

ARENA STAGE MEDIA RELEASE

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Julia Suszynski/Kirstin Franko
press@arenastage.org; 202-600-4055

January 27, 2011

ARENA STAGE ANNOUNCES CASTING AND COMPANIES FOR THE TWO-MONTH LONG EDWARD ALBEE FESTIVAL

FULL PRODUCTIONS OF STEPPENWOLF THEATRE COMPANY'S *WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF?* AND ARENA STAGE'S *AT HOME AT THE ZOO* TO OVERLAP WITH PRESENTATIONS OF NEARLY ALL OF EDWARD ALBEE'S PLAYS

(Washington, D.C.) Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater continues its inaugural season this spring with an unparalleled tribute to one of the nation's greatest living playwrights, Edward Albee. The company has mounted a two-month festival featuring 30 events, making nearly every one of his plays available in performance spaces throughout the Mead Center.

The festival kicks off with **Steppenwolf Theatre Company's** highly acclaimed *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* directed by **Pam MacKinnon** (Arena's *A Delicate Balance*) starring Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award winner **Tracy Letts** as George, Tony Award nominee **Amy Morton** as Martha, **Carrie Coon** as Honey and **Madison Dirks** as Nick in the Kreeger Theater February 25 – April 10. Simultaneously Arena Stage mounts *At Home at the Zoo* directed by **Mary B. Robinson** starring **Jeff Allin** as Peter, **Colleen Delany** as Ann and **James McMenamin** as Jerry in the Arlene and Robert Kogod Cradle February 25 – April 24.

Beginning in March through the end of April, 16 theater troupes will present staged readings of Albee's work. Participating companies include **The Shakespeare Theatre Company, Theater J, Taffety Punk, Round House Theatre, American Century Theater** and **Forum Theatre** and directors include **Wendy C. Goldberg, Amy Freed, Mary Robinson, Aaron Posner, Irene Lewis** and **Howard Shalwitz** among many others. The full schedule and list of participants is below.

All staged readings are free, though reservations are required via the Arena Stage Sales Office at 202-488-3300 or www.arenastage.org. All readings will be followed by a discussion with its participating artists. Supporters of Arena Stage will be able to make reservations January 31, with subscribers receiving early access on February 2 before a **general release to the public February 4, 2011.**

"At Arena Stage we are fiercely committed to shining a spotlight on the giants of American theater," shares Arena Stage Artistic Director Molly Smith. "There's no greater contemporary American playwright than Edward Albee, and in this first season in our new home for American artists there is no better time to celebrate the glorious canon of work he has produced."

- continued -

Arena Stage Announces Casting and Companies for the Edward Albee Festival

Page 2

When asked what this festival means to him, Albee expressed, "Any playwright who would not be delighted to have this amount of intelligent and creative attention paid to his work would be a foolish and ungrateful person."

March 14 Arena Stage will honor Albee with the presentation of the American Artist Award during its annual benefit to support the company's Community Engagement programs. More information on the event entitled, *An Evening with Edward Albee*, to be release at a later date.

As part of the ongoing Arena Stage salon series, there will also be an Edward Albee Festival Salon Monday, April 4 at 7:30 p.m., featuring free public conversations with some of the artists from *At Home At the Zoo*, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* and the festival readings.

Edward Albee (Playwright) was born on March 12, 1928 and began writing plays 30 years later. His plays include *The Zoo Story* (1958); *The Death of Bessie Smith* (1959); *The Sandbox* (1959); *The American Dream* (1960); *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* (1961-62, Tony Award); *Tiny Alice* (1964); *A Delicate Balance* (1966, Pulitzer Prize; 1996, Tony Award); *All Over* (1971); *Seascape* (1974, Pulitzer Prize); *Listening* (1975); *Counting the Ways* (1975); *The Lady From Dubuque* (1977-78); *The Man Who Had Three Arms* (1981); *Finding the Sun* (1982); *Marriage Play* (1986-87); *Three Tall Women* (1991, Pulitzer Prize); *Fragments* (1993); *The Play About the Baby* (1997); *The Goat Or, Who is Sylvia?* (2000, 2002 Tony Award); *Occupant* (2001); *At Home at the Zoo: (Act 1, Homelife; Act 2, The Zoo Story)* (2004) and *Me, Myself, & I* (2007). He is a member of the Dramatists Guild Council and President of The Edward F. Albee Foundation. Mr. Albee was awarded the Gold Medal in Drama from the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters in 1980. In 1996 he received the Kennedy Center Honors and the National Medal of Arts. In 2005, he was awarded a special Tony Award for Lifetime Achievement.

About the Productions:

In Steppenwolf Theatre Company's *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* audiences are invited for drinks with George and Martha. As wickedly hilarious today as when it first shocked audiences, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* is an ingeniously funny play that packs a helluva wallop. What starts as verbal sparring at an impromptu cocktail party, devolves into a no-holds-barred battle of wits and wills. With brilliant writing and some of the greatest characters ever created for the stage, Albee set a new standard for American theater with this sharp, vicious Molotov cocktail of a play.

"Steppenwolf Theatre and Amy and Tracy, two incomparable theater artists, were the perfect fit to really explore and do right by Edward's masterpiece," shares **MacKinnon**. "*Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* is a play that drives playwrights to surpass it, actors to yearn for it, directors to dream about it and audiences to laugh, shudder, cry and empathize their way through it."

In *At Home at the Zoo* Albee has outdone himself once again with a riveting drama that expands on *The Zoo Story*, the one-act that launched his career 50 years ago. In this meticulous and nuanced look at the lives of three New Yorkers, an everyday conversation between a husband and wife takes an unexpected turn into dangerously personal territory. The revelations and confrontations catapult them from their delicately balanced world onto life-changing paths. With the intensity and honesty for which Albee is known, *At Home at the Zoo* reveals the cutting truth about the razor's edge of our humanity.

"I'm thrilled to be a part of this celebration of the work of Edward Albee, and especially to be directing a play that encompasses both his early and his recent work in one evening of theater," adds **Robinson**. "And the intimate and embracing space of the Kogod Cradle is the perfect environment in which to experience this beautiful, funny and haunting exploration of what it means to be in a human relationship."

Arena Stage Announces Casting and Companies for the Edward Albee Festival
Page 3

The Company of Steppenwolf Theatre Company's *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*:

Carrie Coon (*Honey*). Regional credits include: *Magnolia* (Goodman); *Bronte* (Remy Bumppo); *Blackbird* and *Reasons to Be Pretty* (Renaissance Theaterworks); *Anna Christie*, *Our Town*, *The Diary of Anne Frank* (Madison Rep); and four seasons with American Players Theatre. A native of Copley, Ohio, Ms. Coon received her M.F.A. from Univ. of Wisconsin-Madison.

Madison Dirks (*Nick*). Credits include: *The Chosen* and *Gary* (Steppenwolf); *Girl, 20* (Serendipity, also L.A.); *A Man for All Seasons* (TimeLine); *The Last Supper* (Infusion); *Hillbilly Antigone* (Lookingglass). Film and TV credits include: *According to Jim*; *Public Enemies*; and the upcoming *The Dilemma*. Mr. Dirks is a native of Baton Rouge, La., and a graduate of Louisiana State Univ.

Tracy Letts (George) joined the Steppenwolf ensemble in 2002. Previous Steppenwolf productions include *American Buffalo*, *Betrayal*, *The Pillowman*, *Last of the Boys*, *The Pain and the Itch*, *The Dresser*, *Homebody/Kabul*, *The Dazzle*, *Glengarry Glen Ross* (also Dublin and Toronto), *Three Days of Rain*, many others. Other productions include: *Orson's Shadow* (Barrow St., NY); *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* (Alliance, Atlanta); *The Caine Mutiny Court-Martial* (Red Orchid); *Conquest of the South Pole* (Famous Door); *Bouncers* (the Next Lab). TV and Film: *Guinevere*, *U.S. Marshals*, *Profiler*, *Prison Break*, *Seinfeld*, *Home Improvement*, many others. As a playwright, he is the author of *Killer Joe*, *Bug* (also screenplay), *Man from Nebraska* (Pulitzer finalist), *August: Osage County* (Pulitzer Prize, Tony Award for Best Play) and *Superior Donuts*.

Amy Morton (*Martha*) is an actor, director and Steppenwolf ensemble member since 1997. Her Steppenwolf acting credits include: *August: Osage County* (also Broadway, London and Sydney), *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest* (also on Broadway), *Betrayal*, *Last of the Boys*, *The Well-Appointed Room*, *Berlin Circle*, *The Royal Family*, *Homebody/Kabul*, *Three Days of Rain*, *The Unmentionables*, *Cherry Orchard*, *The Time of Your Life*, and many others. Directing credits include *American Buffalo*, *Our Country's Good*, *The Weir*, *Glengarry Glen Ross*, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, *Dublin Carol*, *Topdog/Underdog*, *We All Went Down to Amsterdam*, *The Pillowman*, *Love-Lies-Bleeding*, *The Dresser* and *Awake and Sing*. Before joining Steppenwolf, she was a member of the Remains Theatre Ensemble in Chicago for 15 years. She can be seen in the films *Up in the Air*, *Rookie of the Year*, *8mm*, *Falling Down* and the soon-to-be-released *The Dilemma*.

Pam Mackinnon (Director) is an Obie Award-winning New York-based director. Recent productions include premieres of Bruce Norris' *Clybourne Park* (Playwrights Horizons, Obie Award and Lortel nominations); Rachel Axler's *Smudge* (Women's Project); and Cusi Cram's *A Lifetime Burning* (Primary Stages); as well as Shakespeare's *Othello* (Shakespeare Santa Cruz); and Gina Gionfriddo's *Becky Shaw* (South Coast Rep). She is a longtime interpreter of the plays of Edward Albee, having directed *A Delicate Balance* (Arena Stage); *The Goat, or Who's Sylvia?* (Alley and Vienna's English Theatre); and *The Play About the Baby* (Philadelphia Theatre and Goodman); as well as premieres of *At Home at the Zoo* (formerly called *Peter and Jerry* at Hartford Stage and Second Stage); and *Occupant* (Signature). Additional recent work includes premieres of Roberto Aguirre-Sacasa's *Good Boys and True* (Steppenwolf); Itamar Moses' *The Four of Us* (Manhattan Theatre Club and Old Globe); Richard Greenberg's *Our Mother's Brief Affair* (South Coast Rep); Jason Grote's *Maria/Stuart* (Woolly Mammoth); Itamar Moses' *Bach at Leipzig* (NYTW and Milwaukee Rep); Sheri Wilner's *Father Joy* (Contemporary American Theatre Festival and Summer Play Festival); as well as productions of Bruce Norris' *The Unmentionables* (Woolly Mammoth); Richard Dresser's *Below the Belt* (ACT Seattle); and David Mamet's *Romance* (Goodman). She is a Drama League and Lincoln Center Directors Lab alumna and an affiliated artist with the New York downtown company Clubbed Thumb.

Arena Stage Announces Casting and Companies for the Edward Albee Festival

Page 4

The Creative Team for Steppenwolf Theatre Company's *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* also includes Scenic Designer **Todd Rosenthal**, Costume Designer **Nan Cibula-Jenkins**, Lighting Designer **Allen Lee Hughes**, Sound Designers **Rob Milburn** and **Michael Bodeen**, Fight Choreographer **Nick Sandys**, Stage Manager **Malcolm Ewen** and Assistant Stage Manager **Keri Schultz**.

The Company of *At Home at the Zoo*:

Jeff Allin (*Peter*) was recently seen at Olney Theater in *The Savannah Disputation*. Local appearances include *Richard III* and *The Tempest* (Shakespeare Theatre Company), *Bal Masque* (Theater J), *The Price* (CenterStage), *The Seafarer* (Studio Theater), *Permanent Collection* and *Treasure Island* (Round House). He appeared on Broadway in *Plenty* and *Everett Beekin* at Lincoln Center. He's performed in theaters across the country, including ACT, Mark Taper Forum, South Coast Rep, Milwaukee Shakespeare, Hartford Stage and Oregon Shakespeare Festival. He's been seen on TV in *St. Elsewhere*, *Matlock*, *Diagnosis Murder*, *Murder One*, *Star Trek Voyager* and *The Next Generation*, *L.A. Law*, *Chicago Hope*, *Moonlighting*, *NYPD Blue* and seven years on *The Bold and the Beautiful*. His indie film, *Sleeping and Waking*, can be seen on Netflix.

Colleen Delany (*Ann*) returns to Arena Stage, having previously performed in *Agamemnon and His Daughters*. She's made numerous appearances at Shakespeare Theatre Company (with whom she is an affiliated artist), including Isabelle/Sabine in *The Liar*, Cherry in *The Beaux' Stratagem* (Helen Hayes-nominated performance), Lavinia in *Titus Andronicus*, Thaisa in *Pericles* and Desdemona in *Othello* (Helen Hayes-nominated performance). She has performed at many D.C. area theaters, including Studio Theater, Theater J, Imagination Stage, Scena Theater and Woolly Mammoth. A prolific audio book narrator, Delany has recorded hundreds of books for the National Library Service and has given voice to many characters in the Graphic Audio catalog, including Krysty Wroth, Annja Creed and Wonder Woman.

James McMenamin (*Jerry*) was most recently seen in Will Eno's *Middletown* at Vineyard Theatre in New York. Previously he appeared as George Gibbs in director David Cromer's *Our Town* at Barrow St. Theatre. Off-Broadway: *BFE* (Playwrights Horizons), *The Naked Angels Issues Project* and *Mag-7* (Naked Angels). Regional: *Prayer for My Enemy* (Intiman, Long Wharf); *Love's Labour's Lost*, *The Sisters Rosensweig* (Huntington); *BFE* (Long Wharf); *Chekhov Cycle*, *Threepenny Opera* (Williamstown Theatre Festival). TV: *Law & Order: SVU*, *Law & Order*, *Guiding Light*.

Mary B. Robinson (*Director*) has directed at Manhattan Theatre Club, Second Stage, Theatre for a New Audience, Young Playwrights Festival, Ensemble Studio Theatre and Cherry Lane in New York City. Regionally, she has directed at Philadelphia Theatre Company, Philadelphia Drama Guild, South Coast Rep, Actors Theatre of Louisville, Milwaukee Rep, Seattle Rep, ACT in Seattle, Cincinnati Playhouse and Hartford Stage. She was nominated for a Drama Desk Award in New York for her production of Lanford Wilson's *Lemon Sky* in 1986, was the first recipient of the Alan Schneider Award in 1987, and received Philadelphia's Barrymore Award in 1995 for directing *Of Mice and Men*. Currently she teaches graduate directing at Brooklyn College, heads an undergraduate directing program at NYU, and serves on the board of directors of the national labor union Stage Directors and Choreographers Society.

The Creative Team for *At Home at the Zoo* also includes Set Designer **James Noone**, Costume Director **T. Tyler Stumpf**, Lighting Designer **Nancy Schertler**, Sound Designer **Timothy Thompson**, Dramaturg **Aaron Malkin**, Arena Stage Casting Director **Daniel Pruksarnukul**, Stage Manager **Martha Knight**, Stage Management Assistant **Shaun Hart**, Stage Management Fellow **Kristen Harris** and Directing Fellow **Felipe Vergara**.

The Edward Albee Festival Schedule*

Steppenwolf Theatre Company's

Production of

Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?

Directed by Pam MacKinnon

February 25 – April 10

In the Kreeger Theater

At Home at the Zoo

Directed by Mary B. Robinson

February 25 – April 24

In the Arlene and Robert Kogod Cradle

Knock, Knock, Who's There?

Ongoing Installation

In the Mead Center

Lolita

Round House Theatre Company

Directed by Blake Robison

Monday, March 7 and

Tuesday, March 8 at 7:30 p.m.

In the Ammerman Rehearsal Hall

Finding the Sun

University of Maryland School of Theatre,

Dance and Performance Studies

Directed by Eric Bone Steele

Tuesday, March 8 and

Wednesday, March 9 at 6:00 p.m.

In the Ammerman Rehearsal Hall

Box and Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-Tung

Double-bill directed by Aaron Posner

Friday, March 11 at 6:30 p.m.

In the Ammerman Rehearsal Hall

The Death of Bessie Smith

Directed by Irene Lewis

Friday, March 11 at 7:30 p.m.

In the Ammerman Rehearsal Hall

Fragments

Directed by Howard Shalwitz

Friday, March 11 at 8:30 p.m.

In the Ammerman Rehearsal Hall

The Lady from Dubuque

Directed by Wendy C. Goldberg

Saturday, March 12 at noon

In the Ammerman Rehearsal Hall

Counting the Ways and Listening

Double-bill directed by

Anita Maynard-Losh

Saturday, March 12 at 5:00 p.m.

In the Ammerman Rehearsal Hall

Marriage Play

Directed by Mary B. Robinson

Sunday, March 13 at 12:00 p.m.

In the Ammerman Rehearsal Hall

The Man Who Had Three Arms

Directed by Amy Freed

Sunday, March 13 at 5:30 p.m.

In the Ammerman Rehearsal Hall

Fam and Yam

Directed by Angelisa Gillyard

Tuesday, March 15 at 7:00 p.m. and

Friday, March 18 at 10:30 p.m.

In the Molly Smith Study

All Over

Barracuda Carmela Theater Company

Directed by Felipe Vergara

Saturday, March 19 at 5:30 p.m. and

Sunday, March 20 at 8:00 p.m.

In the Ammerman Rehearsal Hall

The Goat, or Who Is Sylvia?

The Washington Rogues

Directed by Ryan S. Taylor

Sunday March 20 at 6:00 p.m. and

Monday, March 21 at 8:30 p.m.

In the Ammerman Rehearsal Hall

The American Dream

Colored People's Theatre

Directed by Jamil Jude

Monday, March 21 at 7:00 p.m. and

Tuesday, March 22 at 6:00 p.m.

In the Ammerman Rehearsal Hall

Tiny Alice

Taffety Punk Theatre Company

Directed by Lise Bruneau

Friday, March 25 at 7:00 p.m. and

Saturday, March 26 at 5:00 p.m.

In the Ammerman Rehearsal Hall

- continued -

Arena Stage Announces Casting and Companies for the Edward Albee Festival
Page 6

The Sandbox

Faction of Fools Theatre Company
Directed by Matthew R. Wilson and
Toby Mulford
Tuesday, March 29 at 7:00 p.m. and
Friday, April 1 at 10:30 p.m.
In the Molly Smith Study

The Play about the Baby

Production Workshop
Directed by Douglas Eacho
Sunday, April 3 at 5:00 p.m. and
Monday, April 4 at 7:30 p.m.
In the Molly Smith Study

Occupant

The Shakespeare Theatre Company
Directed by Alan Paul
Friday, April 8 at 5:30 p.m. and
Saturday, April 9 at 11:30 a.m.
In the Molly Smith Study

Three Tall Women

Theater J
Directed by Shirley Serotsky
Saturday, April 9 at 5:30 p.m. and
Sunday, April 10 at 5:30 p.m.
In the Molly Smith Study

A Delicate Balance

Directed by Maya E. Roth

Monday, April 11 and
Tuesday, April 12 at 7:30 p.m.
In the Molly Smith Study

The Ballad of the Sad Café

CTEK Arts
Directed by Margaret Van Sant and
Priscilla Sample
Friday, April 15 at 5:30 p.m. and
Saturday, April 16 at 5:00 p.m.
In the Molly Smith Study

Everything in the Garden

Directed by D. Ohlandt
Sunday, April 17 at 5:00 p.m. and
Monday, April 18 at 7:30 p.m.
In the Molly Smith Study

Seascape

American Century Theater
Directed by Steven Scott Mazzola
Thursday, April 21 and
Saturday, April 23 at 5:30 p.m.
In the Molly Smith Study

Malcolm

Forum Theatre
Directed by Michael Dove
Saturday, April 23 at 11:30 a.m. and
Sunday, April 24 at 5:00 p.m.
In the Molly Smith Study

For full project details please contact press@arenastage.org.

*The Edward Albee Festival schedule is subject to change.

The Edward Albee Festival is sponsored by Joan and David Maxwell.

The Kogod Cradle season is sponsored by Arlene and Robert Kogod, as well as Wendy Farrow, Susan and Steve Bralove, Linda and John Derrick and Katie and Dick Snowdon.

All staged readings are free, though reservations are required by phone at 202-488-3300 or online at www.arenastage.org.

Arena Stage Announces Casting and Companies for the Edward Albee Festival
Page 7

Tickets for *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* and *At Home at the Zoo* start at \$55 plus applicable fees; prices vary by performance. Discount tickets are available for patrons purchasing tickets for multiple shows, students and groups. A limited number of **\$15 tickets for patrons age 30 and under** go on sale each Monday for performances that week. (All patrons must present valid ID.) **HOTTIX**, a limited - number of half-price, day-of-performance tickets, are available 30 minutes before curtain prior to every performance. With **Metro Mondays**, patrons who present a SmarTrip or Metro card can purchase half-price tickets for the week's performances after noon on Mondays while supplies last. **Tickets may be purchased online at www.arenastage.org, by phone at 202-488-3300 or at the Sales Office at 1101 6th St., SW, D.C.**

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

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 6th Street, and the main entrance to the Mead Center is on the right.

PARKING: Discounted parking in the Mead Center garage is available by reservation to full-season subscribers for \$18 per show. The entrance for the Mead Center garage is on Maine Ave., SW. Limited handicapped parking is available by reservation, and the proper sticker is required. Remaining spaces are \$20 for non-subscribers. Patrons can also park at either of Central Parking's garages on 4th St. between I and M Streets for \$10.

Steppenwolf Theatre Company (*Martha Lavey, Artistic Director; David Hawkanson, Executive Director*) is one of the nation's leading ensemble theaters, producing up to 16 productions each year in its three Chicago theater spaces, including programming dedicated to the development of new plays and theater for young adults. Steppenwolf's productions have enjoyed success both nationally and internationally, including Off-Broadway, Broadway and London. Formed in 1976 by a collective of actors, Steppenwolf has grown into an ensemble of 43 actors, writers and directors, including Joan Allen, Kevin Anderson, Alana Arenas, Randall Arney, Kate Arrington, Ian Barford, Robert Breuler, Gary Cole, Kathryn Erbe, K. Todd Freeman, Frank Galati, Francis Guinan, Moira Harris, Jon Michael Hill, Tim Hopper, Tom Irwin, Ora Jones, Terry Kinney (co-founder), Tina Landau, Martha Lavey, Tracy Letts, John Mahoney, John Malkovich, Mariann Mayberry, Tarell Alvin McCraney, James Vincent Meredith, Laurie Metcalf, Amy Morton, Sally Murphy, Austin Pendleton, Jeff Perry (co-founder), William Petersen, Yasen Peyankov, Martha Plimpton, Rondi Reed, Molly Regan, Anna D. Shapiro, Eric Simonson, Gary Sinise (co-founder), Lois Smith, Rick Snyder, Jim True-Frost, and Alan Wilder. www.steppenwolf.org.

Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater is a national center dedicated to the production, presentation, development and study of American theater. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Molly Smith and Managing Director Edgar Dobie, Arena Stage is the largest company in the country dedicated to American plays and playwrights. Arena Stage produces huge plays of all that is passionate, exuberant, 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 through the American Voices New Play Institute. Now in its sixth decade, Arena Stage serves a diverse annual audience of more than 300,000. www.arenastage.org.