

LOUISVILLE MEMORIAL AUDITORIUM

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Press Release

Louisville Memorial Auditorium Announces Reopening Plans and Development of a Preservation Foundation

July 10, 2020

Louisville, KY – The historic **Louisville Memorial Auditorium** is pleased to announce plans for resuming operations based on the Commonwealth of Kentucky guidelines as an event venue and theater. The landmark venue resumes an **interrupted 91st season celebration** with the launch of a **new website** (www.lmafoundation.org) promoting fundraising and preservation mission for the recently created **“Louisville Memorial Auditorium Foundation, Inc.”**

Like other major venues, Louisville Memorial Auditorium closed temporarily this past spring as advised by the Governor’s Office during the Commonwealth’s ongoing effort to prevent the spread of COVID-19. **“The safety of patrons, employees and clients remains our primary concern. The decision to close was in the best interest of public wellness and health,”** said Kelly Gream, Executive Director.

Based on **Kentucky’s “Healthy at Work”** guidelines, the multi-purpose facility will resume offering affordable rental packages for a variety of functions, including weddings, presentations and other approved events. The majestic lobby, spacious ballroom and acoustically perfect 1,742 seat auditorium will be available for approved functions. Organizers will present plans to ensure all event details are following required state guidelines and CDC standards of operation. **“We are excited as an organization to be able to host events again and welcome guests back to one of the most unique and versatile venues in the region,”** said Kelly Gream, Executive Director.

Since the landmark venue only operates seasonally, closing during a busy **91st Spring Season** proved to be challenging for numerous event organizers and disappointing to the community. **Annually, over 200,000 guests** attend graduations, concerts, stage productions, dance events and fundraisers at the historic facility.

The **cancelled schedule included** internationally acclaimed **The Irish Tenors**, who have performed at the world’s most prominent venues, from Carnegie Hall to Sydney Opera House. The highly anticipated stage productions included **“Transition the Stage Play,”** journey of Jerome Kingpin turned pastor, as he tried to build up the community he once ran down. Then the premiere of **“Justice on Trial the Play”** focusing on two civil rights attorneys suing the U.S. Justice Department for reparations and damages done to African Americans. Other functions included local dance recitals and national dance competitions, as well as fundraisers for numerous non-profit organizations. **The William H. Bauer Foundation, Inc.** was also scheduled to present **Cecil B. DeMille’s 1927** epic silent movie **The King of Kings**, with Timothy Baker accompanying on the **world’s largest Pilcher Pipe Organ**.

Prior to the pandemic, plans were already being finalized for a separate non-profit 501c organization to begin fundraising and increasing preservation efforts for the region’s only public auditorium and WWI war memorial. As funding becomes available, plans will focus on installation of modern heat & air conditioning, as well as upgrades to the auditorium’s seating, lighting and sound systems. Despite not being a modern facility, the community’s auditorium continues to be affordable by hosting a variety of local, regional and national productions that are not financially feasible at other performance spaces.

“Louisville has a historic gem and entertainment venue in the WWI Louisville Memorial Auditorium. The creation of the LMA Commission and the building of the Auditorium envisioned a facility of which the community could be proud and deliver an enjoyable entertainment experience. The Foundation’s goal is to have this self-sustaining facility continue into and throughout the 21st century for all Louisvillians and remain the jewel that it is.” said Alfred Welsh, President of Louisville Memorial Auditorium Foundation, Inc.

Visit www.lmafoundation.org to learn more about the important mission of ensuring the historic public auditorium remains affordable and accessible to all individuals, groups and organizations. For additional rental information, call (502) 584-4911 and visit www.louisvillememorialauditorium.com.

About the Louisville Memorial Auditorium

Louisville Memorial Auditorium celebrated its 90th Anniversary on Memorial Day, Monday, May 27th 2019. The unique venue offers rich history, architectural beauty, and a remarkable stage experience, complete with lighting and sound systems to produce a memorable event, and is a Louisville Landmark on the National Register of Historic Places, **dedicated on Memorial Day in 1929.** The auditorium was built from the outgrowth of two movements: one for a public auditorium, the other for a memorial to commemorate the deeds of the sons and daughters of Louisville, KY and Jefferson County who served in WWI. Over the years, many concerts, graduations, dance recitals and competitions, stage productions and other interesting events have been held at the venue. Under new management, the non-profit will be inviting weddings and meeting events to be held at the historic landmark.

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