



MetLife Foundation

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MetLife Foundation and Theatre Communications Group Announce Fourth Round Recipients of the A-ha! Program

New York, NY – MetLife Foundation and Theatre Communications Group (TCG) announce the fourth round of recipients for the **MetLife/TCG A-ha! Program: Think It, Do It**, which supports the creative thinking and action of TCG member theatres with the goal of impacting the larger theatre community. Five theatres were awarded grants, totaling \$225,000, to either research and develop new ideas or experiment and implement innovative concepts.

The **A-ha! Program** has two components: **Think It** grants (\$25,000), which give theatre professionals the time and space for research and development and **Do It** grants (\$50,000), which support the implementation and testing of new ideas. The projects and initiatives supported by the **A-ha! Program** impact more than just the recipient theatres. Successful projects serve as models for theatre and arts professionals across the country.

“Innovation, whether technological, structural or creative, is vital to success in every industry, but all too often in the arts, support for new ventures or experimentation is scarce or non-existent,” said Teresa Eyring, executive director of TCG. “The **A-ha! Program** encourages and enables theatre practitioners to explore new models and new ways of thinking about technologies, greener operations and organizational best practices.”

“In its fourth year, the **A-ha! Program** has demonstrated its essential role in the development of models, programs and strategies that have influenced and shaped local, regional and national communities in the arts,” said Dennis White, president and CEO, MetLife Foundation. “MetLife Foundation is proud of its continued partnership with TCG to support such thoughtful exploration, experimentation and innovation in the not-for-profit theatre field.”

This year’s recipients include two previous **Think It** recipients who are now putting their ideas and research into action with **Do It** grants.

The 2011 **MetLife/TCG A-ha! Program** recipients are:

THINK IT

- **Perseverance Theatre**, Douglas, Alaska
Perseverance Theatre will explore the feasibility of using their new multi-city operations as a catalyst to build statewide programming for Alaskan theatre artists who would work and train with the company.

DO IT

- **Center for New Performance at CalArts**, Valencia, California
The Center for New Performance at CalArts will convene a TEDx conference in Los Angeles, bringing together creative minds from disciplines across the contemporary performance landscape to expand understanding of the live arts.

- **Curious Theatre Company**, Denver, Colorado
Curious Theatre Company, capitalizing on the momentum of their *2010 MetLife/TCG A-ha! Think It* grant addressing the desire to re-center artists within organizations, will create an innovative post-specialist staffing structure by developing and integrating artists with staff in a new organizational paradigm.
- **Salvage Vanguard Theater**, Austin, Texas
Salvage Vanguard Theater will continue to cultivate the Scenic Co-op (shared 'set' resources cooperative) based on discoveries made during their *2010 MetLife/TCG A-ha! Think It* grant project.
- **The Wooster Group**, New York, New York
The Wooster Group will create an ongoing online talk show series in which artists across disciplines have discussions with other artists and the public, to foster a more thorough discourse of vital topics that include current trends in the arts; as well as more expansive cultural and political issues.

For more information about the program and previous recipients, visit:
http://www.tcg.org/grants/aha/aha_recipients.cfm.

The grant applications were reviewed by an independent national panel of theatre and technology professionals comprised of **Kevin Cunningham**, executive artistic director, 3-Legged Dog, Inc. (New York, NY); **Kevin Gillese**, artistic director, Dad's Garage Theatre Company (Atlanta, GA); **Bonnie Metzgar**, artistic director, About Face Theatre (Chicago, IL); **Hetal Patel**, managing director, Brava! For Women in the Arts (San Francisco, CA); **James Royce**, director, marketing, communications and sales, Center Theatre Group (Los Angeles, CA).

MetLife Foundation was established in 1976 to carry on MetLife's longstanding tradition of corporate contributions and community involvement. The Foundation is committed to building a secure future for individuals and communities worldwide. Through programs focusing on empowering older adults, preparing young people and building livable communities, MetLife Foundation increases access and opportunities for people of all ages. Since it was established, MetLife Foundation has made more than \$500 million in grants and \$75 million in program related investments. For more information visit www.metlife.org

For 50 years, **Theatre Communications Group** (TCG), the national organization for the American theatre, has existed to strengthen, nurture and promote the professional not-for-profit American theatre. TCG's constituency has grown from a handful of groundbreaking theatres to nearly 700 member theatres and affiliate organizations and more than 13,000 individuals nationwide. TCG offers its members networking and knowledge-building opportunities through conferences, events, research and communications; awards grants, approximately \$2 million per year, to theatre companies and individual artists; advocates on the federal level; and serves as the US Center of the International Theatre Institute, connecting its constituents to the global theatre community. TCG is North America's largest independent publisher of dramatic literature, with 11 Pulitzer Prizes for Best Play on the TCG booklist. It also publishes the award-winning AMERICAN THEATRE magazine and ARTSEARCH®, the essential source for a career in the arts. In all of its endeavors, 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. For more information visit www.tcg.org

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