**OKRA PLAYGROUND TO TOUR 6 STATES WITH ARTS MIDWEST**   
Residencies and Concerts Aim to Foster Culture Exchange in Small Communities

**MINNEAPOLIS, MN:** Since 2003, Arts Midwest World Fest has been offering small Midwest communities once-in-a-lifetime opportunities to learn about the world from musicians inside and outside the US. This October and April, World Fest continues with a six-state tour featuring Finnish ensemble Okra Playground.

Okra Playground plays traditional Finnish music with a fresh approach, combining classic folk with modern instruments to create unique tunes with hypnotic beats and a homegrown feel. While rooted in the traditions of their homeland’s music, the project also serves as a musical “playground” for its members to experiment with new instruments and techniques, just as the group’s name suggests!

Over the course of two visits to the Midwest, Okra Playground will tour through Oskaloosa, Iowa; Freeport, Illinois; Marinette, Wisconsin; Virginia, Minnesota; Custer + Hot Springs, South Dakota; and Minot, North Dakota. They will perform concerts and participate in residency events embedded in each community.

**Watch: Okra Playground - Kuun ajo / Chasing The Moon**

<https://youtu.be/vgLEmii__Es>

**Download Okra Playground**

<https://www.artsmidwest.org/programs/worldfest/presskit>

"We’re thrilled about the chance to visit a totally new place and meet new people," said **Okra Playground**. "We hope to introduce people to different approaches for expressing their creativity, finding ways for open-mindedly crossing boundaries and existing as a part of the long chain of tradition in their own way.”

"We’re so excited to have Okra Playground on these World Fest tours,” said **Torrie Allen**, President & CEO of Arts Midwest. “Their music will provide such a unique opportunity for our Midwestern community to experience the music of Finland through their concerts and workshops across our region."

Residency Schedule

**September 18 – 24, 2022: Oskaloosa, Iowa**

Presented by [George Daily Auditorium](https://georgedaily.org/)

**September 25 – October 1: Freeport, Illinois**

Presented by [Freeport Art Museum](https://www.freeportartmuseum.com/)

**October 2 – 8: Marinette, Wisconsin**

Presented by [Rusty Wolfe Studio](https://www.rustywolfe.com/)

**March 5 – 11, 2023: Virginia, Minnesota**

Presented by [Lyric Center for the Arts](https://www.lyriccenteronline.org/)

**March 13 – 19, 2023: Custer, South Dakota and Hot Springs, South Dakota**

Presented by [Custer Area Arts Council](https://www.custerareaarts.com/) and [Chautauqua Craftsmen & Artisans of the Black Hills](https://www.chautauquablackhills.org/)

**March 20 – 26, 2023: Minot, North Dakota**

Presented by [Minot Area Council of the Arts](https://minotarts.org/)

A program of Arts Midwest, the 2022 World Fest artist tours are generously supported by the National Endowment for the Arts and Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies. World Fest is also made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund.

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Arts Midwest believes that creativity has the power to inspire and unite humanity. Based in Minneapolis, Arts Midwest grows, gathers, and invests in creative organizations and communities throughout the nine-state region of Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin. One of six nonprofit United States Regional Arts Organizations, Arts Midwest’s history spans 35 years. For more information, visit artsmidwest.org.