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Daniel J. Maldonado in Disney’s Newsies. Photo by Margot Schulman.
A THOUSAND SPLENDID SUNS

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I’m a voracious reader — books, magazines, essays, and of course, the news. For over 18 years, the United States has been engaged in Afghanistan, and it’s almost impossible to ignore the headlines coming from overseas. Coverage of ethnic violence, crimes against women and children, famine, poverty and the Taliban’s repressive extremism flood our newsfeeds. We can thank journalists for providing us with invigorating accounts of the sweeping military and political events in the Middle East and Central Asia, but art gives us a different kind of glimpse of the humanity that’s been swept up in the war. It infuses the headlines that are particularly profound in this moment with empathy, lyricism and the universal truths that connect us.

No artist has done more to bring Afghanistan into the American consciousness than Khaled Hosseini. His novels, which include the internationally bestselling *The Kite Runner*, *And the Mountains Echoed* and *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, ask us to see Afghans not as faceless statistics, but as human beings who love, struggle and yearn. It’s easy to see why *A Thousand Splendid Suns* spent over 70 weeks on the *New York Times* Best Sellers List. In the novel, Hosseini chronicles the lives of Afghan women in a society riddled with violence and obstructive laws that are intended to protect them but render them powerless. The novel’s heroines become exemplars of all that is indomitable in the Afghan spirit and their unlikely bond carries us through a war-torn community with resiliency and hope.

Every city has its own language, its own nuances and its own history, and our language is politics. D.C. audiences are hungry for these stories, and there is no other place in the country where these plays could have such an impact. Plays like Lisa Loomer’s *Roe* or Mary Kathryn Nagle’s *Sovereignty* fill the void between profound moments in history and the people at the center of those events. To have Ursula Rani Sarma’s adaptation of *A Thousand Splendid Suns* at Arena is moving for us.

This production premiered at American Conservatory Theater in San Francisco, where it was the crowning achievement of Carey Perloff’s remarkable 25-year run as the company’s artistic director. Her impact on the cultural life of the city has been immense, as has her influence on the theatrical landscape of the West Coast and the nation. Carey is an artist of intelligence and humanity and it is evident from her profound interpretation of Hosseini’s novel. Her staging transports us to another world and takes my breath away. I am honored to have my colleague’s work represented on our stage and to have this story reveal itself to you in this exquisite production.

Molly Smith
Artistic Director

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In 2017, San Francisco's American Conservatory Theater premiered Ursula Rani Sarma's adaptation of Khaled Hosseini's bestselling novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns*. A.C.T.'s production, directed by its former Artistic Director Carey Perloff, received an Edgerton Foundation New Play Award and was subsequently remounted at Seattle Rep and San Diego's Old Globe, as well as Theatre Calgary and the Manitoba Theatre Centre in Canada. Carey, along with her design team and composer David Coulter, have created a production that is both intimate and expansive and we are thrilled to partner with A.C.T. to bring their work to our audiences here in D.C.

It's always an exciting time when we have a chance to bring a production to our patrons that has had a life elsewhere. As an early pioneer of the resident theater movement, Arena Stage was one of only a few theaters in the country committed to creating theater in our communities. Now the movement is 500+ theaters strong. Our “national theater” of America is the network of these resident theaters. Given our location in the nation's capital, Arena is in a unique position to share American stories with our sister companies.

Why do theaters like Arena partner with other companies to co-produce new work? Collaboration has many benefits just as it does challenges. It is wonderful to share artists between cities, including directors, designers, actors and musicians. Our Washington, D.C., audiences get to experience talent from all over the country, just as our sister theaters get to enjoy the great talent we employ in Washington, D.C. We take great pride in not only producing world premieres, but also in presenting the second and third iterations of new work from across the country. This allows artists to refine their work, hear new things in the text and witness a fresh perspective from our patrons.

However, with a shared physical production also comes the challenge of making a show work well in several different spaces. Actors must adapt their performances to different houses along the way and remember that different audiences will react differently to the same lines or actions. For instance, some of the performers in this production have travelled with the show before; others are new additions to the company. Also, A.C.T.'s flagship theater — the Geary — seats over a thousand patrons; the Kreeger is a more intimate house at about half the size. In the Fichandler, director Bill Rauch has been tasked with adapting the Oregon Shakespeare Festival's production of *Mother Road* from a proscenium-style staging to one that works in the round.

Armed with passion for a project and a joint vision, these partnerships with our sister resident theaters promote new and exciting works that energize us all as new voices are added to our season. Arena opens its arms to many different companies, and the sharing of ideas and discovering of new artists is always exhilarating. With our doors open we can continue to create an atmosphere of learning and sharing with our peers.

Edgar Dobie  
Executive Producer  
President of the Corporation
In *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, Ursula Rani Sarma adapts Khaled Hosseini’s bestselling novel for the stage. The story is a work of fiction, but is set against an all-too-real backdrop of war, oppression and violence. The experiences of these characters and the actual population of Afghanistan have been deeply impacted by the United States’ Cold War with the Soviet Union and our ongoing conflicts with the Taliban, al-Qaeda and ISIS, as well as other regional and internal disputes; with the recent publication of *The Washington Post*’s Afghanistan Papers, detailing the failures of the U.S.’s military involvement in the region, we are only now coming to terms with the true extent of our responsibility for the suffering and lives lost. On these pages, you will find some useful background information that should help with understanding the story and the role America has played in creating the difficulties faced by the characters.

---

**70 YEARS OF AFGHAN HISTORY**

1921  The Emirate of Afghanistan wins independence from Britain in British-Afghan War

1926  Emir Amanulla Khan converts Afghanistan to a constitutional monarchy, including several socioeconomic reforms

1929  Khan abdicates and flees the country due to violent unrest

1933  After a series of assassinations and abdications, Zahir Shah takes the throne, ruling for the next 40 years

1934  The U.S. formally recognizes the state of Afghanistan

1947  The Partition of British India results in the two independent nations of India and Pakistan, which borders Afghanistan

1953  General Mohammed Daoud Khan becomes Prime Minister of Afghanistan, and begins cultivating relations with the Soviet Union, as well as introducing several progressive social reforms
The Afghan Constitution recognizes 14 distinct ethnic groups within the population. While much of the population historically identified as Afghan first, there has been more friction along those ethnic divisions in recent decades. The civil war throughout the 90s was split primarily along ethnic lines, and those tensions continue in the form of both official and unofficial quota systems in everything from military and university admissions to government jobs and political representation. As a result, the gathering and discussion of these numbers is a delicate subject, and the numbers are mere estimates.

**Timeline**

1973 In a Soviet-backed military coup, Prime Minister Khan takes power as president

1978 President Khan is himself the victim of a coup by the Afghan Communist Party, although their rule is shaken by infighting and a growing guerilla revolt (which received support from the U.S.)

1979 The USSR invades Afghanistan, nominally in support of the communist regime

1988 Osama bin Laden forms al-Qaeda in Pakistan, growing from and feeding on the Afghan conflict

1989 The USSR withdraws from Afghanistan; the communist regime continues fighting with the guerilla mujahideen forces

1991 USSR dissolves — putting an end to any aid and support for the Afghan regime

1992 Mujahideen forces capture the capital city of Kabul, but immediately begin to fracture
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Arena Stage
Molly Smith, Artistic Director  |  Edgar Dobie, Executive Producer

PRESENTS

A THOUSAND SPLENDID SUNS

BY URSULA RANI SARMA
BASED ON THE BOOK BY KHALED HOSSEINI
DIRECTED BY CAREY PERLOFF
CHOREOGRAPHED BY STEPHEN BUESCHER
ORIGINAL MUSIC WRITTEN AND PERFORMED BY DAVID COULTER

SET DESIGNER
KEN MACDONALD

COSTUME DESIGNER
LINDA CHO

LIGHTING DESIGNER
ROBERT WIERZEL

SOUND DESIGNER
JAKE RODRIGUEZ

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR
HAYSAM KADRI

VOCAL COACH
ANITA MAYNARD-LOSH

CASTING
VICTOR VAZQUEZ, C.S.A.

STAGE MANAGERS
DANI BAE* AND
CHRISTI B. SPANN*

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER
MARNE ANDERSON*

A Thousand Splendid Suns is generously sponsored by
Beth Newburger Schwartz and Michele and Allan Berman.

Originally commissioned by American Conservatory Theater, San Francisco, California
Carey Perloff, Artistic Director  |  Peter Pastreich, Executive Director
World Premiere production of A Thousand Splendid Suns co-presented by
American Conservatory Theater and Theatre Calgary in 2017
70TH ANNIVERSARY LEGACY CHALLENGE MATCH

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

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

CAST (in alphabetical order)

Mariam ................................................................................................................................... HEND AYOUB*
Ensemble ............................................................................................................................... SARAH COREY*
Fariba/Nana ....................................................................................................................... LANNA JOFFREY*
Rasheed/Fight Captain ......................................................................................................... HAYSAM KADRI*
Babi/Zaman/Interrogator ....................................................................................................... JOSEPH KAMAL*
Wakil ..................................................................................................................................... JASON KAPOOR*
Laila ....................................................................................................................................... MIRIAN KATRIB*
Zalmai .................................................................................................................................... RAVI MAMPARA
Zalmai ..................................................................................................................................... JUSTIN XAVIER POYDRAS
Ensemble ............................................................................................................................... YOUSOF SULTANI*
Aziza ...................................................................................................................................... NIKITA TEWANI*
Tariq/Driver ......................................................................................................................... ANTOINE YARED*

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FOR THIS PRODUCTION

Associate Costume Designer ................................................................. RICHARD LURIE
Associate Lighting Designer ................................................................. ANDREW GRIFFIN
Associate Sound Designer ................................................................. BETH LAKE
Assistant Lighting Designers ................................................................. CATHERINE GIRARDI, NIC VINCENT
Technical Director ................................................................. NATALIE BELL
Properties Director ................................................................. JENN SHEETZ
Costume Director ................................................................................. JOSEPH P. SALASOVICH
Master Electrician ................................................................................ CHRISTOPHER V. LEWTON
Sound and Video Supervisor ................................................................. BRIAN BURCHETT
Original Fight Consultant ................................................................. JONATHAN RIDER
Fight Consultant ................................................................................ LEWIS SHAW
Original Production Dramaturg ................................................................ MICHAEL PALLER
Original Cultural Consultant ................................................................. HUMAIRA GHILZAI
Cultural Consultant ................................................................................ YOUSOF SULTANI
Youth Company Supervisor ................................................................. MALEK MAYO
Stage Management Fellows ................................................................. STEPHEN BUBNIAK, DELAYNIE RIZER
Directing Fellow ................................................................................ GREGORY KENG STRASSER
Deck Carpenters ................................................................................ HANNAH MARTIN, RACHAEL ALBERT
Props ........................................................................................................ KYLE HANDZIAK
Light Board Operator ............................................................................ SCOTT FOLSOM
Sound Technician ................................................................................ ALEX CLOUD
Wardrobe Supervisor ........................................................................... ALICE HAWFIELD
Wardrobe ................................................................................................ KRISTINA MARTIN
First Hand ............................................................................................. ELIZABETH SPILSBURY

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WHO’S WHO

CAST

HEND AYOUB (Mariam) is excited to be making her Arena Stage debut. Her credits include: Broadway’s Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo with Robin Williams, as well as its previous run at Los Angeles’ Mark Taper Forum; Kiss (Yale Repertory Theatre); Veils (world premiere, Portland Stage; Barrington Stage). Television credits include: Homeland, Orange Is the New Black, The Looming Tower, Madam Secretary, Royal Pains, Feed the Beast, Comedy Central’s The Watch List and recurring roles onTransparent and Damages. For film, she co-starred in the Emmy Award-winning film Death of a President and the award-winning film Private.

SARAH COREY (Ensemble) is making her Arena Stage debut. Most recently she played The Grocer’s Wife and Mrs. Beouf in Rhinoceros at Tantrum Theater. Favorite NYC credits include: Love and Real Estate (59e59) and A Letter to Harvey Milk (Acorn Theatre). In D.C. she has been seen as Barbara DeMarco in Shear Madness at the Kennedy Center; Anne / Ana / Aminah in Oil at Olney Theatre Center; and in Love Sick at Theater J. Other favorite regionals include: Anisah in the world premiere of In the Book of at Alabama Shakespeare Festival; Rose Gellman in Caroline, or Change at SpeakEasy Stage; Kate in Lippa’s The Wild Party at New Repertory Theatre (IRNE award); and Kate Jerome in both Brighton Beach Memoirs and Broadway Bound at Oldcastle Theatre Company. AB Princeton University. www.sarah-corey.com.

HAYSAM KADRI (Rasheed / Fight Captain) has appeared in A Thousand Splendid Suns (Seattle Rep, The Old Globe, Theatre Calgary, A.C.T.); Enron, To Kill a Mockingbird, Much Ado about Nothing, The Crucible and A Christmas Carol (Theatre Calgary); The Hollow, Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the Jersey Lily, The Hound of the Baskervilles, Twelve Angry Men, Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde and Black Coffee (Vertigo Theatre); Richard III, Macbeth, Othello, William Shakespeare’s Land of the Dead and The Winter’s Tale (The Shakespeare Company); and The Last Wife, Cockroach, The Motherfu**er with the Hat and Shakespeare’s Dog (Alberta Theatre Projects). His film and TV credits include: The Revenant and Hell on Wheels. Kadri is artistic producer of The Shakespeare Company and program director of Theatre Calgary’s Shakespeare by the Bow.

JOSEPH KAMAL (Babi / Zaman / Interrogator) will be making his third appearance with Arena, previously seen in Anthems: Culture Clash and Love in Afghanistan. Recently, he was in the Broadway company of the Tony Award-winning musical The Band’s Visit. He has appeared in world premieres by Tony Kushner, Ethan Coen, Rajiv Joseph, Charles Mee, Lee Breuer, Betty Shamieh, Herbert Siguenza and Richard Montoya of Culture Clash, and Charles Randolph-Wright, as well as in West Coast premieres and the national tour of plays by Theresa Rebeck and Lynn Nottage. A long

LANNA JOFFREY (Fariba / Nana) is thrilled to make her Arena Stage debut reprising her role in A Thousand Splendid Suns (The Old Globe, A.C.T. and Seattle Rep). Based in London, Lanna recently performed The Eyes of the Night (Cervantes Theatre); The Time of Our Lies chronicling the life of Howard Zinn (Park Theatre); and They Promised Her the Moon honoring the life of Jerrie Cobb (Old Globe). Lanna’s verbatim play of women’s war stories, Valiant, has travelled the U.K. and U.S. — going to Edinburgh Fringe, Theatre503, Women and War Festival, NY Fringe, InterAct Theatre and others. Lanna earned awards for performances at NYFringe (Valiant), IRNE in Boston (Nine Parts of Desire) and Denver Ovation (1001). Her spoken word and writing have been featured online and in print. www.lannajoffrey.com
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time ago he was a company member of The Shakespeare Theatre in Washington, D.C. Recent television credits include: *Murphy Brown, Animal Kingdom, Madam Secretary* and *Seal Team*, among others. He has done a lot of voiceover work including the video game *Call of Duty*. @JosephKamal8

**JASON KAPOOR** (Wakil) is thrilled to be making his D.C. debut at Arena Stage. He has been seen in the Off-Broadway premiere of *Ideation* by Aaron Loeb and in all of the American productions of *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, as well as the Canadian premiere at Theatre Calgary. He received his B.A. from San Jose State University and an M.A. from the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art.

**MIRIAN KATRIB** (Laila) most recently appeared as Laila at The Grand Theatre's (London) production of *A Thousand Splendid Suns*. Other recent theater credits include: *The Prisoner of Tehran* (Theatre Passe Muraille) and *Me and You* (Talisman Theatre). Mirian's TV credits include: *Condor, American Gods* and many other commercial credits. Mirian is also an internationally touring musician and singer/songwriter. Instagram @miriankatrib

**RAVI MAMPARA** (Zalmai) performed most recently in *A Christmas Carol* at Ford’s Theater. He has performed at the Theater Lab’s Annual Cabaret Benefit, the Shakespeare Theatre’s annual Gala and is an alumnus of Camp Arena Stage where he has been an enthusiastic camper for three summers. He is 10 years old and in fifth grade at Washington Latin. He loves to play soccer and piano, sing, dance and perform. He is an avid musical theater fan aspiring to perform in plays and musicals, to compose music and to choreograph dance. Ravi is thrilled to have the opportunity to join the cast of *A Thousand Splendid Suns*.

**JUSTIN XAVIER POYDRAS** (Zolmai) is excited for his first appearance at Arena Stage. He was introduced to musical and drama play production at Capital City PCS (CCPCS) Theatre in Washington, D.C. Beginning in first grade, he has spent the last six years performing notable roles, including Simba (*The Lion King*); Dr. Seuss (*Seussical*); Pinocchio (*Law & Order: Fairy Tale Unit*); and his breakout role as Dromio of Syracuse in Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors* (CCPCS Theatre). Previous roles include: Antigonus, Camillo and Polixenes, in Shakespeare’s *The Winter’s Tale* (The Theatre Lab, School of Dramatic Arts). He received the CCPCS “Light Leadership Award” for exemplary school spirit and actively displaying community values of kindness, courage, creativity, responsibility and perseverance. He maintains “Habits of Scholar” goals in all his academic classes at school.

**YOUSOF SULTANI** (Ensemble) is thrilled to be making his Arena Stage debut! He was most recently seen on stage in *And Then There Were None* at Drury Lane in Chicago. Other credits include: *Photograph 51* (Court Theatre); *Heartland* (InterAct Theatre); *Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley and Guards at The Taj* (Milwaukee Repertory Theater); *The Doppelgänger: An International Farce* and *The Fundamentals* (Steppenwolf Theater); *United Flight 232* (House Theatre); *Disappearing Number* and *Inana* (TimeLine Theatre); *Othello* (Chicago Shakespeare Theater); and *The Hundred Flowers Project* (Silk Road Rising). Film credits include: *Glass House*. Television credits include: *The Brave* (NBC); *Empire* (FOX); and *Chicago Fire* (NBC). Yousof received his B.F.A. in performance from Virginia Commonwealth University. He will be dedicating his performance to his father, Wahid Sultani.
What are the Arena Civil Dialogues?

Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater hosts community conversations as a part of the Arena Civil Dialogues Series. The conversations seek to provide an opportunity for members of the Washington, D.C., community to engage in civil discourse about social and political issues and aim to demonstrate that people of diverse viewpoints can have fruitful dialogues with one another. Each Arena Civil Dialogue features prominent Dialogue Starters, and is curated and moderated by Amitai Etzioni, a university professor at The George Washington University and author.

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NIKITA TEWANI (Aziza) is thrilled to be reprising the role of Aziza in her Arena Stage debut. She is part of the original cast that performed the world premiere at A.C.T. and toured the West Coast. Off-Broadway, Nikita played Nasrin in The Fall at Soho Playhouse. Regionally, she played Mahwish in The Who and The What at Milwaukee Repertory Theater. She will be seen as a recurring role on an upcoming Netflix series in 2020. She has co-starred on TV shows including The Affair (Showtime) and Divorce (HBO) and completed a number of independent films. Most recently, she played the lead role in the upcoming feature film I’ll Meet You There. Nikita received her B.F.A. in drama at NYU Tisch. @NikitaTewani imdb.com/NikitaTewani

ANTOINE YARED (Tariq/Driver), born in Lebanon and raised in Montreal, has performed in theaters across the Canadian provinces of Ontario, Quebec and the Maritimes, as well as performing in A Thousand Splendid Suns last year in San Diego, San Francisco and Seattle. He most recently appeared in Indecent at the Seattle Repertory Theatre, A Christmas Carol at Soulpepper in Toronto and The Last Wife at the Centaur Theatre in Montreal. He also appeared in Groundling Theatre’s production of LEAR in Toronto. Other career highlights include Romeo in Romeo and Juliet at the Stratford Festival where he spent five seasons appearing in productions like The Madwoman of Chaillot, John Gabriel Borkman, Macbeth, As You Like It, King John, The Alchemist, Mother Courage and Her Children, The Merchant of Venice and Pericles.

CREATIVE

URSULA RANI SARMA (Playwright) is an award-winning writer of Irish Indian descent. She has written plays for the Abbey Theatre, the Dublin National Theatre, A.C.T., Ambassador Theatre Group, the Traverse Theatre, Paines Plough, and the BBC, amongst many other companies. Recent productions include Joanne (Clean Break/Soho Theatre), Débris (Théâtre La Licorne), The Ripple Effect (Ambassador Theatre Group/London Cultural Olympiad), Yerma (West Yorkshire Playhouse), Riot (A.C.T. Young Conservatory/Theatre Royal Bath), The Dark Things (Traverse Theatre), and Birdsong (Abbey Theatre, Dublin). Sarma has been writer in residence for Paines Plough, the Eugene O’Neill Theater Center, and the Royal National Theatre, among other companies. She is currently developing plays for the Abbey Theatre, Dublin; the Traverse Theatre; and Djinn Theatre Company. For screen, her work includes Raw, Red Rock, Anywhere But Here, and Judge Dee. She is currently adapting the book Henry’s Demons for BBC 1 and writing an original drama entitled Guardian for Channel 4.

KHALED HOSSEINI (Author) was born in Kabul, Afghanistan, in 1965. In 1976, his family relocated to Paris. They were ready to return to Kabul in 1980, but by then the Soviet invasion was underway, so the Hosseini family moved to San Jose, California. Hosseini went on to become a doctor, practicing medicine as an internist between 1996 and 2004. He is the author of three award-winning and internationally best-selling novels: The Kite Runner (2003), A Thousand Splendid Suns (2007), and And the Mountains Echoed (2013). In 2006, Hosseini was named a Goodwill Envoy to the United Nations Refugee Agency. After a trip to Afghanistan in this position, he was inspired to establish The Khaled Hosseini Foundation, a nonprofit that provides humanitarian assistance to the people of Afghanistan.
CAREY PERLOFF (Director) recently completed an acclaimed 25-year tenure as artistic director of the American Conservatory Theater in San Francisco, an artistic journey documented in her award-winning 2015 book Beautiful Chaos: A Life in the Theater (City Lights Press). Known for innovative productions of classical plays and for championing new voices and new forms of theater, Perloff is celebrated for her decades-long collaborations with Tom Stoppard and Harold Pinter, and for ambitious multi-disciplinary commissions such as A Thousand Splendid Suns (which has been seen throughout the West Coast and across Canada) and Tosca Café. Recent work includes Ghosts with Uma Thurman at Williamstown Theatre Festival, Private Lives at the Stratford Shakespeare Festival and Colm Toibin's Pole Sister at the Gate Theatre. As a playwright, Perloff's work includes The Fit (SF Playhouse), Kinship (Theatre de Paris starring Isabelle Adjani and Williamstown Theater Festival starring Cynthia Nixon), Luminescence Dating (EST and Magic Theatre), Higher (A.C.T. and LJP's DNA Festival) and her new play Bastiano (SF Playhouse, Jim Jarmusch Revisited and Swordfish trombones Revisited). [Composer] An Anatomy Act, A Thousand Splendid Suns (A.C.T.), Hamlet (A.C.T.), Ghosts (Williamstown Theatre Festival), Medea (Legion of Honor), The Eldership Project (Improbable) davidcoulter.co.uk

KEN MACDONALD (Set Designer) is so happy to be working again with Molly and the amazing people at Arena Stage. Previous productions there include The Shoplifters, Sovereignty, Anything Goes and Newsies. Most recently, Ken designed the American tour of A Thousand Splendid Suns (ACT San Francisco; The Old Globe, San Diego; Seattle Repertory). His design for the international hit The Overcoat won him several awards. He has designed over 100 shows with his partner, Morris Panych (director and playwright), from Vigil (starring Olympia Dukakis/Mark Taper Forum and ACT) to 7 Stories across Canada. Ken designed at the Shaw Festival (Niagara-on-the-Lake) for 16 seasons. He designed Private Lives at the Stratford Festival Ontario and this season will design there again for Frankenreinstein Revisited. Then he will design This London Life with The Grand Theatre. Ken's awards include a Gemini (Best Production Design / film “The Overcoat”), four Dora Mavor Moore Awards (Toronto) and 17 Jessie Awards (Vancouver). www.kenandmorris.com

LINDA CHO (Costume Designer) won the Tony Award and the Henry Hewes Design Award for the Broadway musical A Gentleman’s Guide to Love and Murder. In 2017, she was...
nominated for the Tony, Outer Critic's Circle and Drama Desk Awards for Best Costume Design of a Musical for the Broadway production of Anastasia. In 2018, she was proud to be part of Broadway's first all-female creative team for Lifespan of a Fact. She is the recipient of the Theatre Development Fund's Irene Sharaff Young Master Award. Linda attended the Paris American Academy to study fine arts and fashion, received a B.A. from McGill University in Montreal majoring in psychology and received her M.F.A. from the Yale School of Drama.

ROBERT WIERZEL (Lighting Designer) has worked with artists from diverse disciplines and backgrounds in opera, theatre, dance, and contemporary music on stages throughout the country and abroad. His NYC Broadway productions include Lady Day at Emerson's Bar & Grill, the musical FELA! (Tony Award nomination), David Copperfield's debut Dreams and Nightmares. Wierzel has designed productions with opera companies in New York, Paris, Tokyo, Norway, Toronto, Vancouver, Wexford; Atlanta, Boston, Seattle, San Diego, Houston, Dallas, Washington D.C., Virginia, Atlanta and Chicago, as well as numerous productions (30 seasons) with Glimmerglass Festival. Wierzel's dance work includes decades with the Bill T. Jones / Arnie Zane Company. He has designed at regional theaters across the country, including A.C.T.; Shakespeare Theatre (Washington D.C.), Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Guthrie Theater, Long Wharf Theatre, Goodman Theatre, The Old Globe, Asolo Repertory Theatre and the Mark Taper Forum, among many others. Wierzel is a creative partner at Spark Design Collaborative and is on the faculty of NYU Tisch School of the Arts.

JAKE RODRIGUEZ (Sound Designer) is a sound designer and composer based in the San Francisco Bay Area. His recent credits include Top Girls (American Conservatory Theater); Wink (Marin Theatre Company); Oedipus el Rey (Magic Theatre); Between Two Knees (Oregon Shakespeare Festival); The Great Leap, Her Portmanteau, Sweat, and Vietgone (A.C.T.); Women Laughing Alone with Salad and The Events (Shotgun Players);

Everybody (California Shakespeare Theater); Angels in America and An Octoroon (Berkeley Repertory Theatre); we, the invisibles (Actors Theatre of Louisville); A Thousand Splendid Suns (A.C.T., Theatre Calgary, Grand Theater, The Old Globe); The Christians (Playwrights Horizons, the Mark Taper Forum); Girlfriend (Kirk Douglas Theatre); and Mr. Burns, a post-electric play (A.C.T., the Guthrie Theater). Jake is the recipient of a 2004 Princess Grace Award.

HAYSM KADRI (Associate Director)
See bio on page 17.

ANITA MAYNARD-LOSH (Vocal Coach) is the Director of Community Engagement/Senior Artistic Advisor at Arena Stage. Now in her 16th season at Arena Stage, Anita has been involved in an artistic capacity on 40+ Arena Stage productions: she directed the world premiere of Our War as part of the National Civil War Project, and has been an associate director, text director and vocal/dialect coach on multiple other productions. Anita trained and taught at the American Conservatory Theater, was on the faculty at Webster University, headed the theater department at the University of Alaska Southeast and was the associate artistic director of Perseverance Theater in Juneau, Alaska. Vocal/dialect coaching: ACT, Arena Stage, Kennedy Center, Washington National Opera, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Portland Center Stage and the Broadway revival of Ragtime.

DANI BAE (Stage Manager) is thrilled be at Arena Stage for A Thousand Splendid Suns. She has worked on A Thousand Splendid Suns since its debut at American Conservatory Theater in 2017. Her most recent credits include Testmatch, Her Portmanteau, Heisenberg, The Birthday Party, and A Thousand Splendid Suns (American Conservatory Theater), A Thousand Splendid Suns (Seattle Repertory Theatre), Urinetown: The Musical (American Theatre of Actors), and the Bard Music Festival (Bard SummerScape). She has a BFA in stage management from Syracuse University.
CHRISTI B. SPANN (Stage Manager) returns to Arena Stage for her seventh season. Recent Arena Stage productions include Junk and Kleptocracy. Christi 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; Virginia Repertory Theatre in Richmond, VA; and the Shakespeare Theatre Company here in D.C.

MARNE ANDERSON (Assistant Stage Manager) is thrilled to continue her season at Arena Stage with A ThousandSplendid Suns. Arena Stage credits include Disney’s Newsies, Ann, Jubilee, The Heiress, Indecent, Dave, August Wilson’s Two Trains Running, The Great Society, Nina Simone: Four Women, A Raisin in the Sun, Moby Dick, All the Way, King Hedley II, Five Guys Named Moe, The Mountaintop, Metamorphoses, Long Day’s Journey into Night, Arabian Nights and Duke Ellington’s Sophisticated Ladies. She is a graduate of the University of North Carolina School of the Arts and a proud member of Actors’ Equity Association.

AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER (A.C.T.) is a Tony Award–winning nonprofit theater and educational institution in San Francisco dedicated to cultivating the art of live theater through our dynamic productions, intensive actor training in our Conservatory, and ongoing engagement with our community. Under the leadership of Tony and Obie award–winning Artistic Director Pam MacKinnon and Executive Director Jennifer Bielstein, we embrace our responsibility to refresh, renew, and reinvent the rich theatrical traditions and literatures that are our collective legacy, while exploring new artistic forms and communities. Since opening our first San Francisco season in 1967, A.C.T. has presented more than 400 productions to a combined audience of more than seven million people. Today, our performance, education, and outreach programs reach almost 250,000 people in the Bay Area each year.

ARENA STAGE LEADERSHIP

MOLLY SMITH (Artistic Director) has served as Artistic Director since 1998. Her more than 30 directing credits at Arena Stage include large-scale musicals like Disney's Newsies, Anything Goes, Carousel, Fiddler on the Roof, Oklahoma!, My Fair Lady, The Music Man, Cabaret, South Pacific; new plays like 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.
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.

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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Arena Stage gratefully acknowledges these individuals who ensure the future of Arena Stage by making a planned gift. These gifts ensure that Arena Stage will continue to challenge, educate and entertain audiences, and maintain its excellence in theater nationally, and internationally, for generations to come. Arena can help you accomplish your personal, family and philanthropic goals while benefiting the theater. Supporters who make planned gifts to Arena are invited to join the Full Circle Society and enjoy special benefits. For more information about planned giving, please contact Maya Weil at 202-600-4158 or mweil@arenastage.org. The following are members as of December 15, 2019.

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You don’t have to be wealthy to make a significant gift. Bequests and other planned gifts allow you the opportunity to make a significant contribution that will ensure the future of Arena Stage. The Full Circle Society allows us the opportunity to recognize you for that gift during your lifetime. For more information about making a planned gift or to inform us of your existing planned gift, please contact Maya Weil at 202-600-4158 or mweil@arenastage.org.

“We feel the long-term viability of theater really has to come from two sources — annual fundraising efforts and long-term donations [in the form of a planned gift] from the people who love the theater and are willing to commit to it in perpetuity.”

— Beth Newburger Schwartz and the late Richard Schwartz
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Arena Stage gratefully acknowledges the many individuals, families, foundations and corporations 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, call the Development Department at 202-600-4177. The following are contributors as of December 5, 2019.

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Assistant Production Manager: Trevor A. Riley

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