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## NEWS

### Diane Rodriguez Appointed to National Council on the Arts

headshot of Diane Rodriguez

Photo by Jose Angel Castro, courtesy of Center Theatre Group.

January 6, 2016

*Washington, DC* – Diane Rodriguez, associate artistic director at the Center Theatre Group in Los Angeles, California was appointed by President Obama and confirmed by the United States Senate to be a member of the **National Council on the Arts**, the advisory body of the National Endowment for the Arts.

A director, writer, and Obie Award-winning actor, Rodriguez brings her considerable experience fostering greater visibility for Latina/o theater, advancing a feminist presence in the arts, and playing a leadership role in theater nationwide to help advance the NEA's mission to give all Americans the opportunity to experience creativity and participate in the arts.

The National Council on the Arts advises the NEA chairman on agency policies and programs. It reviews and makes recommendations to the chairman on applications for grants, funding guidelines, and leadership initiatives.

For 21 years, Rodriguez has been on the staff of the **Center Theatre Group** (CTG) which produces works on three stages; the Ahmanson Theatre, the Mark Taper Forum, and the Kirk Douglas Theatre. In her current job as in her previous positions as associate producer/director of New Play Production and co-director of the Latino Theatre Initiative, Rodriguez helped increase the diversity of voices on CTG stages and promoted the development of a new generation of playwrights.

Rodriguez co-founded the theater ensemble Latins Anonymous whose two-play anthology, *Latins Anonymous* is in its 16<sup>th</sup> printing. Her latest play, *The Sweetheart Deal* will be co-produced by the Latino Theatre Company and El Teatro Campesino in 2017 in Los Angeles.

In 2008, Rodriguez joined the board of directors for **Theatre Communications Group** (TCG) the national service organization for

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professional theaters in the United States. Now in her third year as chairman of the TCG board, she plays a leadership role in setting the national agenda for the theater field. In addition, she is on the steering committee for the Latina/o Theatre Commons, an initiative of Howl Round, that helps shape the landscape for Latino theater nationwide through convenings, play festivals, and advocacy.

Rodriguez's early work at CTG is documented in the recent monograph, *The Latino Theatre Initiative/Center Theatre Group Papers, 1995 – 2005* (UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center). She has contributed to many literary anthologies including *La Voz Latina: Contemporary Plays and Performance Pieces by Latinas* by Elizabeth C. Ramirez and Catherine Casiano (University of Illinois Press, 2011). Her work has been the focus of three books: *Domestic Negotiations: Gender, Nation, and Self-Fashioning in US Mexicana and Chicana Literature and Art* by Marci McMahon (Rutgers University Press, 2013); *Chicano Drama: Performance, Society and Myth* by Jorge Huerta (Cambridge University Press, 2000); and *El Teatro Campesino: Theater in the Chicano Movement* by Yolanda Broyles-Gonzalez (University of Texas Press, 1994).

Rodriguez replaces National Council on the Arts' member Joan Israelite and joins NEA Chairman Jane Chu and other National Council on the Arts members Bruce Carter, Ph.D., Aaron Dworkin, Lee Greenwood, Deepa Gupta, Paul Hodes, Maria Rosario Jackson, Ph.D., Emil J. Kang, Charlotte Kessler, María López De León, Rick Lowe, David "Mas" Masumoto, Irvin Mayfield, Jr., Barbara Ernst Prey, Raneé Ramaswamy, Tom Rothman, and Olga Viso. Ex-officio members from Congress are Senator Tammy Baldwin (D-WI), and Representatives Betty McCollum (D-MN) and Patrick J. Tiberi (R-OH).

### **About the National Endowment for the Arts**

Established by Congress in 1965, the NEA is the independent federal agency whose funding and support gives Americans the opportunity to participate in the arts, exercise their imaginations, and develop their creative capacities. Through partnerships with state arts agencies, local leaders, other federal agencies, and the philanthropic sector, the NEA supports arts learning, affirms and celebrates America's rich and diverse cultural heritage, and extends its work to promote equal access to the arts in every community across America. This year marks the 50th anniversary of the National Endowment for the Arts and the agency is celebrating this milestone with events and activities through September 2016. Go to [arts.gov/50th](http://arts.gov/50th) to enjoy art stories from around the nation, peruse Facts & Figures, and check out the anniversary timeline.