



May 16, 2008



Diane Paulus, new artistic director of the A.R.T.  
Photo © Dario Acosta 2007

**News Office Multimedia**

[Slide Shows](#)

[Videos](#)

[Special Presentations](#)

## Diane Paulus appointed artistic director of the American Repertory Theatre

Harvard University and the American Repertory Theatre (A.R.T.) announced today (May 16) the appointment of Diane Paulus as artistic director. She will be the third artistic leader of the A.R.T., following founding director Robert Brustein (1980–2002) and Robert Woodruff (2002–07). Paulus is a critically acclaimed director of theater and opera; her productions have garnered multiple Obie awards, and she is one of the most highly regarded theater artists in the country. She will begin her responsibilities in the fall with the planning of the 2009-10 season.

Paulus' relationship with the A.R.T. began more than 20 years ago when she was an undergraduate at Harvard. In her words, "I feel my perspective on theater was shaped by my years attending the A.R.T." She has gone on to direct a distinguished repertoire of work that has drawn acclaim from remarkably diverse audiences and critics around the world. Equally at home with plays, musical theater, and opera, her body of work includes "The Donkey Show," a disco adaptation of "A Midsummer Night's Dream," which ran for six years off-Broadway and toured internationally; "Another Country" by James Baldwin at Riverside Church; the Obie Award-winning "Eli's Comin'," featuring the music and lyrics of Laura Nyro; the 40th anniversary concert production of "Hair" in Central Park for the Public Theatre; and "Don Giovanni," "The Turn of the Screw," "Le Nozze di Figaro," and "Così fan tutte," all for the Chicago Opera Theatre.

"The A.R.T. is an organization that is uniquely positioned to strengthen the place and the role of the arts at Harvard University and in the broader Cambridge and Boston communities," said President Drew Faust. "I am very pleased to welcome Diane Paulus back to Harvard at this exciting point in time when we are actively studying ways in which to integrate arts more closely into the life and the curriculum of the University. She is an accomplished director with an interest in and a talent for engaging young people. Diane will be an important part of our efforts to build new partnerships between the A.R.T. and the University community at large — faculty, students, and the administration. I look forward to Diane's first season with great anticipation."

"I am very happy that Diane Paulus has agreed to become the theater's next artistic director," said Provost Steven E. Hyman, who chaired the search committee composed of Harvard

faculty, members of the theater's fiduciary and advisory boards, and outside artists. "I believe that Diane will become a central figure in the new cultural dialogue at Harvard and I look forward to supporting her as she guides us to a new period of excitement and exchange between the A.R.T., the University, and the local, national, and international theater communities."

Hyman also thanked the members of the search committee for their diligence and hard work in finding Paulus. "I am very pleased with how well the committee has worked together. The sustained energy and passion that committee members — representing various A.R.T. and University constituencies — gave to this search makes me very hopeful about future collaborations."

Asked to comment on the appointment, Paulus said, "I am deeply honored to be appointed artistic director of the A.R.T. When I was a student at Harvard, there was no question the A.R.T. was the most exciting and vibrant theater in America. I am thrilled to build on that legacy, and lead the A.R.T. into the future, creating a home for the next generation of outstanding theater artists who will redefine and revitalize the meaning of theater for our society and for the community. I am very impressed with President Faust's commitment to the arts, and I plan to work closely with Harvard to examine how the A.R.T. can be more fully integrated into the life of the University. "

A.R.T. Executive Director Robert J. Orchard heralded the appointment saying: "I am both excited and proud to have an artist we helped nurture take the organization into a dynamic new era. Please join me in welcoming Diane into our growing family, and supporting her as she leads us down new artistic paths and reaffirms our dedication to creating the most compelling, thought-provoking theater in the country."

Trained as a dancer and a student of classical music, Paulus' work fuses the traditional with contemporary and popular culture across a variety of genres, including theater, opera, rock, and innovative jazz-inflected pieces. She received an A.B. in social studies from Harvard University, where she graduated Phi Beta Kappa; and has an M.F.A. in directing from Columbia University's School of the Arts. Her recent theater work also includes "Lost Highway" (based on the David Lynch film) for the English National Opera and the Young Vic; "Turandot: Rumble for the Ring," co-created with Randy Weiner at the Bay Street Theatre; "The Golden Mickeys" for Disney Creative Entertainment; "Best of Both Worlds," a gospel/R&B adaptation of "A Winter's Tale" produced by Music-Theatre Group and The Women's Project; "The Karaoke Show," an adaptation of "The Comedy of Errors," set in a karaoke bar. She also directed the Obie Award-winning and Pulitzer Prize-finalist "Running Man" by jazz composer Diedre Murray and poet Cornelius Eady, and "Swimming with Watermelons," created in association with Project 400, the theater company she co-founded with Randy Weiner.

As an opera director, her productions also include all three Monteverdi operas "Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria," "L'incoronazione di Poppea," and "Orfeo" at Chicago Opera

Theatre. She is a frequent collaborator with British conductor Jane Glover; in 2002, their critically acclaimed production of "Orfeo" was presented as part of The Monteverdi Cycle at the Brooklyn Academy of Music. This coming summer, she will be directing a production of "Kiss Me Kate" at the Glimmerglass Opera Festival, and the revival of "Hair" for the Public Theatre at the Delacorte Theatre in Central Park.

Paulus has been teaching at Barnard College/Columbia University, and the Yale School of Drama. She and her husband, writer and producer Randy Weiner, have two small children.

[Harvard News Office](#)

[Photo Reprints](#)

[Previous Issues](#)

[Contact Us](#)

© 2008 The President and Fellows of Harvard College