-20.



Mostly C / *Water for Elephants* Cocktail Class

You're extra in the best way. You steal scenes, serve looks and leave a little sparkle everywhere you go. Your drink is a spectacle for the senses and you can make a drink just as vibrant as you are at the ***Water for Elephants*** cocktail classes, Feb. 26-28.



Found your flavor? Come learn to make bold and delicious cocktails at a hands-on mixology class. Add on this experience before a show to enhance your night at the theater, or take a cocktail class before dinner and drinks on Dickson Street. Tickets are \$45, and you can enjoy reduced pricing when you purchase three or more. View full schedule and reserve your shaker now at waltonartscenter.org.

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Hellooooo, Fayetteville! Mrs. Doubtfire Comes to Town

The movie you know and love comes to the stage in this internationally acclaimed hit musical critics call “wonderful, heart-warming and laugh-out-loud funny” (*Manchester Evening News*) and “a feel-good, family-friendly comedy that delivers” (*The Hollywood Reporter*). Based on the beloved film and directed by four-time Tony Award® winner Jerry Zaks, *Mrs. Doubtfire* tells the hysterical and heartfelt story of an out-of-work actor who will do anything for his kids. It’s “the lovable, big-hearted musical comedy we need right now,” raves the *Chicago Tribune* – one that proves we’re better together.

Tour Director Steve Edlund answered a few of our questions before everyone’s favorite Scottish nanny heads to Fayetteville, Dec. 19-21.

For those who may not know, what does a tour director do?

A tour director is responsible for overseeing all the elements of putting a show together in the spirit of the show’s original direction. From how it looks to how it moves ... my job is to honor the amazing work of the brilliant director Jerry Zaks by recreating his meticulously thought-out production as faithfully as possible.

“Every bit of this show is rooted in our deep love for the 1993 movie.”

- Tour Director Steve Edlund





UK Tour of MRS. DOUBTFIRE.
Photos: Johan Persson.

How do you go about recreating a movie that was so popular like this one for the stage?

By loving it! Every bit of this show is rooted in our deep love for the 1993 movie. We've taken what you know and built upon it in a way only a musical can.

What does *Mrs. Doubtfire* provide to its audiences?

Mrs. Doubtfire is all about love and family. The lengths one would go for them and how we define what a "family" can look like.

Why should audiences come see *Mrs. Doubtfire* in Fayetteville?

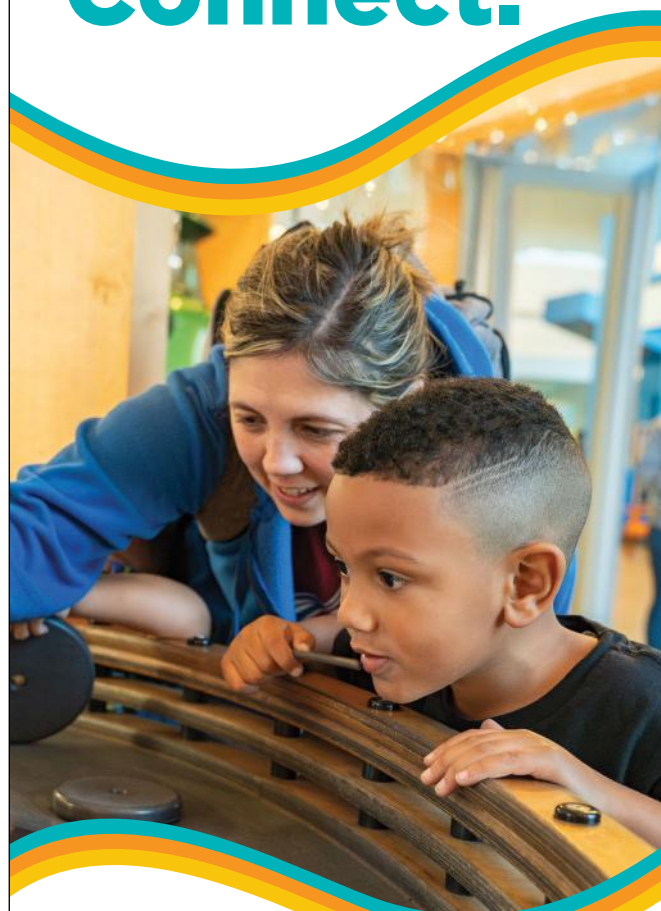
You know, I've watched this show so many times ... and I'm always surprised how it affects me. You laugh and laugh and just when you go to laugh again, you're moved. Anyone can relate to it, and everyone will be entertained.

Premier Broadway Support: *Bob & Becky Alexander*

Show Underwriter: **8th & Walton**

4 SHOWS /
**Dec.
19-21**

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Looking for Community? Find It Through Volunteering

By Quinette Rogers, ticketing representative and volunteer programs assistant

Northwest Arkansas is experiencing rapid population growth, drawing new residents from across the country thanks to its vibrant job market, quality of life and access to outdoor recreation. Moving to a new place often comes with the challenge of building social connections and finding a sense of belonging, but with volunteer opportunities at Walton Arts Center, you can join an active community of kind, theater-loving individuals.

For those passionate about the arts, Walton Arts Center offers a welcoming space to engage with others, give back to the community and support the region's growing cultural and arts scene. The regional performing arts center serves as both an artistic hub and a community gathering place, making it an ideal space for those looking to become more involved in their new home. Whether assisting patrons as an usher, helping with educational outreach programs or supporting community events, volunteers play a crucial role in making the arts fun and accessible to all.

Research shows that volunteering fosters social connections and improves mental well-being. A study by the Mayo Clinic found that individuals who volunteer regularly report lower levels of stress and a greater sense of purpose. Additionally, a University of Maryland study indicated that volunteers are 24.4% more likely to develop strong community ties compared to non-volunteers. Engaging in volunteer work at a place like Walton Arts Center

not only benefits the organization but also enhances personal fulfillment and a sense of belonging for those who participate.

Volunteering is also an opportunity to become part of something bigger. Volunteers have the chance to meet fellow arts enthusiasts and gain hands-on experience in event coordination and customer service. There are also appreciation events for volunteers to celebrate all they do for the organization. Many volunteers have shared that their involvement has led to long-lasting friendships, professional networking opportunities and a deeper appreciation for our region.

Volunteers play an important role in mission-critical programs – including our Classroom Series which welcomes tens of thousands of local school children to our venue each year for free, bridging gaps in arts accessibility for underserved populations. From first graders to retirees, the arts unify this diverse community and foster growth, creativity and engagement in Northwest Arkansas.



If you are interested in finding community with like-minded individuals through volunteering, visit waltonartscenter.org/volunteer.



Walton Arts Center would like to **share our appreciation** for the many **generous volunteers** whose time and dedication make our programming possible.

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Annual NYC Trip Explores Broadway and Beyond

This past March, a group of 21 Walton Arts Center patrons and staff took on New York City for a week of performances, sightseeing and dining. A special opportunity for *Friends* of Walton Arts Center, this annual trip is designed to be an unforgettable experience with once-in-a-lifetime excursions and programs.

The group had the opportunity to attend seven of Broadway's hottest musicals, including the 2025 Tony®-winning productions of *Maybe Happy Ending*, *Sunset Boulevard*, *Buena Vista Social Club* and *Death Becomes Her*.

In addition, guests enjoyed a private showcase with actor Marcus Martin, who you might recognize as the Genie in the North American Tour of *Aladdin*, and a Q&A with Orin Wolf, Tony-winning producer of Broadway and touring productions including *The Band's Visit* and *Buena Vista Social Club*. Excursions included an exclusive behind-the-scenes tour of Sotheby's priceless

"...it's about connecting with fellow arts enthusiasts who are passionate about enriching community."

— VP & Chief Development Officer, Becky Brink

Old Masters collection, exploration of the Transit Museum's unique history and invitations to the final dress rehearsal of the Metropolitan Opera's *Marriage of Figaro*.

"This annual trip is for both seasoned and first-time NYC visitors involved in our *Friends* giving program," says Becky Brink, vice president and chief development officer. "It's not just about the destinations; it's about connecting with fellow arts enthusiasts who are passionate about enriching community."

Curious about the next Broadway & Beyond trip? Mark your calendar for March 23-28, 2026. Priority access is given to *Friends* of Walton Arts Center! For more information, contact giving@waltonartscenter.org or call 479.974.1506.




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Break Dancing and Breaking Down Barriers for Young Artists



Over 100 local students learned the basics of hip-hop last year through Walton Arts Center's inaugural Hip-Hop 101, a free, after-school program. From graffiti to fashion, audio engineering and break-dancing, this program introduces young creatives to the most popular genre of American music.

There are often costs and barriers to receiving quality instruction in the arts, but Walton Arts Center removed those barriers by employing the teaching artists. These local subject matter experts delivered 132 hours of instruction through after-school workshops. Students wrote and performed their own songs, created costumes and showcased what they learned at a performance in Baum Walker Hall.

The high schoolers at ALLPS School of Innovation took their learning outside of the classroom, performing at venues across

the region and creating a professional music video and EP of original music. These students will become teachers this year with Hip-Hop Knowledge Drops, one-day, in-school residencies for third grade students across Northwest Arkansas. These residencies bring professional teaching artists and students in the ALLPS Crew into English, music, physical education and visual arts classes to lead students through three dynamic sessions: writing & rapping lyrics, breaking and graffiti.

Alongside Hip-Hop Knowledge Drops, we are excited to expand Hip-Hop 101 into Asbell and Owl Creek elementary schools, helping local students build confidence and learn about this uniquely American genre and its connection to our history.





Broadway Bridges Welcomes High School Students to See Touring Broadway

Walton Arts Center is one of 24 venues across the country participating in Broadway Bridges on the Road, a Broadway League initiative that expands access to touring Broadway productions for high school students. Based on its successful counterpart in New York City, Broadway Bridges on the Road gives high school student groups access to discounted tickets to touring Broadway shows and serves as an introduction to the magic of theater. Last season, 226 students attended performances of *Funny Girl* and *Back to the Future the Musical* at a highly discounted price, thanks in part to support from *Friends of Walton Arts Center*.

"This program has been very successful in New York," said Jennifer Ross, vice president of programming at Walton Arts

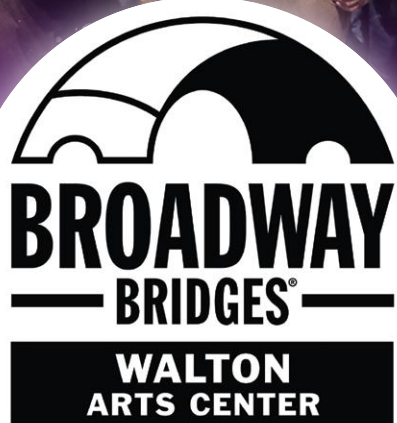
Center. "Since it started in 2017, more than 120,000 public school sophomores have attended a show on Broadway. We are

excited to continue bringing that experience to students in Northwest Arkansas and introducing them not only to the shows and stories in these Broadway productions but the idea of theater as a career."

This [program] makes field trips to see Broadway shows a reality for many who would not be able to attend otherwise.

By collaborating with touring productions, Walton Arts Center is able to provide discounted tickets, usually \$25 or less, for high school groups to a Broadway production at Walton Arts Center. This makes field trips to see Broadway shows a reality for many who would not be able to attend otherwise while also enriching students' arts

education, promoting cultural equity and cultivating a diverse future audience for live theater.



"I just wanted to thank you again for the incredible opportunity to expose my students to Broadway yesterday – They had the time of their lives" said Christine Selby, theater teacher at Lamar High School. "Seriously. I heard, 'This has been the best day of my life' from one of my students. I had several students who rarely go on field trips and they were so happy. It's all they can talk about today. They saw that their passion can someday be their job."

Interested theater instructors can email schools@waltonartscenter.org and request information about next season's shows. We are excited to welcome many more local students to the theater this season through Broadway Bridges at Walton Arts Center!




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The Remember Balloons

**Wednesday,
Oct. 1, 6pm**

The Remember Balloons is a heartwarming intergenerational tale that embraces the beauty of sharing memories while delicately addressing memory loss.

Director and choreographer Dominic Moore-Dunson adapts this touching story for the stage, crafting a captivating dance-theater experience. Recommended for ages 5 and up.

Show Underwriter: *Richie & Karen Roberts*



The Remember Balloons

Dog Man: The Musical

Nov. 22-23 / 3 performances

Based on the worldwide bestselling hit series, *Dog Man: The Musical* is a hilarious and heartwarming production following the chronicles of Dog Man. Recommended for ages 6 and up.

Walton Arts Center & Symphony of Northwest Arkansas present The Snowman: A Family Concert

Sunday, Dec. 7, 2pm

Join us for a special screening of *The Snowman*, based on Raymond Briggs's classic children's book with the original score performed live by SoNA.



Dog Man: The Musical

Wicked Sing-Along

Saturday, Nov. 15, 2pm

After two decades as one of the most beloved and enduring musicals on stage, the 2024 award-winning film *Wicked* comes to Baum Walker Hall as a spectacular, generation-defining cinematic sing-along. *Wicked* is rated PG.

Show Underwriter: *Brandon & Sarah Wilson*



The Snowman: A Family Concert

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Holiday Films: *Home Alone* and *The Muppet Christmas Carol*

Tuesday, Dec. 23

Two holiday favorite films are coming to the big screen in Baum Walker Hall.



Broadway Bonus

Meredith Willson's *The Music Man*

Jan. 16-18 / 4 performances

Meredith Willson's six-time, Tony Award®-winning musical comedy *The Music Man* follows traveling salesman Harold Hill as he cons the people of River City into buying instruments and uniforms for a boys' band that he vows to organize – this, despite the fact that he doesn't know a trombone from a treble clef. Recommended for ages 8 and up.

Show Underwriter: *David & Pam Parks*

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- SEPTEMBER 24** blink-182 with Alkaline Trio & Scowl
- SEPTEMBER 25** Ben Rector with The National Parks
- SEPTEMBER 26** Jon Pardi with Jake Worthington & Colby Acuff
- SEPTEMBER 30** Papa Roach x Rise Against with Underoath
- OCTOBER 10** Alex Warren
- OCTOBER 15** Pierce The Veil with HEALTH, Eca Vandal & Like Roses
- OCTOBER 19** TWENTY ONE PILOTS
- OCTOBER 22** Seether & Daughtry



These shows and more on sale now at **amptickets.com!**





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West Street Live Celebrates 10th Anniversary

For a decade, West Street Live **presented by Neal Pendergraft** has been a lyric-lovers dream, bringing some of the best singer-songwriters to Northwest Arkansas.

Hometown heroes, historic musicians and an intimate venue set this series apart, creating the ultimate listening experience. To commemorate its 10-year anniversary, we interviewed a few people who helped launch the series.

"I had booked several folk acts in Starr Theater over the years, but once Brian Crowne and I put our heads together and proposed a singer-songwriter series to Neal Pendergraft, things started moving in the right direction," says Jennifer Ross, vice president of programming.

"When I decided to make a donation to Walton Arts Center, I wanted a portion of that donation to go to a music series," says Pendergraft. "Mark Blackwood and I discussed the options and finally settled on a small hall series where great singer-songwriters performed in an intimate setting not available to audiences at that time. To me, songwriting starts with a poem, adds some instruments and grows

into a song. When the poet, musician and singer are all together (or the same person) a magical thing might happen."

"...when I sit in that close and comfortable atmosphere, all I think about is the music."

– Neal Pendergraft

Nearly 60 artists have headlined the West Street Live series, including memorable concerts by Peter Yarrow, Rodney Crowell, Jimmy Webb, A.J. Croce, Tinsley Ellis, Kathy Mattea, Marty Stuart and Paul Thorn. "What has stayed the same is the passion of a core group of subscribers that want to be in a space with folks that you

don't know but feel a kinship with as music fans," says Brian Crowne, local promoter, owner of George's Majestic Lounge and vice president of the Walmart AMP and strategic initiatives.

Pendergraft agreed, saying, "when I sit in that close and comfortable atmosphere, all I think about is the music – I believe most of the other folks in Starr Theater feel the same way. When we funded West Street Live, we knew we could get three years. All the great patrons and ticket buyers thought it should go a lot longer. Most of our shows have sold out because of the great acts and our patrons' love of great music."

Thank you to our West Street Live subscribers and to Neal Pendergraft for all of your support and excitement for the series throughout the years. To celebrate, we are excited to present an unparalleled 2025-26 season. Tickets are on sale now.

1 Oz. Jig and Friends: A Tribute to The Last Waltz

Friday, Sept. 19, 7:30pm

Show Underwriter: *Les & Mina Baledge*

Nashville Songwriters

Thursday, Oct. 2, 7:30pm

The War and Treaty with Thunderstorm Artis

Wednesday, Nov. 5, 7:30pm

Marty Stuart & His Fabulous Superlatives

Thursday, Dec. 4, 7:30pm

Sunny Sweeney

Friday, March 6, 7:30pm

Mary Gauthier

Saturday, May 16, 7:30pm



1 Oz. Jig and Friends



The War and Treaty



Sunny Sweeney



Marty Stuart & His Fabulous Superlatives



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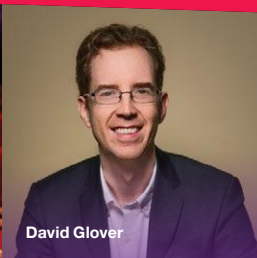
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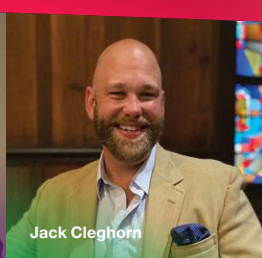
Symphony of Northwest Arkansas Launches 2025-26 Season of Discovery



Lawrence Loh



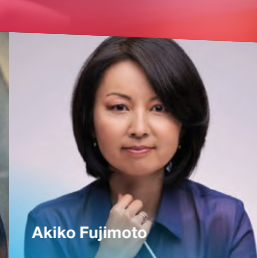
David Glover



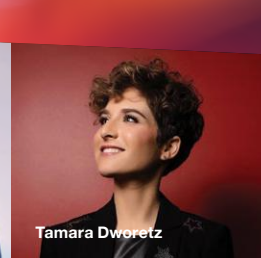
Jack Cleghorn



Sarah Pearson



Akiko Fujimoto



Tamara Dworetz

Big changes are in store for the Symphony of Northwest Arkansas (SoNA) as it kicks off its much-anticipated 2025-26 mainstage season. With longtime Music Director Paul Haas concluding his tenure last spring, the orchestra now embarks on a bold season of discovery, featuring five different guest conductors – four of whom are finalists to become SoNA's next artistic leader.

"This season is unlike anything we've done before," says SoNA Executive Director Ben Harris. "Each concert will be led by a different conductor, each bringing their own unique voice and energy. Our audience won't just be along for the ride – they'll be part of the process of shaping SoNA's future."

Choosing a new artistic leader for an organization such as SoNA is no small task, so the decision was made to proceed at a measured and thoughtful pace, and with SoNA's audience of listeners and supporters at the heart of the process. Following an extensive national search, the four finalists will each conduct one of the upcoming season's four masterworks concerts in September, November, January and March – with each concert serving as a live audition of sorts.

"This approach will give our musicians the chance to work closely with each conductor during rehearsals, and it will give you — our audience — the opportunity to experience their artistry on stage," Harris explains. "After each concert, we'll invite patrons to share their thoughts through an audience survey."

The season launches on **Saturday, Sept. 20** with **Celestial Visions: *Symphonie Fantastique***, led by returning guest conductor **Lawrence Loh**. This imaginative program opens with Missy Mazzoli's modern, otherworldly *Sinfonia (for Orbiting Spheres)*, followed by Brahms' richly textured *Variations on a Theme by Haydn*. The evening then crescendos with Berlioz's iconic *Symphonie Fantastique* – a fever-dream of passion, obsession and musical innovation.

On **Sunday, Nov. 2**, audiences are invited to celebrate the joy of motion and melody with ***Celebration in Motion: Beethoven 7***. Guest conductor **David Glover** leads a thrilling lineup, beginning with William Grant Still's spirited *Festive Overture*, followed by selections from Smetana's epic *Má Vlast*, and Jessie Montgomery's dazzling *Starburst*, before closing with Beethoven's exhilarating *Symphony No. 7*.

The magic of the holidays returns in December with two cherished annual events. ***A Very SoNA Christmas*** returns on **Saturday, Dec. 6** with matinee and evening performances, conducted by SoNA's friend and frequent collaborator **Jack Cleghorn**. Then on **Sunday, Dec. 7**, co-presented in partnership with Walton Arts Center, families can experience ***The Snowman: A Family Concert***, featuring a screening of the beloved animated film *The Snowman* with live orchestral accompaniment, led by SoNA Assistant Conductor **Sarah Pearson**.

The season continues after the New Year with ***Across the Silk Road: Scheherazade*** on **Saturday, Jan. 31**. This culturally rich program, conducted by **Akiko Fujimoto**, is inspired by stories, landscapes and legends from across Asia and the Middle East. Highlights include Mozart's *Overture to The Abduction from the Seraglio*, Borodin's *In the Steppes of Central Asia*, Ravel's *Mother Goose Suite* and Rimsky-Korsakov's breathtaking *Scheherazade*.

And the season finale arrives on **Saturday, March 7** with ***Behind the Mask: Romeo and Juliet***, conducted by **Tamara Dworetz**. The program explores the drama and romance of masked identities, beginning with a series of masquerade-themed works by Dvořák, Nielsen, Clyne and Khachaturian, before culminating with Prokofiev's epic *Romeo and Juliet* – a sweeping, emotional masterpiece that has captivated audiences for generations.

Season subscriptions and single tickets are available now, with all performances taking place in Baum Walker Hall. To purchase tickets or subscriptions, visit **sonamusic.org** or call the Walton Arts Center box office at **(479) 443-5600**.



Jeff Clapper

CEO of 8th & Walton

Behind the scenes, over 30 business leaders on Walton Arts Center's Corporate Leadership Council support fundraising events that benefit our arts education programs, which reach more than 26,000 students and educators annually. Jeff Clapper, CEO of 8th & Walton, is both a founding member of CLC and a *Friend* of Walton Arts Center. We sat down to learn more about his support of the arts.

Why did 8th & Walton decide to support Walton Arts Center?

At 8th & Walton, our mission is about growing businesses and scaling impact – not just for Walmart suppliers, but for the communities we're part of. Walton Arts Center is a cornerstone in Northwest Arkansas and supporting it allows us to help ensure the arts remain accessible and vibrant here. It reflects our belief that business success and community enrichment should go hand in hand.

What do you see as the biggest contribution that CLC brings to Walton Arts Center?

The CLC plays a key role in ensuring access to the arts — especially through education — which I believe is one of the most powerful ways to build a more understanding and empathetic world. That's deeply motivating to me, and it's central to the CLC's mission. By bringing together leaders who care about both business and community, the CLC helps Walton Arts Center deepen its impact for generations to come.

How can business leaders come together to support the arts?

Great businesses and great arts organizations both rely on vision, discipline and investment in people. When business leaders engage with the arts, they bring a strategic lens and they also rediscover creativity, empathy and long-term thinking. By showing up together, we reinforce that a thriving arts scene is not a luxury, it's part of a resilient economy and a well-rounded community.

“By showing up together, we reinforce that a thriving arts scene is not a luxury, it's part of a resilient economy and a well-rounded community.”

– Jeff Clapper

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2025-26 Season at Walton Arts Center

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Guest Conductor Lawrence Loh

NOV 2 **Celebration in Motion: Beethoven 7** | **SUNDAY MATINEE**

Guest Conductor David Glover

DEC 6 **A Very SoNA Christmas**

Guest Conductor Jack Cleghorn

DEC 7 **The Snowman: A Family Concert**

SoNA Assistant Conductor Sarah Pearson

JAN 31 **Across the Silk Road: Scheherazade**

Guest Conductor Akiko Fujimoto

MAR 7 **Behind the Mask: Romeo and Juliet**

Guest Conductor Tamara Dworetz

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