

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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Kathy Kern Ross: President, Kaleidoscope Entertainment, Inc.  
[kathykernross@yahoo.com](mailto:kathykernross@yahoo.com) / (740) 215-5434

**Springfield, Ohio** — Flashback & Funny Forward, a comedy, musical variety review show is now available for touring.

*Flashback & Funny Forward*, is a comedy, musical variety review show that takes audiences on a journey beginning with a flash from American Vaudeville and continues through the USO performance era and brings it forward with portrayals of beloved modern performers. The show combines singing, dancing, piano playing, multimedia visuals, comedic and historic sketches and tributes to many favorite American Performers including W.C. Fields, Mae West, Cab Calloway, Ethel Merman, Betty Hutton, The Andrew Sisters, Lucille Ball, Ray Charles, Phyllis Diller, Big Joe Turner, and Rose Marie. The show also has modern fun and flair featuring character portrayals of Gilda Radner, Dolly Parton, Joan Rivers, and many original characters. The show is an uplifting, toe tapping, knee slapping, family friendly show that will have you laughing and humming all the way home.

The show's ensemble of stars includes **Karen Bowman, Michelle Krajecki, Christie McLendon, and Darryl Van Leer**. **Karen Bowman** is a professionally trained dancer, choreographer, actor, and model. Karen began her entertainment career portraying Cinderella and Alice from Alice and Wonderland at The Disney World Amusement Parks. She appears in national commercials including ones for Kodak, McDonalds, United Airlines and Pepsi. She has worked as a dancer with numerous bands, including The Romantics, and was a featured dancer in various music videos that air on MTV and VH1. Karen has played numerous comedic roles for productions of the Odd Couple, Prelude to a Kiss, and Monty Python's Flying Circus. She can currently be seen on the episodic Webseries the Natural. Karen is a member of the Screen Actor's Guild (SAG) and the American Federation of TV and Radio Artists (AFTRA). Karen has been a model for SeaWorld and is currently still fitness modeling for several publications. Karen attended Florida State University's School of Performing Arts and has trained at The Ballet Royal, Atlanta's School of Television and Commercial Acting, as well as the Actors Studio in Chicago. **Michelle Krajecki** was born and raised in Chicago. Her comedy comes from her mid-western, middle class, middle child views. She is a graduate of The Second City Training Program in Chicago and Zanies stand-up comedy classes. She hosts her own comedy minute on 95.9 a suburban Chicago radio station, is a co-host of her own comedy cable television show, "Comedy-At-Random". In addition to Flashback & Funny Forward, Michelle performs at comedy clubs and events all over the U.S. **Christie McLendon** is a tiny little blonde with a big smile and an even bigger personality who brings her special blend of amazing singing ability with her comic acting to the stage in her performances. Christie has an extensive background in starring in plays and musical productions. McLendon is also a part of a traveling troupe that performs as the characters from "The Andy Griffith Show," portraying Charlene Darling, part of the infamous Darling family on the show. She is known nationally for her musical character portrayals including her own spin on Dolly Parton and other well know classic female artists. **Darryl Van Leer** captivates his audiences with his astonishing portrayals of great Americans in seven acclaimed one-man shows that he's written, produced and starred. Van Leer is also an accomplished film and television actor, performer, singer and musician. He has shared the screen with James Earl Jones, Samuel Jackson, Gregory Harrison, Rue McClanahan, and Beau Bridges. He has starred in TLC's series The Messengers, and the Nickelodeon movie, First Time, the story of Jackie Robinson. He also appeared in Safe Harbor and roles on One Tree Hill & is featured in two HBO original movies, The Second Civil War and Up Against the Wall, as well as Fox's Steel Chariots and NBC's original movie, Witness to the Execution. Darryl also has performed worldwide illuminating his audiences by transforming into Ray Charles, Elton John, Little Richard and many more!

The Flashback & Funny Forward production is be helmed by accomplished entertainment agent and Producer **Kathy Kern Ross, President of Kaleidoscope Entertainment, Inc.**, based in Springfield, Ohio. Ms. Kern Ross has worked with numerous musicians and actors over the past 35 years. She has produced shows, music videos, entertainment conferences, festivals, and concerts all over the United States. She has worked with national performing arts venues and college venues promoting many types of productions and shows. Her experiences have included working with famed artists such as Carrot Top, Hunter Hayes, Kenny Rogers, The Beach Boys, Sinbad, and many others. Kathy Kern Ross has a Bachelor's Degree from Muskingum University and a Masters' Degree from Ohio University.

The show's writers include **the cast** along with **Ms. Kern Ross**. **Ms. Kern Ross** also serves the creative team as the show's Director and creative consultant. She has utilized award winning multi-media group **The Now Device** to create dramatic visual media to enhance some of the performances during the show. The Now Device is a company owned by **Rodrick Hatfield** and **Scott K. James**. Rodrick is a multidisciplinary artist and entrepreneur producing dynamic video, photography and events for corporate, rock, fashion and art worldwide. Rod is the founder of the Oh10 New Media Center (Springfield, Ohio) and Co-founder of Spaceboat TV (Seattle, WA). Rod earned his Bachelor's Degree in Popular Culture and Liberal Studies from Bowling Green State University while concentrating on film and poetics at the University of Colorado and the Naropa Institute. Rod studied directly with American avant garde masters Stan Brakage, Harry Smith, Allen Ginsberg and Lawrence Ferlinghetti and has worked with clients as varied and prestigious as the United Nations, SFMoMA, VH-1, MSN and XBOX. **Scott K James** is a Seattle-based visual artist, designer and entrepreneur whose work focuses on live composition, performance and constructing visual environments. Scott served as a board member of Seattle's Spaceboat TV, and he has performed live music and visual art in Seattle, San Francisco, Springfield and New York. His work with The Now Device nicely combines an eclectic background, including multi-media design, software programming, spatial and environmental design, theatrical and musical performance, live improvisation and tool making. Scott received a B.A. from Pomona College and an M.L.A. from the University of Washington. The Flashback & Funny Forward show also **features choreography by Kelly Neff Fuller, Owner of Miami Valley Dance Studio in Fairborn, Ohio**. For over 25 years, Ms. Fuller has been certified in jazz, tap and ballet by Dance Masters of America (DMA) and Ohio Dance Masters. Her career highlights include her studies with the Dayton Ballet School, and serving currently as a national adjudicator for Kids Artistic Revue and Rainbow Dance acclaimed competitions.

**The Show was created and developed over a two year period** utilizing and researching the historic connection between vaudeville and Springfield, Ohio and citizen **Gus Sun, known as the King of Vaudeville**. **Gus Sun** was the stage name of a circus juggler named Gustave Klotz (born 1868, died 1959) who developed a booking agency in Springfield, Ohio that epitomized Small Time Vaudeville. He was an entertainer, turned agent, turned vaudeville touring producer-who eventually operated close to 300 theaters that featured vaudeville. **Some of the entertainment world's best acts had their start in Springfield. Bob Hope, Eddie Cantor, and W.C. Fields, all got their start in what was known as "Gus Sun Time."** Others booked by the Sun Agency Included **Mae West, Al Jolson, Will Rogers, and Ted Lewis. The Marx Brothers gave their first professional appearance on stage at the New Sun Theater in Springfield.** Many historic images from that time period are utilized during the show. For more show information visit [www.FlashbackFunnyForward.com](http://www.FlashbackFunnyForward.com)

**The National Premier's show location was The Gloria Theatre in Urbana Ohio.** The theatre was selected because of its strong ties to American Vaudeville. Built in 1904, it was known as The Clifford Theatre, constructed by the famous vaudeville actor and Urbana native William Shyrigh, William was better known by his stage name, Billy Single Clifford, hence the name "The Clifford Theatre". It was a spectacle of its time with an 80-foot stage and a seating capacity for 700 patrons. The cost of construction was about \$75,000 which equates to about \$2 million today. Billy Clifford starred with popular vaudeville troupes in the finest theatres in the U.S. and Europe. Billy's successful production, "The Diamond from the Sky," a serial show, played in Urbana for several months, drawing sellout crowds at the ticket price of 10¢ a couple. The Clifford was often the site of public gatherings for various community issues and events.