



# Press Release

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## Theatre Communications Group Announces **Fall/Winter 2009** **TCG/ITI Travel Grant Recipients**

"As we continue to build our repertoire in Los Angeles, TCG has allowed Poor Dog Group (PDG) to look beyond our borders to seek expansive opportunities. The support from TCG contributed to launching PDG into the realm of an international touring theatre company."

---Itamar Stern, Poor Dog Group, Spring/Summer TCG/ITI recipient 2009

NEW YORK, December, 2009 – Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national service organization for the professional not-for-profit American theatre, which also serves as the U.S. Center of the International Theatre Institute (ITI), is pleased to announce the recipients of the TCG/ITI Travel Grants for Fall/Winter 2009.

The TCG/ITI Travel Grants, funded by the Trust for Mutual Understanding, are designed to foster cultural exchange and artistic partnerships between theatre professionals in the United States and their counterparts in Russia, Eastern and Central Europe. These grants support travel in either direction between theatre artists, administrators and educators, enabling them to share ideas, gain exposure to each other's cultural traditions and communicate contemporary theatre techniques.

In announcing the latest recipients, TCG's director of artistic programs and director of the U.S. Center of ITI Emily Cachapero remarked, "We have been so fortunate to be able to help foster relationships between U.S. theatre artists and their colleagues in Russia and Central and Eastern Europe. It is a vital component to the burgeoning landscape of shared artistry and cultural diplomacy. The TCG/ITI Travel Grants program continues to provide theatres

and theatre professionals with opportunities for successful and ongoing international collaborations. We are again grateful to the Trust for Mutual Understanding for their continued support of such a valuable program.”

TCG’s relationship with the Trust for Mutual Understanding began in 2000, when together, they inaugurated the TCG/ITI Travel Grants. Since then this program has awarded over 100 grants to U.S. theatre practitioners and organizations to explore the creative possibilities of working with artists from over a dozen countries including the Czech Republic, Republic of Bulgaria, Romania, Republic of Macedonia and the Republic of Serbia.

ITI was created by UNESCO at the outset of the Cold War as a way to transcend political borders and provide performing arts practitioners worldwide with a forum for communication and collaboration. The resulting relationships were credited with helping to bring about glasnost, but they also led to an expansion of creative thinking and repertoire for theatres on both sides. TCG became the U.S. Center for ITI in 1999 and today, actively participates in the strengthening of ITI and is committed to engaging the current generation of working theatre practitioners.

Applicants for the TCG/ITI Travel Grants may either be a U.S. not-for-profit theatre applying on behalf of a theatre professional, or an individual theatre professional who is a U.S. citizen or permanent resident.

### **TCG/ITI Travel Grants Fall/Winter 2009 Recipients**

Performer-actor **Kersti Bryan** (New York, NY) will travel to Moscow to perform with young Russian and American artists at the Pushkin Theater of Moscow.

Actor-writer **Anthony Nikolchev** (Portola Valley, CA) will collaborate with Polish actress-puppeteer Anna Skubik to create a new piece for Wroclaw’s Puppet Theater.

**ArtSpot Productions’** (New Orleans, LA) artistic director Kathy Randels will travel with fellow ensemble members Jeff Becker (designer) and Sean LaRocca (composer) to Serbia to develop “The Black Lady Project,” a performance directed by Dah Teatar’s Dijana Milosevic.

Kim Whitener, producing director of **HERE Arts Center** (New York, NY) will travel to Serbia and Croatia to participate in Eurokaz and the Belgrade Summer Festival.

Marcy Arlin and Aurorae Khoo from **Immigrants’ Theatre Project** will travel to the Czech Republic for a binational, trilingual (English/Czech/Vietnamese), year-long theatre project based on stories from Vietnamese immigrants in the U.S. and the Czech Republic with Czech and American playwrights, directors and theatres.

Del Hamilton, Heidi Howard and Faye Allen of **7 Stages** will meet with Dah Teatar in Belgrade to develop ideas and concepts that will lead to their next collaborative project.

## **PANELISTS**

A national independent selection panel comprised of theatre professionals reviewed applications for the Fall/Winter round of the TCG/ITI Travel Grants. The panelists were Raymond Bobgan, executive artistic director, Cleveland Public Theatre (Cleveland, OH); Susan Loewenberg, producing director, L.A. Theatre Works (Los Angeles, CA); Rob Melrose, artistic director, The Cutting Ball Theater (San Francisco, CA); Michael Robertson, managing director, Lark Play Development Center (New York, NY); and Shawn Sides, co-producing artistic director, Rude Mechanicals (Austin, TX).

The **Trust for Mutual Understanding** was established in 1984 by an anonymous American philanthropist as a private, grantmaking organization dedicated to promoting improved communication, closer cooperation, and greater respect between the people of the United States, the Soviet Union, and other countries in Eastern and Central Europe. Today, the Trust makes grants to American nonprofit organizations to support the international travel component of cultural and environmental exchanges conducted in partnership with institutions and individuals in Russia and Eastern and Central Europe. Priority consideration is given to projects in which direct, professional interaction plays a major role. For more information on the Trust for Mutual Understanding please visit their website at [www.tmuny.org](http://www.tmuny.org).

**Theatre Communications Group's** (TCG), the national organization for the American theatre, exists to strengthen, nurture and promote the professional not-for-profit American theatre. Its programs serve nearly 700 member theatres and affiliate organizations and more than 12,000 individuals nationwide. As the US Center of the International Theatre Institute, TCG connects its constituents to the global theatre community. 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.

TCG is a 501(c) (3) not-for-profit organization. [www.tcg.org](http://www.tcg.org).

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