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**Colonial Performing Arts Center Welcomes Keith Marks as Executive Director**

The Colonial Performing Arts Center announces the appointment of Keith Marks as its new Executive Director. Marks, a seasoned arts administrator with a proven track record of revitalizing arts organizations and a deep commitment to fostering diverse and inclusive cultural experiences, brings a wealth of experience and a passion for the arts to this prestigious role. The board, staff, and volunteers extend their warm welcome to Marks as the Colonial Performing Arts Center continues a tradition of excellence and as a leader in the cultural landscape of the Monadnock Region.

Most recently, Marks served as the Director of Next Stage Arts in Putney, Vermont. During his tenure, he spearheaded a transformation of the organization from a relatively unknown entity into a vibrant and respected cultural hub, proudly showcasing a broad array of ethnic, racial, and cultural programming supported by strong relationships with artists from New York, Boston, and other urban areas.

“I am inspired by The Colonial’s forward-facing energy,” said Marks. “I look forward to contributing to the organization’s continued success and working collaboratively to enhance its role as a cornerstone of the arts in New England.”

Collaboration and community engagement are at the heart of Mark’s work. Under his leadership, Next Stage Arts partnered with many organizations and launched several creative initiatives that successfully broadened the organization’s footprint in the area. Additionally, his role as co-president of the New England Arts Presenters and active participation on various boards, including Southeastern Vermont Development Strategy (SeVEDS) and The Governor’s Institutes of Vermont, underscore his commitment to regional cultural and economic development.

Emily Benson, vice chair of the Colonial Performing Arts Center Board of Directors, stated, "To find our next Executive Director, The Colonial Theatre partnered with The Arts Consulting Group, a very well-regarded executive search firm specializing in the performing arts. We conducted a nationwide search and had over 50 applicants from around the country. After several rounds of interviews, the recommendations from the staff and search committee to hire Keith were unanimous. We are thrilled that he said yes and are confident he is the right leader for The Colonial."

In the heart of downtown Keene, the Colonial Performing Arts Center offers a diverse array of world-class performances, educational programs, and community events. As Keene continues to evolve and thrive, the Colonial remains steadfast in its mission to inspire audiences, advance

regional economic vitality, and enlighten communities by offering excellent, diverse and engaging artistic experiences.

Marks is the sixth Executive Director in the nonprofit's 30-year history; following Frederick Farrar (1993-1996), Peter Zimmerman (1996-1999), Ken Kohberger (1999-2003), William Odom (2003), and Alec Doyle (2003-2024).

“Keith brings a knowledge of Western New England together with arts center programming experience that should fit well with future development of The Colonial Theatre,” said Jay Kahn, Mayor of Keene, NH. “The community is looking forward to the Colonial providing a more diverse set of arts presentations at both the historic theatre and SHOWROOM.”

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### **About the Colonial Performing Arts Center**

For 100 years - 31 as a 501(c) 3 nonprofit - the Colonial has been at the forefront of the region's leading historic art institutions, setting the standard for excellence in performing arts and continuing the cultural legacy of performing arts in America. For more information, visit [thecolonial.org](http://thecolonial.org).