

## UMS Announces Special Virtual Event with Trevor Noah, *Daily Show* Star and Social Critic on October 20

Ann Arbor, MI (October 14, 2020) -- The **University Musical Society (UMS)**, in partnership with the **University of Michigan Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy** and the **Democracy & Debate Theme Semester** is thrilled to announce that *Daily Show* star **Trevor Noah** will join the U-M community for a casual and interactive conversation on this pivotal moment that reflects both adversity and possibility.

The free virtual event will stream live on **Tuesday, October 20 at 8:30 pm**. Registration is required in advance at [ums.org/trevornoah](https://ums.org/trevornoah). The event is open to the University of Michigan community, as well as UMS and Ford School supporters and event attendees.

"We are thrilled to work with Dean Michael Barr, the Ford School, the Democracy & Debate team, and, very importantly, U-M students, in bringing Trevor Noah to our campus community in these crucial weeks before the election," said UMS President Matthew VanBesien. "Noah's insightful commentary on the state of the world and our country shows how we can all rise to the challenges of the current moment, engage in constructive debate, and lean into this important election. And, he's pretty damn funny too."

"U-M and Ford School students care deeply about our democracy and about the urgent work of building a racially just society," said Michael S. Barr, the Dean of the Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy. "I'm excited to host this conversation between our students and the brilliant Trevor Noah, who speaks with such honesty and clarity about racism, social movements, and public policy. I want to thank UMS President Matthew VanBesien for organizing such an important conversation."

In this virtual event, he reflects on the state of our nation and discusses how the U-M community can, in spite of isolation, come together around the arts, pursue racial justice, and rise to the challenge of this moment. Michael Barr, Dean of the Ford School of Public Policy, moderates the discussion with timely questions from U-M students.

University of Michigan students are invited to submit questions through the Democracy and Debate theme semester website at [speakactvote.umich.edu/](https://speakactvote.umich.edu/)

**TREVOR NOAH**, host of Comedy Central's Emmy and Peabody Award-winning *The Daily Show*, is widely known for his social commentary touching upon issues of racism, immigration, incarceration, and the protest movement. Born in South Africa to a Black South African mother and a white European father during apartheid, Noah knows what it means to live in a divided nation, and he brings a unique perspective in his incisive social and political criticism of the larger issues at play in the U.S. and in the world today. He persevered through extreme poverty and social turmoil to become one of the most sought-after comedians and political commentators. He has written, produced, and starred in eight comedy specials and was the subject of the award-winning documentary film *You Laugh But It's True*, which tells the story of his remarkable career in post-apartheid South Africa. In 2019, he launched a podcast series "On Second Thought: The Trevor Noah Podcast" in which he challenges himself, and his listeners, to explore unfamiliar angles, embrace differing viewpoints, and celebrate the contradictions that make our modern world both bewildering and exciting. In April 2018, he launched The Trevor Noah Foundation, a youth development initiative that enhances youth preparedness for higher education or entry into the workforce.

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. During the coronavirus pandemic, UMS has continued to connect audiences and artists through digital presentations like this one and through a robust Digital Artist Residency series, giving audiences a window into the creative process

through six different projects by Wendell Pierce, Tarek Yamani and the Spektral Quartet, Tunde Olaniran, Cleo Parker Robinson, Brian Lobel and Gweneth Ann Rand, and Joyce DiDonato. All digital presentations are being presented free-of-charge to enable access to audiences everywhere, supporting UMS's commitment to bold artistic leadership, engaged learning through the arts, and access and inclusiveness.

**Event Details:**

Tuesday, October 20, 2020

8:30 pm

Free with advanced registration at [ums.org/trevornoah](https://ums.org/trevornoah)

Presented by: University Musical Society

In partnership with: Ford School of Public Policy and the Democracy & Debate Theme Semester at the University of Michigan

Presenting Sponsors: Bank of Ann Arbor, Patti Askwith Kenner and the Bert's Ticket program, and Valerie and Jeff Wilpon

**To register, contact:**

University Musical Society

[ums.org/trevornoah](https://ums.org/trevornoah)

734-764-2538 (1-5 pm Monday-Friday)

**Press Inquiries Only (Do Not Publish)**

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