

FROM: TIMES SQUARE ALLIANCE www.TimesSquareNYC.org
CONTACT: TJ Witham | (646) 369-4592 | TJWitham@TimesSquareNYC.org
Amanda Shur | (215) 778-4737 | AShur@Rubenstein.com

SONGS FOR OUR CITY COMMISSIONS BROADWAY SINGER-SONGWRITERS TO WRITE ORIGINAL MUSIC INSPIRED BY CURRENT EVENTS

The concerts will raise funds for Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS' COVID-19 Emergency Assistance Fund

(Times Square, N.Y. – May 18, 2020) - The Times Square Alliance announced today the first ever *Songs for Our City*, a songwriting challenge commissioning new original music from Broadway actors and composers in response to the current COVID-19 crisis, in order to both support artists during this time and provide a unique and interactive way for audiences to enjoy new music while in-person events are on pause.

Twenty-seven artists, including **Alice Ripley, Ethan Slater, Rob Rokicki** and more, will share their new original songs during a series of concerts that will be live-streamed for free to the public throughout the month of June, culminating in a finale on June 21 as part of Make Music New York. The series will be streamed on the Times Square Alliance's website and social platforms in partnership with Time Out New York, as a part of their recently launched [Love Local campaign](#). All participants will receive a stipend from the Times Square Alliance, and finalists will receive additional cash prizes. The concerts will also raise funds for Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS' COVID-19 Emergency Assistance Fund, which provides urgent resources to those within the performing arts community.

The artists participating in *Songs for Our City* are previous performers from the Broadway Buskers concert series, which showcases Broadway performers' original music through free concerts in the Times Square pedestrian plazas as part of the Alliance's annual free public programming. Events for this summer were originally planned to begin as early as May but have been delayed due to the ongoing crisis.

“As the entity responsible for taking care of and celebrating the Theater District, this is a symbolic and simple way for us to continue to showcase and support Broadway performers who create their own original work throughout June,” said Tim Tompkins, President of the Times Square Alliance.

“Our friends in the theater community are remarkably talented even beyond their night jobs on Broadway, and we've been lucky to have some of them share their singer-songwriter side during the past two seasons of Broadway Buskers. With the halt of performances, we wanted to find a way to support our community while providing an outlet for their incredible creative energy. We are so excited to offer a platform for them to continue sharing their music with the world,” said Sophie Aung, Programming Manager of the Times Square Alliance.

Each songwriter participant will write and perform a new song about community, the Theater District, or their memories on Broadway. Participants include: **Leslie Becker; Sam Carner, Derek Gregor, and Selda Sahin; Jaime Cepero; Lauren Elder; Drew Gasparini; John Arthur Greene; F Michael Haynie; Marcus Paul James; Donnie Kehr; John Krause; Janet Krupin; Molly and the Memphis Thunder; Anthony Norman; Alexander Sage Oyen; Alice Ripley; Rob Rokicki; Jennifer Sánchez; Max Sangerman; Heath Saunders; Dru Serkes; Ethan Slater; Starbird & the Phoenix; Will**

Taylor; Will Van Dyke & Jeff Talbott; Joel Waggoner; Mike Wartella; and Tim Young. The series will be hosted by Broadway Buskers host & curator **Ben Cameron**.

Songs for Our City will take place over seven concerts in June. The initial six concerts will feature participants performing their new songs, and will allow for audience members to vote to send one participant from each concert into the finale. During the finale, audiences will also be able to vote for their favorite participant to receive the Audience Choice Award. The final concert will take place on June 21, 2020, and will be judged by a panel of esteemed Broadway and music industry notables to determine a winner. Judges will be announced at a later date.

The concerts will be streamed live at 7:05PM EDT at TSQ.org/Songs, immediately following the collective applause for essential workers in NYC, on the following dates:

Tuesday, June 2nd
Wednesday, June 3rd
Tuesday, June 9th
Wednesday, June 10th
Tuesday, June 16th
Wednesday, June 17th
Sunday, June 21st (Finale)

Social media:

#CitySongs

Twitter: @TimesSquareNYC

Instagram: @TimesSquareNYC

Facebook: @TimesSquareNYC

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ABOUT TIMES SQUARE ALLIANCE

The Times Square Alliance works to improve and promote Times Square — cultivating the creativity, energy, and edge that have made the area an icon of entertainment, culture, and urban life for over a century. Founded in 1992, the Alliance keeps the neighborhood clean and safe, promotes local businesses, manages area improvements, and produces major annual events including New Year’s Eve, Solstice in Times Square, and Taste of Times Square. As the custodians of Times Square, the Alliance works every day to improve the quality of life for the neighborhood residents and businesses while driving economic growth in New York City. TimesSquareNYC.org

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