

A musical match made at Epcot: Community groups perform at Epcot International Festival of the Arts

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. Feb. 23, 2018— While the Epcot international Festival of the Arts has come to a close, the memories made at the festival are sure to last for years. Some of those memories were made by Central Florida performers who were invited to bring their local talent into the international festival.

Five groups took to the stage at the America Gardens Theatre, bringing a range of vocal and instrumental performances across several festival evenings. The Orlando Repertory Theatre's Power Chords, Negro Spiritual Scholarship Foundation, Encore Performing Arts, Florida Symphony Youth Orchestra and Central Florida Community Arts each were invited to showcase their artistic talents for Epcot Guests.

"Giving our young performers a platform like Epcot to showcase their talents has been incredible," said Gene Columbus, executive director of the Orlando Repertory Theatre. "The Power Chords are a youth performance group that has appeared in many locations around Central Florida, but there's nothing like the magic of Disney to make a performance extra special. It was an emotional, powerful day we spent on stage at the Epcot International Festival of the Arts and we wouldn't trade it for the world."

The collaborations were formed by Walt Disney World Corporate Citizenship and the Epcot festival leadership teams, who saw a unique opportunity to include groups from Central Florida.

"We love working with our nonprofit community and are always looking for ways to shine a spotlight on the great work they do," said Nancy Gidusko, director of Walt Disney World Resort corporate citizenship. "In the case of Epcot International Festival of the Arts, the spotlight was literal! But, more than including talented performers, we also want to make sure we're bringing awareness for all they do to keep the arts alive in Central Florida every day."

In addition to the performing arts groups, the Crealde School of Art and Orlando Museum of Art presented live workshops and seminars during the festival. Crealde also brought a selection of student artwork as part of a gallery in Innovations in Future World.

"If there's any part I've played, the vital part is coordinating these talents, and encouraging these talents, and carrying them down a certain line. It's like pulling together a big orchestra." - Walt Disney