

CAMBODIAN ROCK BAND



2023/24 SEASON

arena
stage®



BIGGER BOLDER & BETTER THAN EVER!



2023/24 SEASON



POTUS: OR, BEHIND EVERY GREAT DUMBASS ARE SEVEN WOMEN TRYING TO KEEP HIM ALIVE

BY SELINA FILLINGER
DIRECTED BY MARGOT BORDELON

OCTOBER 13—NOVEMBER 12

SWEPT AWAY

BOOK BY JOHN LOGAN
MUSIC AND LYRICS BY THE AVETT BROTHERS
DIRECTED BY MICHAEL MAYER
CHOREOGRAPHED BY DAVID NEUMANN

NOVEMBER 25—DECEMBER 30

TEMPESTUOUS ELEMENTS

BY KIA CORTHRON
DIRECTED BY PSALMAYENE 24

FEBRUARY 16—MARCH 17

UNKNOWN SOLDIER

BOOK BY DANIEL GOLDSTEIN
MUSIC BY MICHAEL FRIEDMAN
LYRICS BY MICHAEL FRIEDMAN
AND DANIEL GOLDSTEIN
DIRECTED BY TRIP CULLMAN

MARCH 29—MAY 5

THE MIGRATION: REFLECTIONS ON JACOB LAWRENCE

BY STEP AFRIKA!

JUNE 6—JULY 14

SPECIAL 2023 HOLIDAY EVENT!

STEP AFRIKA!'S MAGICAL MUSICAL HOLIDAY STEP SHOW

DECEMBER 8—17

CAMBODIAN ROCK BAND

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 5 From the Executive Producer
- 7 Artistically Speaking
- 8 Dramaturgy Note
- 10 Title Page
- 12 Setting/Cast/For this Production
- 13 Music Credits
- 14 Bios — Cast
- 16 Bios — Creative
- 21 Bios — Arena Stage Leadership
- 24 Board of Trustees/Young Patrons Board
- 25 Thank You — Full Circle Society
- 27 Thank You — Individual Donors
- 33 Thank You — Institutional Donors
- 34 Theater Staff

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Photos of original Signature Theatre cast of *Cambodian Rock Band* by Joan Marcus.

SOCIALLY SPEAKING

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TALK ABOUT US:

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#DCTheatre #ACreativeDC #ExperienceDC #VisitDC



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.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE PRODUCER



Cambodian Rock Band comes to our Kreeger Theater after a long journey interrupted by a number of unforeseen circumstances.

I don't think I'm speaking only for myself when I say it's a proud moment to share this production with you—and a bit of a relief. This is a fabulous story and an authentic production that deserves to be heard and felt. Thank you all for being here today.

You may be asking the natural question, Edgar, what was that journey? Lauren Yee wrote this compelling story, and the play was expertly produced by Signature Theatre in New York. So expertly produced that other producers were inspired to option the rights for a national tour. Arena was part of that tour during our 2021/22 Season. However sturdy a theater production appears, there is a lot of delicacy in keeping it together. The tour fell apart, not because of any lack of desire for the artistic product, but because contracts and tours are very complex. Timing was also not a friend, as theaters were trying to rebuild out of 18 months of darkness from the pandemic. So, the show was cancelled out of our season then, and we promised it would be back.

Because the original plan was a tour, there were several theaters invested in this production. After the single producing team was unsuccessful, five individual theaters decided to band together and partner on the production. We joined with the Alley Theatre, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Center Theatre Group, and ACT Theatre/5th Avenue.

As you may have heard, Center Theatre Group has since canceled its participation as it acknowledged the need to take significant actions to balance its operating model. The original Signature Theatre production has remained the core of this partnership, however as time has moved on, so have several members of the cast. The impact for Arena is that our plans for receiving the production have to shift to support the new artists. The delicacy of the artform is ever-present.

I like to have themes to my season of notes in our programs, and this season seems like a good one to dive into how we manage that delicacy of producing theater. What we produce is perishable. It is there for a few hours and then it is gone. Every piece is handcrafted.

The pandemic taught us a lot about that delicacy and our ephemeral nature. Most importantly, the lack of live theater emphasized to me the beauty and the need for live theater. I will make the leap that by being here you agree, or that if this is your first time with Arena or at a live theater performance, that you leave today enjoying our time together, fleeting as it may be.

Edgar Dobie
Executive Producer

Arena Stage
Washington, DC

CLARK
CONSTRUCTION

**Proudly Shaping
the Local Landscape**

ARTISTICALLY SPEAKING

**Theater must entertain and,
if it passes that bar, it can do a
whole lot more.**



Because you are reading this, you've most likely had at least one fantastically entertaining theatrical experience. Or if this is your first time—Welcome!—what a great show to start with. Thank you for joining us, whatever your path to getting here has been.

There is so much in *Cambodian Rock Band* that entertains and more: it delights, it side-eyes power, it explores the depths of human brutality and perseverance, it quite literally rocks! There will be no lip-syncing here tonight.

The music, which merges vintage Cambodian rock numbers with songs written by the Cambodian American band Dengue Fever, is performed live by this dynamic company. If you aren't already familiar with this music, I foresee a music streaming deep-dive in your future (just in time for the release of Dengue Fever's new album).

History is brought to life with exquisite visual and aural design by our creative team. Duch, our narrator and antagonist, is so witty and charming that he tugs on our sympathies despite our knowledge of the many horrors committed by the Khmer Rouge.

And I've saved my favorite part for last: there is a humorous and deep parent/adult child relationship at the heart of this story. The music and history are all woven around Chum and his daughter Neary, as he tries to maintain his relationship with her while protecting her from the truth of his past. As I watch their scenes, I sit with these questions: What do our parents hide from us and why? What details of their past do parents owe their children? Does trauma leak through generations even if it remains unspoken? Is there healing to be found in speaking of the past to our loved ones?

Weaving all these story elements together is no small feat, but Lauren Yee is one of our finest modern playwrights. She masterfully tucks humor and history together into a basket of music in a way that teaches us to better appreciate the whole lives our parents had before they became our parents.

Cambodian Rock Band is the type of storytelling I love to watch as an audience member: show me our history, but also give me the tools to process it. Our artists are doing just that—grappling with the past, daring to make jokes about it, and setting it to music.

Teresa

Teresa Sapien
Associate Artistic Director



THE SOUND BEFORE THE SILENCE

Photos of original Signature Theatre cast by Joan Marcus.

BY ANDY KNIGHT

Reprinted with permission from South Coast Repertory.

In 1953, after 90 years as a French protectorate, Cambodia won its independence.

The Southeast Asian country was now the Kingdom of Cambodia. In 1955, general elections were held. Prince Norodom Sihanouk, who had abdicated as king in pursuit of a political career, and his newly established party, Sangkum Reastr Niyum (People's Socialist Community), triumphed: the Sangkum party won every seat in Parliament, and the Prince was appointed prime minister. The Sihanouk era had begun.

The Prince envisioned postcolonial Cambodia as a modern nation. He sought to improve the country's infrastructure and to foster a strong national identity (which often meant harsh punishment for far-left dissidents). To Sihanouk, modernity also required cultural relevance, and the arts and entertainment boomed in Cambodia during the 1950s and '60s. But the country's music enjoyed a particular renaissance—for it was during this era that rock and roll came to Cambodia.

Even before the arrival of rock and roll, Cambodia's popular music had incorporated foreign influences. While the country was still a protectorate, folk musicians integrated Western instruments into their ensembles and Latin beats into their songs. By the 1960s, the youth in urban Cambodia were hooked on yé-yé music, French pop named after the common refrain "yeah, yeah." Then, as the United States' military presence in neighboring Vietnam increased, English-language rock and roll became popular.

Throughout the 1960s and early '70s, Cambodian musicians recorded Khmer-language covers of foreign songs. But as a whole, Cambodia's rock was far more than a mere imitation of a Western form. Artists composed and recorded original songs that addressed national concerns and challenged contemporary attitudes; and both covers and original pieces combined Western-inspired melodies with a distinctly Cambodian sound. The music's unique identity was also embodied in its greatest stars. Singers such as Ros Serey Sothea and Sinn Sisamouth appealed to a wide audience with a modern sound that was complemented by traditional looks and performance styles. Other artists, such as Pan Ron and Liv Tek, epitomized the term "rock star" with their unrestrained, raucous performances.

By 1969, Cambodia was on the brink of a new political era. While Sihanouk ruthlessly contended with the country's far-left communist revolutionaries—whom he nicknamed the Khmer Rouge—he lost the support of urban Cambodians, who disapproved of his government's corruption. Finally, in March 1970, while Sihanouk was in France, General Lon Nol and Prince Sisowath Sirik Matak, both high-ranking government officials, orchestrated a coup with the unspoken permission of the United States. The Kingdom of Cambodia was now the Khmer Republic.

During the five years that followed, Cambodia was enmeshed in a civil war as the U.S.-backed Lon Nol government fought the tenacious Khmer Rouge. But in Phnom Penh, Cambodia's capital, the music persevered.

THE SOUNDS OF ROCK AND ROLL WOULD NOT BE QUIETED—

not by the U.S. bombs dropped on eastern Cambodia in the name of the Vietnam War, nor the rampant corruption within Lon Nol's government, nor the growing number of Khmer Rouge guerilla fighters.



Then, on April 17, 1975, the Khmer Rouge breached Phnom Penh, and the music finally stopped. The war was over, and the victors swiftly instituted their vision for a new society. Over the next four years, approximately two million Cambodians would be exterminated by the Khmer Rouge, including ninety percent of the country's musicians. But miraculously, many of their recordings survived.

ARENA STAGE

HANA S. SHARIF, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR | EDGAR DOBIE, EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

IN ASSOCIATION WITH ALLEY THEATRE, BERKELEY REPERTORY THEATRE, AND ACT THEATRE/5TH AVENUE

PRESENTS THE SIGNATURE THEATRE PRODUCTION OF

CAMBODIAN ROCK BAND

BY LAUREN YEE

FEATURING SONGS BY DENGUE FEVER

DIRECTED BY CHAY YEW

SET DESIGNER
TAKESHI KATA

COSTUME DESIGNER
LINDA CHO

LIGHTING DESIGNER
DAVID WEINER

CO-SOUND DESIGN
**MIKHAIL FIKSEL &
MEGUMI KATAYAMA**

PROJECTION DESIGNER
FIVE OHM PRODUCTIONS

WIG DESIGNER
TOM WATSON

MUSIC SUPERVISOR &
CO-MUSIC DIRECTOR
JANE LUI

MUSIC SUPERVISOR &
CO-MUSIC DIRECTOR
MATT MacNELLY

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR
GRAHAM SCHMIDT

STAGE MANAGER
**MERRICK A.B.
WILLIAMS**

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER
CAROLINE DUFFIN

REHEARSAL ASSISTANT
STAGE MANAGER
TARYN FRIEND

PERFORMANCE ASSISTANT
STAGE MANAGER
CHRISTI B. SPANN

New York Premiere produced by
Signature Theatre, New York City
Paige Evans, Artistic Director;
Harold Wolpert, Executive Director

Cambodian Rock Band was
commissioned and first produced by
South Coast Repertory
with support from the
Time Warner Foundation.

The play is a recipient of the
Edgerton Foundation
New American Play Award.

Developed with support from
The Ground Floor at Berkeley
Repertory Theatre, Berkeley, CA.

Produced by special arrangement
with Broadway & Beyond Theatricals.

Support for *Cambodian Rock Band* is
provided by **Andrew R. Ammerman**
and **Sue Henry and Carter Phillips**.

Arena Stage offers this production
in memory of long-time friend
and proud Washingtonian
Curtis T. Bell.



SETTING / CAST / FOR THIS PRODUCTION / MUSIC CREDITS

SETTING

Phnom Penh, Cambodia (April 2008), Outer Phnom Penh, Cambodia (April 1978), and Phnom Penh (April 1975). Cambodian New Year happens in April.

CAST (in alphabetical order)

u/s Neary/Sothea, Pou/S21 Guard **KELSEY ANGEL BAEHRENS**
Neary/Sothea **BROOKE ISHIBASHI**
Duch **FRANCIS JUE**
Rom/Journalist **ABRAHAM KIM**
Ted/Cadre/Leng **TIM LIU**
Pou/S21 Guard **JANE LUI**
u/s Ted/Cadre/Leng, Rom/Journalist; Fight Captain **ALEX LYDON**
Chum **JOE NGO**
u/s Chum, Duch **VI TRAN**

FOR THIS PRODUCTION

Associate Costume Designer **HERIN KAPUTKIN**
Associate Lighting Designer **DAVID SHOCKET**
Associate Sound Designer **BEN TRUPPIN-BROWN**
Assistant Lighting Designer **CATHERINE GIRARDI**
Khmer Vocal Coach **SOKUNTHARY SVAY**
Fight Director **ALDO URIBE**
Production Consultant **CHARLES M. TURNER III**
Production Assistants **SARA GEHL, ILANA SIMON-RUSINOWITZ,**
MARGARET WARNER
Stage Carpenters **ABAGAIL FRY, HANNAH MARTIN**
Props **ERICA FEIDELSEIT, ALEKX SHINES**
Light Board Operator **KELSEY SWANSON**
Deck Electrician **SCOTT FOLSOM**
A1 **VALERIE TUROS**
Sound Assistant **JORDANA ABRENICA**
Second Audio **ALEX CLOUD**
Wardrobe Supervisors **ALICE HAWFIELD, ADELLE GRESCOCK**
Wardrobe **EMILY McCORT**
Wigs, Hair, and Makeup Supervisor **JAIME BAGLEY**
Crew Swing **TREVOR COMEAU**

This play contains one fifteen-minute intermission.

The videotaping or other video or audio recording of this production is strictly prohibited.

Please turn off all electronic devices, unless using specifically for
GalaPro closed captioning service.

MUSIC CREDITS

"Uku," "Family Business," "One Thousand Tears of a Tarantula," "Cement Slippers," "Sni Bong," and "Tooth and Nail" all written by Dengue Fever.

All Dengue Fever songs administered by Ellipsis Music Corp. (ASCAP) and Pentagon Lipservices (BMI) on behalf of Chhom Chimney, 1 Armed Crab Publishing, Foolish Mortal Publishing, Noon Key Music, S W O P Songs, and Troll Under The Bridge.

Dengue Fever music and information are available from denguefevermusic.com.

The Times They Are A-Changin'

Written by Bob Dylan

Copyright © 1963, 1964 by Warner Bros. Inc.; renewed 1991, 1992 by Special Rider Music

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JEAS CYCLO by Yol Aularong;

TODAY I LEARNT TO DRINK, OLD POT STILL COOKS TASTY RICE, I AM SIXTEEN

by Ros Serey Sothea;

and CHAMPA BATTAMBANG by Sinn Sisamouth

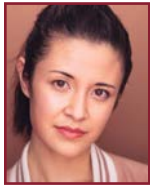
All used by arrangement with Minky Records, Inc.

Additional Arrangements by Matthew MacNelly and Jane Lui.



Photo of Francis Jue in *Cambodian Rock Band* by Joan Marcus.

CAST



KELSEY ANGEL BAEHRENS

(u/s *Nearly/Sothea, Pou/S21 Guard*) is a hapa Filipina-American currently based out of her hometown, Honolulu, Hawaii. Regional

credits: *Cambodian Rock Band* (HI), *Lizzie, the Rock Musical* (Playhouse Square, OH), *Henry IV, p1* (Hawaii Shakes Fest). Directing creds: Kate Hamill's *Pride & Prejudice* (KOA Theater, HI); associate to director Erin Ortman on *Jeannette*, a new musical about the right to vote; associate to director Jess McLeod on the NYCLU's "Sing Out for Freedom"; assistant to Alex Gemignani at the O'Neill Center's NMTC 2022. Graduate of Baldwin Wallace University and Mid-Pacific School of the Arts. Her deep gratitude to the raddest tour family ever, to Kaimake, the Tarantulas, Kana'ina, and bong. kelseyangelbaehrens.com Instagram: [@kelseyangelb](https://www.instagram.com/kelseyangelb)



BROOKE ISHIBASHI

(*Nearly/Sothea*) recently appeared as Florinda in the celebrated production of *Into the Woods* at The Kennedy Center. She

made her Broadway debut in the same production and originated the role at City Center Encores! Off-Broadway. After originating and developing the roles of *Nearly* and *Sothea* (South Coast Repertory, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, La Jolla Playhouse), Brooke is proud to be returning to her bandmates, The Cyclos. She is a former Actors' Equity Association national councilor, Fair Wage Onstage core member, NYCLU ambassador, and Be An #ArtsHero/ Arts Workers United cofounder. Arts & culture contributes \$919 billion+ to the

U.S. economy, employing 5.2 million+ arts workers. There is no American economic recovery without a robust arts & culture recovery. Our fates are intrinsically tied together. she/her/hers BeAnArtsHero.com



FRANCIS JOE

(*Duch*) is thrilled to make his Arena Stage debut. Francis was last seen in DC in *You for Me for You* at Woolly Mammoth. In the season

before the pandemic, Francis received a Lucille Lortel Award for *Cambodian Rock Band*, an Outer Critics Circle Award for *Soft Power*, and a Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Award for *The Language Archive*. He has appeared on Broadway in *Pacific Overtures, Thoroughly Modern Millie*, and *M. Butterfly*. Recent Off-Broadway credits include *Good Enemy, Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992*, and *Wild Goose Dreams* (Obie Award). Recent regional credits include *Today is My Birthday, King of the Yeas* (Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Award), and *Tiger Style!* TV/Film credits include *Madam Secretary, Hightown, Law & Order: SVU, Joyful Noise, White Noise*, and *Our Son*.



ABRAHAM KIM

(*Rom/Journalist*) Regional: Originated the role of Rom in *Cambodian Rock Band* (Signature Theatre Company, Pacific

Playwrights Festival, South Coast Repertory, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, La Jolla Playhouse); Son in *LA Riots* (Cafe/Club Fais Do-Do). Music: National and International tours with Run River North, DANakaDAN, and Magnetic North & Taiyo Na. Drummer on Magnetic North & Taiyo Na's album, *Home:Word*. Music band affiliations: IXS, Monroe Street, The Blazing Rays of the Sun, Former Faces, Fyke, Ruth + the Library, Priska, Surrija. Music Producer: Priska (*State Change*), SGLA (*Be Thou My Vision*). TV/ Film: *Good Sessions* (CBS pilot), *Jasyn's*

Theme (YouTube). Education: Craig Kupka, Daniel Yoo, Angelica Thompson. Instagram: [@Oabrahamkim0](https://www.instagram.com/Oabrahamkim0)



TIM LIU

(*Ted/Cadre/Leng*) was born and raised in NJ. He most recently performed Off-Broadway in the world premiere of *Good Enemy*

directed by Chay Yew for Audible Theater. Additional theater credits include Off-Broadway performances with the Pearl Theatre Company (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, dir. Eric Tucker), Pan Asian Repertory Theatre, HERE Arts Center, and other NYC theaters. Regionally he has worked with Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival, B Street Theatre, Capital Repertory Theatre, The Shakespeare Theatre of NJ, and Centenary Stage Company. Recent TV and Film credits include *Pam & Tommy* (Hulu), *The Endgame* (NBC), *New Amsterdam* (NBC), *Girls on the Bus* (HBO), *A Father's Son* (w/ Ronny Chieng and Tzi Ma), and *Knock at the Cabin* (M. Night Shyamalan).



JANE LUI

(*Pou/S21 Guard*) is a songwriter, vocalist, producer, keyboardist, and percussionist. Recent credits include

"Opera Evelyn" vocal contributions to the soundtrack of *Everything Everywhere All at Once* (A24), Arranger/Pou in *Cambodian Rock Band* (Off-Broadway Signature Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, South Coast Repertory), Huong in *Vietgone* (East West Players), original compositions in *All's Well That Ends Well* (OSF), and composer and music director in *Secret in the Wings* (Coourage Theatre Co). Her music project, SURRIJA, explores glitch and warm electronic design in song form. The album earned a nomination for Best Pop Album at San Diego Music Awards 2021. The music video "Southern Winds" earned

Best Music Video at Dublin Web Fest 2017. She has worked with Matt Chamberlain, Son Lux, Felicia Day, CDZA, and toured internationally. Surrija.com Instagram: [@surrija](https://www.instagram.com/surrija)



ALEX LYDON

(u/s *Ted/Cadre/Leng, Rom/Journalist; Fight Captain*) is thrilled to be joining the Cyclos for their national tour! Previous credits

include *As You Like It* (Quest Players), *Such Things as Vampires* (People's Light), *It Can't Happen Here* (Berkeley Rep), *Sisters Matsumoto* (CenterREP), and the Ground Floor workshop of *Cambodian Rock Band*. Many thanks to Lauren Yee, Chay Yew, and the rest of the Cyclos.



JOE NGO

(*Chum*)'s credits include *Cambodian Rock Band* (South Coast Repertory, La Jolla Playhouse, Alley Theatre, Oregon

Shakespeare Festival, Berkeley Repertory, and Signature Theatre NYC; Drama League nomination, Obie Award winner). Other regional credits include *Vietgone* (Studio Theatre), *King of the Yeas* (Baltimore Center Stage and ACT Contemporary Theatre), *White Snake* (Baltimore Center Stage), *Mlima's Tale* (Repertory Theatre of St. Louis). Joe's TV/Film credits include *Crashing* (HBO) and *Funan* (GKids). www.joe-ngo.com Instagram: [@joengoinsta](https://www.instagram.com/joengoinsta)



VI TRAN

(u/s *Chum, Duch*) is pleased to be making his Arena Stage debut. Born in the shadow of Sai Gon, Vietnam and raised in the

cattle country of southwestern Kansas, Vi is equal parts sea salt and wheat fields.

His autobiographical refugee folk musical *The Butcher's Son* chronicles his family's escape from Vietnam, their capture by the Khmer Rouge, and their resettlement in the meatpacking country of America. It was nominated for eight awards at the 2018 Chicago Musical Theatre Festival, winning Most Promising Musical and Best Leading Performer (Tran). Regional credits include *Cambodian Rock Band* (Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Alley Theatre), *Vietgone* (Unicorn Theatre, American Stage), *Miss Saigon* (Paramount, Western Playhouse). Watch and listen at [youtube.com/vitranmusic](https://www.youtube.com/vitranmusic). Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram: @vitranmusic

CREATIVE TEAM

LAUREN YEE (*Playwright*) *Cambodian Rock Band* premiered at South Coast Repertory, subsequent productions at Oregon Shakespeare Festival, La Jolla Playhouse, City Theatre, Merrimack Rep, Signature Theatre, Victory Gardens, and Jungle Theater/Theater Mu. Her play *The Great Leap* has been produced at the Denver Center, Steppenwolf, Seattle Repertory, Atlantic Theater, Guthrie Theater, American Conservatory Theater, Arts Club, InterAct Theatre, Portland Center Stage, and Asolo Rep. Honors include the Doris Duke Artists Award, Whiting Award, Steinberg/ATCA Award, American Academy of Arts and Letters Literature Award, Horton Foote Prize, Kesselring Prize, Primus Prize, a Hodder Fellowship at Princeton, and the #1 and #2 plays on the 2017 Kilroys List. She's a Residency 5 playwright at Signature Theatre, New Dramatists member, Ma-Yi Writers Lab member, and Playwrights Realm alumni playwright. Current commissions include Arena Stage/Second Stage, Geffen Playhouse, South Coast Repertory. TV credits: *Pachinko* (Apple),

Soundtrack (Netflix), *Interior Chinatown* (Hulu), *Billions* (Showtime), *The Sterling Affairs* (FX). She is currently developing pilots for Netflix and Apple. BA: Yale. MFA: UCSD. [laurensee.com](https://www.laurensee.com)

CHAY YEW (*Director*)'s New York credits include the Public Theater, Playwrights Horizon, New York Theatre Workshop, Signature Theatre, New York City Center's Encores!, Playwrights Realm, Audible Theater, Rattlestick, Ensemble Studio Theatre, National Asian American Theatre, and Ma-Yi. Regionally, he directed for the Humana Festival, Goodman Theatre, Kennedy Center, American Conservatory Theater, Berkeley Rep, Hartford Stage, La Jolla Playhouse, South Coast Repertory, Huntington Theatre, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Seattle Rep, Woolly Mammoth, Long Wharf, Alley Theatre, Denver Theatre Center, Portland Center Stage, Round House Theatre, Center Theatre Group, Singapore Repertory Theatre, amongst others. His opera credits include the world premieres of Osvaldo Golijov's and David Henry Hwang's *Ainadamar* (co-production with Tanglewood Music Center, Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, and Los Angeles Philharmonic) and Rob Zuidam's *Rage D'Amors* (Tanglewood). He is a recipient of the Obie Award for Direction. [chayyew.com](https://www.chayyew.com)

TAKESHI KATA (*Set Designer*) has designed over 200 theatrical productions including plays, musicals, opera, and dance. Broadway: *Clyde's*, *Derren Brown: Secret*. Off-Broadway: *Office Hour* (Public); *Man from Nebraska* (Second Stage); *The Great Leap*, *Through a Glass Darkly*, *The Intelligent Design of Jenny Chow* (Atlantic); *Until the Flood* (Rattlestick). Regional: Alley Theatre, American Players Theatre, Berkeley Rep, Central City Opera, Dallas Theater Center, Denver Theatre for the Performing Arts, Ford's Theatre, Geffen Playhouse, Goodman, Hartford Stage, Huntington Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse, Long Wharf, Mark Taper Forum, Nashville Opera, Old Globe, Portland Center Stage, Steppenwolf,

Williamstown, and Yale Rep. Kata has been the recipient of Michael Merrit, Drama Desk, Obie, and Jeff Awards and has been nominated for Ovation, San Francisco Critics Circle, Elliot Norton, TBA, and Barrymore Awards. Kata is an Associate Professor at University of Southern California, School of Dramatic Arts.

LINDA CHO (*Costume Designer*) Arena: *A Thousand Splendid Suns*; *Dear Jack*, *Dear Louise*; *Sovereignty*; *Book Club Play*; *Light in the Piazza*; *Legacy of Light*; *Noises Off*; *Awake and Sing!*; *Good People*; *Passion Play*; *Anna Christie*; *Piano Lesson*; *Orpheus Descending*. DC: *Way of the World* at Folger; *Measure for Measure*, *Macbeth*, *Dog in the Manger* all at Shakespeare Theatre. Broadway: *Summer, 1976*; *Take Me Out*; *Grand Horizons*; *Anastasia* (Tony nomination); *The Great Society*; *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder* (Tony Award, Henry Hewes Award); *The Lifespan of a Fact*; *Velocity of Autumn*. Numerous Off-Broadway, regional, and opera productions. Advisory Committee of the American Theatre Wing. MFA, Yale School of Drama. [lindachoch.com](https://www.lindachoch.com)

DAVID WEINER (*Lighting Designer*) is thrilled to continue bringing Chay Yew's production of Lauren Yee's *Cambodian Rock Band* to audiences since its world premiere at South Coast Repertory in 2018. Previously at Arena, David remounted his design for the Tony Award-winning revival of *The Normal Heart*. His work has been seen in over 100+ productions on Broadway, Off-Broadway, and in regional theaters across the country over the last 30 years. David also has a thriving architectural lighting design practice. His recent clients include award-winning restaurants Tatiana by Chef Kwame Onwuachi, Al Coro, Saga, Crown Shy, Cote (NY, Miami, Singapore) and Naminori. www.DavidWeinerDesign.com

MIKHAIL FIKSEL (*Co-Sound Designer*) is a Tony Award-winning designer, composer, audio producer, and DJ working in theater, dance, film, and audio-forward

media. Besides numerous productions of *Cambodian Rock Band*, other projects include collaborations with Playwrights Horizons, The Public, Goodman Theatre, Steppenwolf, Chicago Shakespeare, La Jolla Playhouse, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Victory Gardens, Albany Park Theater Project, Audible Originals, and Make-Believe Association (where he serves as the director of audio production and with whom he just released a new audio drama series "Lake Song" featured at Tribeca Audio Premieres). Film credits include original scores for *Glitch*, *The Wise Kids*, and *In Memoriam*. Other awards include three Lucille Lortel Awards, multiple Jeff Awards, and 2020 Obie Award for Sound Design. Fiksel is on the faculty at Columbia College Chicago and is a proud member of USA and TSDCA.

MEGUMI KATAYAMA (*Co-Sound Designer*) is a NY-based sound designer. Her Arena Stage credits include *My Body No Choice*. Off-Broadway/NY: *The Light in the Piazza* (Encores!), *Regretfully*, *So the Birds Are* (Playwrights Horizons), *The Nosebleed* (LCT3), *for colored girls who have considered suicide/when the rainbow is enuf* (Public Theater), *The Life* (co-design, Encores!), *The Gett* (Rattlestick), NAATCO, Signature Theatre, Ping Chong + Company. Regional: Studio Theatre, Woolly Mammoth, Everyman Theatre, Alley Theatre, Geva Theatre Center, Long Wharf, Yale Rep, Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park, Kansas City Rep, Denver Center, Berkeley Rep, Two River Theater, and more. MFA Yale School of Drama.

FIVE OHM PRODUCTIONS (*Projection Designer*) is a New York City-based production company specializing in theatrical and experiential audio and video applications. Five OHM has employed hundreds of design and technical artists and has an ever-expanding roster of technicians and venues in New York City and beyond. Notable design credits include video design with Tal Yarden for the Apollo's original production of Ta-Nehisi Coates' *Between the World and Me*



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WHO'S WHO

performed at the Apollo and Kennedy Center and the eventual subject of an HBO documentary of the same name. Other notable credits include *New York Times'* DealBook Conference with Jazz at Lincoln Center, original animations and design for *Fahrenheit 451* at the Hippodrome, and video design for *Cambodian Rock Band* with Luke Norby at Signature Theatre.

TOM WATSON (*Wig Designer*), originally from N. Ireland, has headed the wig/makeup department at the Metropolitan Opera for 17 years. He has designed more than 100 Broadway productions, including *Wicked*, *Rock of Ages*, *The King and I*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Oslo*, *Falsettos*, *The Little Foxes*, *Junk*, *My Fair Lady*, *King Kong*, *All My Sons*, *Great Society*, and *Plaza Suite*.

JANE LUI (*Music Supervisor & Co-Music Director*) See bio on page 15.

MATT MacNELLY (*Music Supervisor & Co-Music Director*) is a musician and actor living in Los Angeles. He co-arranged *Cambodian Rock Band* and, prior to the current tour, worked as Music Director for most of the previous productions including Signature Theater (NYC), the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, South Coast Rep, and Victory Gardens, among others. He's been playing guitar and singing for over 20 years. Matt is thrilled to be back in DC, where he started his career at Studio Theatre, Folger Shakespeare Library, Rorschach Theatre, and Synetic Theater. Matt has a BA in Theater and Performance Studies from Georgetown University, and an MFA in Acting from the University of California, San Diego.

GRAHAM SCHMIDT (*Associate Director*) is a theater director based in New York. Graham has directed and developed work at the Orchard Project, Ensemble Studio Theatre, the Lark Theater, the Wild Project, the National Winter Playwrights Retreat, Salvage Vanguard Theater, Aye Defy, the Blue Theater, the Off Center, NYU Grad Acting, Fordham University, the American

Academy of Dramatic Arts, and UT-Austin. Graham teaches acting in BFA programs at Pace University. Find out more at www.grahamschmidt.com.

MERRICK A.B. WILLIAMS (*Stage Manager*) Broadway: *The Book of Mormon*, *Frankie and Johnny in the Clair de Lune*. NY City Center: *Call Me Madam* (Encores!). Off-Broadway: *Sanctuary City*, *Othello*, *Dreaming Zenzile*, *An Ordinary Muslim* (NYTW); *Good Enemy* (Minetta Lane); *Somebody's Daughter*, *The Layover*, *Invisible Thread*, *The Other Thing* (Second Stage); *Gently Down the Stream*, *Sweat Mobile* National Tour, *Measure for Measure* Mobile (The Public); *Daphne's Dive* (Signature). Regional: *Cambodian Rock Band* (Alley Theatre, Berkeley Rep, Arena Stage); *Seder* (Hartford Stage); *10x10 2016* (Barrington Stage); *On the Town* (Boston Pops).

CAROLINE DUFFIN (*Assistant Stage Manager*) is so excited to be a part of *Cambodian Rock Band* again! Broadway: *Clyde's*. Off-Broadway: *Good Enemy*; *HEART* (Minetta Lane); *iAmericano!* (New World Stages); *My Mother's Severed Head* (Theatre Row); *Whisper House* (59E59). Regional: *Cambodian Rock Band* (Alley Theatre, Berkeley Rep, Arena Stage). Concerts: *SuperYou* Musical Concert (Carnegie Hall), *Bridesmaids: A Dance Narrative* (Symphony Space).

CHRISTI B. SPANN (*Performance Assistant Stage Manager*) has been working as a stage manager in DC since 2011. Favorite Arena Stage productions include *A Raisin in the Sun* and *Junk*. She previously spent 12 seasons on the stage management staff at the Denver Center Theatre Company and has also worked with The Great River Shakespeare Festival in Winona, MN and Virginia Repertory Theatre in Richmond, VA.

CHARLES M. TURNER III (*Production Consultant*) Broadway: *Death of a Salesman*, *The Skin of Our Teeth*, *The Parisian Woman*, *Hand to God*, *The Heidi Chronicles*, *The Performers*, *Golda's Balcony*,

and *Metamorphoses*. Other credits include 25 years of Off-Broadway, regional, and international work.

SIGNATURE THEATRE

celebrates playwrights and gives them an artistic home. Signature makes an extended commitment to a playwright's body of work, producing several plays by each resident writer and delivering an intimate and immersive journey into the playwright's singular vision. Founded in 1991 by the late James Houghton, the Tony Award®-winning Signature Theatre is now led by Artistic Director Paige Evans and Executive Director Harold Wolpert. Signature fosters a cultural community within our permanent home on West 42nd Street, the Frank Gehry-designed Pershing Square Signature Center, which boasts three theatres and two rehearsal rooms, including The Ford Studio, a flexible space that can be converted into a 99-seat theatre.

ALLEY THEATRE,

one of America's leading nonprofit theatres, is a nationally recognized performing arts company led by Artistic Director Rob Melrose and Managing Director Dean R. Gladden. The Alley is committed to developing and producing theatre that is as diverse as the Houston community. The Theatre produces up to 16 plays and nearly 500 performances each season, ranging from the best current work and re-invigorated classic plays to new plays by contemporary writers. Home to a full-time resident company of actors, the Alley engages theatre artists of every discipline—actors, directors, designers, composers, playwrights—who work on individual productions throughout each season as visiting artists. The Alley is comprised of two state-of-the-art theatres: the 774-seat Hubbard Theatre and the 296-seat Neuhaus Theatre. The Alley reaches over 200,000 people each year through its performance, education, and community engagement programs. Its audience enrichment programs include pre-show

and postperformance talks, events, and workshops for audience members of all ages.

BERKELEY REPERTORY THEATRE

has grown from a storefront stage to an international leader in innovative theatre. Known for its ambition, relevance, and excellence, as well as its adventurous audience, the nonprofit has provided a welcoming home for emerging and established artists since 1968. Over 5.5 million people have enjoyed nearly 500 shows at Berkeley Rep, which have gone on to win six Tony Awards, seven Obie Awards, nine Drama Desk Awards, one Grammy Award, one Pulitzer Prize, and many other honors. Berkeley Rep received the Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre in 1997. To formalize, enhance, and expand the processes by which Berkeley Rep makes theatre, The Ground Floor: Berkeley Rep's Center for the Creation and Development of New Work was launched in 2012. The Berkeley Rep School of Theatre engages and educates some 20,000 people a year and helps build the audiences of tomorrow with its nationally recognized teen programs. Berkeley Rep's bustling facilities—which also include the 400-seat Peet's Theatre, the 600-seat Roda Theatre, and a spacious campus in West Berkeley—are helping revitalize a renowned city. Learn more at berkeleyrep.org.

ACT THEATRE

is a collective that believes in the inherent power of story and art as the ultimate agent of change through the shared experience of live theatre. Steadfast in its dedication to producing work that sparks an authentic curiosity about the human condition, ACT produces bold, audacious works of contemporary theatre. Over the last 55 years, ACT has been a trusted Seattle destination presenting necessary and relevant works on contemporary themes, producing more than 300 plays and musicals. History of Theatre will become ACT's 47th world premiere during the 2022-23 season. Led by Artistic

Director, John Langs and Managing Director, Anita Shah, ACT is a theatre where artistic ambition and civic engagement unite around the mission to nurture theatre-makers of the next generation.

5TH AVENUE THEATRE

is one of America's leading musical theater companies. We enrich the community we love with the art form we love—giving the Pacific Northwest a front-row seat to original powerhouse productions that go on to light up marquees and audiences all the way to Broadway. From the page to the stage, we bring passion and epic scale to every musical we create with big talent and bigger-than-life productions. As a nonprofit theater company and our region's largest performing arts employer, we spread the joy of great musicals with people of all ages across our region and state. Each year, we reach 30,000 young people through our nationally acclaimed education programs. Programs designed to develop new musicals ensure that the next generation of great musicals will be there to tell the stories that captivate tomorrow's audiences. On the national stage, we are a leading voice for the power of this art form to lift the human spirit.

CENTER THEATRE GROUP,

one of the nation's preeminent arts and cultural organizations, is Los Angeles' leading not-for-profit theatre company, which under the leadership of Managing Director / CEO Meghan Pressman and Producing Director Douglas C. Baker, and in collaboration with the four Associate Artistic Directors, Lindsay Allbaugh, Tyrone Davis, Neel Keller, and Kelley Kirkpatrick, programs seasons at the 736-seat Mark Taper Forum and 1,600 to 2,100-seat Ahmanson Theatre at The Music Center in Downtown Los Angeles, and the 317-seat Kirk Douglas Theatre in Culver City. In addition to presenting and producing the broadest range of theatrical entertainment in the country, Center Theatre Group is one of the country's leading producers of ambitious new works through commissions

and world premiere productions and a leader in interactive community engagement and education programs that reach across generations, demographics, and circumstances to serve Los Angeles. Founded in 1967, Center Theatre Group was led by Founding Artistic Director Gordon Davidson until 2005 when Michael Ritchie was the artistic director until his retirement in 2021; Snehal Desai has been appointed the organization's next artistic director and will begin in August of 2023. Center Theatre Group has produced more than 700 productions across its three stages, including such iconic shows as *Zoot Suit*; *Angels in America*; *The Kentucky Cycle*; *Biloxi Blues*; *Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992*; *Children of a Lesser God*; *Curtains*; *The Drowsy Chaperone*; *9 to 5: The Musical*; and *Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo*.

CenterTheatreGroup.org

ARENA STAGE LEADERSHIP

HANA S. SHARIF (*Artistic Director*) has enjoyed a multi-faceted theater career, including roles as an artistic leader, director, playwright, and producer with a specialty in strategic and cross-functional leadership. Hana began her professional career as an undergraduate student at Spelman College. From 1997 to 2003, Hana served as the co-founder and Artistic Director of Nasir Productions, a theater dedicated to underrepresented voices challenging traditional structure. Hana joined the Tony Award-winning regional theatre, Hartford Stage, in 2003. During her decade-long tenure at Hartford Stage, Hana served as the Associate Artistic Director, Director of New Play Development, and Artistic Producer. Hana launched the new play development program, expanded the community engagement and civic discourse initiatives, and developed and

produced Tony, Grammy, Pulitzer, and Obie Award-winning shows. Starting in 2012, she served as Program Manager at ArtsEmerson, a leading world theater company based at Boston's Emerson College. During her tenure at ArtsEmerson, Hana launched an Artists in Residency program, led a research program assessing barriers to inclusion across the region, and leveraged her regional theater experience to freelance produce for smaller theater companies looking to expand and restructure their administrative teams. Hana was Baltimore Center Stage's Associate Artistic Director from 2014 to 2019 and was the architect of the innovative CS Digital program: a platform that pushes the boundaries of traditional theater and looks at the nexus point between art and technology. Her other achievements at Baltimore Center Stage included prototyping the Mobile Unit focused on historically underserved audiences, strengthening community engagement, producing multiple world and regional premieres, and helping to guide the theater through a multi-million dollar building renovation and rebranding effort. Hana became the first Black woman to lead a major regional theater in 2018 when she was named the Augustin Family Artistic Director of The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis. During her tenure at The Rep, Hana guided the organization through a strategic alignment, revolutionized the New Works program, expanding access to underserved communities, and centering equity and anti-racism as the organization's foundational values. Hana holds a BA from Spelman College and an MFA from the University of Houston. Hana is the recipient of USITT's 2023 Distinguished Achievement Award, Spelman's 2022 National Community Service Award, the 2009-10 Aetna New Voices Fellowship, EMC Arts Working Open Fellowship, and Theatre Communications Group (TCG) New Generations Fellowship. Hana is a founding member of The Black Theatre Commons (BTC). She serves on the board of directors for the TCG, BTC, and the Sprott Family Foundation.

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. I am honored to have been recognized for my service to, and leadership of, the Washington, D.C.-area theater community as a recipient of Theatre Washington's inaugural Victor Shargai Leadership Award in 2022.

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.



The Director and Choreographer are members of the STAGE DIRECTORS AND CHOREOGRAPHERS SOCIETY, a national theatrical labor union.

Arena Stage is a constituent of the Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national organization for the American theater.

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The Arena Stage Young Patrons Board seeks to strengthen and support the future of American theater at Arena Stage. The Young Patrons Board supports the artistic mission of Arena Stage by being active ambassadors to the community and arranging opportunities for people under 40 years old to engage with the theater.

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To learn more, please contact youngpatrons@arenastage.org

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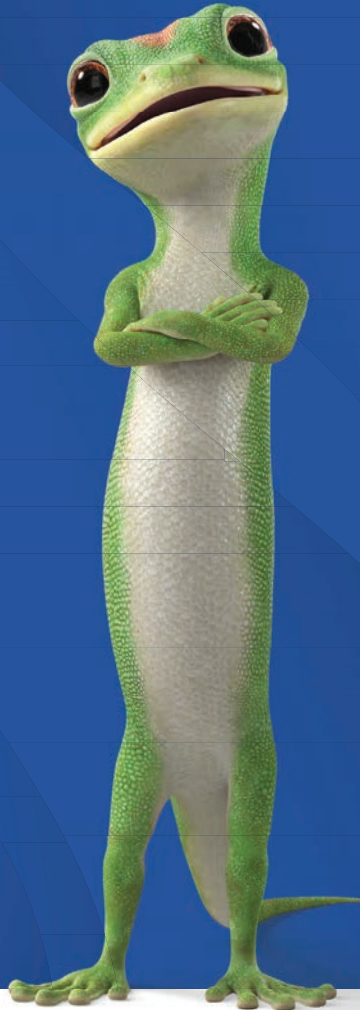
The Molly Smith Fund for New Work was created to honor the tremendous legacy of Molly Smith, Arena Stage's Artistic Director Emeritus, who retired at the end of the 2022/23 Season after 25 years of visionary leadership. The fund will support the artistic development of new work at Arena Stage, a pillar of Molly's vision.

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Arena Stage gratefully acknowledges these individuals who ensure the future of Arena Stage by making a planned gift. These gifts assure that Arena Stage will continue to challenge, educate and entertain audiences, and maintain its excellence in theater nationally, and internationally for generations to come.

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Arena Stage gratefully acknowledges the many individuals and families who support the theater's work by contributing to the Annual Fund. These gifts make it possible for the theater to continue presenting high-quality productions and innovative education programs that strengthen the community in which we live.

For more information on the benefits of becoming an Annual Fund contributor, please call the Development Department at 202-600-4177.

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The cast of *The Pajama Game*. Photo by Margot Schulman.



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Wigs, Hair, and
Makeup SupervisorJaime Bagley

COMING UP NEXT



POTUS: OR, BEHIND EVERY GREAT DUMBASS ARE SEVEN WOMEN TRYING TO KEEP HIM ALIVE

BY SELINA FILLINGER

DIRECTED BY MARGOT BORDELON

OCTOBER 13—NOVEMBER 12

