



For more information:  
Theresa L. Smith-Levin  
Theresa@CentralFloridaVocalArts.org | 407 927-0058

## FURTHERING A DIVERSE TALENT PIPELINE: CFVA Summer Institute Moves To The Ren

ORLANDO – (January 27, 2023) **Central Florida Vocal Arts announces new educational venue partnership**

In celebration of its tenth anniversary year, Central Florida Vocal Arts is partnering with the Renaissance Theatre Company as a host venue to present its celebrated youth education program, Summer Institute.

CFVA's Summer Institute, its first educational program launched in July of 2013, has always aimed to provide youth artists with a holistic performing arts training experience. Despite having undergraduate and graduate degrees in music education and vocal performance, CFVA founder, Theresa Smith-Levin found herself and her peers woefully underprepared for performing arts careers. She received outstanding vocal training but little education in acting or dance and almost none whatsoever in technical theatre. A modern performing arts career requires diversity of skills and flexibility and Smith-Levin dreamed of creating a better foundation for a new generation of artists; this desire launched the first Summer Institute.

Over the course of just one week, the program empowers students to create their own unique musical theatre production, in which they write dialogue, create sets and props and design costumes, in addition to performing. All students also participate in a voice recital in which they perform solos, promoting individual confidence, building community and promoting self-efficacy. CFVA also promotes an environment that embraces the beauty of diversity. LGBTQ+, differently-abled and neuro-divergent students all find a home at Summer Institute, where they are celebrated for their unique gifts.

Since 2013, CFVA has also boasted a 100% scholarship award record for Summer Institute: no student has EVER been turned away for an inability to pay. In 2020, CFVA furthered this commitment by partnering with Orange County Public Schools to offer additional scholarship opportunities to students in Title I school settings. Because BIPOC families are disproportionately impacted by poverty, CFVA makes an intentional effort to reach these families and overcome barriers to access, as it cultivates a pipeline for diverse professional talent.

"As we encourage students to pursue their professional ambitions, we are so excited to invite them to one of Central Florida's most promising, new professional stages, Renaissance Theatre Company. Simply being in this inspiring space can spark potential and ambition in our community's future storytellers. We are so thankful to The Ren, Donald and his whole team for hosting our young artists and we hope to collaborate for many years to come" remarks Smith-Levin.

"Renaissance Theatre Company doesn't have any youth programs yet, so it made so much sense to partner with Theresa and CFVA, who have been providing this excellent opportunity to kids for years. The Ren is committed to fostering a new audience for Theatre and the Arts, and we believe that starts with strong educational programming," Renaissance Theatre Company Co-Founder Donald Rupe says.

Summer Institute registration is now open but limited to only 50 students per session to ensure individualized instruction and superior program quality. Scholarships are available for students with financial need.

What: CFVA Summer Institute I and II at Renaissance Theatre Company  
When: Summer Institute I (ages 6 to 12) Monday, June 5 to Saturday, June 10, 2023  
Summer Institute II (ages 13 to 18), Monday, June 12 to Saturday, June 17, 2023  
Where: Renaissance Theatre Company (415 E. Princeton St. Orlando, FL 32803)  
Register: <https://www.centralfloridavocalarts.org/events>

### About Central Florida Vocal Arts

Central Florida Vocal Arts uses its platform in the performing arts to build a better Central Florida community through education, performance and appreciation. We are dedicated to re-imagining the future of vocal arts. We provide the highest quality training to artists of all ages, while also offering performance opportunities to emerging and professional artists. We create equitable access to meaningful arts opportunities for all in our community.

### About Renaissance Theatre Company

Renaissance Theatre Company is dedicated to creating new theatrical works in Orlando and beyond. With a focus on fair pay for artists, sustainability, and diversity, the Ren hopes to build a new audience for live entertainment. [www.renthetheatre.com](http://www.renthetheatre.com)