

ARENA STAGE MEDIA RELEASE

Molly Smith Artistic Director Edgar Dobie Executive Director Zelda Fichandler Founding Director

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ARENA STAGE ANNOUNCES 2017/18 RESIDENT ARTIST PATTY RANGEL

***** Mixed reality artist Patty Rangel to focus year-long residency on exploring use of virtual, augmented and mixed reality for theater *****

(Washington, D.C.) Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater announces [Patty Rangel](#), a mixed reality artist, holographer, producer and experience designer specializing in exponential technologies, as the company's next resident artist for the 2017/18 season. Rangel's year-long residency will focus on researching and testing the viability of virtual, augmented and mixed reality and simulation-based learning applications in Arena Stage's artistic processes, communications and live performance.

The selection signifies a bold expansion of Arena Stage's artist residencies, which have previously focused on playwrights, and builds on Deputy Artistic Director Seema Sueko's vision to broaden the company's research and development (R&D) work beyond traditional play development. Arena Stage continues its commitment to playwrights with Power Plays, an ambitious 10-year initiative announced in 2016 that will commission and develop 25 new plays and musicals.

"R&D has always been a big component of my work in the theater," says **Sueko**, whose work includes creating and exporting Consensus Organizing for Theater, developing the Green Theater Choices Toolkit and researching the neuroscience of acting. "Just as Zelda Fichandler asked why should theater only take place in New York when she pioneered the regional theater movement, exploring mixed realities is also about broadening the platforms where theater exists and the audiences we touch through live performance. Our goal is purely R&D, to come out of this residency having learned some things that work and some that don't and thus strengthen our work in service to artists and audiences."

Rangel is a graduate of Singularity University at NASA and the CalArts Theater Producing program. Her work in the technology sector has focused on virtual, augmented and mixed reality for defense, aerospace, medicine and edutainment applications, and she has worked with clients including the Centennial Olympic Games, Vancouver Olympic Games, Shanghai World Expo 2010, Coca-Cola Greater China, ESPN and the United Nations. She received an Emmy Award for Mursion Holographic projection and initiated the work with Dr. Dre that brought Tupac back to life as a [Hologram](#) at the Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival.

"Virtual reality (VR) is inspired by Plato's Republic and the Allegory of the Cave, contemplating perception, reality and illusion," explains **Rangel**. "Plato's student, Aristotle, went on to establish the foundation of the Six Elements of Drama, turning ritual practices into what became the very foundation of our theater industry. This was the inspiration for the creation of the virtual reality CAVE (Cave Automatic Virtual Environment) and my work as a resident artist. I worked in one of 20 existing CAVE systems in the world after graduating. Theater puts the 'A' into STEM making virtual reality a STEAM approach.

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“I have waited a decade for technology to become more affordable, smaller, portable and accessible to the critical mass. It is time for theater to occupy its rightful place as master storytellers at the foundation of virtual and mixed reality, to tell stories through technology integration and relate to the masses by pioneering the vision of Plato and Aristotle in today’s world.”

Rangel joins a distinguished group of former Arena Stage resident artists, including Ayad Akhtar, Lydia R. Diamond, Amy Freed, Katori Hall, Samuel D. Hunter, Lisa Kron, Charles Randolph-Wright, John Strand and Karen Zacarias. As part of the residency, Rangel will receive financial resources; ideation and rapid-prototyping opportunities with Arena staff, board and other artists; and a commitment from Arena Stage to continue cultivating an ongoing, long-term relationship. For additional details on resident artists at Arena Stage, visit arenastage.org/american-voices/resident-artist-program.

Patty Rangel holds a Master of Fine Arts in theater producing (design & production program) from CalArts. She is an alumna of the GSP program in Exponential Technologies from Singularity University at NASA Ames and the HIVE Global Leaders Program and featured Technologist/Futurist of the USC World Building Institute FRONTERA project. At the Centennial Olympic Games, Patty was a member of the Opening & Closing Ceremonies team and liaison to NBC. She headed creative production, tech integration, logistics and coordination of a \$4.5 million budget proposal for the Shanghai World Expo 2010.

As an artist, Patty has exhibited her 3D laser holograms, installation art and fine art at the Reuben H. Fleet Science Center, TEDx Transhumanism, Centro Cultural de la Raza, the Burning Man Festival, CalArts Main Gallery and “3D Art Revelry” and “Surrealism” shows at the House of the Future. She was the founder/owner of the Virtuasoul Gallery at San Diego Space 4 Art. In the STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics) movement, Patty combined multisensory technology, art installation and virtual reality as co-curator of the Filmatic Festival at Qualcomm Institute. She is a current Avatar Artist in Residence at the Crossworlds Gallery in the Second Life Virtual World. In the movement of increasing women in entertainment technology, she has been a featured speaker at the Qualcomm Institute’s “Future of Virtual Reality Conference,” Digital LA “Digital Women 2015 Conference,” Open Simulator Community Conference and Metaverse Cultural Series and is a co-author/ambassador of the *Innovating Women: Past, Present and Future* book project from Singularity University at NASA (sponsored by Google for Entrepreneurs).

Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater, under the leadership of Artistic Director Molly Smith and Executive Director Edgar Dobie, is a national center dedicated to American voices and artists. Arena Stage produces plays of all that is passionate, profound, deep and dangerous in the American spirit, and presents diverse and ground-breaking work from some of the best artists around the country. Arena Stage is committed to commissioning and developing new plays and impacts the lives of over 10,000 students annually through its work in community engagement. Now in its seventh decade, Arena Stage serves a diverse annual audience of more than 300,000. arenastage.org

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