

CAPACOA ANNOUNCES 23rd ANNUAL CONFERENCE

CAPACOA CONFERENCE 2010: “THE CULTURE OF COLLABORATION”

CAPACOA is the united national voice of the Canadian performing arts presenting and touring sector. CAPACOA works to advocate for the interests of Canadian presenters and the communities they serve, and to provide national-level opportunities for performing arts industry professionals to connect, collaborate, and develop skills. Each year in November CAPACOA hosts an annual conference, and this year, the theme for the 23rd annual gathering is: **The Culture of Collaboration**. The 2010 CAPACOA conference will take place November 5-8 in Ottawa, Ontario.

“It’s an exciting time in arts and culture in this country and within this association,” says CAPACOA Executive Director **Erin Benjamin**. “We are working to establish a comprehensive and exceptional conference program for our membership – one that we know will inspire innovation, excellence and create new opportunities for partnerships. To collaborate is to imagine something that has yet to be achieved, finding new ways to realize our goals – together”.

CAPACOA Board President **Charles McFarland** (City of Ottawa, Theatres) agrees. “In what are becoming increasingly challenging times for presenters, promoters, managers and artists in all the performing arts, CAPACOA is stepping up to the plate as the acknowledged facilitator of many perspectives and interests into a unified voice for positive change, be it in advocating for better support for artistic activity, in creating ‘networks of networks’ for cross-disciplinary strength or in offering curatorial and professional development for the betterment of Canadian audiences’ experiences of the arts everywhere. Our culture, and our strength, is in our ability to collaborate.”

“The Culture of Collaboration” represents the theme for both the 2010 conference as well as signaling new developments in the conference structure. CAPACOA will focus on the unique networking and professional development opportunities that the association can provide at a national level. The traditional showcase program will be replaced with full-length performances presented in different performing arts facilities in Ottawa in collaboration with local presenters, and the Pitch Sessions will be improved to provide even more high-quality opportunities for agents and managers to connect more artists with more presenters. Performing arts industry professionals will have many opportunities to network and collaborate. Additional initiatives, speakers and activities will be announced in the coming months. The 2010 conference will set the stage for 2011 when the CAPACOA conference is held in Toronto, Ontario.

CAPACOA Board Member **Jesse Kumagai** (Corporation of Massey Hall & Roy Thomson Hall), says, “CAPACOA is on the verge of some exciting growth - a time of evolution and reinvention. New leadership and new ideas are fuelling change that will make the organization and conference current and relevant as both a business resource and source of inspiration and creativity. Ottawa will see the beginnings of change, reflecting this new energy and opportunity. Toronto will be transformative as we look forward to hosting one of the most significant gatherings in CAPACOA’s history, and

making the conference an essential destination for arts professionals from Canada and abroad.”

The CAPACOA Conference Committee includes CAPACOA Vice-President and Conference Committee Chair **Phyllis Stenson** (Harrison Festival of the Arts), CAPACOA Board President **Charles McFarland** (City of Ottawa, Theatres), CAPACOA Board Member **Claude de Grandpré** (Théâtre Hector-Charland), CAPACOA Board Member **Jesse Kumagai** (Corporation of Massey Hall & Roy Thomson Hall), **Stephen McHolm** (Honens International Piano Competition), and **Joyce Hinton** (Chan Centre for the Performing Arts).

These leaders in Canada’s performing arts industry are working closely with CAPACOA management to help provide leadership, knowledge, communications, skills development and advocacy on behalf of CAPACOA members and within the arts presenting community, to ensure that all Canadians enjoy and have access to a vibrant cultural life.

“Through the consultation process, we’ve made some changes to the conference to better serve a broader representation of the presenting field,” explains **Phyllis Stenson**, Conference Committee Chair. “The theme of “Collaboration” is relevant today in our community - some of the most exciting artistic practices have been created through innovative collaborations. Our goal is to create a spark that leaves us all feeling rejuvenated, connected and inspired.”

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