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Actor and Louisiana native Wendell Pierce selected as 2011 PAE Keynote Speaker

Atlanta, GA – South Arts is proud to announce that actor and Louisiana native Wendell Pierce will act as this year’s Keynote Speaker for the 2011 Performing Arts Exchange in Baton Rouge, Louisiana on September 22. Mr. Pierce will share his insights on the importance of art and culture in this country and the role we can all play in creating a better world.

Wendell Pierce is recognized by film audiences for his extensive work for directors including Woody Allen, Spike Lee, Brian De Palma, Barry Levinson, Sidney Lumet, and Paul Schrader. In addition to hosting the radio show *Jazz at Lincoln Center*, he has been hailed for his portrayal of Detective Bunk Moreland on five critically-acclaimed seasons of *The Wire*, and trombone player Antoine Batiste on HBO’s *Treme*. Wendell is a native of New Orleans and has worked to rebuild the neighborhood in which he was raised. His message will touch on the ways in which art and culture have helped rebuild New Orleans and the importance of the presenting and touring field in the lives of our communities.

The Performing Arts Exchange (PAE), a major conference held annually for arts professionals, is the primary marketplace and forum for performing arts presenting and touring—artists and work, ideas, learning and information—in the Eastern United States. Arts presenters from 22 states will be present at PAE this year. The conference will take place September 21-24 at the River Center Baton Rouge, the Manship Theatre/Shaw Center, and other sites in the downtown Baton Rouge area. PAE is presented by South Arts, a regional arts organization based in Atlanta.

About South Arts

South Arts, 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

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