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2009 MIDWEST ARTS CONFERENCE COMING TO SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA *PERFORMING ARTS CONFERENCE/TRADE SHOW SETS THE STAGE FOR MIDWEST PERFORMANCES*

MINNEAPOLIS / SAINT PAUL, MN – The 22nd annual **Midwest Arts Conference** will convene in Saint Paul, Minnesota, at the RiverCentre from September 9–12, 2009. The Conference is one of the largest convenings in the nation for performing artists, artist managers/agents, theater and facility managers, and arts administrators from throughout the United States and beyond, and provides a platform for these performing arts professionals to come together for an educational and motivational four days focused on promoting and presenting live touring performing arts.

The Conference is committed to providing a productive and energized environment where attendees come together to **connect and collaborate**, which is more important than ever in the current business climate. The Conference is also taking a leading role with **new and innovative programming** designed to help attendees weather these storms and to come out the other side as stronger and healthier organizations. Specific to these economic times, the Conference is partnering this year with New York-based **EmcArts** – a leading service provider on innovation and organizational change – to lead in-depth sessions titled **New Pathways for a New Era: Innovating in Turbulent Times**.

The Conference provides the platform for attendees to **expand their networks** of performing arts colleagues, resources, and opportunities; **learn new skills and gain valuable insights** into issues relevant to their work in the performing arts; **discover artists** in the Marketplace exhibit hall and at live performances; **create dynamic performing arts experiences** for artists and audiences; and invest in **strengthening their organizational capacity and flexibility**. The 2009 event **will be attended** by approximately 900 individuals representing 250 arts presenting organizations and 250 artists managements from 35 states and Canada. The Midwest Arts Conference convenes in different cities annually; it was last held in Saint Paul in 2001. The official Conference hotel is the Crowne Plaza St. Paul – Riverfront, with special events occurring at the Fitzgerald Theatre, Northrop Auditorium, and the Landmark Center.

2009 Highlights

- **Twin Cities Triple Play**, a set of discipline-focused live performances curated by well-known Twin Cities arts professionals, featuring local artists that represent the vitality and quality of our performing arts community
- All-Conference luncheon featuring a performance by Twin Cities–based **James Sewell Ballet**
- Full-length dance performance by **Wayne McGregor | Random Dance** at the University of Minnesota’s Northrop Auditorium, with a special post-performance meet-and-greet for Conference attendees with the choreographer and dancers
- Saturday Brunch, featuring a performance by Broadway and television star **Kevin Spirtas**
- **Opening-Night Party** at the historic Landmark Center
- **Closing-Night Reception** at Windows on the River at the top of the Crowne Plaza St. Paul–Riverfront, featuring Minneapolis’ own World’s Most Dangerous Polka Band

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Marketplace Exhibit Hall

One of the Conference's major components is the **Marketplace exhibit hall**, filled with organizations representing thousands of performing artists and ensembles ranging from world music, ballet, string quartets, and touring theater companies to percussion ensembles, illusionists, and youth and family entertainment. During Marketplace hours, conversations between artists, agents, and representatives from venues ranging from small community performance series to major performing arts centers will focus on booking future dates and venues. Much of what Midwest audiences will see **on stages in the 2010–2011 season and beyond** will be determined at this event.

Professional Development

The Conference also programs a **comprehensive slate of professional development sessions**; the rich variety of free sessions run the gamut from legal issues in the arts to audience development to discipline-specific discussions, in addition to two in-depth seminars offered in collaboration with EmcArts. Attendees will be able to choose from more than 30 **professional development sessions** ranging from the in-depth seminars and workshops to more intimate roundtable discussions and meetings

Live Performances

Live performances are a vital part of the Conference, offering venue representatives the opportunity to experience and evaluate a wide range of artists, while providing artists with a forum for presenting their work to a large and diverse audience of potential buyers. The Conference's **Spotlight Showcases** feature mini-performances by 18 panel-selected artists performing at the Fitzgerald Theater. In addition, more than 70 **sponsored and independently arranged showcases** will also take place at venues across the Twin Cities throughout the Conference.

Conference Leadership & Management

The 2009 Midwest Arts Conference is co-chaired by Karen Lane Christilles of the Lied Center of Kansas in Lawrence, Kansas, and Ivan Sygoda of Pentacle in New York City. The Conference is managed by Arts Midwest and serves the 15 states represented by Arts Midwest and Mid-America Arts Alliance.

About Arts Midwest

A non-profit regional arts organization headquartered in Minneapolis, **Arts Midwest** serves audiences, arts organizations, and artists throughout the nine states of Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Wisconsin, and beyond. One of six regional arts organizations in the United States, 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. Arts Midwest presents and sponsors performances and exhibitions seen by more than half a million people annually across the Midwest and around the world. Throughout its programming, Arts Midwest maintains a commitment to artistic quality and to reaching underserved audiences and communities.

Complete information on the Midwest Arts Conference and Arts Midwest is available online at **www.artsmidwest.org**.

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