

Freelance Theater Artist and Consultant

January 2021 – present

Seema Sueko is a theater director, writer, and consultant. Her current projects include adapting the novel [SONG OF THE EXILE](#) by Hawaiian writer Kiana Davenport into a play with jazz music, serving as a Co-Curator with [DNAWORKS LLC](#), and the [Hawai'i Theater People Project](#). Past projects include:

Directing Credits (partial list)

*SOMETHING MOVING by Pearl Cleage	Ford's Theatre , Washington, DC	Sept-Oct 2023
SILENT SKY by Lauren Gunderson	Asolo Repertory , Sarasota, FL	Jan - Mar 2023
THE CHINESE LADY by Lloyd Suh	Denver Center , Denver, CO	Sept/Oct 2022
* imagine a u.s. without racism , commissioned	Mixed Blood , Minneapolis, MN	April 2022
HOLD THESE TRUTHS by Ken Ludwig	Virginia Stage Company , Norfolk, VA	October 2021
DEAR JACK, DEAR LOUISE by Ken Ludwig	Virginia Stage Company , Norfolk, VA	October 2021
* GERMANTOWN PLAYS PERICLES , devised	Shakespeare in Clark Park , Philadelphia	August 2021
* VETERANS DAY 2020 – Virtual Film	Atlantic Council , Washington, DC	November 2020
Arena Stage Films , monologue co-director	Arena Stage , Washington, DC	May–Oct 2020
SILENT SKY by Lauren Gunderson	Ford's Theatre , Washington, DC	January 2020
* RIGHT TO BE FORGOTTEN by Sharyn Rothstein	Arena Stage , Washington, DC	October 2019
THE HEIRESS by Ruth and Augustus Goetz	Arena Stage , Washington, DC	February 2019
VIETGONE by Qui Nguyen	Denver Center , Denver, CO	September 2018
THE PRICE by Arthur Miller	Arena Stage , Washington, DC	October 2017
SMART PEOPLE by Lydia Diamond	Arena Stage , Washington, DC	March 2017
THE FANTASTICKS by Tom Jones & Harvey Schmidt	The Pasadena Playhouse	September 2016
A SINGLE SHARD by Richard Schenkkan	People's Light , Malvern, PA	March 2016
REAL WOMEN HAVE CURVES by Josefina Lopez	The Pasadena Playhouse	September 2015
STOP KISS by Diana Son	The Pasadena Playhouse	November 2014
EXTRAORDINARY CHAMBERS by David Wiener	Mo'olelo , San Diego, CA	June 2013
*THE CAR PLAYS	La Jolla Playhouse , San Diego, CA	February 2012
HOW I GOT THAT STORY by Amlin Gray	Mo'olelo , San Diego, CA	February 2012
26 MILES by Quiara Alegria Hudes	Mo'olelo , San Diego, CA	September 2011
YELLOW FACE by David Henry Hwang	Mo'olelo , San Diego, CA	October 2010
TOMBS OF THE VANISHING INDIAN (reading)	Native Voices , San Diego, CA	June 2010
GOOD BOYS by Jane Martin	Mo'olelo , San Diego, CA	May 2009
PERMANENT COLLECTION by Thomas Gibbons	Mo'olelo , San Diego, CA	February 2008
ROMEO AND JULIET (assistant director)	The Old Globe , San Diego, CA	June 2008
*THE ADOPTION PROJECT: TRIAD by Kimber Lee	Mo'olelo , San Diego, CA	March 2007
SINCE AFRICA by Mia McCullough	The Old Globe , San Diego, CA	January 2009
	Mo'olelo , San Diego, CA	October 2006

*World Premiere

Consultant / Guest Speaker / Host

- Management Consultants for the Arts – Field Advisor, April 2021 – December 2022
- Federal Housing Finance Agency, Women's Equality Day Speaker, August 2022
- Forum for Cultural Engagement – Curator and Moderator, Speaker Series sponsored by U.S. Department of State, 2021, 2022
- Thomas S. Kenan Institute for the Arts – Host, *Hindsight 2020*, virtual salon
- University Guest Speaker: Blackburn College (Theater class, Professor Laura Matthews), Columbia University (Directing Class, Prof. Anne Bogart), Emerson College (Theater class, Prof. Melia Bensussen), Kennedy Center Directing Intensive, University of Oklahoma (Directing II Class, Prof. Seth

Gordon), Washington College (Theater class, Prof. Brendon Fox), William and Mary (Theater class, Prof. Mark Lerman), Yale School of Drama (Scenic Drafting Class, Prof. Mikiko Suzuki-MacAdams)

Publications & Plays

- Commissioned Play: *imagine a u.s. without racism*, produced by Mixed Blood Theatre (2022)
- Article: [“Entwined Viruses and Solving for Pattern,” SDC Journal, Fall 2020](#)
- Article: [“Get Smart,” SF Breaking Character Magazine \(2017\)](#)
- Published research: [Development and pilot randomized control trial of a drama program to enhance well-being among older adults](#), The Arts in Psychotherapy (2016)
- Commissioned Monologue: [Vet Story](#), produced by Baltimore Center Stage as part of their “My America” 50th Anniversary project (2012)
- Research product: [Green Theater Choices Toolkit](#) (2010)
- Commissioned Play: *Hijab Tube*, a play for young audiences, produced by Mixed Blood Theatre (2009)
- Commissioned Play: *Messy Utopia*, produced by Mixed Blood Theatre, Ivey Award (2007)
- Play: *remains*, produced by Mo`olelo and Saint Mary's University; readings at Golden Thread and Chicago Dramatists; taught at University of Puget Sound; McDonald Playwriting Award (2004)

Previous Artistic Leadership Positions

Deputy Artistic Director

Arena Stage, Washington, DC

July 2016 – December 2020

\$19 million, nonprofit, Equity theater, three venues, 10 productions per season.

Duties included: driving the season-planning process, directing world premiere and classic plays and films, managing artistic development department and visiting artists, overseeing Power Play Commissioning Initiative, Resident Artist program, Playwrights Arena, new play development, department budget and staff, and mentoring Allen Lee Hughes Fellows. Senior Staff member engaged in strategic planning and fundraising. Key accomplishments included creating the [Theater Artists Marketplace](#), [Power Play Summit](#) and [Artistic Director Intensive](#).

Associate Artistic Director

The Pasadena Playhouse, Pasadena, CA

January 6, 2014 – May 27, 2016

\$6 million, nonprofit, Equity theater, two venues, six productions per season.

Duties included: directing plays and musicals, supporting the Artistic Director with season planning, managing 21-member artistic department staff and contractors, HOTHOUSE new play development program, New Generations Theatre Access for Youth Program, *¡Mi Historia, Mi Manera!* Initiative, and Consensus Organizing for Theater. Key accomplishment included creating the consensus organizing strategy to secure the [Wallace Foundation's Building Audiences for Sustainability](#) grant.

Co-Founder & Executive Artistic Director

Mo`olelo Performing Arts Company, San Diego, CA

January 2004 – December 2013

Small, nonprofit, Equity theater company, which operated in the 113-seat Tenth Avenue Theatre and produced a three-show season, served an audience of 30,067, achieved an average of 93% audience capacity, created 181 seasonal jobs, and grew the budget 700% over nine years without deficit or debt. Duties included: designing and implementing the artistic, operational and financial vision, directing, external relations, fundraising, audience development, human resources. Key accomplishments included: creating [Consensus Organizing for Theater](#), the [Green Theater Choices Toolkit](#), [American Theater Wing National Theater Company Award](#), [inaugural resident theater at La Jolla Playhouse](#), and advancing a new play [from Mo`olelo to The Old Globe](#). Received the [inaugural Leadership U grant from Theater Communications Group](#) to spend a year in mentorship at Arena Stage, 2012-2013.

Awards & Recognition

- [2022 TCG Alan Schneider Director Award](#)
- 2020 Zelda Fichandler Award Finalist, Stage Directors and Choreographers Foundation
- 2017 Washingtonian Magazine Women to Watch
- 2016 Asian Pacific American Friends of the Theater (APAFT) Artist of the Year
- 2015 NAACP Theatre Awards Nominations – *Stop Kiss*, Director, Playwright and Cast
- 2014 *Los Angeles Times* Charles McNulty's Top 10 of the year – *Stop Kiss*
- 2013 California State Assembly and Assemblymember Shirley N. Weber Award - "Woman Leader in the Seventy-Ninth District in the Field of Arts"
- 2012 NAACP San Diego Branch Lorraine V. Hansberry Performing Arts Award
- 2012 Consensus Organizer of the Year, awarded by the Consensus Organizing Center, San Diego State University
- 2011 American Theatre Wing Award – From the creators of the Tony Awards, recognizes the most promising emerging theater companies around the nation
- 2011 Ivy Bethune Award from Actors' Equity Association to Mo'olelo
- 2011 New York Coalition of Professional Women in the Arts and Media (NYCWAM) Collaboration Prize - Honorable Mention for *Sila*
- 2010 Des McAnuff New Vision Award from the San Diego Theater Critics Circle, the honor recognizes "inspired and risk-taking artistic vision"
- 2009, 2008, 2007, 2006 Patte Award for Theatre Excellence, Mo'olelo Awards for Direction, Lighting Design, Sound Design, Ensemble
- 2007 Ivey Award for Playwriting, *Messy Utopia*
- 2006 *San Diego Magazine*, 50 People to Watch
- 2004 McDonald Playwriting Award for Playwriting, *remains*
- 2004 San Diego Theatre Critics Circle Award, Leading Actor, *The Intelligent Design of Jenny Chow*, The Old Globe
- 2004 Anti-Discrimination Committee Artistic and Cultural Achievement Award
- 1999, 1998, 1995 Chicago "Jeff Award," Best Performance, Leading/Supporting Actor, Ensemble

EDUCATION

M.A. International Relations, University of Chicago, *Morton Kaplan Prize for Thesis; Graduated with Honors*

B.A. Politics & Government, University of Puget Sound, *Magna Cum Laude; Coolidge Otis Chapman Honors Scholar; Study Abroad, Tel Aviv University, Israel; Honors Thesis: El Hakawati: Palestinian Theater*

VOLUNTEER

Solidarity Economy Learning Circles for the Theater Community, Organizer, June 2022 – present

Stage Directors and Choreographers Foundation (SDCF) Board of Trustees, February 2021 – present

Stage Directors and Choreographers Society (SDC) Executive Board Member, December 2019 – present

SDC Diversity & Inclusion Committee, March 2014 – 2020

L.A. County Cultural Equity and Inclusion Initiative Advisory Committee, January – May 2016

San Diego Regional Arts and Culture Coalition (SDRACC) – Co-Chair, November 2011 – December 2012

San Diego Association of Nonprofits (SANDAN) – Board Member, January 2010 – June 2011

The San Diego Performing Arts League (SD PAL) - Board Member, January 2006 – June 2007