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## MEDIA RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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### **ARENA STAGE KICKS OFF ITS FRESH NEW SEASON WITH TIMELY TONY-AWARD WINNING MUSICAL *CABARET***

**\*\*\* *Damn Yankees* duo Meg Gillentine and Brad Oscar return to lead Molly Smith's cast of direct-from-Broadway names and familiar Arena faces \*\*\***

(Washington D.C.) "Willkommen, Bienvenue, Welcome!" Arena Stage invites audiences into the Fichandler this fall to indulge in the Tony-Award winning musical *Cabaret*. The dark, decadent journey into pre-World War II Berlin features unforgettable music by John Kander and Fred Ebb and a powerful story written by Joe Masteroff. Artistic Director Molly Smith (*Damn Yankees*, *Camelot*, *South Pacific*) and her creative team have been inspired to highlight the socio-political underpinnings of this satirical musical. ***Cabaret* runs September 8 – October 29 on the Fichandler Stage. The press opening night performance is Thursday, September 14 at 8:00 p.m.**



"*Cabaret* is especially timely," said Smith. "It shows how people in another time and place were asleep while their rights were eroding – until suddenly it was too late. Today in America, our rights are also eroding, and Arena's production of *Cabaret* will highlight these losses in a dramatic way. I am delighted to work with an incomparable cast and creative team to present this great modern musical that is sure to move audiences."

American journalist Clifford Bradshaw lands at the notorious Kit Kat Club in decadent pre-war Berlin where he falls madly in love with English entertainer Sally Bowles. Their affair is tested as her reckless lifestyle overwhelms him and the world around them marches towards chaos. Throughout, the Kit Kat Emcee taunts and satirizes with dazzling musical numbers in a score that includes "Money (Makes the World Go Around)," "Maybe This Time" and the unforgettable title tune.

*Cabaret*, originally produced and directed on Broadway by Harold Prince in 1966 starring Joel Grey as the Emcee, was awarded eight Tony Awards including Best Musical. In 1972, Bob Fosse directed the Oscar-winning movie, again starring Grey and with Liza Minnelli as Sally Bowles. The musical has been revived twice on Broadway, first with Grey in 1987 and again in 1998, starring Alan Cumming and Natasha Richardson, a production which garnered four Tony Awards.

Smith and her creative team have envisioned an environmental production of *Cabaret*, using the 1987 Broadway revival version, which will incorporate the entire Fichandler space including cabaret tables and chairs replacing designated box seats. The designers have taken inspirations from the Dada cultural movement, which was largely influenced by World War I. This is most noticeable in designer Anne Patterson's hypnotic set featuring a spherical multi-level floor. The design allows for versatile scene transitions between the

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Directed by Molly Smith

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realities of Weimar Germany and the sinfully permissive interior of the Kit Kat Club. In his sixth musical at Arena, George Fulginiti-Shakar returns to conduct the Club's band, which will be visibly worked into the set on-stage and will also dress the part in period costume designs by Austin K. Sanderson (*Lady Day at Emerson's Bar & Grill*). David Neumann uses sexy, idiosyncratic choreography to bring this darkly rich musical to life.

**Joe Masteroff** is best known for writing the book for *Cabaret*, taken from John Van Druten's *I Am a Camera*, and based on Christopher Isherwood's *Berlin Stories*. Masteroff's first play to open on Broadway was *The Warm Peninsula*, which debuted in 1959 at the Helen Hayes Theater after a national tour. His first musical *She Loves Me*, also to be produced at Arena this season, opened in New York in 1963 with music and lyrics by Jerry Bock and Sheldon Harnick. Masteroff also wrote the libretto for an operatic version of Eugene O'Neill's *Desire Under the Elms* and the book and lyrics for a production of *Six Wives*, as well as the musical *Paramour*, based on Jean Anouilh's *The Waltz of the Toreadors*.

The legendary songwriting team of **John Kander** and **Freb Ebb** began their partnership in 1962 when they collaborated to write *Flora the Red Menace*. That show was their first joint effort with producer Harold Prince, and also led to the Broadway debut of Liza Minnelli. After the success on Broadway of *Cabaret* in 1966, Kander and Ebb's partnership became an unrivaled harmony, creating scores and incisive lyrics for Broadway musicals – often with challenging themes – including *The Happy Time*, *Zorba*, *70 Girls 70*, *Chicago*, *The Act*, *Woman of the Year*, *The Rink*, *And The World Goes 'Round*, *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, *Steel Pier*, *Fosse*, *The Skin Of Our Teeth* and *The Visit*. Film credits include *Cabaret* in 1972 and *Chicago* in 2002.

### A Cast of 20

D.C. native **Brad Oscar** (Emcee) returns to Arena Stage after portraying the devilish Mr. Applegate in last season's *Damn Yankees*. He recently played David O. Selznick in *Moonlight and Magnolias* at the historic Cape Playhouse. He performed in *The Producers* as Max Bialystock for more than two years and created the role of deranged Nazi playwright Franz Liebkind – receiving a 2001 Tony Award nomination for his performance. Other Broadway and New York credits include the original casts of *Jekyll & Hyde* and *Aspects of Love*, *Forbidden Broadway*, the Encores! production of *Do Re Mi*, as well as Santa in *The Radio City Christmas Spectacular* in Los Angeles and Branson.

**Meg Gillentine** (Sally Bowles) is excited to return to Arena Stage after making her Helen Hayes Award-winning debut as Lola, also in last season's 2005 hit *Damn Yankees*. Her Broadway credits include *Cats* (Cassandra), *Fosse* and *The Frogs* starring Nathan Lane. She can be seen on the PBS broadcast of *Fosse* performing "Steam Heat," "Nowadays" and "Big Spender" with Ann Reinking. Other credits include the first national tour of *Fosse*, the Los Angeles company and first national tour of *The Producers* starring Jason Alexander and Martin Short, and Gladys in *The Pajama Game* at Baltimore Center Stage.

**Walter Charles** (Herr Schultz) has performed on Broadway in *Woman in White*, *Big River*, *Boys From Syracuse*, *Kiss Me Kate*, as Scrooge in *A Christmas Carol* (world premiere), Albin in *La Cage Aux Folles*, *Aspects of Love*, *Me & My Girl*, *Cats*, *Grease*, *Anna Karenina*, *Call Me Madam* with Tyne Daly and *Sunset Boulevard* co-starring Diahann Carroll. NYC Opera credits include *Sweeney Todd* and *110 in the Shade*. He has appeared off-Broadway in *Wit* and *The Immigrant* and in Los Angeles alongside Angela Lansbury in *Sweeney Todd*. Mr. Charles has numerous regional credits including the Kennedy Center's Sondheim Celebration productions of *Sweeney Todd* and *Company* and Hartford Stage's world premiere of *Martin Guerre*.

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**Dorothy Stanley** (Fraulein Schneider) makes her Arena debut direct from the highly acclaimed Tony Award-winning revival of *Sweeney Todd* as the standby for Mrs. Lovett and Pirelli. Other Broadway credits include *La Cage Aux Folles*, *42nd Street*, *Follies*, *Show Boat*, *A Little Night Music*, *Company*, *Into the Woods*, *Kiss of the Spiderwoman* (also Canada and the UK), the original *42nd Street*, *Annie* and *Sugar Babies*. Ms. Stanley toured nationally with Joel Grey in *Cabaret* as Fraulein Kost, played Joan in the off-Broadway revival of *Dames at Sea* and has countless regional credits.

**Glenn Seven Allen** (Clifford Bradshaw) was a swing in Broadway's *The Light in the Piazza*, where he also understudied the roles of Fabrizio and Giuseppe. He was recently seen in the York Theatre Company's production of *A Fine and Private Place*, and his many regional credits include *The Pirates of Penzance*, *Julius Caesar*, *The Student Prince*, *Ligiea*, *The Tales of Hoffmann* and *A Michigan Man*.

**Sherri L. Edelen** (Fraulein Kost) last appeared at Arena Stage in *Sunday in the Park with George* directed by Eric Schaeffer in 1997. Local appearances include *Sunday in the Park with George* and *Merrily We Roll Along* (Kennedy Center's Sondheim Celebration); *A Murder, a Mystery and a Marriage* and *The Diary of Anne Frank* (Round House Theatre); *Urinetown* and *Elegies: A Song Cycle* (Signature Theatre); *Dames at Sea* and *She Loves Me* (Olney Theatre Center); and *A Christmas Carol* (Ford's Theatre). Ms. Edelen has toured nationally in *Big*, and has appeared at numerous regional theaters. After five prior nominations, she is the recipient of the 2000 Helen Hayes Award for Signature Theatre's *Side Show*.

**J. Fred Shiffman** (Ernst Ludwig) last appeared at Arena Stage as Mr. Welch in *Damn Yankees*. Other Arena credits include *Passion Play, a cycle*; *Anna Christie*; *Orpheus Descending*; *Camelot*; *An American Daughter* and *South Pacific*. His Arena credits go back two decades, performing in more than thirty productions. His credits regional credits include *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Old Globe), and a recording of *Barefoot in the Park* with Laura Linney and Eric Stoltz for L.A. Theatre Works. He is the recipient of two Helen Hayes Awards and six nominations. He is currently an Affiliated Artist at Arena Stage.

**The Ensemble** is comprised of Julie Burdick, Billy Bustamante, Hillary Heather Elliott, Deanna Harris, Lynn McNutt, Monique L. Midgette, Kyle Pleasant, Carlos Ponton, Diego Prieto, Jason Strunk and Erica Sweany with swings Jenna Edison and Brett Teresa.

### Direction and Design

Director **Molly Smith**, now in her ninth season as Artistic Director of Arena Stage, directed last season's *Damn Yankees* and *Passion Play, a cycle* and has been a passionate leader in new play development for the past thirty years while at Arena Stage as well as Perseverance Theatre in Alaska, the theater she founded and led for 19 years. Her directorial work has also been seen at Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Trinity Repertory Company and Tarragon Center Theatre. Ms. Smith brings artists of international renown to work at Arena Stage and serves as a member of the Board of the Theatre Communications Group as well as the Center for International Theatre Development. She has directed two feature films, *Raven's Blood* and *Making Contact*, and received Honorary Doctorates from both Towson and American Universities.

Music Director/Conductor **George Fulginiti-Shakar** returns to Arena Stage following last season's acclaimed production of *Damn Yankees*. Previous Arena musicals include *Camelot*, *South Pacific*, *Animal Crackers* and *Candide*. Recent credits include *1776* (National Portrait Gallery); *Christmas Carol* (Ford's Theatre); *The Oedipus Plays* (Shakespeare Theatre); *The Long Season* (Public Theater, Perseverance Theater); and *Alexander is Not, Not Going to Move* (Kennedy Center). He has received seven Helen Hayes Award nominations, and was recently named an Arena Affiliated Artist.

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**David Neumann's** (Choreographer) work has been featured at The Public Theater, Signature Theater, The New Group, Hartford Stage, Yale Rep and Mabou Mines. Mr. Neumann is the Artistic Director of New York based *advanced beginner group* whose original work has been presented at PS 122, Dance Theater Workshop, Central Park Summerstage, Symphony Space, Brooklyn Academy of Music, the Whitney Museum and Mass MoCA, among others.

**Anne Patterson's** (*Set Designer*) highlight productions include *Every Good Boy Deserves Favor* (Philadelphia Orchestra); *Così Fan Tutte* (BAM); and 13 designs for the Aspen Music Festival. In creating installations for the Brooklyn Philharmonic, Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and American Symphony Orchestra, Ms. Patterson has pioneered a new area of design for symphonic presentations. She has collaborated with artists including directors Blanka and Jiri Zizka, Chris Ashley, Edward Berkeley and Kate Saxon; conductors Robert Spano, Donald Runnicles and Dennis Russell Davies; and playwrights Terrence McNally, Doug Wright and Nilo Cruz. Ms. Patterson's sculptures and paintings have been exhibited at WallSpace in NYC and included in the arts festival "Sevilla Entre Culturas" in Spain.

**Austin K. Sanderson's** (*Costume Designer*) work was last seen at Arena Stage in *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar & Grill*. His design credits include the 2006 season of the Big Apple Circus in NYC, *Jelly's Last Jam* (Alliance Theatre), *Ain't Misbehavin'* (North Shore Music Theatre), the Welcome Parade for Royal Caribbean's "Freedom of the Seas," the world's largest cruise ship, and countless regional theaters.

Lighting Designer **Joel Moritz's** award-winning work has been seen internationally. Recent New York/Off-Broadway work includes *Courting Vampires* (SPF, Theatre Row), *Tatjana in Color* (The Culture Project), *Wave, Just as If, The Tempest, Phedre* (Fisher Center), *King Stag* and *Ivona Princess of Burgundia* (Juilliard). Regional theater and Opera credits include Arena Stage, Chicago Opera Theatre, Court Theatre, Goodman Theatre, Long Wharf, Meadowbrook Theatre, Theatre Alliance of Washington D.C., Rep. Theater of St. Louis, Steppenwolf, About Face Theatre (Chicago).

Hair and Wig Designer **Bettie O. Rogers** has made wigs and designed hairstyles for more than 75 productions Off-Broadway and regionally. Her Broadway credits include *A View from the Bridge*; *Bring in Da Noise, Bring in Da Funk*; *One Mo Time*; *Riverdance on Broadway*; *Street Corner Symphony*; and *Swinging on Star*. For television, she held the "3rd" position (Assistant to the Key Hair Designer) for NBC's "Saturday Night Live" 2001-2006.

Rounding out the creative team are Sound Designer **Phillip Peglow**, Assistant Choreographer **Chris Yon**, Assistant Music Director **Jose C. Simbulan**, Production Dramaturg **Mark Bly**, and Stage Manager **Susan R. White**, and Assistant Stage Managers **Amber Dickerson** and **Kate Olden**.

*Cabaret* is sponsored by Gilbert and Jaylee Mead and by Shugoll Research.

The 2006/07 season is sponsored by Joan and David Maxwell.

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## Special Events, Ticket Information and Performance Calendar

### Stage Banter: the Arena Stage Blog

George Fulginiti-Shakar, the Music Director/Conductor for *Cabaret*, is Arena Stage's guest blogger. His posts will be filled with updates and other fun behind-the-scenes action from the must-see production *Cabaret*. Posts will be added several times a week and interested users may submit their own comments after every post. Visit [blog.arenastage.org](http://blog.arenastage.org) and join the Stage Banter conversation.

### The Salon

**Monday, September 11 at 7:00 p.m.**

**Featuring Molly Smith and special guests from *Cabaret***

In the spirit of artistic and literary salons of the past, The Salon features Artistic Director Molly Smith and other artistic leaders from Arena Stage in a series of lively, in-depth conversations with the playwrights, actors, directors, designers and audiences which make Arena Stage so unique. The Salon is free to Arena Stage subscribers and donors (\$75+), and only \$3 for the general public. Reservations must be made through the Arena Stage Sales Office at (202) 488-3300.

### Southwest Night

**Friday, September 15 at 8:00 p.m.**

A special invitation is extended to our Southwest D.C. neighbors to buy \$20 tickets for one specially designated Friday evening performance of each production. Proof of Southwest D.C. residency or employment must be presented at the time of purchase. Tickets are limited to 4 per person and are based on availability. To purchase tickets, call (202) 488-3300 or stop by the Arena Stage Sales Office.

### Out At Arena

**Friday, October 6 at 8:00 p.m.**

For Gay and Lesbian audiences on selected Friday evenings; a post-show discussion with cast members and a reception follow the performance. Reception FREE for subscribers.

**TICKETS:** Tickets range from \$55-\$74, with discounts available for students and groups. **HOTTIX**, a limited number of half-price, day-of-performance tickets, are available from 90-30 minutes before curtain prior to every performance. **FIVETWENTYFIVE TICKETS**, a limited number of \$10 tickets for patrons aged 5-25, are available for purchase until 30 minutes prior to each performance.

Sales Office	(202) 488-3300
TTY	(202) 484-0247
Group Sales Hotline	(202) 488-4380
Subscriptions	(202) 488-4377
Info for patrons with disabilities	(202) 554-9066

Tickets are available for purchase online at [www.arenastage.org](http://www.arenastage.org).

### PERFORMANCE TIMES:

Tues., Wed., and Sun. at 7:30 p.m. (Exception: 6:00 p.m. curtain 9/17 and matinee only 10/10)

Thurs., Fri., and Sat. at 8:00 p.m.

Sat. and Sun. matinees at 2:00 p.m. (Exception: None on 9/17)

Weekday matinees at 12:00 p.m. on 10/10 and 10/25

**Post-show Conversations:** 9/28 at 8:00 p.m.; 10/3 at 7:30 p.m.

**Sign-interpreted performances:** 10/8 at 7:30 p.m., 10/12 at 8:00 p.m.

**Audio described performances:** 9/27 at 7:30 p.m., 9/30 at 2:00 p.m.

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