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Minnesota Fringe announces 2010 lottery results, venue lineup

Midwest's largest performing arts festival gets underway Aug. 5

MINNEAPOLIS — Minnesota Fringe announced the initial lineup for its 2010 festival yesterday. Fringe's lottery to select shows at random from a pool of applicants kicked off the planning for the Midwest's largest performing arts festival.

From a total of 397 applications, 169 shows will appear in this summer's festival, Aug. 5-15 in Minneapolis and St. Paul. The official festival schedule will be released at noon on July 1 at fringefestival.org.

Some audience favorites returning to the festival are: Walking Shadow Theatre Company; Joking Envelope, a company headed by Joseph Scrimshaw; Mike Fotis and Joe Bozic's Ferrari McSpeedy Theatrical Productions; casebolt and smith; Minnebarista; and Tom Reed.

Among other notable applicants in the 2010 Fringe are *Mystery Science Theater 3000* alumna Mary Jo Pehl; storyteller Florence Fisch-Hacham coming from Israel; and C.R.A.Z.Y., a teen theater group based in Minneapolis's Cedar-Riverside neighborhood.

"This is a really high-octane mix of Fringe veterans, established artists who haven't spent much time on Fringe stages, and completely new producers," said Robin C. Gillette, Fringe's Executive Director. "There's a lot to be excited for."

A full list of this year's lottery winners and the festival's waiting list is available at fringefestival.org/lottery.

Fringe announced it's expanding the number of stages to 15 for the 2010 festival. The addition of one more venue allows the addition of 11 shows.

"On the heels of our attendance jump in 2009 and after receiving almost 400 applications for this year's festival, it was time to expand," said Gillette. "Our audiences stepped it up, our artists stepped it up, so we'll step it up."

Theatre in the Round joins the Playwrights' Center, the Southern Theatre, Mixed Blood Theater and four stages at the University of Minnesota Rarig Center on Minneapolis's West Bank.

Jungle Theater is added to Fringe's established Uptown lineup of Intermedia Arts, Minneapolis Theatre Garage and Bryant-Lake Bowl. St. Paul's Gremlin Theater returns to the festival for its second year. Ritz Theater in Northeast Minneapolis is home to two Fringe stages.

"Audiences and artists have told us one of the best things about Fringe is to have venues close together," Gillette said. "This year, we're incredibly proud of the festival map. There isn't a stage that's more than 10 minutes from at least one other venue. These spaces rank among the finest in the Twin Cities."

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Of the 169 shows, four were drawn from a special Midwest Fringe tour circuit lottery in January. Four are part of the festival's bring-your-own-venue program for site-specific works. Slots are also reserved for sub-lotteries for artists of color, international, national, teen and children's theater applicants.

COMING SOON: Fringe's annual Five-Fifths of... event takes place Monday, May 3. This year, five performing arts companies each tackle one-fifth of one of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes stories and reinterpret in their own styles. This year's participating companies are: Park Square Theatre; Theatre Unbound; Joshua English Scrimshaw and Levi Weinhagen; Tom Reed; and Monica Rodero and Dan Schuchart.

In 2010, Minnesota Fringe celebrates its 17th year. More information about the festival is at fringefestival.org.