

molly smith  
artistic director

stephen richard  
executive director

zelda fichandler  
founding director

## MEDIA RELEASE

Contact: Kirstin Lunke/Haley Miller  
press@arenastage.org; (202) 554-9066 ext. 715

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**January 14, 2008**

### **GROUNDBREAKING DATE SET TO COMMENCE CONSTRUCTION ON \$125 MILLION EXPANSION TO BUILD ARENA STAGE AT THE MEAD CENTER FOR AMERICAN THEATER**

**\*\*\* Ceremony includes announcement of a gift to support the creation of the Cradle and speeches from key members of the Arena Stage family \*\*\***



(Washington, D.C.) After completing a successful three-month effort to move theater operations into temporary spaces around the D.C. area, Arena Stage has announced it will break ground on the 47-year-old Southwest, D.C. campus **January 30, 2008 at 10:00 a.m.** The event will take place onsite at Sixth Street and Maine Avenue, SW. This ceremonial event commences 29 months of construction to make way for the new Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater. The ceremony will include speeches from special members of the Arena Stage family, an announcement of a visionary gift to support the creation of the new 200-seat theater, the Cradle, and will conclude with a surprise event to clear space for the new theater.

"This is a defining moment in Arena's 57-year history," said Artistic Director Molly Smith. "At the groundbreaking we will officially announce the donors who paved the way for the Cradle, a theater created expressly for premieres of new American plays and one of the most exciting features of the new building. In just two-and-a-half years, we will return to the new Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater."

The \$125 million renovation will be a breathtaking expansion of the current campus allowing Arena Stage to focus on the strengths of the two existing spaces – The Fichandler Stage and the Kreeger Theater – while reinventing the surrounding building and adding the Cradle. The theater has currently raised \$107 of its \$125 million fundraising goal since the Next Stage Campaign launched in 2002. Arena Stage at the Mead Center is scheduled to open for the 2010/2011 season.

To allow for a timely and cost-effective renovation, Arena Stage has begun operating at a temporary venue, Arena Stage in Crystal City, in Arlington, VA. Minutes from the current location in Southwest, D.C., the area around Arena Stage in Crystal City boasts many well-known restaurants, is convenient to the Crystal City Metro and has free evening and weekend parking. The theater is roughly the same size as the Kreeger, and seats 460 patrons. Details on programming for the Arena Stage 2008/09 season, including productions at the Lincoln Theater in D.C., will be shared at a later date. For more information on Arena Stage in Crystal City or The Mead Center for American Theater visit [www.arenastage.org](http://www.arenastage.org).

Following the ceremony, members of the media will have an opportunity to have one-on-one Q&A with Arena Stage staff members and special guests.

For media interested in attending, please RSVP to Media Relations Manager Kirstin Lunke at (202) 554-9066, ext. 715 or email [press@arenastage.org](mailto:press@arenastage.org).

###

The logo for "arena restaged", featuring a grey arrow pointing to the right. The words "arena restaged" are written in a lowercase, sans-serif font inside the arrow.

arena restaged

Temporary office:

2001 Jefferson Davis  
Highway, Suite 701  
Arlington, VA 22202

Permanent home &  
mailing address:

1101 Sixth Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20024

T: 202 554 9066

F: 202 488 4056

[www.arenastage.org](http://www.arenastage.org)

