BLACK VIOLIN FULL CIRCLE TOUR 2025

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McANINCH ARTS CENTER Apr 27, 2025



Welcome to the MAC! Your home for entertainment.

I have worked in the performing arts for the entirety of my career and after 10 seasons at the MAC, I can unequivocally say our patrons are *Simply the Best!* The support you provide and the sense of community you have fostered make the

MAC such a special place for all who step through the doors. In honor of our patrons, the MAC is bringing you *Simply the Best* in the 2024-2025 season. Get ready for an incredible year with the best shows.

Join us for a complimentary pre-show MAC Chat or Q&A following specific performances. Our arts center, located in a community college, offers over 60 student productions supported by professional lighting, sound, and costumes. These can be enjoyed at affordable costs, or you can attend our FREE programs like Music Fridays at Noon and our free International Global Film series in February. We hope to exceed your expectations with excellent service and special pre- and post-show engagement opportunities. These will help you connect with the artists and art forms more deeply. While you are here, don't forget to visit the Cleve Carney Museum of Art in the lobby to experience cutting-edge contemporary art. You can also enjoy our full-service concession area and gift shop.

After your visit, please stay connected with us by joining us on Facebook (AtTheMAC) or subscribing to our e-newsletter to find out about added shows, events, and special offers (<u>www.AtTheMAC.org</u>). We challenge you to try something new at the MAC and expand your cultural palate. Come see the New Philharmonic Orchestra or a Buffalo Theatre Ensemble play. Or join us this summer for the Hokusai exhibit. We are grateful for your presence here and we want to ensure that your visit is enjoyable. If you need anything, please don't hesitate to ask any of the staff and we will do our best to accommodate you.

Thank you for being a part of our community of arts enthusiasts and being *Simply the Best!* We can't wait to share these unforgettable experiences with you and hope you have a wonderful time. We look forward to entertaining you and seeing you at the theater.

Enjoy the show!

Diana Martinez Director, McAninch Arts Center

McAninch Arts Center at College of DuPage presents

Black Violin Full Circle Tour 2025

The McAninch Arts Center acknowledges support from the Illinois Arts Council Agency.



Sun, Apr 27, 2025, 4p Belushi Performance Hall

ABOUT THE SHOW

Step into Black Violin's Full Circle Tour, where GRAMMY-nominated duo Wil Baptiste and Kev Marcus redefine the possibilities of music by merging classical depth with hip-hop's pulse. This tour captures the essence of returning to where it all began—transformed and reimagined. Each powerful performance invites audiences to reflect on their own journeys, discovering that even as we evolve, we're often drawn back to our roots with renewed purpose.

From high school orchestra classmates to groundbreaking artists, Black Violin's path reflects resilience, creativity, and the courage to challenge expectations. With their Black Violin Foundation reaching over 100,000 students each year, they're building a legacy that transcends the stage, inspiring a new generation to dream boldly. Join them for an unforgettable night that celebrates growth, music, and the beauty of coming full circle.

ABOUT BLACK VIOLIN

For nearly two decades, Black Violin has been merging string arrangements with modern beats and vocals and building bridges in communities along the way. Members Kev Marcus and Wil Baptiste first met in orchestra class at Dillard High School in Fort Lauderdale, becoming classically trained on the violin and viola through their high school and college careers. Post-college, they reconvened to produce beats for South Florida rappers, and began building an audience in local clubs. They later went on to win Showtime at the Apollo in 2005 and eventually sold out headline performances at venues across the country, including a sold out two-night headline run at The Kennedy Center in 2018. NPR took note and declared "their music will keep classical music alive for the next generation." Black Violin's 2019 album release, "Take the Stairs", earned a Grammy Award nomination for "Best Contemporary Instrumental Album". The band also recently received their second ever Grammy Award nomination for the track "The Message" as Best Americana Performance, in collaboration with The Blind Boys of Alabama.

Black Violin plays roughly 200 shows a year; many of which are performances for young, low-income students in urban communities. In the last year alone, the group has played for over 100,000 students with

ABOUT BLACK VIOLIN

the goal of challenging stereotypes and preconceived notions of what a "classical musician" looks and sounds like. "The stereotypes are always there, embedded so deep in our culture," says Wil. "Just by nature of our existence we challenge those ideas. It's a unique thing that brings people together who aren't usually in the same room, and in the current climate, it's good to bring people together."

In 2019, the group launched the Black Violin Foundation Inc. (BVF), a non-profit organization dedicated to empowering youth by providing access to quality music programs in their community. BVF believes that music and access to music programs should not be determined by race, gender, or socio-economic status. Black Violin Foundation's inaugural program the Musical Innovation Grant for Continuing Education will provide scholarships to young music students to attend a program of their liking that fosters musical creativity and innovation.

For more info on Black Violin: http://www.blackviolin.net For more info on the Black Violin Foundation: http://www.blackviolinfoundation.org Discography: http://blackviolin.net/albums/

MAKE MUSIC WHERE MUSIC THRIVES

College of DuPage brings 50 years of training and supporting musicians like you in whatever it is you want to do. With a staff of 25 private music instructors, nine ensembles, and four degree and certificate programs, COD is the first choice of serious musicians from the western suburbs and beyond.

For more information

Contact Thomas Stark at (630) 942-2391 or starkt1620@cod.edu.

For ADA accommodations, please email access@cod.edu with the event title in the subject line and your accommodation request. Please email two weeks in advance.



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Eat, drink & enjoy - MAC dining partners

Coupons are only valid on performance days or nights.

For all your pre-show meals and post-show bites, we are thrilled to be partnering with these neighborhood restaurants. Our dining partners offer MAC patrons exclusive discounts and special offers. All MAC ticket orders receive coupons to these local favorite restaurants!





Wil Baptiste immigrated to the United States from the Bahamas with his family at the age of 11. He hoped to join the school band to play saxaphone, but accidentally was placed in the string program. He grew to love the viola and mastered it as well as the trumpet, drums, and bass guitar.



Kev Marcus began playing violin at age nine, with the encouragement of his mother. He and Wil Baptiste met while attending the famed Dillard High School of Performing Arts in Fort Lauderdale, Florida where they were trained in the classical tradition. During their class and practice time they developed firm classic techniques

and in free time listened to hip hop and rhythm and blues.

Both Baptiste and Marcus attended college on full music scholarships. Baptiste attended Florida State and Marcus went to Florida International University.

THE BLACK VIOLIN FOUNDATION

Black Violin Foundation Inc. (BVF) is a non profit 501 c3 organization dedicated to empowering youth by working with them in their communities to provide access to quality music programs that encourage creativity. Our long term goal is to empower youth to color outside of the lines and push the boundaries of music through innovation.

BVF is an extension of the vision of Kev Marcus & Wil Baptiste. As young musicians during school they would study classical compositions, but after school they would play Tupac, Wu-tang, and whatever else was hot at the time. It is the blending of genres fused with their classical training that gives Black Violin their unique sound. Our mission at BVF is to help up and coming musicians foster creativity in order to make music in a way it's never been made before.

BVF is co-directed by Anne Sylvester, wife of Kev Marcus, and Corryn Freeman, wife of Wil Baptiste.

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The Friends of the MAC is a family of those who have decided that a worldclass performing and visual arts center should reside in their community. Ticket sales provide only 42 percent of our \$4 million operating budget. It is through the support of College of DuPage and through the generous gifts from patrons and local businesses that we can keep art in our museum and on our stages.

Your Gift to the MAC

- Brings nationally and internationally renowned artists to our community
- Supports our SchoolStage program that annually offers affordable arts experiences to thousands of schoolchildren
- Provides students and community members the opportunity to interact with artists
- Enhances quality of life in our community

Without the generous support of the Friends of the MAC, we would not be the beacon for the arts in DuPage County. We gratefully thank our friends, and we invite others to join them.

Arts Center and MAC-tastic Treat Seats Endowments

Donor may choose to direct gifts to the Arts Center Endowment or the MAC-tastic Treat Seats – Tickets for Kids & Families Endowment. Donations made to these MAC Endowments, our "savings accounts," go into principal secured, invested accounts that will provide ongoing support for arts programs and arts accessibility for years to come.

The McAninch Arts Center and the College of DuPage Foundation can also provide you with information on planned giving options, gifts of stock, IRA Charitable Rollovers and other giving opportunities.

> For complete details, visit the MAC Box Office or contact the College of DuPage Foundation at (630) 942-3088 or foundation@codfound.org.

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McAninch Arts Center acknowledges and gives grateful thanks to those donors who have contributed in support of the MAC mission and vision. This list of donors reflects contributions made from July 31, 2024 – January 31, 2025. While we carefully prepared this list, we recognize that errors may have occurred. Please accept our apology if you are not properly represented on this list and contact the College of DuPage Foundation at (630) 942-3088 so we may correct our records.

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Visit AtTheMAC.org/Volunteer to fill out an online application and for more information on requirements and qualifications. Applications accepted year-round.

Questions or for more information, contact Volunteer Coordinator Rob Nardini: email <u>nardinir@cod.edu</u>, phone (630) 942-3705.

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 Cameras and recording devices are not allowed in the theater and are prohibited by our contracts with the artists.

- Smoking is not permitted in the theater or on campus.
 For your comfort and security, all backpacks and large bags must be checked.
- Please turn off all cell phones and any other alarms while in the theater.
- Emergency phone number at COD Police Department for after-hour calls is (630) 942-2000.
- Latecomers seated at discretion of the House Manager.
- Groups of 10 or more may contact (630) 942-3026 or grouptix@cod.edu to arrange for group discounts.
- If you notice a spill in the theater, please notify an usher.

 McAninch Arts Center volunteers are people who assist the house staff in areas of ticket taking, ushering and general management during performances. To get involved, call (630) 942-3705.

• For Americans With Disabilities Act accommodations, call (630) 942-2141 (voice) or (630) 858-9692 (TDD).

 Infrared Assistive Listening Devices: For audience members who desire audio amplification of performances, headsets with individual volume controls are now available. You may check out the headsets at the Box Office with a driver's license. Underwritten by a generous gift from The Knowles Foundation.

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