

Just Curious about

Ryan Heinritz

By Felicia Crosby



Meet Ryan Heinritz, the director of the Paradise Center for the Arts in Faribault, and a man on a mission. Here he is to talk about regional arts centers, the next generation of arts supporters and what Robin Williams has that he wants.

Would you have been surprised if someone had told the nine-year-old you that someday you were going to head up an arts organization?

Considering you couldn't get my soccer ball pried off my foot... I'd say "yes."



In the beginning there was:

...home:

Milwaukee, WI, home of the Milwaukee Brewers... GO TWINS!!!!

.....youthful arts involvement:

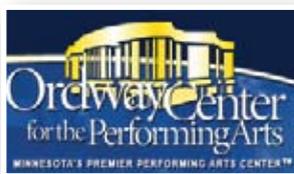
I was in the band at my elementary school as a drummer, and was also a performer in our musical, but wasn't really until in high school when I got more involved.

.....early organizational tendencies:

I always had to be heard and most likely be the captain or leader of the team... go figure.

The artist (administrator) as a young man:

(After) college I was hoping to work in advertising as a copywriter. With nothing open, I applied for an unpaid internship from the Ordway Center for the Performing Arts in St. Paul, in PR. One of the greatest jobs I ever had... (that) earned me a spot as marketing coordinator, then marketing and communications coordinator. But after a few years... I pursued (sales)... I spent nearly 3 1/2 years in regional ad sales, before moving to a cleaning and restoration franchise business (as) its sales and marketing manager.



On the path to the Paradise:

I have always been passionate for the theater; I did miss the days of working in arts administration... thinking about my skills as a manager, a relationship builder, a closer, an educator, combined with leadership and vision, and drive to succeed (and) blend it



together – (then, in late 2009) I saw an ad in the *Faribault Daily News*, for executive director of the Paradise Center for the Arts.

The PCA was looking for a leader to focus on the 'Business of Running an Art Center'. I was the lucky one who fit the bill.

Biggest challenge?



More money! There is never enough of it in this industry to fully do everything one wants to do. That being said, if you can run the right business you can do exactly what you need to do to support your mission and carry out your vision. But boy, imagine the possibilities an organization like ours could have with the right sources of financial support.

Job rewards both professional.....

Alongside members and supporters, to help in the leadership of taking a business that ended its fiscal year two years ago in the red, and ending last year in the black.

....and personal.

The four-year-old girl singing and dancing in the lobby in her princess dress with her tiara on, after our community theater's production of *Cinderella*; the 1600 (plus) 2nd-5th grade students that – over the next year and hopefully years to come – will be able to see live theatre when typically they would not; and the look on my boys' faces every time they get to see Dad at work and "go on the big stage."

Following in Dad's footsteps:

My three-year-old is definitely his daddy's son; he has the drama written all over him. Quite the *manipula*...uh, I mean quite the *performer*...you bet.

Both boys love "Dance Party" and my six-year-old likes to belt out songs we listen to on the radio. They don't come to work too often but when they do, it's stage time for sure!

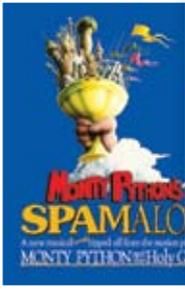


Evolving the Paradise to better fit the region:

Define "region."

We have talked a lot about that at the PCA. Not everyone here (in Faribault) yet knows about their art center downtown; there isn't a weekend I don't hear, "wow, I haven't been here since I was a kid," or "wow, look what they did with the old movie theater!" We are sandwiched between two great communities filled with rich arts and entertainment opportunities, including great community theatre – (we are) collaborating on musicals such as *Into the Woods* (closing Sunday, Aug. 5). One thing we are trying to provide is that

you don't have to drive to the Cities to see high quality arts and entertainment. We are going to work very hard – collaborating and partnering and finding the right funding – to fill the (arts and entertainment) needs, and bring that to the region.



Ryan's bucket list of Paradise productions (small sampling):

WOW, wouldn't it be great *if...*
musicals: *WICKED*, *JERSEY BOYS*, *MEMPHIS*, *SPAMALOT*
performers: 2 Cellos, David Garret, "Piano Men" Billy Joel and Elton John, Stevie Wonder, Carrie Underwood, Adele, Florence and the Machine
comedians: Jeff Dunham, Gabriel Iglesias.

I saw Robin Williams at Northrop years ago. I'd love to work with him some day, just to get an ounce of that energy.

What do we all need to know about the Paradise that we don't?

- 1) *It is open to the public.* Though we encourage and need the support of members, it is open to everyone.
- 2) *There is no dress code.* Yes, for the sake of your date it would be nice if you didn't have holes in your jeans, but there is no dress code.
- 3) *Everyone is welcome here.* We are here to provide you quality educational, artistic and entertainment opportunities and hope you have a great time and come back.

What do Northfielders need to know about Faribault that they don't?

It's only 19 minutes from my house in Northfield to the front door of the Paradise Center for the Arts.



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