

ARENA STAGE MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**AMERICAN VOICES NEW PLAY INSTITUTE AT ARENA STAGE ANNOUNCES
AGENDA FOR THE UPCOMING NATIONAL CONVENING
FROM SCARCITY TO ABUNDANCE: CAPTURING THE MOMENT FOR THE NEW WORK SECTOR**

**HELD AT THE MEAD CENTER FOR AMERICAN THEATER
AND STREAMED ONLINE LIVE AT #NEWPLAY TV
JANUARY 26-29, 2011**

(Washington, D.C.) Now in its second year, the **American Voices New Play Institute at Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater** will hold a four-day convening bringing together more than 100 theater practitioners from across the country to further the dialogue around new play development. The convening, entitled ***From Scarcity to Abundance: Capturing the Moment for the New Work Sector***, will take place in the Mead Center (1101 6th St., SW) **January 26 – 29, 2011** and will focus on the following: identifying the rich and vital activity that already exists in the new play sector, exploring the gaps and challenges facing the field and strategizing the means of continued and closer collaboration to advance the new work infrastructure moving forward. This convening will build upon the outcomes and initiatives that grew out of last year's convenings: *Defining Diversity*, *Black Playwrights: the Stories We Tell* and *Devised Work*.

This convening is made possible through the generous support of the **Doris Duke Charitable Foundation** and the **Andrew W. Mellon Foundation**.

"Once in a blue moon, there is an important convergence of brilliant minds focused on a particular subject," shares Arena Stage Artistic Director Molly Smith. "This convening brings together 100 leading practitioners in new play and new musical development from around America to grapple with the ways we create new work in the theater. Many of the participants have been part of earlier convenings, here and elsewhere, so there's a strong sense of progress being made for promising ideas and initiatives around the field."

The convening kicks off on Wednesday, January 26 with an address from Chairman of the National Endowment of the Arts (NEA) **Rocco Landesman** on the intersection of for- and not-for-profit theater. This will be followed by a panel focusing on the future of the field as well as an interview with **Todd London** a year after the release of *Outrageous Fortune, the Life and Times of the New American Play*. Then participants and the general public are invited to take a sneak peek at scenes from Robert Levi's forthcoming documentary film that delves into the process behind creating the projects of the NEA New Play Development Program (NEA-NPDP), which Arena Stage administered. The day concludes with a panel featuring artists discussing their artistic process as part of that program.

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Thursday and Friday, participants will engage in a series of roundtable discussions focused on the following areas: artists and institutions, diversity in new play development, devised work and technology and the new play sector. In the evenings they will have the opportunity to attend performances of the [#NewPlay Festival](#). Friday will also include the unveiling of version 1.0 of the [New Play Map](#) for feedback from the field. The convening will end Saturday with a session focused on identifying action steps to move the new works sector forward.

To further the Institute's commitment to documentation and dissemination of all findings, the **events of the convening will be live-streamed on #NewPlayTV**, with commentary shared by commissioned tweeters (#NewPlay) and bloggers on [The New Play Blog](#). In order to view live-streamed events, please access #NewPlay TV online at <http://www.livestream.com/newplay>. In partnership with 2AMt, Arena Stage is setting up viewing parties across the country. Plans are underway in Dallas, Austin, San Francisco, Minneapolis, DC, New Orleans, and Chicago. All findings from these communities will be published on the [2AMt blog](#). In addition, along with the final convening report to be published in the spring, the new online journal [Howlround: The Journal of the American Voices New Play Institute](#) will release a special edition specifically around the convening.

The Steering Committee for *From Scarcity to Abundance: Capturing the Moment for the New Work Sector* includes **Danielle Mages Amato**, President, Literary Managers & Dramaturgs of the Americas; **Neil Barclay**, CEO, National Black Arts Festival; **Emilya Cachapero**, Director of Artistic Programs, TCG; **Polly Carl**, Director of Artistic Development, Steppenwolf Theater; **Deborah Cullinan**, Executive Director, Intersection for the Arts; **Sandra Gibson**, President and CEO, Association of Performing Arts Presenters; **Adrien-Alice Hansel**, Literary Director, Studio Theatre; **Jason Loewith**, Executive Director, National New Play Network; **Todd London**, Artistic Director, New Dramatists; **Jack Reuler**, Artistic Director, Mixed Blood Theatre; **Mark Russell**, Associate Artistic Director, Producer, Under the Radar Festival; **Mark Valdez**, National Coordinator, Network of Ensemble Theaters; **Shay Wafer**, Producing Director, Colored Girl Productions.

Convening participants include **Victoria Bailey**, Executive Director of Theatre Development Fund; **Ben Cameron**, Program Director for the Arts at the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation; **Jeremy Cohen**, Producing Artistic Director of The Playwright's Center; **Lydia R. Diamond**, playwright; **Kristoffer Diaz**, playwright; **Erik Ehn**, Head of Playwriting at Brown University; **Brad Erickson**, Executive Director of Theatre Bay Area; **Kamilah Forbes**, Artistic Director of the Hip-Hop Theater Festival; **Rha Goddess**, artist and activist; **Wendy Goldberg**, Artistic Director of the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center; **Mara Isaacs**, Producing Director at the McCarter Theatre Center; **Jennifer Kiger**, Associate Artistic Director of Yale Repertory Theatre; **Marc Masterson**, Artistic Director of the Actors Theatre of Louisville; **Richard Montoya**, co-founder of Culture Clash; **Diane Ragsdale**, previously with the Performing Arts program at The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation; **Diane Rodriguez**, Director of New Play Development at Center Theatre Group; **Michael Rohd**, Founding Artistic Director of Sojourn Theatre; **Howard Shalwitz**, Artistic Director of Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company and **Molly Smith**, Artistic Director of Arena Stage, among others. Arena Stage Resident Playwrights Amy Freed, Katori Hall, Lisa Kron, Charles Randolph-Wright, and Karen Zacarias will also attend. A full list of convening participant biographies, agenda and additional information regarding the convening can be found at www.arenastage.org/new-play-institute/convenings/new-work/.

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From Scarcity to Abundance: Capturing the Moment for the New Work Sector Agenda:

Wednesday, January 26, 2011

- 2:00 - 3:15 p.m. *The Intersection of the For-Profit & Not-For-Profit Theater*
Rocco Landesman, Chairman of the NEA, Moderated by Diane Ragsdale
By invitation only in the Arlene and Robert Kogod Cradle
Live-streamed online on #NewPlay TV
- 3:45 - 4:45 p.m. *Massive Thoughts from Four Big Thinkers*
Lydia R. Diamond, Kirk Lynn, Marc Masterson & Meiyin Wang, Moderated by
Deborah Cullinan
By invitation only in the Molly Smith Study
Live-streamed online on # NewPlay TV
- 5:00 - 6:00 p.m. *Outrageous Fortune: One Year Later*
David Dower interviews Todd London
By invitation only in the Molly Smith Study
Live-streamed online on # NewPlay TV
- 8:00 - 9:30 p.m. *Clips from the NEA-NPDP Documentary*
Narrated by filmmaker Robert Levi
Followed by
NEA-NPDP Artists Talk Process
Aditi Brennan Kapil, Lloyd Suh, Lana Lesley, Claudia Rankine & Joanne Winter,
Moderated by Polly Carl
By invitation only in the Arlene and Robert Kogod Cradle
(*NEA-NPDP Artists Talk Process* live-streamed online on # NewPlay TV)

Thursday, January 27, 2011

Frisson or friction? Artists and Institutions

By invitation only

- 9:30 - 10:15 a.m. Roundtable Discussion (live streamed on # NewPlay TV)
10:15 - 10:45 a.m. Breakout
11:00 - 11:45 a.m. Roundtable Discussion (live streamed on # NewPlay TV)
11:45 - 12:15 p.m. Breakout

What's Diversity got to do with it?

By invitation only

- 1:15 - 2:00 p.m. Roundtable Discussion (live streamed on # NewPlay TV)
2:00 - 2:45 p.m. Breakout

Theater Outside the Box: Devisers & Ensembles

By invitation only

- 3:45 - 4:30 p.m. Roundtable Discussion (live streamed on # NewPlay TV)
4:30 - 5:15 p.m. Roundtable Discussion (live streamed on # NewPlay TV)
5:15 - 6:00 p.m. Breakout
6:00 - 8:00 p.m. # NewPlay Festival: *The Provenance of Beauty* (open to the public)
8:00 - 10:00 p.m. # NewPlay Festival: *The Provenance of Beauty* (open to the public)

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Friday, January 28, 2011

Connectivity at Work: Networks & Partnerships

By invitation only

9:30 - 10:15 a.m. Roundtable Discussion (live streamed on # NewPlay TV)

11:00 - 11:45 a.m. Roundtable Discussion (live streamed on # NewPlay TV)

11:45 - 12:15 p.m. Breakout

Go Tweet Yourself! New Technologies in the New Work Sector

By invitation only

1:15 - 2:00 p.m. The New Play Map Lecture Demo (live streamed on # NewPlay TV)

2:00 - 2:45 p.m. Roundtable Discussion (live streamed on # NewPlay TV)

3:00 - 4:00 p.m. Uses for the New Play Map (live streamed on # NewPlay TV)

8:00 p.m. # NewPlay Festival: *I've Never Been So Happy* (open to the public)

Saturday, January 29, 2011

By invitation only

Designing Tomorrow: Action Steps

9:30 - 10:15 a.m. Roundtable Discussion (live streamed on # NewPlay TV)

10:15 - 10:45 a.m. Breakout

11:00 - 11:45 a.m. Roundtable Discussion (live streamed on # NewPlay TV)

11:45 - 12:15 p.m. Breakout

2:00 p.m. #NewPlay Festival: *Pastures of Heaven* (open to the public)

The Institute will host two more convenings in the spring of 2011 focused on the role of literary managers and communications in new play development.

The Institute at Arena Stage is designed as a center for research and development of effective practices, programs and processes for new play development in the American Theater. The Institute operates under the leadership of Molly Smith, driven by Associate Artistic Director David Dower. The Institute includes a suite of interrelated programs, all of which are built upon innovative models currently operating in the field that demonstrate potential for replication in other communities. For more information visit www.arenastage.org/new-play-institute.

*The mission of the **Doris Duke Charitable Foundation** (www.ddcf.org) is to improve the quality of people's lives through grants supporting the performing arts, environmental conservation, medical research and the prevention of child abuse, and through preservation of the cultural and environmental legacy of Doris Duke's properties.*

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation's Performing Arts Program currently provides multi-year grants on an invitation-only basis to leading orchestras, theater companies, opera companies, modern dance companies and dance-specific presenters based in the United States. Although the Foundation does not confine its support to large organizations with national visibility, it does seek to support institutions that contribute to the preservation and development of their art form, provide creative leadership in solving problems or addressing issues unique to the field, and which present the highest level of institutional performance. Grants are awarded on the basis of artistic merit and leadership in the field, and concentrate on achieving long-term results. In conjunction with regular program grants, the Foundation also makes a limited number of grants to research and service organizations that are doing work closely related to program goals.

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Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater is a national center dedicated to the production, presentation, development and study of American theater. Arena Stage produces huge plays of all that is passionate, exuberant, profound, deep and dangerous in the American spirit, and presents diverse and ground-breaking work from some of the best artists around the country. Arena Stage is committed to commissioning and developing new plays through the American Voices New Play Institute. Now in its sixth decade, Arena Stage serves a diverse annual audience of more than 200,000.
www.arenastage.org.

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