

MEDIA RELEASE

MOLLY SMITH ARTISTIC DIRECTOR EDGAR DOBIE EXECUTIVE PRODUCER ZELDA FICHANDLER FOUNDING DIRECTOR



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ARENA STAGE OPENS APPLICATION PERIOD FOR THE 2023/24 SEASON ALLEN LEE HUGHES BIPOC FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

*****Applications are being accepted through March 17, 2023*****

(Washington D.C.)—Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater has opened applications for the **Allen Lee Hughes BIPOC Fellowship Program** for the 2023/24 Season. Founded in 1990 and named for the four-time Tony Award-nominated lighting designer, the Allen Lee Hughes BIPOC Fellowship Program is dedicated to cultivating the next generation of BIPOC theater professionals. **Applications will be accepted through March 17, 2023.** To apply, please visit arenastage.org/fellowship.

Paused due to the onset of the COVID-19 global pandemic in 2020, the Allen Lee Hughes BIPOC Fellowship Program was restarted with the 2022/23 Season, reclaiming its roots as a professional training program for individuals who are interested in contributing to a fuller representation of BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) individuals in the arts. The full-time program offers personalized training and in-depth, hands-on experience with top-tier professionals in artistic and technical production, arts administration, arts education, and community outreach.

“As a recent graduate, I was looking for further guidance as I began my journey into the professional world,” said current School Programs Fellow **Kayla Warren**. “The Allen Hughes BIPOC Fellowship Program has been supportive in fostering my artistic passions, providing the opportunity to seek out new skills, while allowing me the space to connect and collaborate with talented, established professionals.”

Arena Stage has supported young artists through the Allen Lee Hughes Fellowship Program for over 30 years. Arena Stage’s Founder and Artistic Director **Zelda Fichandler** and Artistic Associate **Tazewell Thompson** co-founded the theater’s fellowship program in 1990 for individuals of color as a part of Arena Stage’s cultural diversity program. “The Fellowship Program was founded to bring people of color into the Arena family, train them, and promote them,” explains namesake **Allen Lee Hughes**. “I am so proud of Arena Stage’s commitment to emerging talent.”

More than 700 young artists and administrators have gone through the program and over 85% are still working in theater. Graduates include Tony-nominated director **Lileana Blain-Cruz**, *Washingtonian* “40 Under 40” multidisciplinary artist **Paige Hernandez**, True Colors Theatre Company Artistic Director **Jamil Jude**, Barrymore Award-winning costume designer **LeVonne Lindsay**, Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company Associate General Manager **J.P. McLaurin**, Theater J Managing Director **David Lloyd Olson**, lighting designer **Xavier Pierce**, Arena Stage Literary Manager **Otis Ramsey-Zöe**, NextStop Theater Company Associate Artistic Director **Aria Velz**, Helen Hayes Award-winning playwright **Cheryl West**, and more.

“Arena Stage has always prioritized diversity,” shared current Marketing Fellow **Jordan Brown**. “During my time in this program, there has always been an attitude of respect towards my identity, and I have the Allen Lee Hughes Fellowship to thank for that.”

Fellows in the program, who receive a weekly stipend, will be mentored by an Arena Stage staff member, participate in professional development workshops, and attend monthly meetings with directors, designers, and senior staff administrators who provide insight into the overall management of theater.

“I’m in the very best location to absorb marketing techniques and experiment with my ideas, all within a renowned infrastructure,” continued **Brown**. “I feel like I am innovating because I finally got a platform to do so; and I’m only getting started!”

FELLOWSHIP INFORMATION

Opportunities:

Artistic Development: Artistic Development Fellow

Arts Administration: Development Fellow, General and Company Management Fellow, Graphic Design Fellow, Marketing and Media Fellow

Community Engagement: Community Programs Fellow, School Programs Fellow

Production: Lighting Fellow

Timing: Fellowships are full-time and require a dedication of 35-38 weeks. For the 2023/24 Season, the fellowships start on September 5, 2023, and end on May 24, 2024.

Compensation: Weekly stipend of \$600. Housing is not provided.

For more information, and to apply, please visit arenastage.org/fellowship.

The Allen Lee Hughes BIPOC Fellowship Program is made possible by **The Hearst Foundations** and **AT&T**.

Arena Stage’s community engagement efforts are generously sponsored by Denie and Frank Weil; The Estate of Ms. Toni A. Ritzenberg; Joanne Barker; The Robert and Natalie Mandel Family Foundation; The Hearst Foundations; AT&T; Comcast; The National Endowment for the Arts; Max and Victoria Dreyfus Foundation, Inc.; Global Medical REIT; Alice Shaver Foundation; Venable Foundation; Theater Forward; GEICO; Hattie M. Strong Foundation; The Lois & Richard England Family Foundation; Friends of Southwest D.C.; and Actors’ Equity Foundation.

Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater, under the leadership of Artistic Director Molly Smith and Executive Producer Edgar Dobie, is a national center dedicated to American voices and artists. Arena Stage produces plays of all that is passionate, 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 and impacting the lives of over 10,000 students annually through its work in community engagement. Now in its eighth decade, Arena Stage serves a diverse annual audience of more than 300,000. arenastage.org

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