In-person events for the 26th annual Art & Soul celebration rescheduled for summer 2022

Despite postponement, Black History Month still takes center stage with upcoming arts & culture guide, and announcement of 2022 Featured Artists

Indianapolis (January 19, 2022) - The Indy Arts Council announces the postponement of Art & Soul, its largest public program that has kicked off Black History Month in Indianapolis since 1996 and helped expand the city’s awareness and appreciation of African-American art and music. Originally scheduled for February 2022 at the Indianapolis Artsgarden, the event will be moved to summer 2022 (dates TBA) and will celebrate the theme of Black Health & Wellness. Art & Soul, which was virtual in 2021, annually attracts more than 2,000 visitors and is supported by Lilly Endowment Inc.

"We're disappointed to have to postpone, but we take the ongoing threat of COVID-19 and the health of artists and audiences very seriously," said Ernest Disney-Britton, Vice President, Community Impact & Investment, Indy Arts Council. "But, working with Asante Art Institute of Indianapolis, Indy Jazz Fest, Ilbada Dance Company, and FLAVA FRESH!, we're looking forward to bringing some new ideas to the program while still maintaining the traditions that so many have grown to love over the past 25 years."

The Indy Arts Council has partnered with Face A Face Collective to produce and curate an Indianapolis arts and culture guide to Black History Month, which will be available at explore.indyarts.org on February 1. Special newsletters and social media content are also planned.

THE 2022 ART & SOUL FEATURED ARTISTS: Over the past 25 years, Art & Soul has helped launch the careers of emerging Black artists in central Indiana. The four Featured Artists are spotlighted throughout the month of the event, and
receive year-long career development support. The 2022 Featured Artists include:

- **Marrialle Sellars, singer**
  Marrialle Sellars, a Top 20 “American Idol” competitor in 2014, made her Art & Soul debut in 2021, seven years after a successful audition for “Idol” panelists Jennifer Lopez, Keith Urban, and Harry Connick Jr. Then a 17-year-old Lawrence Central High School student, Sellars sang Bruno Mars’ “Grenade” on the TV talent search. She describes her music genre as “a unique and powerful sound mixing sultry R&B and slow pop.” *Naked (Acoustic) - EP* is her first original album.

- **Karome Walker, choreographer**
  Karome Walker is the artistic director of Meraki Dance Company, Indy’s newest professional company and youth program. Walker is committed to bringing love, creativity, and soul to the community through elite training and entertaining shows.

- **Chantel Massey, poet**
  Chantel Massey (she/her) is a storyteller, poet, author, teaching artist, and educator based in Indiana. Poems from *Bursting At The Seams* (VK Press, 2018), her first book of poetry, has been performed across various platforms. Massey also founded the literary arts organization *UnLearn Arts*, cultivating and amplifying the craft and wellness of BIPOC writers in the Midwest and elsewhere.

- **Shayla Renee Williams, visual artist & writer**
  Shayla Renee Williams’ vibrant work is charged with emotion and tells the stories of contemporary women through narrative portraits. She sees her work as being deeply therapeutic, and as her most important form of expression. She’s been featured in numerous FLAVA FRESH! exhibitions, and is a FLAVA FRESH! series award winner. Williams recently branched out into illustration and writing and published two children's books in 2020.

**GET UPDATES ON ART & SOUL:** The public is encouraged to follow @ArtsCouncilIndy and #ArtSoulIndy on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, or visit indyarts.org, to learn more about the 2022 celebration.

**ABOUT THE INDY ARTS COUNCIL**
The Indy Arts Council is central Indiana’s leading arts advocacy and services agency, whose mission is to foster meaningful engagement in the arts by nurturing a culture where artists and arts organizations thrive. Read their *Equity Statement* here.

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