

## MEDIA CONTACT

Su Byron; 941-955-8103; subyron@hermitage-fl.org



### **The Hermitage Artist Retreat Appoints Andy Sandberg as Artistic Director and CEO**

*Sandberg is an accomplished director, writer, and Tony Award-winning producer, whose national and international career has been committed to new work and artist development.*

(December 4, 2019) The board of the Hermitage Artist Retreat announced today that the organization has chosen Andy Sandberg as its artistic director and chief executive officer as of January 1. Sandberg succeeds Bruce Rodgers, who is retiring after serving as the Hermitage's executive director since 2005. Sandberg, an accomplished director, writer, and Tony Award-winning producer, was selected following an extensive national search. In his new role, Sandberg will be responsible for overseeing the organization's operations, artistic programs, administration, and strategic plan.

"We're very excited to have Andy shepherd in a new wave of leadership for the Hermitage," says Leslie Edwards, president of the Hermitage's board of trustees.

"The interest in this position from so many accomplished professionals from around the United States was above and beyond what we hoped for. Andy emerged as a

forward-thinking leader ready to serve our mission with enthusiasm and integrity; he was our unanimous choice. We were wowed by his passion, vision, fresh ideas, and charisma—and his extensive experience nurturing artists and their projects is invaluable to us. We were fortunate to find someone of Andy’s caliber to lead this organization at this critical juncture and proud to put our future in his hands.”

“I’m honored to lead the Hermitage into this exciting next chapter of its history,” says Sandberg. “Throughout my career, I have been an advocate for new work, and the Hermitage provides artists an invaluable opportunity to nurture bold ideas while planting the seeds for great works of art to sprout up around the country and throughout the world. I look forward to being part of this extraordinary tradition and working with a brilliant and diverse group of artists across multiple disciplines to achieve their artistic goals. I’m eager to build on the organization’s impressive history while also reimagining what’s possible for the Hermitage in the years ahead. As we look to expand the Hermitage’s reach and impact, I am energized by and deeply committed to our core mission: ‘to inspire the artists of our time.’”

“I am in the unique position of having known both Andy and Bruce since they were young men—in Andy’s case, a very young man—and therefore take special pleasure in this development. Andy was my student when he was at Yale and impressed me with his preternatural entrepreneurial gifts,” says Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright and Hermitage alumnus Donald Margulies. “I have watched with pride as he fulfilled that talent with a glowing resume of professional accomplishments as a multi-hyphenated theater artist. I applaud the Hermitage for recognizing in Andy a

bright young leader who will build on Bruce's accomplishments with passion and vision."

Sandberg is highly regarded in the theater community as a champion of new work and artistic development. Born and raised in Manhattan, he is a graduate of Yale University with a B.A. in English and Theater Studies. His theatrical work has been represented in New York City, London, and throughout the United States. In 2009, when he was 25, he became one of the youngest producers in history to win a Tony Award (for *Hair*). Sandberg's Broadway and West End producing credits include the hit revival of *Hair* (2009 Tony, Drama Desk, Drama League, Outer Critics Circle Awards); the Broadway revival of Gore Vidal's *The Best Man*, starring James Earl Jones, Angela Lansbury, John Larroquette, Candice Bergen, and Eric McCormack (2012 Tony, Drama Desk, Drama League, Outer Critics Circle Nominations); and Will Eno's *The Realistic Joneses*, a critically acclaimed new play starring Toni Collette, Michael C. Hall, Tracy Letts, and Marisa Tomei.

Most recently, Sandberg directed the London premiere of Jeannette Bayardelle's *Shida*, which opened to rave reviews and earned 2019 Off West End Award nominations for Best Musical, Best Director, and Best Lead Actress. He previously directed the world premiere of *Shida* Off-Broadway at Ars Nova (four AUDELCO Award Nominations, including Best Director and Best Musical) and at the American Repertory Theater (Cambridge, MA). Sandberg has been represented Off-Broadway as the director of *Straight*, named a Critics' Pick by *The New York Times*, which cited that the production was "directed with polished finesse." He previously wrote and directed the critically acclaimed world premiere of *Application Pending*, a

comedy about kindergarten admissions (BroadwayWorld Award: Best Off-Broadway Play, Drama Desk Nomination: Outstanding Solo Show, Winner: Book Pipeline Prize). Additional world premieres that he has directed include Alan Brody's historical drama *Operation Epsilon* (four IRNE Awards, including Best Play and Best Director), the Off-Broadway comedy *Craving for Travel* (also co-author), and the Off-Broadway musicals *The Last Smoker in America*, *Neurosis*, and *R.R.R.E.D.*

In addition to his leadership position at the Hermitage, Sandberg will continue to develop projects of his own in theater, film, and television. He will be directing *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* at the Maltz Jupiter Theatre (Jupiter, FL) in the spring of 2020, and future stage productions and screen adaptations are currently in the works for *Application Pending*, *Straight*, and *Shida*, among others.

Sandberg is a member of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society (SDC), Actors' Equity Association (AEA) and the Off-Broadway League. He has served on the boards of The Browning School (NYC), the Yale Dramatic Association, the Whiffenpoof Alumni Association, and the Yale Alley Cats Alumni Organization (founder and longtime president). He currently serves as president of the Browning Alumni Association.

**About the Hermitage Artist Retreat:**

The Hermitage is a nonprofit artist retreat located on Manasota Key in Englewood, Sarasota County, Florida. It invites accomplished artists in all disciplines for residencies on its beachfront campus which is on the National Register of Historic Places. Its artists, who are asked to interact with the community, touch thousands of Gulf Coast residents and visitors with unique and inspiring programs. Hermitage fellows have included Pulitzer, Tony, Emmy, Grammy and MacArthur Fellowship award winners. Works created at this beachside retreat by a diverse group of Hermitage alumni have gone on to renowned theaters, concert halls, and galleries

throughout the world. The Hermitage awards the \$30,000 Greenfield Prize for a new work of art, and the Aspen Music Festival awards the annual Hermitage Prize in Composition.

**The Hermitage is supported by:**

Hermitage programs are supported, in part, by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts; by Sarasota County Tourist Development Tax Revenues; and by the Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs, the Florida Council of Arts and Culture and the State of Florida (Section 286.25 Florida Statutes). For more information about The Hermitage Artist Retreat, visit [www.HermitageArtistRetreat.org](http://www.HermitageArtistRetreat.org).