



Press Release

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Theatre Communications Group Announces **Summer/Fall International Travel Grant Recipients in** Ninth Round of New Generations/Future Collaborations Program

“Odile Katese’s residency at the 2008 Sundance Institute Theatre Lab surpassed any of our initial expectations and desired outcomes. Once she arrived and we understood her great value as an artist, we decided to elevate her standing from observer at the Lab to that of ‘Artist-in-Residence.’”

Philip Himberg, Sundance Institute Theatre Program
Spring Round Eight Future Collaborations recipient.

NEW YORK, May, 2009 – Five theaters and two individuals have been selected to participate in the ninth round of the New Generations Program/Future Collaborations initiative. This round of recipients is funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and administered by Theatre Communications Group (TCG).

At the core of the program is the desire to build bridges between U.S. theater professionals and their counterparts abroad, to identify theater professionals who are or have the potential to be cultural leaders and to create opportunities for the larger U.S. theater field to engage in international conversation.

“This has been an important program since its inception,” said Teresa Eyring, TCG executive director. “Today, cultural exchange is critical for both inspiring artistry and improving diplomacy. In fact, President Obama’s administration considers the arts a valuable tool in bridging the world’s divides.”

Unlike other TCG travel grants, Future Collaborations has no geographical limitations. The award is open to all key leadership members of theatrical organizations, as well as individual artists. It encourages cultural exchange and artistic partnerships between theatre professionals in the United States and their counterparts abroad and is focused to support all stages of these collaborations.

Following are the eight recipients and a brief summary of their projects.

Bond Street Theatre Coalition

Joanna Sherman, artistic director of Bond Street Theatre Coalition (New York, NY), will travel to Myanmar to collaborate with Gitameit Music Center to develop their new theatre program.

The Children’s Theater Company

Denise Maroney of The Children's Theater Company (New York, NY) will project-direct & costume design *Books in Motion*, a collaboration with The Lebanese Street Theatre Group to adapt youth literature into 'street theatre' and perform for free, in outdoor, site-specific locations across Lebanon.

Cultural Odyssey

Rhodesa Jones, co-artistic director of Cultural Odyssey (San Francisco, CA), will continue to facilitate the international collaboration between Cultural Odyssey's Medea Project: Theater for Incarcerated Women and the Urban Voices Festival of South Africa.

Catherine Filloux

Playwright Catherine Filloux (New York, NY) will develop and adapt plays by two female Cambodian playwrights, Morm Sokly and Chhon Sina, at AMRITA (Phnom Penh) and continue collaborations begun in 2001.

Next Theatre Company

Jason Southerland, artistic director of Next Theatre Company (Evanston, IL), will travel to Israel to work with *Return to Haifa* author Boaz Gaon and to explore future collaboration with Cameri Theatre.

Johnmichael Rossi

Director, playwright and educator Johnmichael Rossi (Brooklyn, NY) will work with LOTOS Collective in the *Triangulated City*, a collaboration with Zoukak Theatre Company to develop a multi-location performance in Beirut, Lebanon.

Sundance Institute Theatre Project

The Sundance Institute (Beverly Hills, CA) has invited Rwandan composer Alif Naaba to be a Fellow at the 2009 Theatre Lab to work on Odile Gakire Katese's project called *NWINA UBEHO (Come and Be Alive)*.

The grant applications were reviewed by an independent national panel of theatre professionals comprised of Devon De Mayo, academy director at Northlight Theatre (Skokie, IL), Erik Ehn, dean at CalArts School of Theater (Valencia, CA); Linda Hartzell, artistic director at Seattle Children's Theatre (Seattle, WA); Jamil Khoury, artistic director of Silk Road Theatre Project (Chicago, IL) and Freelance director Victor Maog (New York, NY).

The New Generations/Future Collaborations International Travel Grants Program is funded by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and is administered by Theatre Communications Group.

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation (www.mellon.org) is a private philanthropic institution that makes grants on a selective basis in five core program areas: higher education and scholarship; libraries and scholarly communication; museums and art conservation; conservation and the environment; and performing arts. 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, theater, and dance. Annual giving in the area of the performing arts has averaged approximately \$28 million since 2005. In 2004 the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation was awarded a National Medal of Arts, the highest award given to artists and arts patrons by the United States Government.

Theatre Communications Group's (TCG) mission is to strengthen, nurture and promote the professional, not-for-profit American theatre. TCG initiatives include a variety of artistic, management, international and advocacy programs. Its many publications offer a national resource for reference, opinion and debate on theatre and the performing arts today. TCG's artistic programs support member theatres and theatre artists by awarding approximately \$2 million in development grants annually, and offer career enhancement programs for artists. As the U.S. Center of the International Theatre Institute (ITI) world-wide, TCG supports cross-cultural exchanges and collaborations.

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