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Cultural Trust ready to present a season of diverse performances

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By Adrian McCoy, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette



Lakota Sioux Dance Theatre will be performing as one of The Pittsburgh Cultural Trust acts this year.

The Pittsburgh Cultural Trust unveils the 2008-09 season of its Trust Presents series today, announcing a diverse array of music, dance and spoken-word performances over the coming months.

"The Trust Presents series is the vehicle to bring in the broadest range of presentations," says Paul Organisak, Cultural Trust vice president of programming and executive director of the Pittsburgh Dance Council. "It can seem all over the map, but what we're trying to do is serve the diversity of our community, and to present work that otherwise wouldn't be seen in the city."

The lineup is all over the map, literally, drawing on performers from nearly every continent.

Musical highlights include the season-opening performance by Canadian Celtic rock band Great Big Sea; an evening of romantic music by Italian baritone Patrizio Buanne; Mariza, one of the next-generation Portuguese Fado singing stars; African guitar virtuoso Vieux Farka Toure, who is the son of the late guitar master Ali Farka Toure; singer Angelique Kidjo; the African-American marching band DRUMLine Live; a tribute to the rock band Queen; and "Idols in Concert ... for the Holidays!" featuring past "American Idol" finalists in a concert of holiday and popular music.

Other stage performances: "Luis Bravo's Forever Tango," the Broadway dance spectacular devoted to the art of the tango; acrobatics and martial arts with The National Acrobats of China; and Lakota Sioux Dance Theatre, a Native American troupe.

"Defending the Caveman," Rob Becker's popular comedy that explores the relationships between men and women, returns for another run. Literary figures coming to the stage include Walter Mosley and David Sedaris.

The Pittsburgh International Children's Theater merged with the Cultural Trust in June, and the Trust Presents series will augment the upcoming Children's Theater season with a slate of family programming, including the Broadway-scale "Magic Tree House: The Musical," based on Mary Pope Osborne's children's book series; the Russian American Children's Circus; and a to-be-announced date for "Dora the Explorer."

Here's the lineup (tickets go on sale today):

- **Great Big Sea:** Sept. 18 at 8 p.m., Byham Theater; \$31-\$36.
- **Luis Bravo's Forever Tango:** Sept. 26-27 at 8 p.m., Byham; \$25-\$40.
- **Aquila Theatre Company in Homer's "Iliad":** Sept. 28 at 4 p.m., Byham; \$10-\$25.
- **"Magic Tree House -- The Musical":** Oct. 3 at 7 p.m., Oct. 4 at 2 and 7 p.m., Byham; \$15-\$32, VIP seating \$45.
- **Patrizio Buanne:** Oct. 8 at 8 p.m., Benedum Center; \$34.50-\$69.50.
- **Vieux Farka Toure:** Oct. 13 at 8 p.m., New Hazlett Theater; \$20.
- **Walter Mosley:** Oct. 16 at 7:30 p.m., Byham; \$10-\$25.
- **"Defending the Caveman":** Oct. 17 at 8 p.m., Oct. 18 at 2 and 8 p.m., Byham; \$35.
- **Angelique Kidjo:** Oct. 29 at 7:30 p.m., Byham; \$20-\$37.
- **Capitol Steps:** Nov. 2 at 4 p.m., Byham; \$20-\$42.
- **Idols in Concert ... for the Holidays!:** Nov. 29 at 8 p.m., Byham; \$22-\$42, VIP seating \$80.
- **Lily Tomlin:** Feb. 7 at 8 p.m., Benedum; \$57-\$67, Gold Circle seating \$100.
- **Gabriel Alegria's Afro-Peruvian Sextet:** Feb. 10 at 8 p.m., Cabaret at Theater Square; \$20, \$10 students.
- **DRUMLine Live:** Feb. 18 at 7:30 p.m., Byham; \$20-\$32.
- **The National Acrobats of China:** Feb. 28 at 8 p.m., Byham; \$10-\$25.
- **Mariza:** March 7 at 8 p.m., Byham; \$20-\$37.
- **Lakota Sioux Dance Theatre:** March 8 at 3 p.m., Byham; \$10-\$25.
- **"She Said: Women's Words" with Bernice Johnson Reagon:** March 15 at 7 p.m., Byham; \$15.

- **David Sedaris:** April 1 at 7:30 p.m., Benedum; \$20-\$42, Gold Circle seating \$50.
- **One Night of Queen:** April 5 at 7 p.m., Byham; \$22.50-\$42.50.

The Trust also announced an additional slate of performances, for which either dates or ticket-sale dates haven't been established:

- **Smokey Robinson:** Oct. 25 at 7 p.m., Benedum; \$65-\$75, Gold Circle seating \$125.
- **Al Jarreau:** Date to be announced, Byham; \$25-\$50.
- **Chip Davis' Christmas: Music of Mannheim Steamroller:** Dec. 16-17 at 8 p.m., Benedum; tickets go on sale Oct. 11.
- **"Dora the Explorer":** March 2009; TBA.
- **Russian American Kids Circus:** March 28-29 at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m., Byham; \$10-\$20.

For tickets, call 412-456-6666 or visit www.pgharts.org or the box office at Theater Square. For group sales, call 412-471-6930.

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