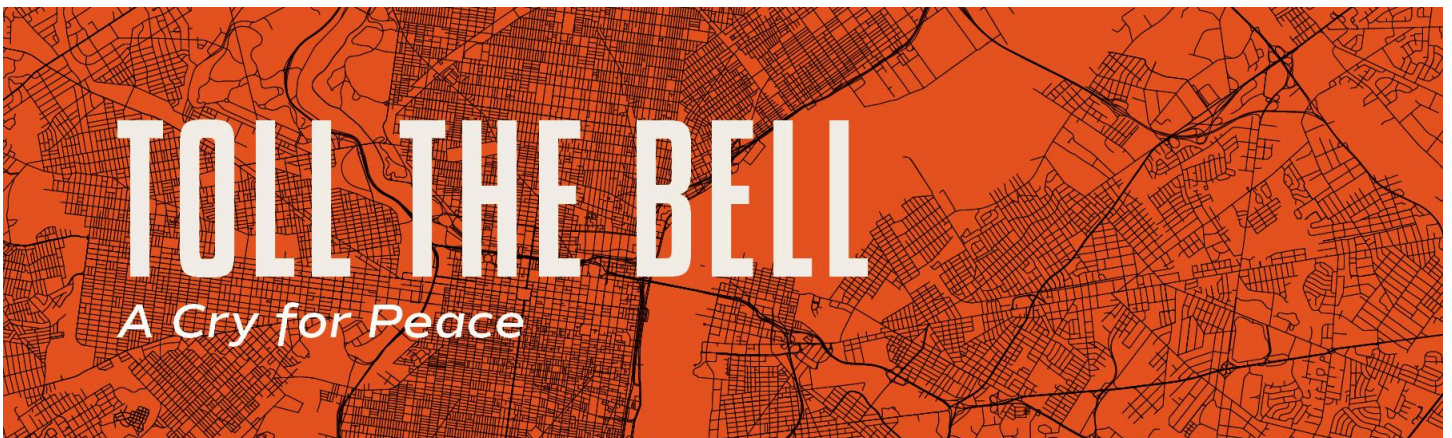


PENN LIVE ARTS CONCLUDES 23/24 SEASON WITH CITY-WIDE SOUND INSTALLATION, TOLL THE BELL

A cry for peace on National Gun Violence Awareness Day honors those who have lost their lives and raises awareness for those working to have a positive impact in Philadelphia



PennLiveArts.org

April 24, 2024 (Philadelphia, PA) — [Penn Live Arts](https://PennLiveArts.org) (PLA) – the leading presenter of innovative and transformative performing arts experiences in Philadelphia – will close its 2023/2024 programming with [Toll the Bell](#) on **National Gun Violence Awareness Day, Friday, June 7, 2024**, a city-wide sound installation culminating a season-long focus on the gun violence epidemic affecting our city and the country as a whole.

Toll the Bell is one of the biggest national sound installations in support of gun violence awareness. This large, coordinated community initiative features over 40 partners that include faith-based sites and community impact organizations. Toll the Bell serves as a warning and a sonic device to disrupt the environment for Philadelphians, inviting them to stop and reflect on this tragic issue. Bells and other sounds will be heard from West Philly to Old City and beyond, with over 20 sound partners confirmed to participate and more to be announced.

In partnership with [Interfaith Philadelphia](#) and the Religious Leader's Council of Greater Philadelphia, a vigil service will take place at **12:30 pm** at the **Annenberg Center** (3680 Walnut Street), with various speakers including Rev. Charles Lattimore Howard, University Chaplain and Vice President for Social Equity & Community. This service will honor Philadelphians who lost their lives this past year to gun violence. Following, those in attendance will walk together to the Philadelphia Episcopal Cathedral (19 S 38th Street) shortly after 1:00 pm.

At **1:00 pm**, there will be a prolonged period of bell ringing and other community-driven sound-making across the city and beyond. Penn Live Arts has identified specific anchor sites that will be open to the general public for listening and other means of reflection during this city-wide installation: **Philadelphia Episcopal Cathedral** (19 S 38th Street) in West Philly, which will have an exhibition of the [Souls Shot Portrait Project](#) and offer advocacy letter writing, **Mt. Tabor AME Church** (961 N 7th Street) in North Philly, and **Arch Street Meeting House** (320 Arch Street) and **Christ Church** (20 N American Street) in Old City. Twenty more sites – including Church of the Holy Trinity, Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul, and Temple University Lenfest Circle – will participate in sound-making and reflection, with more to be announced. A full list of confirmed sound-making and reflection sites is below and [a map of these locations can be found here](#).

“Sound plays a profound role in our societal fabric. From signaling danger to uniting communities in celebration, sound is a powerful conduit for communication and solidarity,” shares **Executive & Artistic Director Christopher A. Gruits**. “Just as the tolling bell echoes through our city’s past, it also resonates with our present aspirations for positive change. With Toll the Bell, we aim to amplify the voices of those driving transformative action within our communities. Together, we hope to harness the evocative power of sound to uplift individuals and organizations dedicated to shaping a brighter future for all.”

Philadelphia has experienced historic increases in gun-related crime, claiming an unprecedented number of lives and bringing immeasurable pain and trauma to our communities. This endemic issue affects us all, but disproportionately impacts urban neighborhoods and people of color.

With Toll the Bell, PLA has focused its 23/24 season artist residencies with the Negro Ensemble Company (NEC) and Rennie Harris Puremovement on exploring the tragedy and trauma of the gun violence epidemic affecting Philadelphia and the entire country. With the NEC and Rennie Harris Puremovement, the institution offered a range of programs that brought awareness to the issue of gun violence, while honoring the victims of this tragedy. The focus is timely, and these artists addressed it head-on with their own interpretations, perspectives, and lived experiences.

Toll the Bell is not a profile of tragedy, but rather a call to action – a literal ringing of the bell – to honor our fellow citizens who have lost their lives and raise awareness for those working to have a positive impact in our city.

Penn Live Arts is proud to collaborate with many partners across the city and beyond for Toll the Bell, including Penn’s Office of the Chaplain, Interfaith Philadelphia, Partners for Sacred Places, and Temple University. [A full list of partners can be found here](#). PLA continues to welcome new partners for this event, either those who can ring bells or make other sounds as well as those who can help amplify these efforts. [Those interested in partnering with Toll the Bell can learn more here](#).

PLA encourages the community to engage with this project on social media by using the hashtag **#TolltheBell** in relation to the sound installation, spreading awareness, and sharing personal stories.

Penn Live Arts has further compiled a list of [anti-violence resources available here](#) for individuals seeking to learn more about anti-violence initiatives, get involved in supporting these organizations, or find help for themselves or others. These resources offer valuable information, guidance, and support for those looking to contribute to creating safer, more compassionate communities in Philadelphia.

Event Information

Toll the Bell

Friday, June 7, 2024, National Gun Violence Awareness Day

Link: PennLiveArts.org/TolltheBell

Interfaith Vigil Service at 12:30 pm
Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts | 3680 Walnut Street

Bell Ringing at 1:00 pm

A prolonged period of bell ringing and other community-driven sound-making will take place across the city and beyond at the following locations:

West Philadelphia

Philadelphia Episcopal Cathedral | 19 S 38th St (**open to the general public**)
St. Agatha - St. James Parish/Roman Catholic Church | 3728 Chestnut St
Tabernacle United Church | 3700 Chestnut St
University Lutheran Church | 3637 Chestnut St
St Mary's Church, Hamilton Village | 3916 Locust Walk
St. Francis De Sales Catholic Church | 4625 Springfield Ave
Calvary-St. Augustine Episcopal Church | 814 N 41st St
St Ignatius of Loyola Catholic Church | 636 N 43rd St
E. Craig Sweeten Alumni House | 3533 Locust Walk

North Philadelphia

Old Zion Lutheran Church | 628 N Broad St
Mision Cristiana Elim Philadelphia | 1204 Melon St
Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception | 830 N Franklin St
Saint Nicholas Eastern Orthodox Church | 817 N 7th St
Mt. Tabor AME Church | 961 N 7th St (**open to the general public**)
St. Peter the Apostle Roman Catholic Church | 1019 N 5th St
Temple University Lenfest Circle | 1801 Broad St

Center City & Old City

Arch Street Meeting House | 320 Arch St (**open to the general public**)
Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul | 1723 Race St
Christ Church | 20 N American St (**open to the general public**)
St. Augustine's Roman Catholic Church | 243 N Lawrence St
The Church of the Holy Trinity | 1904 Walnut St
First Unitarian Church of Philadelphia | 2125 Chestnut St

South Philadelphia

Drexel Catholic Newman Community | 111 S 38th St

[A map of confirmed sites can be found here.](#)

Additional locations for sound-making and reflection to be shared at a later date.

About Penn Live Arts

Penn Live Arts (PLA), headquartered at the Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts, is the leading presenter of innovative and transformative performing arts experiences in Philadelphia. A vital resource for the performing arts at the University of Pennsylvania, PLA is an artistic crossroads joining Penn and the greater Philadelphia region through world-class music, dance, theatre, and film on campus and at venues throughout the city, serving an annual audience of over 80,000. Penn Live Arts emphasizes artistic and intellectual excellence and diversity in its offerings; prioritizes broad inclusiveness in the artists, audiences, and groups it serves; and expands arts access by actively engaging a wide range of audiences and inclusive communities from campus, the West Philadelphia neighborhood, and the surrounding region. <https://pennlivearts.org/>

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