



## LEVINE CENTER FOR THE ARTS

For Immediate Release

### **First-ever #LongLiveArts Festival to bring FREE performances, art activities, and more to Levine Center for the Arts**

**The public is invited to a full day of activities on Saturday, May 21**

**WHAT:** #LongLiveArts Community Festival

**WHEN:** Saturday, May 21

10 a.m.-6 p.m., followed by Charlotte Symphony “plazacast” of Romeo & Juliet

**WHERE:** Levine Center for the Arts, 500 block of South Tryon Street, including Bechtler Museum of Modern Art, Blumenthal Performing Arts’ Knight Theater, Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Arts + Culture, and Mint Museum Uptown

**MORE INFO:** [facebook.com/levinecenterart](https://facebook.com/levinecenterart)

**CHARLOTTE, N.C. (May 11, 2016)** – Salsa dancing. Puppets. A portrait paint-off. Drums. Aerial dancing. Jazz. Food trucks. An Arts Guy. An outdoor symphony concert. And FREE museum access all day.

All this and more will be part of the inaugural #LongLiveArts Festival, the first event of its kind to be hosted by the four member institutions of Levine Center for the Arts – the Bechtler Museum of Modern Art, Blumenthal Performing Arts’ Knight Theater, the Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Arts + Culture, and Mint Museum Uptown. The public is invited to the 500 block of South Tryon Street between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. for the festival – and both before and after those hours to enjoy a free “plazacast” of Charlotte Symphony’s Romeo & Juliet, showing from a big screen in front of the Firebird statue at 7:30 p.m. on both Friday and Saturday evenings. The Bechtler and Mint will also offer special hours of free access on Friday May 20 in conjunction with the plazacast (the Bechtler will offer Bechtler by Night from 6-9 p.m., while the Mint will offer free general admission from 6-8 p.m.).

More fun for all ages begins Saturday morning at 10 a.m., with a main stage set up on Levine Avenue and emceed by Moira Quinn, Vice President of Charlotte Center City Partners. And about that Arts Guy? He’s part of a new marketing initiative jointly launched by Levine Center for the Arts institutions, and he will

represent the Charlotteans and global visitors who want to learn more about the cultural offerings of the Queen City. Watch for him to give behind-the-scenes insights to Saturday's audience. Community artists are also invited to join a #LongLiveArts Festival Portrait Paint-Off, in which participants are invited to meet local oil painter Gordon James. He will first paint a live model from 10:15 to 11 a.m., and then at 11:30 and 1:45, audience members will be invited to grab some art supplies and paint volunteer models. The paint-off contest will give prizes including gifts from the three museum gift shops and free passes to return to the Levine Center for the Arts museums.

Other performers and activities scheduled as part of Saturday's activities include the Charlotte Symphony's Musical Petting Zoo; Caroline Calouche's aerial dancers; Drums4Life; Africano Campbell; Blue Moon Puppets; an art class with Cathay Dawkins; Dancehall Groove; and a salsa dancing demonstration, as well as interactive art-making activities led by the education staffs of the three member museums. Docents from the three museums will lead free 30-minute "ArtBreak" tours inside each museum at noon, 1 p.m., and 2 p.m.

A complete schedule of events is attached and available at [facebook.com/levinecenterart](https://facebook.com/levinecenterart).

**For further questions, please contact:**

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### **ABOUT LEVINE CENTER FOR THE ARTS**

Levine Center for the Arts is one of Charlotte's major cultural destinations, home to Bechtler Museum of Modern Art, Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Arts + Culture, John S. and James L. Knight Theater, and Mint Museum Uptown. The Center was made possible through the support of the City of Charlotte, Mecklenburg County, Campaign for Cultural Facilities, and The Leon Levine Foundation, one of the country's largest and most impactful philanthropic organizations, along with the generosity of Bank of America Foundation, Wells Fargo Foundation, and Duke Energy Foundation, among many others.

A generous grant from the THRIVE Fund is enabling the four institutions to work more closely together than ever before to increase visibility and access to the unified center. The \$250,000 award from the THRIVE Fund over two years is making possible the center's first-ever joint marketing campaign, as well as free monthly lunchtime tours and a free community festival to be held on May 21, 2016. The THRIVE Fund was established in 2013 to provide financial stability for Charlotte's cultural sector under the leadership of Hugh McColl, former Bank of America chairman and CEO, and is currently administered by the Foundation For The Carolinas. The

Mint Museum spearheaded the grant and is managing the project in collaboration with the other institutions. More information at [levinecenterarts.org](http://levinecenterarts.org).

### **ABOUT BECHTLER MUSEUM OF MODERN ART**

The Bechtler Museum of Modern Art is dedicated to the exhibition of mid-20th-century modern art. It is named after the family of Andreas Bechtler, who assembled and inherited a collection created by seminal figures in modernism. The collection comprises more than 1,400 works. Some works are accompanied by books, photographs, and letters illustrating personal connections to the Bechtler family. For museum details visit [bechtler.org](http://bechtler.org).

### **ABOUT BLUMENTHAL PERFORMING ARTS + KNIGHT THEATER**

Blumenthal Performing Arts serves the Carolinas as a leading cultural, entertainment and education provider. Blumenthal Performing Arts receives operating support from the Arts & Science Council and North Carolina Arts Council. Blumenthal Performing Arts is also supported by PNC Bank, sponsor of the PNC Broadway Lights. More information: [blumenthalarts.org](http://blumenthalarts.org).

### **ABOUT HARVEY B. GANTT CENTER**

Founded in 1974, Charlotte's Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Arts + Culture (formerly the Afro-American Center) exists to present, preserve and celebrate the art, history and culture of African-Americans and people of the African Diaspora through dance, music, visual and literary arts, film, educational programs, theatre productions and community outreach. Named for Harvey Bernard Gantt, the prominent architect, community leader and former mayor of Charlotte, the Center is housed in an inspired and distinguished award-winning structure and is home to the nationally celebrated John and Vivian Hewitt Collection of African-American Art, which was generously donated by Bank of America. More information: [ganttcenter.org](http://ganttcenter.org).

### **ABOUT THE MINT MUSEUM**

The Mint Museum is a leading, innovative museum of international art and design committed to engaging and inspiring all members of our global community. Established as the first art museum in North Carolina in 1936, The Mint Museum has grown to include two dynamic facilities, Mint Museum Uptown and Mint Museum Randolph, and currently boasts one of largest collections in the Southeast. Mint Museum Uptown houses an internationally renowned Craft + Design Collection, as well as collections of American and Modern & Contemporary Art. The five-story, 175,000 square-foot facility was designed by Machado and Silvetti Associates of Boston. Historic Mint Museum Randolph is located three miles to the south. More information: [mintmuseum.org](http://mintmuseum.org).

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