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## **Theatre Communications Group Announces New Recipients of Global Connections Program**

*Previous Recipients Featured in Global Pre-Conference in Washington DC*

New York, NY – Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national organization for theatre, is pleased to announce the recipients of the latest round of **Global Connections**. Supported by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Global Connections encourages reciprocity and cultural exchange through two programs: **ON the ROAD** grants to foster new relationships with international colleagues; and **IN the LAB** grants to further pre-existing international collaborations. Now in its fifth year, the Global Connections program awarded a total of \$70,000 to ten projects in this year's cycle, with over \$700,000 awarded to date.

"As a rising xenophobia besets our political discourse, the power of theatre to heal, humanize, and bridge cultural differences is critically important," said Teresa Eyring, executive director of TCG. "Thanks to enduring support from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, these Global Connections participants are connecting with a diverse set of practitioners and communities, including projects set in Rwanda, Syrian refugee camps in Turkey, and the Marshall Islands."

"Global Connections reflects TCG's core values of Artistry, Activism, Diversity and Global Citizenship," said Kevin Bitterman, associate director of artistic & international programs, TCG. To date, the program has supported nearly 100 projects in six of the seven continents of the world. In addition to grant programs and leading delegations of theatre-practitioners to international festivals around the world, TCG's global reach includes numerous programs and services for the field, such as advocacy efforts urging Congress to increase resources to support cultural exchange through the U.S. Department of State, and to enact the Arts Require Timely Service (ARTS) Act, S. 2510, which would require U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to ensure timely processing time for petitions filed by, or on behalf of, nonprofit arts-related organizations.

On June 22, TCG and the Laboratory for Global Performance and Politics (the Lab) will host the Global Pre-Conference, entitled *Finding Home: Exile, Migration, and Belonging*, at the Davis Performing Arts Center at Georgetown University in Washington, DC. This event will gather over 100 attendees from over 20 countries for discussions and presentations, including *Shelter*, a project of CalArts Center for New Performance/Duende CalArts, which received support from the Global Connections program. *Shelter* is a movement-based performance that shares stories of the massive human crisis of unaccompanied minors crossing the U.S. border and their passage through the U.S. deportation shelter system. The Global Pre-Conference is part of TCG's National Conference: *Theatre Nation* in Washington, DC from June 23-25, 2016.

### **ON the ROAD**

The following six recipients were each awarded up to \$5,000 for unrestricted travel support to foster new relationships with international colleagues and inspire future collaborations:

#### **ArtsEmerson, Boston, MA**

HowlRound: A Knowledge Commons by and for the Theater Community, will meet three nationally focused Canadian theatre organizations: the National Theatre School in Montreal, the theatre think-tank SpiderWebShow in Toronto, and The Playwrights Theatre Centre in Vancouver.

The goal of these new partnerships is to facilitate the creation of more knowledge, dialogue, and connection between the many aesthetically and culturally diverse theatre communities that are isolated from each other within Canada, and between Canada and the U.S. These three companies are also interested in media content such as livestreaming and online curation—skills that HowlRound is versed in and eager to share.

#### **Simón Adinia Hanukai, Brooklyn, NY**

Director Simón Adinia Hanukai will visit Istanbul, Turkey, and Dubai, United Arab Emirates to solidify organizational and artistic partners for the implementation of *Living Altar*, a multi-disciplinary performative celebration of the lives of individuals killed in conflict, regardless of origin, gender, religion, status, and profession. In Turkey, he will also visit the border-town of Gaziantep, which is surrounded by over a dozen refugee camps, to meet individuals affected by the Syrian conflict and to connect with NGOs working there. In *Living Altar*, through successive 30-minute performance pieces, casualties are given a name, face, story, and equal value. Each piece is based on surveys completed by those close to the deceased. *Living Altar* will be presented in four cities—New York, Paris, Istanbul, and Dubai—and performed around the clock by dozens of artists from various disciplines in a storefront-like space that is visible and easily accessible to the audience of passers-by. Simón is the co-artistic director of Kaimera Productions, a live-performance company based in New York and Paris.

#### **Honolulu Theatre for Youth, Honolulu, HI**

Honolulu Theatre for Youth, a company dedicated to telling stories of Pacific life and cultures, will collaborate with spoken-word poet Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner of the Republic of the Marshall Islands to foster writing by Pacific Nation writers. Director and playwright Daniel A. Kelin, II will travel to the Marshall Islands, with Jetnil-Kijiner and writers, to participate in discourse and workshops about the displacement of islanders from their homes due to impending climate threats such as the rising of the Pacific Ocean. The collaborators desire to develop a site-responsive theatre event to be presented in the Marshall Islands and Hawaii.

#### **John Jarboe, Philadelphia, PA**

John will engage in a 10-day research trip to Berlin, Germany, to study the history and contemporary practice of Berlin Cabaret with Dieter Rita Scholl, a star of the Berlin scene. Scholl will act as an ambassador for Berlin cabaret and introduce Jarboe to local artists. Simultaneously, they will engage in a workshop to share their cabaret practices with each other. This will be a pilot for a larger project that seeks to document and share contemporary cabaret practice around the world so that artists can access each other's work more easily across borders.

#### **Mel Krodman, Philadelphia, PA**

Creator and performer Melissa Krodman will engage in a studio-based artistic exchange of ensemble devising processes, tools, exercises, methods, aesthetics, and values with the Slovenian director Nina Lampic and a team of collaborators from Berlin, Germany and Ljubljana, Slovenia. The project will focus on the creation of a full-length performance work entitled *A Potential Performance* to be developed in these two cities. Participating in a lineage of theatre ensembles creating original work, this project honors the sharing of skills and practices as a means of evolving individual and collective artistic practices, and the field at large.

#### **Kaneza Schaal, Brooklyn, New York**

Theatre artist Kaneza Schaal and her collaborators will travel to Rwanda for a creative and cultural exchange centered on theatre that honors the dead. Drawing from her theatre piece *Go Forth*, which was inspired by her experience of Rwandese ritualized grieving process, Schaal's team will collaborate with Rwandan theatre director, Hope Azeda, to create a theatrical work for Kigali's Ubumuntu Theater Festival. Azeda's theatrical tradition is rooted in dynamic story telling traditions, and Schaal's theatrical tradition comes from Experiential Theatre that integrates different artistic

mediums. Through this exchange, both artists will expand and deepen their aesthetic repertoire and creative tool set.

### **IN the LAB**

The following four recipients were each awarded \$10,000 to further pre-existing international collaborations by supporting residencies that advance the development of a piece and/or explore elements leading up to a full production:

#### **Bond Street Theatre, New York, NY**

Bond Street Theatre and Thukhuma Khayeethe are continuing to develop a dual-language version of Ben Jonson's 1605 play *Volpone*, titled *VolponeYangon*, combining contemporary theatre techniques and Burmese traditions. Bond Street Theatre will complete the production and premiere it publicly in Yangon and Mandalay, which they had been unable to do previously due to potential political repercussions. The aim of the project is to a) help revitalize contemporary theatre in Myanmar, b) further Thukhuma Khayeethe's ability to create innovative theatre, and c) use theatre as a tool to promote awareness and dialogue around social and political issues.

#### **GALA Hispanic Theatre, Washington, DC**

Director Arellano Garcia, composer David Peralto, and choreographer Andoni Larrabeiti will travel to D.C. to conduct a workshop on classical Spanish theater, movement, and voice with GALA company members and additional Latino artists. This project will bring together outstanding Spanish artists of diverse disciplines with Latino and non-Latino artists based in Washington, DC and New York City. The workshop will develop a new dramatic work based on the life and times of Miguel de Cervantes, author of *Don Quixote*. The new play, under the working title *Cervantes: El último Quijote/The Last Quixote*, will be developed in collaboration with Spanish playwright/director Jordi Casanovas and the artistic team. The play will examine the work and life of Cervantes, which will provide the Spanish collaborators the opportunity to work with Latino artists who are not familiar with the classical language and society of Cervantes's time but are able to bring distinctive perspectives to the work.

#### **Rebecca Chifuniro Mwase, New Orleans, LA**

Rebecca Mwase will travel to Accra, Ghana with members of the *Vessels* creative team—co-director, Ron Ragin, and designer, Jeffrey Becker—to work with David Quaye and members of the University of Ghana Legon Dance Department. In collaboration with performers from the University of Legon graduate and undergraduate programs, they will develop choreography, movement, and song for *Vessels* and envision how to further their international collaboration throughout the creation of the piece. *Vessels* is a seven-woman performance on a boat floating on the Mississippi River that explores song as the primary coping mechanism for enslaved African people during the Middle Passage. Utilizing songs and other spiritual technologies of the African diaspora, *Vessels* explores our ability to transform and transcend.

#### **Lilliam Vega, Miami, FL**

Cuban-born, U.S.-based theatre director Lilliam Vega, in collaboration with director Flora Lauten, playwright Raquel Carrió of Teatro Buendía in Havana, and filmmaker Dinorah de Jesús Rodríguez, will develop a play with multimedia on the subject of gender violence in Latin America and among Latinas in the U.S. The residency will support research and development of the play, including the gathering of archival imagery and footage, as well as an initial staging of the work with actors from both companies. This work will be featured in the Festival of Latin American Women's Theater, and be presented and hosted by El Ingenio Teatro in Miami in spring of 2017.

**The Global Connections selection panel** included **Sarah Bishop-Stone**, programming director, FringeArts, Philadelphia, PA; **Evren Odcikin**, director of marketing and new plays, Golden Thread

Productions, San Francisco, CA; **Kyong H. Park**, artistic director, Kyong's Pacific Beat, Brooklyn, NY; and **Lisa Portes**, head of MFA Directing, The Theatre School at DePaul University.

To learn more about the program, please visit [www.tcg.org/globalconnections](http://www.tcg.org/globalconnections).

Founded in 1969, **The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation** endeavors to strengthen, promote, and, where necessary, defend the contributions of the humanities and the arts to human flourishing and to the well-being of diverse and democratic societies by supporting exemplary institutions of higher education and culture as they renew and provide access to an invaluable heritage of ambitious, path-breaking work. [www.mellon.org](http://www.mellon.org).

For over 50 years, **Theatre Communications Group** (TCG), the national organization for U.S. theatre, has existed to strengthen, nurture and promote the professional not-for-profit theatre. TCG's constituency has grown from a handful of groundbreaking theatres to nearly 700 member theatres and affiliate organizations and more than 12,000 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 U.S. 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 14 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. [www.tcg.org](http://www.tcg.org).

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