

... LABORATORY ... FOR ... GLOBAL ... PERFORMANCE ... & ... POLITICS ...

Harnessing the power of performance to humanize global politics



GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY

Who we are



“Leveraging Georgetown’s dual strengths in performance and international affairs, The Lab has greatly enriched the Georgetown and Washington communities . . . For in bringing performances from around the world in which local voices give us their perspectives, they humanize today’s foreign policy challenges.”

The first and only joint initiative between Georgetown's **School of Foreign Service** and **Georgetown College**, The Laboratory for Global Performance and Politics harnesses the power of performance to humanize global politics.



Co-founded and led by Professors **Derek Goldman** (Chair, Department of Performing Arts; award-winning global theater artist) and **Cynthia P. Schneider** (School of Foreign Service; Former US Ambassador to the Netherlands), The Lab creates and presents **productions, festivals, workshops, courses, symposia, panels, and convenings** at Georgetown, throughout Washington DC, and around the world.

The Lab **actively engages students from across campus** in its programs, as well as a global network of **leading artists, policymakers, scholars, and partner organizations**.

The Lab **promotes global citizenship and international collaboration** through our leadership role in the UNESCO International Theatre Institute and the Global Theatre Initiative, in partnership with Theatre Communications Group.

We are passionate about **training the next generation of innovators** to use their artistry and voices to shape new understandings in pursuit of a better, more just world.

What we do



“The Lab has created a platform for like-minded artists, scholars, and activists to build a network with each other and to hear voices from around the world. It is very important for all of us to join forces in creating work that decreases polarization, division, and misunderstanding.”



“Because ultimately when I dream forward, I see a world that fully utilizes the power of communal narrative to help re-humanize our families, our cities, our countries, and our world. But more importantly than that, theater ultimately re-humanizes the most powerful tool on the planet: the human heart.”

KWAME KWEI-ARMAH. ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, YOUNG VIC THEATRE, LONDON; LAB THINK TANK MEMBER; WORLD THEATRE DAY, 2017, HOSTED BY THE LAB AT GEORGETOWN



From left: Ifrah Mansour’s *How to Have Fun in a Civil War* at The Lab’s CrossCurrents Festival; Lab Think Tank member Kwame Kwei-Armah and Lab Campus Cohort member Prof. Soyica Colbert; Nobel Laureate Wole Soyinka performing his epic poem “A Humanist Ode for Chibok, Leah” as part of the Renegade Theatre of Nigeria’s residency at Georgetown; Anna Deavere Smith, Secretary Madeleine Albright, Cynthia Schneider at The Lab’s residency of Deavere Smith’s *On Grace*.

Training the next generation of innovators and change-makers



“Being one of The Lab Fellows means so much to me — as an artist, as a Syrian woman, and as a refugee. This is an amazing group of people, and I’m so proud to be one of them. We are more than friends; we’ve been united under the name of humanity, culture, and art, a connection that eclipses the different places we’re from. These are relationships that will last forever.”



“Nothing gives me greater hope for our shared future than the fact that in the face of trauma the world over, this group of people can come together and celebrate and love each other. The Lab is where I can do the vital work of envisioning and practicing the more just and creative world I want to live in.”

LAB FELLOW CAITLIN NASEMA CASSIDY



From left: The inaugural cohort of Lab Fellows 2017–2019; The Fellows lead a workshop at the Gathering at Georgetown; Reem Alsayyah, Caitlin Nasema Cassidy and Faisal Abu Alhayjaa; Chankethya Chey; the full cohort in residency at Southend-on-Sea, UK.

Innovative courses and curriculum, on campus, and across the globe



“Going to Cambodia with The Lab showed me the power the arts have in rebuilding a nation. I was awestruck watching artists engage all forms of performance as a way to talk about Cambodia’s recent traumatic past under the Khmer Rouge, and as a way to empower marginalized people in Cambodia’s present. Without The Lab, I would not have experienced this side of Cambodia.”



Left: The Lab at the 2017 International Theatre Institute World Congress, Segovia, Spain, where The Lab's original production *I Pledge Allegiance* premiered.



Top and middle: Our Politics and Performance Centennial Lab, in which students travel to Cambodia to engage the vital role of the arts and performance in reshaping the country's identity.



Bottom: *Performing One Another*, a signature methodology The Lab has employed around the world from Bangladesh to Russia to Sudan, rooted in bringing people together across their differences through performance, dialogue, and deep listening. *In Your Shoes*, an ongoing Lab initiative between Georgetown and Patrick Henry College, a conservative Christian college in Virginia, designed to counter polarization by engaging mutually respectful dialogue around issues of politics, identity, and faith.

Original artistic projects



“Jan Karski was one of the most inspirational figures of modern history. As a first-hand witness to the evils of the Holocaust, his legacy speaks to the phenomenon we call “whistleblower,” and to the psychic toll extracted in the decision to speak or not to speak. I’ve always felt that one of the vital roles, even a responsibility, of the artist/citizen, is to provide palpable, emotive, and relevant insight into the most pressing issues concerning our common humanity. By dramatizing the legacy of Jan Karski, we are striving to do just that.”



“The Lab has felt like home to me since I first met Derek and Cynthia in Louisiana three years ago. Here I Am began in Derek’s class and I’m honored to be a voice telling the story of the GU272 past, present, and future.”

MÉLISANDE SHORT-COLOMB, LAB COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ASSOCIATE, MEMBER OF GU272 DESCENDANTS ASSOCIATION, CREATOR OF THE LAB’S *HERE I AM*



“The Lab brings together policy experts, employees from the State Department and embassies, global theater practitioners, students, and community members. There is no other place besides The Lab that can create a conversation like this. It is invaluable for me as an artist developing my work.”

LAB THINK TANK MEMBER HEATHER RAFFO ON THE LAB’S ROLE IN DEVELOPING HER AWARD-WINNING PLAY *NOURA*



Original productions by The Lab: *Remember This: The Lesson of Jan Karski*, a solo performance about the Polish World War II hero, Holocaust witness and longtime Georgetown professor; Mélisande Short-Colomb addresses the Gathering; workshop production of *Noura*, an award-winning play by Heather Raffo; *I Pledge Allegiance*, an original internationally-touring play created by first-generation and immigrant GU students and recent alums.

Productions, residencies and workshops with leading artists from around the world



“The Lab has the great goal of giving international creative voices a platform in this fractious capital city. That’s a timely mission.”



“The women of The Chibok Girls are armed with nothing but these testimonies, trusting that the detailed, alarming stories are enough to change hearts and minds. It’s a fitting centerpiece for a gathering on how artists can use the public platform of the stage to confront politics in the most powerful and even dangerous ways, especially when officials spin facts and warp reality.”

THE WASHINGTON POST



Productions presented by The Lab at Georgetown:
Freedom Theatre of Jenin’s *The Island* by Athol Fugard;
Migrar, a site-specific journey, conceived by Kamchàtka,
part of *Finding Home: Migration, Exile, and Belonging*,
a global conference organized by The Lab and Theatre
Communications Group’s Global Theater Initiative;
Ajoka Theatre of Lahore, Pakistan’s *Amrika Chalo*, by
Shahid Nadeem; National Theatre of Ghana’s *Ten Blocks
on the Camino Real*, by Tennessee Williams.

A biennial festival, for Georgetown, Washington DC, and the world



“Theater isn’t good at everything, but it can be spectacularly good at countering polarization through the empathy it enables in a live, communal setting, and through its capacity to humanize others. CrossCurrents is in many ways the epitome and culmination of The Lab’s eight years of work, as we bring together groundbreaking artists and performances from around the world who are tackling society’s most challenging issues. These artists give us hope.”



“Washington is hungry for this type of international theatrical experience, one rooted in history and culture. We have some pockets of it here and there, but not that much is sustained, engaged, political and ideas-driven, with a strong international foundation.”

JEFFREY P. CUNARD,
CROSSCURRENTS PATRON

Images from the inaugural 2019 CrossCurrents Festival: Phantom Limb Company’s *Falling Out* in partnership with the Kennedy Center; Somi in Residence; Inua Ellams’ *An Evening with an Immigrant*; Ashtar Theatre’s *Oranges and Stones*; Renegade Theatre of Nigeria’s *The Chibok Girls: Our Story*, by Wole Oguntokun.

Gathering 200+ artists from 40 countries



“The Gathering was a powerful demonstration of the urgency of theatre in today’s polarized world. We heard from artists and companies around the world whose work speaks to issues of climate change, migration, white supremacy, unequal justice, authoritarianism, and fundamentalist attitudes of all kinds. These are the forces shaping our world, and theatre makers have a critical role in bringing new awareness and creating forums for education and dialogue.”



“Your program is clearly a watering hole in the vast Serengeti of the American Theatre. The great thinkers and makers and carers are drawn there for sustenance. And the Gathering was gorgeous and unforgettable, a spectacular celebration of the place you have developed.”

JESSIA LITWAK, THEATRE WITHOUT BORDERS,
THE H.E.A.T. COLLECTIVE



“When I work there (in Cambodia), I do the work I have to do. But I work alone. I have come here and I know I am not alone.”

SOUNG SOPHEAK, THEATER DIRECTOR OF
KHMER ART ACTION PHNOM PENH, CAMBODIA.



Images from the Gathering; Tony Award-nominated actress and GU alum Pascale Armand presents *\$/#!Thole Country Clap Back*; Lab co-director Derek Goldman welcomes more than 200 artists from more than 40 countries to this 4-day event; one of many featured workshops at the Gathering; Tony Award-winning actress Kathleen Chalfant performs from T.S. Eliot's *Four Quartets*.

Performance as a catalyst for critical conversations



“I came to the United States in 1997, and the place where I feel my heart is the closest to is The Lab. They are my home. I have never felt so passionately about a place before The Lab.”



“We have to engage in dialogue like this because that is the only way we can defeat the forces of fear and anger and misunderstanding, by continuing to talk, and by continuing to make art.”

ZARQA NAWAZ, AUTHOR OF THE BEST SELLING MEMOIR *LAUGHING ALL THE WAY TO THE MOSQUE*



From left: Lab Think Tank member Azar Nafisi speaks at the National Press Club; Lab students perform Elaine Avila’s play *Brackendale* about climate change and environmental justice for Vice-President Al Gore and GU’s Core Pathways Initiative in Riggs Library; Maria Alyokhina (Pussy Riot) and Think Tank member Natalia Kaliada (Belarus Free Theatre) at *Burning to Tell You: Critical Conversations with Risk-Taking Artists*, The Lab’s event about freedom of expression and censorship.

Our expansive network

Our **Lab Fellows** are a group of path-breaking artists and thinkers from around the world working at the intersection of performance and politics.



Our **Think Tank** is made up of visionaries in these fields.



Our **Campus Cohort** consists of Georgetown faculty collaborators.

Join us



“What The Lab is doing today is so critical... the power of performance, the power of storytelling, and the power of narrative are absolutely essential. In my mind, they are some of the only things that can actually have an influence on the political dialogue.”

“Artists are the canaries in the coal mine. If you want to know what’s really going on, don’t ask the political leaders, ask the artists.”

AMB. CYNTHIA SCHNEIDER,
LAB CO-DIRECTOR



The Lab’s Next Level Global Hip-Hop event at the Gathering; DC theater leaders Maria Goyanes (Woolly Mammoth) and Raymond Caldwell (Theater Alliance) at the Gathering.

At a time characterized by polarization and distrust, the need for approaches that humanize others through narrative and empathy has never been greater. The Lab is dependent on outside funding in order to make our work possible. To support, visit: globallab.georgetown.edu/donate



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