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***PHOTOGRAPH 51*, BY ANNA ZIEGLER, WINS 2008 *STAGE* INTERNATIONAL
SCRIPT COMPETITION FOR BEST NEW PLAY ABOUT SCIENCE &
TECHNOLOGY**

**WINNER CHOSEN BY PULITZER, TONY, OLIVIER & NOBEL-WINNING JUDGES
DAVID AUBURN, DAVID LINDSAY-ABAIRE, JOHN GUARE, DR. DOUGLAS
OSHEROFF & SIR ANTHONY LEGGETT**

The prestigious *STAGE* International Script Competition, now in its third year, announces this year's winner for the best new play about science and technology. *Photograph 51*, by New York playwright Anna Ziegler, was chosen by a stellar panel of judges, all multiple award-winners in their own right: Pulitzer Prize and Tony-Award winning playwright David Auburn; Tony, Olivier, and Obie Award-winning playwright John Guare; Nobel Laureate in physics and KBE Sir Anthony Leggett; Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright David Lindsay-Abair; and Nobel Laureate in physics Dr. Douglas Osheroff.

STAGE – Scientists, Technologists and Artists Generating Exploration – will award Ziegler a \$10,000 cash prize and an opportunity to further develop her play.

STAGE is a unique collaboration between the Professional Artists Lab (the Lab), a dynamic artistic laboratory, and the California NanoSystems Institute (CNSI), an esteemed science institute, both housed at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Along with the announcement of Ziegler's win, the Lab and CNSI are simultaneously embarking on the next round of the Competition – their fourth – as well as an expanded partnership between theatre and science with the newly-launched *STAGE* Project.

Ziegler's winning script was chosen from nearly 150 entries hailing from a dozen countries. Each year, plays are received from all over the world and written by a wide range of authors. Entrants have included established and prominent playwrights and screenwriters, an unknown playwright living in a remote part of Nigeria, highly-regarded scientists, and even a Nobel Laureate.

Ziegler's *Photograph 51* asks, "What does a woman have to do to succeed in the world of science?" Set largely in 1953, the play concerns Dr. Rosalind Franklin, a brilliant and passionate scientist who pours herself into her studies of DNA. But when fellow scientists Watson and Crick find out about her groundbreaking discoveries, her work is suddenly not her own – and shortly thereafter they claim credit for a major breakthrough. A compelling drama about a woman's life in a man's world, *Photograph 51* asks how we become who we become, and whether we have the power to change.

Ziegler is a published and produced playwright whose work has been developed by the Sundance Theatre Lab, the Old Vic New Voices program, Primary Stages, Geva Theatre Center, McCarter Theatre, New Georges (where she is an Affiliate Artist), the Hampstead Theatre in London, Birmingham Rep, and Company B at the Belvoir St. Theatre in Sydney, Australia, among others. Her play *Dov and Ali* just completed a run at Theatre 503 in London. Ziegler also teaches at the prominent St. Ann's School in Brooklyn, which she attended herself before going on to Yale and then receiving her MFA from NYU's Tisch School of the Arts.

A level of excellence distinguishes the collaborative theatre and science efforts of *STAGE*. In reference to this year's *STAGE* winner and finalists, John Guare, one of the illustrious judges, remarked, "It's a rare contest which has such strong entries. All of them are stage worthy. Bravos to all the playwrights."

While Nancy Kawalek, founder and director of *STAGE*, is "deeply honored and proud" that *STAGE*'s efforts have garnered the support of such celebrated talents in the arts and sciences, she insists "the ultimate goal has been and always will be to take chances with the kind of work we are doing. Accidents in scientific laboratories often lead to great discoveries. I'm convinced that theatre also needs to be a place in which accidental discoveries can provide the seeds for great work."

STAGE grew out of efforts to catalyze the development of theatre that depicts the technological age in which we live and to foster new and imaginative voices and methods of storytelling, as well as to promote understanding of the sciences in the public arena. Kawalek, also the founder and director of the Professional Artists Lab, approached the California NanoSystems Institute a few years ago with the idea of collaborating on these mutual interests. The partnership has thrived ever since.

Based on the extraordinary success of the *STAGE* Competition, Kawalek is taking the work to the next level with the *STAGE* Project. Under this umbrella, *STAGE* will collaborate internationally with professional artists to create and develop multi-media theatre pieces in which science and technology play prominent roles in content and/or form. This October, work will begin on the first of these theatrical creations: *The Brain Project*, a multi-media theatre piece about the brain.

To allow for the growing number of submissions, as well as to encourage even more, the *STAGE* International Script Competition will now become a biennial versus an annual competition. The next deadline for entries is December 15, 2009. That leaves writers plenty of time to hone a

current script or even to write a new one, since, although the fourth round has officially begun, submissions won't actually be accepted until June 15, 2009.

Along with Ziegler, three other playwrights were singled out in this year's Competition as finalists. These are Oscar-winning and Tony-nominated writer and director Eric Simonson, for his play *Fake*; award-winning playwright Jennifer Maisel, for *There or Here*; and newcomer Charlotte Rahn-Lee, for *Double Helix to Heaven*.

For more information:

STAGE: www.cnsi.ucsb.edu/stage

Professional Artists Lab: www.proartslab.ucsb.edu

California NanoSystems Institute: www.cnsi.ucsb.edu

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