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**Four leading arts organizations will explore the changing landscape of performing and presenting, new alliances and new avenues of training through the *Innovation Lab for the Performing Arts***

February 19, 2013—**Northrop Performing Arts Center, Portland Institute for Contemporary Art, Redmoon Theater and The Theater Offensive** have been selected to participate in Round 8 of the *Innovation Lab for the Performing Arts*, an intensive training and immersion program that supports prototyping of innovations at nonprofit theater, dance, jazz and presenting organizations. Designed and managed by EmcArts, the *Innovation Lab* is funded by a generous \$1.6 million grant from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation (DDCF).

EmcArts is currently conducting research on how best to support innovation and adaptive change among service organizations and other arts development agencies. We expect to develop a first Lab cohort designed especially for service organizations in spring 2013.

**Round 8 Grantees – Project Descriptions**

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**Northrop Performing Arts Center at the University of Minnesota (Minneapolis, MN) : *A New Center for Interdisciplinary Creativity and Innovation***

Northrop's adaptive challenge is to transform its revitalized facility into a hub of interdisciplinary creativity and innovation at the University of Minnesota—a Big Ten, major research university in the United States—that dynamically engages students, faculty, researchers, artists, and the greater community. Northrop aims to create a new collaborative model, framework, and set of practices that will realize and meaningfully sustain this transformation. Northrop's overarching goal is to transform its curatorial practice from “presenting artistic content” to “facilitating social orchestration” that provides meaningful personal experiences and aggregates creative energy to deliver greater value to its multiple constituents and create lasting impact in the community.

**Portland Institute for Contemporary Art (Portland, OR) : *Changing Spaces: Rethinking PICA's Itinerant Presenting Model***

The Portland Institute for Contemporary Art (PICA) champions experimental, inter-disciplinary artists locally and globally through presenting, residencies, commissioning, and educational programming. Since its founding, PICA has pursued a flexible and entrepreneurial model of temporary, pop-up spaces and alternative venues in underutilized buildings within residential and transitioning neighborhoods. This practice of presenting work in abandoned warehouses, cinemas, storefronts, and in partner galleries and theatres has fulfilled PICA's mission of putting artists first, allowing PICA to site work in spaces appropriate to the artists needs. PICA is questioning its ability to find the sort of spaces that it was able to obtain before, and is challenging its assumptions of the value of this model in its current state to PICA, to artists and to its community. PICA wants to preserve its practice's core values while reshaping an itinerant model.

**Redmoon Theater (Chicago, IL): *Academy of Spectacle***

For 23 years Redmoon has cultivated innovative thinking in creating community and activating public space. As the artistic and civic practice of creative placemaking and the power of art in public space are gaining national and international traction, Redmoon is identified as a leader in the field. Redmoon faces the need to invest in individuals in the long-term, scaffolding training from intern to apprentice, apprentice to collaborator, and from collaborator to



peer artist. In re-imagining this process to create a Spectacle Academy, Redmoon has the opportunity to benefit from cultivating a well-trained community of collaborators. The institution faces the following adaptive challenge: how can Redmoon realize the full potential of its social mission and 23 years of history as artists in public space in the creation of a training model that builds their artistic community and diversifies who and how Redmoon trains the next generation of Spectacle artists?

**The Theater Offensive** (Boston, MA) & partner organizations involved in the Pride Youth Theater Alliance : *Can a Continent Be Our Neighborhood?*

**The Theater Offensive** (TTO) has co-founded the newly formed Pride Youth Theater Alliance (PYTA), a strategic alliance, to bring a international organizing model to support and encourage Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) youth theater in North America. TTO's strategic alliance with the PYTA will support similar art work by partner organizations in 18 cities with almost 10% of North America's population. More than just a contracted service, this alliance has an equally shared leadership structure that oversees the administration, as well as a mutual recognition of the overlapping missions and institutional goals. This is a completely new model for TTO; and raises several questions: 1) Can TTO's model of Queer-arts-as-local-community-organizing have impact across North America by effectively leading the Pride Youth Theater Alliance? 2) Can TTO execute this change in scale as it continues growing and deepening its own work locally?

**Ben Cameron, Program Director for the Arts at DDCF, said:**

"The Round 8 grantees are an exciting cohort of four organizations that are all looking to question and explore the changing landscape of producing and presenting. The Doris Duke Charitable Foundation is pleased to support EmcArts' *Innovation Lab for the Performing Arts* because it offers a unique framework for exploration and experimentation with potential for impact on the field as a whole."

**Richard Evans, President of EmcArts,** comments on the work to date of the *Innovation Lab for the Performing Arts*:

"When the Lab was initiated in 2008, it was a unique and timely response to the rapid and unprecedented change being experienced in the operating environment for the arts. Over the last four years, it has proven its value to the arts field, and fostered the design and testing of significant innovations that otherwise would likely not have reached the public. As in earlier Rounds, the participants in Round 8 of the Lab are a widely varied group of leading organizations – demonstrating again that the Lab is of relevance to organizations of different sizes, types and backgrounds. We are grateful for the staunch support of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, and for the expertise of our many selection panelists, who have helped ensure the continuing development and vitality of the *Innovation Lab*."

## **Selection for Round 8**

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Organizations are selected to participate in the *Innovation Lab* via a competitive national RFP process. EmcArts received 28 applications to the Lab for Round 8. Applications were reviewed and applicants selected by an expert panel, selected and convened by EmcArts.



## **About the Innovation Lab for the Performing Arts**

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Originally launched in 2008 with a DDCF grant of \$1.5 million, EmcArts' *Innovation Lab* helps teams from nonprofit theater, dance, jazz and presenting organizations design and prototype new ideas and launch real-life projects that address major challenges facing arts and cultural organizations. Participants take part in a 12-month immersion program featuring an extended framework of individual coaching and group facilitation, guided by field research and led by EmcArts' expert facilitators. Ultimately, the Lab gives arts organizations the time and space they need away from the regular workplace to plan, engage, participate and learn how to innovate effectively. Participating organizations also receive much-needed risk capital to underwrite experimentation.

To date, 26 organizations have participated in the *Innovation Lab*, representing a range of disciplines and launching a variety of innovative initiatives in community engagement, uses of technology, collaborative programming and strategic alliances/mergers, among others. Past participants by Round are:

MAPP International Productions (NY); Roadside Theater/Appalshop (KY); The Civilians (NY); STREB Lab for Action Mechanics (NY); HERE Arts Center (NY); Yerba Buena Center for the Arts (CA); Children's Theatre Company (MN); Oregon Shakespeare Festival (OR); Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company, with Dance Theater Workshop (NY); University Music Society, Ann Arbor (MI); Center of Creative Arts – COCA (MO); Liz Lerman Dance Exchange (MD); Denver Center Theatre Company (CO); Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company (D.C.); The Wooster Group (NY); Dad's Garage Theatre Company (GA); The Flynn Center for the Performing Arts (VT); The Pearl Theatre Company (NY); Springboard for the Arts (MN); Adventure Stage Chicago (IL); The Apollo Theater Foundation (NY); The Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts (Washington, D.C.); New Dramatists (NY); Dancewave (NY), Geva Theatre Center (NY) and International Contemporary Ensemble (NY).

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### **About EmcArts**

Recognized as the leading not-for-profit provider of innovation services to the arts sector nationwide, EmcArts ([www.EmcArts.org](http://www.EmcArts.org)) serves as an intermediary for arts funders, and as a re-granting agency and service organization for the arts field around innovation. Our innovation programs support the development and implementation of mission-centered new strategies by arts organizations of all sizes. The programs range from directly incubating specific innovation projects to introductory programs that enable new thinking and build a culture of innovation across local arts communities. EmcArts is a 501(c)(3) organization.

### **About DDCF**

The mission of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation ([www.ddcf.org](http://www.ddcf.org)) is to improve the quality of people's lives through grants supporting the performing arts, environmental conservation, medical research, and the prevention of child abuse, and through preservation of the cultural and environmental legacy of Doris Duke's properties. The Arts Program focuses its support on contemporary dance, jazz and theatre artists, and the organizations that nurture, present and produce them.