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**Virginia Arts Festival announces the return of
VAF Fringe Festival**

***Five days of events and performances throughout venues in Downtown Norfolk's NEON District
May 15 – 19, 2018***

(Norfolk, VA) An explosion of creative energy is in store for Downtown Norfolk! This year's VAF Fringe Festival returns for five days of up-close, experimental and unique arts experiences in venues across Downtown Norfolk's official arts district, the NEON District.

What is a Fringe Festival?

Fringe Festivals began in Edinburgh, Scotland in 1947. There, a number of performing artists who were not official participants of the Edinburgh International Festival decided to produce their own work in empty stores and church basements. Thus, their work was staged literally "on the fringe" of the established festival. The concept was an immediate success and the Fringe soon became just as popular as the "official" Festival. Today, Fringe Festivals around the world vary, lasting from a few days to a few weeks involving multiple venues. Shows are kept brief and technical requirements simple, introducing audiences to new genres as a performing arts "smorgasbord."

To find out more information and to purchase tickets, visit www.vafest.org, call 757-282-2822, or visit the Virginia Arts Festival box office, 440 Bank St. in Norfolk, Monday-Friday, 10:00 am – 5:00 pm.

VAF Fringe Festival is presented in partnership with the Downtown Norfolk Council.

AT THE ILLUSIONIST'S TABLE

AN INTIMATE MAGIC DINNER EXPERIENCE – SOLD OUT

After a rave-reviewed engagement at the 2017 Edinburgh Fringe and a sold-out extended run at New York's McKittrick Hotel, this enchanting show comes to Virginia Arts Festival Fringe. Acclaimed illusionist Scott Silven hosts intimate dinners interwoven with illusion, mentalism and storytelling. Candles flicker. Whiskey pours. Conversation stirs. Before the night is over, your thoughts will transcend; mysteries will materialize; and your dreams will be revealed. Tickets are extremely limited as only 18 diners are allowed at each performance. Be among them and discover why *The New York Times* said "Wow. Wow. Wow."

TUESDAY-SUNDAY, MAY 15-20

LEONE'S RESTAURANT, 455 GRANBY STREET, NORFOLK

SOLD OUT

FOUND FOOTAGE FESTIVAL PRESENTS "CHERISHED GEMS"

This live comedy show features the funniest, weirdest and most outrageous video clips ever dug up on VHS. Host Joe Pickett (*The Onion*) scours thrift stores and garage sales around the country and serves up the highlights, complete with live commentary and where-are-they-now updates on these video relics that can't be seen anywhere on the internet. From corny safety videos to cable access weirdos, the FFF resurrects its most cherished gems in a hilarious hour of VHS insanity.

FRIDAY, MAY 18, 8 PM AND 10 PM
PUSH COMEDY THEATER, 763 GRANBY STREET, NORFOLK
TICKETS \$15

THE HOT SARDINES

Fueled by the belief that classic jazz feeds the heart and soul, the Hot Sardines are on a mission to make old sounds new again. They have been featured at the Newport Jazz Festival and the Montreal Jazz Festival, and have sold out NYC venues from Joe's Pub to Bowery Ballroom. "Unforgettably wild...consistently electrifying. A live music powerhouse" (*The Boston Globe*).

FRIDAY, MAY 18, 8 PM
COMMUNE, 759 GRANBY STREET, NORFOLK
TICKETS \$20

ULTRAFAX, jazz trio

It's hard to believe sixteen strings can deliver this much power and this much joy — but this two-guitar/upright bass trio brings the heat, and brings fans to their feet. Playing Django Reinhardt-inspired jazz, be-bop, gypsy folk, swing, funk, blues and French musette, this Baltimore-based ensemble has played major festivals and stages around the world. "Fast-paced, foot-tapping sound, punchy harmonies and dazzling improvisations — a timeless feat that's fit for a party" (*Baltimore Magazine*).

FRIDAY, MAY 18, 9:30 PM
GLASS WHEEL STUDIO, 128 WEST OLNEY ROAD, NORFOLK
TICKETS \$15

KATIE GOODMAN, actress/comedian

Musical satirist and comedian Katie Goodman's hit off-Broadway solo show *I Didn't F*ck It Up* received a *Time Out New York* Critic's Pick for Best Cabaret. Her comedy music videos have amassed over 2 million hits on Youtube and several more million on Facebook; now you can see this "joyously vulgar, smart, multi-talented femme-extraordinaire" live (*Los Angeles Examiner*)!

SATURDAY, MAY 19, 8 PM AND 10 PM
PUSH COMEDY THEATER, 763 GRANBY STREET, NORFOLK
TICKETS \$15

BANDA MAGDA

Drawing on its members' global backgrounds (Greece, Argentina, Japan, Colombia, USA), Banda Magda whips up South American rhythms, jazz improvisation, cinematic arranging, sophisticated audience participation, and songs sung directly to your soul in six languages. "Endlessly charming...The wildly charismatic Magda (her sensual, knotted English could charm a stuck bull) began the set with a slithering ethno-gypsy number that sounded like Beirut doing tango. From space odyssey guitar to a flurry of Rhodes piano play, Magda and her Banda put on a rhythmically illustrious show that was nothing short of inspirational" (*Dallas Observer*).

SATURDAY, MAY 19, 8 PM
COMMUNE, 759 GRANBY STREET, NORFOLK
TICKETS \$20

PRISCILLA RENE, SINGER-SONGWRITER

Best known for penning hit records for pop artists including Kelly Clarkson's 2018 Grammy-nominated single "Love So Soft," Rihanna's "California King Bed," Kesha's "Timber," and Miranda Lambert and

Carrie Underwood's "Something' Bad," this singer/songwriter has now released her own debut album, *Colored*. Showcasing her powerhouse vocals and her ability to combine poignant lyrics with unforgettable melodies, *Colored* is a genre-blending album that incorporates elements of pop, R&B, and country music with soulful undertones. Catch her live at Fringe!

SATURDAY, MAY 19, 9:30 PM

GLASS WHEEL STUDIO, 128 WEST OLNEY ROAD, NORFOLK

TICKETS \$15

About the Virginia Arts Festival

Since 1997, the **Virginia Arts Festival** has transformed the cultural scene in southeastern Virginia, presenting great performers from around the world to local audiences and making this historic, recreation-rich region a cultural destination for visitors from across the United States and around the world. The Festival has presented numerous U.S. and regional premieres, and regularly commissions new works of music, dance, and theater from some of today's most influential composers, choreographers, and playwrights. The Festival's arts education programs reach tens of thousands of area schoolchildren each year through student matinees, in-school performances, artists' residencies, master classes and demonstrations.

About NEON District

Norfolk's first official arts district, the NEON (short for New Energy of Norfolk), is home to long-time cultural institutions like the Chrysler Museum of Art and Harrison Opera House as well as studio-based ventures like d'Art Center and the Rutter Family Art Foundation, all providing artists a place to make, create and show. Within a few short blocks you can see a muralist at work, take in an improv comedy performance at Push Comedy Theater, watch a live glassworking demonstration, shop for unique home goods, get a tattoo or dine out at an eclectic restaurant. Learn more at www.NEONNFK.com and follow along on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram at @neonnfk.

Come discover why Norfolk was named Favorite American City for 2018 and was selected as one of the Top 50 Places to Travel in 2017 in the world! ###