



Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**THEATRE COMMUNICATIONS GROUP ANNOUNCES
NEW GENERATIONS PROGRAM GRANTS TO TWENTY-FIVE THEATRES
SIXTH ROUND AWARDS OVER \$1.5 MILLION**

NEW YORK, May 2006 - Twenty-five theatres have been selected to participate in the sixth round of the *New Generations Program*, a grant initiative cooperatively designed by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and Theatre Communications Group (TCG). In the six rounds of the program, over \$9 million in two-year grants have been awarded to 126 theatres in support of three grant categories. In *Future Leaders Mentorships*, early-career theatre professionals are mentored by established leaders in the theatre field. In *Future Leaders International Fellowships*, theatre professionals from other countries spend six months in residence at a theatre in the United States. In *Future Audiences*, theatres expand and strengthen existing unique and innovative audience development programs that have proven effective in reaching young and/or culturally specific audiences.

Cheryl Ikemiya, program officer for the arts at the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, remarked on the success of the program: "Throughout its brief history, the New Generations Program has nurtured a significant group of new leaders who are already assuming major positions in nonprofit theatres throughout the country, theatre audiences are growing in diversity, and international theatre artists are working collaboratively with their American colleagues to provide new dimensions to a global theatre community. The foundation is proud of the program's outstanding accomplishments."

TCG's managing director, Joan Channick, stated, "The New Generations Program creates opportunities to deepen the knowledge and experience of theatres, artists and administrators who have the potential to lead the theatre field. In the Future Leaders initiative of the program, mentorships create nurturing relationships between current theatre leaders and extraordinarily talented early-career professionals, while international fellowships foster collaborative relationships between U.S. theatres and theatre practitioners from other countries. The Future Audiences initiative supports audience development programs that are models of innovation and responsiveness in a rapidly changing demographic landscape. TCG is grateful for our longstanding partnership with the funders of the New Generations Program, the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, whose foresight and vision help to ensure a vibrant future for the American theatre."

The nine *Future Leaders Mentorships* recipients are listed below. More detailed bios of the mentees are provided at the end of this press release.

Alley Theatre's (Houston, TX) director of Education and Community Engagement **Amy Steele** will mentor **Autumn Knight** in education and community outreach. Ms. Knight will coordinate the Alley Theatre's Education and Community Engagement programs, including a new play development program for high school students, and will assist with teacher recruitment and training.

Black Ensemble Theater's (Chicago, IL) executive director **Jackie Taylor** will mentor **Reuben D. Echoles** in artistic leadership. Mr. Echoles will learn the management and administrative duties of an artistic director, work as an assistant director, direct a production and teach an eight-week acting workshop for beginners.

Classic Stage Company's (New York, NY) artistic director **Brian Kulick** will mentor **Jeff Janisheski** in artistic directing. Mr. Janisheski will collaborate on the *First Look Festival*, the *On the Verge* program and the *Monday Night Open Rehearsal* series. He will serve as an ambassador for Classic Stage Company's new education initiative, assist visiting directors and direct his own readings and a workshop.

The Foundry Theatre's (New York, NY) producing artistic director **Melanie Joseph** will mentor **Sunder Ganglani** in artistic producing. Mr. Ganglani will participate in the development of new work, aid in the conception and execution of public dialogue events and help to build an advisory board of artists.

INTAR Theatre's (New York, NY) artistic director **Eduardo Machado** will mentor **Megan Smith** in artistic producing and new play development. Ms. Smith will help with all administrative aspects of production and take part in the selection and creative development of plays.

Jump-Start Performance Co.'s (San Antonio, TX) education director **Steve Bailey** will mentor **Daniel Jackson** in directing and community education. Mr. Jackson will assist on productions, participate as a teacher in Jump-Start's education programs and help with the programming of Jump-Start's guest artist series.

Mu Performing Arts' (Minneapolis, MN) artistic director **Rick Shiomi** will mentor **Randy Reyes** in artistic directing. Mr. Reyes will assist with and eventually take responsibility for the *New Eyes Festival* and *New Directions Festival*, participate in the organization of theatre outreach performances, organize and lead actor and script development workshops and direct a mainstage production.

Mum Puppettheatre's (Philadelphia, PA) artistic director **Robert Smythe** will mentor **Martina Plag** in puppetry. Ms. Plag will conduct historical and practical research and assist with preliminary puppet design and engineering. She will also develop projects involving community outreach, including creating collaborations between Mum Puppettheatre, individual artists and other organizations.

Youth Ensemble of Atlanta's (Atlanta, GA) executive director **Deborah Frye Barber** will mentor **Chiwuzo Ife Okwumabua** in producing. Ms. Okwumabua will assist with producing Youth Ensemble of Atlanta's productions, participate in the general operations of the company and work on tour management and fundraising.

The three *Future Leaders International Fellowships* recipients are listed below. More detailed bios of the fellows are provided at the end of this press release.

Bloomsburg Theatre ensemble (Bloomsburg, PA) will host **Nabil Mohammed Bahgat Al Hidaya Abdel Fattah**, a director from Egypt. While in Bloomsburg, Mr. Bahgat will observe the practical workings of the ensemble's artistic and administrative operations, train the ensemble in Arab puppetry and co-create bilingual works to tour the U.S. and Egypt.

Dell'Arte International (Blue Lake, CA) will host **Carlos Simioni**, an actor/creator and co-founder of LUME Teatro in Brazil. While in Blue Lake, Mr. Simioni will exchange approaches to physical theatre and ensemble structure in the creation of original work with Dell'Arte. He will participate in company productions and develop a LUME methodology workshop that will become part of Dell'Arte's new MFA program.

The Talking Band (New York, NY) will host **Anna Kiraly**, a set and costume designer from Hungary. While in New York, Ms. Kiraly will design the Talking Band's production of *The Necklace*, develop and present a new visually-driven theatre work and travel to Hungary and Poland to present new work and conduct workshops.

The thirteen theatres awarded grants in the *Future Audiences* objective are listed below:

Black Spectrum Theatre Company (Jamaica, NY) will create and produce two original plays about avoiding gang life and teen sexuality through their Youth Theatre Company for summer 2006, using their mobile theatre stage to reach underserved youth in targeted New York City communities, and will hire a part-time outreach coordinator.

Classical Theatre of Harlem (New York, NY) will hire an outreach coordinator to reinstitute, expand and manage their grassroots Harlem audience program. They will also hire a part-time box office manager and install a computerized system in their box office that will allow them to capture walk-up patron information at the point of sale.

Deaf West Theatre (North Hollywood, CA) will expand their audience development plan for young and deaf audiences by conducting sensitivity training, organizing marketing and outreach events that target the deaf community, holding talk-backs and developing a Discovery Journal, all in conjunction with several upcoming productions including a new musical based on the children's classic *Sleeping Beauty*.

Freehold Theatre (Seattle, WA) will expand their *Engaged Theatre* tour to culturally underserved communities, adding additional performances and workshops. They will also integrate a musical component into the piece being created using improvisation and writing through their Prison Residency at the Women's Correctional Center of Washington.

Georgia Shakespeare (Atlanta, GA) will expand its marketing and outreach efforts to target a younger, more urban and ethnically diverse audience through its *Shake at the Lake* program, which includes five free performances in the park, and *Celebrate Shakespeare*, a free event for families.

HERE Arts Center (New York, NY) will expand their customized show-specific marketing and add more proactive person-to-person audience development through their *HERE: Tailored-to-Fit* program, which uses targeted marketing rather than institutional branding to encourage young audiences to engage with their resident and visiting artists' work.

Oregon Shakespeare Festival (Ashland, OR) will expand its audience development work with African-American and Hispanic professionals in Portland, OR; Oakland, San Francisco and Sacramento, CA and Seattle, WA. They will meet with leaders from diverse communities to develop host committees for OSF events in these cities and promote travel to OSF. Events will highlight the OSF theater experience, involving actors from OSF and participants in OSF's *Open Door* program.

The People's Light and Theatre Company (Malvern, PA) will present productions, forums and workshops that center on Tazewell Thompson's new play inspired by the local stories of the Underground Railroad. *The Underground Railroad Project* will include newly cultivated audience members in the development of the script and in the events and activities surrounding the production.

San Diego Repertory Theatre (San Diego, CA) will expand their Ambassadors to the Future project, building increased partnerships with audiences from their bi-national community. They will develop a deeper interaction with downtown, Latino and African-American communities through collaboration with an active Ambassadors Council of community leaders, developed in association with trustees and guided by the marketing director and a new audience development associate.

Seattle Children's Theatre (Seattle, WA) will expand program activities, personnel support and production values for their *Deaf Youth Drama Program* (DYDP). They will expand staff resources for local and outreach residencies and partner with Seattle Central Community College's interpreter training program to bring both deaf and hearing students into DYDP programs.

7 Stages (Atlanta, GA) will hire a director of audience development and increase promotion of the *Rush Hour Wednesday* program, which models itself on after-work happy hours to overcome geographic and traffic barriers to reaching young professionals. They will also engage in more nuanced uses of electronic technology, such as adding blogging functionality and archival records to their website.

Theater by the Blind (New York, NY) will increase the number of performances presented yearly and add more touring and workshops. They will expand their productions to two per year, with runs increasing from four to six weeks. They will also provide workshops for vision-impaired students, providing role models for what blind people can achieve.

The Theater Offensive (Cambridge, MA) will expand *Repeat Offenders*, their audience involvement program, to include shared meals, pre- and post-show gatherings in homes and

neighborhood restaurants, insider volunteer opportunities and excursions to other cultural experiences. They will cultivate a core team of audience leaders, called *Hardcore Offenders*, who will host these events and participate in planning the program.

New Generations Program applications were reviewed by an independent national selection panel comprised of Jessica Andrews, managing director, Arizona Theatre Company (Tucson, AZ), Barclay Goldsmith, producing director, Borderlands Theater (Tucson, AZ), Jason Loewith, artistic director, Next Theatre Company (Evanston, IL), Olga Sanchez, artistic director, Miracle MainStage and Bellas Artes (Portland, OR), Delicia Turner-Sonnenberg, artistic director, MOXIE Theatre (Encinitas, CA), Clyde Valentin, executive director, Hip Hop Theater Festival (Brooklyn, NY) and Donna Walker-Kuhne, president, Walker Communications Group (Brooklyn, NY)

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The New Generations Program is funded by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, and is administered by Theatre Communications Group.

The mission of the **Doris Duke Charitable Foundation** is to improve the quality of people's lives through grants supporting the performing arts, wildlife conservation, medical research and the prevention of child maltreatment, and through preservation of the cultural and environmental legacy of Doris Duke's properties. Established in 1996, the foundation supports four national grant making programs in the areas described above. It also oversees three properties that were owned by Doris Duke in Hillsborough, New Jersey; Honolulu, Hawaii; and Newport, Rhode Island. The foundation's activities are guided by the will of Doris Duke, who endowed the foundation with financial assets that currently total approximately \$1.7 billion. As of December 31, 2005, the foundation has approved approximately \$437 million in grants to nonprofit organizations throughout the United States. More information on the foundation can be found at www.ddcf.org.

In 2000 the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation developed a joint Theatre Initiative that supports two programs: the Leading National Theatres Program for theatres invited by the foundations to apply; and the New Generations Program, cooperatively designed by Theatre Communications Group, the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

The **Andrew W. Mellon Foundation** (www.mellon.org) is a private philanthropic institution with assets of approximately \$4.8 billion; AWMF makes grants on a selective basis to institutions of higher education, independent libraries, centers for advanced study, museums, art conservation, and performing arts organizations. The foundation's Performing Arts Program focuses on achieving long-term results by providing multi-year grants to leading organizations in the disciplines of music, theatre, dance, and opera. Annual giving in the area of the performing arts has averaged \$17.3 million per year since 2000, not including approximately \$20 million in disaster recovery relief grants made to New York based performing arts organizations in the wake of September 11, 2001. In 2004 the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation was awarded a National Medal of Arts.

Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national organization for the American theatre, offers a wide array of services in line with its mission: to strengthen, nurture and promote the

professional not-for-profit American theatre. Artistic programs support theatres and theatre artists by awarding \$2.7 million in grants annually, and offer career development programs for artists. Management programs provide professional development opportunities for theatre leaders through workshops, conferences, forums and publications, as well as industry research on the finances and practices of the American not-for-profit theatre. Advocacy, conducted in conjunction with the dance, presenting, opera and symphony orchestra fields, includes guiding lobbying efforts and providing theatres with timely alerts about legislative developments. The country's leading independent press specializing in dramatic literature, TCG's publications include *American Theatre* magazine, the *ArtSEARCH* employment bulletin, plays, translations and theatre reference books. As the U.S. Center of UNESCO's International Theatre Institute, a worldwide network, TCG supports cross-cultural exchange through travel grants and other assistance to traveling theatre professionals. Through these programs, TCG seeks to increase the organizational efficiency of its member theatres, cultivate and celebrate the artistic talent and achievements of the field, and promote a larger public understanding of and appreciation for the theatre field. TCG serves over 430 member theatres nationwide. More information about TCG is available at www.tcg.org.

NEW GENERATIONS PROGRAM, ROUND 6: FUTURE LEADERS MENTORSHIPS MENTEE BIOS

Rueben D. Echoles is a performer, director, choreographer and producer. Mr. Echoles has won numerous awards including the Black Theater Alliance's Sammy Davis Jr. Award for his leading role in *The Way We Were* at Black Ensemble Theater. Mr. Echoles was recently appointed as the associate artistic director of the Black Ensemble Theater and will be trained by Jackie Taylor, founder and executive director of the theatre.

Sunder Ganglani has worked with the Foundry Theatre and New WORLD Theater for the past five years as an associate producer, curator, dramaturg and community outreach coordinator. At New WORLD, Mr. Ganglani worked on Ping Chong's *Undesirable Elements*, Steven Sapp and Mildred Ruiz's *Eyewitness Blues* and the *2050 Project*. More recently, he has been the co-curator of the Foundry's public dialogue events, which explore connections between theatre and the socio-political worlds of audience and community members.

Daniel Jackson recently graduated from Stanford University with a degree in Drama. While at Stanford, he directed, devised and performed in numerous productions, including the well-received *And There's Nothing You Can Do About It*. Mr. Jackson also served as the president of StageOne Performance, Stanford's only student group devoted to the development of new performance work. In New York City, Mr. Jackson has worked with playwright/director Young Jean Lee and experimental performance group Radiohole.

Jeff Janisheski has directed at Chashama, Cherry Lane Theatre, Classic Stage Company and GALE GATES in New York; the KO Festival in Massachusetts and theatres in Tokyo. He has trained in Japan in *butoh* and *noh*, and in 2003 he launched the New York Butoh Festival. Currently an adjunct lecturer at Dowling College, Mr. Janisheski has taught theatre at Fordham University and Smith College. He is a graduate of Columbia University's MFA directing program.

Autumn Knight is an installation artist, actress, performance artist and teacher. She holds a B.A. in Theatre Art from Dillard University. Ms. Knight has worked with London's Talawa Theatre Company and Tabernacle Arts Centre, and she is the recipient of an American College Theatre Festival Kennedy Center Fellowship. Her educational work includes the University of Texas' college prep program for minority youth and several Alley Theatre programs, including the *DramaKids* after-school workshops and the *Barbara Jordan Project*.

Chiwuzo Ife Okwumabua is an alumnus of Atlanta's Performing and Visual Arts High School, Tri-Cities. While at Tri-Cities, She joined the Youth Ensemble of Atlanta and has performed nationally and internationally. Ms. Okwumabua received a B.A. in Marketing from Georgia State University and has written songs for two musicals. Her directorial debut with the Youth Ensemble of Atlanta was in November 2005 with her original musical *The Maestro*.

Martina Plag is originally from Germany and formally trained as an architect. She is now pursuing her interest in performing *objects* theatre. Her masks have been in juried exhibitions, and she has been awarded two international artistic residencies for her work: one in Canada in 2006 and another by the International Turning Exchange in 2008. Ms. Plag intends to activate puppet artistry for adult audiences through interdisciplinary work to address contemporary issues and advocate social change and awareness.

Megan Smith has been the producing associate at INTAR since November 2004. She holds an MFA in Dramaturgy/Script Development from Columbia University, where her credits as dramaturg include *Scapin*, *Crocodile Eyes*, *The House of Bernarda Alba*, *Chalk Circles* and *Ghosts*. Ms. Smith has interned in the literary/dramaturgy departments at Berkeley Repertory Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse, Helen Merrill Ltd. and New WORLD Theater. She received a B.A. in Theatre and History from Mount Holyoke College.

Randy Reyes is an actor, teacher, movement consultant and director who works regularly with Mu Performing Arts. He has acted at the Guthrie Theater, Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park, the Alliance Theatre and others. Mr. Reyes has taught movement at the University of Minnesota BFA Program, SUNY Purchase and the New York University Graduate Program, and he is currently the theatre in education director at the Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis. He received his training at the Juilliard School and the University of Utah.

NEW GENERATIONS PROGRAM, ROUND 6: FUTURE LEADERS: INTERNATIONAL FELLOWSHIPS BIOS

Nabil Mohammed Bahgat Al Hidaya Abdel Fattah is a founding member and producing/co-artistic director of the Cairo-based WAMDA Group, whose mission is to "disrupt the present with the past, employing indigenous and traditional Egyptian performance to tackle urgent social issues." With WAMDA, Mr. Bahgat has produced and co-directed four documentary films and three full length theatre works. He is an assistant professor of Theatre and Dramatic Criticism at the Faculty of the Arts, Helwan University, Cairo.

Anna Kiraly graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts in Budapest, Hungary. She designs sets, costumes, puppets and video. Recent projects include *Darkling* (American Opera Projects),

Delicious Rivers (Talking Band), *A.W.O.L.* (Act French Festival) and *Pay Up* (Pig Iron Theatre Company). Her collaborations include costumes for Alexandre Vassiliev and Peter Sellars. She is the recipient of a Henson Foundation seed grant, a CEC ArtsLink residency and an NEA/TCG Career Development Program for Designers grant (2003-2005).

Carlos Simioni is a founder and artistic director of LUME, an interdisciplinary nucleus for theatrical research in Brazil that serves as a center for theatre anthropology, Brazilian culture and the corporal and vocal performing techniques of Luís Otávio Burnier. With Grupo Internacional Farfa, part of Odin Teatret in Denmark, he has led workshops on physical and vocal preparation and technical actor training in Latin America, the U.S. and Europe. He has acted and directed all over the world.