



Theatre
Communications
Group

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 6, 2015

CONTACTS:
Dafina McMillan
dmcmillan@tcg.org | 212-609-5955
Gus Schulenburg
gschulenburg@tcg.org | 212-609-5941

**Theatre Communications Group Announces Cycle A Recipients of
Fourth Round of Global Connections Program
*Launches New International Touring Initiative: ON the STAGE***

New York, NY – Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national organization for theatre, is pleased to announce the recipients for the latest round of **Global Connections**. Supported by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, this grant program encourages reciprocity and cultural exchange through **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 fourth year, this round of the Global Connections program awarded a total of \$33,045 to seven projects through ON the ROAD and a total of \$30,000 to three projects through IN the LAB, with over \$400,000 awarded to date.

Thanks to additional support from the Robert Sterling Clark Foundation, TCG is excited to announce **ON the STAGE grants, a new pilot initiative of the Global Connections program**. This new initiative is designed to share U.S. culture with global audiences through sustained international tours and/or co-productions. Up to five grants between \$10,000 and \$15,000 will be awarded to theatres located in New York, New Jersey and Connecticut to tour a work internationally or to present international work on their stages. The application process for ON the STAGE will launch along with the next cycle of IN the LAB and ON the ROAD grants, with a shared application deadline of March 11, 2015.

“From Live-Action Role Play to multi-lingual signed productions, from Sri Lanka to Lebanon, these Global Connections recipients are crossing both aesthetic and national borders to transform global theatre practice,” said Teresa Eyring, executive director of TCG. “We’re grateful that our longstanding partnership with The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, coupled with new support from the Robert Sterling Clark Foundation, has empowered the addition of the ON the STAGE initiative to facilitate the touring of full productions.”

ON the ROAD

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

César Alvarez (Yonkers, NY) will engage in a new collaborative process with Danish artist and game designer Nina Runa Essendrop. They will create a new participatory theatre work that combines her interest in physical interaction and sensory play with César’s interest in musical and theatrical storytelling. At the end of this process they will develop a hybrid participatory theatre work that fuses progressive Live-Action Role Play (LARP) design and American experimental musical theatre.

ARTFARM’s (Middletown, CT) artistic leaders, Dic Wheeler and Marcella Trowbridge, will travel to Sri Lanka and work with Sri Lankan artists Ruhanie Perera and Jake Oorloff of Floating Space Theater, observing and sharing strategies for new work development and workshoping and creating original performance works with underserved and stressed populations utilizing physical theatre techniques, circus disciplines and traditional sound and music pathways. Marcella and Dic will also participate in the Inter Act Arts Colombo International Theater Festival as U.S. theatre artist representatives.

Kathleen Doyle (New York, NY) will travel to Hanoi, Vietnam and meet Mr. Hoang Tuan Nguyen, artistic director of the Thang Long National Water Puppet Theater and a living master of the ancient tradition of water puppetry. In preparation for designing and directing her own water puppet theater event, she will meet with Mr. Nguyen and observe his work from behind the scenes and meet the puppeteers and craftsmen who carve and lacquer the puppets. She will also bring her puppets to show him. Doyle’s goal is to discover how these Vietnamese artists make theatre magic using just basic materials in pools of water that were originally flooded rice paddies.

Tracy Cameron Francis (Brooklyn, NY), a theatre director, will travel to Beirut to meet acclaimed exiled Syrian playwright Mohammad Al-Attar in anticipation of her opportunity to direct Al-Attar's play in translation, *A Chance Encounter*, as part of a Boom Arts program in Portland, Oregon in April 2015. Through this initial visit, Francis seeks to allow conversations with Al-Attar to inform her interpretation of his play, and hopes to begin building an artistic relationship with the playwright towards possible future collaborations.

Sage Lewis (Los Angeles, CA) will engage in a performance and social exchange between Estación Teatro (Tijuana) and Automata (Los Angeles) called *Border Labs | Laboratorios Fronterizos*. He will initiate a pilot for a two-year project of micro-festivals connecting small experimental arts organizations in both cities. Over January 15-18, artists and representatives from both organizations will travel to and spend a day in each respective city, sharing work and conversation about performance. Through home stays and shared meals, Border Labs sets a personal tone for exchange between Los Angeles and Tijuana's thriving experimental performance scenes, and their political, social, and cultural context.

Julie Rada (Salt Lake City, UT) and Serbian theatre/film artist, Saša Perić, will construct/reconstruct performances, hold salons and pop-up happenings, and conduct research into the art movement known as Zenitism, in order to reawaken conversation about this vibrant moment in art history which has been lost to time. Like the Beat poets, Zenit artists traveled through the former Yugoslavia and Julie and Sasa will do the same; tracing through the Balkans by road trip, staging performances, performing interviews, and cultivating future collaborative relationships with artists along the way. Throughout, they will develop a vocabulary that, like Belgrade, will stand where two rivers meet.

Shadowlight Productions' (San Francisco, CA) Larry Reed (US), Ramli Ibrahim (Malaysia) and Tetsuro Koyano (Japan) will travel to Pos Slim, a Senoi tribe village near Ipoh, the capital city of the Perak State in Malaysia in May 2015. There they will attend the Orang Asli (original people) Festival to build partnerships with peoples and artists from the Senoi community in order to begin a process to create a modern shadow theatre work with and for the Senoi community and to highlight the unique indigenous culture.

IN the LAB

The following three 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:

Adrian Michael Blue (Philadelphia, PA), a director and author, will research, create and produce a 45-minute production in American Sign Language, Mexican Sign Language and spoken Spanish for the award-winning theatre company, *Seña y Verbo*, based in Mexico City. This will require a one-week visit to Mexico for research and collaboration with *Seña y Verbo*'s artistic director and co-writer of the project, Alberto Lomnitz. A second trip to Mexico City of approximately three weeks will take place after several video meetings when the script is ready for the company to rehearse.

Oana Botez (New York, NY), a costume and set designer, and her artistic team will travel to Romania for research and filming of *Km. 0 (Kilometer 0)*—a site-specific, community-based performance installation being developed by U.S. and Romanian-based artists that will have its world premiere in Bucharest in summer 2016. Conceived, created and directed by Oana Botez, *Km.0* will examine what it means to be Romanian today, and will build partnerships between artists in the U.S. and Europe who will use theatre to examine oppression, racism, displacement and corruption, and the fight to define one's own identity after existing in a cultural void.

Ping Chong + Company's (New York, NY) Ping Chong, Sara Zatz and Bruce Allardice will travel to Toronto for a 6-day developmental workshop for PUSH: real athletes, real sports, real stories. PUSH is an oral history theater project exploring the intersections of sports and disability, featuring six Paralympic athletes. It is scheduled to premiere during the 2015 ParaPanAmerican Games in Toronto. Residency activities will include the first script reading with the cast, as well as artistic development on video projection and original music scores with designer Murray Siple and composer/musician Luis Orbegoso, and opportunities for community outreach.

The Global Connections selection panel included **Jessica L. Andrews**, managing director emeritus, Arizona Theatre Company (Tucson, AZ); **David Lozano**, executive artistic director, Cara Mía Theatre Co. (Dallas, TX); **Raphael Martin**, director of new work & FEED Humanities Program, Soho Rep (New York, NY); **Michelle Preston**, executive director, SITI Company (New York, NY); and **Anna Vigeland**, artist (Amherst, MA)

The next application deadline for the Global Connections program is March 11, 2015. To learn more about the program, please visit www.tcg.org/globalconnections.

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation is a private philanthropic institution that makes grants on a selective basis in five core program areas: Higher Education and Scholarship in the Humanities, Arts and Cultural Heritage, Diversity, Scholarly Communications, and International Higher Education and Strategic Projects. To advance greater coordination among its program areas, the Foundation promotes diversity and inclusion, digital media, the public humanities and arts, and international collaboration. Through the Arts and Cultural Heritage program (ACH), the Foundation nurtures, studies, and preserves exceptional creative accomplishment, while seeking to promote a diverse and sustainable ecosystem for the arts. By the end of 2013, the total endowment was approximately \$6.1 billion; annual grantmaking came to approximately \$235 million. 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. www.mellon.org.

The Robert Sterling Clark Foundation makes grants in three program areas: Promoting International Arts Engagement, Safeguarding Reproductive Rights and Health, and Improving the Performance of Public Institutions in New York. The arts program's aim is to strengthen cultural organizations of the highest artistic quality by enabling them to participate in the global marketplace. Grants help leverage new support in this area and introduce American culture to communities around the world, as well as bring diverse world cultures to American audiences. The Foundation supports arts organizations that are based in the New York region and those that serve national constituencies. www.rsclark.org

For over 50 years, **Theatre Communications Group** (TCG), the national organization for the American theatre, has existed to strengthen, nurture and promote the professional not-for-profit American 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 13 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.

###