

## Arts in Crisis: A Kennedy Center Initiative

### To Provide Planning Assistance from Kennedy Center President Michael M. Kaiser and Executive Staff

(Washington, D.C.) The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts today announced **Arts in Crisis: A Kennedy Center Initiative**, a program designed to provide emergency planning assistance to struggling arts organizations throughout the United States. Expanding on previously existing arts management programs at the Kennedy Center, **Arts in Crisis** will provide free consulting from both Kennedy Center President Michael M. Kaiser and members of the Kennedy Center's executive staff.

**Arts in Crisis: A Kennedy Center Initiative** is a response to the emergency facing arts organizations throughout the United States. The current economic climate has reduced earned and contributed income, decimated endowments, and has left some organizations struggling for survival. Companies of all sizes, localities, and performing arts disciplines have been affected. The program, open to non-profit 501(c)(3) performing arts organizations, will provide free and confidential counsel in fundraising, building more effective Boards of Trustees, budgeting, marketing, and other areas pertinent to maintaining a vital performing arts organization during a troubled economy.

"These are times of economic crisis and as the nation's center for the performing arts, we wish to help," said Kennedy Center President Michael M. Kaiser. "If any arts organization in the United States believes we can assist, the senior staff of the Kennedy Center and I offer our collective skills. We are at your service."

"The Kennedy Center and Michael Kaiser offered swift, constructive, hands-on, and inspirational assistance during the crisis for the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra following Hurricane Katrina," said Babs Mollere, Managing Director of the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra. "We are still following and implementing planning done during that critical period and have been amazed at the hard work and resilience of our organization and our cultural community that was aided by this special partnership."

"That Michael Kaiser, along with his senior Kennedy Center administrators, are freely putting themselves at the service of the nation's arts organizations is an amazingly generous offer, made at a very important juncture," said Susan Baker, Chairman of the New York City Opera Board. "Michael Kaiser's advice and expertise have been a tremendous help to City Opera. I strongly encourage other arts organizations in these challenging times to avail themselves of this exceptional team of experts."

Laveen Naidu, Executive Director of Dance Theatre of Harlem stated, "When DTH had to close its doors because of financial difficulties, we worked with Michael Kaiser on a strategic plan, assessing the organization's strengths and weaknesses, reorganizing the board, and placing the organization on a solid administrative footing in order to support the organization's artistic vision. His assistance helped us reopen in just six weeks."

Companies who would like to participate should visit [www.artsin crisis.org](http://www.artsin crisis.org) and submit an online request. In some instances, answers to simple questions may suffice; in others, more in-depth consultations will be required. Michael Kaiser, along with the heads of the Kennedy Center's development & fundraising, marketing, finance, information technology, and education departments will assist through e-mail, phone calls, and in-person visits to the organization.

Artsin crisis.org will also enable senior arts managers across the United States to volunteer to serve as mentors to other arts organizations. "There are many talented arts administrators around the country, and we encourage them to lend their expertise," said Michael Kaiser. "If all of us work together, we can turn a time of crisis into a time of opportunity."

Over the past several years while at the Kennedy Center, Michael Kaiser and his executive staff have assisted the leaders of numerous companies through the Kennedy Center Institute for Arts Management. The Institute provides a wide variety of training and support for arts management, including a capacity building program for culturally specific arts organizations; a program to train board members of arts organizations throughout the United States; international capacity building programs for arts organizations in 60 nations; a capacity building program for over 250 arts organizations in New York City; and [artsmanager.org](http://artsmanager.org), an interactive web resource for arts management professionals. The Kennedy Center also offers internship and fellowship programs, exposing arts professionals to various facets of arts management.

**Arts in Crisis: A Kennedy Center Initiative** is funded by Adrienne Arsht and Helen Lee Henderson.

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#### More Information

- "[Kennedy Center to Help Arts Programs in Economic Trouble](#)" - February 3, 2009 The Washington Post
- "[Kennedy Center to help struggling arts groups](#)" - February 3, 2009 Associated Press
- "[Kennedy Center Offers Help to Struggling Arts Groups](#)" - February 3, 2009 New York Times
- "[Adrienne Arsht donates funds for Kennedy Center initiative to help arts groups](#)" - February 3, 2009 The Miami Herald
- "[Performing arts struggle under crisis](#)" - February 3, 2009 Variety