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THREE NEW BOARD OF DIRECTORS NAMED TO THE SHAKESPEARE CENTER OF LOS ANGELES

LOS ANGELES (June 5, 2019) – The **Shakespeare Center of Los Angeles** announced today the appointment of three new members of its Board of Directors. They are **Mark Steven Cohen** Phd, Professor-in-Residence – UCLA, **Wendy Garen**, President and Chief Executive of The Ralph M. Parsons Foundation, and **Judith Parker**, writer, producer and development executive.

“The addition of these three new board members marks a milestone in the organizational development in our 30-plus year history,” said **Ben Donenberg**, executive artistic director of the Shakespeare Center of Los Angeles. “They individually and collectively bring an expertise to our work. They have deep commitment to the Shakespeare Center’s mission and values of artistic excellence, accessibility, social justice and building bridges between our cherished communities.”

Mark Steven Cohen is an American neuroscientist and early pioneer of functional brain imaging using magnetic resonance imaging. He currently is a Professor of Psychiatry, Neurology, Radiology, Psychology, Biomedical Physics and Biomedical Engineering at the UCLA Semel Institute for Neuroscience and Behavior and the Staglin Center for Cognitive Neuroscience. Professor Cohen's significant achievements in MRI include the earliest clinical uses of echo-planar imaging, defining the safe boundaries of operation of high-end MRI units. His interests and publications span a broad range of topics including schizophrenia, mental imagery, biophysics, time perception, drug addiction, epilepsy, cardiac imaging and others. His current work concentrates heavily on the development and application of machine learning methods to the decoding of brain activity and the physiology of cognition. Cohen is the Director of the UCLA/Semel NeuroImaging Training Program (NITP), a federally sponsored graduate and post-graduate educational program that seeks to bring advances in technology into the broad fields of neuroimaging. He is also a performing musician. Cohen has performed for many years on guitar, in classical, country-western, blues and jazz styles. He is better known, however, for his work on the pedal steel guitar.

Wendy Garen has played an integral role in the life of The Ralph M. Parsons Foundation, becoming President and CEO in 2008 after working for the Foundation for more than twenty years. Prior to joining the Parsons Foundation, Wendy was Executive Director of the Los Angeles Child Care and Development Council, Program Manager at Children's Home Society of Orange County, and founding staff member of the children's nonprofit Crystal Stairs. She has served on the founding board of the Broad Stage and board of The Trusteeship, the local affiliate of the International Women's Forum. As a member of the Women's Leadership Board at the Harvard Kennedy School, she traveled with delegations to Egypt and South Africa. She currently serves on the advisory board of the Center for Philanthropy and Public Policy at USC. She is Vice Chair of the Los Angeles County Commission for Children and Families and the State of California commission Volunteer California. She is on the board and is the Immediate Past-Chair of Southern California Grantmakers, a regional association of 300+ foundations, corporations, government grant makers and philanthropic advisors that is a leadership hub for members, helping them to connect, learn and act independently and collaboratively to increase the impact of philanthropy. Wendy is a frequent speaker and panelist at local and national meetings for philanthropy. She is a graduate of the University of Illinois and has a master's in urban planning from UCLA

Judith Parker has worked in the television and film industry for many years as a writer, producer and development executive. A lifelong interest in social issues informs the themes in her writing. She has written and produced numerous movies for television and created the pilot for, *Studio 5B*, a one-hour show that aired on ABC. She won an Emmy for her work as a writer-producer on *LA LAW*. In addition, she worked as a "script doctor" on many projects, often resulting in a green light to production. Early in her career she was awarded a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts and, in conjunction with the Writers Guild of America, founded "The Open Door." Open Door was one of the first programs created to teach script writing to previously excluded groups. Eager to learn the craft of television writing to tell their unique stories, young Latino and African-American students attended weekly workshops taught by professional writers. Judith served as the Program Administrator and ran a workshop for several years. During a brief hiatus from writing she served as Vice President of Development at NBC in the Television Movie Division and went on to become a Production Executive in the Feature Film division of Orion Pictures, producing a slate of films that included *Yentl* and *Arthur*. She has served on the boards of Teach For America, The Writers Fund For the Future, and PEN America. She has adjudicated final television and film credits as a member of the Writers Guild of America Credits Committee for the last twenty years. She is a member of the Writers Guild and The Academy of Television Arts & Sciences. Judith is currently working on a novel and has had her own interior design business for the last ten years. She attended Boston University and the film schools at University of San Francisco, USC and UCLA.

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About the Shakespeare Center of Los Angeles

The Shakespeare Center of Los Angeles has over 30 years of award-winning history in Los Angeles. In June 2018, the Shakespeare Center of Los Angeles produced Henry IV directed by Daniel Sullivan with Harry Groener, Tom Hanks, Hamish Linklater, Joe Morton and Rondi Reed at the Japanese Garden on the West Los Angeles VA Campus. The theatre set and other production elements were built by a veteran workforce. SCLA offers outreach programs such as Will Power to Youth, an employment and enrichment program that combines hands-on artistic experience with paid job training, specifically created to provide an arts immersion for at-risk youth; Will Power to Schools, a program providing free tickets to students to see Shakespeare as well as professional teacher training; and Veterans In Art, which provides employment, training and educational opportunities for underemployed military veterans. For more information on Veterans In Art, view a video at <https://bit.ly/2WMJx7N> or visit www.shakespearecenter.org.

Theatre: The Shakespeare Center of Los Angeles Downtown Studio Theatre
 1238 W. 1st Street, Los Angeles, CA 90026

Photos:



(L-R): Mark Steven Cohen Phd, Wendy Garen, and Judith Parker

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