

McCARTER THEATRE CENTER RECEIVES SUBSTANTIAL GRANT FROM THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS

PRINCETON, NJ: McCarter Theatre Center is proud to be a recipient of an Art Works grant of \$30,000 to support the McCarter LAB, a year-round creative incubator that provides key support to writers at all stages of their careers, cultivating meaningful artistic relationships and original works for McCarter's main stages and future co-productions.

National Endowment for the Arts Chairman Jane Chu has approved more than \$80 million in grants as part of the NEA's second major funding announcement for fiscal year 2018. The Art Works category is the NEA's largest funding category and supports projects that focus on the creation of art that meets the highest standards of excellence, public engagement with diverse and excellent art, lifelong learning in the arts, and/or the strengthening of communities through the arts.

Fostering the development of new plays, adaptations, musicals and investigations into the classics, the LAB consists of readings, workshops, the Sallie B. Goodman Artist Retreat, commissions, and the annual LAB Spotlight Production. It also provides McCarter's audiences with an exclusive window into the creative process. Most McCarter LAB programs take place in the intimate and flexible performance studio located within the Roger S. Berlind Theatre. New work developed at McCarter have included pieces by such renowned playwrights as Christopher Durang, Danai Gurira, Heather Raffo, Nathan Alan Davis, and more.

"The variety of these projects speaks to the wealth of creativity and diversity in our country," said NEA Chairman Jane Chu. "Through the work of organizations such as McCarter Theatre Center, NEA funding invests in local communities, helping people celebrate the arts wherever they are."

Emily Mann, McCarter Theatre Center Artistic Director and Resident Playwright, added: "I am honored to see the work created through the McCarter LAB recognized with such a generous grant from the NEA. Over the past 25 years, the McCarter LAB has grown into a year-round program that provides writer-centric development supporting approximately 20-25 projects each year, reflecting the passion and commission of new works and the artists who create them."

About McCarter LAB Programming

LAB SPOTLIGHT - In 2019, McCarter will produce the next McCarter LAB Spotlight production, a new adaptation by Emily Mann of Władysław Szpilman's *The Pianist*. Spotlight productions are fully-realized small-scale productions, providing a new play with all the benefits of a professional cast and design elements presented in the intimate Berlind Theatre performance studio. Two previous LAB Spotlight

Productions, Tarell Alvin McCraney's *The Brothers Size* and Danai Gurira's *Eclipsed*, have gone on to numerous full-scale productions.

COMMISSIONS - The LAB commissions new plays from playwrights across the country. Since the inception of McCarter's commissioning program in the late 1990s, McCarter has commissioned a total of 30 plays including Edward Albee's *Me, Myself and I*; Christopher Durang's *Miss Witherspoon*, *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike*, and McCarter's currently running [world premiere production of *Turning Off the Morning News*](#); Beth Henley's *Ridiculous Fraud*; and Stephen Wadsworth's translations and adaptations of Pierre Beaumarchais' *The Figaro Plays*. The theater anticipates awarding new commissions to two playwrights and will continue four in-process development commissions to Christopher Durang, Lisa Peterson and Denis O'Hare, Rachel Bonds, and Heather Raffo. Over 80 percent of McCarter-commissioned plays have been professionally produced on an American stage.

ARTIST RETREAT - The annual Sallie B. Goodman Artists' Retreat takes place every spring providing 9-12 artists with uninterrupted time to work, build relationships with peers, and recharge. Recent retreat participants include Ayad Akhtar, Rachel Bonds, Nilo Cruz, Chris Durang, and Jiehae Park.

WORKSHOPS AND READINGS - Workshops and readings take place throughout the year and are driven entirely by the needs of the artists and their individual projects with most readings being made open to the public. A centerpiece of McCarter's LAB readings is the annual "In the Writer's Voice," an evening of writers and composers reading and performing excerpts from their works-in-progress. "In the Writer's Voice" is always free and open to the public.

For more information about The McCarter LAB, please visit www.mccarter.org/lab.

[Click through for a short video interview with such McCarter-associated playwrights as Ken Ludwig, Ayad Akhtar, Lydia Diamond, and more.](#)

McCarter is supported by Princeton University, the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, and over 3,000 individuals, corporations, and foundations. McCarter Theatre is located at 91 University Place in Princeton, NJ. For more information, please visit www.mccarter.org.

For more information on projects included in the NEA grant announcement, visit arts.gov/news.

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