

SDCF Lloyd Richards New Futures Residency

Program Description

Recognizing the need for bold leadership as regional theatres reemerge from the pandemic and our country's reckoning with racial injustice, **SDCF has created the Lloyd Richards New Futures Residency to partner a visionary mid-career BIPOC director or choreographer with a regional Artistic Director who is contemplating significant changes at their institution as the theatre reemerges.** In this inaugural year, the residency will be reserved for a Black artist. The Resident Artist will receive a \$40,000 grant from SDCF for a year-long commitment; the residency will begin by March 2021.

Named for a legendary leader of the American Theatre, the goal of this program is to forge new alliances between artists pursuing institutional leadership and forward-thinking Artistic Directors **who will collaborate on discovering new solutions to address the rapidly changing field. On a practical level, the Resident Artist will engage in the day-to-day life of an artist-led theatre and learn how to balance administrative and institutional demands with artistic ambitions.**

As SDCF considers our own role in what this historical moment demands, we have listened to BIPOC artists about the need for supporting entry into institutional leadership. Through this program, SDCF seeks to respond to that need by **positioning more BIPOC artists for leadership roles in the American theatre, and, over time, developing a cohort of artists leading our field's reemergence.**

The grant is made possible with support through the SDCF fellowship funds named for George C. Wolfe, Mike Ockrent, Shepherd and Mildred Traube, Sir John Gielgud, and Reginald H.F. Denham; as well as many generous individuals.

SDCF is now [accepting applications](#) from host theatres until 6 p.m. EDT on Tuesday, September 22nd. One host theatre will be selected for the pilot year.

For the host theatre's eligibility requirements, [click here](#).

Program Details

While the Resident Artist's primary relationship will be with the Artistic Director, **the SDCF Resident Artist will also collaborate with the senior artistic team on significant projects, which may include re-imagining the theatre's season selection process, crafting virtual programming during the shutdown, re-mapping the theatre's organizational structure, etc.** While these responsibilities serve as examples, theatres applying to host the Resident Artist will use the application to detail the collaborations and potential projects most appropriate for their theatre.

While SDCF will support a one-year residency, it is our hope the relationship between artist and institution builds and grows beyond the one-year commitment. In support of that goal, **the host theatre must pledge to hire their Resident Artist to direct or choreograph at their institution within two to three years of the residency's completion.** The host theatre will need to provide additional payment applicable to the appropriate SDC contract; if not an SDC Member, then SDCF will expect prevailing rates to apply as the stipend provided is not intended to supplant artists' fees.

We also understand that some portion of this residency may take place virtually, depending on the circumstances of a theatre's given region. Also, in designating this program for mid-career artists, the Resident Artist will likely have other artistic and/or personal obligations throughout the year of their residency. To support the Resident, the host theatre will be flexible in providing leave and virtual work time for these prior obligations.

The host theatre will already be supporting both BIPOC artists and its local BIPOC community.

Applicants should not use this program to take first steps towards diversifying the staff.

SDCF will select the host theatre by mid-November and will then open an application process for the Resident Artist. **If you would like to apply to be the Resident Artist, please wait until that application is released in November before contacting SDCF with questions.**

An SDCF committee will evaluate the host venue applications and will conduct interviews with the host theatre finalists' Artistic Directors in mid- to late October. Once selected, the host theatre will participate in the selection process for selecting their Resident Artist. The SDCF committee includes Mark Brokaw, Lydia Fort, Michael John Garcés, Kent Gash, Linda Hartzell, Anne Kauffman, and Scott Richards.

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About Lloyd Richards

This New Futures Residency is named for Lloyd Richards, whose career blazed a trail through our industry. Starting as an actor in 1940s New York, in 1956, Sidney Poitier arranged an interview for Richards with producers to direct Lorraine Hansberry's new play *A Raisin in the Sun*. Richards' work on the production garnered his first of five Tony nominations for Best Direction of a Play; he later won the award in 1987 for his work on *Fences*. Richards led the National Playwrights Conference (NPC) at the Eugene O'Neill Theatre Center for more than 30 years, developing work with hundreds of playwrights. From 1979-91, he was Artistic Director of Yale Repertory Theatre and Dean of the Yale School of Drama.

Richards was the first Black director to be nominated for and then to win the Tony Award for Best Direction. Aside from his first nomination for *Raisin in the Sun*, the other four honored his work directing August Wilson's plays on Broadway. Richards' collaborations with Hansberry and Wilson sustained his deepest beliefs about our industry: "We must each bring the wonder of our particular cultural heritage to the context of the here and the now. That is American Theatre—theatre which reaches into the ethnic memory of each of us and is informed by its wisdom, form, and artistry, and brings that to the context 'now,' where we all dwell, and informs the now, which provokes and enriches us all."

In addition to his artistic accolades, Richards was a staunch advocate for artists' rights as workers. A founding member of SDC, Richards served as president from 1970 to 1980. He received the National Medal of Arts in 1993; he died in 2006.

For Lloyd Richards' full biography, [click here](#).