



2009 Program Review and Updates

M I D W E S T

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OUR PURPOSE

Arts Midwest's mission is to connect people throughout the Midwest and the world to meaningful arts opportunities, sharing creativity, knowledge, and understanding across boundaries. Our vision is that people in the communities we serve will find joy, meaning, and beauty in their lives through the arts.

Arts Midwest is one of six regional arts organizations in the United States created to transcend state boundaries and give citizens access to a broad variety of arts experiences.

Our cultural programs reach more than one million people annually, serving communities across our nine member states, which include Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin. Many of our programs extend beyond these borders to communities across the 50 states, and internationally to places like China, Egypt, Chile and more, enhancing the quality of life in hundreds of cities, towns, and rural areas across the world.



OUR NATIONAL IMPACT

Over the past 24 years, Arts Midwest has been committed to serving the nation's thriving arts communities. Through our performing, visual, literary, and theater arts programs, we have supported arts initiatives in urban and rural communities throughout the U.S.

During the second year of the 2007–2009 Arts Midwest World Fest cycle, ensembles from Quebec, Israel, Mexico, and the Inner Mongolia Region of China reached **40,965 individuals, including 31,280 students** in Midwestern communities.

Additionally, in 2008–2009, Arts Midwest granted \$540,318 to presenting organizations, and artists earned more than \$3.5 million touring throughout the region through the Performing Arts Fund. **These funds helped dance, music, and theater ensembles engage over 296,000 individuals, including over 138,000 youths through a variety of enriching public performances and educational activities.**

Arts Midwest also supported the arts community at the 2009 Midwest Arts Conference, with **more than 900 attendees representing artists, presenting organizations, and service organizations.** Attendees used this opportunity to gain knowledge about the performing arts industry, network with colleagues, and experience a variety of dynamic performances.

During 2008–2009, our National Initiatives through the NEA, including The Big Read, NEA Jazz Masters Live, and *Shakespeare in American Communities*, reached more than one million individuals in communities across the 50 states. **The Big Read served 810,000 individuals through 11,447 events; NEA Jazz Masters Live reached 47,480 individuals; and more than 248,220 individuals experienced Shakespeare through *Shakespeare in American Communities*.**

Find us online!



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www.artsmidwestworldfest.org



www.artslabonline.org

OUR PROGRAMS

ARTS MIDWEST WORLD FEST

Arts Midwest World Fest brings extraordinary music ensembles from around the world to small- and mid-sized communities across the Midwest. In the second half of the 2007–2009 cycle, Arts Midwest World Fest reached 40,965 individuals – including 31,280 students – through 156 educational activities and 22 public concerts.

Student workshops, an integral part of the program, encourage cross-cultural learning; integrate the arts into core curriculum areas such as social studies, language arts, and history; and provide lively and interactive arts experiences:

“The Arts Midwest World Fest program is a unique opportunity for our community ... the week long face-to-face interaction goes a long way toward helping [our community] form positive perceptions of a global society.” –Dolf Moon, Hutchinson Community Education, MN



PERFORMING ARTS FUND

The Performing Arts Fund brings dance, theater, music, and youth and family entertainment to audiences across the Midwest, enhancing the quality of life in communities such as **St. Joseph, Minnesota, where we supported activities by Luna Negra Dance Theater from Chicago, Illinois at the College of St. Benedict.** Each engagement supported by the Performing Arts Fund includes a public performance as well as an educational component that directly connects audiences with the arts.

During the 2008–2009 funding cycle, the Performing Arts Fund supported 202 engagements that reached more than 295,000 people across our region, including more than 138,000 youths, and leveraged more than \$7.9 million into local economies.

EXHIBITIONS

While the *Somali Documentary Project* continued its tour with presentations at the Weisman Art Museum at the University of Minnesota and the Plains Art Museum in Fargo, North Dakota, we prepared to launch work on *Shout Freedom! Photo League Selections from the Columbus Museum of Art*, which will open in 2010.

Arts Midwest is also partnering with the U.S. Embassy in the People's Republic of China to tour Minnesota artist Wing Young Huie's exhibition, *9 Months in America, an Ethnocentric Tour*. The exhibition features 55 photographs from the artist's nine-month road trip across America and explores how Chinese culture is interwoven into mainstream America.

The tour will showcase the talent of Wing Young Huie to Chinese audiences in the following areas: Beijing, Shanghai, Chengdu, Guangzhou, Hong Kong, and Harbin.



MIDWEST ARTS CONFERENCE

The annual Midwest Arts Conference is one of the largest booking and education conferences for the performing arts in the U.S. This year, 905 arts professionals convened in Saint Paul, Minnesota to conduct business, experience performance showcases, learn from in-depth professional development sessions, network with colleagues, and gain new insights into the world of performing arts touring and presenting. Marilyn Greaves, who attended the Conference for the first time this year, remarked,

“[When I returned from the conference] I told all our staff and board members that this conference was worth a one million dollar education for someone new to the industry.”

The 2010 Conference will be held in Indianapolis, Indiana.



DAVID J. FRAHER FUTURE LEADERS FUND

To celebrate Executive Director David J. Fraher’s 25 years at Arts Midwest, our constituents, board, and staff created the David J. Fraher Future Leaders Fund. The fund was used to provide a full scholarship for recent College of St. Benedict graduate Megan Vetsch to attend the 2009 Midwest Arts Conference. Megan spent her time at the Conference attending workshops, networking with professionals, and observing the dynamic responsibilities inherent to arts leadership. Megan was enthusiastic about her experience,

“Receiving this fund allowed me to see it all...and opened my eyes to how the field operates. Ultimately, I feel SO fortunate to have had this first experience as a Future Leader.”

While Megan is the first honoree, she will not be the last. Thanks to the incredible support of our constituents, the program will continue to invest in the development of future leaders.



SERVICE TO OUR STATES

This year, Arts Midwest increased our service to our nine member states – their organizations, communities, and infrastructures. Through a series of collaborative workshops with state-based arts service organizations, we are providing opportunities for our constituents to share best practices, to explore new ways of responding to crisis, and to make the case for arts funding.

Arts Midwest has also played a key role in distributing funding through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Our staff are working closely with local and federal agencies to ensure that the region’s vibrant arts community remains strong despite the economic downturn. So far, through this program, we have invested \$514,000 in projects that assist arts organizations in retaining staff.

John Bracey, executive director of the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs, discussed his relationship with Arts Midwest:

“It is the nature of the arts and cultural field that it attracts passionate individuals doing everything they can to make the world a better place...nowhere is that more the case than at Arts Midwest...the work that they do in Michigan, for Michigan, is nothing short of amazing.”

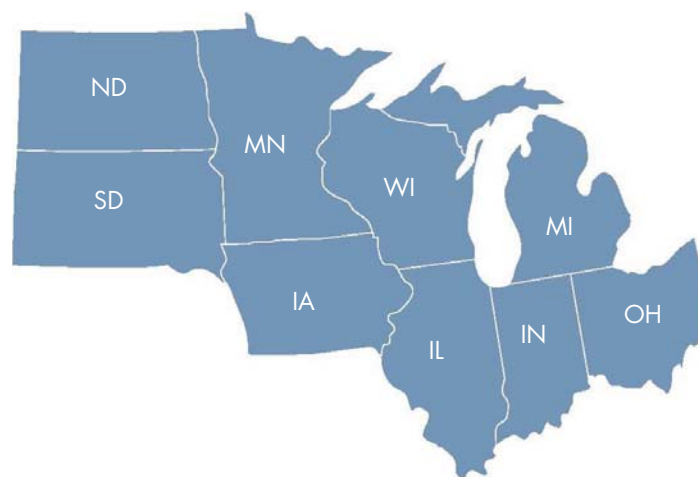


Photo credits- Front: Stuart’s Opera House. Inside (clockwise from top left): Hutchinson Community Education; Tiffany Rodgers; Tiffany Rodgers; Wing Young Huie; Chamber Music Society of Detroit, courtesy of Jerry Zolynsky. Back: Helena High School.

OUR REGIONAL, NATIONAL, AND GLOBAL PARTNERSHIPS

Arts Midwest manages an array of initiatives with partners such as the National Endowment for the Arts; the U.S. Department of State; and The Wallace Foundation, Minnesota Community Foundation, Bush Foundation, F.R. Bigelow Foundation, Mardag Foundation, The McKnight Foundation, and The Saint Paul Foundation to deliver arts programs to communities across the country and around the world.

THE BIG READ

The Big Read supports innovative reading programs, lectures, and events in communities across the country. During the 2008–2009 cycle, grantees served more than 810,000 individuals at 11,447 events. In addition to the funding awards that totaled \$2,810,500, these communities leveraged \$6,548,671 in matching grants, cash contributions, and in-kind support for their Big Read programs. In September 2009, 268 grantees from more than 45 states began their programming.

Arts Midwest has been working with the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) on a series of documentary interviews with authors whose works are featured in The Big Read. From 2008 – 2009, six documentaries on authors Ray Bradbury (*Fahrenheit 451*), Amy Tan (*The Joy Luck Club*), Rudolfo Anaya (*Bless Me, Ultima*), Ernest Gaines (*A Lesson Before Dying*), Cynthia Ozick (*The Shawl*), and Tobias Wolff (*Old School*), were added to the NEA's library of Big Read materials. **The Big Read and The Big Read Films are supported by the NEA.**



THE BIG READ EGYPT/U.S.

Since 2008, The Big Read Egypt/U.S. initiative has introduced communities in Egypt to American literary masterpieces, exposed four U.S. communities to the work of Egyptian author Naguib Mahfouz, and pioneered an unprecedented literary cultural exchange. In April 2009, Congressman Keith Ellison (D-MN 5th District) was the keynote speaker in an internationally broadcast video conference in support of the program. During this conference, Congressman Ellison discussed cultural diplomacy, the benefits of international citizen-to-citizen dialogue, and drew on Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* to highlight themes of civil justice and human rights. **The Big Read Egypt/U.S. is supported by the U.S. Department of State in collaboration with the NEA.**

NEA JAZZ MASTERS LIVE

Arts Midwest continues to manage NEA Jazz Masters Live, a series of concerts and conversations featuring acclaimed jazz musicians. This year, activities have been held at the Detroit International Jazz Festival in Michigan and the Monterey Jazz Festival in California, with events at 10 other venues across the country scheduled between now and August 31, 2010. **NEA Jazz Masters Live is supported by the NEA.**

SHAKESPEARE IN AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

As of May 2009, more than 1.2 million students from 3,600 schools in 2,300 communities have benefitted from *Shakespeare in American Communities*, an initiative that brings the inimitable works of William Shakespeare to communities across America. Currently in the 2009–2010 cycle, there are 37 professional theater companies participating in *Shakespeare for a New Generation*, which provides funding to support performances and educational activities for middle- and high-school students. ***Shakespeare in American Communities* is supported by the NEA.**

ARTS LEARNING XCHANGE

The arts learning Xchange is a knowledge-sharing project designed to help Twin Cities arts organizations deepen their relationships with patrons and supporters. To achieve this end, arts learning Xchange is providing symposia to the Twin Cities arts community, conducting advanced marketing training for a select group of arts organizations, and offering various funding opportunities.

The inaugural arts learning Xchange event took place in July and featured an inspiring presentation by Ben Cameron of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation (below) on social networking, organizational change, innovation, and collaboration. The response from the 225 local artists and arts administrators was incredibly positive: ***"The Arts Midwest arts learning Xchange will be a great resource for our organization!"*** The arts learning Xchange is supported by The Wallace Foundation in collaboration with Minneota Community Foundation.



ARTSLAB

ArtsLab is a robust, capacity-building initiative designed to strengthen organizational infrastructure and leadership in small Minnesota arts organizations. Through peer learning gatherings, consulting support, distance learning, and modest operational support grants, ArtsLab is supporting organizations, encouraging strategic thinking, and ensuring that Minnesota's arts community remains stable, innovative, and vibrant. **ArtsLab is supported by Bush Foundation, F.R. Bigelow Foundation, Mardag Foundation, The McKnight Foundation, and The Saint Paul Foundation.**