



PRESS RELEASE

The Grand 1894 Opera House
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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15th ANNUAL GRAND KIDS FEST TO SHOWCASE “GALVESTON –A GATEWAY OF CULTURES AND TRADITIONS” SATURDAY, APRIL 10th

Celebrating its fifteen anniversary on Saturday, April 10th, The Grand Kids Fest - a celebration of families and folk arts -will present many new and exciting entertainment options this year – sure to please every member of the family! Showcasing both a festival theme and annual student banner contest theme of “*Galveston – A Gateway of Culture and Traditions*”, new entertainment will include the “Celtaire String Band”, “Dance of Asian America”, the “Flying Balalaika Brothers”, “Lannaya West African Drum and Dance Ensemble”, and “School Sculptures with actor Kevin Reese”. Returning performers – by popular demand – include such popular family entertainment favorites as Tipi Tellers, The Harms Marionettes, and Shelly Kneupper Tucker. Hosted by The Grand 1894 Opera House, the festival will be held from 10am-5pm on Postoffice Street, between 20th and 23rd streets, in historic downtown Galveston. The festival will feature three entertainment stages, a story-telling tent, an artisans’ tent, and a host of activity booths “guaranteed to spark the imagination and creativity in kids of all ages.” Advanced-price tickets are on sale now at The Grand’s box office and may be purchased by calling 800.821.1894 or 409.765.1894.

Created as an extension to The Grand's children's programming and designed to raise an appreciation and awareness of the importance of fine arts for children, the festival is sponsored in part by Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream, CenterPoint Energy, Target, KUHF 88.7 FM Radio, the permanent endowment fund of Moody Memorial First United Methodist Church, Kathy G. McGovern, The Jamail Galveston Foundation, Alice Taylor Gray Foundation, Texas Commission on the Arts, BP Texas City, Frost Bank, the Historic Downtown Strand Partnership, Galveston Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club of Galveston, Galveston Island Rotary Club, Houston Family Magazine, The Kids Directory, Lyda Ann Quinn Thomas and the Galveston Historical Foundation. Festival founding sponsors are Mary Ainslie, The Gladys B. Foundation in honor of Robert Richard Thornton, Lawyer; the Harris and Eliza Kempner Fund, Bank of America, and the Park Board of Trustees of the City of Galveston.

Throughout the day, festival goers can look forward to family-friendly entertainment performed on three outdoor stages, viewing and participating in unique booths with hands-on activities for children, as well as the opportunity to participate in children-oriented arts and crafts (sand art, creative coloring, and chalk art creation area). In addition, an Artisan's Tent will showcase a variety of arts demonstrations. An exotic petting zoo, inflatable attractions, and the Bubble Pond will round out all there is to see and do. Be sure and come hungry as food booths will offer a variety of fun - but good food - with only non-alcoholic beverages sold. In addition, festival goers will have the opportunity to view the winning banners that will be on display throughout the day.

An annual highlight of the festival is the production staged by Missoula Children's Theatre (MCT). This year's show is "Rumpelstiltskin". Presented as an original adaptation of the classic children's tale, the performance will feature a cast of 50-60 area youth. (Auditions for these young performers will take place on Monday, April 5 at The Grand at 4pm.) The cast will rehearse all week with two performances scheduled during the festival at 11am and 1.30pm on stage at The Grand, Saturday, April 10.

Saturday festival admission is \$3.00 for adults; \$2.00 for children; free for children 4 years and younger. Half-price advance festival tickets (family four-pack for only \$5.00) are available at The Grand's box office. For more information about this and other events at The Grand, visit www.thegrand.com. To purchase advance tickets, call The Grand's box office at 409.765.1894 or 800.821.1894. Full-price tickets may be purchased at the festival gates. The Grand 1894 Opera House is located at 2020 Postoffice Street in historic downtown Galveston.

For more information about the festival, the student banner contest, "Rumpelstiltskin" audition procedure, or for vendor participation inquiries, contact KidsFest Director, Kathy Van Dewalli at 409.770.5056 or Elise Worthen at 409.770.5058.