



Arts Midwest
2908 Hennepin Avenue, Ste 200
Minneapolis, MN 55408

July 20, 2007

Dear Friends:

Arts Midwest is preparing for a busy summer and fall as many of our programs shift into high gear. In just a few short months we will be hosting the 20th Anniversary Midwest Arts Conference, beginning a new visual arts exhibition tour, and kicking off the 2007-2009 Midwest World Fest cycle under a brand new name: Arts Midwest World Fest! In the following pages, please allow me to update you on our progress over the last few months and bring you up to speed on our exciting upcoming programming.

Midwest Arts Conference Prepares for 20th Anniversary Conference

From September 5-8, 2007, Arts Midwest will be hosting the 20th Annual Midwest Arts Conference in Columbus, Ohio. The largest booking conference of its kind in the Midwest, it once again will bring together hundreds of presenters, artists, managers, and agents to conduct business in the Exhibit Hall, experience unique showcases by a diverse range of artists, learn from in-depth professional development sessions, network and reconnect with colleagues, revitalize professional energies, and gain new insights into the world of performing arts touring and presenting.

Plans have been underway for this milestone conference for many months, and we are looking forward to revisiting Columbus! Arts Midwest has been working with the local host committee, co-chaired by Katherine Eckstrand of the Ohio Arts Council and Paul Hoy, Class Acts Entertainment, to prepare another wonderful Conference this year. Please visit <http://www.artsmidwest.org/programs/mac> for registration information and a complete list of professional development sessions.

Midwest World Fest Begins New Cycle with New Name



Elementary school students in Brookings, SD participate in an Esta workshop.

Midwest World Fest will begin its 2007-2009 cycle as **Arts Midwest World Fest**. Accompanying the new name will be new promotional materials designed and generously donated by Risdall Marketing Group located in New Brighton, MN.

The program, which brings rich traditional music experiences to selected Midwestern communities, continues to address world issues of culture and identity, relation and conflict. Over a two year period Arts Midwest will present and tour four global musical ensembles in underserved

communities throughout our region. Each ensemble conducts intensive residencies in selected communities with activities such as low-cost public concerts; free school concerts; workshops with elementary-, middle-, and high-school students; and community outreach activities such as family workshops in public libraries, master classes with local musicians, and community-hosted dinners with the ensembles. The program reaches all nine of Arts Midwest's member states, providing communities that lack access to high-quality international arts and education programming with unique artist residencies.

"Our rural schools cannot afford to host performers of this caliber. Exposure to such great ambassadors from Israel for these students was wonderful to see."

- Terri Connell, Outreach Coordinator, Prairie du Chien, WI

The 2007-2009 cycle of Arts Midwest World Fest will begin on September 23rd with week-long residencies by Mauvais Sort, an ensemble from Quebec, through communities in our western region. New to Arts Midwest World Fest, these communities include:

- Spearfish, SD
- Bismarck, ND
- Hutchinson, MN
- Ames, IA
- Menomonie, WI



Student workshop in New Ulm, MN

Los Utrera, a Mexican Son Jarocho ensemble, will begin its tour next fall as well, bringing its lively music to:

- Nelsonville, OH
- Jasper, IN
- Elgin, IL
- Traverse City, MI
- Grand Rapids/Muskegon, MI

An Da Union, hailing from the Inner Mongolian region of China, and Esta, an Israeli ensemble returning to the program for a second time, will join Mauvais Sort and Los Utrera as participating ensembles this cycle.

Russel Wright: Living with Good Design

Russel Wright: Living with Good Design recently opened at the Palm Springs Arts Museum in Palm Springs, California. Collectors from all over Southern California attended the Opening and continue to flock to Palm Springs to see Wright's work, making it one of the Museum's highest attended exhibitions in recent years. The exhibition will run through September 2, 2007, and will then travel to Bellevue, Washington where it will open on October 6, 2007.



Kifah Barre posing in front of her photo.

Somali Documentary Project Exhibition Opens in Columbus

Earlier this year, documentary photographer Abdi Roble and writer Doug Rutledge spent four months in residency in Minnesota. Roble took more than 10,000 photographs, ranging from documentation of the Somali residents in the Twin Cities to Somali employees at the Jennie-O Turkey Plant in Wilmar, Minnesota. Arts Midwest, in partnership with the Columbus Museum of Art, is preparing a national tour of The Somali Documentary Project, which will include photographs from Minneapolis, MN; Columbus, OH; and the Dadaab refugee camp in Kenya. The exhibition will be on view at the Columbus Museum of Art from September 9 – November 25, 2007. Other confirmed venues include Bates College in Maine, where it will exhibit from March 24 – June 21, 2008, and the Weisman Museum at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis, Minnesota, in fall 2008. We are in discussion with other venues throughout the Midwest and the nation.

While in Minnesota, Roble and Rutledge spent one month as artists-in-residence at Ubah Medical Academy, located within the International Education Center in Minneapolis. The resulting student exhibition, titled *As I See It: Documentary Images by Students at Ubah Medical Academy*, was on display during Ordway Center for the Performing Arts' ArtWalk, a component of the Flint Hills International Children's Festival, from May 7 – June 3, 2007. Sponsored by Travelers, the exhibition was on view in the windows of Travelers, Inc. in downtown St. Paul. The students were also invited to a reception in their honor at Travelers on May 24, 2007.



Abdirizak Hassan standing in front of his photo.

Not only did the exhibition highlight the students' hard work in documenting their homes, school, and religious education, it served as a conduit for cultural dialogue among students and families in the Twin Cities.

The Big Read Prepares for Next Cycle

Arts Midwest continues to manage The Big Read on behalf of the National Endowment for the Arts. The Big Read was designed to revitalize the role of literature in American popular culture and bring the transformative power of literature into the lives of its citizens. In May, a panel convened and recommended 118 communities to participate in the September – December 2007 cycle of The Big Read. In the 2007 programming year, we will reach 48 states, Washington D.C., and Puerto Rico. Additionally, The Big Read was recently highlighted on CNN. To read more about the program and its future please visit the following website:

<http://www.cnn.com/2007/SHOWBIZ/books/06/25/nea.bigread/>

We are excited to welcome our new partners in The Big Read, and we look forward to a new cycle of original activities!

As always, our programs would not be possible without your ongoing support of Arts Midwest and its mission. I hope you are enjoying your summer and I look forward to seeing you soon. In the meantime, please feel free to contact me at 612-341-0755, ext. 24 with questions or comments about Arts Midwest.

Sincerely,

David Fraher
Executive Director