

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA CONTACTS:

National / New York: Candi Adams; (917) 776-1170; CandiAdamsNYC@gmail.com

Florida / Regional: Hermitage Media Relations; (941) 475-2098, Ext. 8;
Communications@HermitageArtistRetreat.org

THE HERMITAGE
artist retreat



**The Hermitage and Terrence McNally Foundation
Partner to Launch the McNally Residency at the Hermitage
in Support of Early-Career Playwrights;
Zeniba Now Announced as Inaugural Recipient**

*The **Hermitage Artist Retreat** and the **Terrence McNally Foundation** have announced writer, performer, and vocalist **Zeniba Now** as the inaugural recipient of the McNally Residency at the Hermitage. As part of her residency, Zeniba will present a public program on Friday, October 18 on the Hermitage Beach.*

September 10, 2024 (Sarasota County, Florida) — **Andy Sandberg**, Artistic Director and CEO of the **Hermitage Artist Retreat**, today announced the launch of the **McNally Fellowship at the Hermitage**, made possible with generous support from the **Terrence McNally Foundation**. This new grant is intended to support the residency of an early-career playwright. In collaboration with the McNally Foundation, the Hermitage has selected **Zeniba Now** as the inaugural honoree.

Zeniba Now, an award-winning writer, musical storyteller, performer, and vocalist from Los Angeles, was selected for the Hermitage’s acclaimed residency program by the organization’s National Curatorial Council, a fourteen-member body that includes two-time Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright **Lynn Nottage**, Doris Duke Award-winning artistic director **Nataki Garrett**, and acclaimed playwright and screenwriter **Rajiv Joseph**, among other luminaries in their respective fields. She was recently named a “Woman to Watch” by the Broadway Women’s Fund.

As part of Zeniba’s residency, the Hermitage will present “**Zeniba Now: The Heartsong and Other Experiments**” on the Hermitage Beach – Friday, October 18 at 5:30pm. The program will feature original works performed by this singularly talented artist and performer. Crossing mediums and weaving genres, Zeniba Now is introducing audiences to her unique approach to musical storytelling. Along with her work, Zeniba will offer insight into her creative process. The program will also feature remarks from Tony and Olivier Award-winning Broadway producer **Tom Kirdahy**

(*Hadestown*, *Gypsy*, *Little Shop of Horrors*) and Tony Award-winning Hermitage Artistic Director **Andy Sandberg**.

Hermitage programs are free and open to the public (with a \$5/person registration fee), offering Gulf Coast audiences a rare chance to engage and interact with some of the world's leading talent. Running time for most Hermitage programs is 60-70 minutes with no intermission. Due to capacity limitations, registration is required at **HermitageArtistRetreat.org**.

See below for complete program details and artist bios.

"The Hermitage is deeply grateful to the Terrence McNally Foundation for their generous support and passionate belief in the work we are doing," says Hermitage Artistic Director and CEO **Andy Sandberg**. "It has been a joy to collaborate with our friend Tom Kirdahy on a number of special programs, and he's been such a champion of the Hermitage and its mission. We are honored to celebrate Terrence's remarkable legacy by providing the gift of space and time to inspiring new voices in the theater, and we're excited to name *Zeniba Now* as the first recipient of this honor."

Tom Kirdahy, a Tony and Olivier Award-winning Broadway producer and the late Terrence McNally's husband, is the president of Tom Kirdahy Productions and a principal trustee of the McNally Foundation. Among his recent producing credits are the forthcoming revival of *Gypsy* starring Audra McDonald, the Tony Award-winning musical *Hadestown*, the hit Off-Broadway revival of *Little Shop of Horrors*, and Stephen Sondheim's posthumous musical *Here We Are*, which starred Tony Award winner and recent Hermitage Fellow Rachel Bay Jones. Kirdahy has also participated in a number of Hermitage programs himself over the past four seasons.

"We are incredibly proud to support the work the Hermitage is doing," added Kirdahy. "The Hermitage is a world-class arts incubator – not only for playwrights and theater artists, but for so many extraordinary talents of all different backgrounds and disciplines. The gift they are giving to these innovative and imaginative writers, performers, and artists is invaluable. We are excited for *Zeniba Now* to continue her creative journey with this Hermitage residency in Terrence's name."

The Terrence McNally Foundation is a nonprofit organization committed to supporting bold new voices in the American theater by providing support to early-career playwrights and the institutions that support them. The McNally Foundation's mission to champion new playwrights aligns with the mission of the Hermitage Artist Retreat: to inspire and foster the most influential and consequential art and artists of our time. Created by legendary playwright/librettist Terrence McNally and supported through the ongoing royalties of his work, the Foundation is also committed to supporting LGBTQ+ causes, as McNally did throughout his life. Following Terrence's passing, Tom Kirdahy stated that the Foundation would continue the legendary playwright's "singular legacy of mentorship and activism."

Zeniba Now is a creator of commercial and independent art and performance. As a writer of musicals, her work includes the musical shorts “Beloved” and “To Be on Hold Forever / Stay on the Line.” Full-length musicals include *The Loophole*, *Take the Lead*, and a new musical in development with Disney Theatrical Productions. Audiences can see Zeniba Now in her shows “iQuit: Millennial Retirement Gala” and “Sincerely, Z” on TikTok and YouTube. Her music can be heard on several streaming services, including her new meditative release, “Wholly Chill.” Zeniba Now is the winner of The Jonathan Larson Grant, The Richard Rodgers Award, The Vivace Award, The Thom Thomas Award, and now the inaugural Fellow of the McNally Residency at the Hermitage.

Terrence McNally was an American playwright, librettist, and LGBTQ+ trailblazer, described by *The New York Times* as “the bard of the American Theater.” One of the few playwrights of his generation to successfully pass from the avant-garde to mainstream acclaim, McNally redefined American playwriting for six decades and was the recipient of five Tony Awards (two for his plays *Love! Valour! Compassion!* and *Master Class*, two for the books to his musicals *Kiss of the Spider Woman* and *Ragtime*, and the 2019 Tony Award for Lifetime Achievement). He received the 2011 Dramatists Guild Lifetime Achievement Award (he was Vice President of the Guild from 1981 to 2001), the 2015 Lucille Lortel Lifetime Achievement Award, a 1996 induction into the American Theater Hall of Fame, and, in 2018, an induction into the American Academy of Arts and Letters. His other accolades include an Emmy Award (*Andre’s Mother*), two Guggenheim Fellowships, a Rockefeller Grant, four Drama Desk Awards, two Lucille Lortel Awards, two Obie Awards, and three Hull-Warriner Awards. Terrence was an alumnus of Columbia University and received numerous honorary degrees, including from NYU and Juilliard, where he helped create the playwriting program in 1993. His legacy lives on in his plays, musicals, and operas that continue to be performed all over the world, as well as in his papers, which are kept and open to the public at the Harry Ransom Center in the University of Texas at Austin.

A leading national arts incubator, the Hermitage is the *only* major arts organization in Florida’s Gulf Coast exclusively committed to supporting the development and creation of new work across all artistic disciplines. The Hermitage hosts artists on its Gulf Coast Manasota Key campus for multi-week residencies, where diverse and accomplished artists from around the world and across multiple disciplines create and develop new works of theater, music, visual art, literature, dance, film, and more. As part of their residencies, Hermitage Fellows participate in free year-round community programs, offering audiences in the region a unique opportunity to engage with some of the world’s leading artists and to get an authentic “sneak peek” into extraordinary projects and artistic minds before their works go on to major galleries, concert halls, theaters, and museums around the world. These innovative programs include performances, conversations, readings, interactive experiences, open studios,

school programs, teacher workshops, and more, serving thousands in our regional community each year.

For more information about the Hermitage and upcoming programs, visit: **HermitageArtistRetreat.org**.

The Hermitage Artist Retreat

Sarasota County, Florida
Andy Sandberg, Artistic Director and CEO

The Hermitage is a leading national arts incubator and multidisciplinary artist retreat located on Manasota Key, Florida. For more than two decades, the Hermitage has invited accomplished artists across multiple disciplines for residencies on its beachfront campus, which is on the National Register of Historic Places. Hermitage artists are invited to interact with the local community, reaching thousands of Gulf Coast residents and visitors each year with unique and inspiring programs. Hermitage Fellows have included 17 Pulitzer Prize winners, Poets Laureate, Guggenheim and MacArthur Fellows, and multiple Tony, Emmy, Grammy, Oscar winners and nominees. Works created at this beachside retreat by a diverse and accomplished group of Hermitage alumni have gone on to renowned theaters, concert halls, and galleries throughout the world. Each year, the Hermitage awards the Hermitage Greenfield Prize for a new work of art, the Hermitage Major Theater Award for an original theater commission, and the Aspen Music Festival's Hermitage Prize in Composition.

For more information, visit HermitageArtistRetreat.org.

The Hermitage is supported by:

Hermitage programs are supported, in part, by the National Endowment for the Arts; Sarasota County Tourist Development Tax revenues; the Welles Murphey Fund at Gulf Coast Community Foundation; Charles & Margery Barancik Foundation; and the Community Foundation of Sarasota County.

The Terrence McNally Foundation

The Terrence McNally Foundation is a nonprofit organization committed to supporting bold new voices in the American theater by providing financial and institutional support to early-career playwrights. Created by Terrence and supported through the royalties of his work, the Foundation is also committed to supporting LGBTQ+ causes, as McNally did throughout his life. Learn more by visiting TerrenceMcNallyFoundation.org.

FULL PROGRAM DETAILS

Newly Announced Program Description:

- **“Zeniba Now: The Heartsong and Other Experiments” with Hermitage McNally Fellow Zeniba Now, Friday, October 18, 5:30pm:** Launching this exciting new partnership between the Hermitage and the McNally Foundation, Zeniba Now is the inaugural recipient of the **McNally Residency at the Hermitage** and will present a community-wide program that will also feature remarks from Tony Award-winning Broadway producer **Tom Kirdahy**. “Zeniba Now: The Heartsong and Other Experiments” will feature original works performed by this singularly talented artist and performer. Crossing mediums and weaving genres, Zeniba Now is introducing

audiences to her unique approach to musical storytelling. Along with her work, Zeniba will offer insight into her creative process. *This program and Zeniba Now's Hermitage residency are made possible with generous support from the Terrence McNally Foundation. **Registration is required at HermitageArtistRetreat.org** (\$5/person registration fee). **The Hermitage Beach, 6660 Manasota Key Road, Englewood, FL 34223***

HERMITAGE ARTIST PROGRAMS CURRENTLY OPEN FOR REGISTRATION:

FINAL WEEKS OF THIS SPECIAL EXHIBITION! – Now through September 29, “**The Truth of the Night Sky:**” A Hermitage Collaboration featuring Hermitage Fellows Anne Patterson and Patrick Harlin, at Sarasota Art Museum (Sarasota)
Presented in partnership with Sarasota Art Museum

Friday, September 20 @ 7pm, “The Untethered Voice: A Voice-Movement Exploration,” featuring Hermitage Fellow **Stephanie Heidemann**, at Sarasota Contemporary Dance Studio (Sarasota) *Presented in partnership with Sarasota Contemporary Dance*

Thursday, October 17 @ 5:30pm, Hermitage Sunsets @ Selby Gardens: “Let the Music Set You Free,” featuring 2024 Hermitage Greenfield Prize Finalist **Britton Smith**, at Marie Selby Botanical Gardens (Downtown Sarasota)
Presented in partnership with Marie Selby Botanical Gardens

NEWLY ANNOUNCED! – **Thursday, October 18 @ 5:30pm, “Zeniba Now: The Heartsong and Other Experiments,”** featuring Hermitage McNally Fellow **Zeniba Now**, on the Hermitage Beach (Manasota Key)
*Zeniba Now's Hermitage residency is made possible with generous support from the **Terrence McNally Foundation**.*

Friday, October 25 @ 5:30pm, “Tom and Daniel Make a Musical,” featuring Pulitzer Prize-Winning and Emmy Award-Nominated Hermitage Fellows **Tom Kitt** and **Daniel Goldfarb**, on the Hermitage Beach (Manasota Key) *Presented in partnership with Asolo Repertory Theatre*
Daniel Goldfarb's Hermitage Residency generously sponsored by Carole Crosby & Larry Wickless
Tom Kitt's Hermitage Residency generously sponsored by B. Aline Blanchard & Arthur Siciliano

Friday, November 1 @ 5:30pm, “How Not to Drown in a Glass of Water: The Works of Angie Cruz,” featuring Hermitage Fellow **Angie Cruz**, on the Hermitage Beach (Manasota Key) *Presented as a part of the Second Annual Off the Page Festival in partnership with Sarasota County Libraries and Ringling College of Art and Design*

Monday, November 4 @ 2pm, “Walking the World Within: A Hermitage Playwriting Workshop,” featuring Hermitage Fellow **Elaine Romero**, at Elsie Quirk Library Reading Garden (Englewood) *Presented as a part of the Second Annual Off the Page Festival in partnership with Sarasota County Libraries and Ringling College of Art and Design*

Thursday, December 5 @ 5:30pm, Hermitage Sunsets @ Selby Gardens: “Solo Flute — The Destiny of Density,” featuring Hermitage Fellow **Claire Chase**, at Selby Gardens' Historic Spanish Point (Osprey) *Presented in partnership with Marie Selby Botanical Gardens*
Claire Chase's Hermitage Residency generously sponsored by Ellen Berman & Roy Cohen

Monday, December 9 @ 7:30pm, “The Sore Loser,” featuring Hermitage Major Theater Award Winner **Madeleine George**, at Venice Theatre (Venice)
Presented in partnership with Venice Theatre

*The Hermitage Major Theater Award and Madeleine George's Hermitage residency are made possible with generous support from **Flora Major** and the **Kutya Major Foundation**.*

Friday, December 13 @ 5pm, "Hermitage Cross Arts Collaborative: Opera and Theater," featuring 2024 **Hermitage Cross Arts Collaborative** Recipients **Anthony Barrese** and **Raleigh Mosely II**, at the Sarasota Opera House (Downtown Sarasota)

Presented in partnership with Sarasota Opera and Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe

*The Hermitage Cross Arts Collaborative is made possible with generous support from **The Koski Family Foundation**.*

Tuesday, December 17 @ 4pm, "An Author Here and Now," featuring Hermitage Fellow **Kirstin Valdez Quade**, at Johann Fust Community Library (Boca Grande)

Presented in partnership with Johann Fust Library Foundation

Kirstin Valdez Quade's Hermitage Residency generously sponsored by Terry Brackett

BIOS

Zeniba Now

A 2024 "Woman to Watch" on Broadway, **Zeniba Now** is an award-winning writer, musical storyteller, performer, and vocalist from Los Angeles, California creating commercial and independent art. As a writer of musicals, her work includes the musical shorts: "Beloved" (PBS, #BARS at The Public) and "To Be on Hold Forever / Stay on The Line" from "Human Resources" (St. Louis Rep, Woolly Mammoth), and the full length musicals: *The Loophole* (Richard Rodgers Award Winner, Headliner Pass The Mic Hip Hop Festival, Public Studio), *Take the Lead* (Paper Mill Playhouse 2025), *The Thirst Trap* (Dramatists Guild 60th Anniversary Gala), and a new musical in development with Disney Theatrical Productions. Audiences can see her past shows "iQuit: Millennial Retirement Gala," "Sincerely, Z," and "April Fools" on TikTok and YouTube. Her music can be found on the streaming service of choice, including her new meditative EP "Wholly Chill." She is the winner of The Jonathan Larson Grant, The Richard Rodgers Award, The Vivace Award, The Thom Thomas Award, and now the inaugural Fellow of the McNally Residency at the Hermitage. Zeniba Now can be found on social media @ZenibaNow or her website: ZenibaNow.com.

Terrence McNally

Terrence McNally was an American playwright, librettist, and LGBTQ+ trailblazer, described by *The New York Times* as "the bard of the American Theater." One of the few playwrights of his generation to successfully pass from the avant-garde to mainstream acclaim, Terrence redefined American playwriting for six decades and was the recipient of five Tony Awards (two for his plays *Love! Valour! Compassion!* and *Master Class*, two for the books to his musicals *Kiss of the Spider Woman* and *Ragtime*, and the 2019 Tony Award for Lifetime Achievement). He received the 2011 Dramatists Guild Lifetime Achievement Award (he was Vice President of the Guild from 1981 to 2001), the 2015 Lucille Lortel Lifetime Achievement Award, a 1996 induction into the American Theater Hall of Fame, and, in 2018, an induction into the American Academy of Arts and Letters. His other accolades include an Emmy Award (*Andre's Mother*), two Guggenheim Fellowships, a Rockefeller Grant, four Drama Desk Awards, two Lucille Lortel Awards, two Obie Awards, and three Hull-Warriner Awards. Terrence was an alumnus of Columbia University and received numerous honorary degrees, including from NYU and Juilliard, where he helped create the playwriting program in 1993. His legacy lives on in his plays, musicals, and operas that continue to be performed all over the world, as well as in his papers, which are kept and open to the public at the Harry Ransom Center in the University of Texas at Austin.

Tom Kirdahy

Tom Kirdahy is a Tony and Olivier Award-winning producer whose projects have spanned Broadway, Off-Broadway, the West End, national and international tours. A Longboat Key resident and a champion of the Hermitage, Kirdahy is currently producing the Broadway smash hit *Hadestown* (8 Tonys, incl. Best Musical), as well as its U.S. tour and West End production; the Off-Broadway revival of *Little Shop of Horrors* (Drama Desk Award, Best Revival); and the forthcoming Broadway revival of *Gypsy*, starring Audra McDonald. He recently produced *Here We Are*, Stephen Sondheim's final musical with a book by David Ives; the first Broadway revival of August Wilson's *The Piano Lesson* (Drama Desk, Best Revival) starring Samuel L. Jackson; the new musical *New York, New York* from legendary songwriting team John Kander and Fred Ebb, featuring additional lyrics by Lin-Manuel Miranda with direction and choreography by Susan Stroman; and the new play *Grey House* by Levi Holloway, starring Laurie Metcalf, Tatiana Maslany, and Paul Sparks. Select Broadway: *The Inheritance* (4 Tonys, incl. Best Play); Terrence McNally's *Frankie & Johnny in the Claire de Lune* starring Audra McDonald & Michael Shannon (2 Tony noms. incl. Best Revival); *Anastasia; It's Only a Play* starring Nathan Lane & Matthew Broderick; *The Visit* starring Chita Rivera (5 Tony noms.). Select West End: *The Inheritance* (4 Oliviers, incl. Best Play), *The Jungle*, Edward Albee's *The Goat, or Who is Sylvia?*. Select Off-Broadway: world premiere of *The White Chip*, *The Jungle*, *White Rabbit Red Rabbit* (all NY Times Critic's Picks). Additional Tony noms: *Mothers and Sons*, *After Midnight*, *Ragtime*, *Master Class*. Recipient, Robert Whitehead Award for Outstanding Achievement in Commercial Theater Producing. Recipient, Miss Lilly Award, a prize in recognition of his advocacy for women in a male-dominated industry. Recipient, 2023 Medal of Honor, Entertainment Community Fund. Recipient, NYU Distinguished Alumni Award. Kirdahy serves on the Broadway League Board of Governors, the Executive Board of Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS, and is a member of the Harry Ransom Center Advisory Council at the University of Texas. As an attorney, he spent nearly two decades providing free legal services to people living with HIV/AIDS and served for many years on the Executive Committee of the NYC LGBT Center. Graduate, New York University School of Law, NYU CAS. HermitageArtistRetreat.org

HermitageArtistRetreat.org

Facebook / Instagram: [@HermitageArtistRetreat](https://www.instagram.com/HermitageArtistRetreat)