Wayzata, MN (June 6, 2014) - According to official counts, by the year 2030 the number of Minnesotans over age 65 is expected to nearly double, so that older adults will comprise one-fifth of our population. Across the nation, baby boomers are turning 65 at the rate of 10,000 people per day. These older adults are demanding that their lives remain vital, yet few facilities or cultural organizations understand or are prepared to deal with their needs.

To meet the demand of this impending “gray tsunami,” ArtSage will present the first-ever Midwest Arts and Aging Conference at St. Paul’s Union Depot on June 20, 2014, bringing together arts and aging experts, teaching artists, senior organization staff members, funders and those who wish to learn more about this emerging field.

The day-long conference kicks off with keynote speaker and poet Gary Glazner, founder of the nationally acclaimed Alzheimer’s Poetry Project. Concurrent afternoon workshops will focus on developing successful arts programs for older adults with memory loss, and engaging frail seniors with music and movement programs, in sessions taught by leading arts-and-aging experts, including Gary Glazner and Zoë Bird, Maria Genné, founder of Kairos Alive!, Jeanie Brindley-Barnett, co-founder of MacPhail Center for Music’s Music for Life™ program, and Joey Clarke.

Groundbreaking research documented by Dr. Gene Cohen, author of The Creative Age: Awakening Human Potential in the Second Half of Life, found a direct link between creative expression and healthy aging. Cohen found that older people who are involved in creating art, music, theater and other artistic forms feel better, remain more independent, and live more meaningful lives. He also proved through longitudinal studies that older adults who engaged in arts activities reduced the need for medications and lowered their health care costs.

Using this research, ArtSage, a Minnesota nonprofit, is working to ensure that older adults participate in arts and creative activities in order to remain vital, healthy and engaged in living.

ArtSage provides training for teaching artists who wish to work with older adults, consulting services for organizations and senior facilities that help them to provide quality arts programming for their residents, and resources such as SageConnect, a database to connect those working in the field of arts and aging.
In addition to workshops, the conference will offer an Exhibitor Fair, and the first-ever ArtSage Teaching Artist Showcase. The showcase will provide teaching artists who have been trained by ArtSage to work with older adults an opportunity to connect with activity directors at senior housing facilities for lifelong learning employment opportunities.

Finally, attendees will learn about new evaluation strategies for arts programming for adults with memory loss, and have an opportunity to network. The conference concludes with a Happy Hour Book Signing with keynote speaker Gary Glazner.

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**Midwest Arts & Aging Conference - Schedule of Events**

**Morning Sessions with Gary Glazner**
Poet Gary Glazner, founder and director of the national Alzheimer’s Poetry Project, will offer a two-part keynote address—and lead an afternoon workshop on poetry for older adults with memory loss.

**9:00 am - 10:15 am**: Keynote Session 1: Celebrating Creativity in Elder Care
**10:30 am - 12:00 pm**: Keynote Session 2: Dementia Arts Research Ensemble (DARE)

**Teaching Artist Showcase**
1:30 pm - 4:00 pm
Visit the Teaching Artist Showcase to be inspired by trained teaching artists who deliver arts programs for older adults at all care levels.

**Exhibitor Fair**
12:30 pm - 4:00 pm
Learn about senior facilities working to develop outstanding arts programming, and arts groups offering lifelong learning experiences for older adults.

**Interactive Workshops**
1:30 pm - 4:00 pm
Attend hands-on, multi-discipline workshops featuring keynote speaker Gary Glazner and Zoë Bird of the Alzheimer’s Poetry Project, Maria Genné and the staff of Kairos Alive!, and Jeanie Brindley-Barnett and Joey Clark of MacPhail Music for Life™. Learn how to put innovative arts programs into action with these master teachers.

**Networking Happy Hour and Book Signing**
4:30 pm - 6:30 pm
Join Gary Glazner for a Happy Hour Book Signing event and network with fellow conference attendees at Christos, inside the Saint Paul Union Depot.
Arts & Aging Conference Sponsors

Aroha Philanthropies • Minnesota Good Age • National Center for Creative Aging • The Waters Senior Living

Exhibitors

Wilder Foundation • Beyond Ballroom • COMPAS • Episcopal Homes • Kairos Alive! • MacPhail Center for Music • Minnesota Adult Day Services Association • Minnesota Gerontological Society • Minnesota Good Age • National Alzheimer’s Poetry Project • Oak Meadows • Opening Doors to Memory • Springboard for the Arts • The Waters Senior Living • VocalEssence

Master Teaching Artists


Showcase Artists

Shari Aronson & Z-Puppets, Puppetry • Cheri Bunker, Music (Drumming) • Michèle Coppin, Visual Arts • Kristina de Sacramento, Dance (Flamenco) • Lucy Rose Fischer, Visual Arts • Robin Getsug, Visual Arts • Jennifer Klukken, Music • Mick LaBriola, Music • May Lee-Yang, Storytelling • Deborah Lyon, Visual Arts • Shakun Maheshwari, Visual Arts • Margo McCreary, Puppetry • Karen Mueller, Music (Autoharp) • Crystal Schneider, Visual Arts • Paige Tighe, Interdisciplinary • Nothando Zulu, Storytelling

The Midwest Arts & Aging Conference is open to the public and registration is available online. ArtSage members receive a discount on their registration fee.

Midwest Arts and Aging Conference

When:       June 20, 2014
Where:      The St. Paul Union Depot
            214 East Fourth Street
            St. Paul, MN  55101
Cost:       $25 - $100
Tickets:    www.showclix.com/event/ArtSage

Sponsor and exhibitor opportunities are still available; interested organizations should email maureen@artsagemn.org to receive sponsor and exhibitor kits.
About ArtSage:
ArtSage is a connector, convener and catalyst for the field of arts and aging. We provide training for artists and organizations, consulting services and resources in the field of arts and aging. ArtSage is managed by nonprofit consulting firm Blue Sky Thinking. Learn more at: www.artsagemn.org.

About Blue Sky Thinking:
Blue Sky Thinking is a boutique management services firm for nonprofits. We deliver turnarounds and reinventions and provide basic management services for associations and nonprofits. ArtSage is a re-invention success story! For more information about our clients and services, visit www.blueskythinking.net.

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