

Center Place Fine Arts & Civic Association Reopens With New Programming

By Libby Hopkins - March 16, 2021



Center Place Fine Arts & Civic Association will reopen its doors on March 21 and it is bringing the Brandon community some awesome new programming mixed with the classic programs offered at Center Place. Some of the new programming will be Holy Yoga with Cassie and Eliza McClelland (left), painting with Fabstraq (center) and sketch art with artist Frankie Gonzalez (right).

Center Place Fine Arts & Civic Association in Brandon is considered the area's best-kept secret. It has been a part of the community for more than 44 years. It almost became one of Brandon's best-kept memories because the center was facing a permanent closure due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Center Place's dim future was turned around when the new executive board and interim executive director (me) stepped in to save the heart and art of the Brandon community.

I'm thrilled to let the community know that Center Place will reopen its doors on Sunday, March 21 and we are bringing the Brandon community some awesome new programming mixed with the classic programs offered at Center Place.

Our grand reopening event will feature some of the new programs and the artists and instructors who will be teaching them.

"We are excited to teach at Center Place because we see it as a beautiful place that will meet the needs of the community," said Yoga Instructor Cassie McClelland. "We as a collective desperately need community, belonging, art—and yoga is a practice that provides grounding and can bring a sense of inner calm in tumultuous time."

McClelland and her daughter, Eliza, will be teaching Holy Yoga, which is a faith-based yoga practice, as well as other forms of yoga.

Local artist Fabstraq (www.fabstraq.com) will be teaching various painting classes at Center Place.

"I have always known that my journey as an artist is not just about my personal growth, but also about helping others along the way," Fabstraq said. "For me, it has always been

imperative that while focusing on the goal of sharing my art, I also help others understand what a gift creating art truly can be, especially children.”

Artist Frankie Gonzalez (www.frankieart.com) will be teaching sketch art at Center Place. “With everything going on in the world right now, we can feel stuck, but I believe Center Place and its artistic focus can provide a space for all ages to unwind, make new friends, try new things and inspire the community to see things differently.”

Center Place will also be offering some STEM-based summer camps with TechPlayzone and Bricks 4 Kidz. It will also be offering horticulture-based programming through its new partnership with We Teach Plants (www.weteachplants.com).

Center Place has also partnered with Learn & Play Tampa Bay (glazermuseum.org/learnplaytampabay), which is a kindergarten readiness program that will be offering pop-up play sessions over the summer at Center Place.

The center is also working on other community partnerships to offer programs for parents of children with Down syndrome through the Down Syndrome Association of Tampa Bay (www.dsatb.org).

Keep an eye out for the new Center Place website and social media pages, as Center Place is also going through a new rebranding for 2021. Great things are coming to Center Place, so stay tuned. We also hope to see you at our grand reopening on March 21 from 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

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Libby is a writer for The Osprey Observer/The Christian Voice. She started as an intern in 2009 and upon finishing her internship, she was asked to stay on as a permanent writer for both papers. Libby lives in Brandon with her two rescue dogs, Olive and Bogey.