



November 30, 2011

Dear Friends,

We are truly thankful to you—and to so many Milwaukeeans—for your support over the last 37 years! It's quite incredible that we've been able to provide professional quality programming which engages our community about vital social issues (HIV/AIDS, sexual abuse, drug/alcohol abuse, violence prevention), environmental stewardship, health education, and multi-cultural understanding, while also building giant puppet theme parades—mostly free-to-the-public programming for underserved Milwaukeeans. AND we've paid our artists professional rates. AND we've never had to borrow money. We've always been able to pay as we go.

But as our community is suffering, so are we. Thus we are reaching out to you in ways that we've not had to do for many years. Here are some of the details of our financial challenges, the ways we are working to address them, and the ways that you can help.

FINANCIAL CHALLENGES:

- Because of numerous cuts in budgets for schools, non-profits, and corporate special events, our contracts with them are down about 40%.
- Government grants were either reduced this year or will be next year –15% to 60% reductions in grants we customarily receive.
- The bottom line is: *WE RISK A \$30,000 SHORTFALL ON EXPENSES OF \$400,000.*

WHAT WE'RE DOING TO ADDRESS THE SHORTFALL:

- **Writing grant proposals for upcoming projects** (of course)
- **Exploring new sources of income, like:**

MPT GRAND VENUE ARTIVITY PLACE: The Shops of Grand Avenue have invited arts and creativity organizations to rent space at very low rates to try to breathe new life into the place. This last summer we were able to rent the former Linens 'N Things space (30,000 square feet!), to work on the All-City People's Parade. We have taken a leap of faith by renting it again for a year, and are developing an "Artivity Place" for exciting arts projects, and for local businesses to rent the space (and hire our artists!) –to increase our earned income.

ARTCORPS CREATIVE: We are also starting a new entrepreneurial venture to provide customized, arts-based learning programs, services and events for employers to address creativity skills deficits in the workplace.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP:

- Donate whatever you can
- Book a party/special event at the Grand Venue
- Come to our events, and bring your friends
- Help sponsor a performance, an arts residency, or adopt an intern
- Contact us about ARTCORPS Creative
- Volunteer your time

There's more information on our website about our projects and plans. We will greatly appreciate your participation in our work (YOUR Public Theatre)—and your contributions in any amount. It's easy. Use the enclosed envelope, or donate online. It's safe and secure: www.milwaukeepublictheatre.org.

And if you have any questions, ideas or suggestions, do give us a call: **414-347-1685**.

Many thanks, again

Barbara Leigh, MPT Artistic/Producing Director

MPT Staff, Board of Directors and Artists (over 100 of us!!)

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