

October 10, 2008

Summer and fall have been extraordinarily busy for Arts Midwest, and I am pleased to update you on our accomplishments during the past few months.

### Midwest Arts Conference

The 21st annual Midwest Arts Conference concluded another successful event in Kansas City, Missouri. The Conference ran from September 17-20, 2008, and offered many networking and learning opportunities for the 938 attendees. The Marketplace served as a central meeting point for the 459 performing arts presenters to connect with the 261 exhibiting organizations, who represented more than 4,000 artists or ensembles.



There were a number of highlights from this year's Conference. Featured Speed Lead sessions offered participants a fun, fast-paced way to connect in a "speed dating"-style setting. Professional development sessions recorded an all-time high level of attendance, with topics ranging from discipline based discussions to audience development to legal issues. In addition to the formal workshops, many performing arts service organizations and presenter consortium groups held small group discussions about their current programming and grant opportunities.

We had a variety of support for the Conference this year, and we would like to thank our generous sponsors:

- National Endowment for the Arts
- SMG Artists
- Missouri Arts Council
- Windwood Theatricals
- IMG Artists
- Betsy DuBois Agency
- Hyperion Productions
- Riders in the Sky
- Keith Knight & Bear Claw Music
- Duelling Divas
- DC Artists Management
- NAPAMA
- Mike Green & Associates
- Canadian Consulates General of Chicago, Detroit, Dallas, and Minneapolis
- Wisconsin Center District
- Paul Taylor Dance Company
- Opus 3 Artists
- Délégation du Québec à Chicago
- ACTS, Inc. / Agency for Creative Talent Strategies, Inc.
- Andrea Anderson
- Americans for the Arts
- SMG Artists
- River City Artists Management
- Ed Keane Associates

## Performing Arts Fund

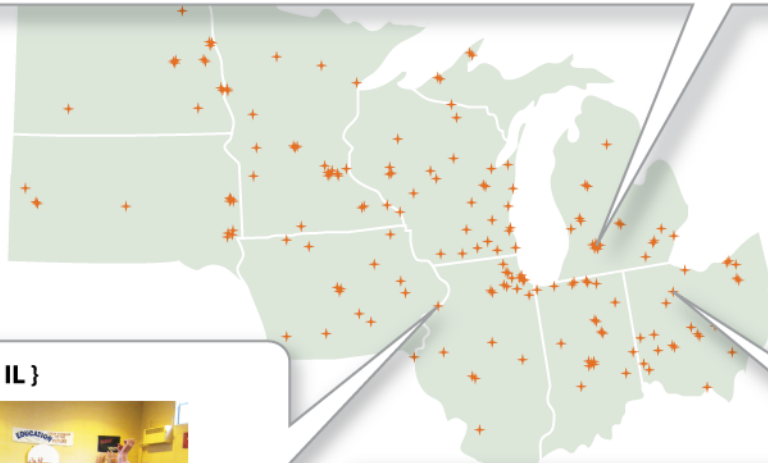
The 2007-2008 cycle of the Performing Arts Fund closed with our fiscal year on July 1, 2008. In total, the Performing Arts Fund supported 175 engagements during 2007-2008 that reached more than 290,000 residents across our region, 40% of which were youth.

### All 2007-2008 Performing Arts Fund Engagements

#### { Kalamazoo, MI }

Often as presenters, we are constrained by the length of time the artist is available at our location. This type of [longer] residency [assisted by the Performing Arts Fund] allows us to combine concert programming together with meaningful outreach education programs for the community. As a result, we are able to reach an incredibly broad regional constituency that includes adults, children, underserved individuals, at-risk youth, university music students, high school music students, disabled adults, and elderly individuals.

*Anne Berquist, Executive Director  
Fontana Chamber Arts*



#### { Rock Island, IL }



*Photo credit: Susan Wahlmann  
Performing Arts & Arts-In-Education Director  
Quad City Arts*

#### { Findlay, OH }

The school day performances allowed youth to learn about the fine art of ballet...The in-class workshops took that learning one step further by explaining how ballets are created and allowing youth to connect the art form to their daily lives. Your support has allowed us to bring these types of quality programs to our rural area. Thank you!

*Char Johannigman, Executive Director  
The Arts Partnership of Greater Hancock County*

## Arts Midwest World Fest

These past few months have been filled with planning and preparation as Arts Midwest World Fest enters the second half of the 2007-2009 cycle. New agreements, visa applications, tour schedules, and transportation have been arranged, and planning began in earnest with our state arts agencies for determining partner communities for the 2009-2011 cycle. While looking ahead, Arts Midwest also convened a focus group of community leaders from past and current program cycles to evaluate the

program's progress, its communications, the curriculum, and more. The knowledge gleaned from these discussions will be used to further refine Arts Midwest World Fest 2009-2011.



Meanwhile, Arts Midwest World Fest made its debut on YouTube with a short video from a school workshop with Chinese ensemble An Da Union, which you can view at [www.youtube.com/artsmidwest](http://www.youtube.com/artsmidwest).

### **ArtsLab**

ArtsLab has selected seventeen grantees and has now launched its three-year capacity building program. The selected arts nonprofits were chosen for their work to cultivate new artistic aesthetics, reach a breadth of diverse audiences, serve both emerging and mid-career artists, challenge traditional organizational structures, and meet a wide range of regional needs.

ArtsLab's first set of peer learning gatherings took place in September and were very well-received. Teams from the seventeen grantee organizations gathered to begin their work together, with a focus this month on the question "What does it mean to be community-centered in the 21st century?" The energizing workshop leaders challenged groups to view all aspects of their work from the "outside-in" as customer-centered organizations.

In addition, we are pleased to announce the launch of the new ArtsLab Web site, [www.artslabonline.org](http://www.artslabonline.org)! The new site will be a primary resource to ArtsLab constituents as well as the broader arts community and those interested in the field of capacity building on behalf of small and mid-sized arts organizations. We invite you to look through the site and subscribe to the ArtsLab newsletter for more specific information from the program.



*ArtsLab participants enjoy a reprieve from the cognitive labors of the first workshop.  
Photo credit: Sharon Rodning Bash*

### **The Big Read Egypt/U.S.**

New Arabic translations of Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451* and Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* have joined the previously completed translation of John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*. These books have been published along with Arabic versions of the NEA's supplemental Big Read program materials, and the Big Read Egypt/U.S. partners have begun their programming. Within the U.S., program launch events in Brookings, SD, and Miami, FL, included professor Dr. Azza El Kholy from Egyptian partner Bibliotheca Alexandrina. Dr. El Kholy, a highly regarded Egyptian literature specialist and a professor of American Literature at The University of Alexandria, led discussions and presentations on Egyptian literature, culture, and the works of Naguib Mahfouz, Egypt's Nobel Prize winning author of *The Thief and the Dogs*.

As you can see, much is happening here at Arts Midwest! We are pleased and excited at the myriad of artistic opportunities we are supporting across our region. I encourage you to visit our Web site for further details – subscribe to our RSS feed or the online version of this newsletter, view our expanding YouTube presence, and much more. Thank you for your continued support, and I hope to see you soon!

Sincerely,

David Fraher  
Executive Director