



First Large-Scale National Performing Arts Convention Will Take Place in 2008

- ***Dance, Opera, Music and Theatre All Coming Together in Denver in June***
- ***Excellence Expert, Jim Collins, Chosen as Plenary Speaker***
- ***'AmericaSpeaks' Engaged to Facilitate Closing Town Hall Meeting***

December 11, 2007, (New York, NY) – Details of the nation's first truly combined National Performing Arts Convention (NPAC) were announced today in New York City. It will take place June 10-14, 2008 in Denver, Colorado. NPAC is expected to bring together nearly 5,000 actors, administrators, conductors, producers, dancers, trustees, singers, marketers, critics, composers, volunteers, musicians, businesses, instrumentalists, educators, directors, fundraisers and agents.

NPAC is being made possible by more than a dozen national performing arts service organizations coming together to develop, design, fund and facilitate the 2008 convention in close partnership with colleagues from the Denver performing arts community. The historic impact of such a teaming will be significant and communicate the importance of the performing arts to the nation's life and identity. By working together, arts leaders will more effectively bring the value of the performing arts to a wider audience.

Traditionally, each performing arts discipline holds its own individual national conference; however, next year they will combine into one large convention. "It has become clear that the performing arts share many of the same challenges," said Marc A. Scorca, co-chair of NPAC and President/CEO of OPERA America. "Through NPAC we aim to capitalize on the opportunities for growth as a *sector* rather than grappling independently with these issues as we have in the past."

"This is far more than a one-time event. The goal is that – years from now when arts leaders in communities large and small look back at their successful multi-disciplinary collaborations and cooperative programs – they'll remember that the initial ideas and relationships began when they participated in NPAC," added Ann Meier Baker, co-chair of NPAC and President/CEO of Chorus America.

Content development for the 2008 historic convention is well underway and plenary speaker, Jim Collins, acclaimed author of *Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the*

Leap...and Others Don't, has been signed. "I've become a passionate student [of the non-profit, social sector]", says Collins. "I've come to see that it is simply not good enough to focus solely on having a great business sector. If we only have great companies, we will merely have a prosperous society, not a great one. Economic growth and power are the means, not the definition, of a great nation."

A centerpiece of the convention programming is a series of discussions that will culminate in the closing plenary session when—via a unique *AmericaSpeaks* process that updates the traditional town hall meeting format—all convention participants will determine the action agenda for the newly-unified performing arts community.

NPAC registration will officially open on January 7, 2008 at www.performingartsconvention.org. The site is currently being built out with information being added each week about NPAC's agenda, schedule and objectives. Details about the plenaries, Jim Collins's presentation and the more than 50 sessions are being posted. Examples of sessions include: Taking Art Off the Shelf: Making the Arts Relevant Again; The Art of Living, or Living for Art: A Survival Guide for Individual Artists; The Value of A Seat; Design, Evaluation and Research on Arts Education Programs; Playwriting Bootcamp; Fun with Critics; The Changing Technological Universe and its Potential for the Arts Sector; Boomers: A Blooming Audience, or Fading Flowers in the Cultural Scene?; Artists from Abroad: Everything You Need to Know about Visa and Tax Issues; Opera: From Soap to Nuts; It Ain't Easy Being Green!; and, Art and Activism: Making Art, Making a Difference. *(Sessions are subject to change; a complete list will be available in December at www.performingartsconvention.org.)*

While NPAC has been designed to engage attendees in shared, multi-disciplinary content where they can learn best practices and meet colleagues from other fields, time during the convention has also been reserved for each discipline to convene their own members for special events and discipline-specific programming.

The participating NPAC arts service organizations include: American Composers Forum, American Music Center, Americans for the Arts, Association of Performing Arts Presenters, Chamber Music America, Chorus America, Conductors Guild, Dance/USA, Early Music America, Folk Alliance, International Association for Jazz Education, League of American Orchestras, Meet the Composer, Music Critics Association of North America, National Guild of Community Schools of the Arts, National Association of State Arts Agencies, National Performance Network, North American Performing Arts Managers and Agents, OPERA America and the Theatre Communications Group.