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For Immediate Release

Contact: Steven Padla / [press@artidea.org](mailto:press@artidea.org)

### **INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF ARTS & IDEAS NAMES SHELLEY QUIALA NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Upon the unanimous recommendation of the Board of Directors, following an international search process guided by Arts Consulting Group, Chair **Gordon Geballe** has announced that **Shelley Quiala** will be the next Executive Director of the **International Festival of Arts & Ideas**, effective August 1, 2020.

Quiala comes to the International Festival of Arts & Ideas from the Ordway Center for the Performing Arts in St. Paul, Minnesota, where she has worked since 2003. For the past six years, she served as Vice President in Programming, Education and Community Engagement in this multifaceted organization. She is widely known for her commitment to equity in the field of performing arts.

“On behalf of the entire Board, I am delighted to congratulate and welcome Shelley Quiala to the International Festival of Arts & Ideas,” said Board Chair Gordon Geballe. “Shelley’s remarkable track record over the course of nearly two decades at the Ordway Center—particularly in the areas of executive management, fundraising, program development, social impact, and community engagement—uniquely qualifies her to lead the next chapter of the Festival.”

At the Ordway, Quiala led a team that programmed and produced concerts, comedy, dance, and educational programming that reached more than 150,000 people annually. She worked with colleagues and community to grow the Flint Hills Family Festival over more than two decades as a national and international model. During her tenure at the Ordway, the participation in school programming grew by more than 50 percent to reach more than 60,000 youth each year. She also led major initiatives in bilingual programming and community engagement work that centered the narratives of Black, Indigenous and People of Color. She managed a statewide arts awards program for impact in the arts, championed socioeconomic access and led collaborations with universities, community centers, and school districts. Prior to her work at the Ordway, Shelley worked with Teatro del Pueblo, a Latinx theater company in Saint Paul, Minnesota. In her former role as a board member for the International Performing Arts for Youth (IPAY), she co-led professional development with the executive director. She is currently a board member of TYA-USA Theater for Young Audiences, US division (TYA-USA) where she is active in supporting their annual festival and conference. Committed to reducing barriers to arts and educational participation, she is a frequent speaker at national and international conferences. Quiala

graduated summa cum laude from the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities with a double major in Spanish and Performance as a Medium for Social Change. She put herself through school and was able to study in both Cuba and Venezuela as an undergraduate.

“New Haven is filled with a spectrum of diversity and creativity and is rich with opportunities to co-create new pathways forward,” said Shelley Quiala. “I am thrilled to be able to build on the Festival’s extraordinary foundation with a talented staff, vibrant community, and visionary board of directors.”

Co-Founder **Roslyn Meyer** said, “The Festival already has exceeded even the wildest dreams **Anne Calabresi, Jean Handley,** and I had when we started it in 1996,” said Roslyn Meyer. “I couldn’t be more delighted to welcome Shelley Quiala to lead us into our next quarter century of thrilling art and visionary ideas here in New Haven.”

Quiala succeeds **Liz Fisher** and **Tom Griggs** who have served as Co-Directors of the Festival since 2017. Fisher, who has worked for the Festival for more than 20 years, and Griggs, who joined the staff in 2014 after serving on the Festival Board for several years, announced their retirements last fall. They plan to assist in the leadership transition over the course of the next year.

“Liz Fisher and Tom Griggs have led the Festival with keen intelligence, infectious joyfulness, and an extraordinary commitment to delivering the best experience possible year after year for artists and audiences alike,” said Geballe. “That may be no more apparent than it is this year, when they and the entire staff devised a 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Season that celebrates our past, our present moment, and looks ahead to a future when we can all gather together again. They are special people and will be sorely missed, although I’m certain we will see them both at Festivals well into the future.”

### **MORE ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF ARTS & IDEAS**

The International Festival of Arts & Ideas celebrates and builds community, engages with vital issues, and promotes the arts. Each year, we highlight the City’s diverse and culturally rich community with events featuring world-class artists, thinkers, and leaders. The Festival’s additional programs include the annual Visionary Leadership Award and educational opportunities like the High School Fellowship Program. The Festival was established in 1996 by Anne Calabresi, Jean M. Handley, and Roslyn Meyer, who envisioned an annual celebration in New Haven—a city steeped in a rich array of cultural and educational traditions—distinguished from other arts festivals by its fusion of the arts with events centered on sharing ideas.

The Festival is presented with major support from Yale University, The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven, Connecticut Office of the Arts, and the National Endowment for the Arts with additional support from The City of New Haven, KeyBank, The Whitney Center, Yale New Haven Health, the Avangrid Foundation in partnership with United Illuminating and Southern CT Gas, Connecticut Humanities, a non-profit affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities, and our generous community of individual supporters.

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