

Tuesday
MAY 6
7:30 pm

BLACK VIOLIN

FULL CIRCLE TOUR 2025



**An exhilarating fusion of classical
sounds and hip-hop beats**

This event is made possible through the generous support of Irvine and Ellen Hockaday.

Sponsored by

**Dr. Jim & Vickie
OTTEN**

Dr. Jim and Vickie Otten are pleased to partner with the Lied Center to bring life-enriching, world-class performing arts experiences, like Black Violin, to our community. Enjoy tonight's performance!



Expect rock-concert sound levels at this performance. To accommodate individual listening needs, ear plugs are available at the Audience Services Desk in the lobby before and during the show.

There will be no intermission during this performance.

Full Circle Tour

Step into Black Violin's Full Circle Tour, where Grammy-nominated duo Wil Baptiste and Kev Marcus redefine the possibilities of music by merging classical depth with hip-hop's pulse. This tour captures the essence of returning to where it all began—transformed and reimaged. Each powerful performance invites audiences to reflect on their own journeys, discovering that even as we evolve, we're often drawn back to our roots with renewed purpose. From high school orchestra classmates to groundbreaking artists, Black Violin's path reflects resilience, creativity and the courage to challenge expectations.

Black Violin

For nearly two decades, Black Violin has been merging string arrangements with modern beats and vocals, building bridges in communities along the way. Members Kev Marcus and Wil Baptiste first met in orchestra class at Dillard High School in Fort Lauderdale, becoming classically trained on the violin and viola through their high school and college careers. Post-college, they reconvened to produce beats for South Florida rappers, and they began building an audience in local clubs. They later went on to win *Showtime at the Apollo* in 2005 and eventually sold-out headline performances at venues across the country, including a sold-out, two-night headline run at The Kennedy Center in 2018. NPR took note and declared "their music will keep classical music alive for the next generation." Black Violin's 2019 album release, *Take the Stairs*, earned a Grammy Award nomination for Best Contemporary Instrumental Album. The band also recently received their second-ever Grammy Award nomination for the track "The Message" as Best Americana Performance, in collaboration with the Blind Boys of Alabama.

Black Violin plays roughly 200 shows a year; many of which are performances for young, low-income students in urban communities. In the last year alone, the group has played for over 100,000 students with the goal of challenging stereotypes and preconceived notions of what a "classical musician" looks and sounds like. "The stereotypes are always there, embedded so deep in our culture," says Wil. "Just by nature of our existence, we challenge those ideas. It's a unique thing that brings people together who aren't usually in the same room, and in the current climate, it's good to bring people together."

In 2019, the group launched the Black Violin Foundation Inc., a non-profit organization dedicated to empowering youth by providing access to quality music programs in their community. The foundation believes that music and access to music programs should not be determined by race, gender or socio-economic status. Black Violin Foundation's inaugural program, the Musical Innovation Grant for Continuing Education, provides scholarships to young music students to attend a program of their liking that fosters musical creativity and innovation.

**Black Violin | blackviolin.net
Black Violin Foundation | blackviolinfoundation.org**