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Contact: [Jim Byk](#) / [Kelly Guiod](#)

## **Building for the Arts Welcomes New President David J. Roberts**

(December 7, 2022 – New York, NY) - **Building for the Arts** (BFA), the non-profit organization that programs and administers Theatre Row, Music and the Brain, and the American Playwriting Foundation, announced today that **David J. Roberts** will succeed **Wendy Rowden** as President. Rowden, who served as BFA's President for eight years, will remain on BFA's Board of Directors following her December 13, 2022 departure.

Roberts, who was BFA's Interim Director of Theatre Operations in the spring of 2022, has previously served as Managing Director of the Classical Theatre of Harlem, Managing Director of the Pearl Theatre Company, Executive Director of 651 ARTS, Executive Director of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Foundation, and Interim Managing Director of the Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival. He teaches at the David Geffen School of Drama at Yale and The New School's College of Performing Arts.

"I've long been inspired by BFA's distinctive work in the performing arts sector, from my early years in NYC witnessing AMAS Musical Theatre's off-Broadway production of *Zanna, Don't!* as an audience member, to serving as line producer of *Sonia Flew* by Melinda Lopez at the 2006 Summer Play Festival, both presented at Theatre Row," said new President Roberts. "BFA's mission-focus on 'access' and 'opportunity' align beautifully with my personal values, as I've actively sought out opportunities in my career where inclusion and diversity are accepted, embraced, and celebrated. I look forward to serving the institution and its vibrant, multi-faceted community of artists, arts organizations, audiences, and educators."

Outgoing President Rowden said, "I am truly delighted to be turning over the reins to David. His keen intellect and passion for BFA's mission will lead the organization to the next level."

Board Chair **Jeff Horwitz** added, "Wendy has been a transformative force for Building for the Arts, creating an active and engaged board and staff, supporting and growing programs, and positioning us for continued success delivering for the arts and our community. We have been lucky to have her attention and prodigious energy and are thrilled to have her remain on our board."

“We are excited and energized to have David Roberts join the organization to lead us into our next phase. David is our first President with direct theatrical and performing arts experience and we welcome his vital perspective and passion for all our efforts.

“None of this would have been achieved were it not for the commitment and devotion of the search committee, under the unflagging leadership of board member **Andy Hamingson**. Andy brought deep industry expertise, ensuring equity and an outstanding result in what was a highly competitive process.”

Building for the Arts (BFA) expands access to the performing arts by providing creative space, learning opportunities, and hubs for artistic connection. BFA’s signature projects – Theatre Row, Music and the Brain, and the American Playwriting Foundation – nurture artists, audiences, and youth with a focus on accessibility and inclusion.

[bfany.org](http://bfany.org)

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**David J. Roberts** was recently named President of Building for the Arts and will officially begin his tenure on December 13, 2022. With over 20 years’ experience in the performing arts, David comes to BFA with an extensive background as a producer, manager, and executive leader, with a track record of leading organizations through moments of transformation with roles at institutions including 651 ARTS, Stage Directors and Choreographers Foundation, Classical Theatre of Harlem, Pearl Theatre Company, and SITI Company. Most recently, he consulted for Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival serving as Interim Managing Director and BFA’s Theatre Row as Interim Director of Theatre Operations.

David is on faculty at The New School’s College of Performing Arts, where he teaches graduate students a course on Arts Management and Nonprofit Governance. He is also a lecturer in theater management on faculty at David Geffen School of Drama at Yale (DGSD), where he teaches a course on Identity-Specific Theaters and co-teaches the Management Seminar. He serves on the editorial advisory board of DGSD’s Theater Management Knowledge Base and is a co-founder of the Artists’ Anti-Racism Coalition, a grassroots organizing effort to help the Off-Broadway community dismantle systems of exclusion and oppression. He is a 2021 Rockwood Leadership Fellow.

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