

DAVENPORT HOUSE MUSEUM PRESENTS ‘LIVING HISTORY: YELLOW FEVER IN SAVANNAH 1820’

Savannah, Ga. – Sept. 29, 2021 – The Davenport House Museum will present a living history depiction of early 19th-century life in Savannah, focusing on the Yellow Fever epidemic, on Friday and Saturday evenings in October. The performances will begin at 7 p.m. at the Davenport House Museum, located at 324 E. State St. in Savannah. Audience sizes will be limited, so patrons are encouraged to purchase their tickets in advance.

The 2021 living history production will be a 50-minute, dramatic re-creation of the Yellow Fever epidemic and the psychological effects of losses it caused the city’s residents. The performance will examine contemporary 1820 medical treatments, and attendees will meet ordinary citizens with complaints about the government, home remedies, combatting mosquitoes and the true cause of the fever. With its shows, the Davenport House relays factual historical events pertaining to the epidemic while conveying the profound emotions of grief and fear that citizens grappled with.

The presentation features a script compiled from period sources specially for the Davenport House and includes vignettes adapted from works by Washington Irving and Conrad Aiken, by playwright/screenwriter Raleigh Marcell. He is a professionally-produced and published playwright, his four published one-act plays having been performed by over 2,000 schools, theaters, and colleges in the United States, Canada, Australia, and Turkey.

“Each year, I look through the research on 1820 as well as period literature to see what feels right. I have been working on the idea to include literary works from Savannah’s past. Who better than a great writer to give us insights into the mind of the 1820s? We delve into William Cullen Bryan, Conrad Aiken – though a 20th century writer – and Washington Irving to give us a sense of the spiritual world,” Marcell said.

According to Davenport House Museum Director Jamie Credle, the Yellow Fever living history presentation is always popular with audiences, and this year's performance has a special connection with present-day events.

"This year's Yellow Fever performance focuses on the people of Savannah and how the epidemic affected them mentally and physically," Davenport House Museum Director Jamie Credle said. "Our guests will appreciate this year's presentation particularly when they compare it to current health concerns. They will also enjoy seeing the house at twilight and *live action* performers portraying people from the past."

The production will begin in Columbia Square, in front of the Davenport House, and guests will make their way through the candlelit home. Guests are asked to arrive on time. Before purchasing tickets, those interested should consider that the performance requires that guests walk up and down the stairs and maneuver in low light.

Tickets to the Yellow Fever in Savannah performance are \$16 in advance and \$19 at the door. To purchase tickets, please visit www.davenportmuseum.org, call 912-236-8097, or by them in person at the Davenport House Museum gift shop. Due to the sensitive subject matter, this program is not suitable for children under the age of 8.

The mission of the Davenport House Museum, a Historic Savannah Foundation property, is to preserve and interpret the American Federal-style house and the artifacts within, built by Master Builder Isaiah Davenport for his household, with an emphasis on the years 1820-27. The Davenport House seeks to educate, enrich, and inspire our visitors and the community, as well as recognize the historical role of the house in the founding of the Historic Savannah Foundation. Situated on Columbia Square at the corner of State and Habersham streets in historic downtown Savannah, it is one of the oldest brick structures in the city and sees approximately 40,000 visitors annually through its guided tours and education programs.

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