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## 2011 Mary Beth Treen Award Recipient

*Leslie Gordon Receives 2011 Mary Beth Treen Award at Annual PAE Conference*

**September 28– Baton Rouge** – During the 2011 Performing Arts Exchange Conference held in Baton Rouge, LA, South Arts announced the recipient of the 2011 Mary Beth Treen Award. The award went to Leslie Gordon, Artistic and Executive Director of the Rialto Center for the Performing Arts, at Georgia State University in Atlanta, GA.

Leslie began her career in arts management in 1985 as the Director of Cultural Affairs for the City of Savannah. In 1992, she moved to Atlanta to become one of the four producers of the Cultural Olympiad, a four-year celebration produced in conjunction with the 1996 Olympic Games. In that position, Gordon developed diverse programming, including "100 Years of World Cinema" with the High Museum of Art; "American South: Past, Present, Future" with the Atlanta History Center; and "Southern Crossroads," a 10-day Centennial Olympic Park festival, in collaboration with the Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage. Gordon also served as Artistic Director for the 1997 Arts Festival of Atlanta and, prior to joining the Rialto, as Manager of Humanities and Education for the National Black Arts Festival.

At the Rialto, Leslie curates an extremely diverse season of high quality artists – from West African pop and Latin jazz to Israeli and Turkish roots music and Zydeco. She presents innovative and inclusive programming that educates audiences and cultivates an understanding about cultures and art forms. Over the years, the Rialto has been named as one of the city's best venues for performances, and Leslie's leadership and dedication are often admired by peers and leaders throughout the arts community. During her tenure at the Rialto, the Center has been recognized for its distinctive programming, including its selection as "Best World Music Venue" by *Creative Loafing* and named as "where the shakers go" in *Atlanta Magazine's* "Movers and Shakers" issue.

Leslie has also served as a mentor for emerging arts leaders in Atlanta, and continues to mentor emerging arts administrators and provide leadership to peers in the presenting and touring field. She has served as a mentor in South Arts' Dance Touring Initiative. In the upcoming season, Leslie is focused on the importance of collaborations between artists – bringing different artists together for a new and fresh perspective. Leslie also works with local arts organizations and schools, local

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and regional presenters, multicultural community groups, and local, regional, national, and international artists.

### **About the Mary Beth Treen Award**

The Mary Beth Treen Award is presented annually during the Performing Arts Exchange to a respected member of the performing arts presenting and touring community. The award is named for Mary Beth Treen, now retired from Mary Beth Treen Artists Management, for her contributions to the performing arts presenting and touring field. For over 40 years, Mary Beth worked tirelessly on the advancement of the field and served as a mentor for students, artists, managers, presenters and others who are engaged in the presentation of the performing arts.

### **About South Arts**

South Arts (formerly the Southern Arts Federation), a nonprofit regional arts organization, was founded in 1975 to build on the South's unique heritage and enhance the public value of the arts. South Arts' work responds to the arts environment and cultural trends with a regional perspective. South Arts offers an annual portfolio of activities designed to address the role of the arts in impacting the issues important to our region, and to link the South with the nation and the world through the arts. For more information, visit [www.southarts.org](http://www.southarts.org).

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