

ARENA STAGE MEDIA RELEASE

Molly Smith Artistic Director Edgar Dobie Managing Director Zelda Fichandler Founding Director

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**D.C. MAYOR FENTY WELCOMES ARENA STAGE HOME
TO THE MEAD CENTER FOR AMERICAN THEATER IN SOUTHWEST D.C.
WITH PRESS CONFERENCE ON THEATER'S 60th ANNIVERSARY AUGUST 16**

(Washington, D.C.) District of Columbia Mayor Adrian Fenty will hold a press conference at Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater (1101 Sixth St., S.W.) to welcome Arena Stage back to their newly expanded theater campus in Southwest D.C. The Mayor, along with city officials and the Arena Stage staff, will celebrate the return on the day of the company's 60th anniversary Monday, August 16 at 10:30 a.m.

"It's beyond words how it feels to be finally returning to Sixth and Maine in Southwest Washington," says Artistic Director Molly Smith. "For the first time in Arena's history, all staff will be under one roof, and to have this historic re-opening happen in the year of our diamond anniversary is all the more sweet."

"We are thrilled to welcome back Arena Stage to the District," said Mayor Adrian M. Fenty. "For many years, the Arena Stage has provided District residents with quality productions and we look forward to the fantastic productions that have yet to come."

Smith continues, "Arena has a rich, 60-year history contributing to the arts in the D.C. area, and we're so fortunate Mayor Fenty and all of the city officials throughout our past—and particularly over the last 10 years of this project—have been immensely supportive. Without them this beautiful new center dedicated to American theater would not be possible."

Since groundbreaking in January 2008, the historic Southwest campus was under construction, and the company temporarily moved performances to Crystal City in Arlington, VA and the Lincoln Theatre on U St., NW. Planning began for the new complex over a decade ago, and it has been a catalyst for community-wide revitalization in Southwest D.C. New restaurants and commercial retailers have already moved into the Waterfront neighborhood.

Media interested in attending the August 16 press conference should contact press@arenastage.org.

The official re-opening of the Mead Center will take place in October 2010. For more information about Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater and the inaugural season, visit www.arenastage.org.

Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater is a national center dedicated to the production, presentation, development and study of American theater. Arena Stage produces huge plays of all that is passionate, exuberant, profound, deep and dangerous in the American spirit, and presents diverse and groundbreaking work from some of the best artists around the country. Arena Stage is committed to commissioning and developing new plays through the American Voices New Play Institute. Now in its sixth decade, Arena Stage serves a diverse annual audience of more than 200,000. www.arenastage.org.

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