



Arts Midwest promotes creativity, nurtures cultural leadership, and engages people in meaningful arts experiences, bringing vitality to Midwest communities and enriching people's lives.



Arts Midwest 2011

across our region
across the world



PERFORMING ARTS

For the past several years, **Arts Midwest World Fest** has connected small and mid-sized Midwestern communities to world cultures through week-long residencies with global performers. In 2011, we said goodbye to our 2009–2011 artists and host communities and welcomed our new 2011–2013 community partners, as well as artists from Egypt, Israel, China, and Indonesia. We are already hearing great stories from our communities about the first concerts and workshops of the season, and we are confident that the next two years will be filled with new friendships and lasting connections.

In September, we welcomed the **Midwest Arts Conference** to Minneapolis. As the preeminent booking and educational conference for the Midwest performing arts industry, the Conference brought more than 1,000 artists, artist managers/agents, arts presenting organizations, and arts leaders together to network, learn, and experience live performances. We enjoyed hosting our friends and colleagues in Minneapolis, and we are looking forward to reaching new arts venues and audiences next year in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Our **Performing Arts Fund** continues to foster and promote creativity across our region. During the 2010–2011 season, we supported 249 public performances and 1,147 educational activities, which featured 365 Midwestern artists and provided 261,511 Midwestern residents access to creative arts experiences. We were thrilled to reach some of the Midwest's brightest arts organizations and to support so many exceptional artists from our region.

In 2011, Arts Midwest launched **Caravanserai: A place where cultures meet**, a cultural exchange program managed on behalf of our partner U.S. Regional Arts Organizations with financial support from the Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art and Robert Sterling Clark Foundation. Caravanserai encourages understanding of Muslim cultures through immersive performing, media, and visual arts residencies in American communities. This season features artists from Pakistan touring to five U.S. communities. Though the program is still young, we have already been deeply moved by the mutual and unyielding generosity and compassion between our artists and communities.

[A group of young students] rushed back to the auditorium after our presentation to tell us they had looked up Pakistan on the map. They were concerned for our safety after they learned our country is located next to Afghanistan because, they informed us, "There's a war over there." As they dashed back to class, they said with great emotion, "Take care; we love you."

- Najmuddin Muhammad
Caravanserai artist

Arts Midwest continues to manage two nationwide performing arts programs on behalf of the National Endowment for the Arts. Over the course of the 2010–2011 season, **Shakespeare in American Communities** fostered appreciation for live theater and the work of William Shakespeare through 3,345 educational activities and 731 professional productions of Shakespeare's work. And in 2011, **NEA Jazz Masters Live** presented 22 concerts and 47 conversations that featured and celebrated living jazz legends. We are honored to manage these programs, as we recognize the importance of these traditions and art forms on our nation's cultural heritage and legacy.

All I can say is thank you for the wonderful [Arts Midwest World Fest] performance in Knoxville. Never in my life have I seen such a brilliant, joyful performance. There was something very special about that night in Knoxville, perhaps because it was [Agatsuma's] first performance after the tragedy in Japan. They played in our middle school auditorium, but they played like they were at Carnegie Hall.

- Bob Leonard
audience member



VISUAL ARTS

Our work in the visual arts continues to reach across our region, nation, and the world. In 2011, we successfully concluded the Midwest tour of “**Shout Freedom! Photo League Selections from The Columbus Museum of Art**,” an exhibition that featured influential documentary photographs from the 1930s. While this tour has ended, we are pleased to learn that it inspired “The Radical Camera: New York's Photo League, 1936-1951” a larger exhibition of the Photo League’s work at The Jewish Museum in New York, on display from November 2011–March 2012. This year, we also coordinated the ongoing installation of “**Identity and the American Landscape: The Photography of Wing Young Huie**” in cities across China. Presented in partnership with the United States Embassy of Beijing, this exhibition offers a moving examination of identity, otherness, and belonging.

We continue to partner with the Minnesota Museum of American Art on “**Modern Spirit: The Art of George Morrison**.” Complete with breathtaking selections from collections across the United States, this retrospective exhibition will celebrate and document the enduring legacy of an important Native American modernist, and will tour to Fargo, ND; New York, NY; Indianapolis, IN; Bentonville, AR; Phoenix, AZ; and St. Paul, MN. Finally, in 2012, Arts Midwest, in partnership with South Arts and with support from the United States Embassy of Beijing, will launch “**Fabric of America: An Exhibition of American Quilting**” in urban and rural venues across China.

LITERARY ARTS

We continue to work closely with the National Endowment for the Arts on **The Big Read**, a program that encourages reading for pleasure and enlightenment by providing citizens with the opportunity to read and discuss a single book within their communities. During 2010–2011 we had the pleasure of working with 74 communities across 31 states to present innovative reading programs on classics such as *Fahrenheit 451*, *The Maltese Falcon*, and *The Stories and Poems of Edgar Allan Poe*.

LEADERSHIP TRAINING

In 2011, we offered five learning opportunities to arts marketers in Minneapolis-St. Paul through **Arts Learning Xchange**. Through engaging forums, lectures, and workshops, experts from the fields of marketing and evaluation challenged participants to expand their understanding of audience engagement and take risks. Funded by The Wallace Foundation and in collaboration with the Minnesota Community Foundation, Arts Learning Xchange is creating lasting networks of arts professionals in Minnesota and is inspiring the local arts community to stay innovative, vibrant, and curious.

As our 2008–2011 **ArtsLab** cycle comes to a close, we are happy to report that our sixteen participating organizations achieved great successes over the three year program. From strengthening organizational boards, to developing new leadership skills, forming new collaborations, and expanding staff and operating capacities, the program made a great impact on arts organizations across urban and rural Minnesota. We are thankful to The McKnight Foundation, The Saint Paul Foundation, F.R. Bigelow Foundation, Mardag Foundation, and Bush Foundation for their vision and support of this important work and we look forward to sharing more learning opportunities and resources in the new year.

STRATEGIC PLAN

In 2011, Arts Midwest launched its new strategic plan. In it, we outline the environmental trends and opportunities that affect our work. We draw on field expertise and research to strengthen our programs and foster Midwestern vitality. And we commit to taking bold steps that will ensure our audiences have access to high-quality, creative experiences for years to come.

Read our plan, and join us as we work to keep our region vibrant:
www.artsmidwest.org



In **2011**, our programs reached



**1 million
individuals**

including



**477,716
youth**

through

**9,339
educational activities**

**and 1,027
performances**



**and 17
countries**



We believe that **the arts are essential** to bright communities, creative minds, and healthy lives. And we are dedicated to **keeping the Midwest a vibrant and dynamic place** to live and do business.



M I D W E S T

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