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For immediate release

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QUAD CITY ARTS PARTICIPATES IN THE MIDWEST WORLD FEST

As an addition to Quad City Arts' regular Visiting Artist Series roster, Quad City Arts is proud to be participating as the Illinois site for Arts Midwest's Midwest World Fest in 2005-07. The Midwest World Fest is a global education and outreach performing arts initiative that provides inspiring arts enrichment and instills awareness and appreciation for other cultures. Beginning in fall 2005 and continuing for two years, the Midwest World Fest features four unique musical ensembles from different cultures. The ensembles will conduct week-long residencies consisting of public concerts, school concerts, and outreach activities in 10 selected Midwest communities.

Two artists will visit the Quad Cities in 2006-07. The first residency October 15-21, will feature Ilays, a Somalian music and dance ensemble. The Japanese Bamboo Orchestra will visit four sites February 18-24, 2006. Both groups will give public performances at Augustana College's Centennial Hall on the last day of their residency. Tickets are \$8 for adults and free for students and children. They will be available at the door or by calling the Augustana College Ticket Office, (309) 794-7306.

Ilays shares its Somali culture in an energetic and vibrant mix of music, poetry, dance, and stories drawing from traditional as well as more contemporary Somali culture. The ensemble includes writers, dancers, actors, singers, and instrumental musicians. Through performance and workshops, Ilays works to build cultural and artistic bridges between communities and to foster greater social awareness, understanding, and a culture of peace. Ilays has grown out of the Minneapolis-based Multicultural Arts and Education Center. The Center is devoted to the humanities, arts, education, and the conservation of cultural heritage.

A characteristic feature of Japanese culture is harmony in coexistence between people and nature and between people themselves. The Bamboo Orchestra focuses on this elemental vision through their art form. Bamboo, which has been used to make instruments in many regions of the world since antiquity, provides defining tones to the music of many ethnic communities. The Bamboo Orchestra, led by Makato Yabuki, plays a unique palette of more than 20 bamboo instruments from Japan and Asia. According to the ensemble, bamboo music transcends ethnic identities, personalities, and musical genres, as each listener and musician humbly encounters the bamboo and its rich, resonating sound. The members of the orchestra also introduce the joy of producing music and being in harmony with nature through bamboo instrument making workshops. The Orchestra, based both in Tokyo and Marseille, France, has performed extensively in Japan, including the Ministry of Culture's Asia Arts Festival, the World Ceramic Exposition in Saga, and Japan Expo in Fukushima. The Orchestra has also performed throughout France, and in 1998 participated in The Fifth World Bamboo Conference in Costa Rica.

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Quad City Arts is a nonprofit local arts agency dedicated to the growth and vitality of the Quad City region through the presentation, development and celebration of the arts and humanities. All Quad City Arts programs are partially supported by Festival of Trees, Quad City Arts *Partners* and operating grants from the Illinois Arts Council (a state agency) and the Iowa Arts Council, a division of the Department of Cultural Affairs. Quad City Arts also receives significant support for the Visiting Artist Series from the following: National Endowment for the Arts, Arts Midwest/Performing Arts Touring Fund, Iowa Arts Council, HNI Industries Charitable Foundation, Geneseo Foundation, Oscar Mayer Division/Kraft Foods, Scott County Regional Authority, Target Stores, Rock Island Community Foundation and the Rauch Family Foundation I.

Local car dealerships donate rental vehicles and hotels provide rooms coordinated through the Quad City Lodging Association. Performance space is provided by Augustana College, Redeemer Lutheran Church, St. Ambrose University and Scott Community College. Additional support comes from service fees paid by school districts, Parent Teacher Associations, service clubs and businesses as well as paid subscriptions to VAnguard. KWQC-TV 6 provides public service announcements for the formal concerts. GENESIS sponsors tickets for the public concerts.

Midwest World Fest is made possible with leadership support from the 3M Foundation, the William Randolph Hearst Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts. Major sponsorship has been generously provided by Amstore Corporation, Hanon McKendry, Verizon, the Consulate General of Israel to the Midwest in concert with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Israel, and the *Muskegon Chronicle*. Additional support from WKK Fund of Dorothy A. Johnson, the Muskegon Rotary Club and Muskegon Jewish Community.

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