

ARENA STAGE MEDIA RELEASE

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Julia Suszynski
press@arenastage.org, 202-600-4056

May 9, 2012

SAVE THE DATE:
FOR A SPECIAL PERFORMANCE OF *THE NORMAL HEART*
TO BENEFIT THE WASHINGTON AIDS PARTNERSHIP AND ARENA STAGE
MONDAY, JULY 23 AT THE MEAD CENTER FOR AMERICAN THEATER

(Washington, D.C.) Coinciding with [AIDS 2012](#), the biennial International AIDS Conference in D.C. July 22-27, 2012, **Arena Stage will host a special benefit performance of *The Normal Heart* along with the Washington AIDS Partnership Monday, July 23 at the Mead Center for American Theater.** As the largest private funder of HIV/AIDS prevention, education and advocacy in the region, the Partnership awards more than \$1 million in local grants annually. Fundraising from the event will equally benefit Washington AIDS Partnership and Arena Stage. The evening will include a pre-performance VIP Cocktail Hour, intermission champagne toast and a festive after party following the performance.

The event is sponsored by **Abt Associates, Andrew Ammerman, Eric Braverman and Neil Brown, CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield, Dave Caskey and Dale King, the Stephen A. and Diana L. Goldberg Foundation, Randy Griffin with Marriott International, Vicki J. Hicks, News Corporation, Judy Lynn Prince, Richard Schwartz and Beth Newburger Schwartz, Sheila Stampfli, Grace Terpstra, Vornado/Charles E. Smith, the Weissberg Foundation, Whole Foods Arlington, Channing Wickham and Chris Wolf and James Beller.**

The media sponsor for *The Normal Heart* benefit performance is **Metro Weekly.**

"*The Normal Heart* was written at a time when there were hundreds of AIDS-related deaths and no one was talking about it," says Arena Stage Artistic Director **Molly Smith**. "Larry Kramer's powerful play gave a voice to the victims of this epidemic. Today, D.C. has one of the highest rates of HIV in the country. We are pleased to be partnering with the Washington AIDS Partnership to spread awareness of the on-going fight against HIV/AIDS."

Fueled by love, anger, hope and pride, a circle of friends struggle to contain the mysterious disease ravaging New York's gay community in *The Normal Heart*. Dismissed by politicians, frustrated by doctors and fighting with each other, their differences could tear them apart—or change the world. Hailed by critics as "riveting" (*Newsday*) and "a great night at the theater" (*New York Times*), Kramer's masterwork is an outrageous and totally unforgettable look at sexual politics during the AIDS crisis and remains one of the theater's most powerful evenings ever. The winner of three Tony Awards including Best Revival of a Play, *The Normal Heart* runs June 8-July 29, 2012 in the Kreeger Theater.

The Normal Heart is an affiliated independent event of the 2012 International AIDS Conference. The AIDS 2012 gathering in Washington, D.C. will be a landmark event as it marks the first time in 22 years that this important conference will take place in the United States.

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“I am thrilled that Washington AIDS Partnership is working with Arena Stage on a benefit performance of *The Normal Heart*,” shares **Channing Wickham**, executive director of Washington AIDS Partnership. “Not only will the event raise badly needed funding for the fight against HIV/AIDS in our region, but the play is a timely and relevant reminder that the AIDS epidemic is still with us.”

Benefit Performance of *The Normal Heart*

Monday, July 23, 2012

Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater (1101 Sixth St., SW, Washington, D.C.)

6:30 p.m. Red Carpet Arrival and VIP Cocktail Hour

8:00 p.m. Benefit Performance of *The Normal Heart*

10:15 p.m. Festive After Party immediately following the performance

Individual Tickets

Sponsorship opportunities begin at \$2,500

\$500 VIP Benefit Ticket – featuring printed recognition, VIP Cocktail Hour, premium seats for performance and champagne toast at intermission

\$250 Benefit Ticket – Performance and After-Hours Dance Party

\$100 Performance only

\$75 Festive After Party only

For corporate sponsorships, table purchases and tickets, please contact Laura Haynes at 202-600-4030 or thenormalheart@arenastage.org.

Cocktail Attire

Complimentary Valet Parking

*For more than two decades, the **Washington AIDS Partnership (WAP)**, a collaboration of local grantmaking organizations and individuals, has been fighting this public health crisis in the Washington, D.C. metro area. By mobilizing the local private sector’s response to the epidemic, WAP is able to provide grants and technical assistance to HIV/AIDS service organizations, spearhead public policy initiatives, and invest in the next generation of HIV/AIDS leaders through AmeriCorps. Since 1989, WAP has granted over \$21 million to more than 150 organizations in the D.C. metro area serving people at risk for or living with HIV/AIDS. WashingtonAIDSPartnership.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 Executive Producer 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. arenastage.org

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