



Curt Columbus, The Arthur P. Solomon and Sally E. Lapidés Artistic Director, Tom Parrish, Executive Director
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TRINITY REP WELCOMES MICHELLE CRUZ AS DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

PROVIDENCE, RI: Trinity Rep announces that **Michelle Cruz** will join the leadership team as the Director of Community Engagement beginning in July after a national search with over 70 applicants. Cruz comes to Trinity Rep with extensive experience working with non-profits, the arts, and the community in and around Rhode Island. The Director of Community Engagement is responsible for establishing long-term partnerships between the theater and community stakeholders, and will play a critical role in the theater's artistic, educational, and community-centered initiatives.

The Director of Community Engagement produces the theater's annual event America Too; heads the Prologue program, the 30-minute dialogue before each of the season productions; and organizes Trinity Rep's Context & Conversation series, a partnership with the Providence Public Library and at a thematically-connected organization for a curated conversation about each show. As Trinity Rep continues to deepen its commitment to community engagement, this position has been elevated to a senior manager level and will take part selecting the plays the theater produces and in the long-term strategic planning for the theater.

Associate Artistic Director Tyler Dobrowsky said, "Michelle stood out in a number of ways. First, her warm, considerate, determined personality made her a very attractive candidate for a position that is all about forming crucial partnerships with other community organizations. We wanted a director who could comfortably reach out to the community in ways that felt open-hearted and authentic. Michelle has that in spades -- she is clearly someone people take to, trust and want to collaborate with. "

Cruz commented, “My passion for the arts, not only as a performer but an arts advocate, drives my work in the community to bring access and connectivity to those, especially, who do not feel like the arts are ‘for them.’ I was elated to be chosen as the Director of Community Engagement as I want to open doors and experiences to the many faces in our community as we work together to be a catalyst for change through the power of the arts. I am so proud to join the Trinity Rep family in this capacity and look forward to what is to come.”

ABOUT MICHELLE CRUZ

Michelle Cruz gained her Bachelor of Arts in Marketing from Providence College, along with two certificates from Harvard Business School’s HBX program, and Stanford University’s non-profit management institute.

Cruz worked at Farm Fresh Rhode Island, where she not only helped move over \$2.5 million dollars’ worth of local food through the Rhode Island economy but also managed the largest Wintertime Farmer’s Market in New England. From there she worked in communications and outreach for Brown University and Spia Media, respectively working with the Department of Africana Studies/Rites and Reason Theatre at Brown and to honor the Cape Verdean Settlers of Fox Point at Spia. Cruz is working on being fully quadrilingual in English, Cape Verdean Creole, Portuguese, and Spanish. She is the emcee and co-curator for the Downtown Providence Parks Conservancy’s Burnside Music Series and has volunteered for such organizations as Girls ROCK! RI, The Food Advisory Committee for Rhode Island Congressman Jim Langevin, and has served on numerous boards, as well as with organizations such as the Mayor’s Commission on Arts and Culture in Pawtucket, and the Pawtucket Citizens Development Corporation. Cruz was nominated for the 2008 Americans for the Arts Emerging Leader Award and won the Rhode Island Foundation’s Emerging Leadership scholarship for three consecutive years and was a Rhode Island Foundation fellow.



Cruz is an award-winning musician who has opened for such acts as The Roots and performed at Newport Jazz Festival founder's "George Wein and Friends". She has over ten years of experience teaching music and workshops for multiple places across Rhode Island, including the Newport Museum, Rhody Center for World Music and Dance, and the Pawtucket Armory. Michelle's "Music Is Healing" program promotes wellness through the power of music and works with individuals with dementia, Alzheimer's, Veterans and those working through grief. She also founded the program, "Singing Sirens," to help women who feel they have lost their voices and hopes to expand the program to Sojourner House. She returns to Trinity Rep after working as a receptionist from 2004-2007.

TRINITY REPERTORY COMPANY

Rhode Island's Tony Award-winning theater, Trinity Rep has created unparalleled professional theater for and with its community since its founding in 1963. Trinity Rep strives to facilitate human connection and has been a driving force behind the creativity that fuels and defines the region for more than 50 years.

Trinity Rep is committed to reinventing the public square and inspiring dialogue by creating emotionally-stimulating live productions that range from classical to contemporary and innovative education programs for all ages and abilities. Its annual production of *A Christmas Carol* has brought families together for more than four decades and made memories for over a million audience members. It will return again in 2019 for its 42nd year.

Subscriptions are now on sale for the 2019-20 Season, including the world-premiere of *The Prince of Providence* by George Brant, based on the book *The Prince of Providence* by Mike Stanton; *Fade* by Tanya Saracho; August Wilson's *Radio Golf*; *A Tale of Two Cities* by Brian McEleney, based on the novel by Charles Dickens; *Sweat* by Lynn Nottage; and *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* with music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim and book by Hugh Wheeler. Single tickets will be available for purchase later this summer.



For more information on our 2019-20 Season, call the box office at (401) 351-4242 or visit Trinity Rep's website at www.TrinityRep.com.

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