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Theatre Department's Dr. Baron Kelly Receives Fulbright

Will Use Grant to Do Research in Norway on Immigrant Populations and Their Involvement With the Arts

ORANGE, Calif. Dr. Baron Kelly, assistant professor of theatre at Chapman University, has been awarded a Fulbright Scholar grant, the U.S. Department of State and the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Fund have announced. Through the Fulbright program, Dr. Kelly will travel to Norway for a residency in the city of Bergen, where he will carry out research at the International Migration and Ethnic Relations (IMER) Center of the University of Bergen. The aim of the center is increase research-based knowledge about international migration, and Dr. Kelly will carry out pioneering work dealing with ethnic groups in Scandinavia and their involvement in the arts.

This is Dr. Kelly's second Fulbright; the first was awarded to him while he was still a graduate student at the University of Wisconsin. That first grant was given to him for his research and doctoral dissertation on the American actor Earle Hyman (b. 1926), who lives in Norway and is best known to U.S. audiences as Russell Huxtable, Bill Cosby's TV dad on *The Cosby Show*. While in Norway, he met Anne Wiggins Brown (b. 1912) one of the first African-American opera stars and the original Bess in Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess*, and became an expert on her career as well. He was required to learn Norwegian to do his research. I knew I'd have to be able to go into the archives and read things, he says, and is now quite fluent in the language.

What did it feel like to win a second Fulbright? I just couldn't believe it, Dr. Kelly said. It was an upwelling of emotion my mother passed away in 2003, and she would have been so proud. She wouldn't have known the nuances of what this meant, but she would have known it was an incredible opportunity for her son.

Dr. Kelly will focus his studies at IMER upon how immigrant groups can integrate into the arts in Scandinavia, as well as how they are being integrated into society as a whole. The U.S. has had many social movements that have opened doors for people, he says. In Norway, that hasn't happened as much, and the numbers of people of color in the theatre and the other arts music, dance, opera have not been as great. Now that all seems to be changing now we have second and third generations of children whose parents or grandparents came to Norway from Somalia or the Philippines or India, but now they're Norwegian. They go to concerts or plays and see the people on stage, and say I want to do that. But, for example, there's only one major theatre school in Norway and how many students of color have they picked in that school's existence? The prime minister of Norway has declared that 2008 will be the Year of Multiculturalism in his nation, so I'm going over at a great time to study all this.

Dr. Kelly trained at London's Royal Academy of Dramatic Art and holds his MFA from California State University, Long Beach and his Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin at Madison. He has been a visiting scholar at Harvard University and has appeared in productions

with the Royal National Theatre of Great Britain, the Stratford Shakespeare Festival of Canada, the Edinburgh Theatre Festival, the Academy Theatre of Dublin and the National Theatre of Norway. He appeared on Broadway with Al Pacino in *Electra and Salome*, and has performed with more than 30 regional theaters, including Shakespeare

Orange County. His television appearances have included roles on *Law & Order*, *Frasier*, *JAG* and *Homicide: Life on the Streets*, and his film appearances have included roles in *A Day Without a Mexican*, *Bird*, *Looking for Jose* and *The Couch*. On May 19, he will be inducted into the Wall of Fame at Cal State Long Beach, an honor reserved for very distinguished alumni.

Dr. Kelly is one of approximately 800 U.S. faculty and professionals who will travel abroad in the coming year through the Fulbright Scholar program. Established in 1946 under legislation introduced by the late Senator J. William Fulbright of Arkansas, the programs purpose is to build mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the rest of the world.

Sponsored by the United States Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, the Fulbright program is Americas flagship international educational exchange program. Since its inception, the program has exchanged approximately 273,000 people 102,900 Americans who have studied, taught or researched abroad and 170,600 students, scholars and teachers from other countries who have engaged in similar activities in the U.S. Recipients of Fulbright awards are selected on the basis of academic or professional achievement, as well as demonstrated leadership potential in their fields.