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## **HISTORIC CHURCH ANSWERS ARTS GROUPS' PRAYERS** **MuCCC (Multi-Use Community Cultural Center) is turn-key, 175-seat theatre**

Rochester, NY – With Renaissance Square's original plans for two smaller theatres a distant memory, **Doug Rice**, founding director of **ARTWalk** in Rochester's Neighborhood of the Arts, is providing new hope to local organizations looking for performing space.

"After ten successful years of running ARTWalk, I felt I needed a new project," says Rice. "At the same time, the church at **142 Atlantic Avenue** – which had been for sale for three years with several failed deals – was still empty. Buying it for this purpose seemed like a 'heaven-sent' solution to everyone's problems," laughs Rice.

The name that Rice came up with – **MuCCC** (pronounced "muck") – may not sound like a dream come true, but what it stands for certainly is: Multi-Use Community Cultural Center. MuCCC will provide community groups with a turn-key, handicapped-accessible performing space with the flexibility (due to a moveable stage) to seat audiences up to 175. The 4,000-square-foot space will include a lobby, concessions area, lounge, balcony, offices, seating (recycled pews), updated restrooms, a dressing room and its own parking lot (across the street), as well as built-in lighting and sound systems.

"Being turn-key is 'key' to making this work for smaller arts groups," explains Rice, who is also a sound designer. "Another important aspect is that groups will have the 'luxury' of actually rehearsing in their performance space."

**MuCCC will open Saturday, March 14, 2009** with a rare production of **Edge**, writer Paul Alexander's critically-acclaimed, Off-Broadway show about poet Sylvia Plath, by Rochester's **METHOD MACHINE**. The fledgling company, already known for ground-breaking work, has been performing in venues ranging from night clubs to hair salons.

"We are exhilarated to be a part of this project and look forward to future collaborations at MuCCC," says METHOD MACHINE Artistic Director **David Henderson**.

Renovating the 120-year-old building, which first housed the East Rochester Baptist Mission, has involved replacing the roof, insulating the building and gutting the interior along with removing the sunken, 1,000-gallon, whole-body baptistry. Rice is keeping the unique cottage-style, stained-glass windows (reflected in the venue's logo) as well as maintaining the architectural integrity of Victorian church, both inside and out.

Rice's plans include creating a non-profit organization to run the theatre, as well as partnering with nearby Starry Nites Cafe to provide concessions. Please visit **[www.muccc.org](http://www.muccc.org)** for more information. Find out more about METHOD MACHINE'S *Edge*, which runs through March 28 at MuCCC, at **[www.methodmachine.org](http://www.methodmachine.org)**.

Media, please note: historic and renovation photos of the space are available, and interviews and photo/footage opportunities may be arranged.

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