



# 2010 MIDWEST ARTS CONFERENCE INDEPENDENT SHOWCASE FAQs

## What is an independent showcase?

Independent showcases are independently produced, coordinated, and marketed by artists and/or artist managers/agents who are attending or are represented by an organization attending the Midwest Arts Conference. Typically, 50–75 independent and group independent showcases take place at or near the Conference venue(s) over the four-day event.

## Why should I showcase at the Midwest Arts Conference?

Independent showcasing is an effective way to give presenters a glimpse of your or your artists’ work. This type of showcase offers artists and artist managers/agents greater flexibility in terms of cost and scheduling. Here is what one ensemble had to say about their group independent showcase at the 2008 Midwest Arts Conference in Kansas City:

*We would recommend all acts participate in an independent showcase. In our experience, the showcases were well-planned, well-attended, and a "must see" stop for a majority of attendees. Moreover, we were given expert assistance with every step of the planning and execution. The result?—Fantastic feedback and, more importantly, confirmed bookings!* — Shaun Johnson of Tonic Sol-fa

## What should I consider when producing an independent showcase?

There are many things to consider before deciding to produce an independent showcase. It requires significant time, planning, and financial and professional resources to produce a successful showcase. Some factors to consider:

- Is the work of high artistic quality and ready to accept bookings to tour?
- Are your promotional materials ready to sell your production to presenters?
- Do you have a sufficient budget to cover exhibit space at the Conference and potential additional registration fees, plus travel, lodging, shipping, technical assistance, venue rental, advertising, and promotional costs?
- Which local venue is most suitable to your production?
- What are your scheduling, rehearsal, and soundcheck requirements?
- Do you know artists and colleagues who want to collaborate on a group independent showcase?
- Have you thought about offering enticements such as food or beverage, which may enhance attendance?
- Is your chosen showcase venue within walking distance? Or, if not, can you afford to provide transportation?
- **Don’t forget** that all artists performing in a Conference showcase must either purchase exhibit space in the Marketplace OR be represented by an organization that has done so.

## When should I schedule my independent showcase?

Scheduling your showcase during published Conference activities is strongly discouraged and may reduce attendance. Showcase times that conflict with published Conference activities will NOT be published in the Program Book or posted on Arts Midwest’s Web site. The following times do not conflict with scheduled Conference events, thus offering the most potential for attendance:

<b>Monday, Sept. 13</b>	8:30 p.m.–Midnight (following the Opening-Night Party & curated performances)
<b>Tuesday, Sept. 14</b>	9:30 p.m.–Midnight (following Spotlight Showcases at the Indiana Repertory Theatre)
<b>Wednesday, Sept. 15</b>	9:30 p.m.–Midnight (following Spotlight Showcases at the Indiana Repertory Theatre)

The full Conference schedule will be available online beginning May 3.

## Where do independent showcases take place?

Artists or groups of artists most often rent a meeting room in the Conference hotel or a performing arts venue near the Conference site. Venues may include theaters, clubs, churches, cafés, or other sites. Your choice of venue will depend on the venues’ availability, you or your artists’ schedules, and the venue’s suitability for your performance and budget needs.

## How do I find an independent showcase venue?

The Independent Showcase Venue List posted on Arts Midwest’s Web site lists local sites and contact information for a number of venues located in downtown Indianapolis, near the Westin Indianapolis (the Conference hotel) and the Indiana Convention Center. The list is not exhaustive, and artists and artist managers/agents are encouraged to do their own research on venues in Indianapolis.

## How do I get involved in a group independent showcase?

You may wish to consider teaming up with an interested colleague or group of colleagues who will also be exhibiting or represented by an exhibiting organization at the Midwest Arts Conference to save on rental and production costs. If you are interested in connecting with other artists to coordinate a group showcase, you can indicate your interest when you register for the Conference (registration opens online on May 3, 2010, at [www.artsmidwest.org](http://www.artsmidwest.org)). You will receive a list of artist contact information via e-mail in June (following the exhibitor lottery registration deadline in late May) with a list of all exhibitors who indicated interest in group showcasing.

## How do I promote my independent showcase?

There are several ways you can promote your showcase both before and during the Conference.

### Before the Conference

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- **Mailings and e-mail blasts:** Use the presenter contact information you receive over the summer (as part of your exhibitor package registration) to do promotional mailings and e-mail marketing to presenters registered for the Conference.
- **List your showcase on the Conference Web site:** For a nominal fee of \$80, you can submit a listing of your showcase with a 75-word description, date, time(s), and location/directions.
  - The Independent Showcase Listing Form will be available on the Conference Web site on June 1.
  - Listing Forms must be received by **July 15, 2010** for inclusion in the printed Program Book + online.
  - Listing Forms may be submitted **after July 15** for online-only publication. Listings for online-only publication must be received by **August 16, 2010**.
- **Promote your showcase on your Web site:** Our online directory of exhibitors who are registered for the Conference will link to your/your agent's Web site. Presenters often use this directory to learn more about artists and artist managers/agents' rosters before they arrive at the Conference.

### Onsite at the Conference

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- **Advertising:** Increase your visibility by purchasing ad space in our printed Conference publications, which are distributed onsite to all attendees.
- **At your exhibit in the Marketplace & designated info tables onsite:** Promote your showcase from your exhibit space, or place a flyer on the designated table near Conference registration (look for the "Independent Showcases" sign).
- **Signage at your event location:** Be sure to talk to your venue about where you can post signs to advertise your showcase and help presenters find you.
- **List your showcase in the Program Book and/or online:** See above for more information on listing your showcase online before the Conference and in the printed Program Book.
- **Take attendance:** Collect business cards of presenters attending your showcase and have someone checking name tags at the door.

### After the Conference

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- **Follow up:** Contact presenters who attended your showcase and send promotional materials when requested.

## What do I need to know onsite?

Independent showcases are an important part of the Conference for artists, managers, and presenters. We ask that once your showcase has begun, you close the door to your performance space. This will help your audience enjoy your showcase without distractions, and prevent sound bleed to and from other showcases.

## What if I have other questions about independent showcasing?

Contact Conference staff at [midwestartsconference@artsmidwest.org](mailto:midwestartsconference@artsmidwest.org) if you have questions that we haven't answered with these FAQs.