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HARRIS THEATER WELCOMES NEW PRESIDENT AND CEO, PAUL ORGANISAK



Paul Organisak, Harris Theater President and CEO; Photo by Todd Rosenberg

CHICAGO - The Harris Theater for Music and Dance announced today the appointment of **Paul Organisak** as the new **Alexandra C. and John D. Nichols President and Chief Executive Officer Endowed Chair**, effective immediately.

Organisak succeeds Michael Tiknis who was President and Managing Director since 2004.

Mr. Organisak comes to the Harris Theater with a breadth of experience spanning a thirty-year career in arts administration. He most recently served jointly as Vice President of Programming for the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust and Executive Director of the Pittsburgh Dance Council, which became a division of the Trust in 2002, managing an overall budget of nearly \$16 million. In these capacities, his programming responsibilities covered the entire spectrum of performance including dance, music, Broadway, cabaret

and cross-disciplinary performance. He has co-curated several international festivals including the *Cultural Trust's Pittsburgh International Festival of Firsts* as well as a series of country-specific festivals.

"We're excited to welcome Paul to his new role at the Harris Theater and we are confident that the organization will thrive under his leadership," said Alexandra Nichols, Chairman of the Board of the Harris Theater for Music and Dance. "Mr. Organisak is a true collaborator and comes with an impressive track record. We look forward to strengthening the organization under his guidance and vision."

"I am honored and thrilled to join the team of the Harris Theater for Music and Dance. Its status as a world-class theatre, a fantastic venue for so many Chicago-based companies, and a cultural jewel of Chicago drew me immediately to this position. I look forward to building upon its marvelous reputation and I am proud to be able to contribute to it in such a significant role." said new President and CEO, Paul Organisak.

Mr. Organisak's prior leadership positions include Dance Umbrella (Boston), the American College Dance Festival Association (ACDFA), and the Pittsburgh Dance Council. He has served on several professional boards and panels, including Dance/USA, the PA Council on the Arts, Mid-Atlantic Arts Foundation, National College Choreography Initiative, the Arts Education Planning Process and Partnership, among others. Organisak holds a degree from the University of Michigan/Ann Arbor with a focus in music history / musicology.

Harris Theater for Music and Dance

The Harris Theater is Chicago's primary residence for music and dance, connecting diverse audiences with outstanding artists from across the city, the nation, and the world. The Theater's activities fall under three central strategies: support for local music and dance companies, community engagement and educational programs, and presentation of national and international artists. The Harris Theater's original group of 12 resident companies has grown to include 35 diverse organizations. Through these partnerships, the Theater has earned national recognition as a distinctive model for collaboration, performance, and artistic advancement.

Opened on November 8, 2003, the Harris Theater for Music and Dance was the first multi-use performing arts venue to be built in the Chicago downtown area since 1929. Today the Theater continues to host the most diverse offerings of any venue in Chicago, featuring the city's world-renowned music and dance institutions and the Harris Theater Presents series of acclaimed national and international artists and ensembles.

To learn more about the Harris Theater, please visit HarrisTheaterChicago.org
Call the Box Office at 312.334.7777 to request a brochure or additional information.

The Harris Theater for Music and Dance, Chicago's state-of-the art 1,525-seat performance venue, can also be found on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

