

Embargo lifts Wednesday, May 17

Spoletto introduces “Pay What You Will” ticket pricing for more than 25 performances

Lowering the barrier to entry for new audience members

Tickets can be purchased online at spoletousa.org/pwyw

May 17, 2023 (Charleston, SC) — With an aim to welcome new audience members to Spoleto this season, General Director & CEO Mena Mark Hanna announced today the start of a “Pay What You Will” ticket pricing program, which allows patrons to purchase tickets for a price they determine (at a minimum of \$5 per ticket to cover fees). Across more than 25 performances—one-quarter of Spoleto offerings—more than 1,300 tickets to a broad array of programming is offered as “Pay What You Will,” at a value of \$50,000.

“As Charleston continues to grow rapidly, we want to ensure that the arts serve as a connective tissue across our community,” says Hanna. “By lowering one barrier to entry, we hope to create a culture of belonging that welcomes curious new audience members. Our doors are open.”

Spoletto’s “Pay What You Will” ticket program is made possible by the financial support of a generous donor who wishes to remain anonymous. Spoleto relies on philanthropic funding to cover more than half of its general operating costs. “As a nonprofit festival, the public should be represented in our theaters and concert halls,” Hanna continues. “By investing in audience development initiatives, we support the vitality of the Festival and the cultural ecosystem of the Southeast.”

To access “Pay What You Will” tickets, visit spoletousa.org/pwyw. Audience members can select which performances, dates, and times, and during checkout, select the seats’ value. To ensure broad access, only two tickets per performance are eligible for “Pay What You Will” pricing (tickets are limited and subject to availability). Please call the box office at 843.579.3100 if assistance is needed.

The “Pay What You Will” ticket program runs in congruence with Spoleto’s longstanding Open Stage Door program, which offers more than 600 complimentary tickets annually to community-based nonprofits, such as the Jenkins Institute for Children, My Sister’s House, Our Lady of Mercy Outreach, and We Are Family, ensuring their constituents can take part in the festival events. Interested organizations can apply to the Open Stage Door program at spoletousa.org.

SPOLETO FESTIVAL USA

Spoletto Festival USA was founded in 1977 by Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Gian Carlo Menotti, who sought to create an American counterpart to the annual Festival of Two Worlds in Spoleto, Italy, that he had founded in 1958. Now in its 47th year, Spoleto Festival USA is internationally recognized as America’s premier performing arts festival. For 17 days and nights each spring, Spoleto Festival USA fills Charleston’s historic theaters, churches, and outdoor spaces with performances in opera; theater; dance; and chamber, symphonic, choral, and jazz music. Spoleto’s mission is to present programs of the highest artistic caliber while maintaining a dedication to young artists, a commitment to all forms of the performing arts, a passion for contemporary innovation, and an enthusiasm for providing unique performance opportunities for established artists. Beyond its role as a launching pad for young talent, Spoleto also serves as a catalyst for cultural change and has aided in Charleston’s flourishing as a top arts and culture destination. With General Director & CEO Mena Mark Hanna at its helm, the 2023 season takes place May 26 to June 11 in various locations on the downtown peninsula. Spoleto Festival USA is a 501 (c)(3) charitable organization.

IMAGES: A selection of high-resolution images can be found in the online gallery.

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