Online “Concert” events – OIGC style!

Oakland Interfaith Gospel Choir successfully produced our first online concert on Saturday, April 25, 2020. Our event consisted of two parts: a group voice lesson hosted on Zoom, and a full-length performance streamed on Facebook live.

Watch OIGC’s 2020 Spring Musical here!

Part 1: Vocal Workshop

Our Free Spring Concert traditionally includes a workshop portion, so we adapted to include a Zoom-based voice lesson. Attendees were happy with the experience and we are already planning a series of additional content.

- One hour free lesson hosted by Artistic Director Terrance Kelly
- Participants registered via Eventbrite to receive a link to the private Zoom session
- To keep on track, participant responses were limited. We disabled chat and questions, but allowed interaction by inviting specific individuals to sing and receive feedback. Participants remained on mute unless called on; a moderator assisted by muting participants who had technical difficulties.
- In total, approximately 350 registered and 150 people attended - we are guessing that a number of the registrants who did not attend had intended to only register for the concert.

Part 2: Concert

Gospel concerts are traditionally interactive; to achieve some level of audience engagement we moderated a live chat on social media during the presentation, and accepted questions from the audience at the end.

- One hour concert with 15 minute post-show Q&A
  - 1 video from each of Oakland Interfaith’s three choirs
  - 1 video each from 3 guest artists, including a brief introduction and a pre-recorded performance
- 1 Pre-recorded invocation by a Reverend in our community
- 1 Pre-recorded donor pitch by a board member
- Our Artistic and Executive Directors served as live emcees
- Additionally, we opened the Facebook Live stream 30 minutes early, running an ad reel with a countdown timer, and we included credits at the end.

- The concert was executed via a Zoom meeting, using the built-in Zoom feature to stream to Facebook live. This allowed the emcees and production team to coordinate between live and pre-recorded elements in a private space. The production team was in the live Zoom room, but muted and with video off so they did not appear. This allowed the production team to communicate with emcees via the zoom chat feature, which did not display on the Facebook live feed.
- Additionally, staff facilitated and encouraged engagement with audience participants on the Facebook live video chat feed.
- We also used Zoom’s built in record feature and were able to edit the final recording for archival purposes, and for later posting to YouTube.
- In total, approximately 450 viewed the concert live, and 700 people viewed the concert recording within its first few days on YouTube.

**Tips for streaming your own virtual concert**

Build your program around your existing resources. Practice. Pre-Record. Prepare.
- OIGC produced a live audio recording at a concert shortly before COVID-19 hit. We used this as a foundation and built video content around it.
- Our three choirs each pre-recorded a live lip-synched video, moving together along with verbal guidance from our director. This was recorded in Zoom and then that clip was merged with the pre-recorded audio track using video editing software. We planned ample time ahead of the recording to assist singers with Zoom, setting up framing and lighting so that everyone looked as good as possible in their home environments.
- Don’t have enough material? Invite artists in your community to contribute video content. Collaborations also help increase cross-promotion and viewership.
- Pre-record as much as possible. This may feel like cheating for a “live” concert, but it will ensure you can provide quality content with fewer technical issues. The live element for our production was the emcee interaction and Q&A portion
- Create a simple guide - show flow - for your team to use during the concert. Include details such as staff roles, zoom links, names of files to be run, how to contact each other, and a show flow with technical notes. Your team should be able to look at this document and see all the information they need for the day of the event.
- Be sure to include plenty of links and references to donation opportunities, such as virtual tip-jars, your website donor links, or other donation platforms.

OIGC looks forward to bringing more quality virtual content to you in the future!
*To hear about future OIGC events, join our mailing list or follow us on Facebook.*