



For Immediate Release

July 29, 2025

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**BETTY BRINN CHILDREN'S MUSEUM TO PREMIERE ORIGINAL SONG COMPOSED
BY 2025 ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE MALIK JOHNSON**

MILWAUKEE, WI (July 29, 2025) – What does being a kid at the Betty Brinn Children's Museum sound like? The Museum is inviting the community to find out on August 27 at 10 a.m. when it will release an original song composed by its 2025 Artist-in-Residence, Grammy-nominated cellist Malik Johnson. The song is inspired by interactions with families at the Museum and turns the magic of play-based learning into music.

Attendees at the public song release event will be the first to hear a live performance of Johnson's brand new Betty Brinn Children's Museum song and see a making-of-the-song music video. An artist meet-and-greet will take place after the performance. The event is included with general Museum admission.

Johnson, a Milwaukee-born musician and music educator and alumnus of the Milwaukee Youth Symphony Orchestra, began working with the Betty Brinn Children's Museum in April. At the conclusion of his residency, he will have:

- Shared nearly 10 hours of live cello playing with Museum guests.
- Hosted four hours of Toddler Talkbacks alongside guest panelists including children's author Dionne Grayson, author and literacy expert Maya Smart, actor N'Jameh Camara and Pink Umbrella Theater Executive Director Katie Cummings.
- Led three social-emotional learning sessions with Betty Brinn Children's Museum members.

These weekly interactive performances and community conversations provided new and dynamic ways for children and caregivers to learn through music and explore themes like dreaming big dreams, positive self-expression, discovering personal talents and setting and achieving goals.

"As our first ever Artist-in-Residence, Malik Johnson's tenure at the Betty Brinn Children's Museum has been incredibly impactful, using music as a vehicle to connect children through rhythm and storytelling and showing our young visitors that creativity knows no boundaries," says Tina Quealy, CEO at Betty Brinn Children's Museum. "It's been powerful to watch kids see themselves reflected in the music and to watch them light up as they express themselves through art."

Johnson has two additional performances at the Museum—one on August 11 at 10:30 a.m. and one on August 21 at 10 a.m.—before his final appearance and song release on August 27. Learn more at <https://bbcmkids.org/artist-in-residence/>.

The Betty Brinn Children's Museum is deeply grateful to the generous private family donor whose support makes this residency possible. Because of their vision and investment, this program is

offered at no additional cost to our visitors, bringing world-class artistry and inspiration directly to our community.

About Malik Johnson

Malik Johnson a.k.a. “99TheProducer” is a Grammy-nominated classically trained cellist, composer and music producer based in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Malik has been passionately teaching music to youth across Illinois and Southeastern Wisconsin to help them discover the transformative power of music. He has had the honor of performing alongside artists like Stevie Wonder, John Legend and PJ Morton. Malik continues to produce for various artists, blending his classical training with modern sounds to create music that inspires and connects with audiences of all ages.

About Betty Brinn Children’s Museum

The mission of the Betty Brinn Children’s Museum (BBCM) is to inspire all children to wonder and explore their world through play and innovative, hands-on learning experiences. The Museum opened in 1995 and serves almost 200,000 visitors each year at its downtown Milwaukee location. BBCM is dedicated to ensuring that all children have access to its interactive educational exhibits and programs designed to promote the social, emotional and intellectual growth of children from birth through age 10.

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