

MY BODY NO CHOICE

THIS IS A
TIME WHEN
WOMEN NEED TO
TELL THEIR STORIES



MONOLOGUES BY

LEE CATALUNA, FATIMA DYFAN, LISA LOOMER, DAEL ORLANDERSMITH,
SARAH RUHL, MARY HALL SURFACE, V (FORMERLY EVE ENSLER), AND "ANONYMOUS"

CONCEIVED AND DIRECTED BY MOLLY SMITH

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ARENA STAGE MISSION

Arena Stage is the voice of American theater resident in our nation's capital. Focused on American artists, our productions are innovative and representative of stories from across the country. We nurture new plays and reimagine classics. We celebrate our democracy and diversity through a multitude of voices in our productions and community engagement programs to inspire people to action. We produce all that is passionate, exuberant, profound, entertaining, deep, and dangerous in the American spirit.



the mead center
for american theater



Arena Stage is built on the land of the Piscataway people of the Algonquin-speaking tribes, as well as the lands of the Native American people of the greater Anacostia, Potomac, and Tidewater regions.



In the early 1970s, my sister Bridget and I went to a women's consciousness-raising session weekly in a friend's living room near Catholic U. We talked about our bodies and read eye-opening books like *Our Bodies, Ourselves* as most of us already subscribed to *Ms. Magazine* and many read Betty Friedan's game-changing book. Mostly we talked and laughed and cried and learned and listened to our individual and collective stories about being a woman and feminists. Those sessions forever changed my life. I was in that circle of women who got to know each other over a single year, and we had this place to reveal our deepest secrets.

When *Roe v. Wade* was struck down by the Supreme Court a few months ago, to say I was devastated is an understatement. Here we are in this country without an Equal Rights Amendment for women; my sex is still not making the same amount of money as men; and now this most sacred choice—the choice about our bodies—was ripped away. Women once again have been relegated to second-class citizens.

I thought, what can I do about this horrifying decision? I woke up one morning with: “Of course, I’ll make a theater piece.” I wrote to some of my favorite writers and some new writers too, to see if they wanted to write monologues about the choices women either have made or cannot make about our own bodies. I was so pleased that six writers answered me within 24 hours...

This is the final play I’ll direct as your Artistic Director, and I’ve chosen to set it in a consciousness-raising space—with one important distinction. In the 1970s these spaces were secret, but now we are opening the stories up to all of you. Our secrets keep us sick. Our shame keeps us sick. Our fears keep us sick.

Before 2015, when marriage for same-sex couples was ruled on by the Supreme Court, legions of gay people told their families and friends and neighbors that they were gay. This secret-telling normalized difference. I believe that women need to tell their stories now. It’s time to remove our fears and to speak out.

To help spread the stories, we have reached out to theaters and universities around America to join us by hosting readings of the play during our run, October 20–November 6. Check out arenastage.org/mybody for information about where these readings are taking place in all corners of the country.

In our lobby, go into the Whisper Room if you have secrets you want to tell, or take a sticky and post on the Kogod Cradle wall to share a choice you’ve made or haven’t been able to make about your own body...

... And please vote! Knock on doors! Shout it from the rooftops! We created *My Body No Choice* to perform right before the midterms, for only 18 days, charging \$18 a ticket, because of the symbolism of the age of 18 as the legal age to cast a vote.

Our votes have never been more important.

Molly Smith
Artistic Director

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FROM THE EXECUTIVE PRODUCER



The difficult times of the pandemic forced introspection in many ways. I was fortunate to have had the opportunity to convene (through a thoughtful and meaningful course, called “Convene,” led by TRG Arts) with other art makers from around the world. I took many valuable lessons from that time, including striving for resiliency, as you may have read in notes from other shows this season. Another was to teach myself to look at life through a lens of abundance rather than scarcity. Neither of these are easy a lot of the time.

For instance, when faced with a moment in time when a personal right that had seemed to be solid and fundamental is being questioned and outright taken from women, it is challenging to find a view of abundance and resilience.

Molly tells her personal impulse for *My Body No Choice* eloquently. Some have questioned, with a negative manner uncharacteristic of Arena’s audiences, why Arena would undertake this piece.

Arena is not attempting to enforce a specific stance. As befitting Arena’s mission to “produce all that is passionate, exuberant, profound, entertaining, deep, and dangerous in the American spirit,” we are a platform for American voices and stories. You are witnessing a sampling of the stories of American women here today. Stories that are often not shared broadly.

One purpose of this art form is to engage with complicated ideas. Hearing stories like these relies on empathy. Sometimes we all must be reminded to be—and how to be—empathetic.

Every person has a backstory. Every person woke up this morning with a myriad of worries about a variety of concerns that is not evident to others. All struggling to find that resilience to make it through the day. The stories in *My Body No Choice* are impactful opportunities to feel the effects of significant reinterpretations of laws on the individual. They are meant to embrace our empathy and put our lives in the context of someone else’s backstory. To raise consciousness and awareness.

These stories have varied points of view, and none are trying to tell anyone specifically to think one way or another. It’s an opportunity for theater to do what it does best—tell important stories that speak to our world and our time.

Thank you for joining us today. I find a renewing of my resilience in our ability to gather and share a collective consciousness.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Edgar'.

Edgar Dobie
Executive Producer
President of the Corporation

MEMORIES WITH MOLLY



Beth Newburger Schwartz and Molly Smith

Molly Smith is a theatrical force of nature.

But I didn't know that in 1998 when I headed to Arena's Board Chair Steve Bralove's home to meet her. I had joined the Arena Board five years earlier, because I loved theater and thought Zelda Fichandler, Arena's Founding Director, created the kind of theater I wanted be part of. To say that I walked up the driveway that night with a healthy dose of skepticism about this final candidate would be an overstatement of my attitude after my underwhelmed reading of Molly Smith's bio.

That skepticism was the mistake I would make often over the next 25 years.

My first meeting with Molly taught me that this gutsy woman had both the capacity to face overwhelming challenges and the imagination to envision successful outcomes. After all, I thought, she did drag 50 theater chairs from Washington, D.C., to Juneau, Alaska to start the successful Perseverance Theatre.

Molly and I were friends by the end of the night.

The Arena Artistic Director Search Committee had requested that Molly present them with a vision for Arena that would put us back in the spotlight as the one of the nation's premier regional theaters. As the first of what would become a vibrant 80-theater community, Arena had lost its "premier" brand. Molly envisioned Arena as the home of American voices and American work. I worried we would lose further subscribers without the works of international classics and the London West End innovators.

Molly's vision was right; today, Arena is the center of American theater in the nation's capital. And she broke the glass ceiling for women playwrights, too!

During her tenure, Arena nurtured American voices from Pulitzer Prize-winning or -nominated playwrights Lynn Nottage, Katori Hall, and Lisa Kron. In fact, she brought a coterie of women playwrights to Arena's stages including Anna Deavere Smith, Karen Zacarias, Paula Vogel, Mary Kathryn Nagel, Sara Ruhl, and V (formerly Eve Ensler).

Molly and I share a political viewpoint—usually!

Not only does Arena speak for America, but Molly's Power Play commissions tell many of the untold stories of each of the 25 decades in America's history. From John Quincy Adams' unsung presidency to JFK's assassination, Arena is revealing our national controversies and questions to an audience ready to absorb to new works. Before this initiative, Arena very rarely produced premieres.

But then there is The Originalist, the story of Antonin Scalia and his African American, lesbian law clerk.

By the time Molly undertook this John Strand Power Play, I was a nervous Board Chair who worried that our liberal audience would reject the entire season when they heard about this one. Again, I was wrong. So much so that, when Broadway theaters wouldn't even read it, I agreed to produce it. It played to sell-out audiences off-Broadway and landed a Broadway theater just before COVID-19 shut us down.

To move, or not to move?

Arena's historic Harry Weese brutalist building in Southwest Washington was creaky and in need of repair when Molly arrived. I was among the Board majority who thought we should move to the newly re-developed Northwest 7th Street corridor. When the Board decided to stay in Southwest, Molly articulated a need for a bold new vision so that Arena could lead the forgotten quadrant to become the nation's hottest destination. She hired architect Bing Thom to design today's beautiful, iconic, winding glass building.

American musicals re-imagined launch the new Arena Stage!

Musicals were not the foregone conclusion I expected from our builder of the American voice-American artist vision. While Molly credits her love of live theater to her own exposure to musicals, she was a child of the '60s who rejected musical theater as not serious theater. Molly took a chance with Rodgers and Hammerstein's *South Pacific* and discovered the subversive power of the only American-created theater form—the musical. This “late bloomer” infused her smash-hit productions of *Fiddler on the Roof*, *My Fair Lady*, *Anything Goes*, and a long list of others with her own sensitivity to the play's contemporary cultural impact.

Molly opens the new Arena Stage home with Oklahoma!: I Object.

Of course, Molly would reopen Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater with a musical, but I thought *Oklahoma!* was a serious mistake. “Everyone knows it, played in it in summer camp, sang it,” I pleaded. But after extensive research into the Oklahoma of the 1880s, Molly brought the diverse culture of the times in Oklahoma and America now to life in the must-see production that brought even the harshest theater critics to standing ovations.

So much for the arrogance of this Board member's skepticism.

Molly, indeed, produced her anticipated revitalization of Arena's neighborhood and secured Arena's reputation both locally and nationally. During her tenure, Arena supported the development of Tony Award-winning musicals including *Dear Evan Hansen* and *Next to Normal*, Pulitzer Prize-winning works such as *Sweat* and *Next to Normal*, and nurtured hundreds of new works and productions nationally.

Mea Culpa, Molly!



Beth Newburger Schwartz



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Arena Stage
Molly Smith, Artistic Director | Edgar Dobie, Executive Producer

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MY BODY NO CHOICE

MONOLOGUES BY

LEE CATALUNA, FATIMA DYFAN, LISA LOOMER,
DAEL ORLANDERSMITH, SARAH RUHL, MARY HALL SURFACE,
V (FORMERLY EVE ENSLER), AND "ANONYMOUS"

CONCEIVED AND DIRECTED
BY MOLLY SMITH

LIGHTING DESIGNER
CATHERINE GIRARDI

SOUND DESIGNER
MEGUMI KATAYAMA

CASTING DIRECTOR
JOSEPH PINZON

REHEARSAL STAGE MANAGER
KAREN CURRIE*

STAGE MANAGER
RACHAEL DANIELLE ALBERT*

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MONOLOGUES / CAST / FOR THIS PRODUCTION

MONOLOGUES / CAST

<i>An Uplifting High School Graduation Speech</i> by Sarah Ruhl.....	JENNIFER MENDENHALL*
<i>Gravitas</i> by Dael Orlandersmith	FELICIA P. FIELDS*
<i>Chance</i> by Mary Hall Surface.....	SHANARA GABRIELLE*
<i>A Rest Stop</i> by Fatima Dyfan	DEIDRE STAPLES*
<i>The Circumstances of My Birth</i> by “Anonymous”	JOY JONES*
<i>Battered Baby</i> by V	DANI STOLLER*
<i>Things My Mother Told Me</i> by Lee Cataluna.....	TONI RAE SALMI*
<i>Roxy</i> by Lisa Loomer	TORI GOMEZ*

*Member of Actors' Equity Association.

FOR THIS PRODUCTION

Assistant Director.....	ZOË LILLIS
Production Assistant.....	KATE WANDER
COVID-19 Compliance Officer	TREVOR COMEAU
Light Board Operator.....	SCOTT FOLSOM
Audio Engineer	ALEX CLOUD

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GalaPro closed captioning service.
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Masks must be worn at all times during the performance.

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CAST



FELICIA P. FIELDS

(Dael Orlandersmith's *Monologue*) is an acclaimed actress, singer, performer, and creator. She originated the role of Sofia in *The Color Purple* on

Broadway and in the first national tour, earning her a Tony Award nomination, a Theatre World Award, a Clarence Derwent Award, two Broadway.com Awards, an NAACP nomination, and a *Denver Post* Ovation Award. She was a 2006 Drama League honoree. Ms. Fields has performed extensively with Chicago's Goodman Theatre, including in *Crowns*, *Blues in the Night*, *Intimate Apparel*, *The Rose Tattoo*, *The Amen Corner*, *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*, and *A Christmas Carol* as the first African American female to play the Ghost of Christmas Present. Other Chicago credits include productions at Marriott Theatre, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Court Theatre, Northlight Theatre, Drury Lane Theatre, among others.



SHANARA GABRIELLE

(Mary Hall Surface's *Monologue*) is happy to be back working on this project that falls at the heart of her passion for art and activism. At Arena

Stage, she has served as Artistic Associate, Associate Director on *Enlightenment* and *Dear Jack*, *Dear Louise*, and has appeared on stage in *Junk*, and numerous workshops. In DC, Shanara has worked as an actor and director at Signature Theatre, Shakespeare Theatre Company, Olney Theatre, Imagination Stage, Solas Nua, Taffety Punk, and more, as well as produced *Working In DC* with AFL-CIO on BLM Plaza. Across the country, Shanara appeared at Guthrie Theater, Actors Theatre of Louisville, St. Louis Rep, and many more. Webster Conservatory B.F.A., proud recipient of Princess Grace

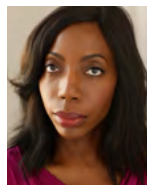
Foundation Award, and union member of AEA, SDC, SAG-AFTRA. Instagram: @shanaragabrielle
www.shanaragabrielle.com



TORI GOMEZ

(Lisa Loomer's *Monologue*) is excited to be making her Arena Stage debut in *My Body No Choice*! She is a junior musical theatre major at The Catholic

University of America. Most recent credits include Amy in *Little Women* (NextStop Theatre Company), Eve in *Children of Eden* (Catholic University), and Laertes in *Hamlet* (Catholic University). Tori would like to thank her friends, family, and teachers for all the love and support they've shown her in her life and career. She is honored to be a part of such an important project, and hopes you enjoy the show! Instagram: @tori.gom



JOY JONES

("Anonymous" *Monologue*) has previously been seen in Arena Stage's *Seven Guitars*, *Jubilee*, *A Raisin in the Sun*, and *Mary T & Lizzy K*. Other DC-area

credits include *The Upstairs Department* (Signature Theatre) and *The Hard Problem*, *Cloud 9*, *Belleville*, and *Invisible Man* (Studio Theatre). Off-Broadway, she appeared in workshops at The Public and Playwrights Horizons. Her selected regional credits include *Disgraced* (Virginia Stage), *Invisible Man* (Huntington Theatre), *Ruined* and *Tantalus* (Denver Center), *The Champion* (TheatreSquared), and *Pericles* (PlayMakers Repertory). Her recent TV appearances are *We Own This City*, *Blue Bloods*, and *Monsterland*. Joy has an Acting MFA from UNC-Chapel Hill and a Helen Hayes Award for Outstanding Ensemble for *Invisible Man* (Studio Theatre). Her film *Dream Flight* is in pre-production. Instagram: @joyjonesig thejoyjones.com



JENNIFER MENDENHALL

(Sarah Ruhl's *Monologue*) is a long time DC theater artist and a Woolly Mammoth company member since 1987. She has appeared at Round

House Theatre, Mosaic Theater, Scena Theatre, Forum Theatre, Theater J, Studio Theatre, Theater Alliance, Kennedy Center, Shakespeare Theatre, Arena Stage, Humana Festival, Florida Stage, among others. #poolparty, her play about the history of discrimination in swimming pools, and a family denied membership at a community pool, was produced by Ally Theatre in 2018. As audio book narrator Kate Reading, she has recorded hundreds of books of all genres. Her awards include Helen Hayes, Theatre Lobby, Audie, Earphone, Publishers Weekly, American Library Association.

www.katereadingaudiobooks.com



TONI RAE SALMI

(Lee Cataluna's *Monologue*) is making her Arena Stage debut. DC credits include *American Spies and Other Homegrown Fables* (Hub Theatre), *Perfect*

Arrangement (Source Theatre Festival), *The Spitfire Grill* (Theater Alliance), *The Tempest* (Taffety Punk Theatre Company), and *Junie B. Jones and A Little Monkey Business* (Imagination Stage, Helen Hayes Award nomination). Directing credits include David Henry Hwang's *Bondage* and *Use All Available Doors* by Tristan Willis (Pinky Swear Productions), and *Measure for Measure* (Cincinnati Shakespeare Company). Toni Rae has also worked with The Kennedy Center, Baltimore Center Stage, and Avant Bard Theatre. For Marci who chose to give me life, and Nora who chose to give me love.



DEIDRE STAPLES

(Fatima Dyfan's *Monologue*) is excited to make her Arena Stage debut. She last appeared as Nell Shaw in *John Proctor is the Villain* at Studio Theatre. Selected

acting credits include: *Daphne's Dive* at Signature Theatre (understudy); *The Skin of Our Teeth* at Everyman Theatre; *Twelfth Night*, *The Crucible*, and *Around the World in 80 Days* with the National Players, Tour 70; and *The Wolves* at Studio Theatre (understudy). She wrote and performed *White-ish* at the Atlas Intersections Festival, Nu Sass Productions, and the Aurora Theatre in Atlanta, GA. BFA, Howard University. deidrestaples.com



DANI STOLLER

(V's *Monologue*) is a Brooklyn-born playwright and actor. *My Body No Choice* is her Arena Stage debut. Her previous DC acting credits include

shows at the Folger Theatre, Studio Theatre, Olney Theatre Center, Keegan Theatre, Signature Theatre, 1st Stage, and The Kennedy Center. Her play *Easy Women Smoking Loose Cigarettes* received its world premiere at Signature Theatre in 2019 and *The Joy That Carries You*, which Dani co-wrote with Awa Sal Secka, had its world premiere at the Olney Theatre Center in 2022. Her play *Girlhood* will be premiering this fall at Round House Theatre as part of its TPC Commission. Her play *Just Great* (an adaptation of *The Great Gatsby*) was recently published and is available through Playscripts.

CREATIVE

LEE CATALUNA (*Playwright*) is hard at work on a piece for Arena Stage's Power Plays series, writing about the bloody riot that followed the surprising results in the election of Hawaii's last king. Her play *Heart Strings*, which tells a story about a chosen family using traditional Hawaiian string figures, is currently in production at Atlantic Theater. Lee's other work includes *Sons of Maui* for San Francisco Playhouse, *What the Stars See at Night* for La Jolla Playhouse, and *Home of the Brave* for La Jolla Playhouse's POP Tour. She was born on Maui, is part Native Hawaiian, and has an MFA in Creative Writing from UC Riverside. www.leecataluna.com

FATIMA DYFAN (*Playwright*) (she/her/ hers) graduated from Georgetown University with a BA in Government and African American Studies with a minor in Theater & Performance Studies in 2021. Fatima explores mixed medium writing that illuminates life. She served as the Executive Producer of GU's Black Theatre Ensemble for two years. With them, she directed Ntozake Shange's *for colored girls...* and ended her collegiate career with a performance art thesis exploring autobiographical notions of black womanhood. She was able to work the piece as a Playwright in the Playwright's Arena at Arena Stage from 2020-2021. She is currently spending a year at Woolly Mammoth Theatre as the New Work Fellow through the Miranda Family Fellowship. She is a performer, poet, and creative spirit who believes in healing, community, care, and the immense power of imagination.

LISA LOOMER (*Playwright*)'s plays include *Roe*, *Living Out*, *The Waiting Room*, *Distracted*, *Homefree*, *Café Vida*, *Expecting Isabel*, *Two Things You Don't Talk About at Dinner*, *Birds*, *Bocón!*, *Maria! Maria Maria*, and *Broken Hearts*. Her work has been produced at Roundabout, Vineyard

Theatre, Second Stage, INTAR, The Public, Mark Taper Forum, Arena Stage, South Coast Repertory, Kennedy Center, Seattle Repertory, Denver Center, La Jolla, Trinity Repertory, Williamstown Theatre Festival, Missouri Repertory, and in Mexico, Israel, Egypt, and Germany. Screenwriting credits include *Girl*, *Interrupted* and pilots for HBO, CBS, FOX, and Showtime. She has received awards from the American Theatre Critics (twice), Kennedy Center Fund for New American Plays, Lurie Foundation, Edgerton Foundation, Susan Smith Blackburn Prize, Jane Chambers Playwriting Award (twice), an Imagen Award, and an Ovation Award. She's currently writing the books for the musicals *Real Women Have Curves* and *Like Water for Chocolate*.

DAEL ORLANDERSMITH (*Playwright*)'s plays include *Stoop Stories*, *Black n' Blue Boys/Broken Men*, *Horsedreams*, *Bones*, *The Blue Album*, *Yellowman*, *The Gimmick*, *Monster*, and *Forever*. Ms. Orlandersmith was a Pulitzer Prize finalist and Drama Desk Award nominee for *Yellowman* and the winner of the Susan Smith Blackburn Prize for *The Gimmick*. Dael is the recipient of a New York Foundation for the Arts grant, The Helen Merrill Award for Emerging Playwrights, a Guggenheim, along with several other awards and honors. Her play *Forever* was commissioned and performed at the Mark Taper Forum/Kirk Douglas Theatre, followed by performances at the Long Wharf Theatre, New York Theatre Workshop, and Portland Center Stage. Her play *Until the Flood* was done at The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, followed by Rattlestick Theater, Milwaukee Rep, Portland Center Stage, ACT Seattle, Arcola Theatre in London, the Druid at the Galway Arts Festival, the Traverse at Edinburgh Festival, the Schaubühne Theatre in Berlin, and at the Spoleto Festival in Charleston, SC. Ms. Orlandersmith is working on a commission for Rattlestick Theater

called *Watching the Watcher*. She recently opened *New Age* at Milwaukee Rep directed by Jade King Carroll and *Antonio's Song/I Was Dreaming of a Son* co-written with Antonio Suarez Edwards and directed by Mark Clement. She is also working on a new work with writer/performer David Cale called *You Don't Know the Lonely One*, and is working on a new piece called *Spiritas*. In 2020, Ms. Orlandersmith received the Doris Duke Award.

SARAH RUHL (Playwright) is an award-winning American playwright, author, essayist, and professor. Her plays include *The Oldest Boy*; *Dear Elizabeth*; *Stage Kiss*; *In the Next Room, or the vibrator play* (Pulitzer Prize finalist, 2010); *The Clean House* (Pulitzer Prize finalist, 2005; Susan Smith Blackburn Prize, 2004); *Passion Play* (Pen American Award, Fourth Freedom Forum Playwriting Award from the Kennedy Center); *Dead Man's Cell Phone* (Helen Hayes Award for Best New Play); *Melancholy Play*; *Demeter in the City* (nine NAACP Image Award nominations); *Scenes From Court Life*; *How to Transcend a Happy Marriage*; *For Peter Pan on Her 70th Birthday*; *Eurydice*; *Orlando*; and *Late: a cowboy song*. Her plays have been produced on Broadway and across the country as well as internationally, and translated into fourteen languages. Originally from Chicago, Ms. Ruhl received her M.F.A. from Brown University, where she studied with Paula Vogel. She is the recipient of a Helen Merrill Emerging Playwrights Award, a Whiting Writers' Award, a PEN Center Award for mid-career playwrights, a Steinberg Distinguished Playwright Award, and a Lilly Award. She is a member of 13P and New Dramatists and won the MacArthur Fellowship in 2006. She teaches at Yale School of Drama and lives in Brooklyn with her family. sarahruhlplaywright.com

MARY HALL SURFACE (Playwright) is a DC-based playwright, director, producer, and teaching artist. She was proud to be a playwright for both of Arena's 2020 film projects, *May 22, 2020* and *The 51st State*. A nine-time Helen Hayes Award nominee, including four for the Charles MacArthur Award for Outstanding New Play, she received the 2002 Outstanding Director of a Musical for her *Perseus Bayou*. Her plays have been produced across the US, Europe, Japan, Taiwan, and Canada, including eighteen Kennedy Center productions. Her 2018 direction of Thornton Wilder's *The Skin of Our Teeth* (Constellation Theatre Company) was recognized by *The Wall Street Journal* as one of the outstanding regional theater productions of the year. She is the proud founding artistic director of DC's Atlas INTERSECTIONS Festival, where she curated over 600 all-arts performances and events from 2009–2015. She currently delights in presenting creative and reflective writing workshops inspired by art through the National Gallery of Art, the Smithsonian Associates, and museums nationwide, as well as through her own new Writers' Studio on Italy's Amalfi Coast. www.maryhallsurface.com

V (FORMERLY EVE ENSLER) (Playwright) is the Tony Award-winning playwright and author of the Obie Award-winning theatrical phenomenon *The Vagina Monologues* (translated into 48 languages and performed in 140 countries), along with many other plays. She is the author of a number of books including her latest bestsellers *The Apology* (translated into more than 15 languages) and *In the Body of the World*, as well as the *New York Times* bestseller *I am an Emotional Creature*. She starred on Broadway in *The Good Body*, and most recently Off-Broadway at Manhattan Theatre Club in the critically acclaimed *In the Body of the World*. During the COVID-19 pandemic she helped create *That Kindness: Nurses in Their Own Words*, a tribute to nurses

presented by Brooklyn Academy of Music in accordance with theaters all across the country. Film credits include *The Vagina Monologues* (HBO), *What I Want My Words to Do to You* (Executive Producer, PBS), and *Mad Max: Fury Road* (Consultant). She is founder of V-Day—the 24-year-old global activist movement which has raised over 120 million dollars to end violence against all women (cisgender and transgender), those who hold fluid identities, nonbinary people, girls, and the planet—and founder of One Billion Rising, the largest global mass action to end gender-based violence in over 200 countries, as well as a co-founder of City of Joy. She writes regularly for *The Guardian*.

“ANONYMOUS” (*Playwright*) is a D.C. Metro-based artist who is honored to have her work at Arena Stage, and honored to be in the company of extraordinary sister playwrights. She has chosen to remain anonymous to highlight how private and personal our choices are. She has chosen to have her voice heard to highlight the need for all women to speak their truths in their own ways at this critical juncture in human history. Pain is personal and powerful. Pain is both private and political.

MOLLY SMITH (*Conceiver and Director*) has served as artistic director since 1998. Her 40 directing credits at Arena Stage include large-scale musicals, like *Catch Me If You Can*, *Anything Goes*, Disney's *Newsies*, *Carousel*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Oklahoma!*, *My Fair Lady*, *The Music Man*, *Cabaret*, *South Pacific*; new plays, like *Celia and Fidel*, *Sovereignty*, *The Originalist*, *Camp David*, *Legacy of Light*, *The Women of Brewster Place*, *How I Learned to Drive*; and classics like *Mother Courage and Her Children*, *A Moon for the Misbegotten*, *The Great White Hope*, and *All My Sons*. Her directorial work has also been seen Off-Broadway at 59E59 in New York, Portland Center Stage, Canada's

Shaw Festival, The Court Theatre, The Old Globe, Asolo Repertory, Berkeley Repertory, Trinity Repertory, Toronto's Tarragon Theatre, Montreal's Centaur Theatre and Perseverance Theater in Juneau, Alaska, which she founded and ran from 1979-1998. Molly has been a leader in new play development for over 40 years. She is a great believer in first, second and third productions of new work and has championed projects, including *Dear Evan Hansen*; *Next to Normal*; *Passion Play*, a cycle; and *How I Learned to Drive*. She led the re-invention of Arena Stage, focusing on the architecture and creation of the Mead Center for American Theater and positioning Arena Stage as a national center for American artists through its artistic programming. During her time with the company, Arena Stage has workshopped more than 100 productions, produced 39 world premieres, staged numerous second and third productions, and been an important part of nurturing nine projects that went on to have a life on Broadway. In 2014, Molly made her Broadway debut directing *The Velocity of Autumn*, following its critically acclaimed run at Arena Stage. She was awarded honorary doctorates from American University and Towson University. In 2018, she was honored as Person of the Year by the National Theatre Conference and inducted into the Washington DC Hall of Fame. In 2020, she was awarded the Director of Distinction in Cairo, Egypt, from the Academy of Arts. During the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, she developed the concept for two online films, *May 22, 2020* and *The 51st State*, overseeing the production direction as well as directing pieces within the films. She also spearheaded a variety of other new online content, including a weekly talk show *Molly's Salon*, during the live performance hiatus.

WHO'S WHO

CATHERINE GIRARDI (*Lighting Designer*) is a local D.C. designer, a proud former Lighting Fellow at Arena Stage, and has previously designed *Our War*, as well as assisting on many productions. Area credits include: *Assassins* and *Eurydice* (NextStop Theatre Company), *Seussical* (Imagination Stage), *The Burn and Failure: A Love Story* (The Hub Theatre), *Smoky Mirrors* and *A Circus Carol* (Sweet Spot Aerial Productions). Regional credits include *The North Pool* and *The Complete History of Comedy abridged* (Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park), *A Christmas Carol*, *Tommy*, *Ain't Misbehavin'* (The Clarence Brown Theatre), *Of Gravity and Light* (Ballet Des Moines), Rex Wheeler's *Symphonic Dances* and Tom Mattingly's *Figure in the Distance* and *Jahreszeiten* (Richmond Ballet). Catherine holds an MFA from The University of Tennessee-Knoxville. Member of USA 829.

MEGUMI KATAYAMA (*Sound Designer*) is making her Arena Stage debut! Her New York credits include *Nosebleed* (LCT 3), *For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide/ When the Rainbow Is Enuf* (The Public), *The Life* (City Center Encores!), *Our Brother's Son* (Signature), *Generation Rise* (Ping Chong and Company/New Victory). Regional credits include *72 Miles to Go...* (Alley Theatre), *Sister Act* (Geva Theatre Center), *Dinner and Cake*, *The Skin of Our Teeth*, *An Almost Holy Picture* (Everyman Theatre), *Pride and Prejudice* (Long Wharf), *El Huracán* (Yale Rep/The Sol Project), *Pass Over* (Studio Theatre), *Rooted* (Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park), *Mary's Wedding* (Kansas City Rep), Chautauqua Theater Company, Skylight Music Theatre, Virginia Stage Company, Dorset Theatre Festival, and more. MFA Yale School of Drama. Member of IATSE USA 829.

JOSEPH PINZON (*Casting Director*) is the founder and creative producer of the contemporary circus company Short Round Productions and its award-

winning show *Filament*. With over 25 years of performing experience, he has worked internationally with renowned companies such as Cirque Éloize, Compagnia Finzi Pasca, Cirque du Soleil, and The 7 Fingers. He holds an MS in Arts Leadership from USC, a BA in Psychology from UCLA, and graduated from the National Circus School in Montreal with a specialization in aerial techniques. He was the casting and resident director for Chamäleon Productions (Berlin) and Constellation Immersive (CAA's experiential affiliate). He is also a member of the Creative & Independent Producer Alliance and a founding board member of the American Circus Alliance. You can see him causing chaos on season 6 of *Nailed It!* on Netflix, where (spoiler alert) he is a part of the series' first three-way tie.

KAREN CURRIE (*Rehearsal Stage Manager*) is thrilled to be making her Arena Stage debut. Other area credits include *The Joy That Carries You*, *A.D. 16*, *Mary Stuart*, *Once*, and *In the Heights* at Olney Theatre Center; *Digging Up Dessa*, *OLIVERio*, *Mockingbird*, and *Orphie and the Book of Heroes* at The Kennedy Center; *Easy Women Smoking Loose Cigarettes*, *Heisenberg*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *The Fix*, *Cabaret*, *Saturday Night*, *Sycamore Trees*, and *The Happy Time* at Signature Theatre; *As You Like It* at Folger Theatre; and over 20 productions at Theater J including *Trayf*, *The Christians*, *Another Way Home*, *G-d's Honest Truth*, *Yentl*, *Freud's Last Session*, *After the Revolution*, *The Whipping Man*, and *The Religion Thing*. Her NYC credits include *The Last Session* with Spellbound Theatreworks. Karen holds an M.A. from American University.

RACHAEL DANIELLE ALBERT (*Stage Manager*) is excited to be stage managing Molly Smith's final endeavor as Artistic Director at Arena Stage. Favorite credits include: *American Prophet*, *Change Agent*, Ken Ludwig's *Dear Jack*, *Dear Louise*, *Junk*, *Native Gardens*, among others.

WHO'S WHO

Selected regional credits include: *Hi, Are You Single, Fairview, Describe the Night*, and *Botticelli in the Fire* (Woolly Mammoth); *The Wolves* (Studio Theatre); *Seize the King, Up Here*, and *Ether Dome* (La Jolla Playhouse); *The Odd Couple, Sylvia*, and *Souvenir* (New London Barn Playhouse); and *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot* (Stage 773). During quarantine, Rachael entered the brave new world of digital theatre, as the livestream stage manager for Amir Nizar Zuabi's new play *This Is Who I Am*, produced by Woolly Mammoth and PlayCo, in partnership with The Guthrie, A.R.T., and OSF. Showcaller: ArchiteX. Founding member: Oakland Theater Project. MFA: University of California, San Diego. BFA: University of Michigan. Proud AEA member.

ARENA STAGE LEADERSHIP

MOLLY SMITH (*Artistic Director*) see bio on page 19.

EDGAR DOBIE (*Executive Producer*) Born in Vernon, British Columbia, a village next to the Rocky Mountains (three years after Arena had its first performance in 1950), I am one of five brothers raised by my Dad Edgar, a mechanic and small businessman, and Mom Connie, a telephone operator and union organizer. I am the only Dobie to make a career in theater. Luckily for me, drama was an arts elective I was offered at the tender age of 12 so I hung up my hockey skates and joined the drama class, led by teacher Paddy Malcolm and her fledgling Powerhouse Community Theater after school. By the time I graduated from high school, we volunteers had built ourselves a 200-seat, fully equipped theater on its own piece of land in the center of town and found a sold-out audience for the full season of plays we had on offer. That experience taught me so many lessons about the power of theater to foster collaboration and

share meaningful stories, as well as the public values that attach themselves to building a safe place where everyone is welcome. All those lessons served me well as a managing leader and producer both sides of the border and both sides of the commercial and non-profit theater divide. Arriving here in Southwest with my good wife Tracy and our daughter Greta Lee in 2009 makes me feel like I am well-equipped to do a good job for you all.

This theater operates under an agreement between the League of Resident Theatres and Actors' Equity Association.



The actors and stage managers are members of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.



The scenic, costume, lighting and sound designers in LORT theaters are represented by United Scenic Artists, Local USA-829 of the IATSE.



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For more information about planned giving, please contact Maya Weil at 202-600-4158 or mweil@arenastage.org.

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For more information, please contact Maya Weil
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The cast of *The Pajama Game*. Photo by Margot Schulman.



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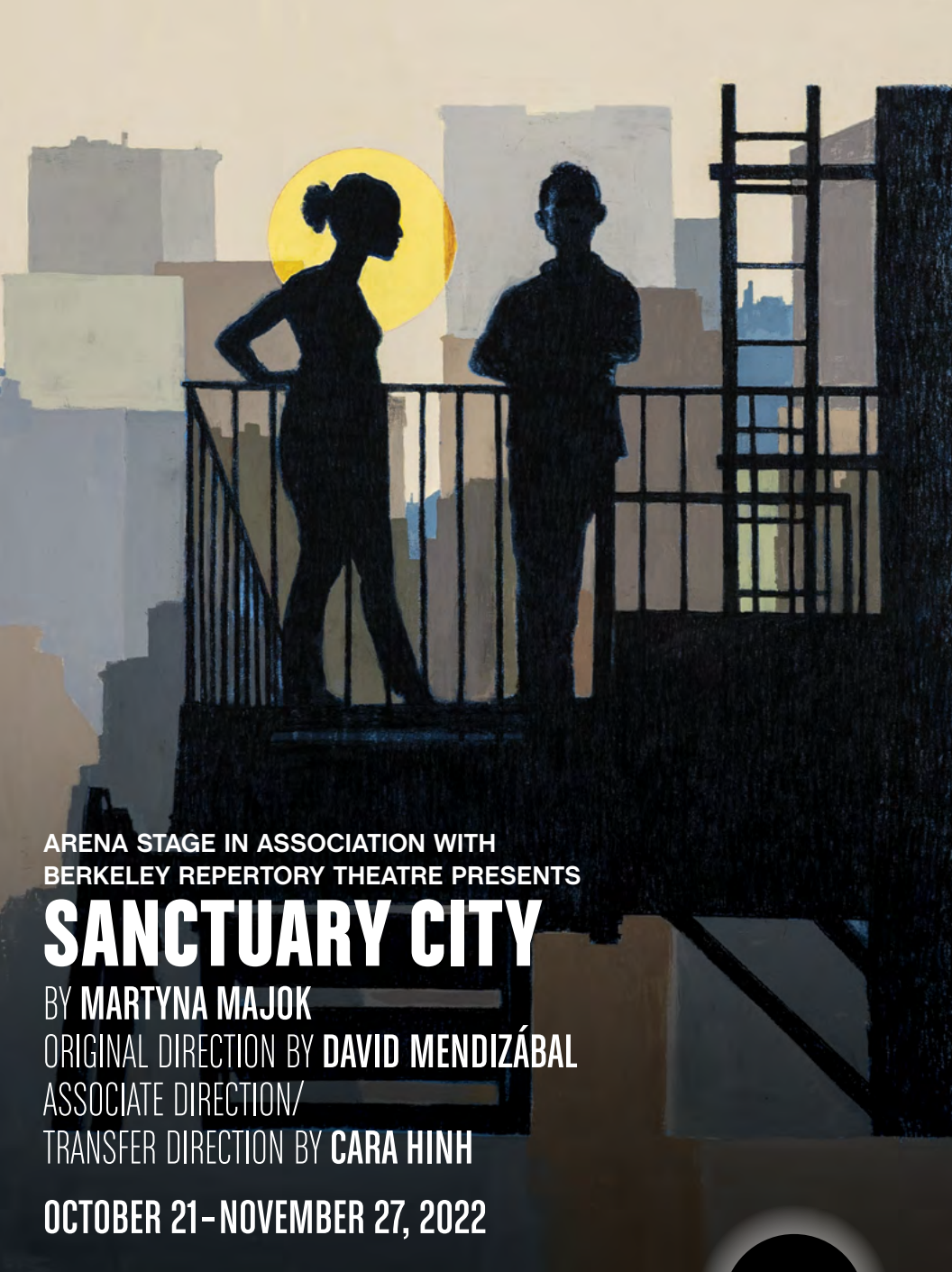
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