



Times Square Alliance Celebrates Broadway with Second Annual “Songs for Our City” Songwriting Competition

Times Square to Host Live Daily Performances this June 1–5,
Featuring Over 20 Broadway Actors and Composers



Marcus Paul James performing at Broadway Buskers in 2019. Courtesy of Times Square Alliance. Photo: Michael Hull.

(NEW YORK, NY — May 26, 2021) — **Times Square Alliance** is pleased to announce the second annual ***Songs for Our City*** songwriting competition, which will take place daily this **June 1–5, 2021**. In anticipation of the return of Broadway in New York City this fall, *Songs for Our City* will highlight original music from Broadway actors and composers to provide a unique and interactive way for audiences to enjoy new music, while celebrating the creativity and ingenuity of the Broadway community.

Hosted by *Broadway Buskers* host and curator **Ben Cameron**, the series will feature five live concerts in Times Square, where guests will have the opportunity to reserve limited-capacity in-person seating. To

RSVP and reserve seats, [click here](#). The performances will also be live-streamed for free to the public online at www.TSQ.org/Songs.

In the spirit of friendly competition, audiences will have the opportunity to vote for their favorite performances on their mobile device at the end of each concert, culminating in a lively final performance on **June 5**, when the winners will be chosen from among eight finalists by a panel of judges including Director of New Artists at The Public Theater **Jack Phillips Moore**, theatre critic and creator of *Token Theatre Friends* **Jose Solís**, and *Cambodian Rock Band* playwright **Lauren Yee**.

“We are so excited to bring *Songs for Our City* back this year, LIVE in Times Square! It’s no secret that theatre artists have been hit particularly hard throughout the course of the pandemic and the accompanying quarantines. As always, artists are the conduit for healing, change, and revolution within society. As our world not only wakes up, but evolves and grows, it feels amazing to pay tribute to our city through the universal power of music,” said *Songs for Our City* host **Ben Cameron**.

Songs for Our City features 25 participants, including **é boylan, Amara Janae Brady, Jaime Cepero, Matt DeAngelis & Christine Dwyer, Lauren Elder, Jasmine Forsberg, Albert Guerzon, James Harkness, F Michael Haynie, John Krause, Rebecca Murillo, Cheeyang Ng & Eric Sorrels, Anthony Norman, Billy Recce, Jen Sánchez, Max Sangerman, Dru Serkes, Starbird & the Phoenix (Courtney Bassett & Andrew Swackhamer), Will Van Dyke & Jeff Talbott, Storm Thomas, The Two Of Us (Nathan Salstone & Micaela Diamond), Josh Walker, Mike Wartella, Ben Wexler & Denise Manning, and Matt Wolpe**.

A pillar of Times Square for more than a century, Broadway has long provided comfort, inspiration, and enjoyment to millions of visitors and New Yorkers alike. Thousands of actors, musicians, designers, crew members, and more bring the shows and theaters of Broadway to life — many of whom have been left struggling throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. As the city slowly reopens and Broadway plans for shows to resume in the fall, *Songs for Our City* is a way to celebrate theatre workers and imagine a brighter future, and an opportunity to bring friends, family, and the public together safely. All performances will take place outdoors with the most up-to-date safety protocols in place for artists, audiences, and staff.

This summer, Times Square Alliance also looks forward to presenting an exciting schedule of additional free performances and concerts to be announced at a later date.

“As we emerge from this pandemic, we are committed to creating the best Times Square experience possible, and celebrating the creativity of the theater community is just one way that we are doing that. Come to Times Square for live music outside in our plazas and you will be one step closer to seeing a Broadway show,” said **Tom Harris**, President of the Times Square Alliance.

The concerts will take place daily in Times Square and will be live-streamed at TSQ.org/Songs. Additionally, five participants who are currently located outside of New York will be sharing their new songs via performances on social media and in another popular entertainment district, Downtown Santa Monica, California’s Third Street Promenade, where people have been dancing in the street for over 30 years thanks to its eclectic mix of talented street performers.

The full schedule and list of performers is as follows:

June 1st at 7pm:

Anthony Norman

Billy Recce
Jen Sánchez
The Two Of Us (Nathan Salstone & Micaela Diamond)
Ben Wexler & Denise Manning

June 2nd at 7pm:

Albert Guerzon
Rebecca Murillo
Starbird & the Phoenix (Courtney Bassett & Andrew Swackhamer)
Storm Thomas
Mike Wartella

June 3rd at 7pm:

Amara Janae Brady
F Michael Haynie
Cheeyang Ng & Eric Sorrels
Josh Walker
Matt Wolpe

June 4th at 7pm:

é boylan
Jaime Cepero
Jasmine Forsberg
Max Sangerman
Will Van Dyke & Jeff Talbott

Final: June 5th at 5pm:

Eight Finalists from the previous four concerts perform again, and a panel of judges will choose a winner while the public will vote for the Audience Choice winner.

Additional artists participating remotely before the week of live concerts:

Matt DeAngelis & Christine Dwyer
Lauren Elder
James Harkness
John Krause
Dru Serkes

The public is invited to join in the celebration and share their own original songs on social media with #CitySongs.

Songs for Our City is sponsored by T-Mobile.

About the Times Square Alliance

The Times Square Alliance works to improve and promote Times Square — cultivating the creativity, energy, and edge that have made the area an icon of entertainment, culture, and urban life for over a century. Founded in 1992, the Alliance keeps the neighborhood clean and safe, promotes local businesses, manages area improvements, and produces major annual events including New Year's Eve, Solstice in Times Square, and Taste of Times Square. As the custodians of Times Square, the Alliance

works every day to improve the quality of life for the neighborhood residents and businesses while driving economic growth in New York City. www.TSQ.org

About Ben Cameron

Ben Cameron is your Broadway Buddy, bringing the Broadway community directly to you like a neighbor bringing over a tray of brownies (Broadway brownies, yum). Ben has appeared on Broadway in *Wicked* (OBC), *Aida*, and *Footloose* (OBC). Ben is the MainStage host of BroadwayCon and creator and host of the long-running NYC staple Broadway Sessions, now in its 12th season, which was the proud recipient of the 2019 Ruth Kurtzman Benefit Series Award at the MAC Awards. He is also the creator and host of the worldwide hit podcast talk show “The Broadway Cast” and the web series “Dance Captain Dance Attack” on BroadwayWorld.com. Ben hosts countless events within the Broadway community for organizations like Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS, NYMF, and Rockers on Broadway, and is a frequent face on PBS WNET. Your Broadway Buddy continues to present Broadway’s best to a wide variety of audiences. www.BenCameron.nyc

About Downtown Santa Monica, Inc. (DTSM, Inc.)

Downtown Santa Monica, Inc. is a private non-profit 501c(3) that works with the City of Santa Monica to manage services and operations in Downtown Santa Monica that promote economic stability, growth and community life within Downtown Santa Monica. DTSM, Inc. manages the Property-based Business Assessment District (PBAD) that encompasses the area bounded by Ocean Avenue (W), Wilshire Boulevard (N), Lincoln Boulevard (E) and the Santa Monica Freeway (S). For more info, please visit DowntownSM.com or follow us on Instagram and Twitter @dtsantamonica or Facebook @DowntownSantaMonica.

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#CitySongs

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