



February 5, 2024

Important Notice: Georgia Ensemble Theatre Mainstage Season Postponement

It is with heavy hearts that the Board of Trustees shares important news regarding Georgia Ensemble Theatre's (GET) planned Mainstage productions. Because fewer than expected ticket sales and other financial pressures we regretfully announce the postponement of three scheduled shows of the 2023-2024 Mainstage Season: *Black Pearl Sings*, *Queen of the Falls* and *Ragtime*. **We remain hopeful that we will be able to secure the funds necessary to resume our mainstage performances (dates TBD). In the meantime, please see the FAQs below with information about how to redeem your GET tickets for a comparable show at one of our sister theatres in the area.**

Thankfully, our thriving education programs and tours, as well as other GET activities, will be able to go forward as planned.

Over the past four years, performing arts organizations nationwide have encountered unprecedented financial challenges. Ticket sales have decreased considerably while production costs have skyrocketed. Georgia organizations have been hit especially hard, as the state has long been ranked dead last in the nation for public funding of the arts. Many notable theaters have been forced to close their doors permanently while, to date, GET has weathered these challenges. However, in recent months a combination of factors converged resulting in an inevitable financial shortfall.

Forces beyond our control resulted in the dissolution of our long-term partnership with the Roswell Cultural Arts Center. GET incurred considerable expenses to lease a new Studio, as well as to relocate our operations, offices, box office, and education programming. We had only a few weeks to secure a new performance space for our mainstage productions. The abrupt move from Roswell to the Jennie T. Anderson Theatre in Cobb County also gave us little runway to forge new relationships and advertise to potential patrons, despite the excellent production quality at the new space. Traveling to the new location also proved a challenge for many of our long-term and loyal subscribers.

Simply put, our expenses are rapidly outpacing our income and it would not be financially feasible to go forward with the next three shows.

We acknowledge the impact this decision will have on both our artists and audiences. It is especially poignant for the talented and committed GET staff who work so diligently to bring outstanding theater to Atlanta. Please know that whatever disappointment you may feel, we share it deeply.

We take pride in the many plays and musicals we've done and the artists who've given so much, and we express our heartfelt gratitude for our loyal audiences. We believe in the mission of GET to create

connections among artists & audiences of all ages, and we intend to continue investing in that mission. **With that legacy and the resilient dedication of our patrons, leadership, volunteers and artists, we are hopeful that we will be able to resume our Mainstage productions.** In the meantime, there are many non-Mainstage programs thriving at GET—we invite you to visit the Studio and learn more. **We are actively fundraising, seeking out sponsorships, and applying for additional grants, as well as working with the *Arts Matters, Atlanta* organization to secure more corporate sponsorship and legislative support of the Arts in Georgia.**

We look forward to collaborating with our patrons, Fulton County, Cobb County, and the state and national arts communities, to continue building upon GET's 31-year history. We welcome your support and feedback as we work to secure the financial foundation of the next 30 years for this beloved institution.

Thank you so very much for your understanding and continued support.

Sincerely,
Board of Trustees,
Georgia Ensemble Theatre

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: I am a season subscriber. What are my options?

A: You have three options. **1.** Exchange your GET tickets at Actor's Express (actors-express.com), Alliance Theatre (alliancetheatre.org), Atlanta Shakespeare Company (shakespearetaVERN.com), Aurora Theatre (auroratheatre.com), City Springs Theatre (cityspringstheatre.com), or Stage Door Theatre (stagedoortheatre.ga). Download guidelines & specifics policies from our website. They have a list of your tickets with us, and will honor them for a show at their theatre. **2.** Convert your tickets to a donation to GET, and receive a receipt for tax deduction purposes. **3.** Ask us to hold your subscription until we are able to bring Mainstage shows back. We are doing our best to secure the funds needed to resume the Mainstage and will recognize your subscription when it is possible. Unfortunately, we are unable to offer refunds at this time.

Q: I have bought individual tickets for *Black Pearl Sings*, *Queen of the Falls*, or *Ragtime*. What are my options?

A: You have three options. **1.** Exchange your GET tickets at Actor's Express (actors-express.com), Alliance Theatre (alliancetheatre.org), Atlanta Shakespeare Company (shakespearetaVERN.com), Aurora Theatre (auroratheatre.com), City Springs Theatre (cityspringstheatre.com), or Stage Door Theatre (stagedoortheatre.ga). Download guidelines & specifics policies from our website. They have a list of your tickets with us. **2.** Convert your tickets to a donation to GET, and receive a receipt for tax deduction purposes. **3.** Ask us to hold your tickets until we are able to bring Mainstage shows back. Unfortunately, we are unable to offer refunds at this time.

Q: I bought a ticket for *And Then They Came for Me: Remembering the World of Anne Frank* on February 18th. Is the show still on?

A: The performance is going on, and has been moved from the Jennie T. Anderson Theatre to the GET Studio in Roswell, at 5:00 on February 18. All tickets have already been moved over, and there are only a handful of tickets still available. Existing ticketholders will receive a message from the box office.

Q: Is the *G.E.T. the Joke* Comedy Night still happening?

A: Yes! This fundraiser will still be on February 20th at the Jennie T. Anderson Theatre, and tickets are still available. (Order online at get.org/tickets.)

Q: What is happening with education classes?

A: Classes are growing! Registration is open now for spring and summer classes, and you can see everything we have to offer at get.org/classes. We've added more events to the calendar, including movie nights, open mic nights, and new classes for adults, teens, and kids.

Q: What is happening with summer camps?

A: Every single week this summer has a camp available, with each session having a different focus. Kids can learn musical theatre, acting, comedy sketch-writing, improv, scriptwriting, and more. There are sessions for students in Kindergarten through rising 12th grade. These camps are booming, and we expect most sessions to be full by April.

Q: What is happening with in-school residencies and workshops?

A: All school partnerships, residencies, in-class workshops, etc. will go on as scheduled. All Travel Team touring shows will go on as scheduled.

Q: Why did GET move the Mainstage away from the Roswell Cultural Arts Center?

A: Unfortunately, we just didn't have a choice. Our contract in Roswell was ended abruptly and the replacement rental opportunity the city offered would not allow the same level of programming that our patrons were used to. The city also wanted to produce their own season in those time slots instead. We needed to find a venue quickly that was available during the dates we had on our calendar and that had both a large enough stage and large enough seating area for the productions that we already had planned for the fall of 2023. There was really only one venue on the north side of Atlanta that fit those qualifications, and we were purely blessed by the fact that it was a beautiful venue like the Jennie T. Anderson.

Q: What factors contributed to the national performing arts financial crisis?

A; When the Covid-19 pandemic hit the United States in 2020, the performing arts sector was shuttered for sometimes up to 18 months. Many innovative ways to provide performing arts came into play; from streaming plays to “drive-in-theatres” When venues began to reopen, many long time supporters and patrons were hesitant to come back. In the early days of returning to the theatre, social distancing requirements eliminated $\frac{2}{3}$ of the seating capacity. Individual donors reduced their giving in the face of tight household budgets and uncertainty. After an almost 2 year hiatus, corporate sponsors and foundations had shifted their funding priorities to other causes. In one fell swoop, earned revenue (ticket and subscription sales) and contributed revenue fell to all time lows. Add to that the increasing costs to produce theatre, and it created the perfect storm for a financial crisis in the arts.

Q: What is GET doing to secure additional funding?

A: We are working with like minded groups to bring attention to the problem and explore innovative and sustainable funding sources. We are reaching out to new businesses, corporations, foundations and individuals to secure the funding we need to move forward. Our staff of eight women (six full time and two part time) are reassigning responsibilities so that every member of the team is working on fundraising as well as on supporting the programs that are still running. We are exploring models to share resources and lower overhead. We are planning fundraiser events in the coming months. And we are adding more programming in our studio performance space that can generate ticket sales with lower production costs.

Q: What can I do to support GET?

A: We need to raise at least \$100,000 before we can begin to resume Mainstage productions. You can kickstart the future of GET just by tapping the button below to donate securely online using a credit or debit card. If you'd like to give monthly instead of making one large payment, just click the button for “recurring donations” and set up the payment plan of your choice. If you prefer to mail a check, you can send it to 615 Hembree Pkwy. Suite 200, Roswell, GA 30076 (marked Attention: Development). Georgia Ensemble Theatre is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization; your gift is tax-deductible and you will receive a receipt by email.

If you're feeling thankful that GET has stayed here in your community for 30 years and hopeful that we can carry on serving, please consider making a donation.

Q: What can I do to support the Arts in Georgia?

Out of all 50 states, Georgia is 50th per capita in public funding for the arts. If you would like to see this change, reach out to your elected officials and let them know that you support the arts and funding for the arts. Just a few things that the arts do besides entertain:

- Arts help strengthen the economy;
- improve individual well-being;
- help to unify communities;
- improve academic performance;
- drive tourism and revenue to local businesses;

spark creativity and innovation;
and they drive the creative industries.