

ARENA STAGE MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY THEATER AND PERFORMANCE STUDIES PROGRAM,
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ARENA STAGE, REMOUNTS *THE GLASS MENAGERIE*
AND *THE GLASS MENAGERIE PROJECT* JUNE 9-JULY 3
AT THE MEAD CENTER FOR AMERICAN THEATER

*** Part of Arena Stage-Georgetown partnership, production and surrounding performances/interactive installations reveal a comprehensive look at how Williams' art imitated life ***

(Washington, D.C.) Following a successful run at Georgetown University, GU's Theater and Performance Studies Program and Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater present Tennessee Williams' most autobiographical work *The Glass Menagerie* in conjunction with *The Glass Menagerie Project*, a diverse array of performances and interactive installations that use the play as a prism to explore how Williams arrived at the final masterpiece. Wrapping up the expansive Tennessee Williams Centennial Festival, the ticketed production of this classic play and free Project events run **June 9 - July 3 in the Mead Center's Arlene and Robert Kogod Cradle.**

Part of the Arena Stage-Georgetown partnership, now in its fifth year, the production is directed by **Derek Goldman**, associate professor of Theater and Performance Studies and Artistic Director of the Davis Performing Arts Center, and features Helen Hayes Award winner and GU faculty member **Sarah Marshall** as Amanda Wingfield, with recent GU alumni **Rachel Caywood**, **Michael Mitchell** and **Clark Young**.

In *The Glass Menagerie*, set in a tenement apartment in 1930s St. Louis, the Wingfield family struggles to hang on to their dreams for the future. This haunting memory play captures the fragility and stifled yearning of characters clinging to hope against the harsh realities of a rapidly changing world. The design team includes **Robbie Hayes** (set), **Colin K. Bills** (lighting), **Debra Kim Sivigny** (costumes), **Matt Nielson** (sound) and **Jared Mezzocchi** (projections).

Before and after select performances of the fully staged production, audiences can experience free, short performances and interactive installations, which explore aspects of Williams' life and family that manifest themselves in the play. Much of the rare content, retrieved from archives, is drawn from his notebooks, memoirs, essays and letters, as well as the numerous versions of the story that he grappled with in different forms. Featuring a cast of nine Georgetown students and alumni and designed by professional artists **Hannah J. Crowell** (set), **Matt Nielson** (sound) and **Jared Mezzocchi** (projections) with student **Justin Keenan Miller** (lighting), these works developed out of an intensive Georgetown University Theater and Performance Studies course, "Tennessee Williams' Worlds," taught by Prof. Derek Goldman. Project components include the following:

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PERFORMANCES

Location: Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater, Arlene and Robert Kogod Cradle

- ***Elegy for Rose***, an ensemble-created/devised piece for four actresses, explores Williams' relationship to his sister Rose, the great love of his life, who was institutionalized and lobotomized. From Rose's perspective, the piece examines how Rose influenced a range of characters (Laura, Blanche, etc.), and how she resurfaces in different forms in so much of his work throughout his life.
- ***For Whom the Southern Belle Tolls***, Christopher Durang's celebrated parody of Tennessee Williams' classic *The Glass Menagerie*, is one of Durang's most popular one-acts, a crackpot comedy of parent-child tensions that appeals to audiences unfamiliar with the play as well as those who have deep knowledge of it. *The New York Times* has called the spoof "exuberantly disrespectful" and asserts that, "Mr. Durang remains one of our funniest playwrights."
- ***The Menagerie Variations***, an ensemble piece developed from materials freshly retrieved from the Williams archive, features sections of numerous unknown versions of *The Glass Menagerie* that Williams grappled with (the screenplay of *The Gentleman Caller*; the play *The Pretty Trap*, with its happy ending; the short story *Portrait of a Girl in Glass*, and others). Audiences have an opportunity to experience material that has never been seen or heard, and that introduces characters and locations such as the glass shop where Laura buys her animals, Rubicam's Business College and Blue Mountain, where a younger Amanda receives her gentleman callers. This often uplifting piece provides poignant and revelatory insight into Williams' life and creative process, and into his autobiographical masterpiece.

INTERACTIVE INSTALLATIONS

Location: Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater, lobby outside the Arlene and Robert Kogod Cradle

- ***The Overstuffed Chair***, conceived by Courtney Ulrich
An interactive, audio-based installation centered around a sensor-activated chair that in Williams' words "has absorbed in its fabric and stuffing all of the sorrows and anxieties of our family life," adapted from his essay about his parents and grandparents, "The Man in the Overstuffed Chair."
- ***Tenn Encounters***, conceived by Lucy Obus
An interactive installation exploring the people, places and personals that inspired Williams' prolific work, *Tenn Encounters* draws from the intimate snapshots of life from his notebooks and famous visuals of the silver screen, illuminating the relationship between Williams the artist, the family member and the wayward traveler. Explore his family portraits, follow his extensive travels across the U.S. on a map that features excerpts from his journals, or type a word from his journal and watch what happens.

This remounting of *The Glass Menagerie* and *The Glass Menagerie Project* is part of the expansive Tennessee Williams Centennial Festival, a multifaceted celebration of Williams' indelible legacy on the occasion of his 100th birthday presented by Georgetown University Theater and Performance Studies Program, in partnership with the American Studies Program and Arena Stage. *The Washington Post's* Peter Marks says of the festival, "A playwright of prodigious gifts deserves a festival of many moving parts, and that kind of complex machinery is exactly what Georgetown University has set in motion to honor the 100th birthday of one of the late, great laureates of the American stage...." Special Centennial Weekend events at Georgetown University March 24-27, 2011 featured more than 30 events and 150 artists, including luminaries such as Edward Albee, Christopher Durang and John Waters.

In addition to *The Glass Menagerie Project*, the partnership between Arena Stage—now home in its expanded venue the Mead Center for American Theater in Southwest D.C.—and the Georgetown University Theater and Performance Studies Program includes staged readings of new works; student participation in Arena Stage's Theater 101 program; multiple artists-in-residence and post-show discussions and panels, among other programs. This ongoing partnership involves Georgetown students in all stages of the theatrical process and provides hands-on opportunities to work with Arena Stage staff and visiting artists. Students also have the opportunity to engage with Arena Stage's Resident Playwrights Karen Zacarias, Amy Freed, Lisa Kron, Katori Hall and Charles Randolph-Wright and Project Residents Lynn Nottage and David Henry Hwang as part of the American Voices New Play Institute at Arena Stage.

Arena Stage-GU partnership remounts *The Glass Menagerie* and *The Glass Menagerie Project*—Page 3

The Arena Stage-Georgetown partnership is made possible thanks to the generosity of Andrew R. Ammerman and the family of H. Max and Josephine F. Ammerman. The Georgetown University Theater and Performance Studies 2010-11 "A Season Named Desire" is generously supported by C74.

Derek Goldman is Artistic Director of the Davis Performing Arts Center at Georgetown University and Associate Professor of Theater & Performance Studies. An award-winning director and adapter/playwright, his work has been seen Off-Broadway, internationally and at leading regional theaters around the country and throughout the D.C. area. As Founding Artistic Director of the StreetSigns Center for Literature and Performance, an award-winning socially engaged professional theatre founded in Chicago, he led the company for 15 years through more than 60 productions. Recent projects include *Shipwrecked* and *Blackbird* with Everyman Theater in Baltimore; his adaptations with Synetic Theater of Kafka's *Metamorphosis* and *Lysistrata* (with Georgetown); *In Darfur* and *Sholom Aleichem: Laughter Through Tears* at Theater J, developed with the legendary Theodore Bikel (Off-Broadway, international touring, Drama Desk Nomination for Outstanding Solo Performance); Sarah Ruhl's *Eurydice* at Round House Theater; *As You Like It* at Folger Theater; his adaptation of Studs Terkel's *Will the Circle Be Unbroken*, which premiered at Steppenwolf in Chicago and has been presented around the country with Garrison Keillor, David Schwimmer, David Strathairn and others. He received his Ph.D. in Performance Studies from Northwestern University and has been the recipient of awards for his teaching and for his published scholarship on the politics of adaptation. Most recently he brought a delegation of GU students and alumni as the lone U.S. representatives to the UNESCO/ITI World Festival of Theater Schools in Peru with *In Search of Duende: The Ballad of Federico Garcia Lorca*, and he is the North American representative on the UNESCO/ ITI Board. Upcoming projects include *bobrauschenbergamerica* with Forum Theater.

Georgetown University Theater and Performance Studies Program integrates creative and critical inquiry, emphasizing artistic excellence, interdisciplinary learning, socially engaged performance and the spirit of collaboration. With a dynamic major in Theater and Performance Studies, the Program features a nationally recognized faculty, including leading scholar/artists and many of the region's leading professional theater practitioners. One of the country's only undergraduate programs in Theater and Performance Studies, this fast-growing program has rapidly attracted significant national attention for its distinctive curriculum, which integrates the political and international character of Georgetown, a commitment to social justice, and high-quality, cutting-edge student production seasons. <http://performingarts.georgetown.edu>

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 more than 300,000. www.arenastage.org

The Tennessee Williams Centennial Festival (Tenn Cent Fest) is presented by Georgetown University Theater and Performance Studies Program, in partnership with the American Studies Program and Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater. Bookended by Moises Kaufman's staged reading of *One Arm* at Georgetown in December and the run of *The Glass Menagerie* and surrounding events at Arena Stage June 9-July 3, this multifaceted festival celebrates Williams' indelible legacy on the occasion of his 100th birthday. The festivities have also included a special Centennial Weekend Celebration (March 24-27, 2011) held at venues on Georgetown University's main campus, including fully staged productions, interactive multimedia experiences, workshops, concerts, panels, discussions and readings—bringing together work by many of the leading professionals from around the world and across D.C. with Georgetown students and faculty. The festival appeals to both aficionados of Williams and those new to his work alike, offering fresh perspectives on Williams' established classics as well as rarely performed experimental and neglected works. Tenn Cent Fest is made possible by the generous support of the Georgetown University American Studies Program and C74. <http://performingarts.georgetown.edu/tenncentfest>

FACT SHEET FOR *THE GLASS MENAGERIE* AND *THE GLASS MENAGERIE PROJECT*

PRESS NIGHT

for *The Glass Menagerie*: Saturday, June 11 at 8:00 p.m.

for *The Glass Menagerie Project*: Sunday, June 12 at 6:00 p.m.

The Glass Menagerie

By Tennessee Williams

Directed by Derek Goldman

Featuring Helen Hayes Award winner Sarah Marshall

with Rachel Caywood, Michael Mitchell and Clark Young

Scenic Design by Robbie Hayes

Lighting Design by Colin K. Bills

Costume Design by Debra Kim Sivigny

Sound Design by Matt Nielson

Projections by Jared Mezzocchi

WHERE: Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater, in the Arlene and Robert Kogod Cradle

1101 Sixth St., SW

Washington, DC 20024

WHEN: June 9 - July 3, 2011

Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m.

Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays at 8:00 p.m.

Sundays at 2:00 p.m.

TICKETS: Tickets for *The Glass Menagerie* start at \$35 plus applicable fees, subject to change and based on availability. Discount tickets are available for students and groups of 10 or more. **30-and-under patrons can purchase PAY YOUR AGE tickets.** Tickets may be purchased by phone or in person, limit four 30-and-under tickets per household. Patrons must provide proof of age for each member of the party. **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 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

The Glass Menagerie Project

All Project performances and installations are free and general admission.

Directed by Joseph Megel

Scenic design by Hannah J. Crowell

Sound design by Matt Nielson

Projections by Jared Mezzocchi

Lighting design by Justin Keenan Miller

PERFORMANCES

Elegy for Rose

Run Length: 25 minutes

WHERE: Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater, in the Arlene and Robert Kogod Cradle

WHEN: Wednesdays and Sundays at 6:00 p.m.

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The Menagerie Variations

Run Length: 45 minutes

WHERE: Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater, in the Arlene and Robert Kogod Cradle

WHEN: Wednesdays at 10:15 p.m., Sundays at 6:00 p.m.

***For Whom the Southern Belle Tolls* by Christopher Durang**

Run Length: 25 minutes

WHERE: Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater, in the Arlene and Robert Kogod Cradle

WHEN: Fridays and Saturdays at 10:45 p.m. (except June 11), Sundays at 6:00 p.m.

INTERACTIVE MULTIMEDIA INSTALLATIONS

***The Overstuffed Chair*, conceived by Courtney Ulrich**

***Tenn Encounters*, conceived by Lucy Obus**

WHERE: Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater, lobby outside the Arlene and Robert Kogod Cradle

WHEN: ongoing

COMBINED SCHEDULE FOR *THE GLASS MENAGERIE* AND *THE GLASS MENAGERIE PROJECT* PERFORMANCES

Thursday, June 9 – Sunday, July 3, 2011

Wednesdays

6:00 p.m. GMP: *Elegy for Rose*

7:30 p.m. *The Glass Menagerie*

10:15 p.m. GMP: *The Menagerie Variations*

Thursdays

8:00 p.m. *The Glass Menagerie* (including June 9 PREVIEW)

Fridays

8:00 p.m. *The Glass Menagerie* (including June 10 PREVIEW)

10:45 p.m. GMP: *For Whom the Southern Belle Tolls* (including June 10 PREVIEW)

Saturdays

8:00 p.m. *The Glass Menagerie*

10:45 p.m. GMP: *For Whom the Southern Belle Tolls* (EXCEPT opening night June 11)

Sundays

2:00 p.m. *The Glass Menagerie*

6:00 p.m. GMP: *Elegy for Rose*, *The Menagerie Variations*, *For Whom the Southern Belle Tolls*

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.

PARKING: Parking in the Mead Center garage is available on a first come first serve basis for \$20. The entrance for the Mead Center garage is on Maine Avenue, SW. Limited handicapped parking is available by reservation, and the proper sticker is required. Patrons can also park at the 1101 Fourth Street Garage between (I and M Street) managed by Central Parking System for \$10.

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