For Immediate Release

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The Show Must Go On! Loisaida Inc. Announces Line-Up for its 2020 [Virtual] Loisaida Festival

Streaming Live on Sunday, May 24 and Sunday, May 31

[New York, NY]

Honoring its 30-year tradition, Loisaida Inc. –the oldest Puerto Rican nonprofit organization in the Lower East Side of Manhattan–announced that its annual cultural celebration, the Loisaida Festival, will take place on Memorial Day weekend, with one significant difference: The Loisaida Festival is going Virtual.

Given the COVID-19 public health and economic crisis, the Loisaida Festival will move to the digital realm, streaming live through platforms such as Facebook and YouTube on Sunday, May 24 and Sunday, May 31, 2020 from 2:00-4:00pm.

"For the first time in over three decades, our annual Loisaida Festival will transmit live to reach thousands of participants from New York City and beyond in the comfort and safety of their homes," says Alejandro Epifanio, Director of Loisaida Inc. "Although we are deeply saddened by the devastating impact of COVID-19 in our communities, we hope that the [Virtual] Loisaida Festival will give us an opportunity to come together to celebrate our resiliency, our creativity, and our sense of community."

The event, hosted by singer and comedienne Jeannie Sol, will feature music by D'marquesina Ny-pr, FUSION JONDA, Joe Louis Vázquez-Ayala, Fernandito Ferrer, and Alynda Segarra of Hurray for the Riff Raff, with additional performances by Circo Café con Gloria (Circus Performance), Carola Garcia (Theater for Kids), Paula Herrera Nóbile (Video Art), Gabriel Leyva (Performance), Sorely Muentes (Performance), the Puerto Rico Symphony Orchestra (Performance), La Trinchera (Contemporary Dance), and Amneris Morales (Poetry). The event will also stream music videos and short films by Teófilo Torres, Julián Garnik and Melvin Audaz

The 2020 [Virtual] Loisaida Festival's theme – ***¡Cuenta Con Nosotros! - Count on Us!*** – will highlight the unwavering dedication of our Latinx essential workers, who have bravely fought in the frontlines against the ongoing health crisis, as well as the plight of the LGBTQ community, as depicted in this year's beautiful commemorative artwork by local artist María Dominguez. It will also emphasize the importance of filling out the 2020 Census in order to secure future Federal, State and City funding for our schools, hospitals, roads, public works, and other vital programs.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has disproportionately impacted Latino and black communities across our country and in New York City," says Raul Russi, President and CEO of Acacia Network. "Acacia Network and Loisaida Inc. are proud to be in the frontlines providing critical services to individuals and families in need, and we are inspired on a daily basis by the courage we witness in our essential workforce. We invite you to join us at our [Virtual] Loisaida Festival so we can rejoice together."

Recent data released by the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene shows that black/African American and Latinx/Hispanic individuals have been dying at higher rates due to COVID-19. Meanwhile, a large majority of essential workers in our City are people of color.

Loisaida, Inc. was founded in 1979 to address the social and economic disenfranchisement of poor, low income and working-class residents in the Lower East Side. Since 1987, Loisaida Inc. has produced the Loisaida Festival, the largest community pride festival in the Lower East Side, which celebrates the culture, heritage and accomplishments of the Puerto Rican/Hispanic community in this neighborhood. The festival attracts over 25,000 participants every year. It has not only become a community tradition, but an anticipated cultural event citywide.

About Loisaida, Inc.

Founded in 1979, Loisaida Inc. seeks to address the economic and social disenfranchisement of poor and low-income Latinx residents through employment and training opportunities, comprehensive youth development initiatives, as well as neighborhood revitalization activities that positively highlight the rich culture, heritage, and contribution of the Puerto Rican and Latin American community in New York City. In order to strengthen its capacity to secure its longterm sustainability, Loisaida Inc. became an affiliate of Acacia Network –a premier health, housing and economic development organization– in 2012. For more information, visit: www.loisaida.org

About Acacia Network

For over 50 years, Acacia Network and its affiliates have been committed to improving the quality-of-life and wellbeing of underserved Latino communities by providing access to integrated health and housing programs, and by reinvesting in communities through innovative programming, employment opportunities and affordable housing ownership, among other initiatives. Acacia Network's offices are located in New York City, Buffalo, Albany, and Syracuse in New York State, as well as Florida, Maryland, Tennessee, Arkansas, Georgia, Connecticut, and Puerto Rico. Acacia Network's extensive array of community-based services are fully integrated, bilingual and culturally competent, while ensuring easy access and actively incorporating consumer and community level input. For more information, visit: www.acacianetwork.org

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The [V] Loisaida Festival
VIRTUAL

Live on: Youtube and Facebook

2:00pm – 4:00pm

Sunday, May 24th & Sunday, May 31st

About the 2020 [Virtual] Loisaida Festival

Since 1987 the Loisaida Festival has been celebrated the Sunday before Memorial Day weekend in the Manhattan neighborhood known as the Lower East Side, the East Village, or Loisaida. This event is the largest community pride festival in the neighborhood and grows annually in size, excitement, and impact. It has been historically celebrated on the Avenue C commercial corridor-renamed Loisaida Avenue in 1989.

Not even the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) will deter Loisaida Inc. from bringing joy, music, performance, and arts to our beloved community! Honoring our over 30-year tradition, this year we will bring our cultural festival to the virtual realm, reaching thousands of participants in the comfort and safety of their homes.

It is no secret that the COVID-19 pandemic has disproportionately impacted communities of color, ravaging our health, livelihoods, economic stability, and social-emotional well-being. For these and many other reasons, we stand by our belief that **"Arts & Culture = Social Justice"** and, therefore, the show must go on!

Our [Virtual] Loisaida Festival's theme **Cuenta Con Nosotros – Count On Us!** will highlight the unwavering dedication of our Latinx essential workers, who have bravely fought in the frontlines against the ongoing health crisis, as depicted in this year's beautiful commemorative artwork by local artist María Dominguez.

It will also emphasize the importance of filling out the **2020 Census** in order to secure future Federal, State and City funding for our schools, hospitals, roads, public works, and other vital programs.

The [Virtual] Line-Up:

Music by:

D'Marquesina

–

Fusión Jonda

–

Joe Louis

–

Fernandito Ferrer

–

Daso ElAfroCaribeño

–

Alynda Segarra of Hurray for the Riff' Raff'

Performances by:

Café con Gloria / Circo
–
Carola García / Theater for Kids
–
Gabriel Leyva / Performance
–
La Trinchera / Contemporary Dance
–
Familia Almodóvar Santiago / String Quartet
–
Paula Herrera Nóbile / Video Art
–
Sorely Muentes / Performance
–
Amneris Morales / Poetry

Music Videos and Short Films by:

TEÓFILO TORRES, **JULIÁN GARNIK** & **MELVIN AUDAZ.**

…with many more invited artists and guest speakers.

Going live:

Sunday, May 24th and **Sunday, May 31st**

2:00pm to **4:00pm**

The vivacious singer and comedian,
Jeannie Sol begins hosting the live show at 2:00 pm.

The 2020 [Virtual] Loisaida Festival has been made possible thanks to the continued support of Popular Bank, Acacia Network, Heart 2 Heart Home Care and the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs (DCLA), the New York City Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) and with the support from the New York City District 2 Councilwoman Carlina Rivera and Hispanic Federation. We appreciate your outstanding dedication to the preservation of our heritage in New York City and the commitment to the Puerto Rican and Latinx Cultures of the Lower East Side of Manhattan. We would also like to thank Mezcolanza for once more collaborating with Loisaida Inc. to bring internationally-recognized artistic talents from Puerto Rico and Latinoamérica.