Schedule announced for 26th annual Art & Soul celebration in June

This popular festival will be presented in various communities for the first time, expanding reach with a focus on Black Health & Wellness and spotlight on four Featured Artists

**Indianapolis (April 28, 2022)** - The Indy Arts Council announces the schedule for Art & Soul 2022, its largest public program that has traditionally kicked off Black History Month in Indianapolis since 1996 and helped expand the city’s awareness and appreciation of African-American art and music. The 26th annual festival’s premiere events will take place over four weekends in June and celebrate the theme of Black Health & Wellness. Other events will happen from May through August.

Art & Soul, which was presented online in 2021, annually attracts more than 2,000 visitors to the Indianapolis Artsgarden and is supported by Lilly Endowment Inc. The June 4 kickoff event will be held at the Artsgarden, but this is the first year the festival will travel to different venues. Over the past 25 years, Art & Soul has helped launch the careers of emerging Black artists in central Indiana. Four 2022 Featured Artists will be spotlighted throughout June and receive year-long career development support.

“Art & Soul is an experience that speaks to the body, but also the soul, and it’s like being at a month-long Black family reunion for the arts,” said Ernest Disney-Britton, Vice President of Community Impact & Investment at the Indy Arts Council. “Together with our program partners Asante Art Institute of Indianapolis, Indy Jazz Fest, Ilbada Dance Company, and FLAVA FRESH !, we’re looking forward to bringing new ideas to Art & Soul as part of Black History Month and Juneteenth, while still maintaining the traditions that so many have grown to love.”

**THE 2022 ART & SOUL SCHEDULE OF EVENTS AND FEATURED ARTISTS:**
Saturday, June 4 - Black Art Day
Indianapolis Artsgarden (110 W. Washington St.) - Noon-2 p.m.
A kick-off celebration featuring a visual art exhibition by Featured Artist Shayla Renee Williams, a discussion with the four 2022 Featured Artists, special performances, and free COVID-19 vaccinations and routine immunizations offered by the Indiana Department of Health to children and adults.

- **Spotlight: Featured Artist Shayla Renee Williams, visual artist & writer**, whose 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 many annual FLAVA FRESH! juried contemporary art showcases, and is a FLAVA FRESH! series award winner. Williams recently branched out into illustration and writing and published two children’s books in 2020.

Saturday, June 11 - Black Dance Day
Madam Walker Legacy Center (617 Indiana Ave.) - Noon-2 p.m.
Featuring performances from Epiphany Dance Collective, Iibada Dance Company, and Meraki Dance Company.

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

Sunday, June 19 - Black Theater/Poetry Day as part of the Juneteenth Eastside Celebration honoring fathers, families and freedom
Warren Performing Arts Center (9500 E. 16th St.) - Noon-5 p.m.
Featuring Congo Square with drumming and dance; IUPUI professor, poet and spoken word artist Lasana Kazembe; Manon Voice; AshLee Baskin; Deborah Asante; community leader and attorney Fay Williams; Asante Art Institute’s excerpt from STAR MIDNIGHT, and “In the Wind” stories, images, and songs in tribute to international cycling champion Marshall “Major” Taylor. The closing ceremony, “In Search of Hope and Restoration,” will include a call to action hosted by Witherspoon Presbyterian Church. Free food while supplies last.

- **Performer spotlight: Featured Artist Chantel Massey, 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.**
**Friday, June 24 - Black Music Day**

*Live at the Orange Bridge (701 Canal Walk) - 5:30-7:30 p.m.*

Featuring performances from the Art & Soul Band (Brenda Williams, Brandon Meeks, Richard “Sleepy” Floyd, Steven Jones, and Rob Dixon); and Bashiri Asad and Yvonne Allu.

- **Spotlight: Featured Artist Marielle Sellars**, a Top 20 “American Idol” competitor in 2014 who 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.

**OTHER EVENTS**

Art & Soul fans will also be able to catch the 2022 Featured Artists at these events:

- **Wednesday, June 8 - Art & Soul Night**
  *The Jazz Kitchen (5377 N. College Ave.) - 7 p.m.*
  - Enjoy live music and poetry, with performances by 2022 Art & Soul Featured Artists Marielle Sellars (vocalist) and Chantel Massey (spoken word artist).

- **Saturday-Sunday, June 18-19 - Art & Soul Stage**
  *Madam Walker Legacy Center (617 Indiana Ave.) - Noon to 5 p.m.*
  - The Art & Soul Stage at the Madam Walker Legacy Center’s 95th anniversary and Juneteenth celebration will feature 2022 Art & Soul Featured Artist Marielle Sellars and performers from previous years.

- **Friday, August 5 - Art & Soul Night at The Alley**
  *The Cabaret (924 N. Pennsylvania St.) - 6 p.m. (doors) & 7 p.m. (performance)*
  - Enjoy performances by 2022 Featured Artists Marielle Sellars, a vocalist, and Chantel Massey, a poet, in the Alley at Library Square, a casual outdoor setting.

**NOTE**: Art & Soul artists from previous years will perform at the Indianapolis Artsgarden throughout the summer. More details will be available in May.

**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.

###