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STAGE DIRECTORS AND CHOREOGRAPHERS SOCIETY (SDC) ANNOUNCES EXECUTIVE BOARD ELECTION RESULTS AND THE PRESIDENT’S AWARD FOR EXTRAORDINARY SERVICE AT ITS ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING, NOVEMBER 17, 2025

Michael John Garcés Elected as Executive Board President

President’s Award for Extraordinary Service given to Mark Brokaw

(New York, November 19, 2025) – Stage Directors and Choreographers Society (SDC) announced the election of **Michael John Garcés** as Executive Board President at its Annual Membership Meeting on Monday, November 17. In addition, SDC shared the results of the 2025 Executive Board election and announced **Mark Brokaw** as the recipient of this year’s President’s Award for Extraordinary Service, bestowed by outgoing SDC Board President **Evan Yionoulis**.

Garcés is a Los Angeles-based director and playwright whose work elevates both community-engaged and professional theatre. Currently a Professor of Practice at Arizona State University, he is the former artistic director of Cornerstone Theater Company and directs at theatres across the country. Garcés was elected for a three-year term.

“I am humbled and honored to be given the opportunity to serve as President of this extraordinary Union,” says Garcés. “This is a time of political and economic volatility. The labor movement and freedom of expression are under threat. I find inspiration, strength, and solace in the power and vision of our Membership, the bold leadership of our Board, and the tireless work of our fiercely dedicated staff. SDC will stand united with integrity and find opportunities in the face of challenges to empower our Membership and fight to protect and expand our hard-won rights. This is who we are. This is our history. Together we will make it our future.”

Elected as Board Officers were **John Rando** as Executive Vice President, **Joshua Bergasse** as First Vice President, **Dan Knechtges** as Treasurer, **Leah C. Gardiner** as Secretary, **Tamilla Woodard** as Second Vice President, and **Joseph Haj** as Third Vice President.

Kent Gash, **JoAnn M. Hunter**, **Tinashe Kajese-Bolden**, **Lorin Latarro**, **Jess McLeod**, and **Lisa Peterson** were newly elected to the Board to serve as At-large members, **Vivienne Benesch** was elected as Southeast Regional Representative, and **Susan V. Booth** was elected as Central Regional Representative. Incumbent Board members **Joshua Bergasse**, **Leah C. Gardiner**, **Dan Knechtges**, **Michael Mayer**, and **Robert O’Hara** were

re-elected to three-year terms. At the Membership Meeting, Yionoulis also recognized outgoing Executive Board members **Liz Diamond, Lydia Fort, Christopher Gattelli, and Annie-B Parson** for their invaluable work and service.

Yionoulis presented the 2025 President's Award for Extraordinary Service, which is traditionally given to a Member who has contributed to the strength of the Union, to the late **Mark Brokaw**. An SDC Member since 1991, Brokaw served on the SDC Executive Board for more than 20 years, including two terms as Vice President, and served as President of SDC Foundation from 2020-2024.

Yionoulis noted Brokaw's illustrious career as a director in her remarks, as well as his service to SDC. "His experience as a director of new work served the Union well as he co-chaired the groundbreaking LORT negotiations that secured coverage for Development work. For Off-Broadway he co-chaired the successful fight to cover Fight Choreography. Both negotiations made it possible for SDC to subsequently advance these protections in other jurisdictions."

SDC Executive Board Officers

President, Michael John Garcés
Executive Vice President, John Rando
First Vice President, Joshua Bergasse
Treasurer, Dan Knechtges
Secretary, Leah C. Gardiner
Second Vice President, Tamilla Woodard
Third Vice President, Joseph Haj

Members of the Executive Board

Saheem Ali, Vivienne Benesch, Melia Bensussen, Anne Bogart, Susan V. Booth, Shelley Butler, Donald Byrd, Desdemona Chiang, Valerie Curtis-Newton, Kent Gash, Steven Hoggett, JoAnn M. Hunter, Tinashe Kajese-Bolden, Moisés Kaufman, Lorin Latarro, Michael Mayer, Jess McLeod, Robert O'Hara, Lisa Peterson, Sam Pinkleton, Lisa Portes, Lonny Price, Jon Lawrence Rivera, Ellenore Scott, Leigh Silverman, Katie Spelman, Susan Stroman, Maria Torres, Annie Yee

About SDC

SDC is the theatrical union that unites, empowers, and protects professional stage directors and choreographers throughout the United States. Our mission is to foster a national community of professional stage directors and choreographers by protecting the rights, health and livelihoods of all our Members; negotiating and enforcing employment agreements across a range of jurisdictions; facilitating the exchange of ideas, information, and opportunities; and educating current and future generations about the critical role of directors and choreographers in leading the field. SDCweb.org

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