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## **Five Selected for 2017 Sundance Institute | LUMA Foundation Theatre Directors Retreat in Arles**

**JoAnne Akalaitis, Daniel Aukin, Ali Chahrour, Diane Rodriguez and Seret Scott  
Gather for Unique Creative Program**

**New York, NY** — Five theatre directors are slated for the fifth **Sundance Institute | LUMA Foundation Theatre Directors Retreat**, which convenes in Arles, France, August 25 through September 7. The Retreat is one of 24 residencies and Labs the Institute hosts annually across the world, and is an integral part of the Theatre Program's ongoing engagement with global theatremakers.

The retreat, the only director-centered residency of its kind, comprises 14 days of rigorous creative interchange. Theatre Program Artistic Director **Philip Himberg** and Producing Director **Christopher Hibma** curate this rare opportunity for a convening of established artists who build new work from both text and in an ensemble or choreographic model. Time in Arles is comprised of reflective working sessions, conversations among the participants, and engagement with the Rencontres d'Arles (one of the world's most vital photography festivals) as well as the historic Camargue region.

**Himberg** said, "Our collaboration with the LUMA Foundation is unique in the field, in that it directly addresses the need for independent directors to converge and interact with one another, in an idyllic environment that's been a cultural capital since the days of the Roman Empire. These directors' diverse experience and backgrounds drive conversations throughout the Retreat, which often lead to discovery and sometimes to collaborative opportunities for these extraordinary individuals."

**Directors selected for the 2017 Sundance Institute | LUMA Foundation Theatre Directors Retreat are:**

**JoAnne Akalaitis**



JoAnne Akalaitis is an American theatre director and writer. She won five Obie Awards for direction (and sustained achievement) and founded the critically acclaimed Mabou Mines in New York City, from which she resigned after 20 years. In addition to the American Repertory Theater – where she has directed *Endgame*, *The Balcony* (by Jean Genet) and *The Birthday Party* (by Harold Pinter) – she has staged works by Euripides, Shakespeare, Strindberg, Schiller, Tennessee Williams, Philip Glass, Janáček, and her own work at the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, New York City Opera, Goodman Theatre, Hartford Stage, Mark Taper Forum, Court Theatre, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, and the Guthrie Theater. She is the former artistic director of the New York Shakespeare

Festival/Public Theater and the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship, among other awards and honors.

#### Daniel Aukin



Daniel Aukin's recent work includes Abe Koogler's *Fulfillment Center* (MTC), the acclaimed Broadway revival of Sam Shepard's *Fool For Love* (MTC), Dan LeFranc's *Rancho Viejo* (Playwrights' Horizons), *The Fortress of Solitude* (Dallas Theater Center & The Public Theatre), Joshua Harmon's *Bad Jews* (Roundabout), Melissa James Gibson's *What Rhymes with America* (The Atlantic), Amy Herzog's *4000 Miles* (Lincoln Center Theatre), Arthur Miller's *A View From The Bridge* (Arena Stage) and Elmer Rice's *The Adding Machine* (La Jolla Playhouse). As Artistic Director of Soho Rep (1998-2006) premieres of new work include Mark Schultz's *Everything Will Be Different*, Melissa James Gibson's *Suitcase* and *[sic]*, Mac Wellman's *Cat's-paw*, Quincy Long's *The Year Of The Baby* and Maria Irene Fornes' *Molly's Dream*.

#### Ali Chahrour



Ali Chahrour is a choreographer, dancer and graduate of the theatre department at The Lebanese University. Influenced by techniques from several European countries, he studies contemporary dance in the Arab world and movement that is related to society's memory and its local circumstances that contribute to creating an identity for a local contemporary dance, whose techniques and problematics are inspired by its surroundings and history. His work examines the relationship between dancing and the body, and the religion and the sacred, relying on the Islamic and Shiite religious rituals and practices especially in his recent trilogy: *Fatmeh*, *Leila's Death* and *May he Rise and smell the fragrance*.

#### Diane Rodriguez



Diane Rodriguez is a director, playwright and Obie Award-winning actor. She wrote, directed and premiered two of her own full length works, *Living Large 2012* at Teatro Luna in Chicago and *The Sweetheart Deal 2017* at the Los Angeles Theatre Center. She is developing and directing a Center Theatre Group commission, *Venice Is Dead* by Roger G. Smith and Richard Montoya having just spent two weeks at Ojai Playwrights Conference earlier this summer. She will direct Culture Clash in *Bordertown Now* in 2018 at The Pasadena Playhouse.

#### Seret Scott



Seret Scott directs new plays, classics, and experimental / developmental work in Off-Broadway and regional theatres around the country. As an author, her play *Second Line* relates her experiences in activist theater during the Civil Rights Movement, and was produced by NJ's Passage Theatre and DC's Atlas Theatre. Seret is the creator of *Insight / Second Sight*, a project that introduces diverse communities to the events, narratives, back stories and life-changing moments of individuals whose lives have been widely acclaimed, or perhaps, quietly extraordinary.

The Sundance Institute Theatre Program is supported by an endowment from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, with generous additional support from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation; Time Warner Foundation; Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art; Perry and Martin Granoff; National Endowment for the Arts; LUMA Foundation; The Shubert Foundation, Inc.; Wendy vanden Heuvel; John and Marcia Price Family Foundation; and The Harold and Mimi Steinberg Charitable Trust.

### Sundance Institute Theatre Program

The Theatre Program has been a core component of Sundance Institute since Robert Redford founded the Institute in 1981. The Theatre Program supports the development of new work for the stage. Under the guidance of Artistic Director Philip Himberg and Producing Director Christopher Hibma, the Theatre Program is one of the leading play development programs in the world supporting projects such as *Appropriate*, *Fun Home*, *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder*, *Circle Mirror Transformation*, *An Iliad*, *The Lily's Revenge*, *The Good Negro*, *The Light in the Piazza*, *Passing Stranger*, *Spring Awakening*, *The Laramie Project* and *I Am My Own Wife*. The Theatre Program's International activity offers Labs, cross-cultural exchange, mentorship and exposure to artists primarily in the Middle East & North Africa. [sundance.org/theatre](http://sundance.org/theatre)

### Sundance Institute

Founded in 1981 by Robert Redford, Sundance Institute is a nonprofit organization that provides and preserves the space for artists in film, theatre, and new media to create and thrive. The Institute's signature Labs, granting, and mentorship programs, dedicated to developing new work, take place throughout the year in the U.S. and internationally. The Sundance Film Festival and other public programs connect audiences to artists in igniting new ideas, discovering original voices, and building a community dedicated to independent storytelling. Sundance Institute has supported such projects as *Boyhood*, *Swiss Army Man*, *Manchester By the Sea*, *Brooklyn*, *Little Miss Sunshine*, *Life*, *Animated*, *Sonita*, *20 Feet From Stardom*, *Beasts of the Southern Wild*, *Fruitvale Station*, *Sin Nombre*, *Spring Awakening*, *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder* and *Fun Home*. Join [Sundance Institute](https://www.sundanceinstitute.com) on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/sundanceinstitute), [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/sundanceinstitute), [Twitter](https://twitter.com/sundanceinstitute) and [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/sundanceinstitute).

### The LUMA Foundation

In 2004, Maja Hoffmann created the LUMA Foundation in Switzerland to support the activities of artists, independent pioneers, and organizations working in the visual arts, photography, publishing, documentary filmmaking, and multimedia. Envisioned as a production tool for Hoffmann's multi-faceted ventures, the LUMA Foundation produces, supports, and enables challenging art projects committed to an expansive understanding of environmental issues, human rights, education, and culture.

In 2013, Hoffmann launched LUMA Arles to plan, develop, and manage the Parc des Ateliers, an expansive former industrial site located in Arles, France. Situated adjacent to the city's UNESCO World Heritage sites, the Parc des Ateliers serves as the major programmatic and cultural center for LUMA Foundation's diverse activities. LUMA Arles is an experimental contemporary art center where artists, researchers, and creators from diverse fields collaborate on multidisciplinary exhibitions and projects. Based in the Parc des Ateliers—a sixteen-acre site formerly occupied by railroad workshops built in the mid-nineteenth century—LUMA Arles includes a resource center designed by architect Frank Gehry; various industrial buildings undergoing rehabilitation by Selldorf Architects; and a public park designed by landscape architect Bas Smets. The Parc des Ateliers has regularly hosted exhibitions and projects each year, while continuing to rehabilitate and make available to the public a growing number of large exhibition and programming spaces. In anticipation of its completion, the site's main building, designed by Gehry, will be opened in 2019.

Throughout the rehabilitation and expansion of the Parc des Ateliers, Hoffmann has worked closely with the LUMA Arles Core Group (Tom Eccles, Liam Gillick, Hans Ulrich Obrist, Philippe Parreno, and Beatrix Ruf), who present a program that fills the site's completed venues — the Grande Halle, Les Forges, and the Mécanique Générale — on a rotating basis.

[www.luma-arles.org](http://www.luma-arles.org)

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