

***Jamaica Center for Arts and Learning
presents its annual
School Assembly / Family Matinee Series***

***Four Free Family-Friendly Online Events,
Including Two Original Commissions
February to June 2021***



The banner features the JAL logo in the top left corner. A black diagonal banner across the middle contains the text "FAMILY MATINEE SERIES" in large white letters. To the right, another black diagonal banner contains the text "BEGINNING FEBRUARY 8TH - 14TH", "RSVP FOR FREE", and "WWW.JCAL.ORG". Below these banners is a photograph of the Boogie Chillun band, consisting of five members: a drummer, a guitarist, a bassist, and two other musicians. They are all wearing t-shirts with the band's name "Boogie Chillun" on them. Below the photo is a white box with the text "FEATURING MULTI-CULTURAL BAND BOOGIE CHILLUN'".

Jamaica Center for Arts & Learning's popular School Assembly and Family Matinee programs have offered children and their families affordable, in-person music and theatre experiences for many years. This year, through the generous support of City Council Member Adrienne Adams and the Queens Delegation, JCAL expands and celebrates the tradition online.

From February to June, JCAL's combined **School Assembly** and **Family Matinee series** will deliver **four free programs**. The first two are exciting works by Arts for Learning Connecticut, a nonprofit that engages students of all ages and abilities to learn creatively through the arts. And then there are two original commissions: one from the renowned Mass Transit Theater, and one from Broadway alumnus Daryl Richardson, who teaches at MAST High School in Cambria Heights.



For Immediate Release

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First up, **available online Feb. 8 to 14**, is ***Boogie Chillun'***, a lively multicultural band that takes students and faculty on a musical journey through America's rich music history. ***Boogie Chillun'*** interacts with the audience as they perform hymns and spirituals, songs of freedom, country, blues, jazz, rock, soul and hip-hop. **RSVP is required on [JCAL's website](#) in order to receive an exclusive link to the show.**

The next month, ***St. Patrick's Day and the Spring Solstice*** welcomes storyteller-educator Monica Peterson to the virtual stage. **Available online March 8 to 14**, Peterson delights listeners with magical tales of seasonal festivities and inspiring stories of national holidays and heroes through props and audience participation. Her focus is Irish folktales -- a schoolteacher who saves her student from a giant; a leprechaun who grants three wishes to a couple; a woman who uses her wits to escape from fairyland. **RSVP is required on [JCAL's website](#) in order to receive an exclusive link to the show.**

From April through June, JCAL will premiere **two new commissioned works**. The first is conceived and directed by Joseph Lymous, co-Artistic Director of Mass Transit Theater, and based on interviews with -- and starring -- Queens public school students. The second, devised by Daryl Richardson, crowdsources and theatricalizes the real-life stories of MAST High School students.

"From the moment Council Member Adams and the Queens Delegation expressed their faith in JCAL by funding our School Assembly/Family Matinee program," said Interim Executive Director Leonard Jacobs, "we committed to reinventing and enriching this series for the remote-learning era. We're proud to offer four diverse programs online for students, teachers and families alike."

"We're thrilled to develop two new works with amazing community partners and teaching artists," added Interim Artistic Director Courtney Ffrench. "Our season has been 'community first, digital first' -- and this series illustrates just what those words mean."

"JCAL has always been committed to providing local youth with opportunities to create -- in this case, amazing theatrical responses to the turbulent events of the past year," noted JCAL Director of Education Juan Carlos Salinas. "Although times may be challenging, we know that resilience lives in our youth -- and is the catalyst for great art."

For more information, visit www.jcal.org.



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About JCAL

Jamaica Center for Arts & Learning (JCAL), founded in 1972, is a multidisciplinary arts center based in the diverse community of Southeast Queens. Our mission is devoted to offering quality visual, performing, and literary arts, and to providing accessible education programs to encourage participation in the arts. JCAL's offices and arts spaces are open in strict accordance with state and local COVID-19 guidelines. Operating hours by appointment: Monday to Friday, 10am to 6pm, and galleries on Saturdays; closed major holidays. For additional information, call JCAL at 718-658-7400 or visit www.JCAL.org.

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