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Arts Scene: Iyanla Vanzant to receive Sankofa Award

By James D. Watts Jr. Tulsa World Dec 10, 2017 Updated 14 hrs ago 0



Iyanla Vanzant, best-selling author and life coach, will accept the 2018 Sankofa Freedom Award on Feb. 24 at Central Library. The award is given to a nationally acclaimed individual who has dedicated his or her life to educating and improving the community.



Iyanla Vanzant, the best-selling author and life coach whose TV show “Iyanla: Fix My Life” has been a top-rated series on OWN: The Oprah Winfrey Network, will receive the 2018 Sankofa Freedom Award, presented by Tulsa City-County Library’s African-American Resource Center.

She will accept the award at an event set for Feb. 24 at Central Library, Fifth Street and Denver Avenue. Vanzant will speak, answer questions and sign copies of her newest book, “Get Over It: Thought Therapy for Healing the Hard Stuff,” which will be published in early 2018. The free event is limited to 600 guests.

“Iyanla Vanzant is one of the country’s most influential, socially engaged and acclaimed spiritual life coaches,” said Alicia Latimer, Tulsa City-County Library’s African-American Resource Center coordinator. “This is a woman who exemplifies the ideal of personal development and the will to succeed against life’s challenges.

“Her life story gives hope to everyone who has decided to heal, to learn and to persevere,” Latimer said. “The African-American Resource Center of the Tulsa City-County Library is honored by the opportunity to salute a woman and author of her stature.”

Vanzant has published 15 books, six of which reached the New York Times best-seller list. She hosted an eponymous talk show and was featured on “Oprah’s Lifeclass” series before launching “Iyanla: Fix My Life” in 2012. She also hosts a weekly YouTube show, “The R Spot,” which deals with relationships.

“Sankofa,” a word from the Akan language, which is spoken in southern Ghana, means: “We must go back and reclaim our past so we can move forward; so we understand why and how we came to be who we are today.”

The Sankofa Freedom Award consists of a \$10,000 cash prize and an engraved medallion. It is awarded every other year in February during African-American History Month to a nationally acclaimed individual who has dedicated his or her life to educating and improving the greater African-American community.

Previous recipients of the Sankofa Freedom Award include Tavis Smiley (2016), Susan L. Taylor

(2014), Hill Harper (2012), Pearl Cleage (2010), Nikki Giovanni (2008) and Dr. Michael Eric Dyson (2006).

The award is presented by the Tulsa Library Trust and TCCL's African-American Resource Center. For more information about the Sankofa Freedom Award or the African-American Resource Center: 918-549-7645, tulsalibrary.org.

'The Nutcracker'

Tulsa Ballet's holiday tradition, "The Nutcracker," continues through Dec. 23.

Tulsa's "Nutcracker" is a unique creation. Set in 1920s Paris, the ballet combines European glamor, Art Deco-inspired scenery, a bit of high-tech stage magic, challenging choreography and Tchaikovsky's beloved music to tell the story of a young girl whose Christmas Eve dream takes her into a grown-up world of magic and romance.

More than 100 students from 18 different communities will take part in this year's production, joining the Tulsa Ballet and Tulsa Ballet II dancers, accompanied by the Tulsa Symphony Orchestra.

"The best moment of 'The Nutcracker' for me is the end of the night, when I see happy faces leaving the theater," Artistic Director Marcello Angelini said. "The original purpose of our version was to whisk our audience away from Tulsa on a magic carpet to a place and time where they would experience a story of innocent love, all told through dance. Even in its 15th season, this show still achieves this goal."

Performances: 2 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 10, 17 and 23; 7 p.m. Friday, Dec. 15, and Dec. 22; 2 and 7 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 16, at the Tulsa PAC, 101 E. Third St.

Tickets: \$25-\$105. 918-749-6006, myticketoffice.com

'A Christmas Carol'

"A Christmas Carol," American Theatre Company's adaptation of the Charles Dickens classic, continues with performances through Dec. 23 at the Tulsa PAC.

This year's show marks the return of Edward Durnal to the director's chair, with Karl Krause again embodying the cantankerous moneylender Scrooge, John Knippers as The Ghost of Christmas Present, Rick Reiman as Jacob Marley, Brittany Wright as the Ghost of Christmas Past and Cody

McCoy in the dual role of the young Scrooge and Scrooge's nephew Fred.

Performances: 2 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 10, and Dec. 17; 7:30 p.m. Dec. 13-16 and Dec. 19-23 at the Tulsa PAC, 110 E. Second St.



Tickets: \$16-\$32. 918-596-7111, myticketoffice.com

'Second Sunday Serials'

Heller Theatre Company presents the second in its monthly series, "Second Sunday Serials," featuring staged readings of original works by Tulsa writers, with audience members voting on their favorites.

Performance: 7:30 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 10, at the Agora Event Center, 1402 S. Peoria Ave.

Tickets: \$5 at the door.

'Christmas with Brian Nhira and Friends'

"Christmas with Brian Nhira and Friends" will feature the Tulsa native, along with several fellow alums from "The Voice" — Caity Peters, Malik Heard, Tulsa's Whitney Fenimore and Shalyah Fearing — for this evening of holiday music.

Performance: 7 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 16, at the VanTrease PACE, 10300 E. 81st St.

Tickets: \$25-\$45. 918-595-7777, myticketoffice.com





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