

UMS LAUNCHES FREE ONLINE LEARNING RESOURCES TO SUPPORT TEACHERS & PARENTS AT HOME

“UMS Performance Playground” Lessons Focus on Various Elements of the Live Performing Arts

ANN ARBOR, MI (May 13, 2020) – The **University Musical Society** is thrilled to announce the launch of **UMS Performance Playground**, a free online learning resource in the arts for students in grades K-8 (ages 5-13). Curated and created by UMS Teaching Artists, who filmed themselves from their own homes, each unit is composed of 3-5 short, sequential video lessons that focus on a specific topic related to the performing arts. The lessons can be streamed for free at ums.org/playground.

Over the next several weeks, UMS will release five units of Performance Playground lessons that explore the skills, traditions, and practices utilized by artists and performers from across disciplines, referencing past and future UMS presentations. The videos will cover music, theater, dance, and visual arts and may also include cross-curricular connections that help to make the arts relevant to other subjects and daily life. Children are encouraged to explore the resources with the guidance of teachers and parents, or on their own.

“At UMS, we believe that an education steeped in the arts is one of the most powerful ways to enhance a child’s learning, fostering creativity, critical thinking, empathy, and so much more,” said UMS Vice President of Education & Community Engagement Cayenne Harris. “Our hope is that UMS Performance Playground will help ensure that students are not missing out on this type of enhanced learning as they shift to virtual schoolrooms while families are at home during the COVID-19 crisis.”

For more information on UMS Performance Playground and UMS’s K-12 initiatives, visit ums.org/education.

ABOUT UMS

A recipient of the 2014 National Medal of Arts, UMS (also known as the University Musical Society) contributes to a vibrant cultural community by connecting audiences with performing artists from

around the world in uncommon and engaging experiences. One of the oldest performing arts presenters in the country, UMS is an independent non-profit organization affiliated with the University of Michigan, presenting over 70 music, theater, and dance performances by professional touring artists each season, along with over 100 free educational activities. UMS is committed to bold artistic leadership, engaged learning through the arts, and access and inclusiveness. Since 1990, the organization has co-commissioned and supported the production of nearly 80 new or reimagined works. Matthew VanBesien became the organization's seventh president in July 2017.

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