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Chelsea Heights Elementary Explores African and African American Art with Young Audiences of Minnesota

Saint Paul, MN – Chelsea Heights Elementary announces its Arts for All – Arts 25 Program in partnership with Young Audiences of Minnesota. One of nine Saint Paul Public Schools that received the \$5,000 Arts 25 award in 2006-2007, the Chelsea Heights project includes performances, workshops, and professional development workshops which explore African and African American art forms. The project begins on January 16, 2007, as music director Anita Ruth and singer T. Mychael Rambo perform “Tracks of New Thinking” in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

“Many of our current students have strong ties to the African continent and our whole student body will benefit from learning about the variety of art forms that come from Africa,” states Arts 25 school coordinator and teacher Wendy Flinner. The learning opportunities are extended to educators, since the Arts 25 award includes a professional development component. Building on the performance of “Tracks of New Thinking,” Anita Ruth and T. Mychael Rambo teach educators how songwriting can infuse the history and social studies curricula on January 26, 2007.

Upcoming Chelsea Heights Arts 25 performances feature a variety of art forms and cultures, from Africa to America. The musical ensemble Karibuni performs songs from Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, the Republic of Congo, and South Africa on May 4, 2007. Universal Dance Destiny performs, “From Native West African Dance to Modern American Hip Hop,” with a company of six dancers and drummers on May 3, 2007. In addition to the performance, Universal Dance Destiny’s artistic director Edna Stevens Talton conducts African dance workshops for students in first through fifth grade. Storyteller Nothando Zulu performs African and African American folktales for kindergarten through third grade classes on May 11, 2007.

The Arts for All – Arts 25 Program is funded by Saint Paul Public Schools District. Arts 25 projects are designed to stimulate students’ imaginations and expand their understanding of the arts. Projects encourage long term partnerships between Saint Paul Public Schools and the local arts community.

Young Audiences of Minnesota is in its 43rd year of providing arts-in-education programs for students, families and communities in Minnesota and western Wisconsin, and is a chapter of Young Audiences, Inc., a nationally recognized arts-education provider. YAMN offers performances, workshops and residencies, professional development sessions, and a unique traveling art exhibit program *Real Art+ Real Kids* ©.

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