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CONTACT:
Dafina McMillan
dmcmillan@tcg.org
212-609-5955

Theatre Communications Group Announces Seventh Round of Recipients of Fox Foundation Resident Actor Fellowships

New York, NY – The William & Eva Fox Foundation and Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national organization for theatre, are pleased to announce the seventh round of **Fox Foundation Resident Actor Fellowship** recipients. The program is designed to support actors' professional and artistic development, to enrich relationships between actors and nonprofit theatres and to ensure continued professional commitment to live theatre. Funded by the Fox Foundation and administered by TCG, the fellowship is one of only a few programs of its kind for actors in the country.

"The Fox Foundation expresses our continued appreciation of the long-term collaborative relationship between Fox and TCG," said Robert P. Warren, president of the Fox Foundation. "This program has provided extraordinary opportunities for Fox Fellows to further their artistic development and enhance their craft. The proposals from this year's recipients hold great promise, not only for them personally and professionally, but also for their sponsoring theatres and the communities they so richly serve."

The Fox Foundation fellowship awarded grants totaling \$152,500 through two categories:

- **Extraordinary Potential** recipients are early- to mid-career actors, who have demonstrated a strong interest and commitment to continued training. Each fellow receives \$15,000 each, with up to an additional \$10,000 available to relieve student loans.
- **Distinguished Achievement** recipients have demonstrated considerable experience in professional theatre with a substantial body of work. Each fellow receives \$25,000 awards. The host theatre companies will receive grants of \$7,500 in support of these residencies.

"Our acting community, which is predominately freelance, rarely has the opportunity to establish sustained partnerships with organizations or undertake the kind of development work that might transform their artistic and professional lives," said Teresa Eyring, executive director of TCG. "Our partnership with Fox Foundation empowers these talented artists to take creative risks and deepen their relationships with theatres around the country."

The Fox Foundation fellows and host theatres are:

Extraordinary Potential

Maggie Lacey, Cleveland Play House (Cleveland, OH) will become a "songcatcher" as she explores storytelling through music and researches what and why we sing. She will improve and develop her voice and guitar skills, as well as her knowledge of the American story as told through its songs. Lacey will travel the country in pursuit of those traditions that go beyond the spoken word (such as "hollerin"), experiment with how they might intersect with her work as an actor and teller of stories, and use that knowledge to create an alternative kind of cabaret. She will combine this endeavor with community outreach by bringing her work to hospice patients and others who are unable to attend theatre. Lacey has acted on Broadway in *Our Town*, *Inherit the Wind* and *Dividing the Estate*. Off-Broadway and regionally she has worked with Signature Theatre, Roundabout Theatre Company, Manhattan Theatre Club, Theatre for a New Audience, Arena Stage and Hartford Stage, among others. She received her MFA from the Graduate Acting Program at NYU.

Distinguished Achievement

Nora Cole, Geva Theatre Center (Rochester, NY) will research, write and mount her third solo show based on a collection of 50 letters and postcards written by her uncle, Lieutenant Robert Lawery to her aunt, Katherine Louise Cole, during WWII. She will develop a physical and vocal regimen to fulfill the demands of principle and solo performing by training in Pilates, yoga, Tai Chi and private voice study at the Manhattan School of Music. Cole, during her 34 years as a performer, has worked on Broadway, Off-Broadway and toured the country three times, as well as toured internationally. Her other solo shows, *Olivia's Opus, an ode to adolescence* and *Voices of the Spirits in my Soul*, based on her family slave history, comprise a trilogy that reflects her roots and experiences as a native of Louisville, Kentucky.

André De Shields, Victory Gardens Theater (Chicago, IL) will further develop his experimental methodology, The Golden Triangle and the 5W Stack/Inner Athlete System. De Shields will deepen this unique style of Griot Performance Art that combines rigorous physical exertion, discipline and contemplation through a new, original work, *Confessions of a P.I.M.P.* (Positive Individual Making Progress). De Shields will also mentor artists and young people in Victory's Poets Conservatory and school programs. His career spans more than 40 years, gaining multiple Tony Award nominations, an OBIE for Sustained Excellence of Performance, two Joseph Jefferson Awards, eight AUDELCO Awards, two Black Theatre Alliance Awards, an Emmy Award and the National Black Theatre Festival Living Legend Award.

Godfrey L. Simmons, Jr., Epic Theatre Ensemble (New York, NY) will study with experts in voice and text to take on lead classical roles that require an actor to vocally and physically carry the show. Simmons will codify what he learns in a curricular plan for teaching classical voice and text at Epic Theatre Ensemble's mentoring and training programs for high school students from disadvantaged communities. For nearly 25 years, Godfrey has had a range of experiences working as an actor-for-hire, a resident company member at regional and Off-Broadway theatres, and a teacher of acting. He has won an AUDELCO Award as Best Supporting Actor in *Old Settler* at Primary Stages and co-created *Dispatches from (A)mended America*. In addition to his 8-year association with Epic, Simmons has ongoing relationships with People's Light and Theatre Company, Lark Play Development Center and is a Lifetime Member of Ensemble Studio Theatre.

Bruce Turk, Hartford Stage (Hartford, CT) will investigate the comic thread which runs through French comedy from Molière to Feydeau and prepare an approach to performing these works. Turk will conduct dramaturgical studies with Stephen Wadsworth, receive vocal training with Kate Wilson, travel to London to train in neutral mask and clown and to Paris for intensive studies of Play, Clown and Melodrama at École Phillippe Gaulier. He will return frequently to Hartford Stage to conduct workshops and perform. Turk is a former resident member of Tadashi Suzuki's Acting Company Mito in Japan and has worked extensively with Julie Taymor on productions of *Titus Andronicus*, *Juan Darien* and *The Green Bird*, in which he starred in the title role. He has performed both on and Off-Broadway and at major regional theatres across the country, including six seasons as a member of The Old Globe's Shakespeare Repertory. He has worked with such distinguished directors as Stephen Wadsworth, Michael Kahn, Paul Mullins, Ron Daniels, Adrian Noble and Darko Tresnjak.

The **Fox Foundation Resident Actor Fellowships panel** included **Sandra Delgado**, Fox Fellow, Goodman Theatre; **Sara Garonzik**, Producing Artistic Director, Philadelphia Theatre Company; **Mark Rucker**, Associate Artistic Director, American Conservatory Theater; and **Ken Washington**, Director of Company Development, Guthrie Theater.

The William & Eva Fox Foundation was established in 1987 by Belle Fox in honor of her parents, who founded the Fox Film Corporation. The Foundation has awarded more than \$2.8 million in fellowships to 327 actors since 1994. The Fox Foundation is the largest US grant maker dedicated to the artistic and professional development of theatre actors, and one of very few that provides direct financial support to

individual actors. For more information, visit http://www.tcg.org/grants/fox/fox_index.cfm and www.thefoxfoundation.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 11 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. For more information, visit www.tcg.org.

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