

# ARENA STAGE MEDIA RELEASE

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

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 31, 2011

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### RODGERS AND HAMMERSTEIN'S OKLAHOMA! TO INCLUDE ORIGINAL PRINCIPAL CAST MEMBERS FOR THE SUMMER REVIVAL AT ARENA STAGE AT THE MEAD CENTER FOR AMERICAN THEATER

\*\*\* Featuring favorites from the acclaimed 2010 cast Nicholas Rodriguez, Eleasha Gamble, E. Faye Butler, Aaron Ramey, Nehal Joshi, Cody Williams and June Schreiner \*\*\*

(Washington, D.C.) After kicking off the inaugural season of **Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater**, shattering all box office records from Arena Stage's 60-year history and rounding up 10 Helen Hayes Awards nominations, **Rodgers and Hammerstein's Oklahoma!** returns for a summer run under the direction of **Artistic Director Molly Smith**. The revival, featuring the entire original principal cast and most of the ensemble, has already broken more company records by selling the highest number of single tickets for a production in 24 hours when tickets went on sale March 3, 2011. **Rodgers and Hammerstein's Oklahoma!** runs July 8–October 2, 2011 in the Fichandler Stage.

**Nicholas Rodriguez** (Broadway's *Tarzan*, Arena Stage's *The Light in the Piazza*) returns as Curly along with **Eleasha Gamble** (Arena Stage's *The Women of Brewster Place*, Signature's *Chess*) as Laurey. D.C. area favorite **E. Faye Butler** (Arena Stage's *Crowns*, *Ain't Misbehavin'*) stars as Aunt Eller and **Aaron Ramey** (Broadway's *Curtains*, *Thoroughly Modern Millie*) as Jud Fry. Dynamic duo **Cody Williams** alongside **June Schreiner** also return in their breakout roles as Will Parker and Ado Annie Carnes, with **Nehal Joshi** (Broadway's *Les Misérables*) as the suave peddler Ali Hakim. With Rodgers and Hammerstein's timeless music, the summer revival of Smith's *Oklahoma!* guarantees the same hearty laughs, robust singing and boot-stomping energy of Arena Stage's all-time, best-selling show.

**The Cast of Rodgers and Hammerstein's Oklahoma!** as of March 31, 2011 also includes returning cast members **Lucas Fedele** (Ike Skidmore), **Vincent Rodriguez III** (Sam), **Emilee Dupre** (Vivian), **Cyana Paolantonio** (Ellen), **Jessica Wu** (Kate), **Andrew Hodge** (Slim), **Shane Rhoades** (Fred), **Annie Petersmeyer** (Virginia), **Semhar Ghedremichael** (Aggie), **Cara Massey** (Gertie Cummings), **Hugh Nees** (Andrew Carnes), **Hollie E. Wright** (Sylvie/Dream Laurey), **Kyle Vaughn** (Mike/Dream Curly), and **Jessica Hartman** (Female Swing).

**The Creative Team of Rodgers and Hammerstein's Oklahoma!** as of March 31, 2011 includes Helen Hayes Award nominees Choreographer **Parker Esse**, Music Director **George Fulginiti-Shakar** and Set Designer **Eugene Lee**, along with Costume Designer **Martin Pakledinaz**, Lighting Designer **Michael Gilliam**, Sound Designer **Timothy M. Thompson**, Fight Choreographer **David Leong**, Associate Director **Anita Maynard-Losh**, Assistant Choreographer **Ashley Yeater**, Assistant Musical Director **José Simbulan**, Stage Manager **Susan R. White**, Assistant Stage Managers **Jenna Henderson** and **Taryn Friend**, Arena Stage Casting Director **Daniel Pruksarnukul** and New York Casting Director **Paul Hardt**.

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Full bios and images available upon request. Please e-mail [press@arenastage.org](mailto:press@arenastage.org).

The Presenting Sponsor for the summer revival of *Oklahoma!* is Altria Group.

The 2011/12 Fichandler Stage season is sponsored by Life Trustee Dr. Jaylee Montague Mead.

*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 nearly 300,000. [www.arenastage.org](http://www.arenastage.org).

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**FACT SHEET FOR THE SUMMER REVIVAL OF ARENA STAGE'S  
RODGERS & HAMMERSTEIN'S OKLAHOMA!**

**Rodgers & Hammerstein's *Oklahoma!***

Music by Richard Rodgers  
Book and lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II  
Based on the play *Green Grow the Lilacs* by Lynn Riggs  
Original choreography by Agnes de Mille  
Directed by Molly Smith  
Choreography by Parker Esse  
Musical Direction by George Fulginiti-Shakar

**STORY:** The best-selling show in Arena's 60-year history is back for 12 weeks only! This is not your mother's *Oklahoma!* Inspired by the toughness of the prairie, Artistic Director Molly Smith sets her production in the robust world of territory life filled with a dynamic cast as rich and complex as the great tapestry of America itself. With Rodgers and Hammerstein's timeless music, *Oklahoma!* celebrates the vigor of America's pioneering spirit with athletic dance and boot-stomping energy. Chock full of classic tunes such as "Oh, What a Beautiful Mornin'," and "People Will Say We're in Love," this muscular production will thrill audiences young and old.

**WHERE: Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater**

In the Fichandler  
1101 Sixth St., SW  
Washington, DC 20024

**WHEN: July 8 – October 2, 2011**

Sunday, Tuesday & Wednesday at 7:30 p.m.  
Thursday, Friday & Saturday at 8:00 p.m.  
Saturday & Sunday at 2:00 p.m.

**Audio-described performance:** Saturday, August 27 at 2:00 p.m.

**Open-captioned performance:** Wednesday, September 7, 2011 at 7:30 p.m.

**Sign-interpreted performance:** Thursday, September 8, 2011 at 8:00 p.m.

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**TICKETS:** Tickets for Rodgers & Hammerstein's *Oklahoma!* start at \$61 plus applicable fees, subject to change and based on availability. Discount tickets are available for patrons purchasing tickets for multiple shows, students and groups of 10 or more. **Beginning May 13, 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 90 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](http://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**

**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:** 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 Avenue, SW. Limited handicapped parking is available by reservation, and the proper sticker is required. Remaining spaces are \$20 for nonsubscribers. Patrons can also park at either of Central Parking's garages on Fourth St. between I and M streets for \$10.

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