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IndyFringe – Four years old and forty of the best August 22 to August 30, 2007

Within less than a month of opening entries for the Indianapolis Theatre Fringe Festival on January 7, 2008, 36 of the 40 slots have been filled. This year's festival supports 40 performing groups each presenting six one-hour shows over ten days from August 22 to August 30.

Over the past three years IndyFringe has returned \$202,000 in box office to 105 performers and small theatre companies. VisualFringe artists have received \$12,000 in art sales.

“IndyFringe is fast becoming a ‘must attend’ Fringe Festival. The Board has worked hard on branding and marketing the Festival but it is thanks to the wonderful Festival audiences and the hospitality of Massachusetts Avenue that we have been able to do so much in three years and attract so many entries so quickly. Entries are on a first come, first serve basis and no performer wants to stand on the sidelines.” explained Pauline Moffat, Executive Director.

This year IndyFringe presents 23 new performing groups and 15 returning artists. 28 of the performing groups are presenting new works.

One surprise entry is from former Greencastle resident Vaughn Croft, who now resides in Brooklyn, N.Y., and is a veteran of three Edinburgh, Scotland, festivals – the oldest of all Fringes.

“Vaughn literally interviewed me on the phone wanting to know ticket sales, average attendance, and the return to the performer. He was surprised at the results and put his entry in the mail that day. Vaughn's show uses fairy tales, and in addition to performing he plans a workshop/practicum on fairytales/storytelling. What a great opportunity for our local performers to learn from such a seasoned international performer.” Moffat said.

The local entry list is a local ‘whose who’ of performing arts headed by ShadowApe, Indianapolis's renowned theatre group in collaboration with Butler University Theatre. Titled “In Your Dreams” this new work was conceived and created by students in ShadowApe's summer workshop at Butler University. Butler University students and faculty have supported the festival since its inception through performance art, student entries and behind the scenes technical support and direction. John Green, Chair of Theatre has often quipped that IndyFringe is a campus of Butler University during August.

Other local artists returning are Arden Theatre Company; Christian and Katalina, MindTrippers; Nell Weatherwax (Bloomington); Theatre Non Nobis; Motus Dance Company and Taylor Martin. FringeNext top seller, nineteen year old magician Jared Sherlock, will take to the big stage of the main fringe with The Magic of Jared Sherlock.

Among the returning US and international artists are Phil van Hest, Phil the Void (LA) ; Matt Panesh, Stand Up Monkey Poet (UK); Shantz Theatre Company and Cool Table from Chicago; Mime Rifle Productions (Minn) remembered for their two hits – Recently Dead Celebrities and Jawz the Musical; Roland and Sarlot’s Magical Cabaret; Brent McCoy, Clown at Work and Merely Players Ind (Kentucky) with another production “Adventures in Mating”.

International entries include “Tastes Funny”, The Gondos, an Australian cabaret show which has toured Europe, Australia and Asia and JG College of the Arts, India. “May you be married forever...!!!” includes Indian Bollywood music, dance and drama blending the rich Indian wedding traditions with modern trends.

“IndyFringe seems to be carving a niche in dance with six entries from local and US based companies. Toronto Fringe has just announced a special lottery and space allocation for dance in their 2008 festival. In the future we may be able to cross promote dance between the two festivals. It is important to provide a touring circuit for our visiting US performers and for our own excellent dance companies” commented Moffat.

IndyFringe accepts entries on a first come, first served basis and therefore has no control over what is entered. “We wish for a balanced program and this year I think we have achieved it. We have comedy, cabaret and magic. Now we have five dramatic works including an entry from Zehra Fazal (Arlington, VA) “My Friend Hitler”, a solo-performance inspired by Yukio Mishima play, which examines the political and personal strategies that lead to Hitler’s ascent and from Miami, The Jesus Quintero Studio, will present a Tennessee Williams play “27 Wagons Full of Cotton”.

“What remains are 3 international slots which take a little longer to fill as overseas performers plan for their US tour. We received enquiries from Italy, UK, Australia and Canada. A number of performers are waiting on the results of lotteries to see if they can perform in other fringes in Canada and the US before making a commitment by March 7. And the remaining slot is for the winner of the New Play Contest announced late March”, explained Pauline Moffat, Executive Director.

FringeNext entries are open. The first entry is from the Center for Inquiry. Middle School students will write and perform a claymation i-movie written by Jacob Miller and friends. There are 18 slots available.

Entries for the 2008 New Play Contest have opened. The ‘New Play Contest’ winner will receive a cash prize and free entry into IndyFringe. The second place entry in the 2007 New Play Contest was one of the first entries opened for this year’s Festival.

VisualFringe and FringeFilm entries will open in March. All applications are or will be posted on www.indyfringe.org.

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