



Medicine Wheel Installation & Vigil Returns to BCA Cyclorama  
19<sup>th</sup> Annual Installation to honor World  
AIDS Day

***\*\*\*Media & VIP Preview, Tuesday, November 30, 9am-5 PM***

**BOSTON—(November 2010)** Medicine Wheel Productions, Inc. will present *Medicine Wheel* for its 19th year from November 30 - December 1, with a 24-hour vigil on December 1, at the Boston Center for the Arts Cyclorama, 539 Tremont Street, South End. *Medicine Wheel*

*Medicine Wheel* is an epic work of art created by Michael Dowling, Artistic Director of Medicine Wheel Productions. The primary visual component is the wheel itself: thirty-six pedestals and portable shrines arranged in a circle. Designed in response to the dramatic

circular space of the Cyclorama, *Medicine Wheel* commands this grand interior with understated power.

Dowling developed *Medicine Wheel* to be a part of *A Day Without Art*, the visual arts community's annual response to the AIDS crisis that flowered in the late 1980's and early 1990's in New York City and other artistic centers. While most activities associated with *A Day Without Art* no longer take place, *Medicine Wheel* has grown in importance as Boston's largest annual observation of World AIDS Day. Each year the installation is based around a different element: fire, water, earth or air. This 19<sup>th</sup> incarnation of the *Medicine Wheel* is a fire year and will focus on the history of the epidemic and how we honor and remember those lost to it and those affected by it.

The *Medicine Wheel Vigil* is true public art; the community is involved as participants and co-creators. This year we will use red ribbons, to mark the walls of the Cyclorama, symbolizing AIDS awareness and solidarity with persons deceased and living with HIV/AIDS. We will also decorate a Christmas tree on the BCA plaza with the same ribbons exploring the duality of our existence.

Dozens of artists from around the city, including soprano Nancy Armstrong and cellist Sam Ou, make offerings of their art during the vigil. In 2004, Bennett Dance Company and the Vox Concert gave a joint performance which Thomas Garvey of the South End News described as "a true synthesis of the different arts...a rare fusion of sight, sound, and space through which the installation came suddenly, deeply alive."

*Medicine Wheel's* 2010 vigil takes place during the twenty-four hours of Wednesday, December 1<sup>st</sup>, beginning at midnight Tuesday and concluding at midnight Wednesday

An offering of song, poetry, and dance will mark every hour of the vigil, and various rituals rooted in fire. Contributors include: Reverend Daniel Smith; D.; vocalists Nancy Armstrong, Marshall Hughes; musicians Matt Samolis and Sam Ou; and Dances Ingrid Schatz and DeAnna Pellecchia. A range of spiritual and faith traditions will be represented in *Medicine Wheel's* vigil, including the Pagan community (led by Bruce Baldwin), Jewish, Christian, Native American, and others.

As in years past, all are invited to leave personal mementos such as jewelry, letters, poems, photos and other items in *Medicine Wheel*. Objects left are placed within the Wheel's pedestals at the conclusion of the vigil, joining those left in previous years.

*Medicine Wheel* will be open to the public on Tuesday, November 30<sup>from</sup> 9 am and 5 pm. The annual 24-hour vigil takes place from 11:30 pm Tuesday Nov 30<sup>th</sup>- and concluding at midnight on the 1st. **The full twenty-four hours of Wednesday December 1.** A media preview will take place Tuesday, November 28<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 pm to 5:00 pm.

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**Editor's Note:**

- Media invited to attend Exhibit Preview on November 30, 9:00-12:00 PM.
- Numerous activities and opportunities will take place around the exhibit.
- Interviews with Michael Dowling encouraged.
- Additional background and installation images available
- A schedule and description of the plans for each hour of the vigil will be available at [www.medicinewheelproductions.org](http://www.medicinewheelproductions.org)

***About Medicine Wheel Productions***

The mission of Medicine Wheel Productions is to explore the human partnership with art through the ritual of involving communities in the creation of public art. All of our projects give voice to communities, to artists, and to youth through making public art. Medicine Wheel Productions brings diverse people together to create high quality sustainable projects, offering them meaningful experiences in their lives that are made manifest in the artwork left behind.