The 2019/20 school year marked BSA’s 40th anniversary. As an institution, we celebrated forty years of providing opportunities and creating pathways to success for Baltimore’s young artists.

TO KICK-OFF THIS YEAR we organized a September event called “40for40.” In a single day we deployed five musical ensembles to eight locations (each) around the city to perform unannounced concerts. Students sang and played for preschoolers, the Oriole bird, diners at Belvedere Square, the homeless, guests at the Pratt library and so many other members of the greater Baltimore community. The whole day was documented by BSA Film students and shared through social media, and on our website. 40for40 was the perfect reminder of the power that young artist voices have in this world for our entire community.

IN OCTOBER we welcomed home over 400 alumni in celebration of our 40th anniversary. The weekend featured a jazz performance, multi-disciplinary masterclasses, a reunion party and a family-fun morning. (Re)Connecting with so many graduates, is a reminder of all that BSA has been and will continue to be. Our alumni are finding success in this world as teachers, practicing artists, change-makers, entrepreneurs, doctors and even spearheading the founding of The Atlanta School for the Arts. As the embodiment of our work, our alumni are truly the greatest measure of our success.

IN PARTNERSHIP with Telluride MountainFilm on Tour, BSA hosted Mountainfilm On Tour in the Fall of 2019. The weekend included free matinee screenings for 1500 Baltimore City students along with a public screening of documentary films. Matinee audience members screened three documentaries and were then able to participate in brief Q&A sessions with filmmakers and subjects of one of the films, Changing the Game.

THE ACTING STUDENTS presented a new experimental theatre performance piece in December at The Former Residences of the Ambassadors of Spain. Under the direction of Luz Nicolás, student actors used translated extracts by Spanish authors such as San Juan de la Cruz, Calderón de la Barca, Miguel de Unamuno, Santa Teresa and Irma Correa to create a work in progress.

BSA’S NUTCRACKER was once again presented to sold out audiences. In addition to four public performances, we engaged with our partners at BCPSS to present four free matinees for 1,500 elementary and middle school children. For many students our productions are the only live theatre experience they are able to attend. The power in seeing
student artists who look like the audience on stage is immeasurable—these events are truly one of the highlights of our program each year.

**IN FEBRUARY**, our students produced an outstanding performance in celebration of Black History Month. The celebration included dance, music, spoken word and video all created and performed by BSA students.

**EXPRESSIONS 2020**, Forty and Flourishing, was one of our most exciting and memorable celebrations. From an outstanding student performance, to a weekend full of engaged community members.

**MARYLAND SCHOOLS CLOSED** abruptly in March due to the Covid-19 virus and world-wide pandemic. The BSA faculty, staff and students endured a long and complex distance learning schedule. And it is because of the determination and resilience, on the part of both our faculty and our students, that we have had remarkable results. Our arts training, in particular, was carefully choreographed, using imaginative instruction and innovative technologies to help our students transform their bedrooms and basements into personal studios.

**THANKS TO FINANCIAL GUIDANCE** from our Board of Trustees, we were able to continue to offer our training programs. Our students were provided with a full schedule of classes each day and we were able to honor our teaching artists’ full annual contracts. Our faculty came together as a community in ways we didn’t think would be possible (remotely) and we were incredibly proud of the curriculum we were able to provide for our students.

**ALSO OF NOTE THIS YEAR**, BSA was ranked, for the fifth consecutive year, the top high school in Baltimore City by U.S. News & World Report. In its 2019 rankings of 17,245 public schools across the country, BSA also placed in the top 5% nationwide, earning distinction as one of America’s Best High Schools and a Silver Badge.
OTHER MEASURABLE OUTCOMES OF 2019/2020 INCLUDE:

BSA’s class of 2020 boasted a 100% graduation rate and 100% of them also earned admission to post-secondary educational opportunities. Our graduates are currently enrolled in conservatories, public and private 4-year colleges, both locally and abroad, in addition to community colleges. By comparison, in 2018, the Baltimore City average graduation rate was 72%.

33% of rising BSA freshman students participated in our Summer Academic Assistance Program for students “at-risk” academically, working with full-time academic faculty to get the best possible start to the 2019-2020 school year.

Advanced Placement Tests: In 2019, BSA students took a total of 115 AP exams in English Language and Composition, English Literature and Composition, Calculus AB, and Spanish Language and Culture, Music Theory and Art History. 75% of tests scored earned a 3 or higher, as compared to 67.6% for the State of Maryland and 61.3% nationally.

In 2019, our students achieved excellent results on the Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program examinations. Their success rates were as follows: Algebra I, 13.9% and English 10, 62.2%. As compared to the district wide averages of: Algebra I, 9.2% and English 16.1%.

College graduation rates (within 6 years) as reported by BSA’s class of 2012 is nearly double the national average.

This past school year, about 25% of our student body received student support plans including 504, IEP and school-initiated Student Support.
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We are incredibly grateful to all of our amazing donors and friends of the BSA! Below are the names of donors who contributed to the Baltimore School For the Arts Foundation during the 2019-2020 fiscal year.

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