

performARTS

2014-2015

Underwritten by The Richard J. Stern Foundation for the Arts

Townsend Communications in Kansas City, Mo., announces its third installment of performARTS participants. Underwritten by the Richard J. Stern Foundation for the Arts, the series will be part of the next six issues of *KC Studio* and will include installments about some of Kansas City's best artistic organizations. The six featured performARTS organizations were selected out of hundreds of arts organizations across this metropolitan community. In alphabetical order, the six organizations for the 2014-2015 performARTS features are Hello Art, the Kansas City Friends of Alvin Ailey, Olathe Civic Theatre Association, Owen/Cox Dance Group, Spinning Tree Theatre and the Youth Symphony of Kansas City.

Hello Art

Hello Art unites fun and informative events that help connect artists with those who appreciate their work. The group's mission strives to break down the barriers that keep people from exploring Kansas City's arts scene. The unifying goal is to bring together all who want to appreciate and support the arts — including artists, gallery owners, experienced collectors, and curious beginners — through a year-round calendar of events. First Friday Trolley Tours, Artist Talks and Demonstrations, and Hello Art Member Exhibitions are just a few examples of the types of events offered. These events have opened doors and created access to the arts and lasting relationships between artists and those who appreciate their work.

Kansas City Friends of Alvin Ailey

A diverse community united by dance to inspire and change lives, Kansas City Friends of Alvin Ailey has a multi-part mission. KCFAA makes dance accessible to all people by presenting the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and Ailey II. KCFAA develops and delivers youth programming that uses the art of dance as a vehicle to improve knowledge, increase self-esteem, enhance critical thinking skills, and encourage positive role models and smart life choices. KCFAA reaches more than 30,000 young people each year through 10 year-round programs. Ailey began his relationship with Kansas City in 1968, when he first brought his groundbreaking modern dance company Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. In 1984, KCFAA was born as the official second home to this remarkable company. The organization is gearing up to celebrate its 30th anniversary.

Olathe Civic Theatre Association

Olathe Civic Theatre Association began as the Olathe Community Theatre Association with a \$1,000 grant from the Olathe Parks & Recreation Department in 1973. In July 1977, OCTA purchased the Reformed Presbyterian Church, built in 1870. The first production of *Arsenic and Old Lace* in the newly-christened Buddy Rogers Playhouse came in November 1977. After some highs and lows with codes violations and a fire, the theater reopened in 1983. In the summer of 2008, OCTA was the recipient of a grant to maintain the historical building and both the interior and exterior of the building was repainted, giving OCTA a much needed face-lift. In 2013 the group officially changed its name to the Olathe Civic Theatre Association to better reflect the breadth and caliber of the theater experience it provides. Today, the theater company plans six shows for its 2014-2015 season.

Owen/Cox Dance Group

Owen/Cox Dance Group's mission is to create new music and dance collaborations, to present high-quality contemporary dance performances with live music, and to engage as wide an audience as possible through affordable live performance, education and outreach programs. With this mission in mind, founders Jennifer Owen

and Brad Cox bring together some of Kansas City's most talented artists, representing a variety of genres, to perform contemporary dance with live music. With diverse backgrounds ranging from the Bolshoi Ballet and the Leningrad Chamber Orchestra, to Alvin Ailey and Dave Brubeck, these dancers and musicians form a highly skilled and multi-faceted corps. The collaborative results speak for themselves: fresh and vibrant new works that are classical in form, but contemporary in expression.

Spinning Tree Theatre

Spinning Tree Theatre, founded by two theater veterans Michael Grayman and Andy Parkhurst, started their small company in April 2011 with *Make Me a Song: The Music of William Finn*. During the next two years, the company has added musicals and plays. The next season will include four shows. The founders aim to produce works that celebrate and reflect the diversity of Kansas City itself by exploring a variety of cultures and art forms through theater, music and dance. The theater goal is to present new, contemporary and classic pieces that are relevant, thought-provoking and entertaining. The other is to educate, challenge, stimulate and inspire audience and artist alike.

Youth Symphony of Kansas City

Youth Symphony of Kansas City is more than 55 years old and designed to educate young musicians through enhanced orchestral experiences and to build the present and future classical music community. Youth Symphony of Kansas City was founded as "Youth Symphony of the Heart of America" by conductor Leo Scheer in 1958. The organization initially consisted of one orchestra of 80 musicians and has been a musical home to more than 8,500 young musicians in Kansas City. Today, the program has more than 340 students in fifth grade through twelfth grade performing in four full orchestras each year. Ten free concerts are programmed annually throughout the metropolitan area, with the advanced ensembles performing an annual spring concert at the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts.