



CENTERSTAGESM

Artists from Abroad in American Communities

JUNE-DECEMBER 2012 TOURS



www.centerstageUS.org

An initiative of the U.S. Department
of State's Bureau of Educational
and Cultural Affairs



Center Stage brings cultural diplomacy to Main Street America. It introduces artists from abroad to American communities, and invites Americans to engage with contemporary artists from around the world - on stage and off.



Cover photo credits (small photos, left to right): BÉLO courtesy of Connecticut College/Laura Cianciolo; Compagnie de Danse Jean-René Delsoin courtesy UNCW/Katherine Freshwater; Zeb & Haniya by YW Luk; Ti-Coca & Wanga-Nègès by Alan Mitchell; (large photo) Nan Jombang by Erin X. Smithers



LAUNCHED IN 2012, CENTER STAGE...

- **Visited** 49 communities in 27 states and Washington, DC
- **Hosted** 61 artists in 10 ensembles from 3 countries: Haiti, Indonesia and Pakistan
- **Booked** 113 performances – indoor and out, ticketed & free
- **Planned** 380 educational, community, and artist-to-artist activities
- **Traveled** 34,400+ cumulative tour miles
- **Connected** with 63,000+ U.S. audience members, participants, and students
- **Reached** 100,000+ U.S. and global viewers of web-based content and social media channels
- **Placed** 1,000,000+ media impressions (online and print): interviews, features, photo essays and reviews. Outlets included: The Washington Post, The Boston Globe, MTV Iggy, The Huffington Post, Rolling Stone Indonesia, Voice of America, The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, NPR and BBC radio.

INDONESIA

“With cultural diplomacy, we can start conversations and make lasting personal connections among people worldwide.”

- Ann Stock, Assistant Secretary
U.S. Department of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs

Center Stage, an initiative of the **U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs**, brings compelling contemporary performing artists from abroad to the U.S. to engage Americans in cultural diplomacy as a way to create opportunities for greater understanding.

Administered by the **New England Foundation for the Arts (NEFA)** in cooperation with the **Regional Arts Organizations**, with funding for the 2012 tours from the **Asian Cultural Council**, the **Robert Sterling Clark Foundation**, and the **Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art**, and with general management by **Lisa Booth Management Inc.**, this public-private partnership is the largest public diplomacy effort to bring foreign artists to American stages in recent history.



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“The arts are powerful...They are colorful, vibrant, bold - and they help people connect.”

– Rebecca Blunk, Executive Director, New England Foundation for the Arts

ON TOUR

Ensembles tour independently for a month to four to seven communities nationwide, spending at least three days in each location.

Engagements are individually crafted to respond to the strengths and interests of the artists and the interests and opportunities in each community. The mix of activities may include:

- public performances
- lecture-demonstrations
- artist-to-artist exchanges
- workshops
- classroom visits
- school concerts
- meet-the-artist events
- panel discussions
- master classes
- social events, including community dinners, jam sessions, museum visits, barn dances, and more.

Sharing Center Stage

Center Stage reaches tens of thousands of people on and off stage in communities the artists visit. Extensive press coverage and online outreach invite many more into the worldwide conversation.

From June to December 2014, six to eight ensembles will travel to the U.S. from Morocco, Pakistan, and Vietnam.



ISLAMABAD, PAKISTAN

Arieb Azhar



Sharp eloquence, humanist politics, and mystic poetries are given a global voice by Arieb Azhar and his band from Islamabad, Pakistan.

"Arieb added a significant, high-profile international element to our program that was artistically excellent... Even NYC audiences can sometimes need to have their eyes opened to new things, ideas and perspectives. Arieb definitely widened people's perceptions of Pakistan and Pakistani culture."

– Andrew Horwitz, Curator, River to River Festival

JUNE-JULY 2012: U.S. DEBUT...4 ARTISTS...9 PERFORMANCES...41 ACTIVITIES

U.S. Pakistan Leaders Forum on Media and Culture – Potomac, MD
The Kennedy Center – Washington, DC
Rockingham Arts and Museum Project & Eugene Friesen String Institute –
Bellows Falls, VT
Silvermine Arts Center – New Canaan, CT
Portland Arts Festival & One Longfellow Square – Portland, ME
Small Town Concert Series & Amalgamated Muck – Chester, CT
River to River Festival (Lower Manhattan Cultural Council) – New York City, NY
Old Town School of Folk Music & Inner-City Muslim Action Network – Chicago, IL
Roots Cultural Center – Providence, RI

CENTERSTAGE™



photo by Sancho Maulion

PÉTION-VILLE, HAITI

BÉLO



Haiti's groove innovator, BÉLO interweaves the Afro-Caribbean depths of tradition and today's culture with a progressive voice for social and political transformation.

"BÉLO was an outstanding advocate, educator, and ambassador for his country, and helped shape a new perspective for supporting and understanding the need for building a successful future for Haiti."

– Debra J'Anthony, Executive Director, Academy of Music

OCTOBER-NOVEMBER 2012: 6 ARTISTS...20 PERFORMANCES...37 ACTIVITIES

The Kennedy Center – Washington, DC
Academy of Music – Northampton, MA
Hibernian Hall – Roxbury, MA
Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts – North Adams, MA
Boothbay Opera House – Boothbay Harbor, ME
Bay Chamber Concerts – Rockport, ME
Portland Ovarions – Portland, ME
Connecticut College – New London, CT
University of Florida Performing Arts – Gainesville, FL
The Raymond F. Kravis Center for the Performing Arts – West Palm Beach, FL

Photo by UNCW/James Moncrief



PÉTION-VILLE, HAITI

Compagnie de Danse Jean-René Delsoin



This company of high-powered dancers and drummers, led by choreographer Jean-René Delsoin, cultivate a nuanced, sophisticated view of Haitian culture.

“Each work focused on a personal theme and reflected its country’s roots, incorporating moments of raw, rugged beauty and times of silent, refined artistry. For those in attendance, it was a one-of-a-kind experience.”

– Laura Vernaci, KCMetropolis.org

OCTOBER-NOVEMBER 2012: U.S. DEBUT...9 ARTISTS...12 PERFORMANCES...46 ACTIVITIES

- The Kennedy Center – Washington, DC
- South Miami-Dade Cultural Arts Center – Miami, FL
- Coker College – Hartsville, SC
- American Dance Festival – Durham, NC
- University of North Carolina – Wilmington, NC
- Lied Center for the Performing Arts, University of Nebraska – Lincoln, NE
- Johnson County Community College – Overland Park, KS



Photo by Abigail Boissac

YOGYAKARTA, INDONESIA

Jogja Hip Hop Foundation

If there were still any doubt that hip-hop is a truly global culture, look no further than Indonesia's Jogja Hip Hop Foundation.

"Today we met the reality of the Bronx, what hip hop is supposed to be: the empowerment of community...and we got a lot of inspiration because of it."

– Muhammad Marzuki, a.k.a. Kill the DJ

NOVEMBER–DECEMBER 2012: 7 ARTISTS...8 PERFORMANCES...47 ACTIVITIES

Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts – New York City, NY

Dancing in the Streets & Casita Maria Center for the Arts and Education –
The Bronx, NY

The Kennedy Center – Washington, DC

Scottsdale Center for the Performing Arts – Scottsdale, AZ

Mondavi Center for the Performing Arts, University of California, Davis – Davis, CA

UCSB Arts & Lectures, University of California – Santa Barbara, CA

Yerba Buena Center for the Arts – San Francisco, CA



PADANG, INDONESIA

Nan Jombang

Hailing from the island of Sumatra, away from Indonesia's dominant cultures, this family of artists offers a compelling mix of Minangkabau performing arts traditions, spiritual practice, and contemporary movement making.

"Martial arts, body drumming and chanting are age-old traditions; using simple means and an eye for sharp visual impact, [choreographer] Ery Mefri has woven them into fascinating theater...An extraordinary dance group."

– The Washington Post

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2012: U.S. DEBUT...7 ARTISTS...12 PERFORMANCES...22 ACTIVITIES

The Kennedy Center – Washington, DC
Dance Place – Washington, DC
FirstWorks – Providence, RI
Fall for Dance, City Center – New York, NY
Asia Society – New York, NY
REDCAT – Los Angeles, CA



Photo by Mohammed Omer

LAHORE, PAKISTAN

noori



Led by charismatic brothers Ali Hamza and Ali Noor, with powerhouse drummer and producer Louis “Gumby” Pinto, noori’s complex thematic and musical explorations result in a great rock and roll show with a distinctive South Asian kick.

“These are very trying times world over. And here we were, Pakistanis performing in front of Mexican-Americans, South Asians, Chinese-Americans, Irish-Americans, and more. When you hit that positive interaction with the audience, it’s not about where I come from, or where you come from; it’s about what we share, it’s about what we share in a fundamentally human way.”

– Ali Hamza, noori

JUNE-JULY 2012: U.S. DEBUT...7 ARTISTS...7 PERFORMANCES...30 ACTIVITIES

The Kennedy Center – Washington, DC.
Huntington Arts Council – Huntington, NY
International Festival of Arts & Ideas – New Haven, CT
Ann Arbor Summer Festival – Ann Arbor, MI
(Le) Poisson Rouge with Ariz, Inc. – New York, NY
University of Houston with Rajput Media – Houston, TX
Irving Arts Center with VJ Entertainment – Irving, TX



YOGYAKARTA, INDONESIA

Papermoon Puppet Theatre

In a country renowned for its puppetry traditions, Papermoon Puppet Theatre is a young, contemporary standout. Their production *Mwathirika*, chronicles the history of loss, and the lost history of a nation in 1965 – Indonesia’s Year of Living Dangerously.

“Brilliant, engaging and enthusiastic artists in residence at our campus/ community for four days – what a treat! Loved the performance, loved the teaching, loved the company.”

– Kathryn Maguet, Executive Director of Weis Center, Bucknell University

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2012: U.S. DEBUT...8 ARTISTS...8 PERFORMANCES...51 ACTIVITIES

The Kennedy Center – Washington, DC
Williams Center for the Arts, Lafayette College – Easton, PA
Halbritter Center for the Performing Arts, Juniata College – Huntingdon, PA
Weis Center for the Performing Arts, Bucknell University – Lewisburg, PA
Great Plains Regional Puppet Festival – West Liberty, IA
FirstWorks – Providence, RI
Asia Society – New York, NY



Photo by Skye Rowland Photography, Inc.

PORT-AU-PRINCE, HAITI

Ti-Coca & Wanga-Nègès

Masters of Haiti’s twoubadou (troubadour) tradition, Ti-Coca and his band, Wanga-Nègès weave through Haiti’s African, Caribbean, and Latin acoustic sounds with the high-energy determination and lightness of the group’s namesake, the hummingbird.

“Our community got to enjoy a spirited and joyful performance in a style that was new and different than anything they had experienced before.”

– Neal Copperman, Co-Producer, ¡Globalquerque!

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2012: 5 ARTISTS...17 PERFORMANCES...35 ACTIVITIES

- The Kennedy Center – Washington, DC
- ¡Globalquerque! – Albuquerque, NM
- Colorado Mountain College – Breckenridge, CO
- University of Denver – Denver, CO
- Central College – Pella, IA
- Hancher Auditorium, The University of Iowa – Iowa City, IA
- Grinnell College – Grinnell, IA
- Richmond Folk Festival – Richmond, VA



KARACHI, PAKISTAN

Very Live

Danish Ali, a doe-eyed MD turned punster, and improv comedy frontrunner and viral sensation Ali Gul Pir will tell you: in Pakistan there's no lack of material for a comic. The comedic trailblazers insist on pushing boundaries in a place where stand-up was virtually unknown.

"Their depth of enthusiasm for cross-cultural exchange allowed for very real – and often hilarious – moments exploring preconceived notions and debunking myths about Pakistan and the United States."

– Stephanie Pacheco, Outreach & Arts Education Manager at the Hopkins Center for the Arts, Dartmouth College

NOVEMBER 2012: U.S. DEBUT...2 ARTISTS...7 PERFORMANCES...19 ACTIVITIES

Hopkins Center for the Arts, Dartmouth College – Hanover, NH
New England Foundation for the Arts, Idea Swap – Worcester, MA
Everett: Company, Stage, and School – Providence, RI
Upright Citizens Brigade – New York, NY
Friar's Club – New York, NY



LAHORE, PAKISTAN

Zeb & Haniya



Cousins, lifelong friends, and longtime musical collaborators, Zeb and Haniya bring a global sensibility to earthy originals and sounds from the Eastern edge of Central Asia, continuing an unsung tradition of strong female artists making an impact on Pakistani popular music.

"This program is a very positive approach. Perceptions only change... [when] people meet people. One person can shatter former perceptions."

– Zeb Bangash

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2012: 6 ARTISTS...13 PERFORMANCES...52 ACTIVITIES

Akron International Friendship, The University of Akron – Akron, OH
The Kennedy Center – Washington, DC
Madison World Music Festival – Madison, WI
¡Globalquerque! – Albuquerque, NM
Helena Presents/Myrna Loy Center for the Performing and Media Arts – Helena, MT
University of Denver – Denver, CO
Asia Society Texas Center – Houston, TX



ROBERT
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asian cultural council



U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs

promotes mutual understanding between the United States and other countries through international educational and exchange programs. Through its Cultural Programs Division, the Bureau supports a variety of cultural exchange programs that support U.S. foreign policy, foster America's artistic excellence, and demonstrate America's respect and appreciation for other cultures and traditions. www.exchanges.state.gov

Based in Boston, the **New England Foundation for the Arts (NEFA)** provides leadership and resources that benefit artists, the public, arts funders, and policymakers throughout New England, nationally, and internationally. NEFA was established in 1976 as one of six regional arts organizations designed to cultivate the arts regionally and strengthen the national arts infrastructure. NEFA is the Department of State's primary partner and serves as overall administrator and communications manager.

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Based in New York City, **Lisa Booth Management, Inc. (LBMI)** brings contemporary performing arts projects before the widest possible public. A producer, manager and curator, LBMI projects have taken place in more than 400 cities in 51 countries on six continents since 1983. As general manager for Center Stage, LBMI is responsible for tour scheduling, residency planning, artist care, travel, production and backline, on-tour staffing and 24/7 oversight.

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