

CONTACTS:

Binh Nguyen
(267) 603-4512, binh@visitphilly.com

Ashley Carter
(856) 236-9439, ashley@visitphilly.com

Philly Theatre Week Returns as Performing Arts Takes Center Stage Across the City

From Philly Theatre Week to Broadway blockbusters, the region sets the stage for a star-studded season of live arts this spring and summer.

PHILADELPHIA, April 16, 2026 – Back for its ninth year, [Philly Theatre Week](#) (April 23–May 3) brings an expansive list of dazzling performances to the 11-day festival line-up. The stages are set for show-stopping performances, like the award-winning [1776: The Musical](#), perfect to ring in America’s 250th birthday — as well as rebooted legacy projects like George Gershwin’s [Porgy and Bess](#) and William Shakespeare’s [Richard III](#).

[Pay What You Can](#) allows theatre-goers to choose their ticket price for select shows at participating theaters. In 2025, the program saw about half of the available tickets sell out immediately as patrons flocked to 99 performances over 11 days. Once the curtain falls on Philly Theatre Week, newcomers and longtime enthusiasts can still enjoy theater tickets discounted up to 50% off through [TKTS Philadelphia](#).

Beyond theater, all genres of live performing arts bloom this spring and summer with must-see productions and limited-run shows. [Wild Horizon Circus and Play Festival](#) takes place at Cherry Street Pier for two days only: May 2 and May 3. This 100% free and public festival combines movement and imagination, featuring contemporary circus, dance and clown performances for all ages.

Philadelphia Ballet and the School of Philadelphia Ballet partner with the [Prix de Lausanne](#) on wide-ranging performances to further cement the city’s status as a hub of world-class choreography. Founded in 1973, the Prix de Lausanne remains one of the world’s most prestigious international ballet competitions for aspiring young dancers ages 15 to 18 years old.

Institutions like Opera Philadelphia draw new audiences: “67% of ticket buyers are attending for the first time, and 69% are under 45—signaling a new, younger generation engaging with the arts,” according to Anthony Roth Costanzo, president of Opera Philadelphia.

Building on this momentum, a \$150 million greening project called [AveArts 2.0](#) will transform a 10-block stretch of Broad Street (along [Avenue of the Arts](#)) over the next decade. Inspired by Philadelphia’s deep connection to live music and the performing arts, a vibrant new streetscape filled with rotating art installations, aerial sculptures, sidewalk cafes and outdoor venues will help spark creativity.

VISIT PHILADELPHIA®

Community & Neighborhood Theater Productions

Philadelphia is a city of neighborhoods, with more than 100 theaters and independent producers across the region—there's no shortage of fun for all ages.

Some taking part in Philly Theatre Week include:

Sweeney Todd The Demon Barber of Fleet Street: A brooding tale of retaliation, Sweeney Todd follows an outlawed barber seeking revenge against a corrupt judge (April 10–18, 2026).

The Contrast: Set in the aftermath of the American Revolution, this 18th-century comedy of manners helped shape the social codes that would come to define American behavior.(April 9–26, 2026).

1776 The Musical: Join John Adams, Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson as they fight for independence in a funny, tense, yet romantic production—making this Broadway hit a must-see show during the 250th anniversary (April 14–May 31, 2026).

The Prom: Four eccentric Broadway stars, eager for a comeback, discover a small-town prom at the center of a growing controversy. (April 23–26, 2026).

Fascist Groove: Part lecture, part punk rock concert, this production traces Margaret Thatcher, the rise of neoliberalism and the cultural resistance that emerged (April 24–25, 2026).

Richard III: A classic by William Shakespeare, Prince Richard of Gloucester is desperate to be king, but what happens when he underestimates women close to the throne? (April 24–26, 2026).

Philly Puppet Slam!: Puppets come to life at Studio 34 as a group of puppeteers takes the stage to make the audience laugh and cry with heartfelt performances (May 2 & 3, 2026).

Franklinland: A conflict of international proportions — Benjamin Franklin wanted his son William to follow in his footsteps, yet he rebelled to become the Governor of New Jersey (May 7–June 7, 2026).

The America Play: At “The Great Hole of History,” a Black Abraham Lincoln impersonator leads a tourist attraction where guests encounter a range of historical lookalikes (May 19–31, 2026).

Dear Evan Hansen: Standing at the edge of connection, this Tony Award-winning musical is a deeply personal piece that will resonate with anyone who's ever felt alone amongst a crowd (May 21–June 28, 2026).

Regional & Suburban Theater Offerings

Theater lovers beyond city limits will also find plenty to enjoy this season, with local companies staging everything from Shakespeare to family musicals.

VISIT PHILADELPHIA®

Performances include:

- [*Jelly's Last Jam*](#): Immerse yourself in *Jelly's Last Jam*, the Tony Award–winning musical that explores the life, music and layered legacy of jazz legend Jelly Roll Morton. (March 31–April 23, 2026).
- [*Urinetown, The Musical*](#): In *Urinetown*, it's a privilege and a price to pee, but when a frustrated janitor decides enough is enough, he leads a revolution to free citizens from paying to pee (April 13–26, 2026).
- [*Ain't Misbehavin'*](#): A Tony Award-winning celebration of Fats Waller brings jazz and juke joints to center stage in an evening of Black joy (April 29-30, 2026).

Broadway & Major Productions

The city's theaters along the Avenue of the Arts have a long history of hosting major Broadway touring productions.

Upcoming major musicals include:

- [*Shucked*](#): This Tony Award-winning musical comedy is “corny” in the best way. Join Maizy and Beau as they venture out beyond the borders of Cob County (April 21–May 3, 2026).
- [*Chicago*](#): Broadway's longest-running musical is back. This showstopping act blends the best choreography with dazzling vocals in the whirlwind of Chicago's Jazz Age (May 12–17, 2026).
- [*The Outsiders*](#): This one-stage classic transports audience members to Tulsa, Oklahoma, in the 1960s, where Pony Boy and the Greasers dream about what they want to become in a world that continues to reject them (May 26–June 7, 2026).
- [*The Notebook*](#): Based on the best-selling novel that inspired the iconic film, this is for the hopeless romantics who love a good cry (July 21–Aug. 2, 2026).

The Opera Philadelphia, Philadelphia Ballet & Philadelphia Orchestra

Reimagined classics and bold new works collide through dance, strings and powerful vocals with a sample of Opera Philadelphia, Philadelphia Ballet and Philadelphia Orchestra.

Philadelphia Ballet

- [*Philadelphia Ballet Spring Festival*](#): Villanova University will host Philadelphia Ballet's 9th Annual Spring Festival at Red Rose Farm. On May 28, guests can enjoy an evening cocktail reception featuring awards and live performances, followed by a relaxed, picnic-style lawn performance on May 30—bring your own blanket and bottle (May 28 & May 30, 2026).

VISIT PHILADELPHIA®

- [*Romeo and Juliet*](#): Experience the world premiere from Juliano Nunes, resident choreographer of Philadelphia Ballet, as he reimagines William Shakespeare’s timeless tale of star-crossed lovers, set to Sergei Prokofiev’s renowned score (April 30–May 10, 2026).

Philadelphia Opera

- [*Sleepers Awake*](#): Gregory Spears creates a rich, layered soundscape for a dreamlike take on *Sleeping Beauty*, inspired by Robert Walser (April 22–26, 2026).
- [*The Black Crown*](#): Blending gospel, opera, jazz, and spirituals, this work creates a powerful sonic tapestry that speaks to the divided soul of Black America and the enduring resilience of a Black man in the face of oppression (May 14-17, 2026).

The Philadelphia Orchestra

- [*Bolero and Don Juan*](#): Strauss’s Don Juan spent a lifetime seducing women, yet longed for monogamy with “the perfect woman.” Consumed by desire, he ultimately wills his own death (April 23–25, 2026).
- [*The Wizard of Oz in Concert*](#): Hear the unforgettable songs of Oz, brought to life by Judy Garland’s timeless, crowd-moving performance (June 26 & June 27, 2026).
- [*Beethoven and Marsalis*](#): Philadelphia Orchestra performs Pulitzer Prize-winning jazz legend Wynton Marsalis’ newest work alongside Ludwig van Beethoven’s Seventh Symphony (May 28–31, 2026).
- [*All Mozart*](#): From the spirited overture to *The Marriage of Figaro* to the triumphant “Jupiter” Symphony, the program brims with radiant energy and imagination (July 31, 2026).

For more information on all performances happening this season, check out our web guide [here](#).

About Visit Philadelphia:

VISIT PHILADELPHIA® is our name and our mission. As the region’s official tourism marketing agency, we build Greater Philadelphia’s image, drive visitation and boost the economy. On Greater Philadelphia’s official visitor website, [visitphilly.com](#), visitors can explore things to do, upcoming events, themed itineraries and hotel packages.

Compelling photography and videos, interactive maps and detailed visitor information make the site an effective trip-planning tool. Visitors can also find loads of inspiration on Visit Philly’s social media Channels.

Note to Editors: For high-resolution photos and high-definition B-roll of Greater Philadelphia, visit the Photos & Video section of [visitphilly.com/mediacenter](#).

###