

# INSIDE ARTS

THE MAGAZINE OF THE ASSOCIATION OF PERFORMING ARTS PRESENTERS



## RITA!

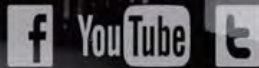
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\* Sardi's, Jan 15, 9pm



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THAT 60'S SHOW

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DATE/TIME: Sunday, Jan. 17 - 9:25 PM

LOCATION: Trianon Ballroom – 3rd Floor



JARROD SPECTOR & KELLI BARRETT



JOURNEY TO BROADWAY



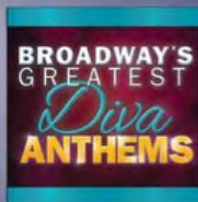
BROADWAY BACK TOGETHER



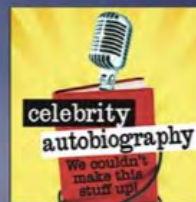
BIG & TALL STARRING BRUCE VILANCH & JUDY GOLD



DISCO INFERNO A 70'S CELEBRATION



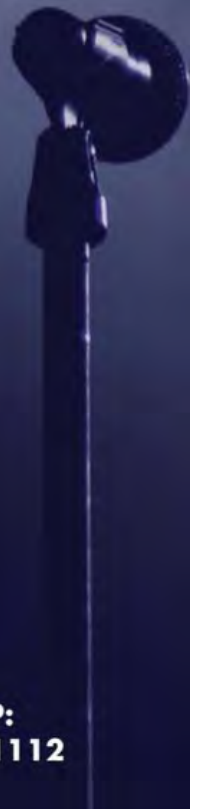
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# INSIDE ARTS

VOLUME 29, NUMBER 1  
CONFERENCE 2016

THE MAGAZINE OF THE ASSOCIATION OF PERFORMING ARTS PRESENTERS

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COVER: Rita Moreno. See page 80.  
PHOTO: Austin Hargrave

PHOTO: B. GONZALEZ





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Michael Riedel - New York Post

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT



There may be no better indicators of the status and health of the presenting field than the annual regional arts conferences that take place at the end of summer and, of course, the APAP|NYC conference each January. My travels to Vancouver, Kansas City and Baltimore invigorated my confidence in the presenting field. WAA's Indigenous People's symposium launched a greater

awareness about the role of the arts (and our responsibility) in developing cohesive communities. Arts Midwest re-ignited my belief in the power of the arts to transform environments, especially at venues such as the soaring Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts. And at PAE, I learned how the Baltimore Peace of Art movement brought solace to a community under siege.

Congratulations to our regional colleagues for thoughtful planning and to the tenacious spirit and support of artists, artist management companies, presenters and producers who participate.

In this issue of the magazine, we introduce and celebrate artists, their collaborators and others who will bring our theme of MAKERS to life. You'll read about the work of Bill T. Jones, Rita Moreno and our former board member Aaron Dworkin, who writes about the influence of Martin Luther King, Jr. on his work. We will honor King at the conference as well. In many recent conversations, I heard that transformative experiences are the greatest indicator of success in our work. Direct contact with the arts has the power to alter the ways in which each individual understands and responds to the often-crazy world in which we live. We all strive to "make the arts matter," which is the theme of our opening session at the APAP|NYC 2016 conference.

Increasing points of entry for everyone in our community has become a primary goal of the Innovations Lab work we have undertaken through a grant from EmcArts. As such, we will expand the number of sessions and events at the conference to be streamed online for those who are unable to be in New York City. In addition, we are piloting reduced membership rates for artists and others to join and participate in APAP programs and services. We are committed to making a difference as your national service organization, and I encourage every APAP member to commit to making a difference wherever your sphere of influence lies.

We are, at the core, makers. Let's work closely together in the year ahead to make transformative experiences in the arts across America and around the globe.

Mario Garcia Durham, PRESIDENT & CEO

### IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- A REPORT ON APAP|NYC
- APAP AWARD WINNERS
- SUMMER FESTIVALS
- AND MORE!

WISDOM PHOTOGRAPHY



- Amaan & Ayaan Ali Khan
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- Cambalache
- Canzoniere Grecanico Salentino
- Cimarrón
- Emel Mathlouthi
- Hector Del Curto Tango
- Hermeto Pascoal
- Huun Huur Tu
- La Bottine Souriante
- Le Mystere des Voix Bulgares
- Les Yeux Noirs
- Los de Abajo
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APAP is a national service and advocacy organization with nearly 1,600 members worldwide dedicated to bringing artists and audiences together. Leading the field, APAP works to effect change through professional development, resource sharing and civic engagement.

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*Rick Jones, Executive Director, Fitton Center for Creative Arts*

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# VOICE



COMMUNITY

# AGE OF ENLIGHTENMENT

20 INSIDE ARTS CONFERENCE 2016





## CREATIVE LIVING COMMUNITIES ELEVATE RETIREMENT TO AN ART FORM.

When you think about a retirement community, what types of activities come to mind? Golf? Bingo? Shuffleboard? Bridge? Maybe a painting class or a book club?

EngAGE in Creativity, a multidisciplinary initiative in Burbank, California, turns that model on its head. The program operates independent senior housing communities – including its flagship Burbank Senior Artists Colony, launched in 2006 – that are built around the arts.

“You can tell right away that this is something different,” says EngAGE in Creativity founder Tim Carpenter. “It doesn’t seem like a place where old people live. It’s a place where I want to live. We’re taking age out of the equation and putting arts in.”

Carpenter spent the early part of his career working in senior health care, but he grew tired of the bureaucracy. In the 1990s, he met a senior housing developer who was looking for a different approach to his work. As he learned more about independent senior housing communities, Carpenter saw the potential “to bring huge change.”

“When I started thinking about the idea of getting older, retiring and moving into one of these places, I thought, ‘What if we made it like college?’ If you look at retirement and college through the right goggles, they’re very similar,” Carpenter says. “You’re

COURTESY TIM CARPENTER



## VOICE



All ages create art together during EngAGE in Creativity.

transitioning into a new thing, moving from one phase of your life to another. You have time to explore new things. What would happen if people looked at retirement as this whole new exciting phase of life and thought: ‘Wouldn’t it be great if I could do something great with it?’”

That “something great” started with courses in retirement housing communities taught by college-level

instructors and professional artists, along with opportunities for seniors to apply what they’ve learned. A poetry class could culminate in a poetry slam while a theater residency could lead to a staged production. The annual senior Olympics draws a crowd of octogenarians interested in physical competition, performance, stand-up comedy — and a whole lot of trash-talking.

“This is not your grandma’s arts and crafts,” Carpenter says. “We have high expectations. We hire professional teachers. We expect residents to learn, create work, do their homework and be part of a creative community.”

Today, that community takes root in a building designed with creativity in mind — in addition to living quarters, there are theaters and





COURTESY JIM CARPENTER

studios and digital media labs. What started as a singular artists colony in Burbank has expanded to four more sites with a fifth in development. NEA chair Jane Chu recently paid the NoHo Senior Artists Colony a visit during her tour of innovative Los Angeles arts programs.

The majority of residents are low- and moderate-income seniors. Some of them are dusting off their artistic

dreams, while others are looking for a more holistic approach to health and wellness and an alternative to traditional retirement.

“Aging means something completely different today than it used to,” Carpenter says. “People are demanding more, expecting more, looking for something that’s an expansion of life, rather than a diminishing of it.” **INA**

# Jazz



**BRUBECK BROTHERS**  
Tribute to Dave Brubeck

Toshiko Akiyoshi Trio Nea Jazz Master  
Brian Lynch  
Eddie Daniels  
Marlena Shaw  
Mills Brothers

## Latin



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# VOICE



Aparna Ramaswamy/Ragamala Dance Company of Minneapolis, Minnesota.





Aspen Santa Fe Ballet's *Silent Ghost*

**SHALL WE DANCE?**

**GRANTS** The New England Foundation for the Arts has awarded \$1,606,350 in National Dance Project funding to support the creation of 18 new dance works that will tour the U.S. Awardees were selected out of 124 applications by a panel of national dance leaders who serve rotating three-year terms. The projects will receive production grants ranging from \$30,350 to \$45,000 for the creation of a new work, plus \$12,000 in unrestricted general operating support for each U.S.-based artist recipient. A total of \$630,000 will be awarded to U.S. nonprofit organizations through presentation grants when they are ready to tour. The 2015 NDP grant recipients are Ann Carlson, Santa Monica, California, for *Doggie Hamlet*; Aparna Ramaswamy/Ragamala Dance Company of Minneapolis, Minnesota, for *They Rose at Dawn*; Aspen Santa Fe Ballet of Aspen, Colorado, for *Silent Ghost*; d. Sabela grimes of Los Angeles, California for *ELECTROGYNOUS*; Dance Theatre of Harlem, New York, for Francesca Harper/DTH 2016 New Work; Emily Johnson/Catalyst of

Minneapolis, Minnesota, for *Then a Cunning Voice* and *A Night We Spend Gazing at Stars*; Reggie Wilson/Fist and Heel Performance Group of Brooklyn, New York, for *CITIZEN*; Gerard & Kelly of Brooklyn, New York, for *Modern Living*; Jess Curtis/Gravity of San Francisco, California, for *The Way You Look (at me) Tonight*; Jody Kuehner of Seattle, Washington, for *one great, bright, brittle alltogetherness*; Lucinda Childs Dance Company of New York for *Lucinda Childs: The Sun Roars Into View*; Malpaso of Havana, Cuba, for *New Work by Aszure Barton*; Mark Morris Dance Group of Brooklyn, New York, for *Layla and Majnun*; Michael Sakamoto of Iowa City, Iowa, for *Soil*; Morgan Thorson of Minneapolis, Minnesota, for *Still Life*; Pick Up Performance Co(s) of New York for *Live Archiveography*; Sidra Bell Dance New York of White Plains, New York, for *MÖNSTER OUTSIDE*-Sidra Bell Dance New York in Collaboration with New Tide Orquesta; and zoe | juniper of Seattle, Washington, for *Clear & Sweet*. For more information on the National Dance Project, visit NEFA.org.

-APARNA RAMASWAMY/ RAGAMALA DANCE COMPANY; REGGIE WILSON/ ASPEN SANTA FE BALLET; ROSALIE COCHRAN

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## VOICE

### REBEL SWELL

**MEDIA** Latino Rebels, the new media company run by a collective of social media influencers, academics, artists, bloggers, journalists, poets, writers, producers, photographers and business professionals, has expanded its scope. The redesigned Latinorebels.com now includes significantly more written content – we’re loving the arts and culture category and LR Radio – and has introduced a digital network with original programming including the Latino Rebels Show with actor Esai

Morales and a new comedy sketch series developed by writer and producer Rick Najera. Journalist Julio Ricardo Varela founded Latino Rebels in 2011 to cover issues of importance to the U.S. Latino population and will continue to be the company’s majority owner. Marlena Fitzpatrick will lead the Latino Rebels Network as the company’s new CEO, and Hector Luis Alamo has been named deputy editor of LatinoRebels.com. “It’s time for Latino Rebels to break through the doors again,” says Varela. “When the

group was formed in 2011, we all saw a hunger for more bold, intellectual and unfiltered stories that authentically spoke to the U.S. Latino community. The support has been spectacular, and we truly believe that our greatest years are in front of us. To have legends like Esai Morales and Rick Najera be part of this group is amazing. I am also thrilled to have Marlena driving this ship and Hector continuing Latino Rebels’ first-in-class editorial vision. This is one true Equipo de Estrellas, an All-Star Team.”

“We all saw a hunger for more bold, intellectual and unfiltered stories that authentically spoke to the U.S. Latino community.”

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## VOICE

### AGES AND STAGES


**AUDIENCES** Over the past two decades, arts attendance has been in decline. Why? *When Going Gets Tough: Barriers and Motivations Affecting Arts Attendance*, a publication from the National Endowment for the Arts, doesn't just answer that question; it provides valuable insight that could help arts organizations connect more deeply with their audiences' motives for attending. Using data from the 2012 General Social Survey, NEA researchers found that more than half of U.S. adults had attended an exhibit or performance in the previous year. Another 13.3 percent wanted to attend but didn't. Why not? Well, it's complicated. For parents of young children, lack of time was the driving

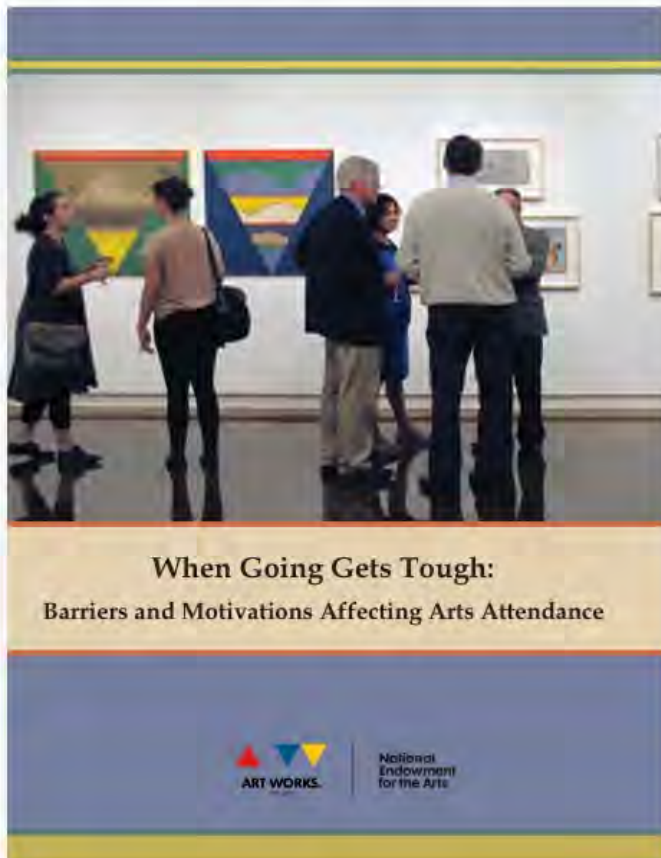
Using data from the 2012 General Social Survey, NEA researchers found that more than half of U.S. adults had attended an exhibit or performance in the previous year. Another 13.3 percent wanted to attend but didn't.

factor. For retirees, difficulty getting to the exhibit or performance location was common. Other barriers included cost and not having anyone to go with. However, racial/ethnic minorities and first-generation immigrants often emphasized different reasons for their decisions to attend or not. Compared with individuals in other racial/ethnic groups, non-Hispanic Blacks and African Americans and Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders most frequently attended performances to support community events and

organizations. Among interested non-attendees, Mexican Americans and non-Hispanic Blacks and African Americans more often said not having someone to go with prevented their attendance. Socioeconomics play a role, as well. Among individuals with very similar household incomes and education, those who self-identified as members of the middle class were more likely to attend than individuals who self-identified as working class. The report, which is intended to help arts organizations and policy-makers better understand motivations and overcome barriers, is available for download at [arts.gov](http://arts.gov) (search for "when going gets tough").

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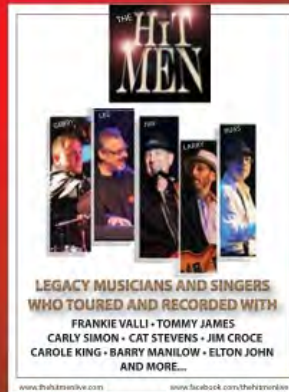
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 Sun. 11:15 p.m. Trianon Ballroom, 3rd floor



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 Sun. 10:45 p.m. Trianon Ballroom, 3rd floor



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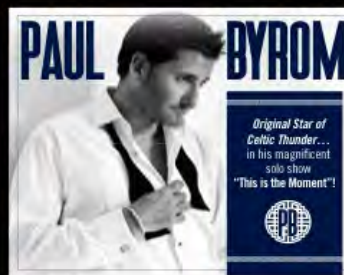
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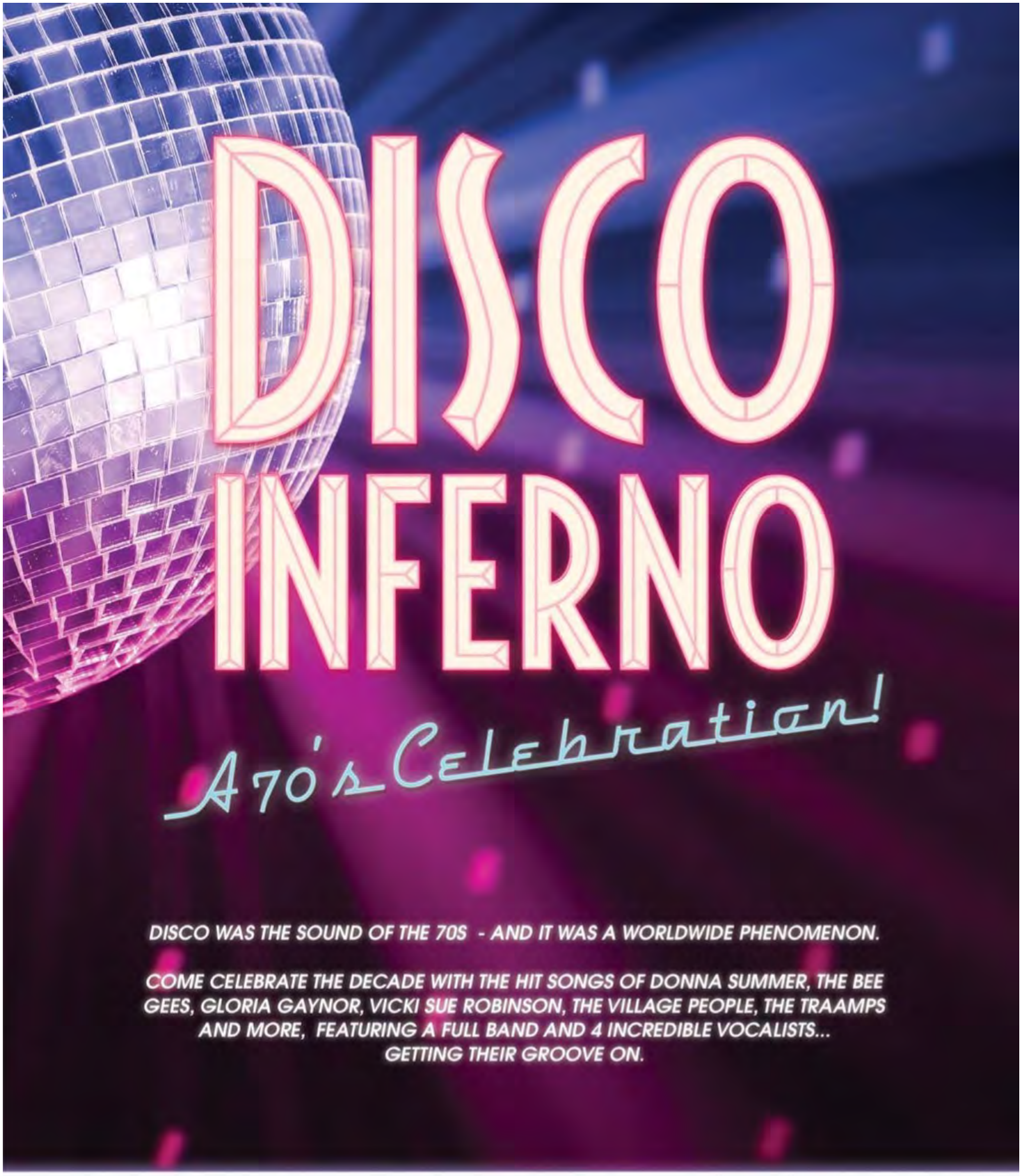
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## VOICE

### TransActions

**BRIAN JOSE** has been named the new director of University of Florida Performing Arts. Jose comes to UF from the College of Saint Benedict/Saint John's University in central Minnesota, where he had served as the executive director of fine arts programming since 2008. Jose, who serves as vice-chair of the Association of Performing Arts Presenters Board of Directors, will assume his new role in November.

**PAM TATGE**, director of Wesleyan's Center for the Arts, has been appointed to the board of the New England Foundation for the Arts. Tatge received the 2010 William Dawson Award from the Association of Performing Arts Presenters, given to an individual or organization in the presenting field for sustained leadership, innovation and vision in program design, audience building and community involvement efforts.

**RAULI GARCIA** has been named senior vice president of administration and chief financial officer of Curtis Institute of Music. Garcia comes to the institute from the Houston Symphony, where he served as chief financial officer. Garcia previously served as CFO of Houston Grand Opera from 2008 to 2013.

**ELISABETH GALLEY** has joined Arts Consulting Group as vice president to expand its revenue enhancement and facility and program planning practices. Galley, who is known for her expertise in fund-raising and capital campaigns, brings more than 30 years of arts and culture industry experience to ACG.

RIOULT Dance NY has selected **AMY HARRISON** as its new executive director. Since 2005, Harrison has worn nearly every administrative hat at RIOULT



Brian Jose



Anna M. Thompson

Dance NY while securing the company's bookings and managing its tours. She has influenced the company's growth in touring and worked to raise its profile among the presenting and dance communities across the country.

New York University Abu Dhabi has appointed **BILL BRAGIN** as the first executive artistic director of the university's Arts Center at the Saadiyat Campus. Called "one of the most influential figures in the New York live-music business" by *The New York Times*, Bragin brings extensive experience, creativity and a multidisciplinary vision to the role. Formerly the director of public programming at Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, Bragin serves

on the Association of Performing Arts Presenters board of directors.

**THE WINDISH AGENCY** has entered into a partnership with **PARADIGM** and its partner agencies, **AM ONLY** and London-based **CODA MUSIC AGENCY**, under the Paradigm Music Division. Together they represent a combined roster that includes such artists as Aerosmith, alt-J, Coldplay, Dave Matthews Band, David Guetta, Diplo, Disclosure, Ed Sheeran, Imagine Dragons, Lorde, Phish, Skrillex, Tiësto, Toby Keith and Zedd. Tom Windish will continue to run The Windish Agency and will join the Paradigm Music leadership team of Chip Hooper, Marty Diamond, Paul Morris and the Coda partners.

**ANNA M. THOMPSON** has been named executive director of the Alys Stephens Performing Arts Center at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. Thompson comes to UAB from the University of Notre Dame, where she served for eight years as executive director of the DeBartolo Performing Arts Center and the Judd and Mary Lou Leighton director for the performing arts.

**UA PRESENTS**, the University of Arizona's professional performing arts group, has contracted with the Nederlander Organization to oversee operations and marketing. Jory Hancock, dean of the UA's College of Fine Arts who also oversees UA Presents, said the move will enhance the organization's ability to focus on programming and fund-raising by supporting its staff with a proven management team. The Nederlander Organization and Broadway in Tucson general manager Lendre Kearns will oversee day-to-day operations of UA Presents and all productions hosted in Centennial Hall.

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation has appointed **KAREN BROOKS HOPKINS** as



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## VOICE

senior fellow in residence, a newly created position. Hopkins, the former president of the Brooklyn Academy of Music, will serve through September 2016.

**NEIL MURRAY**, executive producer of the National Theatre of Scotland, and Graham McLaren, NTS associate director, will become joint directors of the Abbey Theatre of Dublin in July 2016. Fiach Mac Conghail's 12-year tenure as director of the national Irish theater will end in December 2016.

The **JOHN F. KENNEDY CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS** has announced recipients of the 2015 Kennedy Center Honors. The 38th annual national celebration of the arts recognizes singer-songwriter Carole King, actresses Cicely Tyson and Rita Moreno (who will be the APAP|NYC 2016 closing plenary speaker; see related story on page 80), filmmaker George Lucas, conductor Seiji Ozawa and rock group the Eagles. For more information, visit [www.kennedy-center.org](http://www.kennedy-center.org).

**PARK AVENUE ARMORY** has appointed Pierre Audi as artistic director. A critically acclaimed director and artistic director, Audi will continue to lead the Dutch National Opera, a role he has held since 1988 while also serving as artistic director of the Holland Festival in Amsterdam from 2004 until 2014. He previously served as the founding artistic director of the Almeida Theatre in London.

Industry leaders **ROOTS AGENCY** and **ART FEGAN ENTERTAINMENT** have merged and will do business as The Roots Agency, with Fegan leading The Roots Agency's Nashville office. He will be responsible for overseeing the booking of performing arts centers in the Midwest and select other regions, representing the entire combined talent roster. Of the merger, Roots Agency head Tim Drake says, "I'm very excited to be working with Art; he brings with him a tremendous

amount of experience, relationships and expertise. It also gives the agency a Nashville presence."

The **ROBIN HOOD FOUNDATION** has appointed former Lincoln Center president Reynold Levy as its president. The organization is dedicated to fighting poverty in New York. Of the hire, David Einhorn, chairman of Robin Hood's board of directors, says: "Faced with high levels of poverty, homelessness, hunger and school dropout rates, we must continue to approach our work with urgency, energy and resourcefulness. I join all of our trustees in expressing delight that Reynold will bring to us the benefits of his CEO experience at such institutions as the 92nd Street Y, the AT&T Foundation, the International Rescue Committee and Lincoln Center to help strengthen Robin Hood and its partner nonprofit organizations."

**TY SUTTON** has been named executive director of the four-venue Butler University Arts Center in Indianapolis. Sutton comes to Butler from the Wagner Noël Performing Arts Center in Midland, Texas, where he served as general manager. He has more than 16 years of event and venue management experience, including work as general manager of The Lincoln Center in Fort Collins, Colorado. He also has worked in several arts administration positions, including programming director at the University of Utah and audience services manager at the Leshar Center for the Arts in Walnut Creek, California. He was a partner at Encore Entertainment, a Salt Lake City-based concert and event touring company, and worked as a venue manager for the 2002 Salt Lake Olympic Games.

**CHRISTOPHER MERKLE** has been named director of artistic operations for the The Savannah (Georgia) Philharmonic. He comes to Savannah from Aspen Music



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*Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival - Becket, MA*



PHOTOS: ROSALIE O'CONNOR

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## VOICE

Festival and School, where he served as manager of orchestral operations.

**ROB STEELE** has been named president and chief executive officer of the Delray Beach (Florida) Center for the Arts. He most recently served for 10 years as executive director of the Williamsport (Pennsylvania) Community Arts Center, and previously spent five years as executive director of the civic auditorium in Tecumseh, Michigan.

**ALONZO KING LINES BALLET** has named Karim Eric Baer as its executive director. Baer most recently served as director of public programs and performances at the California Institute of Integral Studies, a private, nonprofit

institution of higher education based in San Francisco.

The **JOE R. AND TERESA LOZANO LONG CENTER** of Austin, Texas, has tapped veteran Arizona arts executive Cory Baker as vice president, programming and production. Baker will lead a newly formed department that combines the two teams. Baker previously served as vice president and director at the Scottsdale (Arizona) Center for the Performing Arts.

**JAX DELUCA** will join the National Endowment for the Arts as the director of media arts beginning in January 2016. Deluca will manage NEA grant-making in media arts and represent the agency

to the media arts field. Deluca was previously executive director of Squeaky Wheel Film & Media Art Center in Buffalo, New York, a nonprofit that promotes innovation in media arts through access, education and exhibition throughout western New York state.

We are deeply saddened by the passing of: **OLIVER SACKS**, the renowned neurologist, author and NYU professor of neurology who served as the APAP|NYC opening plenary speaker in 2004; and Tom "TheJazzMan" Mallison, a longtime APAP|NYC attendee who broadcast about the conference to multiple North Carolina public radio stations and helped bring several jazz radio and musician colleagues to this annual event. **ITA**

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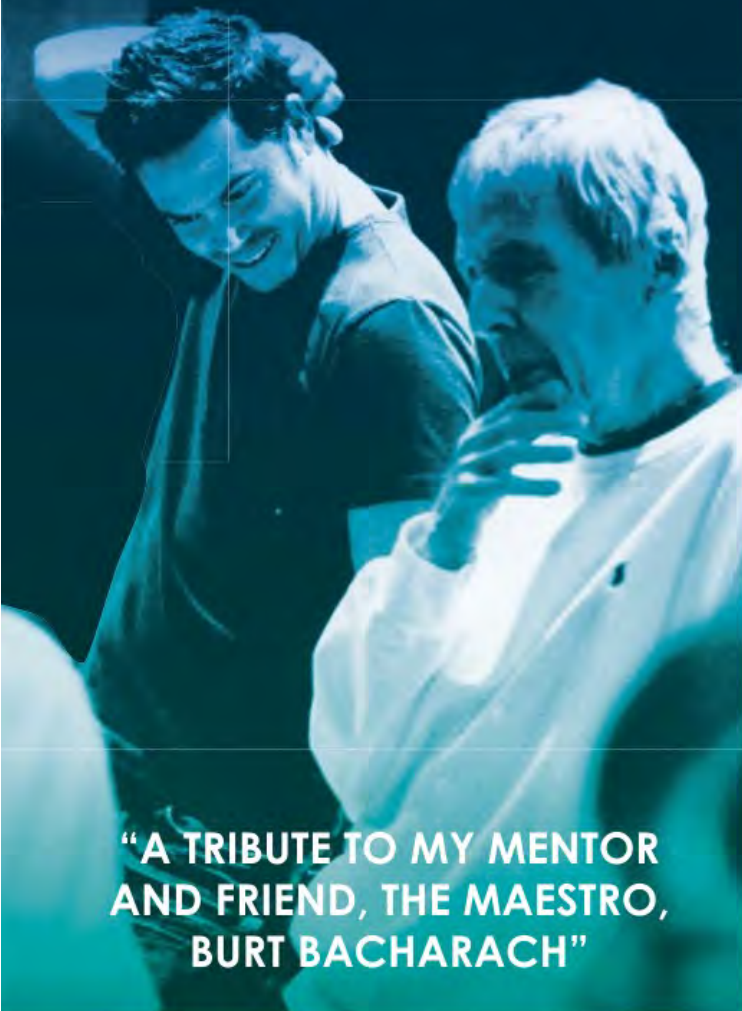




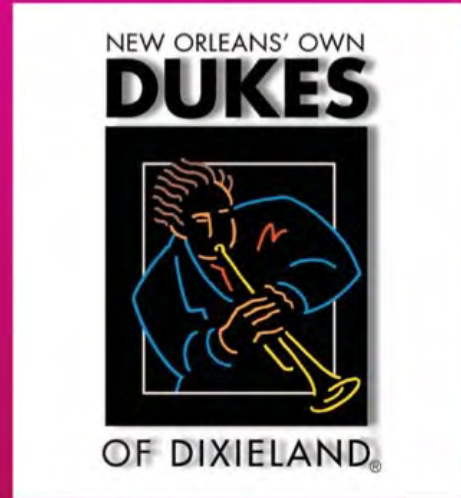
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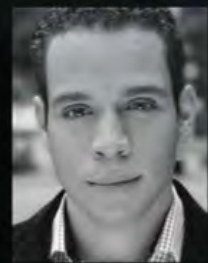
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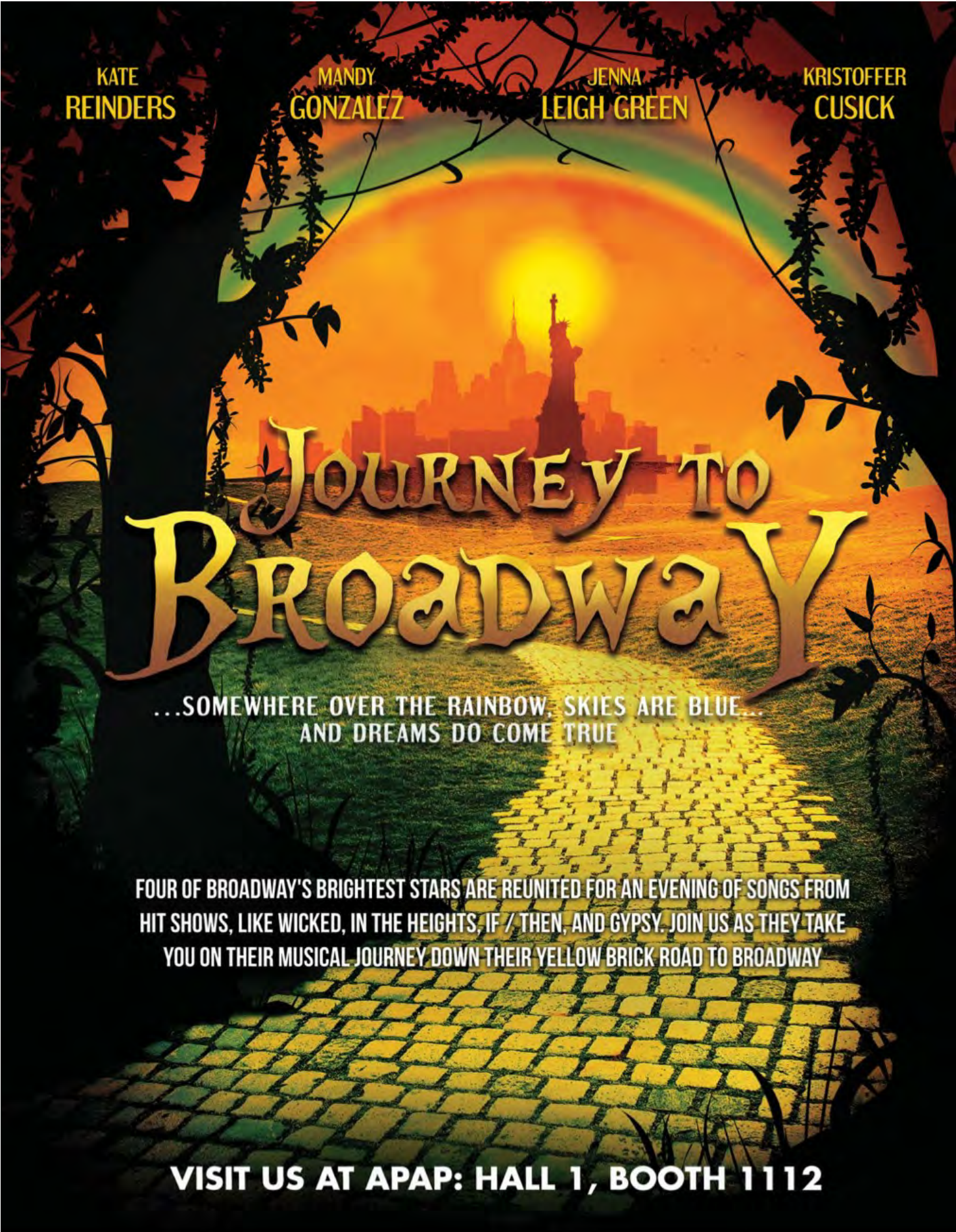


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## VOICE

AUDIENCE OUTREACH

## Follow Spot:

# EMBEDDED WITH THE PILLOW

Legendary Berkshires dance festival takes year-round community engagement to the next level.

BY KRISTEN ANDRESEN



Third graders participate in Dance Counts/ Math Moves: We Are All An Equal Part of the Whole, part of Jacob's Pillow Curriculum in Motion residency program.

When it came time for Jacob's Pillow to transition from a summer festival to a year-round part of the community, it did what dance organizations do best: It stepped up.

Staff artists started offering traditional residencies in area schools, but they craved something more enduring, something that would build lasting relationships, something that would allow them to return to the schools again and again, to advance their work – and the community's understanding of the work.

After extensive conversations with local principals and teachers, Curriculum in Motion was born. Monument Mountain Regional High School served as the program's pilot site, and it has since expanded into two elementary schools.

“People need to know you really want to partner. You're not there to bring them something,” says JR Glover, who co-founded Curriculum in Motion with Celeste Miller in the mid-1980s. “It's key to find people who are open to that experience and who will continue to give you good feedback, because not everything is going to work right away.”

After nearly three decades, Jacob's Pillow Curriculum in Motion has outreach down to an art – and a science. Dancers and choreographers work closely with classroom teachers and administrators to create original movement studies that provide a different – and often deeper – perspective of academic topics. And the results speak for themselves: Students involved with the program score 5 percent higher than their peers in conceptual testing and have shown improvements in critical thinking, creativity, communication, collaboration and social skills. Boys are as willing to participate – if not

COURTESY DAVID PASTIELL




more so – than girls. The program has been so successful that it's part of the creative arts and coursework curriculum at Lesley University, and it has been featured in *Acts of Achievement*, a joint publication of The Kennedy Center and the Dana Foundation.

"You can use dance to teach absolutely anything," says Glover, who previously taught at an all-arts alternative school in Washington, D.C. "When we started the program, the majority of teachers who would sign up were your visual art, music and theater teachers – people who were already arts-oriented. Now, it's social studies, biology, physics, English as a second language – across the map."

Biology students create dances about cell division. Math students divide space into planes, axis points and equations. ESL students explore cultural and political differences through motion.

Today, three Berkshire County schools each host four two-week residencies annually. That equates to 20 classrooms, 400 students, professional development opportunities for 80 educators, and meaningful connections for four to six artists.

"We're very interested in impacting teachers and how they teach and the community feeling within the school," Glover says. "There's a lot of dialogue with principals and teachers about overarching issues within the curriculum and within the school. The very nature of creative work is community-building, and it starts right there in the classroom." 

Kristen Andresen is the associate editor of *Inside Arts*. She is also senior director of marketing and creative services at Providence College in Rhode Island.

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Choreographer and artistic director **Bill T. Jones** reflects on his legacy and the importance of building audiences and staying on his (dance) feet.



42 INSIDE ARTS CONFERENCE 2016



"I've always considered myself an artist first before a dancer," Bill T. Jones was saying over the phone. "An artist, choreographer, director, dancer."

And it's true: The dancer who blazed onto the scene in the 1970s has been occupied in recent years with other things. He's been busy as the artistic director of New York Live Arts, the entity born of the 2011 merger between the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company and Dance Theater Workshop. He's also ventured to Broadway, racking up Tony Awards for choreography – on *Fela!*, which he also conceived, co-wrote and directed, and on the original production of *Spring Awakening*.

But now, in a development he called "scary and exciting," Jones is returning to performance. "I had retired from dancing almost 10 years ago, but I am coming back," he said. "I am doing a series of solos this year, just checking to see what's still there."

APAP|NYC conference goers will get a chance to watch Jones dance and listen to him speak at the opening plenary session of the gathering, the theme of which is MAKERS. The opening session will also feature opera singer Carla Dirlikov and PBS president and CEO Paula Kerger, with actor and playwright Anna Deavere Smith moderating.

Over the phone, Jones traced the evolution of his career as a maker of art, spoke about *Making and Doing*, the piece he has created for and will perform at the conference, and explained that all an artist needs to create is control of his or her own mind.

"I'm a very discursive interviewee," Jones warned. "I hope you're taping." He is, and I was, and off he went. Here are edited excerpts.

**I understand the idea of makers interests you. Is that right?**

(Laughs.) I'm an artist; I'm now also the artistic director of a stage, of a theater, that actually encourages and supports makers at various stages of their career. So in that way, it is my life. You can say that making is

but that's another issue. I wanted a more poetic sweat. I wanted a sweat that was similar to the sweat of a person who was singing or praying or in temptation. And I wanted to be fabulous. Let's face it: young, gay man. I wanted to be a center of everything. Every performer has something of a preener in him or her.

But I began to understand that dance was actually a highly social act. The transmission was always living human being to living human being.

**“Presenters at their best have always been sort of Socratic leaders: They propose questions through the artists that they bring and the projects that they commission, and they hope that the community buys into that.”**

my religion, if you would: my own making and the discourse it comes from, a society of makers, which is, I believe, what APAP is dedicated to.

**How has the way you've practiced that religion changed through your lifetime?**

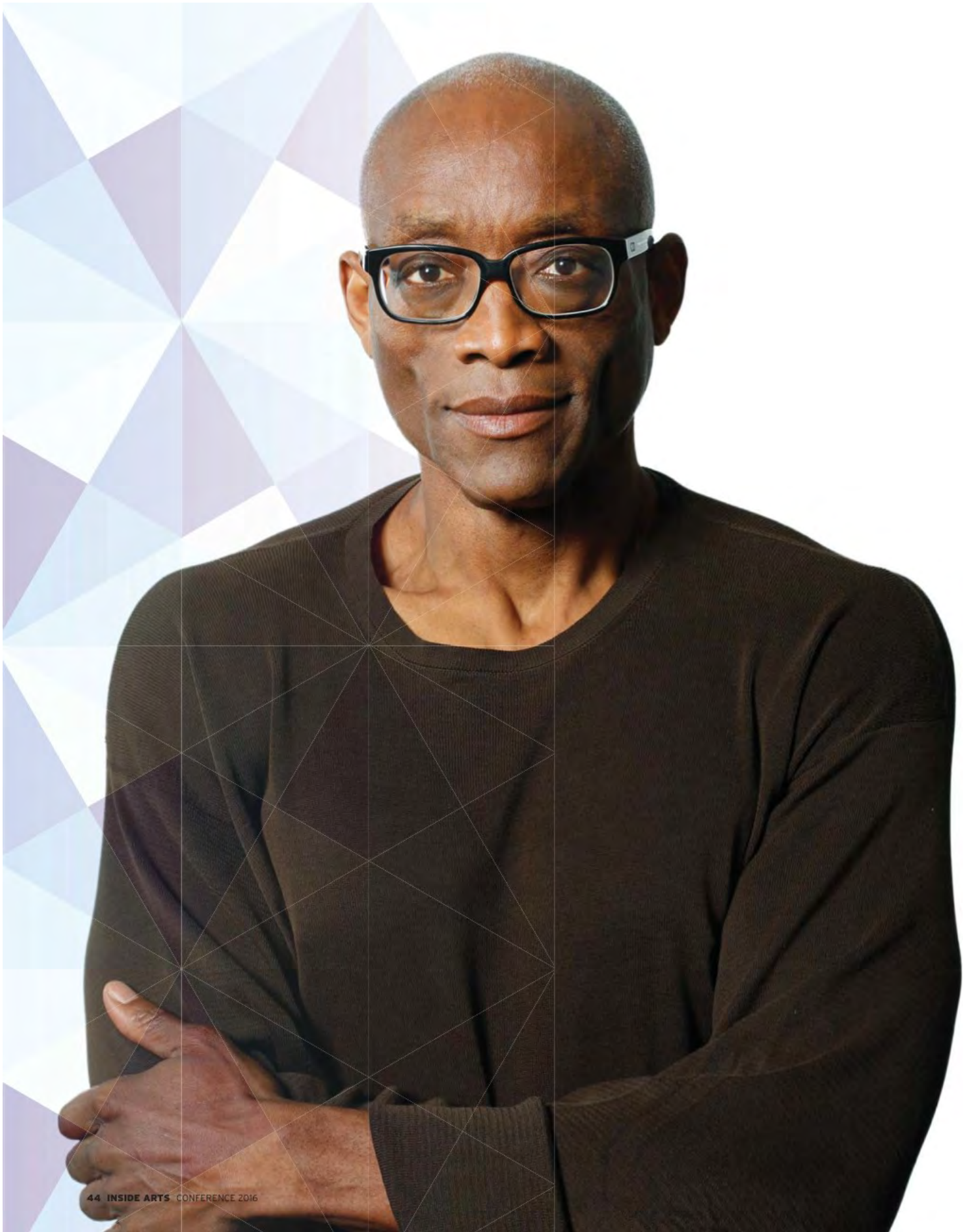
I started dancing at age 19, and I am now 63 years old, so it's not 50 years, but it's more than 40.

Being an athlete, I came into the field enjoying a new type of sweating. The sweat of the locker room was about competition. I didn't know that dance was also about competition,

There's no sheet music. There's no repertoire that you can just go out and buy it and learn it. You have to go into an intensely social situation. That was the next level of understanding: that people teach dance to people.

And then I joined an organization very much of its time called the American Dance Asylum, that was located far away from what we thought was the Babylon of New York. We were up in the countryside, up in a small city, Binghamton, New York. And we were working as a collective. Collective meant that there was no hierarchy, at least no





44 INSIDE ARTS CONFERENCE 2016



recognizable hierarchy, and that we would all be soldiers and would all be captains. We would take turns. That was very much a learning experience. We were training each other when some of us barely had any training to begin with.

But then again, at the time our heroes were the avant-garde of Lower Manhattan. They were not promoting really technical dancing. It was about conception, feeling. The visual arts and the performing arts were very close at that time. We as young Turks were applauding this. We didn't have to worry about pointing feet. It was what is your use of space and time and relationship to power dynamics, what have you. So that was the next level of development: Art making was actually society making. We were living a lifestyle.

I was discovered, if you will, by the Clark Center Dance Festival. A wonderful woman, Louise Roberts, gave me my first opportunity onstage in New York. I got good notices, and one thing led to another. I'm trying

to give you a sense of the career, but it was still built around very small groups of people. Then it became Arnie Zane and myself. Arnie Zane decided that he did not live to sweat. He needed bodies to work with. We began to make a company from that impulse. I wanted to stay out there in the dancing; he wanted to be a director, but he would still dance sometimes.

As you know, he got sick and he died, and I had the option of disbanding this company, this child that he and I had. And he even said when he was getting near the end of his life that I did not have to keep this company, that he didn't think I was temperamentally suited to do so. I disagreed with him, because the company became a monument to the relationship that he and I had, which had all sorts of social, political meaning. We were two gay men, but we were not barren. We made this child that was our company. I was damned if I was going to let it die when he died.

**Did you think that there was anything to his concern about your being temperamentally unsuited?**

*(Laughs.)* Of course I thought about it, but I couldn't be stopped by any concern. What should I do? Questioners ask me about the fears that allow us to make transformations in our lives, and one of those was, "I love this thing that we have made together. I have to learn how to do it." I sometimes ask, "What would Arnie do at this instant?"

Yes, there is a group of people making the movement

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From *Body Against Body*, choreographed by Bill T. Jones.

onstage, but there is always an administration. We had to have a structure. We couldn't stay loose and funky as we had been at the American Dance Asylum. Anyway, the company was celebrating its 20th or so anniversary, Arnie had died and we had an opportunity to

merge with a historic space, which is Dance Theater Workshop, and we did, and we made something called New York Live Arts.

Today, I've expanded my feeling of what it means to make or participate in the discourse around making, which is another way I have

of describing the performing arts world: as a discourse, a conversation, a give-and-take. And I became the artistic director of New York Live Arts. Right now, my company has an associate artistic director, a powerhouse, an elegant woman whose name is Janet Wong. She is

COURTESY NEW YORK LIVE ARTS



my right hand and sometimes more than that - sometimes she is holding me up - and we make together.

The other day, I was speaking to a young relative who has been paralyzed, and he is very, very ill. He's been in the hospital for about a year. Matter of fact, he's the subject of my next work. Sometimes he despairs that his body is betraying him, and I say that the mind for an artist is always the last bastion of control, and that's what creating is - that's what making is.

I say, "You lay there as a patient, but your mind has to be free, and your mind has to be still behaving as you did when you were standing on your two feet. 'What can I do with the area that I am in control of?' Are you writing something?" I say to him, "Never since I've been an adult have I gone through any period of time without writing a poem, a story, reading a book or making a dance."

You find the form that you are able to have access to. I don't think there's ever a time when you cannot use your mind to make art.

#### **What have you learned over the years about making audiences?**

I'm still learning. I don't know: Does one make an audience, or does one grow an audience, or attract an audience? These words are very important. We're still understanding the butts-in-seats equation, and it is a frustrating problem across the field. It seems that people have ever-shorter attention spans, and this is the niche era. Everyone knows their niche of interest, and they cultivate it passionately. You cultivate your playlists, you cultivate your friends on Facebook and in a way the rest of the world goes out of focus.

**"I'm still learning. I don't know: Does one make an audience, or does one grow an audience, or attract an audience? These words are very important."**

So presenters at their best have always been sort of Socratic leaders: They propose questions through the artists that they bring and the projects that they commission, and they hope that the community buys into that. They develop audiences and expand audiences. How is it working? APAP seems this year to be thinking that makers are the magic sauce. I hope that means that they are talking about the integration of new works, the dissemination of ideas about that which is untried - that there's something probing in the artistic discourse. We hope that probing, the questions that are thrown up, will attract new audiences.

The nature of the work that I will be doing [at the conference] is actually based on a series of concerts, talking solos that I was developing throughout the '80s and into the '90s. There is one piece, which will be about 10 minutes long, called *Making and Doing*. This is what I will make in front of the audience. It has to do with allowing people to see a movement vocabulary, which is one way people see and apprehend movement. And then there's an introduction of thought, text if you will, which is coming out of what I am doing with my body.

And my body is the body of a 63-almost-64-year-old man who had knee problems 10 years ago or so. So that body that was always moving like an athlete now has to be very careful about how the foot is placed, and the level changes don't happen so readily. I have to be very strategic about gravity. I was a great leaper, a great jumper. I don't leap and jump. But the power of gesture, and gesture infused with feeling and thought, is something that I have access to and am diving back into after a hiatus of some years directing my company as opposed to being on the stage.

So that's what will be happening at APAP. People will see a demonstration of a middle-aged man with a reputation - good or bad. People have a lot of ideas about him. That's what it means to be a signifier. And he's going to be laying his process open, and he's going to be making and doing in front of them. I think the lure about it is culturally a kind of truthfulness, an adventuresomeness, as you, the spectator, are allowed to put the pieces together and make what you will. **IFA**

**Laura Collins-Hughes** is an arts journalist in New York. She writes regularly about theater for *The New York Times* and books for *The Boston Globe*.



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Mucca Pazza\*  
Olga Vocal Ensemble\*  
Rani Arbo & daisy mayhem  
Turtle Island Quartet

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*Judgment at Nuremberg*: Mann  
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Reduced Shakespeare Company  
Walnut Street Theatre-  
*Last of the Red Hot Lovers*: Simon

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Danú- *A Christmas Gathering*  
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*Everybody's Hero: The Jackie Robinson Story*  
Red Grammer

Cyrus Chestnut appears in collaboration with AMI Artists.

\*New to Baylin Artists Management

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Cirk La Putyka - *Slapstick Sonata* - Pavel Kolsky,  
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9:40—10:05pm

Sunday, 1/17: Trianon Ballroom  
7:45—8:10pm

### PIANO MEN

Saturday, 1/16: Sutton Center  
9:25—9:40pm

Sunday, 1/17: Sutton Center  
10:45—11:00pm



### THE DOO-WAH RIDERS



Friday, 1/15: Mercury Ballroom  
8:20—8:45pm

Saturday, 1/16: Mercury Ballroom  
8:45—9:10pm

Sunday, 1/17: Trianon Ballroom  
8:20-8:45pm

### HOTEL CALIFORNIA

Sunday, 1/17: Morgan Suite  
9:00—9:20pm  
10:00—10:20pm  
11:00—11:20pm

Sunday, 1/17: Sutton Center  
10:25—10:40pm



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# MANDY GONZALEZ



Her Elphaba was "Wicked" good, her Princess Amneris was the showpiece of "Aida" and her Nina in "In the Heights" clinched a Drama Desk Award.

Most recently, you can find her working at The White House on the CBS breakout hit "Madame Secretary".

In short, **Mandy Gonzalez** has astonished both Broadway and television audiences along the way.

Now she adds Chanteuse to her resume.

In her new show expect hit tunes like "Total Eclipse of the Heart," "Breathe" (and, yes, "Defying Gravity") as well as songs from Elvis to Aretha. No wonder Broadway.com called her performance "one of the best shows we've seen yet."

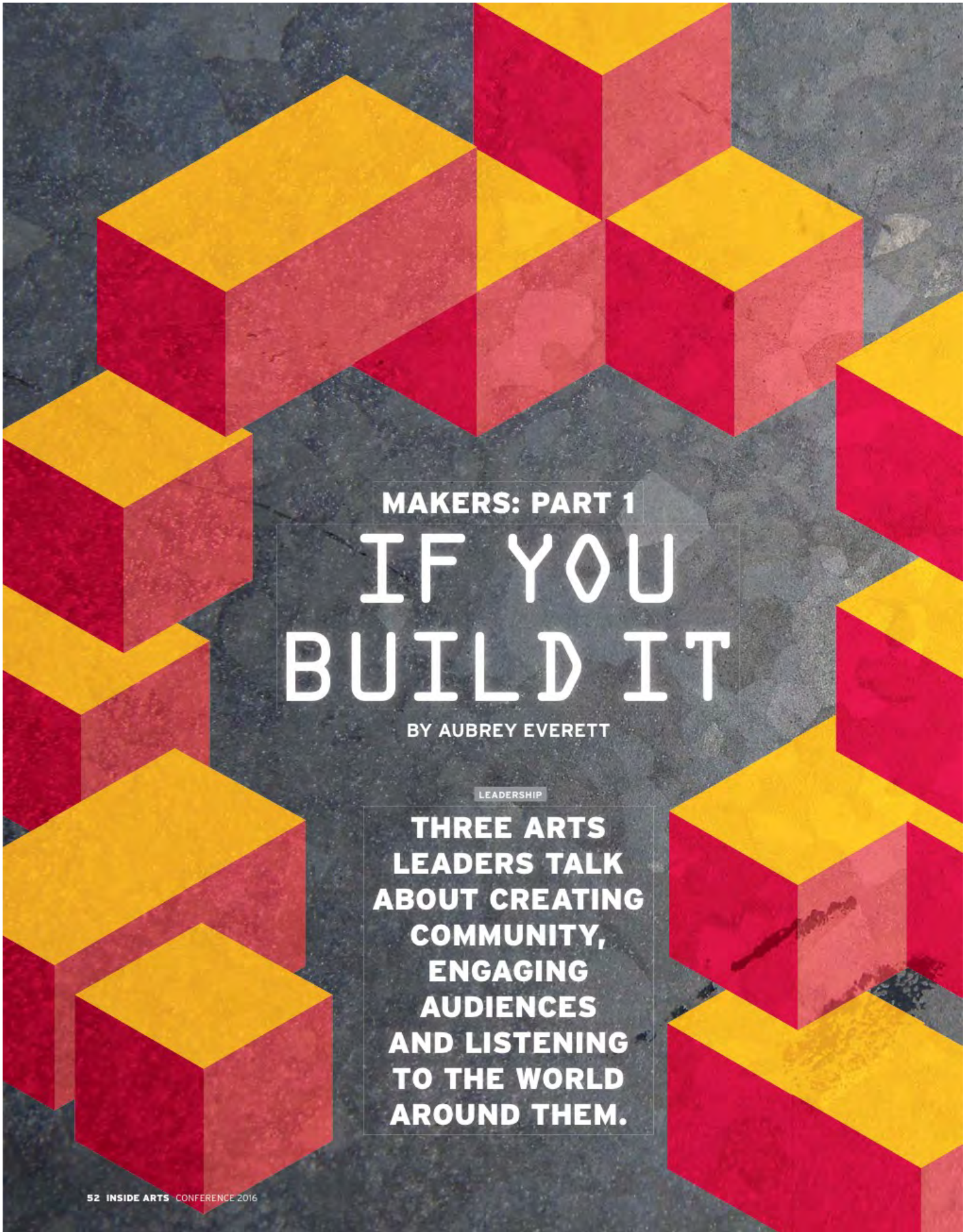


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**MAKERS: PART 1**


# IF YOU BUILD IT

BY AUBREY EVERETT

LEADERSHIP

**THREE ARTS LEADERS TALK ABOUT CREATING COMMUNITY, ENGAGING AUDIENCES AND LISTENING TO THE WORLD AROUND THEM.**





Many artists are good at developing community and drawing people to their craft. For them, the concept of an art “maker” extends beyond the individual people who create the art and encompasses the audience and wider group of spectators who consume and engage with the work. Three APAP members spoke about their experiences working with artists and building community around the making of art. →





**"The best have both a generosity of spirit and an ability to be true to their art, caring about humanity beyond themselves."**

Pamela Green

Pamela Green is president and founder of PMG Arts Management, which provides booking, management and consulting services to performing artists, companies and organizations throughout the country. Alicia Adams serves as vice president of international programming and dance at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. Sydney Skybetter is a choreographer, curator and facilitator.

**What character traits do you tend to see in people who make art?**

**PAMELA GREEN:** Passion and focus. The best have both a generosity of spirit and an ability to be true to their art, caring about humanity beyond themselves.

**ALICIA ADAMS:** People who make art are curious, adventurous, risk-takers, thinkers and activists.

**SYDNEY SKYBETTER:** We live in a fascinating historical moment. Creative tools that used to only be accessible to artists and media professionals are now in our pockets 18 hours a day.

The nature of art and artists changes because the technology scaffolding artistic production and artistic careers is iterative. Artists and the hoi polloi have more in common now; our audiences feel more empowered, more creative





and, not coincidentally, more artistic. “Artist” is more a self-nominated title than a socially constructed one.

**How do you get audience members/ spectators to think of themselves as makers?**

**GREEN:** Being inclusive in what you offer in terms of outreach – not necessarily identifying “levels” but having classes and workshops be open. Also by approaching audiences as if they have some knowledge or possible training in the arts versus assuming they don’t. Even asking them ahead of time or allowing them to share that information in some way. Speaking *to* them, not *at* them.

**ADAMS:** By participating in some aspect of the creative process. For example, we are working with Dublin’s Fishamble Theater on a production called the *Tiny Plays*, which were solicited from the general public. The plays are about their lives and are no longer than five minutes with three characters. There are tutorials online about how to write a play, and the company selects which ones to include.

**SKYBETTER:** Audiences have always co-created with artists, and spectatorship has been, traditionally, a prerequisite of the creative act. Audiences and spectators of live experiences are already enmeshed within a vast lattice of content and creativity. Now their updates, posts, tweets and captured images cast an exponentially wider aura for



**“People who make art are curious, adventurous, risk-takers, thinkers and activists.”**

Alicia Adams



**“Audiences have always co-created with artists, and spectatorship has been, traditionally, a prerequisite of the creative act.”**

Sydney Skybetter



performance online than ever existed in real time. This is all to say that I think audiences and spectators already are – or at least act like – makers. The question is: How can we as artists, managers, curators and producers galvanize the existing maker energy of our audiences? They’re already there. We need to catch up.

**What deliberate steps did you take to make community in your performing arts work?**

**GREEN:** We try to go beyond the “usual suspects” in offering our outreach: open level classes, non-arts related

community intersections, having artists speak to non-arts related classes, invitations for artists to actually dance in works with our company. Tackling subjects like art and spirituality or art and racial issues directly.

**ADAMS:** We just did a project with skateboarders called “Finding A Line.” We worked with various local skateboarding communities to build the “skate bowl” and tried it out in the community for a few weeks before bringing it to the Kennedy Center for open skate sessions. Graffiti artists painted the bowl and the area to create an authentic skate environment. It was

very successful and made new friends for the Kennedy Center, since most attendees had not visited before.

**SKYBETTER:** There are people who, for various reasons, discover and follow my work, and I go to great lengths to encourage that. I tend to think less about “fans” or “audiences” and more in terms of finding folks who are, like me, invested in certain questions of politics, equity, technology and the future. Community is my means, not an end.

**Aubrey Everett** is a writer and editor in the Boston area.







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## HOW DO YOU CREATE A VIBRANT PERFORMING ARTS WORLD?

The notion of “making” goes back as far as human history. Make fire. Make the wheel. Make the images at Lascaux. Make dances to celebrate the season. Making is at the heart of every step that we, as leaders in the arts industry, take. The “make art” list is expressive, ambitious and limitless. For APAP|NYC, the theme MAKERS captures the spirit of four components in our field – and within each segment, you can see the expressive, ambitious and limitless nature: Make art. Make a difference. Make decisions. Make money.

Each of these ideas will be central to the discussions at APAP|NYC plenary sessions and meetings. As one of the producers of the conference, I work closely with the artists whose stories inspire us. I also work closely with Scott Stoner, vice president of programs and resources. Stoner is, in his own right, a maker of events and of art. I asked him to tell me more about his own relationship with making.

### FROM SCOTT STONER

Although my career arc has been primarily devoted to education and professional development focused on the performing arts, I have always had an affinity for drawing, painting and multimedia work in the visual arts. I cannot remember a time in my life when, regardless of how busy I was with school, work and family obligations, I did not have an art-based “project” going on.

I feel that I am a “maker” at my core – making costumes and decorations for haunted houses, parades and parties when I was a kid, designing the pages for our high school yearbook, drawing pictures of shoes for a shoe store to advertise in the town newspaper while in college, rendering designs for the renovation of homes I have purchased, in addition to creating

stained glass windows for my current home.

With a graduate degree in mental health sciences for art therapy, I know that the process of making is indeed therapeutic. Immediately following 9/11, I knew that I needed to and did create a multimedia piece in response to those tragic events.

When I was on a teaching and research fellowship at Penn State years ago, I showed my students the powerful animated film *Why Man Creates*. It is about the instinct, the creative spark that we are all born with to be a maker. You can see it in every child, but it is too often extinguished or repressed by adults who have forgotten about the need to nurture and protect their own creative spirit.

Fortunately, I managed to retain my instinctual need to create, to make. And I expect that is also what has compelled me to stay in the arts presenting field for so many years: the opportunity to help colleagues bring live performance to audiences that just might re-ignite that creative spark. It is why this year’s APAP|NYC theme speaks to me in a very personal way.



As an art maker, Scott Stoner creates stained glass windows among other visual art pieces.

Alicia Anstead is the editor of *Inside Arts* and a producer for APAP|NYC. She also is co-founder and editor-in-chief of the Harvard Arts Blog.





## APAP ARTIST SHOWCASES

**New York Hilton Midtown  
New York Suite - 4th Floor & Sutton Center - 2nd Floor**



### HEIDI BREYER

*entered in five categories for the 2016 Grammy nominations*

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**Sunday, January 17, 9:00 p.m.**

Contemporary Instrumental

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### TODD MOSBY/ NEW HORIZON

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**Sunday, January 17, 8:30 p.m.**

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### BRYAN AND LOLA

**Saturday, January 16, 10:30 p.m. (New York Suite)**

American Jazz & Pop

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### JEFF OSTER

*entered in two categories for the 2016 Grammy nominations*

**Friday, January 15, 10:10 p.m. (Sutton Center)**

**Saturday, January 16, 8:45 p.m. and 11:55 p.m.**

**Saturday, January 16, 11:55 p.m.**

**Sunday, January 17, 3:45 p.m.**

Jazz, New Age, Ambient Funk

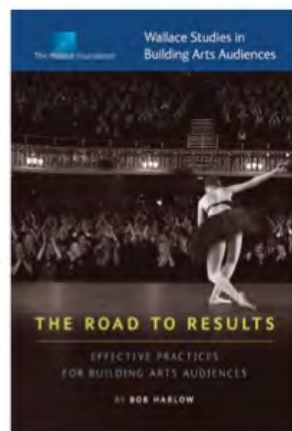
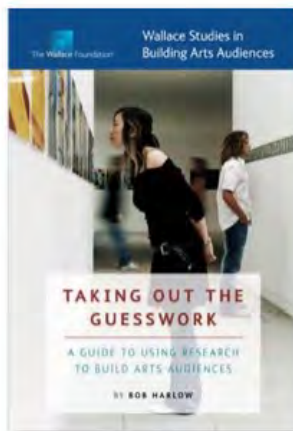
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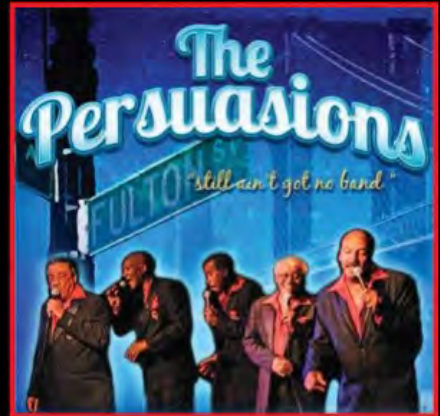
Based on case studies of 10 arts organizations that undertook audience-building projects as part of the Wallace Excellence Awards initiative, this guide and infographic pinpoint nine practices that successful efforts had in common.



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## The 2016 Pecha Kucha-style Experience

# THE BIGGER EXPERIENCE

Get ready for a stellar lineup of art makers during the annual rapid-fire pecha kucha session at APAP|NYC.

BY SUSAN CLOTFELTER

What is art, after all? Does it live in a song, in a rhyme, in a dance, on a plate? What is behind our irrepressible craving to create, see, hear, experience something completely new?

APAP|NYC attendees who arrive at the annual pecha kucha-style session – always one of the best-attended events at the conference – will help create the answers live on January 16 at the Grand Ballroom in the New York Hilton Midtown.

Five world-class, interdisciplinary performers are on deck. And moderator Liz Lerman expects something unique and unpredictable to occur

“Someone once told me, ‘Liz, you love beautiful chaos,’ and it’s true. I love structuring chaos,” said Lerman, choreographer, MacArthur “genius” grantee and creative-process guru.

The official pecha kucha format requires the presentation of 20 slides, 20 seconds each, for a total

of 6 minutes and 40 seconds. APAP participants sometimes break those rules with video and other means of storytelling, but they always stay within the time frame. Either way, the format pushes each artist to focus and edit ruthlessly while forging serendipitous connections between the audience and what happens on stage. It’s fast, lively, improvisational, startling – and each one is unique.

LIZ LERMAN



62 INSIDE ARTS CONFERENCE 2016

JOHN MICHAEL SCHERT



JESSICA CARE MOORE





**Pecha kucha means "chit chat" in Japanese, and in its purest form is 20 automated slides that last 20 seconds each. The format was launched by an architectural team in 2003 as an antidote to overly long presentations.**

This year's quintet includes Robert Farid Karimi, performance artist, food innovator and experience designer; Jessica Care Moore, poet, publisher and, recently, protestor in Ferguson, Missouri; African jazz vocalist and songwriter Somi; choreographer and videographer Michelle Ellsworth; and John Michael Schert, visiting artist and social entrepreneur at the University of Chicago's Booth School of Business.

They'll tap the energy of the crowd and the 2016 theme of MAKERS. But don't try to get them to give you more than a hint of what will happen.

"Oh, it'll definitely be interactive," says Karimi. "The audience will get a literal taste of what I do. Maybe they'll be eating paper. No, I'm kidding. But in one presentation, they're going to get a taste of everything."

Lerman, famous for building a method for artists and audiences to share feedback on emerging works, is in charge of helping audience and artists

come together to make meaning. She says she'll ask attendees to interact and respond – and then find a way to shape and focus that response.

There'll be a whole lot of sharing going on, she promises.

"I think these artists are going to be so strong, and so effective that it will be hard for people to respond," she says. "If I've got people already talking to each other and hearing their voices in the room, it will be easier."

A great deal of Lerman's current work deals with the creative process and the place of art in the world, but to get the

700 or so attendees at the plenary session to ponder those heady topics, she'll first ask them to think about themselves.

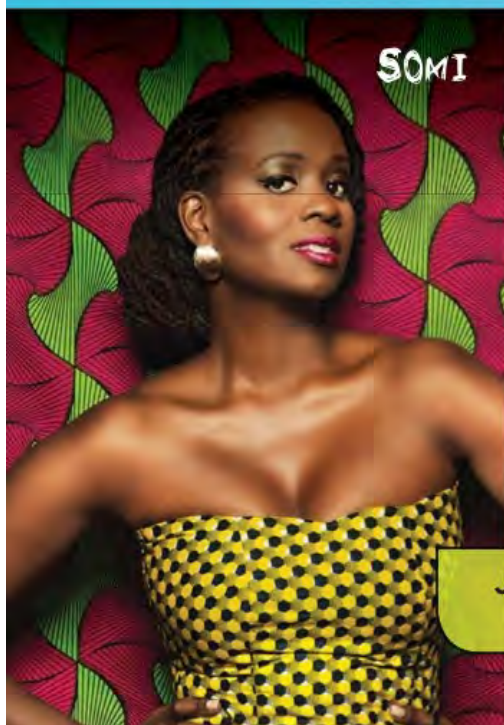
"I want them to ask themselves, 'Which part of you is listening?' Is it the mother, the dancer, the daughter? I want them to broaden their perspective in that moment, to allow them to have a bigger experience of art."

If she can pull that off, it might be a step toward winning a bigger place in the world for creative work – a change all five artists want to see happen.

"The arts are not a side dish," says Karimi. "We're not the appetizer; we're not the dessert. The arts are really part of the main meal. The people of the world really need art of all forms like they need to eat, breathe and walk."

**Susan Clotfelter** has written and edited for national newspapers, magazines and publishing companies about far-ranging subjects such as herb tea and the Denver Broncos' playing field.

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## The 2016 Participants

JOHN MICHAEL  
SCHERT



Dancer, visiting  
artist, social  
entrepreneur  
Booth School  
of Business at  
the University  
of Chicago

### What will you do at the pecha kucha?

Usually when I do presentations, I use my body, because I'm a dancer. The knowledge is all already embodied within me. I think I'll get creative about how I fashion the presentation, which is always about using the visual to support what's organically, authentically arriving out of the humans who are there. That's freeing and also incredibly nerve-wracking. I never know in what order it's going to come out. You don't know until you walk into the room.

### What's the difference you're trying to make in the arts world?

I serve as a translator. I'm taking everything I know from the nonprofit arts world to the for-profit business world. And I find that in the business world, we want to pay attention to the qualitative and the individualistic. I'm always asking myself: Am I representative of other artists, of other dancers? Their heightened level of ability to self-evaluation, ability to perceive, to listen to surroundings – those are very necessary skills in our workforce. If we can better place those artistic practices in other sectors, I think that in time, we'll very much raise the social validity of those sectors.

### What else would you like to change?

We artists have made a mistake in the past of defining our monetary value only in our products: the performance of a film, a painting, a play. Our process is much more valuable. So I'm looking at ways of stating its value.





**What will you do at the pecha kucha?**

I'm toying with the idea of bringing pianist Wendel Patrick on with me. He does a lot of interactive things with his voice. Whatever stories I will tell, he can take over the audience with me.

**What are some of the challenges for performing artists today?**

The older I've gotten, I've realized I'm more of a womanist voice. That's why I created Black Women Rock in Atlanta, because women weren't getting the deals in the music industry that they could. The industry itself was so limiting. So what I've done in my career is try to support other black artists and poets. Poetry is so important right now.

**What's coming up for you?**

I'm working on my first book of essays, and I'm really excited about that. The working title is *Literary Apartheid*, which stems from my work as a publisher trying to get black poetry shelved in the poetry section in bookstores.

Poet,  
performer,  
publisher

JESSICA  
CARE  
MOORE





**SOMI**

Jazz vocalist,  
songwriter,  
traveler

66 INSIDE ARTS CONFERENCE 2016

**What are you working on now?**

I'm touring with my current record, *The Lagos Music Salon*, and I'm now evolving it into a more multidimensional performance. My time in Nigeria was so rich, it doesn't do it justice. So this will be an all-acoustic jazz interpretation of that work, juxtaposed with poetry from my travel journal. I'm also working on a jazz opera about Miriam Makeba. I hope to travel to South Africa next year to dig deeper into her life and the music she grew up with.

**What do arts presenters most need to know now?**

I think talking about how we arrive at our creative process as artists offers greater depth for programming, for ideas, for the collaboration that has to take place between artist and presenter.

**What do you love about being onstage?**

Performing offers me a certain type of freedom. If I can re-imagine who the African woman of 2016 is, and what a modern African city is like in 2016, then that's wonderful. What I love, what I continue to grow into in my performance, is what the work does to me. You have the opportunity to ask people not only to think but to frame something in beauty. I'm always into beauty and truth-telling.





**MICHELLE  
ELLSWORTH**

**Dancer,  
choreographer,  
video artist**

**Your work is so intensely conceptual. What will you do in New York – video, dance, jokes, song, a combo?**

I feel like my work is accidentally conceptual and funny. I have no loyalty to either of those tenets, and yet I know the work inescapably lists in their direction. I always think that I am making sad work. So, no jokes, but yes to some form of combo platter.

**Good Lord, you talk fast. How fast can you talk?**

Speed is one of my performance coping protocols. I'm trying to create a certain level of density, so I don't remember that I'm performing. But I do try to remain intelligible (although lately I've been more interested in language for its rhythm than its words). I don't think I'm even close to going as fast as I could.

**What's the difference you want your art to make in the world?**

I hope my work will evoke a pause or shift or a momentary re-evaluation of what we are doing as humans on the planet. I look for cracks or portals in our party-line existence. I'm not trying to smooth things over, but rather to enter the seams between, or the holes in, our logic and experience.





## ROBERT FARID KARIMI

Playwright,  
poet,  
experience  
creator, food  
innovator

### What are you eating?

Peanuts are in my car right now. I always have to have really crunchy, Virginia blistered peanuts, wherever I go. The other thing I love to have wherever I drive is salt-and-pepper chips. But the food I can't live without is an onion ring. I loves me some onion rings. And mixta, which is a Guatemalan hot sauce with cabbage, mustard and cheese. I can also kill a lot of edamame.

### What change do you want to make in the world?

I would love the Peoples Cook Project to eradicate Type 2 diabetes. I would love my other shows to eradicate all the isms – racism, xenophobia. I really feel like my work is about countering the culture of fear that surrounds much of our world today and to spark people to find their fearlessness.

### What's the biggest challenge facing performing arts today?

Artists are creatures of abundance, and that is at odds with cultures of scarcity. We need long-term relationships, long-term structures and long-term commitments to artists worldwide, because we do serve a vital function, and the world needs to see us as vital.



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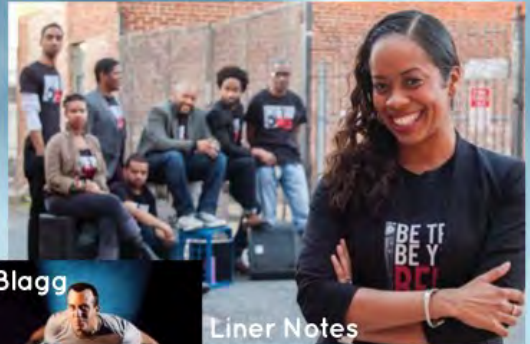
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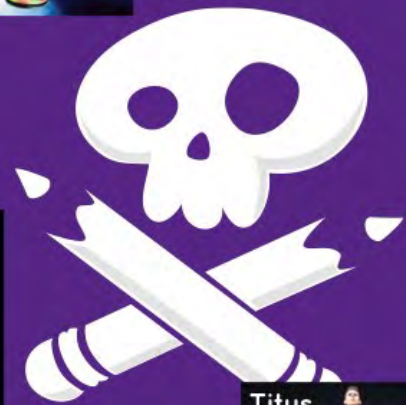
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Artists and presenters champion international exchanges as a way to build relationships and world empathy.

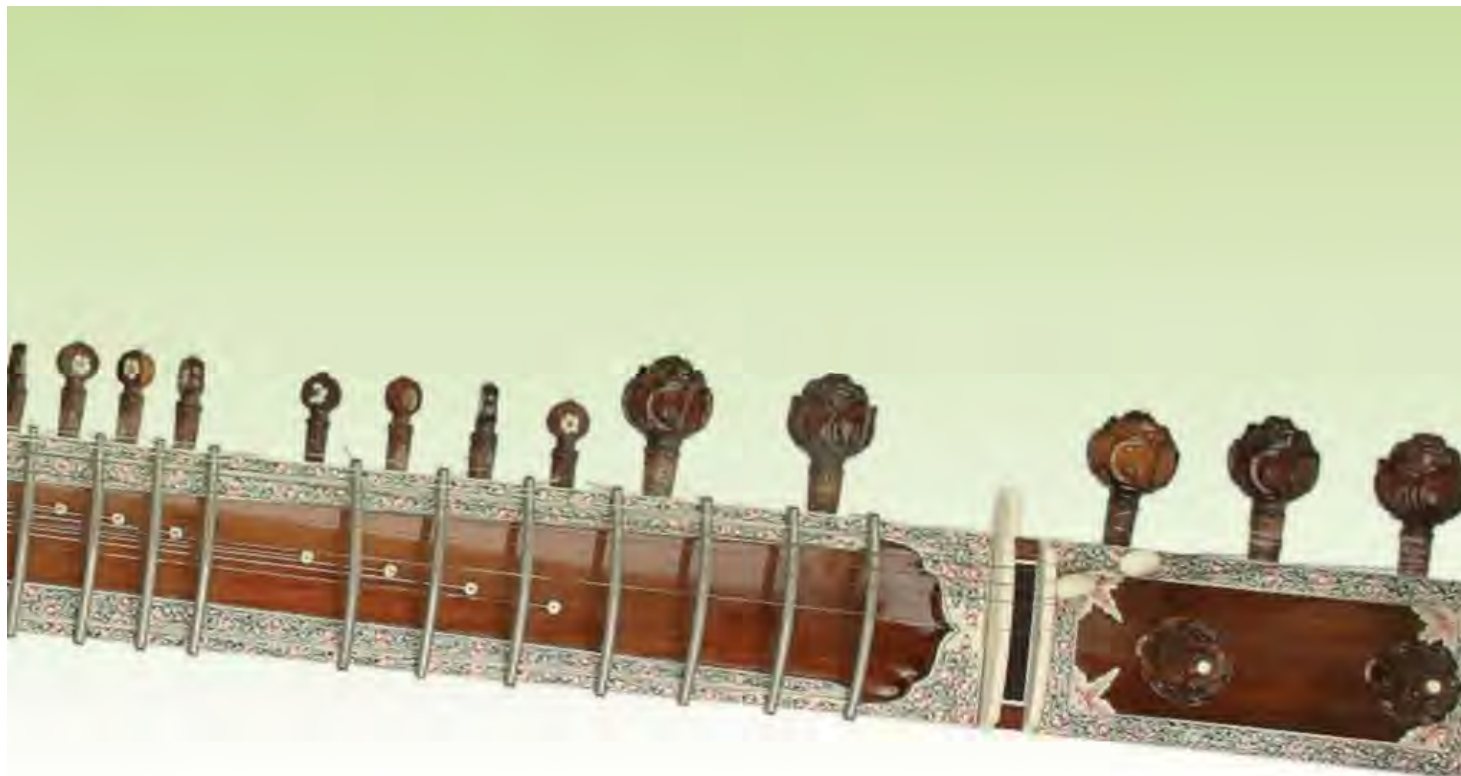
INTERNATIONAL

# WIDER WORLD

BY JAKE STEPANSKY







The Chinese businessmen – high-ranking CEOs visiting the U.S. to engage with and explore American business practices – had just heard from the warm-up acts: renowned economist Jeffrey Sachs and eminent businessman-philanthropist George Soros. Tough acts to follow, for sure – but not for Rachel Cooper, the director of Global Performing Arts and Special Cultural Initiatives at the Asia Society.

“Business is not just about the contract,” she said. “It’s about relationships. After you sign on the dotted line, what do you talk to people about? How do you connect? How do you share something about your culture with the Americans you’re working with? How do you pique curiosity?”

The businessmen were hooked, and with good reason. In view of technological advances and cultural imperatives, the need for international cross-cultural arts exchange has become all the more pressing.

“There is no time in the history of this planet that we have been more

interdependent,” says Cooper, whose work brings her into contact with art makers and arts presenters from a wide swath of backgrounds and nationalities. Above all, Cooper has retained a fundamentally humanistic perspective on the importance of international arts and artist exchange: “In some ways, we are in danger through technology of thinking we know who the rest of the world is, and in fact it is that direct experience of another art form, of another artist, of another person that has the most potential to create positive synergies, empathy, imagination and real relationships.”

The artists and arts presenters expressed unanimous belief that interested energy for international cultural exchange has and does continue to grow both domestically and abroad. At Center Stage, an initiative of the U.S. Department of State Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs that seeks to promote citizen diplomacy through the arts, director Lisa Booth of Lisa Booth Management and her team

handcraft events that cross cultural lines, drawing on both the abilities of the artists and the needs and interests of the presenters.

“The idea is that citizens from abroad – in this case, artists – are coming to the U.S. and are experiencing Americans as we really are, and not as we are portrayed in the media or in films or by the press back home, so that they can have direct experience with American culture and can get a sense of the breadth and depth of who we are as Americans,” Booth says. “Simultaneously it’s an opportunity for Americans – particularly Americans who don’t travel internationally – to have a meaningful dialogue and exchange with people from other countries. I think that then they’re going to go back to their home countries and speak about the United States very differently than, perhaps, how they did when they first came over.”

Booth says that the response from audiences has been overwhelmingly positive and receptive, a sentiment echoed by Michael Orlove, director of





Artist Communities, Presenting and Multidisciplinary Works and coordinator of International Activities at the National Endowment for the Arts. Orlove recently attended the Culture & Conflict Summit convened in September 2014 by the British Council.

“I came into it with little knowledge of what was happening on the international stage,” says Orlove, “but I was really moved, quite frankly, by the work that has been done and is being applied in all kinds of really difficult situations.”

Orlove’s main takeaway from the summit was plain and simple: “The arts have played an integral part of peace building and conflict resolution around the world.”

However, Orlove notes, facilitating international arts exchange comes with its fair share of challenges. Artists and arts presenters face innumerable questions and concerns: “How do people front the expense to legally bring someone here for a performance? Apply for a visa? Make sure all the visa paperwork is in place? Deal with taxation on artists that don’t have a social security number or a central withholding agreement?”

Rachel Cooper is familiar with similar community struggles. “The resources to support this work are more and more difficult to find,” she says. “There are real challenges all along this arts ecology, whether you’re talking about the artists needing the resources to be able to work, the presenters needing the ability to connect with the artists and fellow presenters of the world, the managers working

hard to facilitate this, the funders trying to figure out how to have a real impact with limited funds, the writers in the press helping to get the word out and to reach communities in meaningful ways – all of these components are really important.”

Despite these challenges, international arts exchange has certainly flourished, especially recently. One cornerstone of this movement is the APAP Building Bridges: Campus Community Engagement grant program, which provides arts presenting groups with foundational financial assistance to pursue projects that re-examine and re-engage with Muslim societies around the world. Cooper describes the work of APAP as a “stellar, thoughtful and deep project; they’re galvanizing young people, they’re galvanizing faculty, and they’re as creative in the structure of the project as they are in the performances or arts that they present.”

Scott Stoner, vice-president of programs and resources at APAP, negotiated with the Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Arts and the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation to shape and fund the Building Bridges program. “We witnessed extraordinary moments during our site visits, especially when young people – college students and their peers from immigrant families in the community – came together to share stories, music and dance, which is ultimately creating a new Muslim American narrative,” says Stoner, who is working on a second round of grants. “These are also authentic examples of the transformative power of the arts to build cohesiveness in our communities.”

Aar Maanta, a Somali British singer/songwriter, composer and music producer, traveled to Minneapolis, considered the largest Somali population outside of Africa, as part of the Building



Bridges program. He cherished the “opportunity to meet my fans and let them experience my work in person, but also to introduce my work to the wider world and bring the live element – which is rarity in Somali music – to The Somali Diaspora.”

Over the years, the global arts community has seen great diversification of the voices present in the conversation surrounding cultural exchange. The work engendered by Building Bridges and other programs has an impact that is at once immensely far-reaching and ecstatically community-driven. David Baile, CEO of the International Society for the Performing Arts, understands their tremendous importance.

“At the risk of sounding trite, every issue we deal with today is a global issue,” says Baile. “As a field, for us not to look globally is really not taking into account the factors that are going to impact your work today and in the future.”

To that end, we asked the international artists and arts presenters in this discussion to share a story or example that for them exemplified the importance of international arts exchange. Their comments follow.

---

#### AAR MAANTA

Singer, songwriter, instrumentalist, producer

#### Building Bridges Artist

“In January 2012, Robert Simonds, the director of The Cedar Cultural Center, got in touch because they were having a problem finding a Somali artist who performs live. It was the first time myself and members of my multinational band performed in the US. The experience was amazing; initially the audience was predominately Somali, and audience members were amazed not only by the diversity of my band but also by the fact that they were singing and performing Somali songs with me. For the younger members of our audience, it was the first time that most of them had seen a live performance of Somali music. For the older generation, it brought back memories of peaceful and tolerant times before the Somali civil war. During our second visit in Spring 2015, we had a lot more diverse audiences – partly due to the workshops we did, and partly because our Somali audiences brought their non-Somali friends.”

---

#### DAVID BAILE

CEO, International Society of the Performing Arts

“The key theme of the Malmo/Copenhagen Congress was the role that arts play in larger society on a number of levels: politically, socially, from an entertainment and cultural awareness perspective and from an advocacy perspective. The congress kicked off with a really powerful keynote address by one of the Swedish ministers. Sweden, to the best of my knowledge, is the only nation in the world that pairs together portfolios of culture and democracy, and it makes a really powerful statement about the role that arts and free speech do play in democracy. Also, Sweden has always been a socialistic, social-welfare state, so it’s also interesting to see the role the arts play there in terms of dealing with lots of the social issues. And they’re dealing with a lot of issues there that many European countries are – probably most notably and most poignant right now is immigration and refugees – and they’re really trying to use the arts in terms of bridging those communities with the existing communities there in really interesting ways.”



CONFERENCE 2016 **INSIDE ARTS 75**



**RACHEL COOPER**  
 Asia Society  
 Director, Global Performing Arts and  
 Special Cultural Initiatives

“Four years ago, we put on a concert in Union Square with a major artist from Pakistan named Abida Parveen; about 5,000 people attended. About a month later, there were major floods in Pakistan, and I got an email out of the blue from somebody who said, ‘I just want you to know that I went to the concert in Union Square, and even though I have no emotional feeling about Pakistan whatsoever – I know Indian artists and Indian musicians, but I know nothing about

Pakistan – and when that flood hit, I thought about those musicians I had experienced that had so deeply moved

me, and I donated \$500 to flood relief. I just wanted you to know that the reason I did that was after that concert I had a connection to Pakistan. It had moved me and I felt like I had an obligation, and it surprised me as much as anything.’ That to me was pretty powerful... you can think in big terms, but sometimes it’s those individual stories where someone’s taken the time to say to you ‘this changed my life’ that for me are really important. When you talk about people-to-people, you are trying to reach communities, but communities are made up of individuals, and if it changes how people feel about relationships and understanding people that may be different than they are.”



Cyro Baptista



Paul Dresher



Donal Fox



Merima Kljuco



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Richter Uzur Duo



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Founder, Lisa Booth Management Inc.

"I hesitate to generalize, because the term international artists is so hugely broad, but...one of the things that the artists that come here enjoy the most is when they get opportunities, particularly if they're musicians, to jam with other musicians, to go into a recording studio and try to create something and learn how it's done here. I think you always learn something when you're playing with others, so for their own artistic development, opportunities to engage with American art and artists is very important for both sides. Artists generally also have a very forward-looking vision, and that's what makes them particularly suited for cultural exchange. They can be very open-minded, they tend to be very generous."

**MICHAEL ORLOVE**

National Endowment for the Arts

Director of Artist Communities and Presenting

"We're on the 33rd anniversary this year of the National Heritage Fellowships (the nation's highest award given to the folk and traditional art). If you look at the past hundreds of artists given this distinction, we are honoring people for their contribution to passing on tradition, whether it's in music, dance, craft – and I'd guess that half are immigrants from other countries and cultures. We as a culture have cherished for many years the contributions that international artists have made to our country. This year alone is a perfect example – three of our heritage winners: oud player Rahim AlHaj, a political refugee from Iraq; Yary Livan, a master ceramicist

from Cambodia who survived the Khmer Rouge genocide; and Sidonka Wadina, a master weaver and egg decorator, third generation in the U.S., but originally from Slovakia. Here are three very different examples, and yet all of them are getting a prestigious award from the president. At the federal level, we feel very strongly about honoring our artists – to steal a phrase from Lyndon B. Johnson, we are a "nation of nations", and whether it's craft, food, dance – there is so much out in this country that I think underscores our love for the international." [7]

Jake Stepanyk is freelance writer based in the Boston area. He attends Harvard University, where he blogs for the Office for the Arts.

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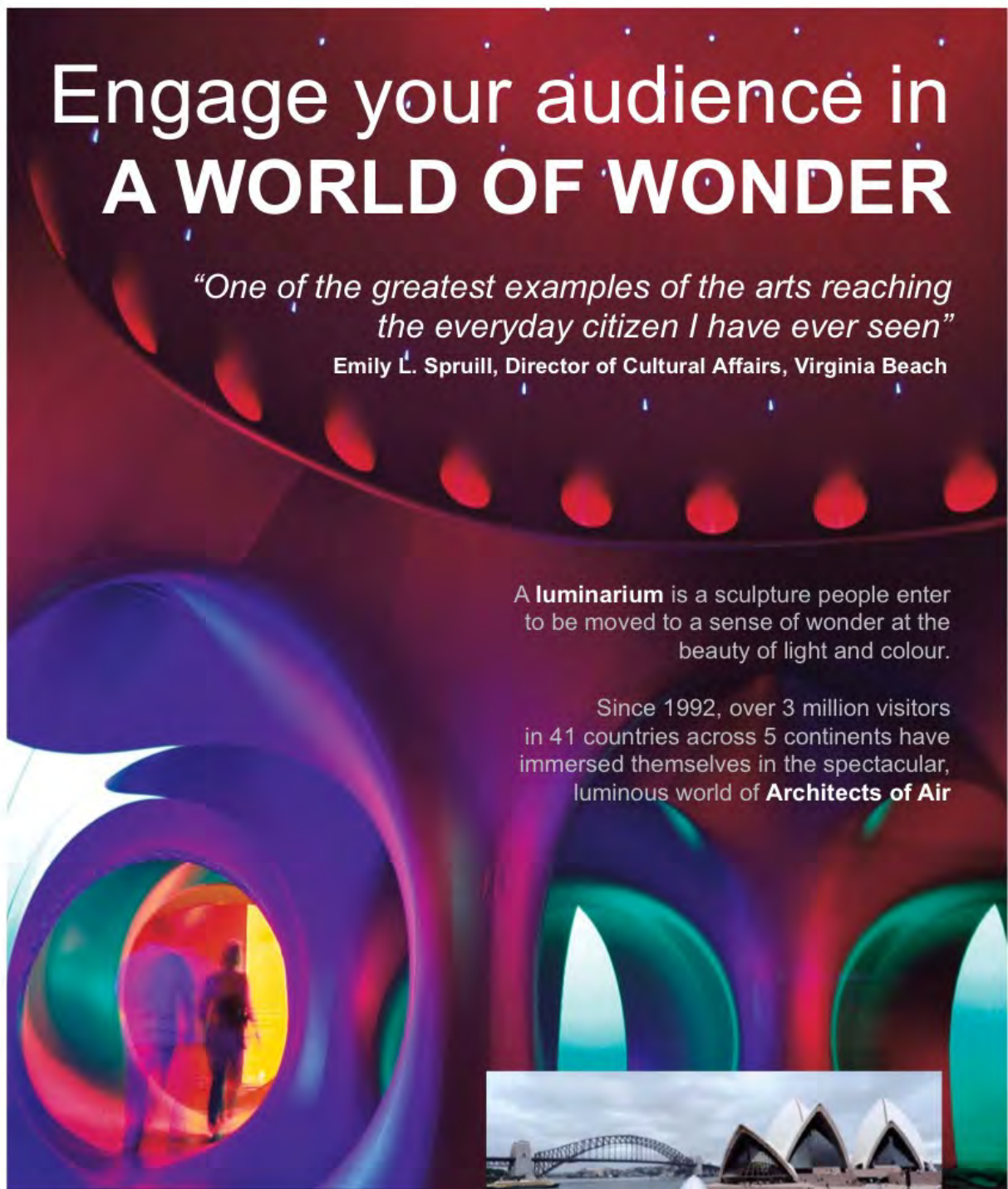
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Rita Moreno talks about making her way to the arts and a career. She will be the closing plenary speaker at APAP|NYC.



# Once Again

BY OLIVIA M. MUNK







**I**t's not every day that Rita Moreno asks if she can sing to you. In Spanish. In a newly translated version of Stephen Sondheim's iconic "Somewhere" that she has recorded for her album *Una Vez Mas*.

Then again, Rita Moreno has never been associated with the quotidian. The prolific performer is one of 12 artists to have won an Emmy, Grammy, Oscar and Tony (an "EGOT"). She has sung and danced her way into our hearts through movies, musicals on Broadway and the West End, TV, a one-woman show and now an album, for the better part of six decades. In December, the month she turns 84, she will be one of six recipients of the Kennedy Center Honors, and in January, she will be the closing





keynote speaker on January 19 at APAP|NYC 2016.

“Can I sing a tiny bit of it for you?” she asks me over the phone from her hotel room in Chicago, where she is visiting to present at the second annual Fifth Star Awards.

She croons a few bars of the song. “I think it’s more soulful,” she says, “and it has everything to do with the romance of the Spanish language.” The original Broadway production of *West Side Story*, she tells me, featured a dream ballet, during which the song took place in the wings. However, when the production went on tour, the ballet, and thus the song, were cut. This meant that when the musical was translated for Spanish audiences in recent years, she adds, “‘Somewhere’ was *nowhere* to be seen.” Her album’s producer, Emilio Estefan, translated the song for Moreno and *Una Vez Mas*.

Finding the soul and romance of performing has always come naturally to Moreno. Her interest in dancing and acting began in a childhood in both Puerto Rico and the Bronx. Her family noticed she had an attention-grabbing talent for dance. And Moreno always knew she was destined to pursue entertainment as a career. “Some people are wired a certain way,” she tells me, “and that’s how I’ve been all my life.”

Moreno was clearly right to follow her instincts and certainly has the body of work (and subsequent awards) to prove it. APAP|NYC attendees will hear Moreno’s personal perspective on the arts during the closing plenary session. What follows are edited excerpts from



my conversation with Moreno. Hearing her sing, however, is something you’ll want to experience for yourself.

**Were there any other careers you considered pursuing besides the performing arts?**

Never. It never occurred to me to do anything else, to be anything else. I’m always so amazed when I ask young people what they’d like to do in life, and a surprising amount of them say, “I don’t know yet.” I look at them like they’re

aliens – *You don’t know?* That astonishes me. I don’t think there’s anything wrong with it, but it’s just that I am, and have always been, so different from that.

**Looking back on your own path to becoming a successful artist, do you think other performers can become successful via the same path you took? Or do you think the industry has changed?**

I was in Hollywood at a time when it was very inconvenient for Hollywood



**“It never occurred to me to do anything else, to be anything else.”**

to take on Hispanic young actors and actresses, or black young actors and actresses. It was a whole other thing then. Now, the door is much more open. It's not completely open, but boy, what a difference. I stand in envy sometimes and say: *Oh, man. I wish I could have had those opportunities in my time.*

**If there were a role you could play today, what would it be?**

It is a role that I already did in London, on the stage, but it would be marvelous to do it again. Norma Desmond in *Sunset Boulevard*. Bigger than life!

**What is the difference for you in performing a role on the stage and a role in film? Do you approach them differently?**

No, you absolutely deal with the role the same way. You try to find out the background of the character, ways that are perhaps interesting or unique as to how she deals with situations, good or bad. It's all the same.

**What does it mean to you to be one of 12 people who have won an EGOT?**

That's pretty fantastic, and being Latina makes it really special. Now I've reached a pinnacle I never dreamed I could reach. For the Kennedy Center Honors, which will







happen in December. I'm in some really fast company. George Lucas is also being honored, Carole King, the Eagles, the fabulous black actress Cicely Tyson, the conductor Seiji Ozawa, and myself, so I'm thrilled. I just got word that Narciso Rodriguez is doing my gown for the Kennedy

Honors. I'm so excited. Mostly, I had asked him if he would be interested in designing the costume because he's Puerto Rican. One way or the other, I was going to have someone Latino design a gown for me for that very, very special occasion.

**You've performed at venues all over the world. What are the best qualities for arts presenters to have to take care of the artists they program?**

Surely, having been successful at what they do, whatever that particular success means in their particular profession. But I think it's also having the ability to relate to an audience – that's so important. You would be amazed at how many actors, for instance, are terrible at that. It's just awful communicating with people on a more personal basis. It's just a disaster. They feel awkward, they're not comfortable, they are comfortable playing a character in a vehicle.

**The theme of the conference is MAKERS – people who make art, make audiences, and make artists. How do you think you make an audience?**

You know, that's something that I think is almost impossible to describe. For one thing, I trust audiences. I think that's what happens when actors try to do this and can't: They don't trust presenting themselves in that kind of naked way to an audience. It makes them really anxious. I have no anxiety whatsoever performing in front of people because I know I'm going to make them laugh and make them feel emotions when I perform. That's what I do, and it's what I do best. If I can make people laugh, then I am really thrilled. I just love making people laugh. But also, if I can bring emotions to them, let's say, in a very sad ballad. We've all been to those



places personally, and if you can bring that to a song, in my case, I know the audience is going to feel the same way.

**It sounds like you've never experienced stage fright.**

I have tons of stage fright. When I was doing my one-woman show at the Berkeley Repertory Theater, I had a wonderful show about my life called *Life Without Makeup*. And I have to tell you, for the first preview and opening night, I was so nervous. I'm the kind of person who gets icy, wet, cold hands. My knees literally knock. They really knock. This was brand new. I hadn't done this hundreds of thousands of times in my life.

I remember questioning my sanity and thinking, "What the hell do you think you're doing? You're too old for this!" Meaning, you're too old to be this unhappy and nervous and scared. I get horrible stage fright. But the difference is that I go on anyway, because you have to. I remember reading about Barbra Streisand and her case of nerves. She apparently has a really difficult time performing in front of people. It's a horrible feeling going on, feeling like you might fail, like you might disappoint. It's really about seeking perfection. Stage fright is really about: What if they don't like me? What if this thing doesn't work out? What if all my thoughts about what a great vehicle this would be for me turn out not to be just that at all? And it's all of these "what if's" that will absolutely run you down.

**But you're able to go on and forget about it?**

Once I go on, and the audience receives me warmly, the stage fright is gone.

**Was there ever a moment when you felt like the audience wasn't receiving you warmly?**

Of course. The world is not going to love you and what you're doing. Just because you think you're swell

doesn't mean everyone else is going to think you're swell. Yes, that happens, but I am able to attribute that to a different kind of audience. And there are audiences like that. There are audiences where, the moment you come out, you know – you know it's going to be a tough flog and that you're going to have to work to win them over. Not that you don't work anyway, but work in a different way – and that's hard. There are





**“Managers really have to care about their client, not look at their client like a moneymaking machine.”**



86 INSIDE ARTS CONFERENCE 2016

audiences that just don't applaud much. I remember one night, I did a performance, and the applause was really quite weak after each number. I thought: *Oh, God, I can't wait to get through with this.* But then people come backstage and say, "Oh, my God, you made me cry, you made me laugh, you're wonderful." So you can't always tell if an audience does not like you. Sometimes they're just low-key people. It's interesting how that communicates itself to everybody else in the audience. You may have some people in the audience who are very enthusiastic, but when they see that the rest of the audience is kind of low-key, they don't want to be noisy and disruptive. It's contagious. Crazy, huh?

**What's your advice about that?**

Don't let the audience guide what you're doing onstage. You do what you planned to do. Don't try to make it different. It's too late! You can't make something different simply because they're not as receptive as you'd hoped. It ain't gonna work. All it's going to do is confuse you.

**What do you think might be the best quality for an agent or a manager?**

Managers really have to care about their client, not look at their client like a moneymaking machine. I think





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**Jonatha Brooke**  
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 Gonzalo Bergara Quartet  
 Johnny Clegg Band  
 Mariachi Sol de Mexico  
**Niyaz featuring Azam Ali**  
 The Nile Project  
**Tomatito**  
 Vicente Amigo

### SPECIAL PROJECTS / COLLABORATIONS

**George Perris - "Picture This" in Concert**  
 Jonatha Brooke **"My Mother Has 4 Noses"**  
 Karla Bonoff and Jimmy Webb  
 Loudon Wainwright III **"Surviving Twin"**  
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**“Don’t let the audience guide what you’re doing onstage. You do what you planned to do. Don’t try to make it different. It’s too late!”**

they really have to have the ability to look way, way, way ahead. I think they really have to have the ability to encourage their client when things are bad and nobody is calling for their services. They really have to become a kind of parent. You don’t find that too often, frankly. I have a superb manager who really just takes care of everything. I went to Spain to present an award, and there was no mirror in the dressing room, not enough lights to put makeup on and nothing to hang my clothing on. My manager said, “Well, you can do one of two things” – because I was getting hysterical, as I am wont to do – “You can spend the afternoon carrying on like this, and getting really nervous and distracted, or you can leave it to me to find the mirror, find the lights, find the hook for the clothing. That’s my job.” I just stared at him like a 2-year-old, and I said, “OK.”

**He sounds like a great manager.**

He’s a wonderful manager, because he’s also a wonderful person. I am

infinitely lucky to have him in my life.

**This year, the APAP conference is taking place over the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday. I’ve been told you were present at his “I Have A Dream” speech.**


I was sitting no more than 10-12 feet away from him during the speech.

**What were you feeling at that moment?**

When Harry Belafonte, who was very close to Dr. King, decided that there should be a Hollywood contingent, he wanted Dr. King to know that there were people in film and in the arts who were absolutely and profoundly supportive of everything that he stood for. Harry invited a number of people – Sammy Davis Jr., Diahann Carroll, myself – a bunch of people from television, film and the stage. We were in a very privileged position because we were sitting on the area where the Lincoln Memorial is. That’s where he spoke from. There we were.

[Mahalia] Jackson actually sang to him, encouraging him to do the speech, done just previously at a church a few days before. “Tell them about your dream, Martin.” When he left his text, and went into that – I get goose bumps just thinking about it – it was astonishing. He just took off. He was like a rocket.

**How does that continue to resonate with you today?**

All of those words are so poignant and beautiful and human, and humanistic, that they will stay with me forever. I love that speech. We were so hot. It was a blazing hot day. No one had brought a hat, no one had even thought about that. I remember my scalp was so seriously sunburned, all of us were. I had my hands on my head because my scalp was burning up. It was the most extraordinary experience, and yes, I was there. Not only there, but really close to the source. It was thrilling. 

**Olivia Munk** is a senior at Harvard University.

Rita Moreno will appear at APAP|NYC 2016, courtesy of David Belenzon Management, Inc., Rhinelander Booth #400. Archival images of Rita Moreno are courtesy Judy Katz/Katz PR.



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## FAIR GROUND

STUDENT VOLUNTEERS

# FUTURE LEADERS

A veteran volunteer at APAP|NYC carries industry lessons with her as she heads toward graduation and her own career.

BY VERONICA MINGRONE

More than two years ago, I became involved with the Association of Performing Arts Presenters as a student volunteer. As I begin my senior year at the University of Florida, I find myself reflecting more about the outstanding experiences I have had in my college career. Volunteering at APAP|NYC always rises to the top of my list.

I first decided to volunteer at the suggestion of my internship supervisor, mentor, then-director of University of Florida Performing Arts and current APAP board chair Michael Blachly. Blachly's previous interns recommended I go because of the career development opportunities available at the conference. One of my career interests has always been to work in arts-related public relations, and I knew APAP would be a chance to network within the industry. I was able to do that and so much more.

In addition to serving on the student committee, I worked with Margaret Stevens, APAP director of executive affairs, in my two years of volunteering. I assisted with special



Veronica Mingrone and friends at APAP|NYC.

events throughout the conference, primarily doing coat check and registration. With each, I had the chance to interact with leading figures in the performing arts industry.

My networking experience extended to more than professionals; I was also able to network with my

peers, the other student volunteers, who, I am confident, will be the future leaders of our industry. After a few days working alongside other volunteers – who come from all over the country – I had made a group of friends with whom I still keep in touch a year or more later.

The students I met while volunteering and serving on the student committee are some of the brightest, hardest-working individuals I have had the pleasure to collaborate with. Seeing their post-graduate successes makes me excited about my own future.

This is my final year as a volunteer at APAP. I'll be working on the media desk with the APAP marketing and communications team. It will be sad for me to turn in my volunteer badge, but I'm happy, too, because I know my education and my volunteer experience have equipped me with the tools to participate in APAP and the larger arts administration world as a professional. 

**Veronica Mingrone** is a senior at the University of Florida.

For more information about opportunities for students at APAP|NYC, visit [students.apapnyc.org](http://students.apapnyc.org).



SPONSORED CONTENT

## PBS President Paula Kerger talks the arts

As America's largest stage for the arts, PBS and its member stations ensure that the worlds of music, theater, dance and art remain available to all Americans, many of whom might otherwise never have the opportunity to experience the arts. In the following interview, PBS president & CEO Paula Kerger discusses this commitment.

### Why do you feel so passionately about the arts?

The arts are woven into the very soul of this country. They inspire us and stretch our sense of what's possible. They break down barriers between people and cultures, and give people a chance to see the world from many different perspectives. Put simply, the arts are what make us human.

### Can art and television coexist?

I know from personal experience how television can be a window to the world. I grew up outside of Baltimore, and public media was how I first gained exposure to the arts. The first ballet I saw was on public television. *Masterpiece*, *Great Performances*, *Live From Lincoln Center* – they were part of my life before they became part of my job. Since I became president of PBS, I have placed a strong emphasis on the arts, because I believe that the arts are fundamental to our mission in public broadcasting. No matter

where you live, you have a front row seat to extraordinary theater, dance and music thanks to PBS and our member stations. Last year, we were able to offer nearly 600 hours of arts and cultural programming, which was watched by more than 110 million people.

### What is your favorite arts program on PBS?

That's like asking me to pick a favorite child! *American Masters* continues to set the standard for documentary film profiles. *Austin City Limits* has an incredible history of great musicianship. Of course there's also the fantastic *Great Performances* and *Live From Lincoln Center*. This year we've really been focused on celebrating music, in our Arts Fall Festival and across our schedule. As President Obama said at a taping for *In Performance at the White House*, "Our music in particular has always been an honest reflection of who we really are – a reflection of our successes and our shortcomings; of our diversity, our imagination, our restlessness; of our stubborn insistence on blending the old with the new, tradition with experimentation." The mission of APAP is to develop and support the arts, and PBS' mission very closely aligns with this mandate. I look forward to attending APAP|NYC 2016 where, together, we in the arts community will further this important work.







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ADO

LEGACY

# ENGAGED SERVICE

BY AARON DWORKIN

In the spirit of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, a fierce advocate for diversity asks if you are part of the silence or the action to support change

Join APAP in celebrating Martin Luther King, Jr.'s life and work at a special MLK Day acknowledgement at the Awards Luncheon on Monday, January 18 in the New York Hilton Grand Ballroom.



A survey by the League of American Orchestras found that only 2 percent of orchestra musicians were African American and 2.5 percent were Latino during the 2011-12 season.



“Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.” – Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

I was personally deeply influenced by many of the teachings of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The statement above is particularly revelatory to me because it illuminates the very purpose behind the message of my work in building the Sphinx Organization, which showcases young black and Latino classical musicians and promotes diversity.

The arts world as a society, in aggregate, is not necessarily engaged in active discrimination, but too few comprehensive, robust and convincing efforts demonstrate purposeful inclusion. We continue to face the stark, poignant lack of cultural representation.

For the arts to not only survive but thrive, they need to be relevant.

Relevance comes from engaged service in which those served feel connected and invested. The arts must represent the communities they aim to serve, and for that to occur, they must be enriched by the voices of those communities. For that level of engagement and reciprocity to occur and to sustain itself, action must replace complacent silence.

Through the work of SphinxCon, our annual conference focused on diversity in

the performing arts, we have heard many inspiring ideas about not only good intentions but efforts made on behalf of individual organizations, segments of the field, pockets within communities. All those examples are inspirational and encouraging.

However, for any change to be lasting, particularly when it is so deeply overdue, it needs to be systemic. That means that as a field, we must make it a priority to want different results and be accountable for the consequences of change. This almost necessarily means we will, at times, fail, feel uncomfortable, encounter obstacles. By default, we will collectively be engaged in something innovative, which requires vulnerability as well as courage.

A handful of leaders exhibiting those qualities is great; however, if everyone commits to the experience, we may see authentic success in our lifetimes. Every person touched by the arts has such a responsibility: Good will is a great place to start, but commitment to feeling uncomfortable for the sake of doing the right thing and taking action are far more powerful and, arguably, necessary. **IAA**

**Aaron Dworkin** is the founder of the Sphinx Organization and the dean of the University of Michigan School of Theater, Music and Dance in Ann Arbor. He was named a MacArthur fellow in 2005 and is on President Obama's National Council on the Arts.

The federal holiday honoring Dr. King was signed into law in 1983 and took effect three years later, although not all states adopted the holiday officially until 2000. In addition to the many political representatives and private citizens who supported the initiative, the musician Stevie Wonder became one of the main figures in popularizing the campaign in 1980 with the release of his single "Happy Birthday" on the Motown label. The holiday is observed on the third Monday in January in honor of King's birthday on January 15. In 2016, MLK Day is January 18.

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