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The People's Music School announces PlayOut! event in celebration of Pride Month

Chicago, June 20, 2018 - The People's Music School (TPMS), the first and only completely tuition-free music school of its kind in the country, announces [PlayOut!, a celebration of classical music's most influential LGBTQ+ composers with cellist, recording artist, and TPMS instructor David Sands](#), on Thursday, June 28 at [Center on Halsted](#).

PlayOut! welcomes friends, supporters, and community members to celebrate Pride Month as Sands performs works by renowned LGBTQ+ composers such as Benjamin Britten (1913 – 1976), Ethel Smyth (1858 – 1944), and Samuel Barber (1910 – 1981), telling his story through their unique voices in history and honoring their legacy in creating social change. The event will feature a cocktail reception, an insightful and relevant program, and an introduction by TPMS [President and Artistic Director Jennifer Kim Matsuzawa](#). Joining Sands onstage will be Esther Rayo (soprano), Madeline Slettedahl (piano), and Julia Soto (cello), a TPMS student who recently [performed with her peers at the Obama Foundation Summit](#).

TPMS delivers access to the benefits of high-quality music education and mentorship to nearly 700 underserved students in Chicago, through four sites in Uptown, Albany Park, Back of the Yards, and Greater South Side. Through their studies with TPMS, students develop essential life skills, find their voice, and grow through a range of high-impact partnerships and residencies the organization has formed, from Yo-Yo Ma and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, to Chicago Public Schools and Bottom Line college prep, to Louder Than A Bomb and Obama Summit, and many more.

PlayOut! will share the music school's theme this year – "Raise Your Voice." As Sands honors influential LGBTQ+ composers and how their voices, though marginalized in their time, have resonated and inspired throughout history, he will be advocating for his cello students, whom he encourages to use music as a vehicle to express themselves and make themselves heard. Sands will also share his own story about how he was able to grow into the person he is today – to "play out" – through his own music education. "It has always been my dream to perform a program of this nature at The Center on Halsted," said Sands. "I feel blessed to teach at a school like The People's Music School, who were more than willing to make this dream come true."

Tickets for the event are free with a suggested donation to TPMS, and can be reserved [online](#). The event will begin at 6:00pm on Thursday, June 28 at Center on Halsted (3656 N Halsted St.) in Boystown, one of the most inclusive LGBTQ+ communities in the nation. Located just off Lake Shore Drive, and four blocks northeast of the Addison red line stop, Center on Halsted is easily accessible by car or public transport. To learn more about the

event and opportunities to support TPMS, please see our [website](#) and contact development@peoplesmusicschool.org. Jennifer Kim Matsuzawa, President and Artistic Director, Renee Davis, Director of Development, and David Sands will be available before and after the event for interviews.

About The People's Music School

The People's Music School is the only completely free music school, focused solely on Chicago's underserved children. Our mission is to deliver access to the benefits of high-quality, immersive music education. Through intensive instruction and performance, our students achieve excellence in music that transfers to the classroom and beyond. They grow musically, socially, emotionally and intellectually, and develop a foundation of responsibility, self-esteem, resilience and purpose. The school serves 700 students, ages 5-18, over 90% of color, with a 100% graduation rate through four program hubs in Uptown, Albany Park, Back of the Yards and Greater South Side. The school has been featured widely in the media for its innovation, impact and excellence in Billboard Magazine, New York Times, the Today Show, Chicago Tribune, Crain's Chicago Business, Chicago Sun-Times, CBS News, PBS, WGN, and more. To learn more about The People's Music School and upcoming events, please visit: www.peoplesmusicschool.org.

About David Sands

A native of Aurora, IL, David Sands began his cello studies at age 10. In 2014, he became a member of the Civic Orchestra of Chicago where he sat assistant principal and was a teaching artist for "CSO Connect" and the Chicago Youth and Music Festival.

As a recording artist, David has participated in studio work for the film Chi-raq and can be heard on the track Mama from the TV show Empire. He has appeared on the Chicago Symphony Orchestra's contemporary chamber music series MusicNOW and was a recent soloist and chamber musician for "The Line-Up" at The Park at Wrigley.

David recently completed his Masters in cello performance from DePaul University, where he studied with CSO cellist Brant Taylor. There he sits principal of the symphony orchestra and serves as adjunct faculty for the Music Education Department. As a pedagogue, David teaches at The People's Music School, and recently accepted a Program Manager position with the school's SLAM (Service, Leadership, and Mentorship) program. Last year he collaborated with acclaimed pianist Emmanuel Ax in a chamber music performance at the school and has since then helped rejuvenate the cello curriculum and his growing studio.

About Center on Halsted

Center on Halsted is the Midwest's most comprehensive community center dedicated to advancing community and securing the health and well-being of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and

Queer (LGBTQ) people of Chicagoland. More than 1,400 community members visit the Center every day. The Center works hard to provide a safe and welcoming environment with programs and services for the entire community. Their programs range from volleyball, dance performances and cooking classes to rapid HIV testing, group therapy and vocational training. The Center partners regularly with other organizations and groups from across Chicago and the nation to provide additional programming for the community.

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