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12th Annual Virginia Arts Festival
Electrifying Performances Light Up
Venues Throughout Hampton Roads
April 18-May 26, 2008

The 12th Annual Virginia Arts Festival brings more than 60 acclaimed performing artists and ensembles to dozens of venues in 10 cities and towns throughout Hampton Roads, April 18-May 26, 2008.

Since 1997, the Virginia Arts Festival has brought great artists from around the world to the cities and communities of Hampton Roads, making this historic, recreation-rich region a center for culture and the arts. “The Festival is committed to presenting, commissioning, and creating the best of the performing arts for the people of Hampton Roads, and to making our region a cultural destination for travelers from across the country and around the world,” says Rob Cross, founder and director of the Virginia Arts Festival.

The 2008 Festival promises to be the most exciting yet. In dozens of venues throughout the area, patrons can choose spectacular performances by world-class performers:

-**Spectacle**: The awe-inspiring **Virginia International Tattoo** opens the Festival with a spectacular display of music and might featuring more than 800 performers from eight countries, in Norfolk’s Scope Arena, April 18-20.

-**Great Singers**: Hear one of the most exquisite voices in all of opera, **Kathleen Battle**, at Norfolk’s Harrison Opera House, May 1, and one of Broadway’s biggest stars, **Audra McDonald**, at the Sandler Center for the Performing Arts in Virginia Beach, May 11.

-**Modern Dance Masters**: Witness the electrifying spirit of **Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater** at Norfolk’s Chrysler Hall, May 2-4 and the drama of the legendary **Martha Graham Dance Company** at Williamsburg’s Phi Beta Kappa Hall, May 23.

-**Musical Theatre**: Experience a riveting new production, with a landmark staging of the Maxwell Anderson/Kurt Weill musical, **Lost in the Stars**, based on Alan Paton’s novel of South Africa, *Cry, the Beloved Country*, at Norfolk’s historic Attucks Theatre, April 22. This production features Herbert Perry, Gretha Denise Boston, Eugene Perry, and local artist Larry J. Giddens, Jr. A champion of new art and new productions of the classics, the Virginia Arts Festival commissioned and created this new production with its partners Opera Theatre Pittsburgh and Virginia Stage Company.

-Classical Music: Enjoy great classical music performed by world-class artists. Hear the critically acclaimed **Miami String Quartet** in Chesapeake's Great Bridge Presbyterian Church, April 27; the east coast premiere of a new trio by **Joan Tower**, co-commissioned by the Virginia Arts Festival and performed by pianist Andre Michel Schub, violinist **Cho-Liang Ling**, and cellist **Gary Hoffman**, in Norfolk's Chrysler Museum Theatre April 30; the fabled **Guarneri String Quartet**, performing in Portsmouth's Trinity Episcopal Church, May 5; **Living Legacy—A Celebration of Holocaust Composers**, in Norfolk's Chrysler Museum, Theatre May 21; and the new stars of choral music, **Cantus**, performing in three area venues May 19, 21, and 22. The **Festival Finale** offers a **Tchaikovsky Spectacular**, complete with the cannons of the 1812 Overture, performed by the **Virginia Symphony** in Williamsburg's College of William and Mary Sunken Garden, May 25. There's much more for fans of great music, including the new "**Coffee Concerts**," presenting renowned chamber music artists in area churches.

-Compelling Theater: Celebrate Israel's 60th anniversary with **Tovah Feldsuh's** Drama Desk Award-winning show, **Mining Golda**, May 7 and laugh out loud at the tales of America's master storyteller, **Garrison Keillor**, May 20 (both performances at the Sandler Center for the Performing Arts in Virginia Beach).

-Extraordinary International Performers: Discover a message of hope with the child singers of **Spirit of Uganda**, at Portsmouth's Willett Hall April 20; and the striking fusion of contemporary and traditional Samoan/Maori dance with New Zealand's stunning all-male **Black Grace** dance company at Tidewater Community College's Roper Performing Arts Center in Norfolk, April 22. Marvel at the gravity-defying **Peking Acrobats** at Virginia Beach's Sandler Center for the Performing Arts, May 9-10; and feel the temperature rise as Spain's sensual **Noche Flamenca** performs at the Newport News Ferguson Center for the Arts, May 17.

-Festival Fun: Savor spring at a pair of outdoor Festival favorites--the Virginia Beer Festival in Town Point Park, May 17 and the PANorama Caribbean Music Festival, oceanfront in Virginia Beach, May 9-11.

**A complete calendar of Virginia Arts Festival events is attached.
Tickets are now on sale, by phone at 757-282-2822, in person at the Festival Box
Office at MacArthur Center, or online at www.vafest.com.**

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