



Georgia
COUNCIL FOR THE
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR Arts



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MARIA HOWELL AND FRIENDS TO OPEN 2010-2011 EVENINGS OF INTIMATE JAZZ SERIES

As a teenager, Maria Howell didn't have a music collection like the other kids in school.

While her friends were grooving to rock 'n' roll, R&B and early hip-hop, Howell found herself drawn to women in much more glamorous outfits, softly nestled next to a grand piano and cradling a microphone.

Those early influences of Billie Holiday and other jazz legends were a natural fit, though, for someone who decided at age 6 that she wanted to be a professional singer. And 25 years after her first performance -- which was before she broke the mold in middle school, by the way -- Howell will come to The Arts Council's Smithgall Arts Center in Gainesville where she'll put her own jazzy spin on contemporary hits and jazz standards, plus sing a few selections from "The Color Purple," the film that helped launch her career.

The Atlanta native will perform at **8 p.m. Nov. 6**. Tickets are \$30, \$25 each for groups of six or more, and available by calling 770-534-2787 or from www.theartscouncil.net.

The performance comes on the heels of Howell's 25th anniversary concert in Charlotte, N.C., the site of her first professional gig. But her career unofficially started just a few years before, when she was just 6. Howell said one day she realized she wanted to be a professional singer as she looked at herself in the mirror.

Deep down inside, she said, she knew this was what she wanted to pursue.

"When I was 6, I didn't know what a 'passion' was -- it was more of a, 'OK, this is what I'm going to do,'" she said. "I was looking in the mirror, and it was as though a spiritual experience happened. It was as though I had a glimpse of my future."

Howell's family definitely had musical influences -- both her mother and her uncle play instruments, with her uncle even touring with rock greats like Jimi Hendrix. She grew up with all different musical influences, she said, which helped spark her curiosity when she saw a picture of jazz great Billie Holiday.

"I remember finding a picture in my mom and dad's house of my father's mother ... then I came across a picture of Billie Holiday, and I thought she looked like my grandmother," she said. Once the connection was made, Howell said, she decided she wanted to sing like the beautiful women in the long dresses.

Her first big break came in 1985, when Howell played a young choir girl in "The Color Purple," who stepped forward toward the congregation during a powerful rendition of "God is Trying to Tell You Something."

From there, her career began two intertwining paths -- one as a professional singer and another as an actress.

She has dozens of film, television and stage credits to her name, including roles in "Army Wives," "House of Payne" and the Academy Award-winning film "The Blind Side." As a singer, she's opened for Ray Charles, performed with the Cab Calloway Orchestra and even performed a duet with R&B artist Baby Face.

The two career paths aren't mutually exclusive, though; acting only helps in the singing performances, Howell said.

"I think if you have a better acting ability, it helps you deliver the song," she said. "I actually see singing helping out the acting first, but the acting definitely helps out the performing aspect of the singing."

But despite her success in both acting and singing, Howell still remembers that little girl who looked into the mirror and saw her future.

"From that experience, through my career I would look in the mirror and say, 'God, am I doing the right thing?'" she said. "I would talk to myself in the mirror, which kind of kept me grounded and reminded that this was what I was meant to do."

The remaining performances in the 2010-2011 Evenings of Intimate Jazz Season include the *Annie Sellick Quartet* on **January 7th**, the *Kevin Bales Trio* on **February 5th**, Sasha Masakowski and Musical Playground on **March 12th**, the *Morgan Guerin Quintet* on **April 16th** and the season concludes with *Steve Cunningham and Friends* on **May 13th**. Season tickets are still available and are only \$140 for all six performances. All ticket sales are plus 7% state sales tax. Tickets may be ordered online at www.theartscouncil.net and click on Evenings of Intimate Jazz or you can call us at 770-534-2787.



ARTS CALENDAR NOVEMBER 2010

PERFORMANCES/CLASSES

NOV 1-30 INTERACTIVE NEIGHBORHOOD FOR KIDS: Arts and crafts events each week during the month. Each week features a different theme. Museum Hours: Mon-Sat 10am-5pm; Sun 1pm-5pm. Museum Admission: \$8 age 2-years and up Mon-Sat and \$6 Sun. Activity Fee: \$1. Information: 770-536-1900 or www.inkfun.org.

NOV 5-6 EVENING OF DANCE is presented by Brenau University Dance Students at Pearce Auditorium. Admission: \$6 general admission, \$4 seniors, under age 12, students with valid ID & Brenau faculty, students, staff Free. Performance: 7:30pm. Information: 770-538-4764 or www.brenau.edu.

NOV 6 EVENINGS OF INTIMATE JAZZ is presented by the Arts Council at the Smithgall Arts Center. Artist: Maria Howell and Friends. Performance: 8PM. Tickets: Season: \$140 or \$30 individual performance. Information: 770.534.2787 or www.theartscouncil.net

NOV 9-14 & 16-20 SINGIN' IN THE RAIN is presented by Gainesville Theatre Alliance in the Hosch Theatre Brenau University's John S. Burd Center. Considered by many to be the gold standard in Hollywood musicals, this American screen gem comes to the GTA stage with all the charm, laughs and brilliant dance numbers that made it an MGM classic in 1952. Admission: \$18-\$22 adults, \$16-\$20 seniors, \$14-\$16 students. Performances: 7:30pm Nov 9-13 & 16-20; matinees 2:30pm Nov 14 & 20. Order tickets online www.gainesvilleTHEATREalliance.org or call 678-717-3624.

NOV 11 REPORTER a film by Eric Metzgar-Director is presented by The Arts Council & Gainesville State College as a part of the Southern Circuit Tour Independent Filmmakers series. Show Time: 7:30pm at the Continuing Ed Center-Gainesville State College. Director's Reception and Q & A following the screening.



Tickets: \$7 adults and \$5 seniors/students. Information: 770-534-2787 or online www.theartscouncil.net.

NOV 12 SENIOR PIANO RECITAL features Jenna Thayer in the Banks Recital Hall Brenau University. Admission: Free. Performance: 7:30pm. Information: 770-538-4764 or www.brenau.edu.

NOV 18 JINGLE MINGLE food, live music carriage rides, Santa is on the downtown square from 5pm to 8pm. A Main Street Gainesville event. Information: 770-297-1141 or www.downtown-gainesville.com.

NOV 18 II PORTALE MUISCALE is presented by the Brenau University Music Dept at Pearce Auditorium. Admission: Free. Performance: 7:30pm. Information: 770-538-4764 or www.brenau.edu.

NOV 19 SPECTRUM SINGERS CONCERT is presented by the Brenau University music dept at Pearce Auditorium. Admission: Free. Performance: 7:30pm. Information: 770-538-4764 or www.brenau.edu.

NOV 29-30 FAMILY HOLIDAY CONCERT is presented by GSC Symphonic Band, Brass & String Ensembles, GSC Chorale and Jazz Ensemble at the Ed Cabell Theatre Gainesville State College-Oakwood. Admission: Free/ Performances: 7:30pm. Information: 770-717-3930 or www.gsc.edu.

NOV 30 CHRISTMAS IN CENTRAL PARK is a concert presented by the Sounds of Sawnee Concert Band in Cumming, GA. Performance: 4pm. Information: www.soundofsawnee.com

EXHIBITS/OPEN HOUSES

OCT 1- NOV 7 SHADOWS is an exhibition at the Sautee Nacoochee Gallery. Admission: Free. Gallery Hours: Mon-Fri 9am to 5pm; Sat 10am to 5pm; and Sun 1pm to 5pm. Information: 706-878-3300 or www.snca.org.

OCT 7-NOV 21 LINKS works by Darryl Pottorf exhibited in the Sellars Gallery-Simmons Visual Arts Center Brenau University. Reception: Oct 7 from 7pm to 8pm. Admission: Free. Gallery Hours: Tues-Friday 10am to 4pm; Sun 2pm-5pm. (Exhibit Closed: Oct 14-15). Information: 770-534-6263 or email gallery@brenau.edu. www.brenau.edu.

OCT 9-NOV 8 DRAWING WITH LIGHT a Juried Photography Show is presented at the Bowen Arts Center Dawsonville. Exhibit reception: Oct 9 2pm to 4pm. Admission: Free. Gallery Hours: Tues-Friday 10am to 4pm; Saturday 12pm to 4pm. Information: 706-216-2787 or www.dawsonarts.org.

OCT 14-DEC 4 63RD ANNUAL MEMBERS EXHIBITION: QUINLAN VISUAL ARTS CENTER. The most popular tradition in the history of the Quinlan, the annual Members' Exhibition showcases the work of the myriad of member-artists from Gainesville and surrounding North Georgia communities, Atlanta and the Southeast. Opening reception: October 14th from 5:30pm to 7:00pm. Admission: Free. Gallery Hours: Mon-Fri 9am to 5pm, Sat 10am to 5pm. Information: 770-536-2575 or online www.quinlanartscenter.org.

OCT 28-NOV 21 TRENDS ARE HISTORY: an exhibition of garments & accessories from the Brenau Historic Clothing Collection in the Castelli Gallery-John Burd Center for the Performing Arts Brenau University. Reception: October 28 from 6:30pm to 8pm. Admission: Free. Gallery Hours: Tues-Friday 1pm to 4pm; Sun 2pm-5pm. Information: 770-534-6263 or email gallery@brenau.edu. www.brenau.edu

NOV 4-DEC 9 ARTISTIC DISCOVERY: THE CONGRESSIONAL ART COMPETITION AND EXHIBIT is at the Roy C. Moore Art Gallery Gainesville State College-Oakwood. Reception: Dec 9 at 5:30pm. Admission: Free. Gallery Hours: Mon-Thurs 10am to 4pm; Fri 10am to 3pm. Information: 678-717-3707 www.gsc.edu.

NOV 12-DEC 18 GOOD 'OL SOUTHERN BOYS' FOLK ART SHOW is at the Bowen Arts Center Dawsonville. Exhibit reception: November 13 2pm to 4pm. Admission: Free. Gallery Hours: Tues-Friday 10am to 4pm; Saturday 12pm to 4pm. Information: 706-216-2787 or www.dawsonarts.org.

NOV 12-DEC 24 THE BEST HOLIDAY SHOW EVER is an exhibition at the Sautee Nacoochee Gallery. Admission: Free. Gallery Hours: Mon-Fri 9am to 5pm; Sat 10am to 5pm; and Sun 1pm to 5pm. Information: 706-878-3300 or www.snca.org.

NOV 13-DEC 31 HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS a juried exhibit is presented at the Bowen Arts Center Dawsonville. Exhibit reception: Nov 13 2pm to 4pm. Admission: Free. Gallery Hours: Tues-Friday 10am to 4pm; Saturday 12pm to 4pm. Information: 706-216-2787 or www.dawsonarts.org.

NOV 29-DEC 17 FIRST ANNUAL JURIED STUDENT DESIGN SHOW: an exhibition of 2-D, fashion, digital and interior design works by Brenau students in the President's Gallery-Simmons Visual Arts Center Brenau University. Admission: Free. Gallery Hours: Tues-Friday 10am to 4pm; Sun 2pm-5pm. Information: 770-534-6263 or email gallery@brenau.edu. www.brenau.edu.