

# THE MUSE

E - M A G A Z I N E

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*From Our Stage to Your Inbox*





## A NOTE FROM OUR DIRECTOR

As summer winds down, we're still riding the excitement from a busy season of shows and performances here at VPAC! From Broadway Boot Camp to graduations, it's been a summer full of music, creativity, and unforgettable moments.

Looking ahead, we're gearing up for another action-packed season, and we couldn't be more excited to bring incredible performances, both local and national, right here to Cypress. With each show, we aim to connect, inspire, and share the joy of live performance with our community.

Thank you for being part of this journey with us,

Nicole Williamson  
Director, CFISD Visual & Performing Arts Center

# IN THIS ISSUE



## 1 FEATURED EVENT

*This October 19, Gary V brings his incomparable energy to the VPAC. Whether you are a longtime fan or hearing his music for the first time, this is a rare chance to experience the performer who has defined a generation.*



## 2 FROM LEARNING TO LIVE PERFORMANCE

*Jazz and mariachi campers turned practice into performance, showing off skills, energy, and unforgettable musical moments.*



## 3 BEHIND THE PUNCHLINE

*We sat down with Chinedu to talk comedy, life on tour, and what keeps him inspired. From high school talent shows to sold-out stages, Chinedu opens up about his comedy career and creative process.*



## 4 STARS, STRIPES, AND SOUND

*From the White House to VPAC, "The President's Own" has inspired audiences for over 200 years. Experience the artistry and tradition of the Marine Corps Band, renowned worldwide for its excellence.*



## 5 STAFF SPOTLIGHT

*Meet a member of the VPAC Team. Get to know the many faces, and talents that make every experience here at the VPAC a memorable one.*

THE VISUAL & PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

# BRINGING THE ARTS CLOSER TO HOME

## Rediscover the arts, right here in Cypress.

At the Visual and Performing Arts Center, creativity knows no boundaries. The VPAC is a place where all forms of creativity come to life. No need to head downtown — our stage brings the best in theater, symphony, opera, dance, and visual arts to you.



**Looking for your next night out or event venue?**

Scan the QR code for a list of upcoming shows and book your next event.



1

# GARY V TAKES THE STAGE AT VPAC

*Four decades of music, energy, and inspiration*

For more than 40 years, Gary Valenciano, or Gary V to his fans, has been a force of nature in music and entertainment. Known for his electrifying stage presence, soaring vocals, and heartfelt performances, he has become a living legend in the Philippines and beyond. From his earliest days on television and in films to his 39 albums and countless live shows, Gary V has built a career that blends talent, passion, and inspiration in equal measure.

Audiences know him as Mr. Pure Energy, and it's easy to see why. His performances are a spectacle of movement and music, combining the dance mastery of Michael Jackson with the vocal agility of Al Jarreau and Jacob Collier. Beyond the technical brilliance, Gary V has a rare gift for connecting with people. His songs move hearts, lift spirits, and leave fans returning to his music again and again.

Gary V's awards read like a career retrospective of excellence. He has won 12 Awit Awards (the Philippine equivalent of the Grammy Awards) for Best Performance by a Male Recording Artist and three Best Album of the Year awards. He has filled stadiums across the globe—from Manila's historic Luneta Grandstand to the Araneta Coliseum, the MOA Arena, and stages in Los Angeles, London, Dubai, and Singapore. He has performed alongside international stars like Brian McKnight, Cliff Richard, and Kool and the Gang, and continues to bring global hits to Filipino audiences on television.

But Gary V is more than an entertainer. He is a survivor, a philanthropist, and an ambassador of hope. Living with Type 1 diabetes for more than 45 years, and a survivor of cardiac bypass surgery and kidney cancer, he continues to inspire millions with his energy, resilience, and faith. Alongside his wife Angeli and their children Paolo, Gabriel, and Kiana, Gary V supports charitable programs, scholarship initiatives, and feeding programs that have changed countless lives.

This October 19, Gary V brings his incomparable energy to the VPAC. Whether you are a longtime fan or hearing his music for the first time, this is a rare chance to experience the performer who has defined a generation. Expect unforgettable songs, dazzling movement, and that magnetic energy that has earned him millions of fans worldwide.

Don't miss the opportunity to see Gary V live at VPAC—a night of music, inspiration, and pure energy you will remember forever.

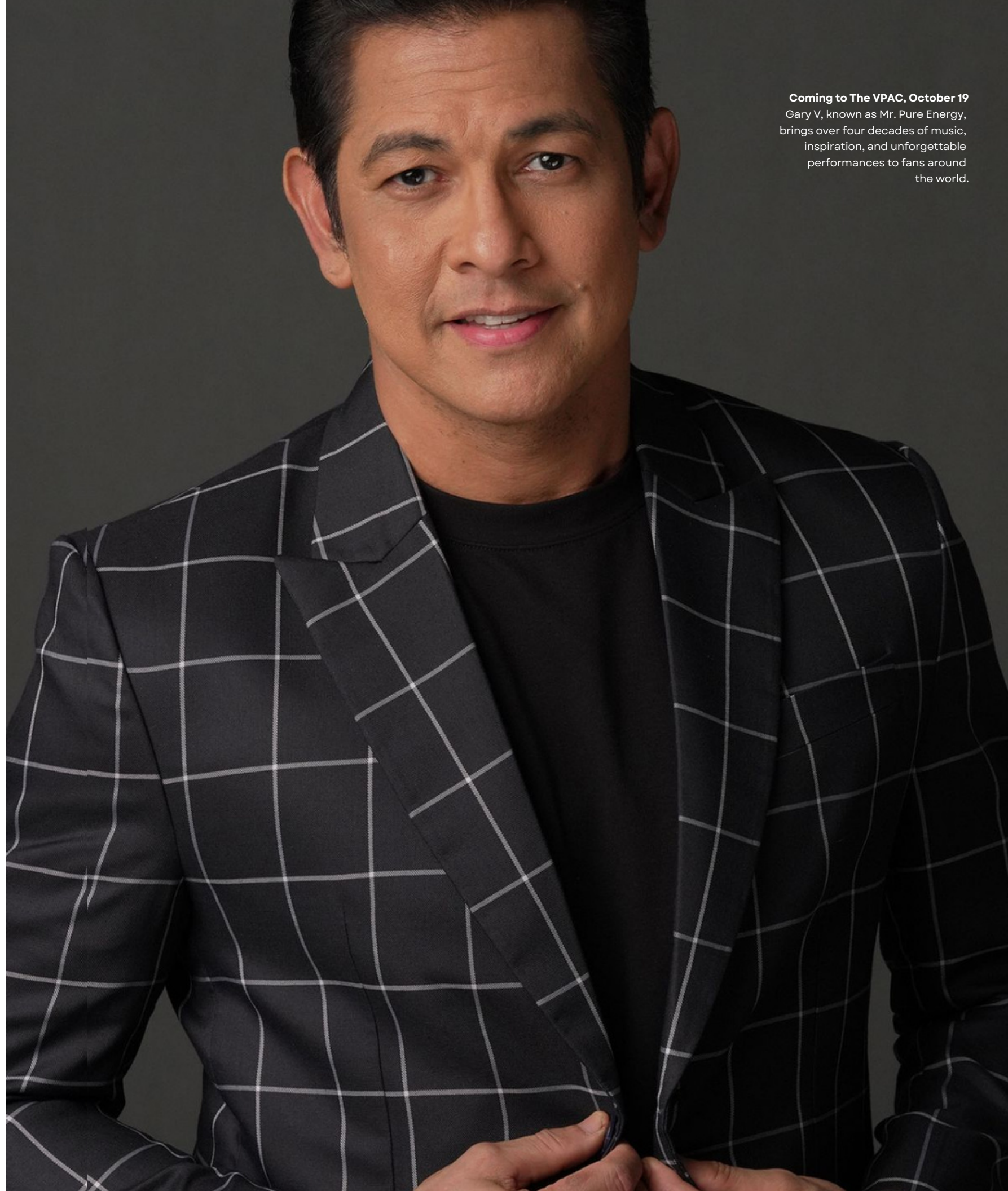


**COMING OCTOBER 19 | 5 P.M.**

For more information and to purchase your tickets, scan the QR code.

**Coming to The VPAC, October 19**

Gary V, known as Mr. Pure Energy, brings over four decades of music, inspiration, and unforgettable performances to fans around the world.



2

# SUMMER SOUNDS

*Jazz and Mariachi Camps*

From June 2 - 5, 2025, CFISD students came together for a week of music, learning, and performance at our Jazz and Mariachi Camps. Across the district, young musicians explored new techniques, practiced improvisation, and collaborated with peers in an immersive, hands-on experience.

The week crescendoed in dynamic concerts that brought families and the community together. From smooth jazz riffs to lively mariachi melodies, the students filled the stage with energy, passion, and pure joy.

If you missed it, don't worry—here are a few snapshots from the night. We just wish the magazine had sound!



# 3 LAUGHS, LIFE & COMEDY

*From his first joke to stages across the U.S.*



Last month, on July 26, Chinedu brought his sharp wit and infectious humor to the VPAC stage. After the show, we had a chance to sit down with him and ask a few questions about his journey, inspirations, and experience performing at VPAC.

**Q: Let's start at the beginning – how did you first get into comedy? Was there a particular moment that made you say, "This is what I want to do?"**

*A: My first start in comedy was hosting my high school talent show when I was 16. Before that, I told my first joke in front of my 7th-grade math class, and they all laughed—followed by a \$20 tip from my teacher, lol. After that, I said to myself, "This is what I want to do."*

**Q: Who were your comedic influences growing up? Are there any performers who shaped your style or inspired your career path?**

*A: Sinbad, Eddie Murphy, Martin Lawrence, and Jim Carrey. A comedian named Godfrey helped shape my stand-up comedy. I remember watching him on ComicView when I was in the 8th grade, and he was the first Nigerian I saw doing comedy. It was very inspiring.*

**Q: What's your writing process like? Do you draw mostly from personal experience, current events, or pure imagination?**

*A: My writing process comes from my personal experience, my family, and sometimes my imagination, lol.*

**Q: Comedy is a powerful way to bring people together. What role do you think humor plays in community and culture today?**

*A: It plays a very big role because, despite all differences, we all laugh in the same language.*

**Q: You've performed on stages across Texas and the U.S. – how does performing at a venue like VPAC compare to those experiences?**

*A: The VPAC is hands-down one of my favorite venues. From the quality design, ample parking, to the amazing staff, the VPAC should be considered one of the top venues in Houston and Cypress.*

**Q: What were your first impressions of the VPAC audience and atmosphere? Any standout moments from the night?**

*A: My first impression of the VPAC was, "Where has this venue been?!?" lol. A big standout moment was how amazing the crowd sounds in the theater, as well as the phenomenal production options each show gets.*

**Q: And finally, where can people catch you next or follow your work online?**

*A: They can catch me at the Houston Improv on 9/21 for my birthday show. They can follow me everywhere [@chineduogu](#)*



4

# PRECISION AND PRIDE

*The Marine Corps Band, “The President’s Own”*



Get ready for a performance unlike any other as the United States Marine Corps Band, “The President’s Own,” brings its world-class musicianship and rich history to the VPAC October 30, at 7:30 p.m. Established in 1798, this prestigious ensemble has played at the White House, state ceremonies, and countless national events, serving as both a symbol of American tradition and a showcase of musical excellence.

Known for their precision, versatility, and powerful performances, “The President’s Own” combines a variety of styles—from classical and jazz to contemporary and patriotic music. Comprised of highly trained Marine musicians, the band has a long-standing reputation for excellence and has inspired audiences across the nation and around the world.

VPAC audiences will experience firsthand the energy, skill, and pride that have made this band a cornerstone of American music for over two centuries.

#### **JULY 11, 1798**

President John Adams signed an Act of Congress establishing the United States Marine Band. The original “32 drummers and fifers” assisted in recruiting Marines and entertained residents.

#### **COMING TO THE VPAC OCTOBER 30 | 7:30 P.M.**

While this event is free, tickets are required. Tickets will be available September 30, at noon.

For more information and to secure your tickets, scan the QR code.



5

# VIEWS AT THE VPAC

We love highlighting and sharing all the moments that make our space so special!

Want to be featured in the next edition of *The Muse*? Follow and tag us (@vpaccfisd) in your photos —we'd love to shine the spotlight on you!



@cyranchband



@bbl.photo.events



@themtj



@vpaccfisd



#cfisdhsjn

6

# STAFF SPOTLIGHT

**What's your name?** Hey, I'm Dan K.

**How long have you worked here?** 3 Years

**What 's your role here at the VPAC?** Technical Manager

**Q: What does a typical day look like for you during a show week?**

A: On event days, I usually arrive with my team an hour before the client to make sure everything's up and running and the building is ready. During the event, I work closely with the client to keep things running smoothly while supporting my team as they handle lighting, sound, and video. After things wrap, my team and I make sure the client's gear is loaded out and the space is prepped for whoever's next. When I'm not immediately needed on stage for the current event, I'm usually working on preparations for an upcoming one.

**Q: What's your favorite VPAC memory or moment so far?**

A: When my oldest son Ben's class came to see a show here, I got to hang out with them in the audience and answer their questions about the theater and the show coming up. He was really excited for them to see and hear about my job.

**Q: Which space at the VPAC do you enjoy most, and why?**

A: The main stage. It's a great space with lots of potential.

**Q: What first got you interested in the arts or production world?**

A: My first interest in the arts began with going to shows with my mom when I was a kid. I got into production because running lights and sound for my friends' juggling shows was a fun way to hang out with them—and make a few bucks.

**Q: Do you have a favorite artist, show, or performance genre?**

A: Really depends on my mood but professionally I have worked on big musicals most of my career.

**Q: If you could see any performer or production here, who would it be?**

A: I'd like to see us bring in some of the Broadway tours.

**Q: What's one fun fact people might not know about you?**

A: Touring as a stagehand has taken me to 48 states and 43 different countries.

**Q: Go-to snack during long show days?**

A: I like a cosmic crisp apple.

**Q: What would be your walk-up song?**

A: The Fixer by Pearl Jam

**Q: Anything else you'd like to share?**

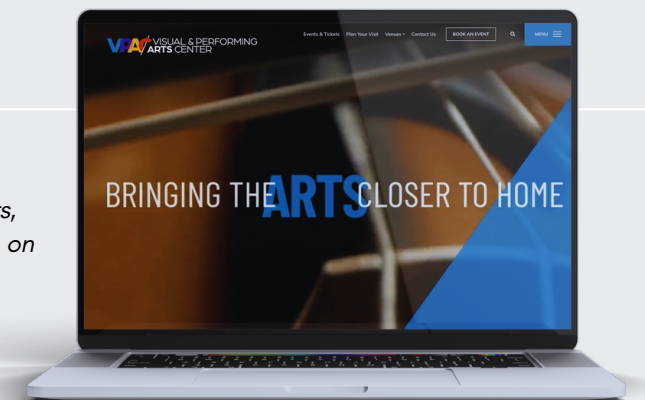
A: One of my favorite backstage stories happened during a scene shift for CATS. Two local stagehands and I went out on stage to move scenery while hidden behind a drop. The plan was simple: the two locals would move some set pieces, I'd do my part and double-check, then we'd leave quickly before the drop flew out.

But one of the local crew got delayed and was still on stage as the drop went out. What made the moment unforgettable was that the drop caught his shirt and pulled it right up and over his head. For a brief second, there he was—unexpectedly shirtless—surrounded by actors in full cat costumes and in front of a full audience—before he noticed my frantic gestures and laughter from the wings urging him to get offstage.

## Stay Connected

Want to stay in the loop on all the upcoming performances, events, and behind-the-scenes moments? Visit [our website](#) and follow us on social media for the latest updates, announcements, and ways to experience the arts — closer to home.

Follow @vpaccfisd on





In June, we hosted the CFISD Mariachi Concert. This cherished musical art form showcased dynamic group performances, colorful costumes, and unforgettable cultural expression. From first-time performers to seasoned student musicians, this concert highlighted student hard work, talent, and community pride.