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MEDIA RELEASE

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ARENA STAGE SENDS A LOVE LETTER TO D.C. AUDIENCES WITH THE CHARMING BOCK & HARNICK MUSICAL *SHE LOVES ME* THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

**Director Kyle Donnelly fell in love with Joe Masteroff's delightful story and
met her perfect match in the musical's cast and creative team**



(Washington, D.C.) Arena Stage invites D.C. audiences to be swept away with romance and music this holiday season with *She Loves Me*, the heart-warming work with music and lyrics by Jerry Bock and Sheldon Harnick (the song-writing team of *Fiddler on the Roof*) and book by Joe Masteroff (*Cabaret*). Director Kyle Donnelly (*Born Yesterday*, *The Women*) is "madly in love" with her 19th Arena production and the creative family supporting it, including Musical Director/Conductor William Foster McDaniel and Choreographer Kenneth Lee Roberson, who respectively played in and directed last season's *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar & Grill*. D.C.-area native Kevin Kraft and Broadway's recent Belle from *Beauty and the Beast*, Brynn O'Malley, lead a talented cast as Georg and Amalia, the intensely competitive clerks in a small 1930s Budapest shop who are blissfully unaware that the other is their romantic pen pal. ***She Loves Me* runs November 17 – December 31 on the Fichandler Stage. The press opening night performance is Tuesday, November 28 at 8:00 p.m.**

"Arena Stage has wanted to produce this musical gem for several years," said Artistic Director Molly Smith. "It occupies a special place in the hearts of many musical theater fans, and is an especially great match for Donnelly, who has truly mastered the Fichandler space with an impeccable style of her own."

"*She Loves Me* is a story about soul mates that fall in love via the mail, and after I received the script by mail, I began to court and spend time with it to see if we were a true match," said Donnelly. "Now I'm madly in love with this musical and the people involved in it, and hope that D.C. audiences will become just as enchanted by it as well."

She Loves Me originally opened at the Eugene O'Neill Theater in 1963 starring Barbara Cook, and earned a Best Supporting Actor Tony for Jack Cassidy's portrayal of Kodaly. It played in London at the Lyric Theater in 1964 and received a Broadway revival at the Roundabout Theatre Company in 1993. The musical is based on a Hungarian play by Miklos Laszlo, which has inspired the films *The Shop Around The Corner* with Jimmy Stewart, *In the Good Old Summertime* with Judy Garland and the more recent *You've Got Mail*. This endearing tale of unlikely sweethearts, and the eccentric colleagues who aid and abet them, is an intelligent, romantic comedy with a touch of Old World elegance. The intoxicating score features the showstopping "Ice Cream," "Twelve Days to Christmas" and the popular title tune. *The New York Times* said it offers "a continuously melodic evening of sheer entertainment and complete escape."

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Bock and Harnick's celebrated collaboration yielded five scores in seven years: *The Body Beautiful, Fiorello!* (winner of Broadway's triple crown: The Tony Award, The New York Critics' Circle Award and The Pulitzer Prize in drama), *Tenderloin, She Loves Me* (winner of *Variety's* poll of critics as Best Musical, citing Bock and Harnick as best composer and lyricist), *Fiddler on the Roof* (nine Tonys, including Best Musical of the year), *The Apple Tree* and *The Rothschilds*. In addition to the 1989 silver anniversary production of *Fiddler*, a highly esteemed revival of *The Rothschilds* enjoyed a successful run off-Broadway the following year. Since then, Bock and Harnick were triply honored by being inducted into the Theater Hall of Fame, receiving the Johnny Mercer Award from the Songwriters Hall of Fame and the Spirit of American Creativity Award from the Foundation for a Creative America.

Joe 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 was *She Loves Me*, a success out of the partnership with songwriting team Jerry Bock and Sheldon Harnick. 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 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 CAST

Kevin Kraft (*Georg Nowack*), a Springfield, VA native, is thrilled to be making his Arena Stage debut and "coming home" to the city where he first earned his AEA card at Ford's Theatre (*A Christmas Carol*). He appeared on Broadway as Hero (standby) in *...Forum* (with Nathan Lane and Whoopi Goldberg) and Off-Broadway as Turkey (understudy) in *Johnny Guitar*. He played the title role in *The Fartiste*, which won Outstanding Musical at the 2006 NY Fringe Festival. Other highlights include Homer in *Floyd Collins* (ATL), Simon in *Hay Fever* (Theatre Virginia), Hally in *Master Harold ... and the Boys*, and going on for Orlando in *As You Like It* (The Acting Company).

Brynn O'Malley (*Amalia Balash*) most recently starred as Kate Monster/Lucy T. Slut in the original Las Vegas production of *Avenue Q*. She has also appeared on Broadway as Belle in *Disney's Beauty and the Beast*. Regionally, Ms. O'Malley appeared as Lizzie in the Paper Mill Playhouse production of *Baby*, Young Phyllis in *Follies, In Concert* (Broadway Reunion Cast) at the Michigan Theatre and Pam Lukowski in *The Full Monty* at Music Theatre of Wichita.

Sebastian La Cause (*Steven Kodaly*) has appeared on Broadway in *Once Upon a Mattress, Chicago, Minnelli on Minnelli* and as Rocky in *The Rocky Horror Show*. He performed Off-Broadway in new works at Altered Stages (*Wingman*), Emerging Artists Theatre Company (*Edenville*), Wings Theatre Company (*Tiger by the Tail*) and Ensemble Studio Theatre (*Tooth and Claw, The Bus to Buenos Aires*). Regionally, he took on Darren Lemming in *Take Me Out* at The Caldwell Theatre Company and played The Baystreet Theatre (*Pippin*). Mr. La Cause was seen in the Oscar-winning film *Chicago, Showgirls, Eraser* and *The Producers*.

Jim Corti (*Ladislav Sipos*) returns to Arena Stage after receiving a Helen Hayes Award nomination for Outstanding Choreography in director Kyle Donnelly's *Dancing at Lughnasa*. He recently played Amos in *Chicago* (Pioneer Theatre, Salt Lake City). Mr. Corti has appeared (and disappeared) as Harry Houdini in the original Broadway cast of *Ragtime* and portrayed Tateh in the national tour. His Broadway credits also include *Candide, A Chorus Line* and the national tours of *Urinetown, Cabaret*

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and Bob Fosse's *Dancin'*. Mr. Corti played the Engineer in *Miss Saigon* and Otto Kringelein in *Grand Hotel*, which garnered a Joseph Jefferson Award (The Marriott Theatre in Chicago). Regionally, he appeared as Ko-Ko in *The Hot Mikado* (The Pittsburgh Civic Light Opera) and as George Spelvin in *Strike Up the Band* (The Goodspeed Opera House).

Hal Robinson (*Mr. Maraczek*) created the role of Professor Mashkan in *Old Wicked Songs* for which he won the Drama League Award (Best Actor) in New York and the Drama Critics Award in Los Angeles (Best Actor). On Broadway, he was last seen as Herr Schultz in *Cabaret* and was in the original casts of *Grand Hotel*, *the Musical* and *Nick & Nora*. Regionally, Mr. Robinson has appeared in *Nine Armenians*, *Gross Indecency* (Mark Taper Forum), *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hedda Gabler* and *Man and Superman* (Great Lakes Theatre Festival). Mr. Robinson starred as Melvin in the film *Planting Melvin* and is in the recent film *The Night Listener* starring Robin Williams.

Clifton Guterman's (*Arpad Laszlo*) credits include *The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby* (California Shakespeare Theatre; Bay Area Critics Circle Award nomination for Smike); *Finn in the Underworld* (world premiere, Berkeley Repertory); *The Goat, or Who is Sylvia?* and *Beautiful Thing* (Actor's Express); David H. Bell's *A Christmas Carol* (Alliance Theatre); *Bat Boy: The Musical* (Dad's Garage). Mr. Guterman was named Atlanta's Best Up and Coming Actor in 2002 by *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*.

Nancy Lemenager (*Ilona Ritter*) recently starred on Broadway as Brenda in *Movin' Out*. She has also starred in the Jerome Kern musical *Never Gonna Dance* and has appeared on Broadway in *Kiss Me Kate*, *Dream*, *How to Succeed...* and *Guys and Dolls*. This spring she starred as Lisa in the South Coast Repertory world premiere of *The Studio* by Christopher D'Amboise. She played Dame Evelyn in *A Connecticut Yankee* (City Center Encores!) and made her Carnegie Hall debut in 2004 with Skitch Henderson and the New York Pops. Ms. Lemenager has appeared regionally in productions including John Patrick Shanley's *Italian American Reconciliation*, *Chicago* (Roxie and Velma), *Sweet Charity* (Charity), *A Chorus Line* (Cassie) and *Company* (Amy). She has choreographed for Bette Midler and recently for her first Off-Broadway show, *The Porch*.

J. Fred Shiffman (*Headwaiter*) last appeared at Arena Stage as Ernst Ludwig in Molly Smith's production of *Cabaret*. Prior to that, he was Mr. Welch in *Damn Yankees*, Carpenter #1 in *Passion Play, a cycle*, Johnny the Priest in *Anna Christie*, Jabe Torrance in *Orpheus Descending*, Merlyn in *Camelot*, Walter Abrahamson in *An American Daughter* and Captain Brackett in *South Pacific*. His Arena credits go back two decades, performing in more than thirty productions. He played Bottom in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at San Diego's Old Globe, and recorded *Barefoot in the Park* with Laura Linney and Eric Stoltz for L.A. Theatre Works. He is the recipient of eight Helen Hayes Award nominations, and has twice been presented with the award. He has been an Affiliated Artist with Arena Stage for five seasons, and a member of Actors' Equity for more than two decades.

The Ensemble is comprised of **Jennifer Andersen, Kurt Boehm, Ashlee Fife, Joe Jackson, Roger Rosen, Rosalie Tenseth**, and with swings **Gia Mora** and **Jeremy Leiner**.

THE CREATIVE TEAM

Kyle Donnelly (*Director*) was most recently seen in Washington at Ford's Theatre directing *State of the Union*, and at Arena Stage last season directing *Born Yesterday*. Previously, she directed *The*

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Constant Wife at Seattle Repertory and *Polk County* at McCarter Theatre and Berkeley Rep. *Polk County* at Arena Stage won the Helen Hayes Award for Best New Musical. Ms. Donnelly was Associate Artistic Director at Arena Stage from 1992 to 1998 and directed such productions as *Tom Walker*, *The Women*, *Lovers and Executioners*, *The Miser*, *Molly Sweeney*, *A Small World*, *Dancing at Lughnasa* (winner of Helen Hayes Award for Best Production), *Summer and Smoke*, *A Month in the Country*, *The School for Wives*, *Misalliance* and others. She directed the American premiere of Brian Friel's *Give Me Your Answer, Do!* for Roundabout Theatre and worked at Williamstown Theatre Festival (*Philadelphia, Here I Come!*), Goodman Theatre (*The Rover*, *Dancing at Lughnasa*), Steppenwolf Theatre (*Molly Sweeney*), Old Globe (*Orson's Shadow*, *Midsummer*), Huntington Theatre (*Hyde Park*, *Aristocrats*, *Little Foxes*), American Conservatory Theatre (*Constant Wife*) as well as Actor's Theatre of Louisville, A Contemporary Theatre and many other regional theaters around the country.

William Foster McDaniel (*Music Director/Conductor*) returns to Arena Stage after performing in last season's *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar and Grill*. He made his Arena debut in *Ain't Misbehavin'*, a show he has musical directed on Broadway, in Europe and on national tours. Other conducting credits include *The Fantasticks*; *Timbuktu!*; *Bubblin' Brown Sugar*; *Sophisticated Ladies*; *House Of Flowers*; *Once On This Island*; *Big River*; *Fiddler On The Roof*; *Guys and Dolls*; *A Funny Thing Happened On The Way To The Forum*; *Hello, Dolly!*; *Dreamgirls*; *Damn Yankees*; *Show Boat*; *Cookin' At The Cookery*; *Storyville*; *Dinah Was*; *The Will Rogers Follies*; *Crazy For You*; and *Smokey Joe's Café*. His classical compositions have been performed by the Philharmonia of Greensboro, the Savannah Symphony Orchestra, the Mozart Society Orchestra at Harvard, The United States Army Band Brass Quintet, The Antara Ensemble of New York and the Brooklyn Philharmonic.

Kenneth Lee Roberson (*Choreographer*) directed *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar and Grill* last season at Arena Stage. His other Arena credits include *Ain't Misbehavin'* (dir/chor), *Guys and Dolls* and *Thunder Knocking on the Door* (chor). New York City choreography credits include *Avenue Q* (2004 Tony Award Winner for Best Musical); *All Shook Up* (Palace Theater); *Purlie* (Encores! Series at the City Center); John Leguizamo's *Freak* (Court Theater); *Harlem Song at the World Famous Apollo Theatre* (Apollo Theatre); *Drowning Crow* and *The Mineola Twins* (Manhattan Theater Club); *Blade to the Heat* and *Insurrection* (New York Public Theatre) and *Jelly's Last Jam* (asst. chor). Regional credits include *Purlie* (Pasadena Playhouse, Goodman Theater) (chor); *Once Upon This Island* (Baltimore Center Stage) (dir/chor); *Smokey Joe's Café* (Alabama Shakespeare Festival) (dir/chor) and *Spunk* (Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park) (dir/chor). TV and film credits include George C. Wolfe's "Lackawanna Blues," HBO; *Preaching to the Choir* directed by Charles Randolph-Wright; and John Leguizamo's "House of Buggin,'" FOX. Awards and nominations include the Emmy (nomination); two NAACP Achievement Awards; Lucille Lortel (nomination); Drama Desk (nomination); AUDELCO Award; NPT Spirit Award; NYSCA Award; and Our Time Theater Life-Time Achievement Award. Mr. Roberson's one man show *Middle Aged Passage Crisis* has generated a cult following.

Kate Edmunds (*Set Designer*) designed the sets for *How I Learned to Drive*, *A Moon for the Misbegotten*, *South Pacific*, *Camelot*, *The Piano Lesson* and *Born Yesterday* at Arena Stage. Her Off-Broadway credits include *Alligator Tales* (directed by Sharon Ott); *The Philanthropist*, *Skirmishes*, and *Dusa*, *Fish*, *Star and VI* all at Manhattan Theatre Club; as well as the American premiere of *Translations* (directed by Joe Dowling). She has designed more than 25 productions at the American Conservatory Theatre (San Francisco), including *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*, *The Constant Wife* and *The Difficulty of Crossing a Field*. Among her many designs at Berkeley Repertory Theater

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are *Homebody/Kabul*, *Twelfth Night* and *The Revenger*. For the past 25 years, she has designed throughout the country's regional theaters.

Nan Cibula-Jenkins' (Costume Designer) previous credits at Arena include *Molly Sweeney* and *Kean*. She designed the original Broadway and tour productions of *Glengarry Glen Ross* and *Speed the Plow*. Ms. Cibula-Jenkins has designed at numerous regional theaters across the country. Her film credits include David Mamet's *House of Games*, *Things Change* and *Homicide*. She is the recipient of the Michael Merritt Award for Design and Collaboration, the Hollywood Dramalogue Critics Award and Joseph Jefferson Award for Costume Design. She is the head of the Costume Design program at The Theatre School at DePaul University in Chicago.

Nancy Schertler (Lighting Designer) has previously collaborated with Kyle Donnelly on *Born Yesterday*, John Strand's *Tom Walker* and *Lovers and Executioners*. Her Broadway credits include *Fool Moon* with David Shiner and Bill Irwin, and Bill Irwin's *Largely/New York* (for which she earned a Tony Award nomination). Her recent work includes playwright/director Carey Perlof's *The Colossus of Rhodes*, produced by ACT in San Francisco; The Milwaukee Rep's *A Christmas Carol* adapted and directed by Joseph Hanreddy; Jeffery Hatcher's *Korczack's Children* directed by Eric Simonson for The Children's Theatre of Minneapolis; and *Uncle Vanya* adapted and directed by Emily Mann for the McCarter Theatre Center and La Jolla Playhouse. Her Off-Broadway credits include *Texts for Nothing* at Classic Stage Company, *Scapin* at The Roundabout Theatre, and *Falsettoland* at Playwright's Horizons. Ms. Schertler has received numerous Helen Hayes Award nominations and an American Theatre Wing Design Award nomination.

Garth Hemphill (Sound Designer) was the Resident Designer for South Coast Repertory and then American Conservatory Theater for the past thirteen years. He has designed more than 150 productions, including 15 world and American premieres and many more West Coast premieres for some of today's greatest playwrights, including Tom Stoppard, Richard Nelson, Richard Greenberg and Christopher Durang. Recent productions in the Washington D.C. area include *State of the Union* and *Once on This Island*. Favorite productions include *The Three Sisters*, *The Constant Wife*, *The Dazzle*, *American Buffalo*, *Lackawanna Blues*, *Indian Ink*, *The Invention of Love*, *The Threepenny Opera* and *A Streetcar Named Desire*.

Rounding out the creative team are Assistant Choreographer **Lorna Ventura**, Assistant Music Director **Jose C. Simbulan**, Production Dramaturg **Michelle T. Hall**, Vocal Coach **Lynn Watson**, Wig Master **Jon Aitchison**, Stage Manager **Susan R. White**, Assistant Stage Manager **Amy Bennett**, Production Assistant **Erin Dammeyer**, Stage Management Fellow **Victoria Murray**, Directing Fellow **Lileana Blain Cruz**, Dramaturgy Fellow **Clarence Coo** and DramaLeague Director Intern **Meredith McDonough**.

She Loves Me is sponsored by Sue and Steve Bralove, John and Linda Derrick, Wendy and Frank Raines, Mark and Merrill Shugoll and Dick and Katie Snowdon.

Arena Stage is proud to bring back the **Target Family Fun Pack**: four box seats, four non-alcoholic drinks and four snacks for \$100, a substantial discount from the regular ticket price. Target is the sponsor of the Target Family Fun Pack during the 2006/07 season.

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

Special Events and Ticket Information for *She Loves Me*

Stage Banter: the Arena Stage Blog

Arena Stage is blogging and you won't want to miss a single entry. You'll get exclusive insights from our artistic staff, visiting directors and actors on our mainstage shows, or you might find interesting tidbits about Arena Stage that only the blog knows. You can even post comments to the blog – we want to hear what you have to say! Visit blog.arenastage.org and join the conversation.

The Salon

Monday, November 20 at 7:00 p.m.

Featuring Molly Smith and special guests from *She Loves Me*

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, November 24 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.

Target Family Fun Pack: four box seats, four non-alcoholic drinks and four snacks for only \$100. The order must include a minimum of two patrons between the age of 5 and 18 years old per Fun Pack and cannot be combined with any other offer applied to previously purchased orders. Limit three Fun Packs per order. To purchase, call the Arena Stage Box Office at (202) 488-3300.

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 day-of-performance 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.

PERFORMANCE TIMES:

Tues., Wed., and Sun. at 7:30 p.m. (Exception: 6:00 p.m. curtain 12/10 and matinee only 12/5)
Thurs., Fri., and Sat. at 8:00 p.m.

Sat. and Sun. matinees at 2:00 p.m. (Exception: None on 11/18 and 12/10)

Weekday matinees at 12:00 p.m. on 12/5, 12/6 and 12/20.

Post-show Conversations: 12/19 at 7:30 p.m.; 12/20 at 12 p.m.; 12/28 at 8:00 p.m.

Sign-interpreted performances: 12/14 at 8:00 p.m., 12/17 at 7:30 p.m.

Audio described performances: 12/6 at 7:30 p.m., 12/9 at 2:00 p.m.

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