

ARTS UNITED

SPRING 2024



ARTS UNITED

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For more information on South Fulton Arts,
visit www.southfultonarts.org



Join us for these FREE READINGS!



“Sexy, serious, and very, very funny” -VARIETY

SMART PEOPLE

BY LYDIA R. DIAMOND

MAR 15-23, 2024

“Heart-tugging and emotionally rewarding” -THE HUFFINGTON POST

tiny beautiful things

based on the book by CHERYL STRAYED
adapted for the stage by NIA VARDALOS

MAY 10-18, 2024

“Savory dramedy...with empathy for both sides” -LA POST-EXAMINER

THE cake

BY BEKAH BRUNSTETTER

SEPT 13-21, 2024

THANK YOU TO
OUR SPONSORS



BRIDGING COMMUNITIES THROUGH THEATRE:

BY MADELINE LIVINGSTON

In the vibrant landscape of South Fulton, the arts have emerged as a powerful force for fostering connection, sparking conversations, and creating a sense of community. At the forefront of this cultural movement is Arts United, a publication produced by South Fulton Arts that passionately celebrates the arts in South Fulton.



Garry Yates, Jade Lambert-Smith and Antonia LaChé rehearsing *The Mountaintop* by Katori Hall

One of the driving forces behind this initiative is the visionary team at South Fulton Arts, who have introduced a groundbreaking program known as CONNECT: A Play Reading Series. Designed and curated by Executive Director Jennifer Bauer-Lyons, CONNECT stands out as a unique and innovative play reading series, designed to delve into thought-provoking narratives that resonate with the community. What sets this program apart is its integration of a talkback component facilitated by an expert in the field, providing the audience with a platform to engage deeply with the themes presented in the play. This interaction allows attendees to explore the nuances of the performance, fostering a shared understanding and empathy among community members.



Audience members after a reading

witness compelling performances but also actively participate in discussions that amplify the impact of the art.

South Fulton Arts recognizes that theatre serves as a conduit for raising awareness on important social issues. The 2024 Season promises to be a beacon of enlightenment and entertainment, commencing with *Smart People* by Lydia R Diamond in March directed by Lee Osorio. This play promises a thought-provoking exploration of privilege, race, and societal expectations, inviting the audience to confront their own biases and preconceptions. Following this powerful opener, the May production, *Tiny Beautiful*

Things by Nia Vardalos and directed by Jennifer Bauer-Lyons, will take center stage. This play, based on Cheryl Strayed's best-selling book, delves into the complexities of human relationships, empathy, and the transformative power of advice. It promises to be a heartfelt journey that resonates with audiences on a personal level.

As the year progresses, South Fulton Arts brings *The Cake* by Bekah Brunstetter and directed by Clifton Gutterman to the spotlight in September. This witty and poignant exploration of love, acceptance, and societal expectations challenges the audience to reconsider their perspectives on tradition and progress.

Closing the season in November is *Feeding Beatrice*, a thought-provoking exploration of family dynamics and societal pressures, by Kirsten Greenidge and directed by K. Parker. Each play within the 2024 Season serves as a catalyst for conversations that matter. Themes of race, love, identity, and family are explored with nuance and sensitivity, providing audiences with a mirror to reflect upon their own experiences and beliefs. The CONNECT series, with its talkback component, promises to enhance these conversations, encouraging a deeper understanding of the complex issues addressed in each production.

South Fulton Arts invites the community to join in this journey of self-discovery and communal exploration. As we eagerly anticipate the 2024 Season, the organization remains committed to fostering a space where the arts not only entertain but also inspire meaningful connections and conversations. Through the CONNECT: A Play Reading Series, South Fulton Arts continues to reinforce the transformative power of theater, proving that in the heart of the community, courageous conversations can flourish, one play at a time.

— —
Dr. Tiffany Russell guiding a facilitated talkback after reading of *Native Gardens* by Karen Zacarias.



SOUTH FULTON ARTS PLAY READING SERIES



Actress Galen Crawley and audience during talkback of *Actually* by Anna Ziegler



Clyde's by Lynn Nottage Cast (L to R): Braian Rivera Jiménez, Dalyla, Jade Lambert-Smith, Isaiah Q. Reed, Jeff Hathcoat and Tamiea Anderson (Stage Manager).



Completed Gelli Prints on the wall



Gelli Prints class



THE COMMUNITY ART ROOM

AT CITY HALL
IN CHATTAHOOCHEE HILLS

BY JUDY WALKER

In February of last year, the newly renovated Art Room at City Hall was dedicated with a Ribbon Cutting by Mayor Tom Reed, Councilwoman Ruby Foster, and Chatt Hills Artist Co-op CEO, Judy Walker. The Artist Co-op was given the room to use for Art Programming with the understanding that our non-profit would raise the money to do the renovation on a 1933 Elementary School that was transformed into City Hall. It was a big lift. Through community member donations, and support from South Fulton Arts, GreyStone Power, Community Brickworks, and the City of Chattahoochee Hills, along with community volunteers led by Peter Clemens and the Bridge Group, it all came together. The Art Room has been used by singular artists, and for art classes which include gelli printing, barn quilt painting, watercolor, chair caning, knitting, ceramics, fleece blanket making, crocheting as well as yoga. The room has also been used by Community Brickworks, the Bridge Group meetings, City use, and even the Chief of Police swearing in. The Co-op is proud to support the community of Chattahoochee Hills with this Art Room dedicated for creating art and engagement.

For more information, contact Judy Walker at heyjwalker@gmail.com.

Mayor Tom Reed, Councilwoman Ruby Foster, and Chatt Hills Artist Co-op CEO, Judy Walker



Exchange: FOSTERING ARTISTIC CONNECTIONS

BY MADELINE LIVINGSTON

In the heart of South Fulton, where the vibrant pulse of creativity beats in unison with the community spirit, South Fulton Arts presents Exchange, an innovative program that transcends the conventional boundaries between artists and their audience. As an integral part of the Courageous Conversations initiative, Exchange goes beyond the surface of artistic performances, offering a unique and intimate glimpse into the creative process. This transformative program serves as a dynamic bridge connecting artists and community members, fostering a sense of shared experience and understanding.

Exchange is a testament to the belief that art is not just a spectator sport; it is a living, breathing dialogue that thrives on connection and interaction. The program is a celebration of diversity, providing a platform for artists to showcase their talents while inviting the audience to delve deeper into the narratives and inspirations that fuel each creation. Through Exchange, South Fulton Arts aims to break down barriers and create a space where artistic expression becomes a universal language.

Our last Exchange event took place at Gallery 992 and was aptly named *Ignite: A Night of Spoken Word*. The venue was transformed into a haven for spoken word artists, and the atmosphere was electric with anticipation. This event showcased the power of words to illuminate, inspire, and bring people together. Five exceptionally talented spoken word artists, namely Adan Bean, ANON The Griot, W.J. Lofton, Earth Angel Geli, and Madi Kreates, took the stage, turning vulnerability into strength as they shared their stories with the audience.

The magic of *Ignite* lay not only in the captivating performances but also in the intimate discussions that followed each spoken word piece. The artists, with openness and authenticity, peeled back the layers of their creative process, giving the audience a rare glimpse into the raw emotions and inspirations behind their work. This exchange of ideas and perspectives created a symbiotic relationship between the artists and the audience, fostering a deeper connection that extended beyond the performance.

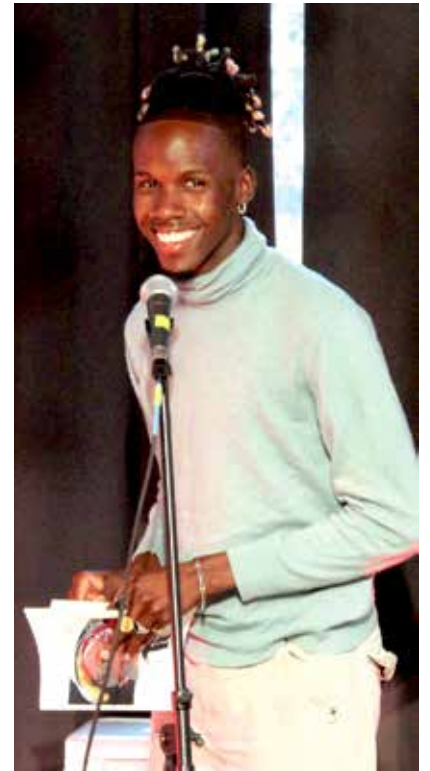
Looking ahead, South Fulton Arts is thrilled to announce the next Exchange event, scheduled for April 11, titled *Behind the Music*. This edition promises to unravel the mysteries behind the creation of musical masterpieces, offering an insider's perspective into the world of musicians and songwriters. Attendees can anticipate an evening filled with melodic enchantment and insightful conversations that demystify the creative process. As Exchange continues to evolve for the community, it provides a space where artists and art enthusiasts can come together to share, learn, and grow. The program's commitment to breaking down barriers and fostering connections aligns seamlessly with South Fulton Arts' mission to create a vibrant, inclusive arts community.



Audience members enjoying one of the performances from the night



Spoken Word Artist Madi Kreates.



Poet & Author W. J. Lofton



Audience members mingling with poet ANON The Griot.

To stay informed about upcoming Exchange events and other South Fulton Arts initiatives, be sure to visit [SOUTHFULTONARTS.ORG](https://southfultonarts.org)

South Fulton Arts invites everyone to join in the celebration of creativity, diversity, and the transformative power of art through Exchange—a program that not only entertains but also enlightens, connecting hearts and minds in the rich tapestry of South Fulton's artistic landscape.

PASSION MEETS PURPOSE

BY KARLA HARRIS

Performer, singer, songwriter and educator Karla Harris believes that to find your passion, look to what you loved to do as a child for clues.

As a girl growing up in the suburbs of St. Louis, Harris spent hours playing “school” where she was the teacher or making believe she was on television singing songs she learned from her parents’ album stack. On Saturday mornings, she became a novelist, taking pencil to paper and writing short stories.



Karla Harris • Photo by Chris Graamans

Decades later, Harris finds the worlds she spent hours imagining in her youth have merged into one. She’s entered her fourth decade as a professional vocalist, with the last twenty focused on jazz, and has maintained that passion for singing and performing throughout busy years as a wife, mom and communications consultant.

Harris’s love for storytelling led her to songwriting 10 years ago. She wrote original songs for her Jazz Week—charting 2018 album, *Certain Elements*, with tracks added to playlists worldwide, including on Sirius XM’s RealJazz

and Atlanta radio stations WCLK and WABE.

And in 2017, the teaching profession found her when the director of the expanding Kennesaw State University Jazz Studies department asked Harris if she would bring her years of experience and launch their new vocal jazz area.

“Seven years later, I can honestly say it’s one of the best things that has happened to me professionally and personally. Working with the students is inspiring and feels purposeful,” Harris says.

In 2022, Harris expanded that purpose when she was awarded a distinguished Jazz Road grant. Provided through the South Arts Foundation, the grant underwrote a concert tour that brought Harris and the Joe Alterman Trio to underserved communities in North Carolina and South Carolina. As part of the tour, they conducted a mini jazz camp for 40 kids. The experience sparked a desire to do more jazz education outreach.

Karla Harris during a music workshop at the Callanwolde Art camp



Harris has performed jazz discovery concerts free to the public in the South Fulton library system, provided an interactive jazz experience for school children at the Summer Creative Camp held by Callanwolde Fine Arts Center, and conducted a high school master class in Oregon as part of an October tour there. This December, she will do the same in Hayesville, North Carolina. And there are plans to join forces with like minded artist-educators to bring more “listen, experience, learn” events to the Atlanta area and southeastern region.

“What happens in jazz is a microcosm of healthy self and healthy community,” Harris says. “There is discipline and improvisation. Respect for structure and also the freedom to create beyond it. Collaboration, cooperation, communication, courage, camaraderie, compromise -- sometimes with people you’ve never even been in the same room with. We respect what we each bring. Exploring jazz is a great vehicle for tuning into those elements of music and of life.”

Harris is traveling to Asia this spring for a family event but will be back on the concert stage locally in May.

Upcoming:

- **May 12, 2024:** Mother’s Day concert at The Hunt House with the Joe Alterman Trio, Marietta, GA
- **May 28, 2024:** Jazz in the Sky Series at the Colony Square helipad, Atlanta
- **July 31, 2024:** Callanwolde Creative Camp, interactive jazz camp, Atlanta
- **August 1, 2024:** Jazz on the Lawn at Callanwolde Fine Arts Center, Atlanta

Visit www.karlaharris.com

for more on her music, story, outreach and performance schedule.



UNION CITY AND SOUTH FULTON ARTS JOIN FORCES FOR THE CREATIVE EXCHANGE

BY MADELINE LIVINGSTON

Union City proudly announces its collaboration with South Fulton Arts to present the eagerly awaited “The Creative Exchange: K-12 Student Art Show.” Scheduled to debut from mid-March through May 31 at the esteemed community center, The Gathering Place, this exhibit promises to be a vibrant celebration of creativity, highlighting the unique perspectives of talented young artists. Students residing in and around Union City can participate in the upcoming art show and unleash their artistic vision by submitting artwork inspired by the themes “Hero” or “Courage.”

Reflecting on the partnership, Mayor Vince R. Williams shared, “The City Council and I are thrilled about our partnership with South Fulton Arts for ‘The Creative Exchange: K12 Student Art Show.’ This collaboration is a testament to Union City’s commitment to Reclaiming, Renewing, and Reimagining arts and culture within our community. By joining forces with South Fulton Arts, we are showcasing our young artists’ incredible talent and fostering an environment that celebrates creativity and cultural vibrancy.”

Jennifer Bauer-Lyons, Executive Director of South Fulton Arts, echoed the excitement, stating, “South Fulton Arts is thrilled to collaborate with Union City on the Youth Art Show. We believe creativity takes many forms, and we are excited to help showcase these young artists and their creations.”

Interested participants can find submission guidelines at www.unioncityga.org. Artwork must be received by 5 PM on Friday, February 23, 2024. Please be aware that entries submitted after the deadline will not be considered. Selected artists will receive notification via email on March 1, 2024. Given the expected high volume of submissions, not all entries will be chosen.

For inquiries about “The Creative Exchange: K-12 Student Art Show,” please get in touch with Vivian Lett, Marketing & Cultural Arts Manager, at (770) 515-7898 or via email at marketing@unioncityga.org.

Union City and South Fulton Arts anticipate an extraordinary talent showcase at The Creative Exchange: K-12 Student Art Show, reinforcing the City’s commitment to fostering creativity and celebrating the arts in the community.



An art lover at the show



Instructor Bree Deck, from Two Hands Pottery Studio helping community members create a work of art.

Teaching Artist Erin Hammerle with students from an art workshop • Photo by Mandi Andersen



unioncityga.org



South Fulton
Arts

southfultonarts.org

CALENDAR LISTINGS SPRING/SUMMER 2024

MARCH

MARCH 1-2, 7-9 @ 8PM, MARCH 3 & 10 @ 3PM • ACADEMY THEATRE

A LADY AND A WOMAN: A DRAMA BY DR. SHIRLENE JONES

Description: Two African-American women negotiate same-sex love, culture and religion at a southern, small town inn at the turn of the 19th century. Playwright Shirlene Holmes says the play, "...grew out of my desire to see more plays about women...who dare to make decisions about their lives, whether people like it or not..."

MARCH 3 @ 6:30PM • ARTSXCHANGE (2148 Newnan St., East Point 30344)

TABITHA KING IS BACK IN CONCERT

Let's come together to celebrate Women's History Month, uplift women's voices, and revel in the beauty of poetic expression. Don't miss this unforgettable evening at the ArtsXchange Paul Robeson Theater.

MARCH 9, 2-4PM • ARTSXCHANGE (2148 Newnan St., East Point 30344)

WRITER'S WORKSHOP

Join us for the Saturday Writers Workshop, a monthly gathering of wordsmiths and creative minds!

MARCH 11, 7:30-9:30PM • ACADEMY THEATRE

SUICIDE BY CIGARETTE: BY VICTORIA NATION, A STAGED READING

In collaboration with Atlanta Dramatists, the Academy Theatre presents a new script by Victoria Nation: *Suicide by Cigarette*. Cody Borah has written songs to add to the show. The show is directed by Kayla Brooke and features Demmarie Boreland, Casey Cudmore, Faina Khibkin, Tommy Sullivan-Lovett, Sydney Webb, and Cody Borah. When a young open mic fan tries to face her depression her vices and her friends fight for her life and her soul. Who wins? Be there and find out!

MARCH 15, 16, 22, & 23 @ 7:30PM • VARIOUS LOCATIONS

**SOUTH FULTON ARTS PRESENTS CONNECT: A PLAY READING SERIES
SMART PEOPLE BY LYDIA DIAMOND • DIRECTED BY LEE OSORIO**

Of the eve of Obama's first election, four of Harvard University's brightest—a surgeon, an actress, a psychologist, and a neuro-psychiatrist—are interested in different aspects of the brain, particularly how it responds to race. But like all smart people, they are also searching for love, success, and identity in their own lives. Lydia Diamond brings these characters together in this sharp, witty play about social and sexual politics.

MARCH 16, 2-4PM • ARTSXCHANGE (2148 Newnan St., East Point 30344)

SCRABBLE CLUB

You're invited to join our Scrabble club! Come and enjoy a fun-filled afternoon of word-building and friendly competition.

MARCH 21 @ 5PM • UNION CITY GATHERING PLACE

UNION CITY K-12 YOUTH ART SHOW RECEPTION

Celebrate the vibrant creativity of young artists at this upcoming youth art show reception, where imagination takes center stage. It's an evening of inspiration and appreciation as we showcase the diverse talents of our community's budding creators.

MARCH 31 @ 2PM • ARTSXCHANGE (2148 Newnan St., East Point 30344)

THE POWER OF WORDS

The Power of Words Author Panel brings together each month authors who utilize words to express powerful narratives, connection, and musing from a diversity of lenses. Hosted by Theresa Davis.

APRIL

APRIL 4-21 @ VARIOUS TIMES • ACADEMY THEATRE

GOODNIGHT DELIA BY JOHN MURPHY

Delia Murphy, the beloved songstress known as The Queen of Connemara, has given the world decades of music. Delia was the daughter of a County Mayo man who struck it rich in the Klondike Gold Rush, and she became the wife of an Irish Ambassador. Her songs are known by many, and her actions helped save thousands from the Nazis in World War II. Now she reflects on the beauty and friendship of the song, and the part she played during the world's darkest hours. Aris presents the fascinating true story of a life lived on the world stage.

APRIL 11 @ 7:30PM • VENUE TBA

SOUTH FULTON ARTS PRESENTS EXCHANGE: AN INFORMATION FORUM BEHIND THE MUSIC

APRIL 13 @ 7:30PM • ARTSXCHANGE (2148 Newnan St., East Point 30344)

TABITHA KING IS BACK IN CONCERT

The Spring Fling \$1,000 Poetry Slam at the ArtsXchange on April 13, 2024, sounds like an exciting event for poetry enthusiasts!

APR 27 @ 7:30PM • FIRST PRESBYTERIA CHURCH (1328 Peachtree St NE, Atlanta, 30309)

CHALLENGE THE STATS PRESENTS 2024 SERIES: VOICES AMPLIFIED

Join us as we celebrate the poetry of BIPOC writers and composers in a powerful evening of music and spoken word. This concert will be rich in prose, story and song and will feature leading Atlanta-based vocal and spoken word artists along with members of the CTS. Community Choir, a meaningfully curated ensemble directed by Verena Lucia Anders uniting talented singers from across the city. This event is presented in partnership with The Atlanta Opera, the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra's Talent Development Program, and South Fulton Arts.

APRIL 28 @ 2PM • ARTSXCHANGE (2148 Newnan St., East Point 30344)

THE POWER OF WORDS

The Power of Words Author Panel brings together each month authors who utilize words to express powerful narratives, connection, and musing from a diversity of lenses. Hosted by Theresa Davis.

MAY

MAY 10, 11, 17, & 18 @ 7:30PM

SOUTH FULTON ARTS PRESENTS CONNECT: A PLAY READING SERIES

TINY BEAUTIFUL THINGS BY NIA VARDALOS FROM THE BOOK BY CHERYL STRAYED

DIRECTED BY JENNIFER BAUER-LYONS

Based on the bestselling book by Cheryl Strayed and adapted for the stage by Nia Vardalos, *Tiny Beautiful Things* personifies the questions and answers that "Sugar" was published online from 2010-2012. When the struggling writer was asked to take over the unpaid, anonymous position of advice columnist, Strayed used empathy and her personal experiences to help those seeking guidance for obstacles both large and small. *Tiny Beautiful Things* is a play about reaching when you're stuck, healing when you're broken, and finding the courage to take on the questions that have no answers.

JUNE

JUNE 2024 DATES TBA • VENUE TBA

NATIONAL BLACK ARTS FESTIVAL PRESENTS STRANGE FRUIT

NBAF celebrates African-American alternative music as an immersive concert experience! The history of black alternative music is a dynamic and multifaceted journey that challenges traditional narratives of these genres as predominantly white spaces. They are spaces of artistic and political experimentation and from their inception, people of African descent have created, rebelled, and influenced within the different scenes.

JUNE 14 @ 8PM • ARTSXCHANGE (2148 Newnan St., East Point 30344)

THE BAD DAD JOKE SLAM

APRIL 4-21 @ VARIOUS TIMES • ACADEMY THEATRE

THE WASH A WORLD PREMIERE PLAY BY KELUNDRA SMITH • DIRECTED BY BRENDA PORTER

Impact Theatre Atlanta in conjunction with the Academy Theatre and Synchronicity Theatre present this new dramady about the Atlanta Laundresses' strike of 1881—telling the story of African-American women who began the strike and garnered the support of the community.

AUGUST

AUG 4-SEPT 9

THE ATLANTA QUILT FESTIVAL

View over 100 quilts created predominantly by African-American quilters.

AUG 22 @ 7:30PM

**SOUTH FULTON ARTS PRESENTS EXCHANGE: AN INFORMATION FORUM
STORIES THAT MATTER**

