



# Arts Midwest Conference

## 2018 Spotlight Showcase Panel

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Spotlight Showcases at the Arts Midwest Conference strive to present high-quality artists from a pool of national and international applicants representing dance, music, theater, variety, and family programming, ranging from large ensembles to solo artists. Spotlight Showcases provide artists and ensembles with a forum for introducing work to a large, diverse audience in a professional setting, and offer attendees from the 15-state Midwest region the opportunity to experience a wide range of performances.

This year's Spotlight Showcases will feature **15** jury-selected artists/ensembles performing 15-minute showcases at the Indiana Repertory Theatre (IRT) in Indianapolis, Indiana.

### Role

Panelists serve as expert advisors who review, score, and comment on all Spotlight Showcase applications. Arts Midwest depends on the panel's recommendations and expects panelists to make confidential, fair, and consistent decisions. Arts Midwest views the decisions made as panel decisions, not individual decisions.

The panel review process is not open to applicants. Conference staff and the panel chair provide support to the process, but cannot vote, participate in discussions, or provide personal opinions on applicants.

### Objectives

- Review application narratives, promotional materials, and work samples in a fair and equitable manner.
- Provide useful and constructive feedback based on stated criteria.
- Recommend **14** applicants to perform at the 2018 Arts Midwest Conference Spotlight Showcases who represent a diversity of artistic disciplines and genres.
- Ensure that no more than two artists/ensembles represented by the same agency/management are recommended.
- Recommend alternates in the event an artist/ensemble is not able to accept the showcase.

### Timeline

#### Wednesday, February 28 from 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. Central Time

- Participates in a 90-minute orientation webinar with Arts Midwest staff.

#### Early March

- Receive electronic and paper versions of applications materials.
- Schedule a brief check in call with Arts Midwest staff to review the online Spotlight Showcase Community and scoring process.

#### Prior to Friday, April 13

- Independently review, score, and provide comments on the promotional and application materials. Each panelist is assigned a portion of the applicants.
- Review all applicants in the panel book.

## Onsite April 16 – 19

- Meet as a full panel at Arts Midwest in Minneapolis, Minnesota to review and score video work samples in a multiple-round selection process.
- Compile a list of recommended winners and alternates.

## Conflict of interest

Panelists must complete a Conflict of Interest form to advise staff in advance of any affiliation that may appear to constitute a conflict of interest with an applicant, such as a panelist who might have a financial gain from an artist being selected. To ensure fairness, any panelist with a noted conflict of interest will not discuss or provide scores for that particular application nor discuss that applicant with other panelists at any time before or during the application review process.

## Selection criteria

The Conference serves artists/ensembles from across the United States and beyond, and arts presenters from the Conference's 15-state Midwest region. Arts Midwest strives to showcase high quality artists/ensembles from a diverse range of disciplines based on the applications received. Applicants are evaluated and recommended based on the following criteria:

### Readiness to tour

In evaluating the provided promotional and application materials, does the artist display a high level of readiness to tour based on the following criteria?

- **Overall quality:** Are the materials presented professionally?
- **Thoroughness:** Can you gain a thorough understanding of their capacity to tour?
- **Visual appeal:** Do the visuals give a clear sense of what the artist/ensemble looks like and does? Is it engaging?
- **Clarity of information:** Is it easy to gain a complete understanding of the artist/ensemble? Is it clear what the artist/ensemble plans to showcase if selected?

### Artistic excellence

- **Technique:** Does the artist/ensemble's movement, musicianship, and verbal/non-verbal communication display knowledge and technical excellence in their art form?
- **Interpretation:** Does the artist/ensemble demonstrate a high level of artistry and expressiveness? Do they effectively communicate their material to the audience?
- **Stage energy/presence:** Does the artist/ensemble command attention and engage the audience?

### Artistic merit

- **Value:** Does the artist's work deepen and extend the arts' value, exemplifying creativity and innovation? Does it offer fresh insights and new value for the field?
- **Impact:** Does it have the potential to be transformative to its audience? Does it have the capacity to reach new audiences?
- **Distinction:** Does the artist/ensemble stretch the boundaries of their art form in new and innovative ways, whether it is original material or existing material presented in a fresh and distinct way?

## Round 1: Promotional + application material review

<b>For review</b>	<p>Promotional materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Biography and history</li><li>• Press and performer photos</li><li>• Past and future touring itinerary</li><li>• EPK or one-sheet (optional)</li><li>• Additional materials (optional)</li></ul> <p>Application materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Program synopsis</li><li>• Artistic statement</li><li>• Three-year touring history or strategy for beginning to tour</li><li>• Performer and staff roles</li><li>• Community and educational outreach offerings (optional)</li></ul> <p>Take optional materials into consideration, but do not penalize those without.</p>
<b>Criteria</b>	Readiness to tour Consider overall quality, thoroughness, visual appeal, and clarity of information.
<b>Process</b>	<p>Review materials, assign one score, and provide written comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Each panelist has been assigned a designated number of application and promotional materials to thoroughly review.</li><li>• Every application will be reviewed and scored by two panelists.</li><li>• For the applications assigned for you, review both printed application and digital promotional materials.</li><li>• Provide honest and constructive feedback on submitted materials, based on the above criteria.</li></ul>
<b>Scoring</b>	<p>Assign a whole-number score using the following scale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>1 - Poor</li><li>2 - Below average</li><li>3 - Average</li><li>4 - Above average</li><li>5 - Excellent</li></ul>
<b>Timing</b>	Approximately ten minutes scoring and commenting on each applicant assigned to you. Review all applicants, including those not assigned to you, to prepare for discussion in future rounds.

## Round 2: Reviewing + scoring

**For review** Video work samples

**Criteria** Artistic excellence

- Consider technique, interpretation, and stage energy/presence

**Process** Silently view video work sample, assign one score, and provide written comments

- While viewing the work sample for each applicant, panelists comment on one area of strength and one area for improvement.
- Provide honest, thoughtful, and focused feedback that addresses the established criteria beyond the general question (“Is it good or interesting?”) and focus on specific details.
- Use language relevant to the discipline or genre.

**Scoring** Assign a whole-number score using the following scale:

- 1 - Poor
- 2 - Below average
- 3 - Average
- 4 - Above average
- 5 - Excellent

**Timing** Maximum of 2.5 minutes per applicant

- The panel chair announces each applicant as the work sample begins.
- Applicants are reviewed in alphabetical order, regardless of discipline.
- Panelists will view the video for 2.5 minutes.
- The panel chair gives a 30-second warning to complete commenting and scoring.

### Advancing from Round 2 to Round 3

As we strive to include a diverse number of disciplines, approximately 35% applications will move into Round 3, based on the combined weighted average of the promotional/application material scores and Round 2 scores, and consideration of disciplines represented.

## Round 3: Scoring + discussion

- For review** Video work samples
- If available, the panel will review a second video excerpt.
- Criteria** Artistic excellence
- Consider technique, interpretation, and stage energy/presence
- Artistic merit
- Consider the value, impact, and distinction of the work.
- Process** Group discussion and assign two scores
- Panelists who reviewed and scored the application and promotional materials in Round I will start discussion, commenting on their capacity to tour, as presented in submitted materials.
  - Conference staff takes notes on the discussion.
  - Panelists do not write their own comments.
- Scoring** Assign two separate whole-number scores (one for artistic excellence and another for artistic merit) using the following scale:
- 1 - Poor
  - 2 - Below average
  - 3 - Average
  - 4 - Above average
  - 5 - Excellent
- Timing** Maximum of four minutes per applicant
- The panel chair announces each applicant as the work sample begins.
  - The video will be viewed and discussed for three to four minutes.
  - Raising a hand indicates that a panelist has seen enough of the work sample to score and comment. The work sample is halted if three panelists have raised their hands or time has elapsed, whichever comes first.
  - The panel chair gives a 30-second warning to complete scoring.

## Advancing from Round 3 to Round 4

Top-scoring applicants will move into the final selection discussion, based on the weighted averages of the Round 3 scores.

## Round 4: Final selection and discussion

<b>For review</b>	Round 3 results and video work samples, as requested by the panelists
<b>Criteria</b>	<p>Readiness to tour</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consider overall quality, thoroughness, visual appeal, and clarity of information.</li></ul> <p>Artistic excellence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consider technique, interpretation, and stage energy/presence.</li></ul> <p>Artistic merit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consider the value, impact, and distinction of the work.</li></ul>
<b>Scoring</b>	No scoring. If necessary, panelists will vote or rank top-scoring artists to make decisions.
<b>Process</b>	<p>Evaluation and discussion of top-scoring artists</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Panel ensures that no more than two artists/ensembles represented by the same agency/management are recommended for selection.</li><li>• Panel will be presented with the top-scoring artists. Facilitated by the panel chair, panelists will evaluate and discuss the group of artists and their overall composition of disciplines and genres, determining where discussion is needed to achieve a diverse selection of artists.</li><li>• If a panelist has a conflict with a specific artist, that panelist may not participate in the discussion until a final decision is made about the artist's selection.</li><li>• Panelists select the final <b>14</b> applicants and 8 alternates.</li></ul>
<b>Timing</b>	<p>Approximately 2 hours</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Final selections will be approved when the panel comes to a consensus that all qualified artists have been selected.</li></ul> <p>Decisions are based on the quorum of participating panelists in the discussion.</p>

### Recommending artists and alternates

The panel recommends the **14** artists who scored highly and who represent a variety of artistic disciplines and genres. No more than two artists/ensembles represented by the same artist manager/agency will be recommended to perform at Spotlight Showcases.

The remaining artists/ensembles become alternates. If a recommended artist/ensemble is not able to accept the showcase, or if an artist/ensemble cancels after accepting the showcase, alternates are chosen after considering technical requirements.

## Panel meeting schedule

The panel convenes at Arts Midwest, 2908 Hennepin Ave S, Suite 200, Minneapolis, MN 55408

### Monday, April 16, 2018

**Afternoon/Evening** Arrive in Minneapolis

### Tuesday, April 17, 2018

8:30 a.m.	Arrive at Arts Midwest
8:30 a.m.–9:00 a.m.	Continental breakfast
9:00 a.m.–9:30 a.m.	Welcome + Introduction
9:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.	<b>Round 2</b>
12:30–1:00 p.m.	Lunch (provided)
1:00–5:00 p.m.	<b>Round 2</b>
5:00–5:15 p.m.	Check scores and comments
5:30–7:00 p.m.	Happy hour with staff
Evening	Dinner (on your own)

### Wednesday, April 18, 2018

8:30 a.m.	Arrive at Arts Midwest
8:30–9:00 a.m.	Continental breakfast
9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.	<b>Round 2</b>
12:00–1:00 p.m.	Lunch (provided)
1:00–5:00 p.m.	<b>Round 3</b>
5:00–5:15 p.m.	Check scores and comments
Evening	Dinner (on your own)

### Thursday, April 19, 2018

8:30 a.m.	Arrive at Arts Midwest;
8:30–9:00 a.m.	Continental breakfast
9:00–11:00 a.m.	<b>Round 4</b> + Final Recommendations
11:00–11:30 a.m.	Discussion about panel policies and process
Noon	Meeting adjourns; panelists depart

*This schedule is subject to change.*

## Post-panel + follow-up

### Technical requirements + venue capabilities

Showcasing artists/ensembles must be able to work with the venue's technical capabilities and Arts Midwest's ability to support the artists' technical needs. After discussion with the artists/ensembles, Arts Midwest staff may need to adjust the panel's recommendations to comply with these capabilities.

### Notifications to applicants

All applicants are notified in late April. Applicants receive edited panel comments with their notifications. Comments are attributed to the panel as a whole, not to individual panelists.

### Confidentiality + announcement of selected artists/ensembles

Confidentiality is essential to this process. The applications are for the panelists' eyes only, and panelists should not speak on behalf of the panel or Conference to any applicant at any time.

When all recommended artists/ensembles are notified and accept the showcases (or, in the event that an artist/ensemble cannot accept the showcase, that an alternate is notified and accepts), Arts Midwest announces the full roster of Spotlight Showcase artists/ensembles. Prior to this announcement, all panel recommendations are confidential and may not be discussed with anyone other than Conference staff. All questions about the program, including panel decisions and process, should be directed to Conference staff.