

THE CULTURAL DIASPORA
AFRICAN-AMERICAN AND AFRICAN PLAYWRIGHTS
CREATIVE RESIDENCY AT THE CAMARGO FOUNDATION

2018

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ABOUT THE PROGRAM



The Camargo Foundation, with generous support from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Jerome Foundation, is excited to announce a four-week residency program for mid-career/established African-American and African playwrights.

Four participants from the United States and four from the African continent, all of whom are interested in the intersection and interaction, whether historic or contemporary, between the United States and Africa, will be hosted at the Camargo Foundation in Cassis, France.

In recognition of the various ways in which theatre is created, an expanded version of "playwrights" will be used for this program. Please see page 6 for further explanation.

THE CONTEXT (1)

BY CHUCK MIKE

**THEATRE DIRECTOR, PRODUCER, PLAYMAKER, EDUCATOR, AND ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
COLLECTIVE ARTISTES**

In what ways has African society reverberated its cultural dynamism within modern day transnational artistic imaginings? Playwrights on the African continent and in the African diaspora are well endowed with tools to provide enlightenment. Creative methodologies and thematic concerns amongst playwrights in Africa and the African World of the Americas are derived from a plethora of sources and influences. The African has at his disposal a reservoir of resources, including the use of African languages, rituals, myth and other traditional and contemporary mores. Common topics include colonialism and the exigencies of cultural, social and political transformation into the modern world.

Storytelling in Africa has been a traditional event since the presence of the *Griots* who—through music and poetry—became the creative custodians of oral history. By extension some African American dramatists view preachers, spoken word artists, stand-up comics, blues singers and playwrights as part of that tradition. They examine and record through text based platforms the trials, tribulations and conditions of a people who evolved from slavery to become one of the most celebrated cultures globally. The aesthetic values and humane concerns which hover their works clearly speak to an African continuum in the New World. Not only does the commonality of practices and history between modern day African and African American playwrights deserve notice, of seminal importance is their mutual struggle to devote attention to their craft—as modern day *Griots*—in a hostile environment often imbued with racism, colonialism and inept governments.

THE CONTEXT (2)

BY CHUCK MIKE

THEATRE DIRECTOR, PRODUCER, PLAYMAKER, EDUCATOR, AND ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
COLLECTIVE ARTISTES

Questions abound towards the survival of these writers in separate lands. How are playwrights funded in Africa in the face of corrupt regimes that feel threatened by the pen and have little or no appreciation for the arts? What can be done about the disparity in funding which goes to the development of black playwrights in the US as opposed to their white counterparts? Where do these playwrights share or showcase their work and to what audiences given the limited building spaces available to them on both sides of the Atlantic? How do playwrights engage in debates about identity and authenticity within an African diaspora? What are the different ways in which international boundaries shape the African experience and how do they manifest in writing and performance? If the notion of Africa is to be broadened, the specifics of these playwrights' experiences and practices must be examined.

The purpose of Camargo's transatlantic black playwright residency would be to afford the opportunity of sharing work, discussing viewpoints and approaches towards enduring as Black artistes—in a safe haven—free of occidental screening and judgment with no self explanations and no obligation to represent anyone but oneself. Exploring one's craft, voice and African-ness in a picturesque and encouraging atmosphere with kindred spirits would be an essential *raison d'être*.

PURPOSE OF THE RESIDENCY



The program is designed to offer participants time and space to:

- Research, experiment & create: applicants may apply either with a specific project or a specific area of inquiry on which they would like to work during the residency. An area of inquiry should be specific and represent exploration and investigation in the resident's field. The Camargo Foundation welcomes both open-ended exploration, or more focused works and long-term research projects;
- Exchange & network: during the residency, discussions are held regularly to foster exchanges between the selected artists. In addition, the Camargo Foundation's staff provides formal and informal links with local professionals to develop possible creative collaborations between the selected artists and the region of the Marseille-Provence area. The selected artists will also attend performances with other cultural organizations and artists in the Marseille-Provence area.

ELIGIBILITY

- The program welcomes applications from black playwrights who are citizens of the United States or of an African country.
- Eligible applicants have an interest in the African diaspora as an influence and factor on their craft, work, and thinking.
- Eligible applicants are established or mid-career artists who assume primary responsibility for creating the texts of theatrical productions and/or performance. This program recognizes that practice is increasingly interdisciplinary (including performances that embrace a combination of live theatre/dance/film, for example), can include both spoken and musical work, and can assume different scales and forms (from solo performances to story telling to large scale theatrical spectacle). This program is designed for artists who play a primary or exclusive role in creating the text component of live theatrical or performance work where spoken language is a critical and primary component, whatever the scale and form. Text creators of course may play additional roles, such as directing, designing and/or performing without compromising their eligibility. Actors, choreographers, designers, directors, etc who have not been a primary creator of texts, however, are not eligible to apply.
- Eligible applicants have had at least three different texts/plays fully produced for public audiences.
- If prior grantees of the Camargo Foundation, Jerome Foundation or National Endowment for the Arts, eligible applicants have successfully complied with all reporting requirements, including (where applicable) submission of all required final reports.
- Students enrolled in undergraduate or graduate degree programs at the time of application are not eligible to apply.
- Eligible applicants are at least 21 years old at the time of application.
- Work developed during the residency may be in any language. In the interests of Camargo's interdisciplinary, multicultural community, eligible applicants are able to communicate well in English. A basic knowledge of French is useful, but not required.

DURATION, STIPEND, AND ACCOMODATION

DURATION

The program will take place from May 28 to June 25, 2018.

STIPEND

Each of the eight participants will receive plane fare, local transport to and from the home airport and Camargo, and both a stipend of \$1,000 US and an honorarium of \$1,000 US (making a total of \$2,000 US per playwright/text creator) to participate.

ACCOMODATION

Each artist will be provided a furnished apartment. The apartments are intended as the workspace for writing and electronic media. Additional workspace at Camargo may also be available, such as the library, or the painting studio and rehearsal space with a piano. Residents are expected to prepare their own meals.

ACCOMPANYING FAMILY MEMBERS

Spouses/adult partners and dependent minor children may accompany fellows for short stays or for the duration of the residency. Accompanying children must be at least six years old upon arrival and enrolled in and attending school or organized activities outside the Camargo Foundation campus, during the week.



HOW TO APPLY?

DEADLINE

Applications must be submitted no later than **October 19, 2017 (midnight Paris time)**.

Late applications will not be reviewed.

APPLICATIONS

Applications should be submitted via Submittable and can be accessed at: <<https://camargofoundation.submittable.com/submit>>

Applications must include the following:

1. **Proposal Name;**
2. **Proposal Summary** (up to 100 words): a brief summary of the proposed project or possible areas of research that you would like to engage in during this exchange;
3. **Proposal Narrative and Relevance of Resources** (up to 1,000 words): please describe in detail any proposed project or possible areas of research you would like to engage in during this exchange. Please articulate specifically how the resources provided by the Camargo Foundation will support your proposed project or research;
4. A **rationale** (up to 300 words) for wanting to participate to the program (up to 500 words): please describe how your work expresses an interest in the African diaspora as an influence and factor on your craft, work and thinking;
5. **A current CV**, including a list of plays fully produced, with year of first full production;
6. **Work samples**, either in the form of written work sample, audio recording, or video. Recent work is strongly encouraged, but applicants should feel that the samples represent fully accomplished and finished work; works in progress are strongly discouraged. All work samples should be drawn from work created in the last five years. All panelists will read at least 10 pages of all scripts and/or view up to 5 minutes of a recording. Applicants who choose to submit a full script or longer performance tape should specify which 10 pages (or 5 minutes) the panel should read (or view), and attach a short description. The applicant must be the primary creator of the submitted sample. Student work is not acceptable.
7. **Two references:** submitters whose applications manage to get to the final stages of review might be asked to provide recommendation letters from their referees at a later stage.

Technical questions about the application should be directed to <apply@camargofoundation.org>.

ABOUT THE SELECTION PROCESS

SELECTION'S CRITERIA

The selection is based on:

- The quality and significance of the **project** and specific area of inquiry proposed;
- The quality and significance of the **professional accomplishments** of the applicant;
- The relevance of the link(s) between the proposal and the **African diaspora**;
- The potential **impact of the residency** to shape and inform the writer's creative process and artistic vocabulary in both the short- and long-term;
- The ability of the artist to contribute to and **participate in a community** of artists, both in Cassis and in one's home country.

THE SELECTION COMMITTEE

The Selection Committee is composed by experts with experience in both Africa and the United States who are working in the field(s) of theater performance.

RESULTS ANNOUNCEMENT

Applicants will be notified of decisions no later than early December 2017.



ABOUT US



National
Endowment
for the Arts
arts.gov

JEROME
FOUNDATION



**CAMARGO
FOUNDATION**
CASSIS, FRANCE

The **NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS** is an independent federal agency that funds, promotes, and strengthens the creative capacity of our communities by providing all Americans with diverse opportunities for arts participation.


The **JEROME FOUNDATION**, founded by noted filmmaker, composer and painter Jerome Hill (1905-1972), supports emerging/early career artists in Hill's home state of Minnesota and New York City, where Hill spent much of his creative life. The Foundation awards grants to artists, collectives and/or ensembles across all disciplines to create new work and to nonprofit arts organizations to offer programs, services and activities for such artists, collectives and/or ensembles.

Also founded by Jerome Hill, the **CAMARGO FOUNDATION** is a residential center offering programming in the Arts and Humanities. It provides time and space in a contemplative environment to think, create, and connect. The Foundation encourages the visionary work of scholars, artists, and thinkers in the Arts and Humanities from throughout the world.



CAMARGO
FOUNDATION

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