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BETHEL WOODS CENTER FOR THE ARTS THIRD SEASON THE MOST SUCCESSFUL TO DATE

Ranked #34 in Top 100 Worldwide Amphitheaters

BETHEL, NY (October 20, 2008) – Bethel Woods Center for the Arts is proud to announce the end of its third and most successful season, attracting 212,000 visitors to the center since June.

Summer 2008 featured four sold out shows including two Pavilion Stage and two Event Gallery performances, as well as three of the venue's top five selling concerts to date. The success of this season's 27 performances drove Bethel Woods to climb 13 spots on the annual *Pollstar* "Top 100 Worldwide Amphitheaters" list, to reach #34 for the 2008 season.

Sold out crowds at the Jonas Brothers, Journey with Heart and Cheap Trick, and the near-capacity Rascal Flatts shows propelled Bethel Woods ticket sales for the season to nearly 138,000. This total also includes the first season of the Music Under the Stars and Music in the Museum series, which drew over 3,400 guests and featured a diverse array of performers including the Klezmatics, Chanticleer, The Del McCoury Band and Richie Havens.

Bethel Woods also initiated roundtrip bus transportation for Pavilion concerts with Coach USA / ShortLine bus service from New York City's Port Authority, the Ridgewood NJ Park & Ride, and the Middletown, NY ShortLine Terminal. Over 300 riders took advantage of this convenient and economical service which was available for 12 concerts.

This summer was historic in other ways as well. The Museum at Bethel Woods opened to the public on June 2nd with over 200 print outlets, 50 radio stations, 24 television stations, and 20 of the top 30 daily newspapers covering the new facility, including Good Morning America, CNN, CBS Sunday Morning, Time Magazine, The New York Times and USA Today, to name just a few. In the first four months of operation, The Museum has attracted over 46,000 visitors from every state in the nation, and from over 20 countries around the globe, from Australia to Iraq. The Museum is also the proud recipient of several prestigious awards including two 2008 MUSE Awards for excellence in media programs, and has been designated an American Automobile Association (AAA) GEM attraction, a 'must-see point of interest' for their members. Over 900 guests have already recorded their personal stories in the museum's archive using the interactive kiosks.

Bethel Woods Center for the Arts also attracted groups from charter bus tours, community organizations, church and alumni groups and more through its Group Sales efforts, focused on both concerts and museum visits. This season the center enjoyed 111 separate group visits consisting of 4,500 guests.

Additionally Bethel Wood's youth education programs provided interactive and educational experiences for over 400 local students and educators. The Experience the Arts program hosted an additional 376 students for two complimentary special performance events. The Museum's Education Program has

already held numerous events including a Free Day for Educators which attracted educators from 21 different school districts, a teacher workshop, and a visit from members of the New York City Department of Education, among others. Local schools have taken advantage of this new educational resource with visits ranging from small class field trips to the Sullivan County Interacademic League competition. Additionally, the museum education staff has created a Teacher Advisory Committee with 19 teachers representing 8 area school districts.

But that's not all. This season also marked the Tenth Anniversary of The Harvest Festival, which has grown to an eight week long celebration of the bounty of Sullivan County. This year the festival attracted nearly 33,000 visitors and 146 vendors. At the season finale, Chili Day in October, the Monticello Fire Department walked away with top honors in both categories for their famous chili recipe, winning both the "Thunder Country Choice" and the "People's Choice" trophies.

The Harvest Festival also concluded their season-long Bench Auction fundraiser, featuring one-of-a-kind cedar benches decorated by local artists. The Bethel Woods Artists' Signature bench went for \$2,000 followed by Le Banc de paix en decoupage, created by 15-year old Molly Stahl from Livingston Manor Central School. All proceeds from the Bench Auction will be used to support The Harvest Festival Children's Programs.

Combined, this season's events at Bethel Woods Center for the Arts have already attracted over 213,000 visitors since June; and with the year-long celebration surrounding the 40th Anniversary of the Woodstock Music and Art Fair, 2009 promises to be the best yet!

NOTE: The Museum is now operating under its Fall Schedule, open from 10am – 5pm daily except Mondays (last admission is at 3:30pm). Beginning on November 1st it will switch to the Winter Schedule and be open Thursday through Sunday from 10am – 5pm only. The Museum will be closed Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and New Years Day. It will close for the season on Monday, January 5, 2009 and reopen on Thursday, March 19th. During this time, however, The Museum will still be available to accommodate pre-arranged school visits by contacting 845.583.2097 or mhughes@bethelwoodscenter.org, and group visits by contacting 845.295.2521 or groups@BethelWoodsCenter.org.

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ABOUT BETHEL WOODS CENTER FOR THE ARTS

Set within 2,000 bucolic acres in Sullivan County, New York, Bethel Woods Center for the Arts is a world-class cultural destination, dedicated to bringing diverse, high quality performing arts and educational programs to the region. The not-for-profit Bethel Woods Center for the Arts' mission is to present compelling programs that educate, entertain and engage audiences of all ages, to improve the quality of life in Sullivan County. Located approximately 90 miles from New York City at the site of the original 1969 Woodstock Festival in Bethel, N.Y., Bethel Woods offers unique backdrops including the original festival site and the majesty of the surrounding countryside. It features a Pavilion Stage with 4,500 seats under cover and another 10,500 on a natural sloping lawn; the Terrace Stage, a 1,000 seat roman-style amphitheater; and a 300 seat Events Gallery, which present a diverse selection popular artists, orchestral performances, community events, and music and arts education opportunities. The Museum at Bethel Woods will serve as an educational facility and tourist destination which explores the unique American experiences of the 1960s and the role of the Woodstock festival through a multimedia extrasensory kaleidoscope of music, images, exhibits and artifacts. For more information, please visit www.BethelWoodsCenter.org.