

33 Years of Arts Healing: Now More Than Ever



HAI began harnessing the power of the arts for people with special needs over thirty-three years ago when our nation lived in very different times. Huge institutions warehoused people with mental disabilities and homelessness was a minor problem. In those days, healing through the arts was limited to reaching institutionalized patients on their wards. HAI began by taking patients *out* from mental hospitals to the finest cultural venues in NYC.

Since then, HAI has reached over 10 million people, and has repeatedly demonstrated how the lives of individuals have been enriched and improved through the arts. As the social fabric of our society changes, we continue to pioneer and innovate by responding to the needs of those who most likely will benefit from enjoyment of the arts, and to secure the funds to make it happen.

Two initiatives, **Tickets to Go** and **S.T.E.P.**, began shortly before 9/11. With the support of the New York City Council and the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, HAI began to provide senior New Yorkers with discounted tickets to cultural and entertainment events. To date, 33,000 have registered. Enjoyment of live cultural experiences, rather than sitting at home, perhaps watching TV, could have long-term health benefits. A study in the *British Medical Journal* (No. 7072 Volume 313, Dec. 1996) on the relationship between attendance at live cultural events and mortality concluded with, "people who frequently attend museums, art exhibitions, concerts and movies live significantly longer than those who do not."

At the other end of the age spectrum, The New York City Board of Education selected HAI to provide tickets for public school children through **S.T.E.P.**, (Student Teacher Enrichment Program). In the weeks after 9/11 with the new challenges facing New Yorkers, HAI once again demonstrated how the arts bring healing in circumstances that we could not have previously imagined.

Princeton University sought to apply its resources to assist the school children of NYC in coping with the 9/11 tragedies. Recognizing HAI's pioneering role and its vast service delivery network, Princeton approached HAI in November 2001 to administer **Arts Alive!**, a program it designed to bring New York City schoolchildren to exciting cultural experiences enhanced by complementary workshops led by Princeton students. For over 10,500 students traumatized or disillusioned by the events of 9/11, enjoyment of theater, music and dance provided vital experiences reaffirming community and goodness in the world. When shared with schoolmates, parents and teachers, the arts once again exercised its power to heal. **Arts Alive!** has been renewed for the current school year with a highly targeted focus. Schools designated to participate are those with a significant number of children who lost loved ones, schools with a direct view of the twin towers or at ground zero and host schools that have absorbed relocated schools.

HAI remains committed to bringing the powerful healing energies of the arts to people of all ages. At the first anniversary of 9/11, we are proud to continue developing innovative programs that sustain us through these difficult times and improve the lives of New Yorkers.

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This October, HAI will provide **Hope And Inspiration** to an audience of more than 27,900 people at more than 1,270 events by offering opportunities...

...to enjoy dance, theater, concerts and more

* In October, the **Cultural Events Program** will provide opportunities for 7,500 people to attend over 60 events including:

<i>Hairspray</i>	Neil Simon Theatre
<i>Burn This</i>	Union Square Theatre
<i>New York Philharmonic</i>	Avery Fisher Hall
<i>Naturemax</i>	American Museum of Natural History
<i>Flower Drum Song</i>	Virginia Theatre

HAI's Community Performance Arts Series will present *Tom Wopat*, the star of Broadway's *42nd Street* on October 17, 2PM at the Electrical Industries Auditorium in Flushing and on October 24, 2PM at the Center for the Arts in the College of Staten Island.

*39 trips are scheduled by **Omni*Bus** in October, providing transport for as many as 975 individuals to events around New York City. These events include trips to the Westchester Broadway theatre for a performance of *Kiss Me Kate*, Bear Mountain, shopping and movie trips.

***Tickets to Go** provides New York City seniors, age 60 and over, with greatly discounted tickets to renowned cultural and entertainment events. A total of 375 tickets have been secured for 12 events in October, including: New York Philharmonic, Momix, *Tom Wopat*, American Ballet Theatre, *Burn This*, *West End Blues: Louis Armstrong*, and the San Francisco Ballet.

***Arts Alive!** is a program developed by Princeton University and administered by HAI. The goals are to provide live arts and cultural experiences for the New York City public schoolchildren from schools most affected by the September 11 attacks, and to help sustain New York City arts and cultural organizations. In October, about 300 tickets will be distributed to 4 Broadway shows: *Hairspray*, *Lion King*, *Into the Woods* and *Flower Drum Song*.

*This October, HAI's **On-Site Performance Program** will reach over 7,500 people with 150 performances. On Sept 20, 2001, singer Mike Barry performed at Project Renewal's Holland House on West 42 St. The recreation director wrote that, "he did a wonderful job of weaving selections of standards with patriotic songs to acknowledge the Sept 11 disaster." At the residents request, Mike Barry returned to perform for the 9/11 anniversary. This time she wrote, "Mr. Barry took us to another place, celebrating unity...an important message to our community."

...to develop competence through artistic expression

* In October, **Arts Workshops** will achieve an attendance of 11,063 clients in 1,017 hours of workshops. New autumn series of workshops for developmentally disabled adults and children are starting up in day and afterschool programs as well as residences: Association for Retarded Citizens Agavino Residence, Bedford Stuyvesant Community Mental Health Center Respite Program, Evelyn Douglin Afterschool Respite Programs at two locations, EI HAB Community Services, Institute for Community Living's Joselow Residence, Pesach Tikvah Sunday Program and two day programs of United Cerebral Palsy of New York City. The exhibit of paintings by program participant Nelia Gibbs at the offices of Value Options, a health care provider, is in its final month. A new exhibit featuring the paintings of Monique Fagan Smith, also a program participant, will debut next month. The exhibit of art by HAI program participants, Thomas Hall, Adeyinka Perry and Melvin Way, continues through November 16 at Fresh Art.

...to acquire skills for supportive/independent living

*Through the HAI **Prevention Education Program**, which uses theatrical role-play workshops to develop decision-making skills with respect to HIV/ AIDS, Homelessness, Youth Leadership/Violence Prevention and Medicaid Managed Care. In October, more than 40 workshops will take place, reaching over 1,600 individuals. *Peace by Peace* performances, HIV Prevention, Youth Leadership, and Housing Readiness workshops will be taking place at The Eddie Harris Residence, Project Hospitality, Abyssinian House, and the Harry Van Arsdale H. S. In October, The new cast of *Peace by Peace* will have their debut at various High Schools throughout the city. The Prevention Education Department wishes them much luck and continued success.

...to gain access to information and to learn more about our mission

* HAI has developed various publications designed to aid disabled and elderly people, and to enlighten and stimulate the general public. On HAI's new web site, www.hospitalaudiences.org, one can find a database which merges our access publications, *Access for all: Guide for People with Disabilities to New York City cultural Institutions*, its update, *Addendum 2001*, and *On the Go: A guide to New York City Culture at a Discount for Seniors*. Hard copies of these publications are also available by writing to HAI. The third edition of *Live Arts Experiences: Their Impact on Health and Wellness* can also be viewed on HAI's website.