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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
SEPTEMBER 24, 2010

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FIRST NATIONAL EXHIBITION TOUR  
TO HIGHLIGHT LIBERACE'S LIFE AND LEGACY

SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA, September 24, 2010 – As one door closes another one opens. So it is with the Liberace Museum that will close its doors on October 17 after 31 years of operation. Concurrently, Exhibits Development Group (EDG) announces the forthcoming exhibition, *Liberace! The Original King of Bling*, which will showcase the unparalleled collection of the Liberace Museum. The exhibition will embark on a national tour in celebration of one America's most beloved performing artists.

According to Dr. Jeffrey Koep, chair of the Liberace Foundation, "The traveling exhibit is an exciting way to share the life and legacy of Liberace while providing an income stream for the Foundation, which was established to provide scholarships to students in the performing and creative arts."

EDG will also be working with venues across the country to manage long-term loans and semi-permanent exhibition installations from the Liberace collection. The Foundation hopes not only to share the celebrated artist's enormous collection of memorabilia, but to build on the \$6 million already paid out to students over the past 34 years by the Foundation.

Liberace's collection of over-the-top costumes, cars, pianos and candelabra will be extensively represented in the *Liberace!* exhibition. These will include the most extravagant Las Vegas show costumes ever created – from mink, fox, feathers and Swarovski™ crystals. They will be paired with matching accoutrements, including his rhinestone-encrusted Roadster, the mirror-tiled Baldwin piano and his ever-present bling – gemstone-encrusted jewelry, including rings in the shape of pianos and candelabra.

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These iconic objects along with Liberace's many collectibles – ranging from fine art to kitsch – are associated with Liberace's rise to stardom, which began in the early 1950s, when he became the highest paid performer in the world, and lasted until his death in 1987.

“The Liberace name evokes memories of a magnificent showman, but few people realize the enormity of his collection and the true sense of his generosity and the Foundation's benevolence during his lifetime and after his death,” said Amy Noble Seitz, president of Exhibits Development Group. “It has long been our desire at EDG to seek partnerships where we can help grow the love of the arts, especially at a time when many arts program budgets are being limited.”

A piano prodigy by age 4, Liberace himself enjoyed local good-will and support growing up in Milwaukee of an Italian immigrant father and Polish immigrant mother. As Liberace's talents became more evident, Polish pianist and composer Ignace Paderewski praised the young man for his remarkable talent following a youthful performance by the musical phenom.

Liberace's undeniable talent, however, was perhaps trumped by his reputation for showmanship. A star of early television and a top Las Vegas headliner for more than a decade, “Mr. Showmanship” routinely appeared on stage in rhinestone-laden costumes with floor-length capes weighing as much as 200 pounds. Always concerned with making a grand entrance, Liberace's outfits were sometimes upstaged by his matching crystal-studded or gold-painted automobiles and his coordinating pianos, which were inevitably illuminated by one of his ever-present candelabra.

EDG plans to premiere the exhibition in the Midwest, where Liberace began his career, continuing the tour in Florida, California, Arizona and Alabama – locations that all have a strong connection to Liberace's story. The exhibition – through allowing access to his many possessions and displaying countless photographs of both his private and public life – will put the entirety of Liberace's life and legacy into perspective.

Exhibits Development Group, headquartered in St. Paul, Minnesota, is committed to initiating and promoting international cultural and intellectual exchange by bringing high-quality traveling exhibitions of art, science and history to a broad and diverse audience. For more information, please visit EDG's website at [www.exhibitsdevelopment.com](http://www.exhibitsdevelopment.com).

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