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Contact

Melissa Weber, Director of Communications
Phone: 320-589-6414, weberm@morris.umn.edu

Jenna Ray, Editor/Writer
Phone: 320-589-6068, jrray@morris.umn.edu

Neal Conan, Ensemble Galilei open Performing Arts Series

Summary: National Public Radio's Neal Conan and Ensemble Galilei will open the 2007-2008 Performing Arts Series season. Conan, along with actress Lily Knight, will present a multi-media celebration of the world's great explorers at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 22, in Edson Auditorium.

(September 10, 2007)-National Public Radio's Neal Conan and Ensemble Galilei will open the 2007-2008 Performing Arts Series season at the University of Minnesota, Morris. Conan, along with actress Lily Knight, will present a multi-media celebration of the world's great explorers at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 22, in Edson Auditorium.

Experience First Person: Stories from the Edge of the World, an evening of theater, original music and breathtaking photographs from the National Geographic Image Collection. Ibn Battuta writes of his travels to 14th Century Iraq. George Mallory sends a letter home before he attempts the summit of Mount Everest. Charles Darwin confesses his doubts on the voyage that changed the way we understand the world.

"All of this as the music of the Celtic harp and fiddle, recorders, whistles, viola da gamba and percussion evoke the mystery and sorrow, elation and hilarity of their journeys. Bach and Telemann. Traditional Scottish music and Swedish waltzes. Medieval dances and a solitary fiddle rising from the silence," says the program's introduction. This event is co-presented by the Campus Activities Council (CAC) Performing Arts Committee and the CAC Convocations Committee.

Tickets for this year's Series are on sale now. All performances will be given at 7:30 p.m. in Edson Auditorium, UMM Student Center, unless a special performance location is noted. Tickets may be ordered by mail or in person at the UMM Student Activities Office. Credit card orders may also be placed by phone. Unpaid reservations are not accepted. Tickets are not refundable. For more information, contact the UMM Office of Student Activities at (320) 589-6080.

Other offerings during this year's Series include:

Vienna Boys' Choir
Saturday, October 27, 2007
Special performance location: Morris Area Concert Hall, 600 Columbia Avenue

For more than 500 years, the Vienna Boys' Choir has been synonymous with choral music, delighting music lovers across the globe with their purity of tone, musical depth and distinctive charm.

Koresh Dance Company
Saturday, November 10, 2007

Full of surprises and blessed with amazing dancers, the company shines in Looking Back, a celebration of the music of the 40s and 50s - from Billie Holiday to Frank Sinatra, from Ella to Elvis. Koresh's exciting and emotional blend of ballet, modern and jazz dance continues after intermission with select pieces from the company's repertoire.

Theatre Sans Fil
Hansel and Gretel
Saturday, February 9, 2008

Montreal-based Theatre Sans Fil brings the children's opera to life with giant puppets, music and spectacular effects. Beyond the delightful telling of the classic Grimm's fairy tale, sure to delight children of all ages, "Hansel and Gretel" is an artistic marriage of theater, sculpture, painting and choreography.

Lily Cai Chinese Dance Company
Saturday, March 8, 2008

Choreographer and company founder Lily Cai began "sculpting with dancers" over a decade ago, inspired by the wild swirls of a massive Jackson Pollock painting. Her work beautifully blends traditional Chinese, Western ballet and modern dance.

In addition to the Performing Arts Series, the CAC Performing Arts Committee and UMM Jazz Ensembles present:

30th Annual UMM JAZZ Fest
April 3-5, 2008
Guest Artists: Byron Stripling and Eric Marienthal

Three days of non-stop, hot jazz! UMM's annual Jazz Fest draws over 800 high school and community jazz musicians to participate in three days of clinics with some of the world's greatest jazz musicians as their teachers. Tickets for the evening public concerts will go on sale in late February. Watch for details online and in the local media.

Primary funding for this series is provided by University of Minnesota, Morris students. The series is made possible in part by a grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board, through an appropriation by the Minnesota State Legislature and a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. The First Person: Stories from the Edge of the World performance is supported by the Performing Arts Fund, a program of Arts Midwest funded by the National Endowment for the Arts, which believes a great nation deserves great art, with additional contributions from General Mills Foundation, Land O' Lakes Foundation and the Minnesota State Arts Board.

Photo: Neal Conan

Through personal and academic discovery, the University of Minnesota, Morris provides opportunities for students to grow intellectually, engage in community, experience environmental stewardship and celebrate diversity. A renewable and sustainable educational experience, Morris prepares graduates for careers, for advanced degrees, for lifelong learning, for work world flexibility in the future, and for global citizenship. Learn more about Morris at morris.umn.edu or call 888-866-3382.