

# ARENA STAGE MEDIA RELEASE

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

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### RODGERS AND HAMMERSTEIN'S OKLAHOMA! SHATTERS BOX OFFICE RECORDS AT ARENA STAGE AND EXTENDS THROUGH DECEMBER 30, 2010

**\*\*\* First production at the Mead Center for American Theater continues to break several sales records, including highest sales made in a day and a week \*\*\***

(Washington, D.C.) Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater announces that its inaugural production, **Rodgers and Hammerstein's Oklahoma!**, extends through **December 30, 2010**, adding six performances to its run in the iconic Fichandler Stage. Due to previous commitments by the actors and Arena Stage, *Oklahoma!* must close December 30. *Oklahoma!*, directed by **Artistic Director Molly Smith**, continues to shatter Arena Stage's box office records not even two weeks after opening night.

#### Now audiences have even more opportunity to see the show D.C. is raving about:

"An enchantment... You just cain't say no."  
*The Washington Post*

"Turbo-charged, romantic revival."  
*Bloomberg News*

"Delightful... leaves you humming long after you've left the theater."  
*Theatermania*

"Dazzling... An evening of joyful song and dance reflecting the pioneer spirit at its best."  
*Washingtonian*

**Tickets for the extension are on sale now through the Arena Stage Sales Office by calling 202-488-3300 or visiting [www.arenastage.org](http://www.arenastage.org).**

"I am pleased that audiences are so hungry for a giant American musical," shares Smith. "*Oklahoma!* is the story of a big, fiery, gutsy territory riding full-speed toward becoming a state, just like Arena Stage is transforming into its new center for American Theater. What a joy to be breaking records and extending *Oklahoma!* with this first production in the new Arena."

In addition to celebrating an extension, Smith's *Oklahoma!* has also broken several box office records at Arena Stage, many of which were previously held by the summer 2010 hit *Duke Ellington's Sophisticated Ladies*, directed by Charles Randolph-Wright and starring Maurice Hines and the Manzari Brothers.

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**Oklahoma! Shatters Box Office Records at Arena Stage and Extends Through December 30**  
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The Arena Stage sales records currently set by Molly Smith's *Oklahoma!* are:

- **Highest single ticket sales for a single production by opening night.** By opening night, Arena Stage had 54% more in advanced single ticket revenue than the previous record holder, the 2010 production of *Duke Ellington's Sophisticated Ladies*.
- **Highest single ticket sales for a single production in a 24-hour period,** surpassing Molly Smith's 2002 production of *South Pacific* by a 50% increase in revenue.
- **Highest grossing, non-extension production in Arena Stage history.** Previously held by the 2010 production of *Duke Ellington's Sophisticated Ladies*, the record for the highest single ticket sales for a non-extension run has been exceeded by more than \$100,000 by opening night.
- **Highest single ticket sales for a single production in one week.** *Oklahoma!* has broken this record twice so far, first during the week of November 1-7, 2010, when Arena Stage surpassed the previous record set by *Duke Ellington's Sophisticated Ladies* by selling more than 4,000 tickets, and then again the following week, when Arena Stage sold nearly 6,000 tickets.

"After our outstanding attendance of over 15,000 folks at our Homecoming and *Oklahoma!* already playing to over 35,000 joyful theater goers, Arena Stage is well and truly back in the Southwest enjoying a warm embrace from our audiences," says Arena Stage **Managing Director Edgar Dobie**. "We have found a way for even more families and friends to experience Molly's fabulous new production."

Inspired by the toughness of the prairie, Smith sets her production in the robust world of territory life filled with a dynamic cast as rich and complex as the tapestry of America itself. D.C. area favorite **E. Faye Butler** (Arena Stage's *Crowns, Ain't Misbehavin'*) stars as Aunt Eller, with **Eleasha Gamble** (Arena Stage's *The Women of Brewster Place*) as Laurey, **Aaron Ramey** (Broadway's *Curtains, Thoroughly Modern Millie*) as Jud and **Nicholas Rodriguez** (Broadway's *Tarzan*) as Curly, who played Fabrizio last season in *The Light in the Piazza*, also directed by Smith. **Cody Williams** makes his Arena Stage debut as Will Parker alongside **Nehal Joshi** as Ali Hakim and **June Schreiner** as Ado Annie Carnes, a high school junior at The Madeira School in McLean, VA, who was discovered in last summer's Arena Stage Academy Musical Theater Training Company. With Rodgers and Hammerstein's timeless music, Smith's *Oklahoma!* celebrates the vigor of America's pioneering spirit with athletic dance and boot-stomping energy.

The Cast of Rodgers and Hammerstein's *Oklahoma!* also includes **Philip Michael Baskerville** (Cord Elam), **Andrew Hodge** (Slim), **Shane Rhoades** (Fred), **Vincent Rodriguez III** (Sam), **Anton Harrison LaMon** (Jess), **Cara Massey** (Gertie), **Emilee Dupre** (Vivian), **Annie Petersmeyer** (Virginia), **Jessica Wu** (Kate), **Cyana Cook** (Ellen), **Semhar Ghedremichael** (Aggie), **Hollie E. Wright** (Sylvie/Dream Laurey), **Kyle Vaughn** (Mike/Dream Curly), **Kurt Boehm** (Male Swing) and **Jessica Hartman** (Female Swing).

The Creative Team of Rodgers and Hammerstein's *Oklahoma!* includes Assistant Director **Anita Maynard-Losh**, Music Director **George Fulginiti-Shakar**, Assistant Musical Director **Mary Sugar**, Set Designer **Eugene Lee**, Assistant Scenic Designer **Tristan Jeffers**, Costume Designer **Martin Pakledinaz**, Choreographer **Parker Esse**, Assistant Choreographer **Ashley Yeater**, Fight Choreographer **David Leong**, Lighting Designer **Michael Gilliam**, Sound Designer **Tim Thompson**, New York Casting Director **Paul Hardt**, Arena Stage Casting Director **Daniel Pruksarnukul**, Stage Manager **Susan R. White**, Assistant Stage Manager **Jenna Henderson**, Production Assistant **Alexandria Wood** and Dramaturg **Janine Sobeck**.

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

The 2010/11 Fichandler Stage season is sponsored by Life Trustee Jaylee Mead.

**Rodgers and Hammerstein's Oklahoma! Special Events, Ticket Information and Performance Calendar**

**TICKETS:** Tickets for Rodgers & Hammerstein's *Oklahoma!* start at \$45 plus applicable fees. Discount tickets are available for patrons purchasing tickets for multiple shows, students, groups and families. A limited number of 20 **Family Fun Packs** are available for each extension performance on a first-come, first-served basis. Fun packs include two tickets for adults and two tickets for children for \$125. 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 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 6th St., SW, D.C.**

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

Tuesday, Wednesday & Sunday at 7:30 p.m.  
Thursday, Friday & Saturday at 8:00 p.m.  
Saturday & Sunday matinees at 2:00 p.m.  
Weekday matinees at noon 11/24, 12/1, 12/21 & 12/24.

**Newly Added Shows Include:**

Monday, December 27, 2010 at noon and 7:30 p.m.  
Tuesday, December 28, 2010 at 7:30 p.m.  
Wednesday, December 29, 2010 at noon and 7:30 p.m.  
Thursday, December 30, 2010 at 8:00 p.m.

**Sign-interpreted performances:** 11/18 at 8:00 p.m. & 11/28 at 7:30 p.m.

**Audio-described performances:** 11/20 at 2:00 p.m.

**Open-captioned performance:** 12/22 at 8:00 p.m.

**Post-show discussions:** 12/1 and 12/21 after the noon show.

**METRO:** The Waterfront-SEU station (Green Line) is the closest Metro station to Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater. 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 up to 24 hours prior to a performance. 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.

*Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater is a national center dedicated to the production, presentation, development and study of American theater. 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 200,000.*

[www.arenastage.org](http://www.arenastage.org)