

# Lincoln Center

Media contact: Rosie Marinelli: [rmarinelli@lincolncenter.org](mailto:rmarinelli@lincolncenter.org)  
(all in-person media coverage must be arranged in advance)

## Big Umbrella Festival Returns to Lincoln Center Celebrating Neurodiverse Audiences and Artists

Trailblazing Festival Features Expanded Offerings for All Ages

April 2025

[LincolnCenter.org/BigUmbrella](https://LincolnCenter.org/BigUmbrella)

PHOTOS/VIDEOS AVAILABLE [HERE](#)



L-R: "Hamlet," Photo courtesy of Teatro La Plaza;  
Big Umbrella Festival 2024, Photo credit Lawrence Sumulong;  
Second Hand Dance's "Sticky Dance" Photo credit Zoe Manders

New York, NY (February 6, 2025) - The **Big Umbrella Festival** returns to Lincoln Center this April—welcoming kids, teens, adults, and their families for three weekends of free and Choose-What-You-Pay programming, designed with and for neurodiverse audiences.

Now in its seventh iteration, this year features an expanded array of events from artists across the world, varying in age-range and genre, and welcomes the Big Umbrella Festival's first-ever Spanish language performance: **Teatro La Plaza's *Hamlet***—a bold reimagining of Shakespeare's timeless work featuring a cast of actors with Down syndrome.

Launched in 2018, the Big Umbrella Festival was the first large-scale performing arts festival of its kind, centering audiences with autism and other developmental disabilities by offering unique approaches to sensory-based and interactive artistic experiences—and sharing these learnings with the field worldwide.

"Access to the arts for all is core to what drives our work here at Lincoln Center," said **Shanta Thake, Ehrenkranz Chief Artistic Officer of Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts**. "We are proud to continue expanding the Big Umbrella Festival,

meeting neurodiverse audiences where they are and embracing a multitude of ways to engage with the arts. Our learnings from this important work continue, as we weave many of these engagement principles into our offerings year-round. We are grateful to continue this work with so many talented collaborators from around the world.”

Each edition of the festival has returned with expanded offerings for thousands of New Yorkers across in-person, virtual, and outdoor events and installations. Photos/Videos from past festivals are available [HERE](#).

Tickets for Choose-What-You-Pay events go on sale to the public today, Thursday February 6. Waitlists will be available for sold-out performances. Learn more at [LincolnCenter.org/BigUmbrella](https://LincolnCenter.org/BigUmbrella).

Highlights include:

- The U.S. premiere of [\*When the World Turns\*](#): an immersive and participatory collaboration from Polyglot Theatre (Australia) and Oily Cart (UK) inviting audiences to explore a wondrous landscape of foliage, light, sounds, and shadows (April 4-6 and 11-13)
- Esrawe + Cadena (Mexico) bring their captivating outdoor installation, [\*Los Trompos\*](#), to Damrosch Park—inviting families to rest, play, and engage with eight colorful and larger-than-life spinning tops (April 4–6, 9–13, and 16–20)
- Virtual Crip Movement Lab, a workshop for all disabled people and their non-disabled accomplices, and an exciting evening of standup comedy, both presented in collaboration with the [ReelAbilities Film Festival](#) (April 3 and April 4)
- A melodious introduction into the world of chamber music and its instruments with [CMS Kids: Moving Music](#)—where audiences can experience how an ensemble works together through active listening, movement, and call-and-response activities (April 5)
- The U.S. Premiere of [\*The Sticky Dance for Sensory Groovers\*](#), an interactive dance performance co-created by Rosie Heafford and Takeshi Matsumoto of Second Hand Dance (England), encouraging audiences to freely explore a colorful tapestry of sticky tape in this tactile, participatory experience (April 11-13)
- [E.P.I.C. Players](#) returns to campus to present a sample of their 2025 season, shining a light on neurodiverse talent through music, theater, and dance performances (April 12)

- The New York premiere of *Hamlet* by Teatro La Plaza (Peru), a joyful and enigmatic reimagining of Shakespeare's timeless work performed in Spanish (with English captions) by a cast of actors with Down syndrome (April 19)
- Indoor **visual art stations** led by Lincoln Center's education team and teaching artists (April 11-13)
- Outdoor **creative activity stations** inspired by the Los Trompos installation led by Lincoln Center's education team and teaching artists (April 4-6, 9-13, and 16-20)

All events are Relaxed Performances, part of a campus-wide series providing a supportive social environment for individuals with autism, sensory and communication disorders, or learning disabilities. Attendees can enter and leave audience spaces as needed, vocalize, and move freely, creating a "no shushing" zone. Chill out spaces and visual art spaces are also available. For more information about Relaxed Performances, visit [LincolnCenter.org/Relaxed](https://LincolnCenter.org/Relaxed).

Visual Guides in English and Spanish offer detailed directions, arrival instructions, and venue amenities with images. Additionally, all events are located on accessible routes with accessible entrances, restrooms, and seating.

To celebrate this year's Big Umbrella Festival, we are pleased to present a limited-edition benefit print and commemorative poster published by Lincoln Center Editions. Complimentary posters will be gifted to attendees while supplies last.

Photos and videos are available for download [HERE](#).

\*\*\*

**Big Umbrella Festival**  
**April 3-20, 2025**

**April 3 at 6:00 pm**

[Crip Movement Lab](#)

**Virtual Dance Workshop on Zoom**

*Presented in partnership with ReelAbilities Film Festival: New York*

**FREE**

Crip Movement Lab - co-created by Disabled dancers Kayla Hamilton & Elisabeth Motley - is a movement workshop for all disabled people and their non-disabled

accomplices, including and not limited to those that identify as D/disabled, blind, low vision, sight impaired, neurodivergent, D/deaf, hard of hearing, Sick, chronically ill, crip, or Mad. In this online community dance workshop, we will reach toward the liberatory pathways found in improvisational dance and the crip pride found in processes of creating from disability knowledge. Those with and without movement experience are welcome!

**April 4–6 and 11–13 at 12:30 and 3:30 pm**

[When the World Turns](#)

**Polyglot Theatre and Oily Cart**

**Clark Studio Theater**

**Choose-What-You-Pay**

*For this event, tickets will be sold as group tickets; each single group ticket accommodates 2–5 people. Recommended for ages 5+.*

As part of this year's *Big Umbrella Festival*, comes *When the World Turns*, a fantastical theater experience for children and young people with disabilities and their families. Performers from Polyglot Theatre (Australia) lead you into the heart of a wondrous landscape, inviting you to become part of a wild place of the senses where you can see, hear, touch, smell, and feel this strange, rustling, breathing world as it reveals itself. *When the World Turns* playfully explores our connection with each other and with the world—offering a place where humans are equal players to plants and our living Earth in a new, inclusive ecology. This immersive and participatory journey will be one you will remember: full of surprise and wonder!

**April 4–6, 9–13, and 16–20 from 11:00 am–6:00 pm**

[Los Trompos](#)

**Damrosch Park**

**FREE**

Bring your family to experience Los Trompos, a captivating, interactive installation featuring eight larger-than-life, three-dimensional spinning tops in a variety of colors and shapes, designed with accessibility in mind, at Damrosch Park. Each sculpture acts as a piece of art and a gathering place for relaxation, social interaction, and entertainment. Created by Mexican creators Esrawe + Cadena, the installation draws its inspiration from the spinning top toy that has been popular with children around the world since the dawn of time. This large-scale, hands-on artistic installation engages visitors in a way that is both meaningful and playful.

**April 4–6, 9–13, and 16–20 from 11:00 am–6:00 pm**

**Creative Activity Station**

**Damrosch Park**

**FREE**

While you're enjoying the *Big Umbrella Festival*, be sure to stop by the creative activity station inspired by Los Trompos in Damrosch Park—led by Lincoln Center's education team and teaching artists.

**April 4 at 8:00 pm**

**[Comedy Night with ReelAbilities](#)**

**Stanley H. Kaplan Penthouse**

**Choose-What-You-Pay**

*Presented in partnership with ReelAbilities Film Festival: New York*

As part of this year's *Big Umbrella Festival*, Lincoln Center continues its collaboration with the ReelAbilities Film Festival, the largest festival in the world dedicated to showcasing ground-breaking films by and about people with disabilities. The week-long series of events is renowned for its wide-ranging international film selection, riveting conversations, and performances, presented annually across the New York metropolitan area. Join us for a one-night-only comedy night at Lincoln Center; more details to be announced soon!

**April 5 at 11:00 am and 1:00 pm**

**[CMS Kids: Moving Music](#)**

**CMS Rose Studio, 10th floor of Rose Building**

**Choose-What-You-Pay**

*Presented in collaboration with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center  
11 am is for ages 3-7, 1 pm is all ages*

Join us for a melodious CMS Kids journey, where music moves and melodies contour through the air! Through interactive listening, movement, and call-and-response activities, audience members are not just watching but actively participating, experiencing firsthand how an ensemble works together. This concert introduces the captivating world of chamber music through the enchanting sounds of clarinet, violin, and piano. Select repertoire will feature the compositions of Darius Milhaud, Aram Khachaturian, Lili Boulanger, and Robert Schumann, showcasing a range of dynamic melodies and emotional expressions. This program not only highlights the shapes and movement in music, but also offers an up-close introduction to the instruments that make chamber music so unique. Come and experience how music moves!

**April 11–13 at 11:00 am and 2:00 pm**

**[Second Hand Dance's The Sticky Dance For Sensory Groovers](#)**

**Samuel Rehearsal Studio, 7th floor of Rose Building**

**Choose-What-You-Pay**

*This production is recommended for neurodivergent children ages 3-7 and their families. For this event, tickets will be sold as group tickets; each single group ticket accommodates 2-3 people.*

Co-created by Rosie Heafford and Takeshi Matsumoto, Second Hand Dance's *The Sticky Dance for Sensory Groovers* is an interactive and colorful dance performance installation designed for neurodiverse children and their families. As three dancers shimmy through the audience weaving a tapestry of sticky tape in this tactile, hands-on performance, they invite you to tape, stick and groove; to see and feel sound or to be still; to watch and listen. Presented as part of *Big Umbrella Festival*, audiences are encouraged to explore freely, choosing how they engage, and ultimately making the show their own!

**April 12 at 11:00 am and 7:00 pm**

[E.P.I.C. Players](#)

**David Rubenstein Atrium**

**FREE**

As part of this year's *Big Umbrella Festival*, E.P.I.C. Players returns to Lincoln Center, proudly presenting a sample of the 2025 E.P.I.C. Season. This exciting set will feature music, theater, and dance performances from the company's repertoire, including numbers from *E.P.I.C. Jr.*, *E.P.I.C. Storytellers*, *E.P.I.C. Dream Roles Cabaret*, and their highly anticipated mainstage show, *Seussical*. E.P.I.C. Players is a non-profit theater company that opens the stage to all types of artists and seeks to shine a light on neurodiverse talent. They believe our differences are our greatest strength, and they are committed to more representation and opportunities for all artists.

**April 13 at 11:00 am (Recommended for ages 3-10)  
and 2:00 pm (Recommended for ages 11+)**

[Magical Miniature World Workshop](#)

**Stanley H. Kaplan Penthouse**

**Choose-What-You-Pay**

Led by Lincoln Center's education team and teaching artists as part of the *Big Umbrella Festival*, participants of all ages and abilities are invited to use a variety of accessible art-making materials to create their own magical miniature world and bring it to life! We invite children and families to join us in playing together, using movement and sound to explore our creations in this imaginative workshop.

**April 11-13 from 11:00 am – 6:00 pm**

**Visual Art Station**

**Rose Building**

**FREE**

While you're enjoying the *Big Umbrella Festival*, be sure to stop by the visual art station in the Rose Building—led by Lincoln Center's education team and teaching artists.

**April 19 at 2:00 pm and 7:30 pm**

**Teatro La Plaza's *Hamlet***

**Alice Tully Hall**

**Choose-What-You-Pay**

*This event will be performed in Spanish with English supertitles.*

*\*Please note: This performance contains adult themes and mature language.*

*Audience discretion is advised. This show is intended for ages 11+.*

Peruvian theater company Teatro La Plaza reinvents Shakespeare's classic tragedy *Hamlet* into a joyful and enigmatic production. Rather than telling one man's story, director and writer Chela De Ferrari's interpretation hones in on the importance of community. In this retelling of Shakespeare, the stories of people with Down syndrome take center stage, when historically they have been relegated to the background. Weaving together a version of the text with personal anecdotes from the cast, De Ferrari brings new meaning to the 400-year-old play and asks how can those with Down syndrome exist in a world that continually sets out to exclude them?

\*\*\*

### **About Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts**

Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts (LCPA) is a cultural and civic cornerstone of New York City. The primary advocate for the entire Lincoln Center campus, our strategic priorities include: fostering collaboration and deepening impact across the Lincoln Center resident organizations; championing inclusion and increasing the accessibility and reach of Lincoln Center's work; and nurturing innovation on stage and off to help ensure the arts are at the center of civic life for all. LCPA presents hundreds of programs each year, offered primarily for free and choose-what-you-pay, including many specially designed for young audiences, families, and those with disabilities.

\*\*\*

*Lead support for educational programming is provided by Anonymous*

*Support for the Big Umbrella Festival is provided by The Taft Foundation, Esme Usdan and James Snyder, New York City Council Member Gale Brewer, and by public funds facilitated by New York City Council's Autism Awareness Initiative*

*Support for Relaxed Performances is provided by The Taft Foundation*

*Lead support for Choose-What-You-Pay is provided by the Family of Robert Wood Johnson III*

*Major support is provided by the Scully Peretsman Foundation*

*Additional corporate support is provided by Capital One*

*Additional support is provided by the PNC Foundation*

*NewYork-Presbyterian is the Official Hospital of Lincoln Center*

*United is the Preferred Airline of Lincoln Center Presents*

*Steinway & Sons is the Preferred Piano Partner of Lincoln Center*

*Major support for Lincoln Center Presents is provided by the Shubert Foundation*

*Additional support is provided by Park Lane New York and Fairfield by Marriott Central Park*

*Lincoln Center's artistic excellence is made possible by the dedication and generosity of our board members*

*Operation of Lincoln Center's public plazas is supported in part with public funds provided by the City of New York*

*Programs are made possible, in part, with public funds provided by the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, Empire State Development, and the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor, Mayor of the City of New York, the New York State Legislature and the New York City Council*

\*\*\*

**FOLLOW LINCOLN CENTER ON SOCIAL MEDIA:**

Facebook: [facebook.com/LincolnCenter](https://www.facebook.com/LincolnCenter)

X (Twitter): [@LincolnCenter](https://twitter.com/LincolnCenter)

Instagram: [@LincolnCenter](https://www.instagram.com/LincolnCenter)

TikTok: [@LincolnCenter](https://www.tiktok.com/@LincolnCenter)

Threads: [@LincolnCenter](https://www.threads.com/@LincolnCenter)

**#LincolnCenter**

###

**For more information, please contact:**

Rosie Marinelli

[rmarinelli@lincolncenter.org](mailto:rmarinelli@lincolncenter.org)

212-671-4747