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STAGE MOVES FORWARD

**TONY, OLIVIER, PULITZER & NOBEL-WINNING JUDGES
DAVID AUBURN, JOHN GUARE, DAVID LINDSAY-ABAIRE,
SIR ANTHONY LEGGETT & DR. DOUGLAS OSHEROFF
TO JUDGE *STAGE* INTERNATIONAL SCRIPT COMPETITION IN 2010**

SUCCESSFUL COLLABORATION BETWEEN SCIENTISTS & ARTISTS LEADS TO EXPANDED PARTNERSHIP

STAGE – Scientists, Technologists and Artists Generating Exploration – is a unique collaboration between the Professional Artists Lab, a dynamic artistic laboratory, and the California NanoSystems Institute (CNSI), an esteemed science institute, both housed at the University of California, Santa Barbara.

The prestigious *STAGE* International Script Competition, which awards a \$10,000 prize to the best new play about science and technology, is now accepting scripts for its fourth round. The deadline for entries is December 15, 2009.

All of the stellar judges who chose the winner of the third round have offered their services to select the next winner. The multiple award-winning panel includes Pulitzer Prize and Tony-Award winning playwright David Auburn; Tony, Olivier, and Obie Award-winning playwright John Guare; Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright David Lindsay-Abaire; Nobel Laureate in physics and KBE Sir Anthony Leggett; and Nobel Laureate in physics Dr. Douglas Osheroff.

It is undoubtedly a level of excellence that entices such illustrious judges to sign on for a second term. In reference to the third round's winner and finalists, John Guare remarked, "It's a rare contest which has such strong entries. All of them are stage worthy. Bravos to all the playwrights."

The winners of the first, second and third *STAGE* Script Competitions – Jamie Pachino, Elyse Singer, and Anna Ziegler, respectively – are all published and produced playwrights with impressive credits. While none are yet household names, each has enjoyed a significant career boost as a result of winning the coveted award, along with the obvious bonus of the generous cash prize.

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STAGE grew out of efforts to catalyze the development of theatre that depicts the technological age in which we live and to foster new and imaginative voices and methods of storytelling, as well as to promote understanding of the sciences in the public arena. Nancy Kawalek, the founder and director of the Professional Artists Lab, approached the California NanoSystems Institute a few years ago with the idea of collaborating on these mutual interests. The partnership began with the *STAGE* International Script Competition. “We wanted to encourage playwrights – and scientists, for that matter – to write plays relevant to the lives we lead, lives influenced at nearly every moment by incredibly sophisticated technological and scientific advances,” said Kawalek.

During each round of the Competition, anywhere from 150-200 plays are received from all over the world and written by a wide range of authors. Entrants have included established and prominent playwrights and screenwriters, an unknown playwright living in a remote part of Nigeria, highly-regarded scientists, and even a Nobel Laureate. Many more entries are anticipated for this next round, as the Competition, previously held every year, has become biennial to accommodate the growing number of submissions, as well as the expansion of *STAGE*'s activities.

Along with the fourth round of the Competition, the Professional Artists Lab and CNSI are simultaneously embarking on an enhanced partnership between theatre and science with the newly-launched *STAGE* Collaboratory. The Collaboratory will bring together an international array of professional artists, scientists and engineers to create its own multi-media theatre pieces in which science and technology play prominent roles in content and/or form.

With Kawalek at the helm, work has already begun on the first of these theatrical creations: *The Brain Project*, a multi-media theatre piece about the brain. Prominent psychologists and neuroscientists such as Drs. Michael Gazzaniga, Kenneth Kosik and Scott Grafton are participating in the novel creative process.

“We’re deeply honored and proud that *STAGE*'s efforts have garnered the support of such celebrated talents in the arts and sciences,” said Kawalek. “The ultimate goal is to take chances with the kind of work we are doing. Accidents in scientific laboratories often lead to great discoveries. I’m convinced that theatre also needs to be a place in which accidental discoveries can provide the seeds for great work.”

For more information:

STAGE: www.stage.cnsi.ucsb.edu

Professional Artists Lab: www.proartslab.ucsb.edu

California NanoSystems Institute: www.cnsi.ucsb.edu

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