



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Contact: Sara Radak, Marketing Associate
sradak@nearwesttheatre.org
(216) 961-9750

“Ease on Down the Road” with *The Wiz* at Near West Theatre

Cleveland, OH (October 9, 2009) - Near West Theatre (NWT) announces its upcoming performances of the Tony Award-winning Best Musical, *The Wiz*. Opening on November 20 and running through December 6, with a special signed performance for the deaf by The Heard on December 3, performances take place on the third floor of St. Patrick’s Club Building at the corner of West 38th Street and Bridge Avenue in Ohio City.

The Wiz takes Frank Baum’s classic, *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, and gives it a modern spin. Dorothy, the Scarecrow, the Tinman and the Lion travel a fantastical, futuristic road trip and learn some things along the way about rising above one’s background and the expectations of others. NWT’s delightful cast of 45 children, teens, and adults, along with its brilliant design team, will bring the re-invented, contemporary version of this funky, urban Oz to life. The winner of 7 Tony Awards when it premiered on Broadway in 1974 and featuring such classic songs as “Ease On Down the Road” and “Everybody Rejoice,” *The Wiz* is sure to have audiences dancing in the aisles.

Performances are Fri.-Sun. Nov. 20-22, Fri-Sun., Nov. 27-29, and Thu.-Sun., Dec. 3-6. Curtain times on Thursday, Fridays, and Saturdays are at 7:30 pm and Sundays at 3:00 pm. All offerings are at St. Patrick’s Club Building, located at W.38th and Bridge Avenue* in Ohio City and include free parking. Adult tickets are \$8 and children, 12 & under, are \$6. The Star Seat ticket, which helps NWT fill the gap between the affordable rate it offers its patrons and the actual cost of the production, is \$20 and includes a concession coupon. Tickets are available by calling (216) 961-6391 or can be ordered online at www.nearwesttheatre.org.

NWT proudly recognizes the show sponsorship of The Charter One Foundation, Medical Mutual and U.S. Bank. 2009-2010 Season sponsorship provided by Today’s Soft Rock, WDOK 102.1 F.M. The Ohio Arts Council has helped fund this program with state tax dollars to encourage economic growth, educational excellence and cultural enrichment for all Ohioans. NWT is generously funded by Cuyahoga County residents through Cuyahoga Arts and Culture and is a member of Greater Cleveland Community Shares. Community Shares supports local nonprofit organizations working for long-term, sustainable, solutions to build a stronger Cleveland. Learn more about Community Shares and supporting social justice through workplace giving at www.communityshares.org.

*While accessibility is an important part of Near West Theatre’s Mission, our current location at W. 38th & Bridge is on the third floor and is unable to accommodate an elevator or chair lift to make it accessible to individuals in wheelchairs or those who have difficulty with stairs. We are focused on providing an accessible space with the opening of our new theatre in the Gordon Square Arts District.

Star Seat Packages Available

Star Seat donors help bridge the gap between the true cost of an audience member's experience and the affordable rate we offer our guests. Buy this package to help NWT continue to offer affordable, high-quality theatre on the Near West Side. For \$120, you get 7 tickets for any combination of performances plus concession coupons, playbill recognition and other VIP opportunities and benefits. Star Seat Packages are available online at www.nearwesttheatre.org.

History

Since 1978, Near West Theatre has engaged youth on the Near West Side in a positive activity that taps into their energy, allowing them to discover their creativity and present themselves as contributing members of the community. Through a process that is intense, sometimes rugged and ragged, challenging and transforming, Near West Theatre, now intergenerational, engages participants and audience alike. Individuals from all walks of life come together and share their unique life stories and experiences in order to find their own voices and make personal connections with the production. Near West Theatre's unique blend of performing arts and community-building has played an instrumental role in the theatre's success with its audience, community and participants.

NWT is a partner in the Gordon Square Arts District, a collaboration between NWT, Cleveland Public Theatre, and Detroit Shoreway Community Development Organization, where it will build a new, accessible performance venue. Go to ww.gordonsquare.org for more information on Gordon Square Arts District which just recently completed a streetscape and the opening of the revitalized Capitol Movie Theatre that will feature art and independent films.

For more information about the Near West Theatre, our programs, performances or for audition information, please contact the NWT business office at (216) 961-9750.

####