

# ARENA STAGE MEDIA RELEASE

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

High-resolution photos available upon request.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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October 18, 2011

OREGON SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL'S *EQUIVOCATION*  
PRESENTED AT ARENA STAGE AT THE MEAD CENTER FOR AMERICAN THEATER  
TO FEATURE ORIGINAL CAST OF OSF COMPANY MEMBERS AND CREATIVE TEAM  
UNDER THE DIRECTION OF OSF ARTISTIC DIRECTOR BILL RAUCH

(Washington, D.C.) Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater is proud to present **Oregon Shakespeare Festival's production of Bill Cain's *Equivocation*** in the first collaboration between Arena Stage and OSF. **Directed by OSF's Artistic Director Bill Rauch**, *Equivocation* reunites the original cast and creative team from the 2009 world-premiere production for this D.C. premiere. *Equivocation* runs **November 18, 2011-January 1, 2012 in the Kreeger Theater**.

"As a national center dedicated to American theater, Arena Stage is committed to presenting the best work from artists across the country," says **Arena Stage Artistic Director Molly Smith**. "I am so proud to introduce D.C. audiences to Bill Cain's brilliant play, which achieved great success at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, one of the most important companies in America. With Bill Rauch's dynamic direction, *Equivocation* comes to life in this imaginative story about Shakespeare and a conspiracy that rocked London and changed history."

In 1606 London, the worlds of King James and the Gunpowder Plot collide with William "Shagspeare" and his theatrical troupe in a startling cat-and-mouse game of politics and art. This high-stakes political thriller reveals the complexities of the truth and the terrible consequences of compromise in "one of the most bracingly intelligent, sizzingly theatrical American plays in a decade" (*Variety*). Follow Shakespeare and his acting company as they create one of his most magnificent masterpieces.

The cast of *Equivocation* features longtime OSF resident actors including Tony Award nominee **Anthony Heald** as Shag, **Jonathanaugen** as Cecil, **John Tufts** as Sharpe, **Richard Elmore** as Richard, **Gregory Linington** as Armin and **Christine Albright** as Judith. OSF supports one of the largest resident acting companies remaining in the United States.

Director Bill Rauch, who last worked at Arena Stage 18 years ago on *A Community Carol*, says, "*Equivocation* is one of only a handful of times in my life as a director when I have read a new play where my heart started to pump faster, and I become obsessed with serving the playwright's vision by directing the play. Bill Cain chronicles a historical episode, but his play is completely contemporary in its language and its exploration of the intersection of politics, religion and art."

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"What I know about history, I learned from Shakespeare," says Cain, who wrote *Equivocation* in the wake of September 11, 2001. "And that's dangerous because this man who has shaped our understanding of history was on the government payroll creating instant history to match a political agenda. 'Speaking truth to power' was not his goal. But mustn't he—late at night—have yearned to? Given his extraordinary skills—how might he have changed history—and our understanding of it—if he had?"

**Critical acclaim for Oregon Shakespeare Festival's and Seattle Repertory Theatre's productions of *Equivocation*:**

*Variety*: "One of the most bracingly intelligent, sizzingly theatrical American plays in a decade."

*The Seattle Times*: "Fascinating... Bill Cain fashions one of the most thoughtful, provocative and entertaining speculations about Shakespeare in relation to his era – and ours."

*The Oregonian*: "A rich, thought-provoking and multifaceted work... *Equivocation* works so well on so many levels – as political thriller, as speculative history, as ethical inquiry, as family drama, as theater about theater."

*Willamette Week*: "Dramatically gripping... darkly funny... an absolute must-see for anyone who cares about history and theater... a major new contribution to American drama."

**Bill Cain** (Playwright). This season Bill's play *How to Write a New Book for the Bible* was seen at Berkeley Rep and will open at Seattle Rep in January 2012. His last two plays, *Equivocation* and *9 Circles*, both received the American Theatre Critics' Association Steinberg Award, the first time ever that an author received the award in consecutive years. After its OSF debut, *Equivocation* was seen around the country at the Geffen Playhouse, Seattle Rep, Marin Theater and Manhattan Theatre Club. *9 Circles* debuted at the Marin Theater and since played in Boston, Los Angeles and San Jose with productions scheduled in Denver and Santa Clara. His play *Stand-Up Tragedy* was awarded best production honors in Los Angeles and Washington (at Arena Stage) and the Joe A. Callaway Award for its Broadway production. Bill's work for TV (including the ABC-TV series *Nothing Sacred*) has been honored with the George Foster Peabody, Humanitas and Writers' Guild awards.

**Bill Rauch** (Director) returns to Arena Stage after last directing *A Community Carol* in 1993, and he won a Helen Hayes Award for *The Video Store Owner's Significant Other* at the former American Playwrights' Theatre in D.C. Rauch became OSF's artistic director in 2007 and was previously co-founder and artistic director (1986-2006) of Cornerstone Theater. Bill directed the world premieres of *Equivocation* and *By the Waters of Babylon* (OSF), *The Clean House* (Yale Rep), *Living Out* and *For Here or to Go?* (Mark Taper Forum), and *My Wandering Boy* and *The Further Adventures of Hedda Gabler* (South Coast Rep). Other work includes productions at Guthrie Theater, Lincoln Center and others. Bill has been a board member for TCG (1992-98) and professor at UC Irvine (2005-07). Honors include TCG's Visionary Leadership Award (2010); Margo Jones Award (2009); Los Angeles Weekly, Garland, Connecticut Critics Circle, Drama-Logue and Helen Hayes awards for direction; and Emmy and Ovation noms. Bill attended Harvard College.

**The Cast of *Equivocation* (in alphabetical order)**

**Christine Albright** (Judith). Arena debut. New York: Marge in *Walking Down Broadway* (Mint Theatre); Ros in *Arrangements* (Cherry Lane Theatre); Celia in *As You Like It* (N.Y. Classical Theatre). In six seasons at OSF: Judith in *Equivocation* (also at Seattle Rep); Juliet in *Romeo and Juliet*; Maria in *UP*; Lady Percy in *Henry IV, Parts 1 and 2*; Titania in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Other regional: *Expectations* starring Eartha Kitt (Stamford Center for the Arts); Nina in *Seagull* (Marin Theatre Co); Hortense in *Burning Deck* (La Jolla Playhouse); Eugenie in *Vincent in Brixton* (Virginia Stage Co). Education: M.F.A., UC San Diego.

**Richard Elmore** (Richard). Arena debut. As a commercial talent, Richard has appeared in more than 100 national, regional and local TV commercials. His film career includes *Cloud Dancer*, *Flying High* and *A Star Is Born*. In 27 seasons at OSF: George in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*; Shylock in *The Merchant of Venice*; Sandor Turai in *Rough Crossing*; Joe Keller in *All My Sons*; Schell in *The Visit*; Orgon in *Tartuffe*; and many more. He has appeared in regional theaters across the country, including Seattle Rep; Milwaukee Rep; Denver Center; Alliance; the Alabama, California and Utah Shakespeare festivals; and dozens more. A five-time *Drama-Logue* winner.

**Jonathan Haugen** (Cecil). Arena debut. In 12 seasons at OSF: Antonio in *The Merchant of Venice*; Kuniharu in *Throne of Blood*; Cecil in *Equivocation*; Capulet in *Romeo and Juliet*; Ford in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*; Faustus in *Doctor Faustus*; Talbot in *Henry VI, Part 1*; Oedipus in *Oedipus Complex*; Løvborg in *Hedda Gabler*; Bertram in *All's Well That Ends Well*; Christy in *The Playboy of the Western World*; and others. Other theaters: *Equivocation* (Seattle Rep); *The Rocky Horror Picture Show, Hamlet* (Rock the Ground); *Pelléas and Mélisande* (Académie française); *Antony and Cleopatra, The Oresteia* (Berkeley Rep); *Edward II* (ACT); *The Night of the Iguana* (Center Rep); *Trust* (Eureka Theatre); *Gross Indecency* (Theatre on the Square); *The Caine Mutiny Court Martial* (San Jose Rep); among others.

**Anthony Heald** (Shag). Arena debut. Broadway: *Inherit the Wind; Love! Valour! Compassion!* (Tony nom); *A Small Family Business; Anything Goes!* (Tony nom); *The Marriage of Figaro; The Wake of Jamey Foster*. Off-Broadway: *Later Life; Lips Together, Teeth Apart; Pygmalion; Elliot Loves; The Foreigner* (Obie); *Quartermaine's Terms* (Obie); *Henry V* (Obie); *Misalliance* (Theater World Award). In eight seasons at OSF: The Duke in *Measure for Measure*; Shylock in *The Merchant of Venice*; Glendower in *Henry IV, Part 1*; Shag in *Equivocation*; Wolsey in *Henry VIII*; Stage Manager in *Our Town*; Tartuffe in *Tartuffe*; Iago in *Othello*; Rosmer in *Rosmersholm*; and others. Film/TV: *Boston Public, Boston Legal, Cheers, The Practice, X-Files, Frasier, Red Dragon, 8MM, The Silence of the Lambs, A Time to Kill, The Pelican Brief*.

**Gregory Linington** (Armin). Arena debut. In 12 seasons at OSF: Berowne in *Love's Labour's Lost*; Cassius in *Julius Caesar*; Gratiano in *The Merchant of Venice*; Armin in *Equivocation*; Trofimov in *The Cherry Orchard*; Mr. Marks in *Intimate Apparel*; Proteus in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*; Doricourt in *The Belle's Stratagem*; Edgar in *King Lear*; Jack Rover in *Wild Oats*; and others. Other theaters: *Throne of Blood* (Brooklyn Academy of Music); *Equivocation* (Seattle Rep); *Welcome Home, Jenny Sutter* (Kennedy Center); *A Christmas Carol* (Actors Theatre of Louisville); *The Seagull* (Class Ensemble); *East of Eden* (Western Stage); *Cyrano de Bergerac* (PCPA Theaterfest). International: *As You Like It, Angels in America* (Misery Loves Company, Prague). TV/Film: *The West Wing, Joan of Arc* (CBS), *Dune* (Sci-Fi), *Indigo, Harrison's Flowers*.

**John Tufts** (Sharpe). Arena debut. New York: *Virtual Meditation* (EST). In seven seasons at OSF: Hal in *Henry IV, Part 1* and *Henry IV, Part 2*; Henry in *Henry V*; Sharpe in *Equivocation*; Parolles in *All's Well That Ends Well*; Puck in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; Dromio of Syracuse in *The Comedy of Errors*; Romeo in *Romeo and Juliet*; Yasha in *The Cherry Orchard*; Mikey Griffin in *UP*; and others. Other theaters: Sharpe in *Equivocation* (Seattle Rep); Konstantin in *Seagull* (Marin Theatre Co); Young Scrooge in *A Christmas Carol* (Milwaukee Rep); Tom in *The Glass Menagerie* (PlayMakers Rep); Malcolm in *Macbeth* (Old Public Theater); Man in *Virtual Meditation* (Humana Festival). Education: B.F.A., Carnegie Mellon Univ.

The Creative Team of *Equivocation* also includes Set Designer **Christopher Acebo**, Costume Designer **Deborah M. Dryden**, Lighting Designer **Christopher Akerlind**, Composer and Sound Designer **Andre Pluess**, Movement Director **John Sipes**, Voice and Text Director **Rebecca Clark Carey**, Dramaturg **Lue Morgan Douthit**, Assistant Lighting Designer **Michael Maag**, Stage Manager **Randall Lum** and Assistant Stage Manager **Mandy Younger**.

For further information please e-mail [press@arenastage.org](mailto:press@arenastage.org).

The Opening Night Sponsor for *Equivocation* is Capital One Bank.

#### **Equivocation Special Events, Ticket Information and Performance Calendar**

##### **Rebel with a Cause – Sunday, November 27 from 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.**

Everybody loves a rebel. But do we, as a culture, have a need to go against the status quo? Arena Stage is honored to bring together **Doris Kearns Goodwin** (Pulitzer Prize-winning author and presidential historian) and director **Bill Rauch** for a discussion on pivotal moments of rebellion and conspiracy throughout the ages – from the Gunpowder Plot in 1606 London to the assassination of Abraham Lincoln and the Rosenbergs' espionage. Moderated by Arena Stage Associate Artistic Director David Dower, join us for this fascinating look at the art of rebellion. RSVP by calling the Sales Office at 202-488-3300.

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## Oregon Shakespeare Festival's *Equivocation* Features Original Cast and Creative Team—Page 4

**TICKETS:** Tickets for *Equivocation* are \$40-\$85, subject to change and based on availability, plus applicable fees. 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. For information on savings programs such as student discounts, Southwest Nights, Pay-Your-Age tickets, HOTTIX and Hero's Discounts, visit [here](#).

**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**

Tuesday, Wednesday & Sunday at 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, Friday & Saturday at 8:00 p.m.

Saturday & Sunday at 2:00 p.m.

Weekdays at noon on Wednesday, 11/23; Tuesday, 12/6; Tuesday, 12/20 and Wednesday, 12/21.

Click [here](#) for a full calendar.

**Open-captioned performance:** Wednesday, 11/30 at 7:30 p.m.

**Audio-described performance:** Saturday, 12/17 at 2:00 p.m.

**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 is available in Arena Stage's on-site garage. Subscribers may purchase parking in advance for \$15. Single ticket buyers may purchase parking in advance for \$18 or on the day of the performance for \$20 on a first-come, first-served basis. Limited handicapped parking is available by reservation. The entrance to the Mead Center garage is on Maine Avenue between Sixth and Seventh streets. 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 and Water Street.

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

Follow Arena Stage on **Twitter** @arenastage or <http://twitter.com/arenastage> and mention *Equivocation* with #EquivOSF. Visit Arena Stage on **Facebook** at <http://www.facebook.com/arenastage>.

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