



## American Repertory Theater

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**American Repertory Theater to Present Reading of  
“Building the Wall”  
By “All the Way” Playwright Robert Schenkkan  
Wednesday, November 1 at 7:30PM**

**A.R.T. of Human Rights Panel Discussion with Schenkkan and Others to Follow**

**Cambridge, MA—American Repertory Theater (A.R.T.)** will present a free public reading of *Building the Wall* by Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award-winning playwright **Robert Schenkkan** (*All the Way, The Kentucky Cycle*) and directed by **Ari Edelson** (director of the play’s 2017 New York Premiere, artistic director of The Orchard Project) on Wednesday, November 1 at 7:30PM in the Ames Courtroom in Austin Hall (1515 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge) at Harvard Law School. This blistering exploration of a disastrous near-future written in the weeks following the 2016 election will be followed by an **A.R.T. of Human Rights** panel discussion led by Professor **Timothy Patrick McCarthy**. Tickets are free and can be reserved online at [americanrepertorytheater.org/buildingthewall](http://americanrepertorytheater.org/buildingthewall).

*Building the Wall* lays out the potential consequences of contemporary anti-immigration campaign rhetoric. Set in 2019, the play imagines, the rhetoric has become policy, and massive numbers of undocumented immigrants and others have been incarcerated in private prisons and camps. As Rick, the former warden of one facility, awaits sentencing for events which happened under his watch, he is interviewed by Gloria, a historian who has come in search of the truth about how the unthinkable became the inevitable.

*The Hollywood Reporter* called *Building the Wall*, **“Powerful...a solid reminder of how quickly and effectively theater can respond to what’s going on in the world.”**

**Schenkkan** reflects, “Several years ago I stumbled across *Into That Darkness* by Gitta Sereny. It is an attempt to understand the bleakest of the Nazi horrors by focusing on one ordinary man who for a brief moment, found himself with unlimited power. The past is often the future, and in this play I have imagined a not-so-distant time to come in which President Trump’s rhetoric has found its full expression. While the current political crisis is extraordinary it is not new, the authoritarian playbook is well established. The question, of course, is not so much what the Authorities will do but how we, the citizens, will respond.”

The issues raised in the play will be explored in the panel discussion that follows. Professor **Timothy Patrick McCarthy** (Host, A.R.T. of Human Rights; Core Faculty and Director of Culture Change & Social Justice Initiatives, Carr Center for Human Rights Policy at the Harvard Kennedy School) will facilitate a conversation with **Matias Ramos** (Director, Phillips Brooks House Association, Harvard University; Co-Founder, United We Dream), **Karen Finney** (2017 Fellow, Institute of Politics, Harvard Kennedy School; Former Communications Director, Democratic National Committee), and *Building the Wall* playwright **Robert Schenkkan**.

## ABOUT A.R.T. OF HUMAN RIGHTS

**A.R.T. of Human Rights** is an ongoing collaboration with the Carr Center for Human Rights Policy at Harvard University that uses the arts and the humanities to explore some of the most pressing human rights issues of our time. This series features public conversations with leading artists, academics, and activists, as well as educational and artistic partnerships with local schools and organizations. Building on the Carr Center's commitment to advancing human rights principles, and the A.R.T.'s mission to "expand the boundaries of theater," **The A.R.T. of Human Rights** is designed to foster a new model for community education, civic engagement, and creative expression. It is directed and hosted by **Timothy Patrick McCarthy**, award-winning Harvard faculty member and director of the Carr Center's Sexuality, Gender, and Human Rights Program.

## ABOUT THE A.R.T.

The **American Repertory Theater** (A.R.T.) at Harvard University is a leading force in the American theater, producing groundbreaking work in Cambridge and beyond. The A.R.T. was founded in 1980 by Robert Brustein, who served as Artistic Director until 2002, when he was succeeded by Robert Woodruff. Diane Paulus began her tenure as Artistic Director in 2008. Under the leadership of Paulus and Executive Producer Diane Borger, the A.R.T. seeks to expand the boundaries of theater by programming events that immerse audiences in transformative theatrical experiences.

Throughout its history, the A.R.T. has been honored with many distinguished awards, including the Tony Award for Best New Play for ***All the Way*** (2014); consecutive Tony Awards for Best Revival of a Musical for ***Pippin*** (2013) and ***The Gershwins' Porgy and Bess*** (2012), both of which Paulus directed; a Pulitzer Prize; a Jujamcyn Prize for outstanding contribution to the development of creative talent; the Tony Award for Best Regional Theater; and numerous Elliot Norton and IRNE Awards.

The A.R.T. collaborates with artists around the world to develop and create work in new ways. It is currently engaged in a number of multi-year projects, including a new collaboration with Harvard's Center for the Environment that will result in the development of new work over several years. Under Paulus's leadership, the A.R.T.'s club theater, OBERON, has been an incubator for local and emerging artists and has attracted national attention for its innovative programming and business models.

As the professional theater on the campus of Harvard University, the A.R.T. catalyzes discourse, interdisciplinary collaboration, and creative exchange among a wide range of academic departments, institutions, students, and faculty members, acting as a conduit between its community of artists and the university. The A.R.T. Institute for Advanced Theater Training, operated in association with the Moscow Art Theatre School, offers graduate training in acting, dramaturgy, and voice. A.R.T. also plays a central role in Harvard's newly launched undergraduate Theater, Dance, and Media concentration, teaching courses in directing, dramatic literature, acting, voice, design, and dramaturgy.

Dedicated to making great theater accessible, the A.R.T. actively engages more than 5,000 community members and local students annually in project-based partnerships, workshops, conversations with artists, and other enrichment activities both at the theater and across the Greater Boston area.

Through all of these initiatives, the A.R.T. is dedicated to producing world-class performances in which the audience is central to the theatrical experience.

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