



# New Jersey Intergenerational Orchestra

*Warren Cohen, Artistic Director*

## The Human Spirit

*A free orchestra concert celebrating music of joy, resiliency, and beauty*



**Featuring the *Afro-American Symphony*  
by William Grant Still**



**Pre-concert performance  
by Keys 2 Success**

**Sunday March 1<sup>st</sup> 2026 at 3 PM**  
Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart  
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# Welcome to our Winter Concert!



Welcome, and thank you for being a part of today's historic performance. This concert is a dream come true, years in the making. I am humbled by the generosity of the Cathedral Basilica's leaders in bringing NJIO to this awe-inspiring space, providing the venue for our first contribution to Newark's cultural landscape.

When we began planning this concert, we knew we wanted to honor Newark and its rich musical history. Newark contains multitudes: a grand history of cultural contribution and a bright future being built by its youth. Brick City's complexity mirrors the complexity of being human, and we chose music that reflects both that depth and what we hear in the human spirit: resilience, joy, and beauty.

The act of challenging ourselves and persevering through difficulty is fundamentally human. As musicians, we embrace pushing ourselves because it helps us thrive throughout our lifetimes. We invite you, as listeners, to allow this music to move and challenge you.

Our mission today and every day is to use orchestral music to connect to ourselves and each other, across all that seems to divide us. If our music and mission move you, please show your support for NJIO, Keys 2 Success, and the Cathedral Basilica Concert Series by making a donation.

Allison Russo

Managing Director



## **WARREN COHEN**

### **Conductor, Symphony Orchestra Artistic Director, NJIO**

Warren Cohen has been the Artistic Director of the New Jersey Intergenerational Orchestra since 2013. He is also Music Director of the MusicaNova Orchestra in Phoenix, Arizona. In 2012 he became Concert Artist in Conducting at Kean University. He has previously served as Music Director of the Scottsdale Baroque Orchestra, the Fine Arts String Orchestra, and the Southern Arizona Orchestra, where he was appointed Music Director Laureate.

Mr. Cohen began his musical career as a pianist and composer. His early positions included a stint as a ballet accompanist for the Honolulu City Ballet and as Music Director of the Kumu Kahua Theatre group in Hawaii. His work in Theatre and Opera led to his becoming a conductor. Over the past fifteen years he has conducted almost a thousand orchestral, operatic and choral works.

He studied conducting with, among others, Gustav Meier and Paul Vermel, and did a year of study at the English National Opera during the last year of the administration of the “power trio” years when the company was led by Sir Mark Elder, David Pountney and Sir Peter Jonas.

Mr. Cohen now lives in South Orange, New Jersey with his wife,

soprano Carolyn Whitaker, and son Graham, an award winning composer and violist who studied at The Juilliard School, receiving both Bachelor and Master's degrees. He coaches Symphony and Intermezzo at NJIO. Visit [njio.org](http://njio.org) to read more about Warren Cohen's work and for links to recordings of his compositions.

## **CRAIG STANTON**

### **Conductor, Intermezzo Orchestra**

Mr. Stanton is a graduate of The College of New Jersey (2007) with a B.M. in Music Education and a graduate of the Teachers' College at Columbia University (2009) with a Master of Arts in Music and Music Education. He has taught String Orchestra and Music Composition for the last 18 years at both the middle school and the high school level. Currently he is the Orchestra Director and Music Composition teacher at Westfield High School. In 2024, he was awarded Westfield High School's Distinguished Teacher of the Year award.



He is also an accomplished double bassist and conductor who maintains a regular schedule of performances throughout New Jersey and New York. He has served as the principal bassist for the Raritan Valley Symphony and the Livingston Symphony, as well as the assistant principal bass in the Baroque Orchestra of New Jersey. He also maintains a regular schedule of musical theater - and various other - performances throughout the state. Mr. Stanton also previously served as the co-chair for the NJ All-State Orchestra Procedures committee, which helps to direct the NJ All-State Orchestra program. As a conductor, he has previously served as the conductor for the Brook Orchestra (Bound Brook) from 2016 - 2018 and as a recent conductor of the CJMEA Honors Orchestra.

Finally, Mr. Stanton enjoys, more than anything, spending time with his wife, Beth, and children, Clara and Elliot.

## ELIZABETH MALISZEWSKI

### Conductor, Prelude Ensemble



Beth Maliszewski is a violist, violinist and music educator originally from Chatham. She has been the conductor of the Prelude Ensemble since 2019. She is currently the Orchestra Director at Herbert Hoover Middle School in Edison, where she coordinates an annual concert festival with 350 students. She graduated from the Mason Gross School of the Arts, Rutgers University with a degree in Music Education, summa cum laude. She then received a master's degree, with a concentration in Music Education, from Ithaca College.

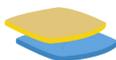
Ms. Maliszewski has been a guest lecturer at the NJ Music Educators State Convention and Summer Conference. Born to two New Jersey music educators, she has been actively involved in music her entire life.

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NJIO is committed to making our concerts enjoyable for everyone. If you find it difficult to sit through a performance, **please visit our Concert Comfort Station in the lobby at any time.** We have a variety of sensory supports and comfort items available for loan, including extra seat cushions, coloring pages, fidget toys, and sound-reducing headphones.

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## About our pre-concert performers, Keys 2 Success

Founded in 2016, Keys 2 Success has served over 1,000 students across Newark in the past decade, using music as a training vehicle for leadership development. We develop leaders who know how to cross traditional boundaries and appreciate the varied strengths that diverse communities bring to the table.

Our students don't just learn music—they develop real-world leadership skills by performing and speaking at venues including NJPAC, the Newark Museum, and Princeton University, where they connect with mentors who guide their journeys. Behind the scenes, they strategize, problem-solve, and help lead in the classroom daily. Keys 2 Success is primarily youth-led: our students provide the majority of teaching and serve as mentors to younger learners, with our investments staying in the community through salaries paid to our Newark-based teaching staff.

Through partnerships with organizations like NJIO, The Discovery Orchestra, New Jersey Symphony, and the Harlem Chamber Players, we're building connections that help our students achieve success in life—not just in music, but in leadership, community, and opportunity.

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## Interested in playing in an Ensemble?

NJIO has four different ensembles from which to choose:

**Outreach** is an ensemble led by violist Miki Hatcher. This group rehearses once a month and plays familiar melodies in string quartet arrangements. (Upper winds are welcome to join in!) Outreach performs about once a month in nursing homes, specialized schools, libraries, etc. Rehearsals are one Wednesday a month from 6:30 - 8:30 pm.

**Prelude** is our beginner level group and is led by Elizabeth Maliszewski. This string ensemble is perfect for new string players, or people who are returning to music after a long break. Members of Prelude should have an understanding of basic notes and rhythms. Previous ensemble experience is not needed. This group meets on Thursdays from 4:30 – 5:30 pm.

**Intermezzo** is our intermediate group, led by Craig Stanton. This group includes all orchestral instruments. Intermezzo plays short pieces and arrangements. Ensemble experience is not mandatory but helpful. Rehearsals are on Thursdays from 5:45 - 7:00 pm.

**Symphony** is our advanced group and is conducted by our Artistic Director Warren Cohen. Ensemble experience is recommended. This group plays complete orchestral pieces and concertos. Symphony rehearses on Thursdays from 7:30 – 9:30 pm.

To read more about our ensembles, please visit our website at [www.njio.org](http://www.njio.org) or email [mbsweet@njio.org](mailto:mbsweet@njio.org) with any questions.

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# **New Jersey Intergenerational Orchestra**

**Warren Cohen, Artistic Director**

## **Conductors**

Warren Cohen, Symphony Orchestra  
Craig Stanton, Intermezzo Orchestra  
Elizabeth Maliszewski, Prelude Ensemble  
Michelle Hatcher, Outreach Ensemble

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## **Staff**

Allison Russo  
*Managing Director*

Mary Beth Sweet <i>Administrator</i>	Emily Kane <i>Operations Manager</i>
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Millie Peterson <i>Outreach Coordinator</i>	Regina Novicky <i>Stage Manager</i>
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Sophia Rosahl  
*Data and Operations Assistant*

## **NJIO**

36 Chatham Road  
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Website: [www.njio.org](http://www.njio.org)

## PRELUDE ENSEMBLE

*Elizabeth Maliszewski, Conductor*

### **Violin I**

Rochelle Castellano  
Katherine Egenton  
Rodrigo Jose Gurdian  
Bill Hanlon  
Gaia Hutcheson  
Walter Meissner  
Dee Walters

### **Violin II**

**Warren Cohen**  
Yumi Lee  
Cheryl Ryan  
Peter Vernon

### **Viola**

**Graham Cohen**  
Ben Kordys  
Sylvie Mesnier  
Cathy Nassani

### **Cello**

Christine Donohue  
Annika Liu  
Michel Mesnier  
Christine Stufflebeam

## INTERMEZZO ORCHESTRA

*Craig Stanton, Conductor*

### **Violin I**

**Robert Anderson**  
Maureen Byrne  
Rochelle Castellano  
Katherine Egenton  
Cali Janulis  
Jenise Janulis  
Emily Kimmons  
Marie Quinn  
Brent Sandene  
Vicki Schwartz

### **Violin II**

**Elizabeth Maliszewski**  
Matthew Brantl  
**Warren Cohen**  
Maggie Fatsis  
Yumi Lee  
Frankie Pelaez  
Stephanie Roche  
Cheryl Ryan  
Melodie Sidun

### **Viola**

**Graham Cohen**  
Erika Emery  
Claire Humen  
Penny Klein  
Ben Kordys  
Sylvie Mesnier  
Michael Vitiello  
Kathleen Wooton

### **Cello**

**Megan Sweet**  
Michael Bates  
Christine Donohue  
Annika Liu  
Cayden Mercado  
Michel Mesnier  
Ava Ryder  
Nancy Vanasek

### **Bass**

*Brian McGowan*

### **Flute**

Genevieve Lubas  
Regina Novicky  
Robert Platts  
JoAnn Porter  
Genevieve Spielberg

### **Oboe & English Horn**

*Kathryn Keller*

### **Clarinet**

Lindsay Kwon  
Tom Ostrand  
David Shemesh

### **Bassoon**

**Tiziana Cappuccia**

### **Horn**

**Emalina Thompson**

Meryl Hajek  
Bryan Montoya

### **Trumpet**

Bryan Eckhardt  
Peter Wick

### **Percussion**

Aniah Auriemma  
Helene M. Kaplan

# SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

*Warren Cohen, Conductor*

## **Violin I**

**Vincent Novellino**

**Robert Anderson**

Marco Cardozo

Ellen Clarke

Megan McDonald

Sanchita Patel

Alysa Peterson

Katherine Schug

Vicki Schwartz

Derek Shen

Judy Snow

## **Violin II**

**Mary Babiarz**

**Elizabeth Maliszewski**

Maureen Byrne

Katherine Egenton

Elleen Hickey

Marie Quinn

Khiana Rogers

Cheryl Ryan

Ilona Wanner

## **Viola**

**Graham Cohen**

Aniah Auriemma

Erika Emery

Aleshia Kafer

Penny Klein

Gini Peck-Phillip

Marjorie Picard

Ezra Piedilato

## **Cello**

**Megan Sweet**

Matthew Brantl

Ann Donohue

Rachel Douglas

Steven Hughes

Joseph Kaiser

Paul Kennedy

Cayden Mercado

Millie Peterson

Nancy Vanasek

William Yacker

## **Bass**

**Craig Stanton**

*Brian McGowan*

## **Flute**

Helen Bartolick

Eva Curtis

Jennifer Romano

## **Oboe**

Jenna AbuSalim

Roberta Samuels

*Kathryn Keller*

## **Clarinet**

Carol Boysen

Joseph DeRosa

Tom Ostrand

Dorothy Panhorst

## **Bassoon**

**Tiziana Cappuccia**

Erin Lunsford Norton

## **Horn**

**Emalina Thompson**

Brian Montoya

Thomas Williams

*Lauren Olivola*

## **Trumpet**

David Luquette

Peter Wick

*Yael Cohen*

## **Trombone**

Nicholas Meyer

William Nilsen

Ed Schug

## **Tuba**

Patrick Bender

## **Percussion**

Helene M. Kaplan

*Rolan Bansil*

*Davey Foote*

*Adrienne Ostrander*

## **Banjo**

*Wyatt Camery*

## **Harp**

## **Piano**

*Jee-Hoon Krska*

**Artistic Staff in bold.**

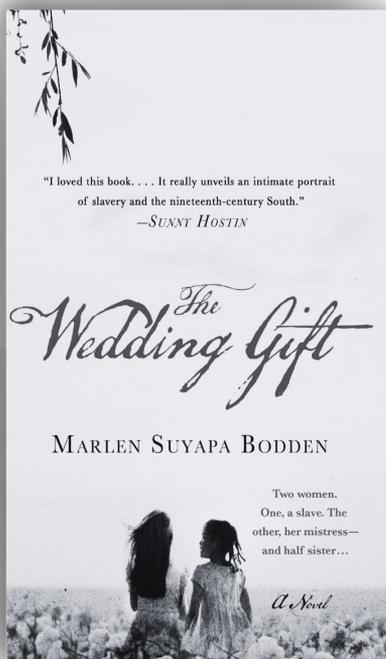
*Guest musicians in italics.*

*Scan this code with your phone's camera to see*

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2026 Winter Concert Program**

**Brass Choir**

Canzon per Sonar Septimi a 10.....Giovanni Gabrieli  
arr. Emalina Thompson

**Prelude Ensemble**

Jupiter from *The Planets*.....Gustav Holst  
arr. Deborah Baker Monday  
Overture to *William Tell*, Finale.....Gioachino Rossini  
arr. Sandra Dackow

**Intermezzo Orchestra**

South American Overture .....Merle J. Isaac  
Serenata .....Leroy Anderson  
Rondalla from *12 Danzas Español*.....Enrique Granados  
orch. De Grigon

**INTERMISSION**

**Symphony Orchestra**

Toussaint L'Ouverture.....Samuel Coleridge-Taylor  
Afro-American Symphony.....William Grant Still  
presented under license from G. Schirmer Inc. and Associated Music Publishers, copyright owners  
Huapango.....Jose Pablo Moncayo



*NJO is committed to ensuring that its programs and concerts are accessible.*



Made possible by funds from the  
New Jersey State Council on the Arts, a partner  
agency of the National Endowment for the Arts.

# INTERMEZZO PROGRAM NOTES

## **Merle Isaac: South American Overture**

To many aspiring musicians, the name Merle Isaac must seem familiar. Born in Iowa in 1898, Merle Isaac became one of the cornerstone music educators and arrangers of the 20th century. In 1995 he was awarded the American String Teachers' Association Lifetime Achievement Award, an award that has subsequently been named after him. His arrangements for band and orchestra have been performed by musicians of all ages throughout the United States and the world for the last 90 years. His *South American Overture* is a collection of South American folk tunes and dance styles. In this piece you may hear the familiar rhythms of the tango and the waltz, as well as the melodies of familiar South American folk tunes like *La Cumparista* (Uruguay) and *El Choclo* (Argentina).

## **Leroy Anderson: Serenata**

Perhaps best known for his *Sleigh Ride*, Leroy Anderson was one of the most commercially successful American composers of the 20th century with his light, orchestral music. The great John Williams has described Anderson as "one of the great masters" of the genre. His orchestral pop compositions include the aforementioned *Sleigh Ride*, *The Blue Tango*, *The Syncopated Clock*, and of course his *Serenata*. The *Serenata* was released in 1947, and is meant to depict the optimism of the United States following the end of World War II. You can hear in the piece the language of Anderson's whimsical optimism in the bustling rhythms and effortless melodies throughout the piece.

## **Enrique Granados: Rondalla from 12 Danzas Españolas**

In his *12 Danzas Españolas* for piano, Granados depicts the vibrant musical culture of Spain. The *Rondalla* is the sixth dance from the suite, orchestrated here by Joan Lamote de Grignon. The title refers to the roving bands of string instrumentalists that could be found on the street corners of Granados' Spain. Drawing inspiration from the *Jota* dance form, the music mimics the rhythmic pluck of guitars and the lively energy of a village square. The movement begins by invoking a festival-like atmosphere, gives way to a melancholy middle section, and concludes with a flourish.

-Written by Craig Stanton

# SYMPHONY PROGRAM NOTES

## Samuel Coleridge-Taylor: Toussaint L'Ouverture

Toussaint Louverture (the spelling in the title of the composition is different than the way his name is usually written) was the leader of the slave rebellion that occurred in Haiti in 1801, which eventually led to Haitian independence in 1804. Although Toussaint was captured by the French and died in prison, he is still regarded as the most important figure in the revolution that led to independence.

Coleridge-Taylor wrote this work in 1901, and it was the first of many works that reflect on his own identity as a Black man. Although he never knew his father, and was brought up by white working class people in Croydon (a suburb of London) his physical appearance made it impossible for him to ignore his African origins, and after attending the Pan-African Congress as a twenty-five year old in 1900, he increasingly leaned into his background both in his music and personal life. It had little direct effect on his musical style, which was already well formed, but it did lead him to use African or Afro-American melodic materials frequently. But these materials were blended into a style that was utterly distinctive and unique. Coleridge-Taylor regarded Dvořák as his greatest inspiration, but his music is even more colorfully orchestrated than Dvořák, and his melodic sense and harmonic language suggest the style of British light music of the 1930's and 1940's, long after his death. Although he was an extremely popular composer during his lifetime, after his premature death in 1912, his music largely faded from the repertoire except for his Oratorio, *Hiawatha*. The present work was a victim of that neglect. Several years ago, when two conductors simultaneously wanted to see the score, the publisher could not find the parts, and it appears that the work had not been performed in at least one hundred years! One of these conductors, Michael Repper, generously put his copies of the parts on IMSLP, so we can expect that there will be many more performances of this beautiful composition in the near future.

The composer described the work as an "Overture", perhaps as tribute to the name of the person he was portraying in musical terms, but it is actually closer to a tone poem, and is reminiscent of the late tone poems of Dvořák. It is in a pure sonata form, with a heroic first theme and a contrasting lyrical idea, the first suggesting Toussaint's military prowess, and the second suggesting his devotion to religious ideals and family. Like all of Coleridge-Taylor's work, the piece is brilliantly orchestrated and full of great tunes, and the swashbuckling character of much of the writing is a striking representation of a larger than life figure in history.

## William Grant Still: Afro-American Symphony

In the years between about 1925 and 1950, there developed a style of contemporary classical American music that was composed exclusively by Black composers; the main representatives of this style were William Dawson, Florence Price, James Price Johnson and William Grant Still. This was music that had an instantly recognizable use of melodic material, a similar harmonic language, and a distinctive rhythmic character. Dawson had said that in writing his *Negro Folk Symphony*, he wanted to compose a work that anyone would know immediately that it was the work of a Black composer. What's interesting about this style of Black classical music is that the influences on it were the melodic and harmonic language of Dvořák and Coleridge-Taylor, field songs, spirituals, ragtime, and, especially in the *Afro-American Symphony*, the blues. Strikingly, the music almost never sounds like jazz. You can hear more jazz inflection in Ravel's *G major Piano Concerto* than in any of the works of these composers. The style has been described as (and criticized as) "conservative", but that is largely because the harmonic language remains purely within the confines of common practice despite the modal melodic inflections, the use of more advanced orchestration techniques and the use of ragtime- and blues-inspired rhythms. William Grant Still especially made full use of the color possibilities of the instruments in the orchestra, so the orchestration sounds very advanced. He studied composition with Edgar Varese, but he seems to have absorbed only his teacher's colorful orchestration, not his wild compositional style!

The *Afro-American Symphony* was written in 1930, and became an instant hit. Over the next twenty or so years, it was probably the most performed Symphony by an American composer. The great tunes, the wonderful orchestration, the blues inflected character and the innovative use of the banjo in the third movement were all things that made the work very attractive to concert goers and Orchestra Managers. As the Civil Rights Movement emerged, it began to be associated with negative Black stereotypes, probably enhanced by the composer's own political views, which were far from progressive. It faded from the repertoire, but in the last 30 years it has come back strong, and it is now once again among the most performed American Symphonies. Still himself said that the work should show various aspects of the life and aspirations of Black Americans, and the fact that he based it on the simplest form of Black music - the blues - is very striking. In language we would not use today, he said he wanted to "elevate" and "dignify" the blues by dressing it up in Symphonic garb. However you express it, it is music of extraordinary quality and beauty, and well deserves its' enduring popularity.

## Jose Pablo Moncayo: Huapango

Although Moncayo was an excellent composer with a fairly large body of work in many forms, he is definitely a “one hit wonder” in that his *Huapango* is extremely well known but his other music remains obscure. In 1940 he traveled to Vera Cruz with his fellow composer Blas Galindo (whose “one hit wonder” piece is called *Sones de Mariachi!*) and they collected songs and instrumental melodies from the region. These tunes became the basis of both *Huapango* and *Sones de Mariachi*. Moncayo said that transcribing the tunes was difficult because the local musicians never played or sang any melody the same way twice. Nevertheless, there were signature rhythms, cadential formulas and melodic shapes that were distinctive and could be used to create further tunes that were in the spirit of the original songs and dances. *Huapango* is thought to be largely or completely an original composition, inspired by but not identical to the tunes he collected. The piece is in a simple ABA form, with the outer sections a couple of lively dance tunes while the middle section is a bit slower and more lyrical. The composer makes extensive use of percussion instruments and the harp, which give the work its distinctive sound. Its popularity is such that it has been called “the second National Anthem” of Mexico, and is often performed at patriotic events. It is a rousing and joyful work that is great fun for both musicians and audiences.

*-Written by Warren Cohen*

## COMING SOON - SAVE THE DATES

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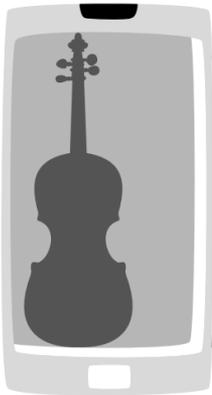
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*Thank you Megan, who keeps  
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*-The Cellos*

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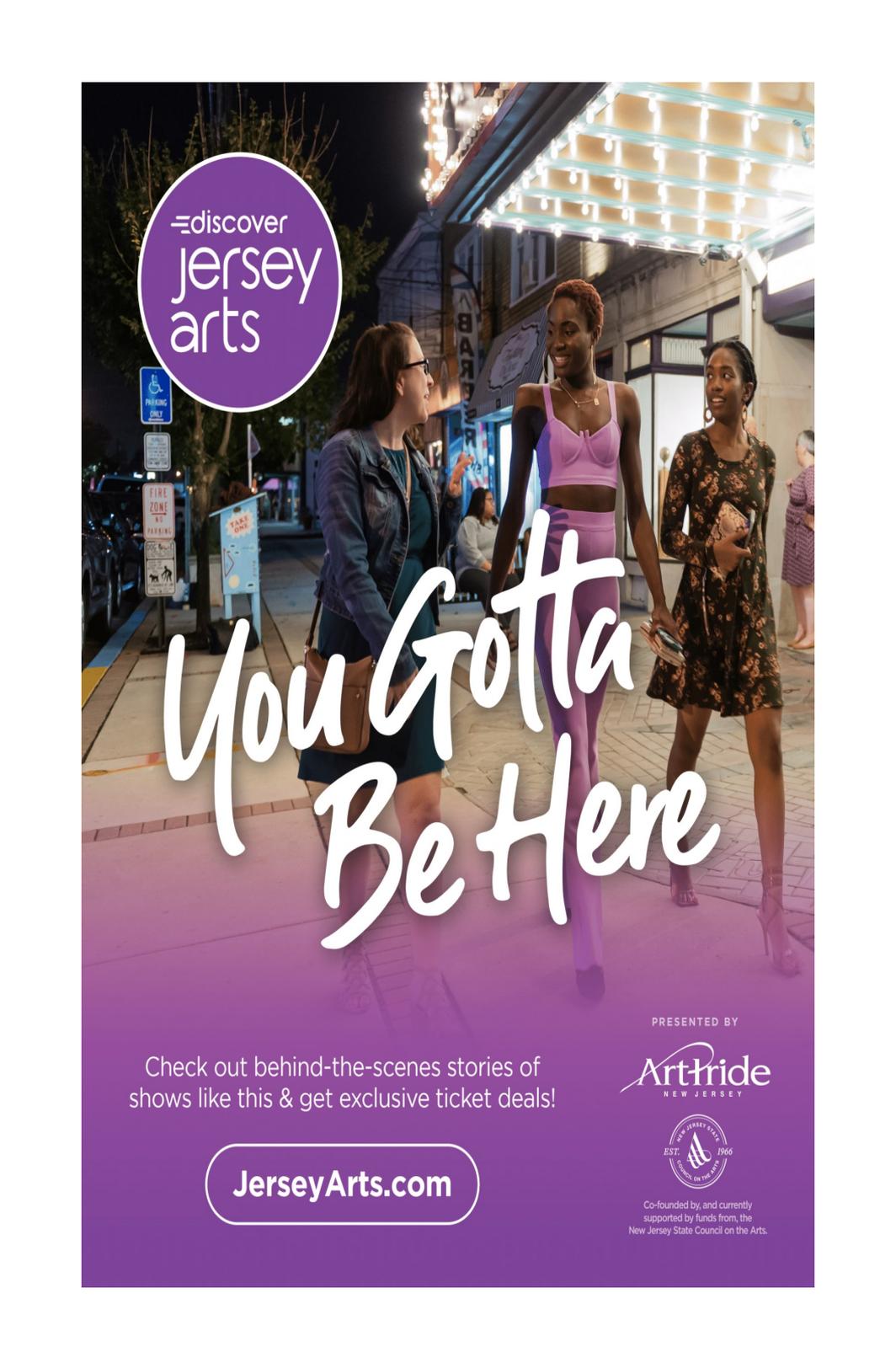
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