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DPAC Celebrates Successful 18/19 Season with Record Attendance and Sellouts Venue remains a nationally recognized theater in its eleventh year

DURHAM, N.C. – With a record-high attendance of 536,710 guests and a record-breaking 163 sellout performances, **DPAC** (Durham Performing Arts Center) celebrated the ending of a highly successful 2018 / 2019 season.

In DPAC's 11th season of operations under the direction of Nederlander and PFM, the theater held 240 events and sold out 163 performances, the venue's best number of sellouts ever for a single season. DPAC also experienced record-breaking attendance levels in its eleventh season, with an average of 2,249 guests attending each performance.

While Triangle publications and organizations have consistently rated DPAC as the region's best venue for live entertainment, the theater also has been nationally highlighted as one of the country's most highly-attended venues.

In October 2018, DPAC was named the 2018 Theater of the Year by the International Entertainment Buyers Association (IEBA), a leading trade organization for live entertainment industry professionals. DPAC, in its first IEBA nomination, won the award over prestigious performing arts centers across the country, including The Anthem in Washington, D.C.; the Beacon Theatre in New York; the Microsoft Theater in Los Angeles; and the Chicago Theater in Chicago.

This past fall, DPAC also earned the North Carolina Visitor Attraction of the Year award from the North Carolina Travel Industry Association (NCTIA).

For DPAC's just completed 12-month season (July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019), DPAC ranks fourth among theaters as tracked by national entertainment trade magazine *Pollstar*. This top-five ranking places DPAC, which has a capacity of 2,712 seats, in some exclusive company and among much larger theaters in major markets including Radio City Music Hall, New York, NY (Capacity: 6,015), Fox Theatre, Atlanta, GA (Capacity: 4,665), Fox Theatre, Detroit, MI (Capacity: 5,174) and the Bill Graham Civic Auditorium in San Francisco, CA (Capacity: 8,500).

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Bob Klaus, General Manager of DPAC, said, “For the team here at DPAC, our mission has been consistent since 2008, we want to be our guests favorite place for live entertainment. This year more than ever, I am thankful for the incredible shows we get the chance to host and the many guests we have the honor to serve.”

DPAC Shows Dedication to Community Engagement Programs

In addition to presenting so many successful superstar shows and national touring events, DPAC participated in a wide array of community engagement activities this past season including:

- **Donating** hundreds of tickets to local non-profit and charitable fundraisers, such as TROSA, Durham Public Schools, Durham’s First Responders and Duke University’s “Doing Good in the Neighborhood” program.
- Coordinating **educational workshops** with casts and crews from touring Broadway productions. These specially organized workshops gave local students in Durham Public Schools, including C.E. Jordan High School, Riverside High School, Northern High School, and Durham School of the Arts, and Durham arts organizations, such as Kidznotes, the opportunity to work directly with touring Broadway professionals.
- Bringing the arts closer to local students and senior citizens. DPAC’s most special ticket donation program, **Discover Broadway** connects donated tickets from season members with disadvantaged Durham Public School students and their parents letting them experience their first-ever Broadway performance. This program saw an astounding 60 percent growth this year. In addition, **DPAC’s Golden Ticket** offered tickets to seniors living in Durham public housing complexes.
- Presenting **Triangle Rising Stars**, the regional qualifying competition that is part of the **National High School Musical Theater Awards**. Celebrating its ninth year at DPAC, this program had participation from 38 schools in the Triangle and surrounding areas, including Chapel Hill High School, Heritage High School, Hillside High School, C.E. Jordan High School, and William G. Enloe High School. This year’s ceremony was hosted by special surprise guest, Clay Aiken and awarded over \$6,000 in scholarships to the local winners.
- Introducing DPAC’s newest community engagement program for area youth, **DPAC’s Performing Arts Ambassadors**. This new program selects 20 Durham high school students to serve as Ambassadors during the DPAC season. These students get the opportunity to volunteer, attend shows, and report their experiences on a blog on DPAC’s website, while also having behind-the-scenes access to participate in exclusive meet and greets, interviews with touring shows, job shadowing and more.
- Beginning a new initiative, **DPAC For All**, that offers heavily discounted balcony tickets to Broadway events for just \$20, available exclusively for Durham residents. This program provides theater experiences for Durham residents who would otherwise be unable to attend Broadway shows. This season over 5,000 seats were discounted 23% to 65% and made available for Durham residents.

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This season DPAC exemplified their status as the center for live entertainment with blockbuster Broadway, concert and comedy events. The groundbreaking Broadway smash *Hamilton* topped the list of DPAC’s highest-attended Broadway shows this season. *Dear Evan Hansen*, declared “one of the most remarkable shows in musical theater history,” was in second, followed by Andrew Lloyd Webber’s classic masterpiece *CATS*.

Top Five Shows – SunTrust Broadway at DPAC 2018/2019*

1. Hamilton
2. Dear Evan Hansen
3. CATS
4. Miss Saigon
5. Anastasia

*July 1, 2018 - June 30, 2019

Along with a historic number of sellouts for DPAC’s Broadway shows, the venue also saw a record-breaking 58 sellouts among its concerts, comedy, and special events.

Brad Saks, Director of Programming – Concerts and Comedy, said “We are incredibly proud of the concerts, comedy, and special events we presented for our guests this past record-breaking season. Our team is always striving to bring new and beloved acts to the DPAC stage, and we look forward to continuing this tradition.”

DPAC presented a total of 240 events this season including concerts, comedy shows and special events. American jam band Widespread Panic was the top-selling concert act, hosting a record-breaking three-day event at DPAC this past March. Guitar legend Joe Bonamassa followed making his fifth appearance at DPAC since 2010. The musical holiday magic of Mannheim Steamroller rounded out the list of top concerts this season.

Comedian Aziz Ansari led an exceptional season of comedy at DPAC, featuring stand up shows by Ali Wong, the Impractical Jokers and the legendary Carol Burnett. The top-selling special events featured a diverse lineup of shows, including Tyler Perry’s *Madea’s Farewell Play Tour*, *Paw Patrol*, and *Sesame Street Live*.

Top Fifteen Concert Events - 2018/2019 Season*

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|--|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Widespread Panic | 9. Toni Braxton |
| 2. Joe Bonamassa | 10. RBRM: Ronnie, Bobby, Ricky & Mike |
| 3. Mannheim Steamroller | 11. The Piano Guys |
| 4. Bob Dylan | 12. Styx |
| 5. Jill Scott: Live in the Moment Tour | 13. Celtic Woman |
| 6. Chicago | 14. Joan Baez |
| 7. Frankie Valli | 15. Gary Clark Jr. |
| 8. Jackson Browne | |

*July 1, 2018 - June 30, 2019

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Top Five Comedy Events 2018/2019 Season*

1. Aziz Ansari
2. Ali Wong
3. Impractical Jokers
4. Carol Burnett
5. Bill Maher

*July 1, 2018 - June 30, 2019

Top Five Special Events 2018/2019 Season*

1. Madea's Farewell Play Tour
2. Paw Patrol
3. Sesame Street Live
4. Wild Kratts Live 2.0
5. Derek Hough

*July 1, 2018 - June 30, 2019

Rachel Traversari, Senior Director of Marketing, said, "On behalf of the entire DPAC staff, we would like to thank our guests for sharing another incredible season with us. We are honored to be consistently recognized as the Triangle's center for live entertainment, and we will continue to work hard to provide our guests with the highest quality programming for Broadway, concerts, comedy, and special events."

Link to Venue Photos: http://bit.ly/2018-19_VenuePhotos

Link to Broadway B-roll & Photos: http://bit.ly/2018-19_TopBroadway

Link to Concert Photos: http://bit.ly/2Re1zug_TopConcerts18-19

Link to Comedy Photos: http://bit.ly/2MIqqrE_TopComedy18-19

Link to Community Photos: <http://bit.ly/2018-19CommPhotos>

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About DPAC

Since its opening in 2008, **DPAC** (Durham Performing Arts Center) has become the center for live entertainment in North Carolina. Recognized for its contemporary design, **DPAC** features 2,700 seats, intimate sightlines and state-of-the-art sound and video. Ranked annually among the top-ten theaters in America by three leading national magazines that cover live entertainment events and venues, DPAC attracts over 500,000 guests per year to its 200+ events.

With a mission of presenting one-of-a-kind live entertainment events, **DPAC** truly has "something for everyone," hosting more than 200 performances a year, including spectacular touring Broadway productions, high-profile concert and comedy events, family shows and the heralded American Dance Festival. Owned by the City of Durham and operated under the direction of Nederlander and Professional Facilities Management (PFM), since 2011 **DPAC** has been listed as the #1 performing arts organization in the region by the *Triangle Business Journal*. For more information please go to www.DPACnc.com.

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