

ARENA STAGE MEDIA RELEASE

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Greta Hays/Kirstin Franko
press@arenastage.org, 202-600-4056

September 7, 2016

For additional press materials, visit the online press room:
arenastage.org/news-press/press-room/press-kits-photos/productions/carousel/
Username: arenapress / Password: arena1617

FULL 27-MEMBER CAST ANNOUNCED FOR
RODGERS & HAMMERSTEIN'S *CAROUSEL*
UNDER THE DIRECTION OF ARTISTIC DIRECTOR MOLLY SMITH

OCTOBER 28–DECEMBER 24, 2016
AT ARENA STAGE AT THE MEAD CENTER FOR AMERICAN THEATER

(Washington, D.C.) Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater announces the complete company for *Carousel* directed by Artistic Director **Molly Smith**, with music by Richard Rodgers and book and lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II. Named the best musical of the 20th century by *Time* magazine, *Carousel* follows Billy Bigelow and Julie Jordan through their journey of love, loss and redemption and soars with unforgettable songs including “If I Loved You,” “June Is Bustin’ Out All Over” and “You’ll Never Walk Alone.” Featuring Musical Direction by **Paul Sportelli** and Choreography by **Parker Esse**, *Carousel* runs **October 28–December 24 in the iconic in-the-round Fichandler Stage.**

“*Carousel* is Rodgers and Hammerstein’s most glorious and lush score with a wild and dramatically beautiful story on the coast of Maine,” says **Smith**. “Full of rich and complex characters, it asks the question: Do we each deserve a second chance?”

“I am sure Molly Smith will find a way to present this classic that both honors the words and music, and give today’s audiences a contemporary view into the drama of the show,” shares **Ted Chapin**, President of Rodgers & Hammerstein: An Iagem Company. “She did that brilliantly with *Oklahoma!* and I am sure she’ll do it again with *Carousel*.”

Smith has assembled a 27-member cast boasting 18 local performers. *Carousel* stars the previously announced audience favorites **Nicholas Rodriguez** (Arena’s *My Fair Lady*, *Oklahoma!*) as Billy Bigelow, **E. Faye Butler** (Arena’s *Pullman Porter Blues*, *Oklahoma!*) as Mrs. Mullin and **Ann Arvia** (Golde in Arena’s *Fiddler on the Roof*) as Nettie Fowler. **Betsy Morgan** (Broadway’s *The King and I*, *Les Misérables*) makes her Arena Stage debut as Julie Jordan, alongside the previously announced **Kate Rockwell** (Broadway’s *Rock of Ages*, *Bring It On: The Musical*, *Legally Blonde*) portraying Julie’s pal Carrie Pipperidge.

—continued—

Page 2—Full casting announced for *Carousel* directed by Molly Smith

Carousel also features the return of Arena Stage veterans **Kurt Boehm** (Arena's *Born for This*, Fyedka in *Fiddler on the Roof*) as Enoch Snow and **Kyle Schliefer** (Arena's *Oliver!*, *Fiddler on the Roof*) as Jigger Craigin, and welcomes the debut of **Skye Mattox** (Broadway's *West Side Story*, *On The Town*) as Louise Bigelow.

The large cast also includes **Jacob Beasley** as Enoch Snow, Jr., **Rayanne Gonzales** as Mrs. Bascombe, **Michael Graceffa** as Carnival Boy, **Thomas Adrian Simpson** as David Bascombe and **Stephawn Stephens** as Captain. In the roles of the Starkeeper and Heavenly Friend, the company features two young local actors—15-year-old **Joshua Otten** of Fauquier County, Virginia and 13-year-old **Nicole Wildy** of Howard County, Maryland.

Rounding out the ensemble are **Gracie Jones**, **Danielle Sue Jordan**, **Ethan Kasnett**, **Emma Sophie Moore**, **Tony Neidenbach** (dance captain), **Bridget Riley**, **Paul Scanlan**, **Jessica Wu** and **Phil Young**, with swings **Katie Arthur** and **Jay Westin** and Heavenly Friend/Starkeeper u/s **Isabella Brody**.

Smith reunites with many of her creative collaborators for *Carousel* including Music Director **Sportelli**, who has created new arrangements for the 13-piece orchestra that will be seen on a visible, elevated level of the set, designed by Tony Award-winning Set Designer **Todd Rosenthal**. Choreographer **Esse** will create his signature athletic ensemble sequences paired with graceful ballets, and **David Leong** returns for Fight Choreography & Mime, along with Lighting Designer **Keith Parham**, Costume Designer **Ilona Somogyi** and Sound Designers **Joshua Horvath** and **Ray Nardelli**.

Richard Rodgers (*Music*) & **Oscar Hammerstein II** (*Book & Lyrics*) joined forces to create the most successful partnership in musical theater. Rodgers first collaborated with Lorenz Hart on *On Your Toes*, *Babes in Arms*, *The Boys from Syracuse*, *I Married an Angel* and *Pal Joey*. Hammerstein collaborated with Rudolf Friml, Sigmund Romberg, Vincent Youmans and Jerome Kern on *The Desert Song*, *Rose-Marie*, *The New Moon* and *Show Boat*. *Oklahoma!* was the first R&H musical, followed by *Carousel*, *Allegro*, *South Pacific*, *The King and I*, *Me and Juliet*, *Pipe Dream*, *Flower Drum Song* and *The Sound of Music*. R&H wrote one musical for film, *State Fair*, and one for TV, *Cinderella*. Collectively, their musicals earned two Pulitzer Prizes and 35 Tony, 15 Oscar, two Grammy and two Emmy awards. After Hammerstein's death, Rodgers continued to write, producing *No Strings*, *Do I Hear a Waltz?*, *Two by Two*, *Rex* and *I Remember Mama*. In 1990, Broadway's 46th St. Theater was renamed in Rodgers' honor.

Molly Smith (*Director*) has served as Artistic Director of Arena Stage since 1998. Her directing credits include *Oliver!*, *The Originalist*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Camp David*, *Mother Courage and Her Children*, *Oklahoma!*, *A Moon for the Misbegotten*, *My Fair Lady*, *The Great White Hope*, *The Music Man*, *Orpheus Descending*, *Legacy of Light*, *The Women of Brewster Place*, *Cabaret*, *An American Daughter*, *South Pacific*, *Agamemnon and His Daughters*, *Coyote Builds North America*, *All My Sons* and *How I Learned to Drive* at Arena Stage. Her directorial work has also been seen at The Old Globe, Asolo Repertory, Berkeley Repertory, Trinity Repertory, Canada's Shaw Festival, 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 30 years. She is a great believer in first, second and third productions of new work and has championed projects including *How I Learned to Drive*; *Passion Play, a cycle*; and *Next to Normal*. She has worked alongside playwrights Sarah Ruhl, Paula Vogel, Wendy Wasserstein, Lawrence Wright, Karen Zacarias, John Murrell, Eric Coble, Charles Randolph-Wright and many others. 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. During her time with the company, Arena Stage has workshopped more than 100 productions, produced 37 world premieres, staged numerous second and third productions and been an important part of nurturing eight 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.

—continued—

Page 3—Full casting announced for *Carousel* directed by Molly Smith

Select Cast Biographies (in alphabetical order)

Ann Arvia (*Nettie Fowler*) was last seen at Arena Stage as Golde in *Fiddler on the Roof*. Washington audiences also saw her in *Les Misérables* (National Theatre). On Broadway, she played the iconic Bird Woman in *Mary Poppins*, Madame Thenardier in *Les Misérables* and appeared in *Beauty and the Beast*. Off-Broadway saw her in the New York premiere of *Time and Again* (Manhattan Theatre Club). She also toured extensively in both *Les Misérables* and *Ragtime*. Regional credits include Meg in *Damn Yankees* and Marie in *The Most Happy Fella* (Goodspeed) and Mrs. Paroo in *The Music Man* (Cape Playhouse). Ann will kick off 2017 with the Off-Broadway premiere of the new Kander/Pierce musical *Kid Victory*. www.annarvia.net

Kurt Boehm (*Enoch Snow*) most recently appeared in *Born for This* at Alliance Theatre and Arena Stage. Previous Arena credits include *Fiddler on the Roof*, *My Fair Lady*, *Oklahoma!* and *She Loves Me*. Additional D.C. credits include *West Side Story*, *Cabaret*, *Les Misérables* and *Kiss of the Spider Woman* (Signature Theatre); *A Chorus Line*, *Godspell*, *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* and *The Producers* (Olney Theatre Center); *Little Shop of Horrors* (Ford's Theatre); *The Full Monty* (Keegan Theatre); *The Last Five Years* (Red Branch Theatre); and *The Phantom Tollbooth* and *Latino Inaugural Gala* honoring Chita Rivera and Rita Moreno (Kennedy Center). He holds a B.M. from Catholic University. Kurt sends his love and gratitude to Molly, Parker and Paul for this opportunity.

E. Faye Butler (*Mrs. Mullin*)'s Arena Stage credits include *King Hedley II*, *Smokey Joe's Café*, *Pullman Porter Blues*, *Trouble in Mind*, *Oklahoma!*, *Crowns*, *Ain't Misbehavin'*, *Polk County* and *Dinah Was*. Recent credits include *An Issue of Blood* (Victory Gardens), *Vanya and Sonia...* (Goodman), *Ghost* (Fulton Theatre/Main State Music Theatre), *Follies* (St. Louis Repertory) and *Hairspray* (Paramount). Additional credits with the Kennedy Center, Signature Theatre, Center Stage, La Jolla, Court Theatre, Steppenwolf, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Marriott, Dallas Theater Center, Northlight, Philadelphia Theatre Company, Yale Repertory and Pasadena Playhouse. She received the 2016 Guy Adkins Award and Rosetta LeNoir Award and was a 2012 Lunt-Fontanne Fellow. Additional awards include Jeff, Black Theater Alliance, Helen Hayes, After Dark, John Barrymore, RAMI, Excellence in the Arts, Ovation, Sarah Siddons Society Leading Lady, Kathryn V. Lamkey and Black Excellence Awards.

Skye Mattox (*Louise Bigelow/Ensemble*) is thrilled to make her Arena Stage debut. She began her career when she moved to NYC at age 17. Her Broadway credits include *West Side Story* and *On the Town*, where she understudied the lead role of Ivy Smith. Other New York credits include *American Dance Machine* and numerous shows for New York City Center's Encores! series, including *Little Me* and *Do I Hear a Waltz?* She can also be seen on the second season of NBC's hit TV series *Smash* as a recurring cast member. In addition to performing, Skye is also passionate about teaching. She has been on the faculty for Broadway Dreams Foundation and does guest teaching for various performing arts studios and schools. Instagram: @skye_mattox.

Betsy Morgan (*Julie Jordan*) originated the roles of Tricia Nixon and Susan Ford in Michael John LaChiusa's *First Daughter Suite* at The Public this past year and can be heard on the original cast recording. Also with LaChiusa, she originated the roles of Louisa in *Rain* and Leslie in *Giant*. She was a member of the original Broadway companies of *The King and I* (2015 revival), *Les Misérables* (2014 revival), *A Little Night Music* (2009 revival), *The Little Mermaid* and *High Fidelity* and the Off-Broadway companies of *Found* (Atlantic Theater Company), *The Fantasticks* (2006 revival) and *Bernarda Alba* (Lincoln Center). Betsy recreated the role of Fantine in the 25th anniversary tour of *Les Misérables*. She was seen on TV in *Flight of the Conchords*.

—continued—

Page 4—Full casting announced for *Carousel* directed by Molly Smith

Kate Rockwell (*Carrie Pipperidge*) makes her Arena Stage debut. Broadway credits include Skylar in *Bring It On: The Musical* (original cast), Margot in *Legally Blonde*, Sherrie in *Rock of Ages* and *Hair*. She has travelled the country in three first national tours and performed regionally at The Muny, La Jolla Playhouse, Alliance Theatre, North Shore Music Theatre and others. Spot her on camera in *Deadbeat* and *Sex and the City* (film). Her solo show, *Back To My Roots*, debuted in New York in 2015. Represented by KMR and proud AEA member. Follow her on Twitter & Instagram: @KateRockwellNYC.

Nicholas Rodriguez (*Billy Bigelow*)'s Arena Stage credits include *Destiny of Desire*, *Oklahoma!* (Helen Hayes Award), *Mother Courage and Her Children*, *My Fair Lady* (Helen Hayes nomination), *The Light in the Piazza* and *The Power of Two*. Broadway's *Tarzan*, Off-Broadway's *The Toxic Avenger*, *Almost Heaven*, *Death for Five Voices*, *Bajour*, *Colette Collage*, *Guys and Dolls* (Carnegie Hall) and *I Am Harvey Milk* (Lincoln Center). Additionally, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *Evita* and *Hair* (national tours), *The Ten Commandments*, *Mothers and Sons*, *Les Misérables* (B. Iden Payne Award), *Love!Valour!Compassion!*, *Master Class*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Tarzan*, *Wizard of Oz*, *Buddy Holly Story*, *Damn Yankees*, *Cinderella*, *South Pacific* and *The King and I*. Screen credits: *Sex and the City 2*, *Madam Secretary* and *One Life to Live* (GLAAD Award). His debut album "The First Time..." is available on iTunes. www.thenickrod.com

Kyle Schliefer (*Jigger Craigin/Ensemble*)'s Arena Stage credits include *Oliver!* (Noah Claypole), *Fiddler on the Roof* (Sasha) and *A House of Glass* (Kip Kiernan). D.C. credits include *A Chorus Line* (Olney Theatre Center, Helen Hayes nomination), *Lost in Yonkers* (Theater J), *The Member of the Wedding* (Ford's Theatre), *Arcadia* (Folger Theatre) and *Lord of the Flies* (Round House). New York credits include Off Broadway's *Songs for a New World*, *Sing to Me Through Open Windows* (Alchemical Theatre) and *Always the Young Strangers* (Actors Fund). Film/TV credits include Trident Gum's "Anthem" national commercial, CBS's *The Good Wife*, ID Discovery Channel's *Who the Bleep Did I Marry* and Showtime's *The Affair*. Kyle was featured on Masterclass.com with Kevin Spacey and is a graduate of Marymount Manhattan College. www.kyleschliefer.com

The creative team for *Carousel* also includes Wig Designer **Anne Nesmith**, Dialect Coach **Lynn Watson**, Associate & Text Director **Anita Maynard-Losh**, Associate Music Director **William Yanesh**, Assistant Choreographer **Tony Neidenbach**, Stage Manager **Susan R. White**, Assistant Stage Manager **Trevor Riley** and Production Assistant **Elle Bolin**.

For full company bios please visit arenastage.org/shows-tickets/the-season/productions/carousel.

***Carousel* is generously sponsored by Hank Schlosberg in memory of his wife Charlotte, George and Duffy Ftikas, AT&T and GEICO. Choreography is sponsored by Virginia McGehee Friend. Anonymous support is also provided for *Carousel*.**

Special Events

Post-Show Conversation

Connect with our shows beyond the performance at a post-show conversation with artists and staff. November 15, 16 and December 21 following the noon performance; November 22 following the 7:30 p.m. performance; and December 1 following the 8:00 p.m. performance.

—continued—

Production Information

[Carousel](#)

Music by Richard Rodgers

Book & lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II

Directed by Molly Smith

Choreographed by Parker Esse

Music direction by Paul Sportelli

In the Fichandler Stage | October 28-December 24, 2016

ABOUT: Dazzling lights, swinging songs and a bad boy to melt your heart—see why *Carousel* was named the best musical of the 20th century by *Time* magazine. When Billy Bigelow and Julie Jordan fall in love, little do they realize that his rebellious ways will lead to tragedy. Given a chance to make good, will a lucky star save Billy and those he loves? Director Molly Smith helms this epic production bursting with classic songs including “June Is Bustin’ Out All Over” and “You’ll Never Walk Alone.”

CAST:

Female Swing: Katie Arthur

Nettie Fowler: Ann Arvia

Enoch Snow, Jr./Ensemble: Jacob Beasley

Enoch Snow: Kurt Boehm

Heavenly Friend/Starkeeper u/s: Isabella Brody

Mrs. Mullin: E. Faye Butler

Mrs. Bascombe/Ensemble: Rayanne Gonzales

Carnival Boy/Ensemble: Michael Graceffa

Ensemble: Gracie Jones

Ensemble: Danielle Sue Jordan

Ensemble: Ethan Kasnett

Louise Bigelow/Ensemble: Skye Mattox

Ensemble: Emma Sophie Moore

Julie Jordan: Betsy Morgan

Ensemble/Dance Captain: Tony Neidenbach

Starkeeper/Ensemble: Joshua Otten

Ensemble: Bridget Riley

Carrie Pipperidge: Kate Rockwell

Billy Bigelow: Nicholas Rodriguez

Ensemble: Paul Scanlan

Jigger Craigin/Ensemble: Kyle Schliefer

David Bascombe/Ensemble: Thomas Adrian Simpson

Captain/Ensemble: Stephawn Stephens

Male Swing: Jay Westin

Heavenly Friend/Ensemble: Nicole Wildy

Ensemble: Jessica Wu

Ensemble: Phil Young

CREATIVE TEAM:

Director: Molly Smith

Choreographer: Parker Esse

Music Director: Paul Sportelli

Set Designer: Todd Rosenthal

Costume Designer: Ilona Somogyi

—continued—

Page 6—Full casting announced for *Carousel* directed by Molly Smith

Lighting Designer: Keith Parham
Sound Designers: Joshua Horvath & Ray Nardelli
Wig Designer: Anne Nesmith
Fight Choreography & Mime: David Leong
Dialect Coach: Lynn Watson
Associate & Text Director: Anita Maynard-Losh
Associate Music Director: William Yanesh
Assistant Choreographer: Tony Neidenbach
Stage Manager: Susan R. White
Assistant Stage Manager: Trevor Riley
Production Assistant: Elle Bolin

Plan Your Visit

TICKETS: Tickets for *Carousel* are \$50-99, subject to change and based on availability, plus applicable fees. For information on savings programs such as pay-your-age tickets, student discounts, family fun packs, Southwest Nights and hero's discounts, visit arenastage.org/shows-tickets/single-tickets/savings-programs.

Tickets may be purchased online at arenastage.org, by phone at 202-488-3300 or at the Sales Office at 1101 Sixth St., SW, D.C.

Sales Office/Subscriptions: 202-488-3300
Group Sales Hotline for 10+ Tickets: 202-488-4380
TTY for deaf patrons: 202-484-0247
Info for patrons with disabilities: 202-488-3300

PERFORMANCE DATES:

Sunday, Tuesday & Wednesday at 7:30 p.m.
Thursday, Friday & Saturday at 8:00 p.m.
Saturday & Sunday at 2:00 p.m.
Weekday matinees at noon on Tuesday, 11/15, Wednesday, 11/16 and Wednesday, 12/21
Full calendar: tickets.arenastage.org/single/PSDetail.aspx?psn=22806

Open-captioned performances: 11/13 at 1:00 p.m., 11/16 at 7:30 p.m. & 11/17 at 8:00 p.m.

Audio-described performances: 11/19 at 2:00 p.m.

CATWALK CAFÉ: Prix fixe meals are now available at the Catwalk Café and include a choice of soup or salad, main entrée and dessert. Pre-ordered meals are only \$22 (\$25 if purchased that day). To pre-order and see the menu, call 202-488-3300 or visit arenastage.org/plan-your-visit/the-café/. The Catwalk Café opens two hours before the show, and reservations are recommended.

To **pre-order drinks** from the Catwalk Café for up to 50% savings (\$6 house wine and beer), visit tickets.arenastage.org/cart/precart.aspx?p=1007.

METRO: Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater is only one block from the Waterfront-SEU Metro station (Green Line). When exiting the station, walk west on M Street toward Sixth Street, and the main entrance to the Mead Center is on the right.

—continued—

Page 7—Full casting announced for *Carousel* directed by Molly Smith

PARKING: Parking is available in Arena Stage’s on-site garage. Subscribers may purchase parking in advance for \$16. Single ticket buyers may purchase parking in advance for \$19 or on the day of the performance for \$22 on a first-come, first-served basis. Limited handicapped parking is available by reservation. Advanced parking must be reserved by calling 202-488-3300. The entrance to the Mead Center garage is on Maine Avenue between Sixth and Seventh streets, and the garage closes one hour after the day’s last performance ends. Patrons can also park at the Public Parking Garage at 1101 Fourth Street, one block from the Mead Center, for \$11. Street parking is also available along Maine Avenue.

VALET PARKING: Arena Stage offers valet service at no additional cost to patrons with accessibility needs who call 202-488-3300 in advance to request valet parking. On days when valet parking is being used for accessibility, it is also available to general patrons one hour prior to show time for \$25, based on availability. To use valet parking, pull up to the main entrance on Sixth Street.

Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater, under the leadership of Artistic Director Molly Smith and Executive Director Edgar Dobie, is a national center dedicated to American voices and artists. Arena Stage produces plays of all that is passionate, profound, deep and dangerous in the American spirit, and presents diverse and ground-breaking work from some of the best artists around the country. Arena Stage is committed to commissioning and developing new plays, and impacts the lives of over 10,000 students annually through its work in community engagement. Now in its seventh decade, Arena Stage serves a diverse annual audience of more than 300,000. arenastage.org

###

