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**OCTFME RECOGNIZES GALA HISPANIC THEATRE AS THE SEPTEMBER 2026
LOCATION OF THE MONTH**



Photo credit – Maxwell McKenzie and courtesy of GALA Theatre

(Washington, DC) - The award-winning DC Office of Cable Television, Film, Music, and Entertainment (OCTFME) has named GALA Hispanic Theatre as the September Location of the Month, honoring its historic contributions and acknowledging Hispanic Heritage Month. Located within the historic Tivoli building in Columbia Heights, GALA stands as a cultural landmark and one of the nation's leading theatres dedicated to Latinx arts, culture, and storytelling.

Built in 1924, the Tivoli Theatre opened during an era when Columbia Heights was considered one of the most fashionable neighborhoods in Washington, DC. Nicknamed the Temple of the Arts, the Tivoli featured a gold-gilded Mediterranean-style dome and seated more than 2,000 people, making it the largest movie theatre in the District at the time. Its opening celebration included a parade from the White House to the theatre, marking its place as a premier venue for film, concerts, and vaudeville performance.

The theatre remained a beloved anchor for the neighborhood's predominantly Black community through decades of change. During the 1968 riots, the surrounding area suffered extensive damage, yet the Tivoli remained intact by the residents' protection who cherished its cultural importance. Though economic shifts led to the theatre's closure and boarding in 1976, its legacy endured.

"GALA Hispanic Theatre is a shining example of how history, culture, and artistry come together to elevate the creative soul of Washington, DC. The Tivoli building is one of the District's most cherished historic venues, and GALA's stewardship has preserved its legacy while ensuring it continues to serve as a vibrant hub for multicultural storytelling. As we celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month, we proudly recognize GALA for its

enduring contributions to the arts and for opening its doors to filmmakers and creatives who seek to bring powerful stories to life,” said OCTFME Director and Film Commissioner LaToya Foster.

In 1999, the District selected a proposal by Horning Brothers to renovate the landmark. GALA Hispanic Theatre was chosen as the resident company and undertook the extensive work required to restore the building’s dome and construct a fully functioning performance venue within its historic shell. Today, GALA uses the Tivoli for live theatre, an annual international film festival, and community film screenings.

GALA’s mainstage theatre seats 264 people, with legal capacity for up to 325. Under the ornate historic dome—visible from every seat—GALA built a stage that blends historic preservation with modern performance needs. Select original pilasters have been restored with gold gild, and the lobby features a bar and art exhibition wall that showcases visual artists.

The venue has served as a filming location for high-profile productions. Opera star Plácido Domingo recorded a masterclass on GALA’s stage. In 2023, actor and producer John Leguizamo filmed a segment of his PBS series *Leguizamo Does America* at GALA, featuring youth from the theatre’s after-school program.

“We are honored to be featured by the Office of Cable Television, Film, Music, and Entertainment. GALA Hispanic Theatre has been a film location in the past and is excited to provide our treasured historic venue at the Tivoli for media productions in the future,” said Rebecca Medrano, Executive Director.

To view GALA’s upcoming Fall programming and to learn more, visit www.galatheatre.org/, <https://www.galatheatre.org/rentals>. Follow them on Instagram, Facebook, X, and TikTok: @teatrogala and explore GALA Hispanic Theatre’s [DC Reel-Scout Profile](#) and for other film-friendly locations in Washington, DC, visit our [Location of the Month](#) section at entertainment.dc.gov.

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About LOCATION OF THE MONTH

OCTFME’s Location of the Month program is designed to showcase Washington, DC’s most cinematic, production-ready spaces and highlight the depth of locations available across the District. By elevating venues like GALA Hispanic Theatre, OCTFME supports the city’s \$15 billion creative economy and helps attract film, television, digital content, and commercial projects that contribute to jobs, economic activity, and the vibrancy of DC’s media and entertainment landscape.

If you have a recommendation for a future OCTFME “Location of the Month,” we welcome your submissions. If you own or manage a DC business, venue, or location that should be considered, please complete our [nomination form](#) and tell us more about the space. Showcasing diverse, film-friendly locations helps strengthen DC’s creative economy and supports the producers, filmmakers, and storytellers who choose Washington, DC as their backdrop.

About OCTFME

The DC [Office of Cable Television, Film, Music and Entertainment](#) (OCTFME), an award-winning District of Columbia Government agency, leads the city’s extensive efforts to build and support a sustainable film,

music, and entertainment creative economy and labor market. Additionally, OCTFME serves as the city's cable television service provider regulator and as the customer service hub for cable subscribers.

OCTFME's extensive portfolio includes:

- The District's government cable access channels [District Council Channel](#) (DCC), the [District of Columbia Network](#) (DCN), and the [District Knowledge Network](#) (DKN)
- [DC Radio](#) (96.3 HD4), OCTFME's owned and operated digital radio station, in partnership with Howard University's WHUR.
- [District of Columbia Entertainment Network](#) (D.C.E), OCTFME's 24-hour streaming platform available worldwide on ROKU, Apple TV, and Amazon Fire TV as well as iPhone and Android mobile devices (download the D.C.E Network App or at [D.C.ENetwork.com](#)).
- The handling of all of the District's filmmaker production needs including **permits, city services, and logistical support**, job placement assistance, workforce development and the [D.C. Film, Television, and Entertainment Rebate Fund](#) (D.C. Rebate Fund).
- Providing additional support to the creative community through the [Creative Affairs Office](#) (CAO) and [Mayor Muriel Bowser Presents: 202Creates](#) initiative. CAO showcases and preserves the District of Columbia's rich creative communities throughout all 8 Wards.

For more on OCTFME: (202) 671-0066 or www.entertainment.dc.gov.

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