

THE

LIEDER

SPRING 2024



Welcome



Bill Stephan, CVE
Executive Director &
Chief Artistic Officer



Spring is always a busy and exciting time at the Lied Center, and this year is certainly no exception! I'm so glad you're part of all the excitement.

We recently announced our spectacular 2024-2025 Glenn Korff Broadway Series, and it is the biggest one yet with three full-week runs, plus a two-week engagement! From the Nebraska premiere of the brand-new *Back to the Future* to the drop-dead hilarious *Beetlejuice*, from the groundbreaking and moving *Dear Evan Hansen* to a huge new production of the beloved classic *The Little Mermaid*, there's something for everyone. We can't tell you about the fifth package show just yet... but we can remind you that the only other shows in Lied Center history to run two full weeks have been *The Phantom of the Opera* and *Hamilton*, so you know it's going to be big! If you haven't already become a Broadway subscriber, please consider this my personal invitation to do that now. Then, stay tuned for the announcement of the full 2024-2025 season of music, theater, dance, and much more on May 7!

Of course, there's still so much to be excited about this season at the Lied! Personally, I'm especially excited about the return of violin virtuoso Joshua Bell on May 9. Joined by renowned soprano Larisa Martinez, it's going to be a thrilling evening of gorgeous, romantic music including Mendelssohn, Dvorak, Puccini, Bernstein's *West Side Story*, and more from this married musical duo. I hope you'll join me!

Finally, I want to offer my gratitude to everyone who made this year's Friends of Lied Gala such a spectacular success. Thanks to the hard work and generosity of so many of our amazing Friends of Lied members and Lied Center staff, hundreds of people gathered for an amazing evening to support the arts—and had a great time doing it!

As always, thank you for all that you do to support the Lied Center's mission of educating, inspiring, and entertaining the people of Nebraska through the performing arts. I'll see you soon #AtTheLied!



Linda Dickenson
President | Friends of Lied
Board of Directors

As we look forward to the warmer days of spring, we also look back to reflect on the accomplishments of the past year at the Lied Center for Performing Arts.

First, we are pleased to report the recent Lied Gala and fundraiser—themed New York, New York—was an extraordinary success. The generosity of the 400 attendees at the gala resulted in raising well over \$120,000 to support the mission of the Lied Center. Deepest gratitude goes out to the event chairs, Jill Davis and Katie Ely, along with the entire Friends of Lied Board of Directors, for the time and passion it took to make this an unforgettable evening.

Recent Lied programs have also been successful and well attended. We enjoyed *Hamilton*, *The Blues Brothers*, Emanuel Ax playing the Lied's new Steinway piano, *Aladdin*, Wynton Marsallis, *Les Misérables* (during a blizzard) and so many other world-class performances.

Finally, we applaud the Friends of Lied membership with more than 1,240 members at the close of 2023—seven percent more than in 2022. Our family is growing! We thank you all for your continued generosity and hope you will continue to renew your Lied memberships in the coming years.



ON THE COVER: GRAMMY® Award-winning violinist Joshua Bell and renowned soprano Larisa Martinez, who will be joined by celebrated pianist Peter Dugan for Voice and the Violin at the Lied Center on May 9 at 7:30 pm. Get more information and tickets at liedcenter.org/voiceandviolin

Open House and Behind-the-Scenes Tour

Friends of Lied members at the Fabulous Friend level or higher were invited to a special Open House and Behind-the-Scenes Tour of the Lied Center on Jan. 18. Despite blizzard conditions and a squall warning that evening, guests bundled up and braved the cold for the event. They were treated to tasty charcuterie boxes, cookies and drinks before going on a small group tour. The highlight of the tour was a surprise ride on the pit lift from the theater seats in the house down into the lower level where they toured the dressing rooms. Those who were unable to attend due to the uncooperative weather still got a behind-the-scenes peek with a video of the tour.



2023 Membership Campaign

Thanks to the support of more than 1,200 members from across the state, the 2023 Friends of Lied membership campaign brought in over \$600,000. These funds will be included in the annual contribution to the Lied Center. The big check will be presented to Lied Executive Director Bill Stephan on April 23 at The Simon & Garfunkel Story. All Friends of Lied members attending the show will be invited to join us for a pre-show dessert reception in the Lied Commons. We hope you can join us! Your support makes it possible to bring the top artists in the world to Nebraska. Thank you!

Staff Appreciation Lunch

On Jan. 10, Friends of Lied board members thanked the Lied Center staff for the help they provide the Friends and for their dedication to making the Lied Center an outstanding performing arts center. Charcuterie boxes from CL creations were provided for employees to take for lunch or dinner. Lied Center Service Awards including a card and gift card were given to employees celebrating milestone anniversaries: Ted Tipton, 30 years; Jillian Stewart, 15 years; Michael Doran, 10 years; Jason Hibbard, 10 years; Drew Caskey, 5 years; and Laura Ekinde, 5 years.



Lied Center Staff Feature

Emma Jorgenson is in her first year with the Lied Center, joining the staff as the Administrative and Development Associate in June 2023. When you call the Administrative Office phone line, she is most likely the one you talk to! Emma studied Theatre and English at Nebraska Wesleyan University, and recently moved back after living in Omaha while working with the Rose Theater. In addition to her work at the Lied, Emma is the Drama Director at Raymond Central High School and enjoys working as a Stage Manager and performer in the Lincoln/Omaha area. Emma fills what spare time she has with reading and baking - both of which have always been her favorite hobbies. Some of Emma's favorite childhood memories were at the Lied Center, and it truly inspired her passion for the arts.

Friends of Lied & Circles of Giving - Together at Last!

The Lied Center has historically offered two membership programs for individuals who support the arts through annual gifts: Friends of Lied for contributions of \$50 - \$3,000 and Circles of Giving for contributions over \$3,000. Each program contained a separate benefit structure, and contributions were made to two separate organizations.

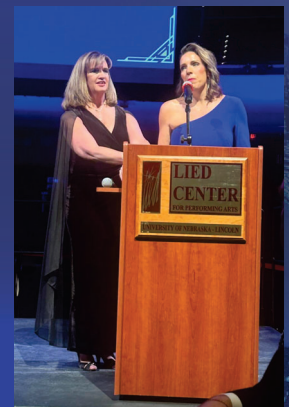
To better serve our members, we are unifying these programs under the Friends of Lied umbrella starting in 2024. Annual contributions for both programs will now be made directly to the Friends of Lied organization, and Circles of Giving members will receive all Friends of Lied benefits (with the exception of Patron Friend show sponsorship).

Friends of Lied memberships will continue to be effective for one year from the date of your contribution. Because Circles of Giving contributions support specific performances within a season, Circles of Giving memberships will continue to renew each spring to support the following Lied Center season, with memberships active from July 1 – June 30 each year.

We are so grateful to those who have contributed to both Friends of Lied and Circles of Giving programs over the years! We hope this change will simplify things for you moving forward, as you can write one check per year to the Friends of Lied and receive all the perks of membership. We humbly ask that you consider making the same overall donation as you have in the past, ensuring that the Lied can continue to provide meaningful arts experiences for our community.

Most Friends of Lied members will not notice any changes, and your membership benefits and renewal process will continue as normal. If you do have questions about how this change may impact your membership, be sure to let us know.

Thank you for being a Friend!



2024 Friends of Lied Gala

The annual Lied fundraiser is always a highly anticipated event. This year the Friends of Lied board transformed the Lied Center into the city that never sleeps for New York, New York. On Feb. 10, 400 guests enjoyed an unforgettable evening featuring the sights of the city and the sounds of Broadway. Because of the incredible generosity of guests and event sponsors, we raised more than \$120,000 to support the mission of the Lied Center.

Gala co-chairs Jill Davis and Katie Ely, along with the Friends of Lied Board of Directors, worked tirelessly to plan and set up the event. The Lied Center staff also helped immensely in the weeks leading up to the occasion.

Upon arrival, guests were greeted by a complimentary champagne table and professional "red carpet" photos as they toured the silent auction during cocktail hour, before moving to the main stage. City lights centerpieces and landmark views filled the stage to set the scene for a formal dinner reminiscent of a New York steakhouse, provided by Venue.

During the dinner program, guests learned about the lives that have been impacted by the work of the Lied Center, with Dr. Lawrence Chatters serving as emcee. Business owner Lyn Leach served as auctioneer, encouraging the crowd to open their hearts and pocketbooks during the live auction and "Fill the Star for the Arts."

Following dinner and the exhilarating live auction, guests could enjoy the music of Broadway by star Franc D'Ambrosio, best known for the playing the lead role in *The Phantom of the Opera* more than 2,100 times. Or they could travel through the city to dance the night away at Studio 54 in the Carson Theater, with DJ Chatters spinning classic hits under the glitter of a disco ball.

New York, New York was a wonderful evening filled with glitz and glamour to come together with friends old and new to support a great cause.



NEW YORK
NEW YORK
GALA 2024

THE FRIENDS OF LIED CORDIALLY INVITE YOU TO

Gala Night

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2024

5:30 PM COCKTAILS • 7:00 PM DINNER

8 PM PROGRAM & LIVE AUCTION

9 PM CONCERT *with* BROADWAY STAR FRANC D'AMBROSIO
& DANCING *with* DJ LAWRENCE CHATTERS

TICKETS ONLINE ONLY: LIEDCENTER.ORG/GALA
SINGLE TICKET: \$175 / TABLE OF TEN: \$1,750

◆ RVSP by January 24, 2024 ◆

QUESTIONS? CONTACT US AT LIEDDEVELOPMENT@UNLEDCO.ORG 102-172-1700

LIED CENTER FOR PERFORMING ARTS

Jazzy Ash to Visit Pender, Kearney in April

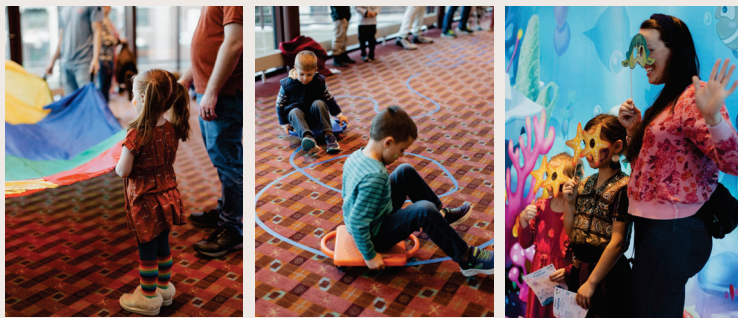
Noted musician Jazzy Ash will visit Pender and Kearney on her upcoming Arts Across Nebraska tour April 17-18, 2024. Ashli St. Armant is a celebrated vocalist, writer, arts educator, and founder of Leaping Lizards Music, a music and theater education program for students preschool through twelfth grade. She tours the United States with her band, Jazzy Ash and the Leaping Lizards, performing jazz for young audiences. Together they have performed at numerous venues including Lincoln Center and Sprout Network (NBC), produced six albums, and have been featured by NPR and LA Times.

Performances include:

Pender Community Center – Pender, NE
Wednesday, April 17 at 7:00 PM

Merryman Performing Arts Center - Kearney, NE
Thursday, April 18 – Invited Student Matinee

Please visit www.liedcenter.org/education/arts-across-nebraska for more information and venue specific ticketing links.



FamFest Goes Under the Sea!

Lincoln City Libraries and Lincoln Children's Museum partnered with the Lied on an exciting FamFest for Rainbow Fish on February 20. Each led fun and educational activities for young people and their families. Education Intern, Ella Gbetanou, planned and coordinated volunteers for other engaging activities including face painting, an underwater photo station, obstacle course, scavenger hunt, friendship bracelet craft, and more. Additionally, our generous sponsors Runza, Pepsi, and The Cookie Company provided refreshments for FamFest attendees. Friends of Lied volunteers helped to support the Lied Education staff in serving refreshments and managing the photo booth.

A heartfelt thanks to the Friends of Lied members who assisted and joined in the fun. Their support helped make this event a huge success!

Registration is open for Lied high school summer camps!

Lied Center Triple Threat Broadway Intensive
June 24-28, 2024

Lied Center Piano Academy
July 15-19, 2024

For information and registration, please visit: liedcenter.org/summercamps



Kinetic Light Brings Fresh Perspective to Dance and Accessibility

Kinetic Light was a thrilling addition to the Lied Center's season that had a lasting impact on the community. As an internationally recognized disability arts ensemble, Kinetic Light illuminates the intersectional creative force emerging from dance, disability culture, and accessibility. From January 22-27, 2024, the company was in residence, leading five separate outreach events, as well as presenting a public performance of their work *Descent*.

On Monday, January 22, Annie Wiegand, the only Deaf professional lighting designer in the United States and recent addition to the Kinetic Light team, led an hour-long lighting lecture with University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) students. Wiegand discussed her career path, challenges, ableism, and audism in the lighting industry, and shared advice to ensure accessibility for deaf technicians. Students were grateful for Annie's sharing of her time and experience. One attendee noted, "Annie opened our world to understanding how being a deaf lighting designer works. It was fascinating to hear her experience in creating art with light." This lecture served 11 students and faculty members.

Also on January 22, Alice Sheppard, founder and artistic director of Kinetic Light, and Laurel Lawson, company choreographer, engineer, and dancer, led a dance master class with a community youth dance group, *Dancing Beyond Limits*. This dance group includes disabled students who are pursuing their love for dance. Sheppard and Lawson utilized collaboration and movement vocabulary to explore and teach Kinetic Light's partnering technique. The class volunteers also took valuable knowledge away from this master class. "I learned different ways and approaches to teach dance classes to young students with disabilities." This event served 15 community students and adults.

On Tuesday, January 23, Sheppard and Lawson led a dance master class for UNL dance students in the Carson Theater. The artists instructed students in different partnering techniques and emphasized the importance of access in the performing arts. This master class emphasized experiencing choreography through the lens of nonvisual, neurodiverse, or Deaf audiences. The class had 16 students in attendance.

A panel discussion was held with members of Kinetic Light and university community leaders on January 24. Panelists include Sheppard, Lawson, Assistant Vice Chancellor of Inclusive Leadership and Learning Dr. Jennifer Peeks Mease, PhD Communication Studies student Renca Dunn, and moderator Barbara Woodhead, the Director of Services for Students with Disabilities. Kinetic Light's residency fell during the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's commemoration of Martin Luther King Jr. Week; with Kinetic Light's focus on intersectional identities and access, the panel was a natural fit for the week's activities. This event was open to the UNL and Lincoln community and had 35 students and adults in attendance.

Lastly, Kinetic Light hosted an event and hospitality training session for Lied Center staff. They shared their practices and philosophy surrounding access. Training also covered actionable steps to create accessible and equitable performing arts venues. This training was led by Lawson and Sheppard and served 40 adults.

In total, Kinetic Light served 117 members of the UNL and Lincoln communities through outreach events, in addition to the over 600 audience members who attended *Descent* on January 27. Their knowledge and perspective in the realms of art, design, technology, dance, and accessibility helped to educate and inspire those who took part in the week.



Laurel Lawson and Alice Sheppard instruct a group of dancers in a large studio. Everyone is dressed in rehearsal clothes and wears masks. Alice is a Black woman with coffee-colored skin and short curly bright yellow hair; Laurel is a white person with cropped bright purple hair; both artists are wheelchair users.



A profile photo, from the side, of the panel discussion. Alice Sheppard is speaking into a handheld microphone, the other speakers listen.



Laurel reaches a hand forward as she instructs a dancer in class. The young dancer stands next to Laurel, listening.



Lied Center for Performing Arts
301 North 12th Street
PO Box 880151
Lincoln, NE 68588-0151
liedcenter.org/support/friends

 **LIED CENTER**
FOR PERFORMING ARTS

GLENN KORFF
BROADWAY SERIES

24 - 25

BROADWAY SEASON

5-SHOW PACKAGES FROM \$228

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