



NEBRASKA HUMANITIES COUNCIL

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N E W S R E L E A S E

For release: April 13, 2009

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“Nebraska Companion” documents state’s music history

Nebraska’s rich music history is documented in a Nebraska Humanities Council (NHC) publication produced as a companion to the Smithsonian Institution’s traveling exhibition “New Harmonies: Celebrating American Roots Music.”

“The Nebraska Companion” is available by mail and at each of the six sites hosting the year-long touring exhibition. It was produced with generous support from Cornhusker Press, a division of Dutton Lainson Company of Hastings.

“The origins and history of music in Nebraska are as rich as our state itself. From the earliest days of the Native Americans and their religious tribal songs to the music of today’s generation, music has served the citizens of our state in happy and sad times, in work and in play, and in celebration and defeat,” writes Robin Koozer, professor of music and department chair at Hastings College, in the introduction to the new 36-page publication.

Brought to the state by the NHC, the Smithsonian exhibition celebrates through roots music the quintessential American values of freedom, democracy, independence, diversity, and ingenuity; and explores the origins and development of spirituals, gospel, country, bluegrass, blues, tejano, polka and more.

As state scholar for the 2009 Nebraska tour of “New Harmonies,” Koozer worked with many contributors to highlight Nebraska while complementing the exhibition’s national focus.

“The Nebraska Companion” samples the state’s music history and explores such topics as barbershop music, the 80 years of the Hastings Symphony, Nebraska’s heritage of jazz, the tradition of community and fraternal bands, music of the pioneer days, tributes to the local piano teacher, the enduring qualities of Native American music, and the renaissance of Nebraska’s opera houses.

“New Harmonies” will visit Knight Museum and Sandhills Center in Alliance (through April 23), Cambridge Museum (May 1-June 7), Platte County Historical Society Museum in Columbus (June 13-July 24), Kearney’s Trails & Rails Museum (Aug. 4-29), Cherry County Historical Society Museum in Valentine (Sept. 3-Oct. 11), and Loves Jazz & Arts Center in Omaha (Oct. 18-Dec. 31).

To receive a copy of “The Nebraska Companion” by mail, send \$2 for postage and handling to NHC, 215 Centennial Mall South, Suite 330, Lincoln, NE 68508.

Additional sponsors of the Nebraska tour of “New Harmonies: Celebrating American Roots Music” include the Berman Music Foundation, The Nebraska Rural Radio Network—KRVN, KTIC, and KNEB, Brown Transfer Company, Nebraska Cultural Endowment, and The “We the People” initiative of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

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