

STAGEBRIDGE

UNITING THE GENERATIONS SINCE 1978

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Stagebridge welcomes New Executive Director Shannon McDonnell

OAKLAND, CA (March 3, 2019)—The nation’s oldest and most renowned Performing Arts Institute for adults over 50 welcomes its new Executive Director, Shannon McDonnell. A native of Canada, she comes to the award-winning theatre non-profit with more than two decades of experience in management, development, and PR with some of the Bay Area’s most dynamic organizations, including San Francisco Opera, San Francisco Symphony, and TheatreWorks.

Ms. McDonnell’s background includes studies in theatre, communications, and clowning, and a love of travel and dogs. “I’m deeply honored,” Shannon says, “for the opportunity to work with such a dedicated group of merry arts-makers!” She looks forward to getting to know everyone at Stagebridge and working with the students, staff, instructors and volunteers.

“Shannon is a great addition to Stagebridge,” says Board President Claire Wahrhaftig. “She is already proving her fresh leadership towards new goals and pioneering new ideas for this 40-year-old organization.”

Founded in 1978, the company’s mission is to transform the lives of older adults and their communities through the performing arts. Stagebridge offers professionally-taught classes for seniors in its **Performing Arts Institute**, as well as storytelling programs in Bay Area public schools in its **Storybridge** program, sharing the rich and varied experiences of older adults to help at-risk local students increase literacy—and confidence. The annual **Grandparent Tales** writing contest truly bridges generations as kids gain the opportunity to hear and transcribe stories told to them by a grandparent or other older adult in their lives. And through **Seniors Reaching Out** events, the company brings high-quality entertainment and hands-on creativity to community venues serving active and frail elders and multigenerational audiences.

Stagebridge is the winner of the 2013 MetLife Creative Aging Award and the 2009 American Society on Aging MetLife MindAlert Award. The company’s work has been featured on ABC-TV, CNN, National Public Radio, in The Huffington Post, the Washington Post, Modern Maturity, Oakland Magazine, Storytelling Magazine, California Health Report, Kiplinger’s, The Orlando Sentinel, The Mercury News, Nikkei BP Online, The Wall Street Journal, Visión Hispana, and at national and regional conferences.

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