

EnsembleArts Philly

Serving the region through world-class performances at the Kimmel Center, Academy of Music, Miller Theater, and Forrest Theatre

Share it!

@EnsembleArtsPhilly (Facebook/Instagram) celebrates the holidays with returning favorites and new traditions. The season of giving kicks off with the 24th annual @1029WMGK (Facebook)/@WMGK (Instagram) Turkey Drop and runs through @philorch landmark performance of Disney's *Fantasia in Concert* and Lunar New Year. Info at www.ensembleartsphilly.org.

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ENSEMBLE ARTS PHILLY IGNITES THE HOLIDAY SEASON WITH DAZZLING PERFORMANCES AND SEASONAL EVENTS

Offerings include musical celebrations across gospel, jazz, Broadway, cabaret, and more

The breathtaking acrobatics and whimsical holiday wonder of *Cirque Dreams Holidaze* returns, a family favorite sure to dazzle all ages

**Celebrate the return of beloved holiday traditions
A Soulful Christmas, Philadelphia Ballet's
George Balanchine's The Nutcracker®,
and The Philadelphia Orchestra's *The Glorious Sound of Christmas*®**

Music and Artistic Director Yannick Nézet-Séguin leads The Philadelphia Orchestra in Handel's *Messiah*

**Plus, give back with us:
Mark your calendars for the 24th annual WMGK Turkey Drop at the Kimmel Center on November 25, benefiting CityTeam, a local organization distributing donations to neighbors in need,**

and join us for CBS' Joy of Sharing Toy Drive through the holiday season, benefiting Salvation Army and Mothers In Charge

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (October 16, 2025) – Ensemble Arts Philly celebrates the 2025 holiday season with an array of joyful events reflecting the broad interests of the diverse region—from orchestral and Broadway to gospel and jazz, participation from esteemed Resident Company Philadelphia Ballet, and much more.

“The magic of the holidays at Ensemble Arts Philly venues isn’t just found onstage, it’s in the moments we share together as a community. One standing ovation, one electric performance at a time, we’re here to make spirits bright and to remind everyone that music and art are the ties that bind this city, now and always,” said Ryan Fleur, president and CEO. “Consider this your invitation: come for the wonder, stay for the warmth; whether you join us for a treasured classic or discover something new for the first time. This season, our doors are wide open to everyone, inviting all to gather, give back, and let the warmth of the arts light up this city we love.”

The seasonal celebration kicks off this year with two annual giving opportunities. Visitors are encouraged to make a child’s holiday shine a little brighter by bringing unwrapped toys to donation boxes in the Kimmel Center, Academy of Music, and Miller Theater (November 17–December 18) as part of the annual **CBS Philadelphia Joy of Sharing Toy Drive**, an initiative benefiting the Salvation Army and Mothers In Charge. The week of Thanksgiving, the annual **WMGK Turkey Drop** returns (November 25); the public is encouraged to donate frozen turkeys in-person that day or make monetary donations, benefiting neighbors at CityTeam, an organization that distributes the donations to individuals and families in need. WMGK will broadcast live from the front of the Kimmel Center on Broad Street from 6 a.m. to 12 p.m.

On Thanksgiving Day, Ensemble Arts returns to the Benjamin Franklin Parkway, once again taking part in the **6ABC Dunkin’ Thanksgiving Day Parade** (November 27), with performances from PHILADANCO!, The Philadelphia Orchestra, and an array of appearances from the upcoming Broadway season, including *Disney’s Beauty and the Beast*, *Back to the Future: The Musical*, *Suffs*, *The Sound of Music*, and *The Notebook*. Audiences and viewers can also expect a special appearance of the iconic, time-traveling DeLorean car from *Back to the Future: The Musical*!

The Philadelphia Orchestra presents a variety of holiday events, including *Handel’s Messiah* (December 12–14), *The Glorious Sound of Christmas* (December 18–20), *Children’s Holiday Spectacular* (December 20), *New Year’s Eve Celebration* (December 31), *Disney’s Fantasia in Concert* (January 2–4, 2026), and *Lunar New Year Celebration* (January 28, 2026).

Resident Company Philadelphia Ballet proudly presents the return of *George Balanchine’s The Nutcracker*® (December 5–31), a dazzling holiday classic brought to life by more than 50 professional dancers and the Philadelphia Ballet Orchestra.

Ana Gasteyer’s Sugar & Booze Holiday Spectacular takes over the Kimmel Center for a musical toast to kick off the holidays (November 22). Thanksgiving week concludes with “The Queens of Christmas” (*Entertainment Weekly*), Jinkx Monsoon and BenDelACreme, in *The Jinkx & DeLa Holiday Show* (November 29). December holiday programming kicks off with *A Soulful Christmas* (December 9) returning for its 12th anniversary with 2025 honoree Bishop Hezekiah Walker; the evening is filled with Gospel favorites, regional choirs, inspirational messages, and ends with the moving “Finale of Lights.” At *Jingle All the Way* (December 12),

Béla Fleck & The Flecktones reunite to perform the group's greatest hits along with reinvented, jazz-infused holiday classics from their GRAMMY-winning album by the same name. For one night only, **WRTI Silent Night Sing-In** returns to the Kimmel Center's Commonwealth Plaza for a free, open-to-the-public sing-along of a holiday classic (December 12). Visitors are invited back for **Tuba Christmas**, as more than 100 regional tuba, sousaphone, and euphonium players come together to perform two free concerts of beloved holiday classics (December 21). Back this season by popular demand, **Cirque Dreams Holiday** (December 23–28) comes to the Miller Theater as a part of both the Broadway and Family Discovery Series.

Guests attending holiday-related performances are encouraged to visit the two dining spaces inside the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts. Come in from the cold and cozy up in Curtain Call, the cafe and lounge space at Broad and Spruce Streets, to enjoy a cup of hot chocolate, or explore the seasonal menu at Leo, the onsite restaurant and bar, including chef specialties – like crispy roast duck – to complement the holiday vibe.

Below is a full, chronological list of holiday-related programming from Ensemble Arts Philly. For up-to-date listings and information, please visit www.ensembleartsphilly.org.

CBS PHILADELPHIA JOY OF SHARING HOLIDAY TOY DRIVE

November 17– December 18, 2025 • Kimmel Center, Academy of Music, and Miller Theater

Partner with CBS Philadelphia and The Philadelphia Orchestra and Ensemble Arts to make the holidays brighter for area children. Benefiting the Salvation Army and Mothers In Charge, visitors are encouraged to bring unwrapped toys to donation boxes in the Kimmel Center, Academy of Music, and Miller Theater.

ANA GASTEYER'S SUGAR & BOOZE HOLIDAY SPECTACULAR

November 22, 2025, 7:30 p.m. • Perelman Theater inside the Kimmel Center

Ana Gasteyer is toasting to the holidays as she performs her festive album of seasonal favorites and holiday originals, which topped numerous “Best Holiday Album” lists. Best known for her six-year stint on *Saturday Night Live*, Gasteyer is also a highly accomplished singer and songwriter. Her first album, *I’m Hip*, received equally rapturous reviews. She has toured nationally with her “Happy Jazz” act since 2016 and had a residency at Cafe Carlyle.

24TH ANNUAL WMGK TURKEY DROP

November 25, 2025, 6:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. • Outside the Kimmel Center building on Broad Street

Join the WMGK air staff as they broadcast live outside the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts. They will be collecting frozen turkeys and monetary donations for CityTeam Philadelphia, an organization that provides holiday meals to less fortunate families in the Philadelphia region.

Checks should be made out to *CityTeam Philadelphia*. No food other than turkeys will be accepted.

6ABC DUNKIN' THANKSGIVING DAY PARADE

November 27, 2025, Times Vary • Benjamin Franklin Parkway

This annual Philadelphia tradition on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway will once again feature appearances from PHILADANCO!, The Philadelphia Orchestra, and an array of performances from Ensemble Arts Philly's upcoming Broadway season: *Disney's Beauty and the Beast*, *Back to the Future: The Musical*, *Suffs*, and *The Notebook*. Plus, there will be a special appearance from *Back to the Future: The Musical*'s iconic car, the time-traveling DeLorean!

THE JINKX & DELA HOLIDAY SHOW

Presented in association with BenDeLaCreme Presents

November 29, 2025, 8:00 p.m. • Miller Theater

The greatest holiday show south of the North Pole is back with another brand spankin' new wintertide wonder! Award-winning comedy icons, writers, actors, and drag queen powerhouses BenDeLaCreme and Jinkx Monsoon are coming back to town with the wildly successful, internationally acclaimed *The Jinkx & DeLa Holiday Show*.

Throughout the show's 8-year history Jinkx and DeLa have met sentient Christmas treats, twisted space-time with Dickensian ghosts, escaped the meta clutches of their own holiday traditions, and led a harrowing rescue mission in the Nutcracker's Land of Sweets. You never know what wild and unexpected sleigh ride these queens have in store.

Whatever the twists and turns, fans can expect another year of over-the-top camp spectacle, side-splitting gags, brand new songs, heartfelt storytelling, thrilling dance numbers, and iconic costumes. Hailed by *Entertainment Weekly* as the "reigning queens of Christmas," this show is not only a moment of respite, but a celebration of community, at a time when we need it most of all.

THE ENCHANTED NUTCRACKER

The Rock School

December 4–7, 2025, Times Vary • Miller Theater

This inclusive, 60-minute performance with light narration will enchant audiences of all ages. Honoring tradition while welcoming everyone, the show features vibrant characters, beautiful dancing, and a sensory-friendly atmosphere. It's a joyful holiday experience where all families can feel at home. Tickets start at just \$10!

Composer: Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

GEORGE BALANCHINE'S THE NUTCRACKER

Philadelphia Ballet

December 5–31, 2025, Times Vary • Academy of Music

(34 performances, including a sensory-friendly performance on December 26 at 12 p.m.)

Philadelphia Ballet's dazzling presentation of **George Balanchine's *The Nutcracker*** returns to the Academy of Music December 5–31, 2025. Brought to life by more than 50 professional dancers and the Philadelphia Ballet Orchestra, this world-class production is a timeless tradition for families. Balanchine's iconic staging captures the magic of the season like no other.

Composer: Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

A SOULFUL CHRISTMAS

December 9, 2025, 7:30 p.m. • Marian Anderson Hall inside the Kimmel Center

The 12th annual *A Soulful Christmas*, led by Creator and Director Dr. J. Donald Dumpson, returns this winter with an inspiring and uplifting union of regional choristers performing holiday spirituals and gospel favorites. The program culminates in a spectacular closing to the evening with a visually mesmerizing “Finale of Lights!” There is no better way to feel the love, joy, and excitement of Christmas.

Honoree: Bishop Hezekiah Walker

Creator and Director: Dr. J. Donald Dumpson

Hosts: Patty Jackson, WDAS 105.3 FM, and Craig Hayes, WIMG 1300 AM

A Soulful Christmas is generously sponsored by PECO.

WRTI SILENT NIGHT SING-IN

December 12, 2025, 5:30 p.m. • Commonwealth Plaza inside the Kimmel Center

Get in the holiday spirit! Join us at the Kimmel Center when we gather with hundreds of your fellow Philadelphians to sing a special arrangement of “Silent Night,” conducted by John Conahan. WRTI’s John T.K. Scherch will host this free event.

This FREE event will take place prior to Béla Fleck & The Flecktones and Handel’s Messiah.

BÉLA FLECK & THE FLECKTONES: JINGLE ALL THE WAY

December 12, 2025, 7:30 p.m. • Miller Theater

This winter Béla Fleck & The Flecktones return to bring you *Jingle All the Way*, a reunion tour featuring the group’s greatest hits along with reinvented, jazz-infused holiday classics from their GRAMMY-winning album by the same name. Performing this music together for the first time in over 15 years, the band reunites for a unique and unforgettable evening as founding members Fleck, Wooten, Wooten, & Levy take the stage alongside former Flecktones bandmate and saxophonist Jeff Coffin and Tuvan throat singing ensemble Alash—both of whom appeared on the album.

HANDEL’S MESSIAH

The Philadelphia Orchestra

December 12–14, 2025, Times Vary • Marian Anderson Hall inside the Kimmel Center

The beloved tradition returns! Handel’s *Messiah* beautifully unfolds in Yannick’s interpretation, with “all the fanfare and glorious music” made even more affecting by “a notably warm and dear sound that was remarkably tender” (*Philadelphia* magazine).

Yannick Nézet-Séguin Conductor

Lucy Crowe Soprano

Jakub Józef Orłński Countertenor

Frédéric Antoun Tenor

Quinn Kelsey Baritone
Philadelphia Symphonic Choir
Joe Miller Director

SCHOOL ENSEMBLE PROGRAM WINTER RECITAL

December 18, 2025, 5:30 p.m. • Commonwealth Plaza inside the Kimmel Center

Enjoy the vibrant sounds of KIPP West Philadelphia Preparatory Charter School students and set the tone for a festive night of music! This free recital features talented student musicians from grades 5–8, showcasing the Honors Orchestra, Concert Band, and Bounce Band. Don't miss this opportunity to support young artists!

This FREE performance will take place prior to The Glorious Sound of Christmas.

THE GLORIOUS SOUND OF CHRISTMAS

The Philadelphia Orchestra

December 18–20, 2025, 7:30 p.m. • Marian Anderson Hall inside the Kimmel Center

Since the iconic Philadelphia Orchestra recording led by Eugene Ormandy was released in 1962, these joyous concerts have become an annual tradition treasured by fans. Conductor Enrico Lopez-Yañez brings a lively energy to the proceedings, which just may feature a visit from you-know-who!

Enrico Lopez-Yañez Conductor
Jana McIntyre Soprano
Mendelssohn Chorus of Philadelphia
Dominick DiOrio Artistic Director

CHILDREN'S HOLIDAY SPECTACULAR

The Philadelphia Orchestra

December 20, 2025, 11:30 a.m. • Marian Anderson Hall inside the Kimmel Center

Join us for a joyful holiday celebration filled with sing-alongs, your favorite sounds of the season, and special guests! Delight in the warmth of the holiday season right here in the Kimmel Center and create cherished memories with the whole family at this heartwarming event that is perfect for all ages. Plus, you might want to listen closely for sleigh bells—you never know who might pay a special visit all the way from the North Pole!

Tristan Rais-Sherman Conductor

TUBA CHRISTMAS

December 21, 2025, 1:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. • Commonwealth Plaza inside the Kimmel Center

Toot your own horn at the free annual Tuba Christmas Celebration on the Kimmel Center's Commonwealth Plaza! Celebrate the holidays as more than 100 regional tuba, sousaphone, and euphonium players come together to perform beloved holiday classics. Tuba Christmas is completely free and fun for all ages.

CIRQUE DREAMS HOLIDAZE

December 23–28, 2025, Times Vary • Miller Theater

As the original cirque holiday theatrical event, this annual tradition wraps a Broadway-style production around awe-inspiring contemporary circus arts. Guests will be on the edge of their seats as a cast of holiday characters come to life, captivating audiences while defying gravity. *Broadway World* exclaims, “Lose yourself for 90 minutes and go back to those wonderful dreams you had as a kid.”

Enchanting and fun for children to seniors and everyone in between, *Cirque Dreams Holiday* features a world-renowned cast of performers including an ensemble of aerial circus arts, sleight-of-hand jugglers, fun-loving skippers, eye-popping acrobatics, and much more.

This show is part of Ensemble Arts Philly’s Broadway and Family Discovery Series.

NEW YEAR’S EVE CELEBRATION

The Philadelphia Orchestra

December 31, 2025, 7:00 p.m. • Marian Anderson Hall inside the Kimmel Center

Musical fireworks light up your New Year’s Eve celebration when “Hollywood’s go-to conductor” (*Billboard*) leads spectacular music from blockbuster film scores! Guest conductor Anthony Parther is famed for his soaring readings of hit movie scores including the Oscar-winning score for *Oppenheimer*; Grammy-winning *Encanto*, Emmy-winning *The Mandalorian*, and many more.

Anthony Parther Conductor

THE PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA PRESENTS DISNEY’S FANTASIA IN CONCERT

The Philadelphia Orchestra

January 2–4, 2026, Times Vary • Marian Anderson Hall inside the Kimmel Center

See this enchanting, animated film as the Orchestra performs the irresistible score live—a score that includes excerpts from great classics including Dukas’s *The Sorcerer’s Apprentice*, Beethoven’s Symphony No. 5, and many more.

Since the 1940 release of this groundbreaking animated film, tens of millions of people have discovered the drama, passion, and joy of classical music through its brilliant score, a score made unforgettable by the landmark performance of The Philadelphia Orchestra led by Leopold Stokowski.

Aram Demirjian Conductor

Disney’s Fantasia in Concert Presentation Licensed by Disney© Concerts

THREE KING’S DAY

Early January 2026, Date and Time To Be Announced • Commonwealth Plaza inside the Kimmel Center

Three King's Day is a free celebration honoring an important holiday in the Hispanic community, welcoming all city residents to share in this cherished tradition.

Guests can enjoy an evening of engaging activities and delightful surprises, including Mexican hot chocolate, traditional "Rosca de Reyes" bread, a reenactment of the story of the Three Kings, and piñata-breaking fun for the youngest family members.

LUNAR NEW YEAR CELEBRATION

The Philadelphia Orchestra

January 28, 2026, 7:30 p.m. • Marian Anderson Hall inside the Kimmel Center

Join the Orchestra and special guests to celebrate Lunar New Year! This family-friendly performance features repertoire in honor of the Year of the Horse.

Naomi Woo Conductor

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Tickets

Tickets can be purchased online at www.ensembleartsphilly.org, by calling 215-893-1999, or in person at the Academy of Music Box Office (240 S. Broad Street) daily from 10 a.m.–6 p.m. For more information, visit www.ensembleartsphilly.org.

Gift certificates make great gifts! Surprise someone with the unforgettable experience of live arts. Gift Certificates may be used to purchase single tickets and subscriptions for events presented by The Philadelphia Orchestra, Philadelphia Ballet, Broadway Series, Ensemble Arts, Curtis Institute of Music, Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, and PHILADANCO!. These gift certificates will never expire. See www.ensembleartsphilly.org for more information.

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TD Bank is a Proud Sponsor of The Philadelphia Orchestra and Ensemble Arts.

Yannick Nézet-Séguin holds the Walter and Leonore Annenberg Chair.

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Click [here](#) for more on The Philadelphia Orchestra's 2025–26 season.