

ARENA STAGE MEDIA RELEASE

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

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ARENA STAGE ANNOUNCES FULL COMPANY FOR BROADWAY PRODUCTION
OF LARRY KRAMER'S *THE NORMAL HEART*
DIRECTED BY GEORGE C. WOLFE
JUNE 8-JULY 29, 2012

An Affiliated Independent Event of the 2012 International AIDS Conference in D.C.

(Washington, D.C.) Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater produces the 2011 Tony Award-winning production of Larry Kramer's *The Normal Heart*, directed by George C. Wolfe. Wolfe, who directed the show's sold-out Broadway engagement last season, mounts the professional D.C.-area premiere of this production, which features returning Broadway cast members Patrick Breen and Luke Macfarlane, among others. Presented by special arrangement with Daryl Roth, *The Normal Heart* runs June 8-July 29, 2012 in the Kreeger Theater.

"It is a real privilege for Arena Stage to bring Larry Kramer's work to his native Washington, which I saw in New York in a powerful and masterful production," shares Arena Stage Artistic Director Molly Smith. "Under the guidance of veteran director George C. Wolfe, I believe this important play will inspire D.C. audiences by offering a deep look at a group of people who bravely fought the unknown of the beginning of the AIDS epidemic."

Breen (Broadway's *Next Fall*), who portrayed Mickey Marcus in the Broadway production, and Macfarlane (Scotty on ABC's *Brothers & Sisters*), who portrayed Craig Donner/Grady, return to take on new roles of Ned Weeks and Felix Turner respectively. Noted TV actress Patricia Wettig (Holly Harper on ABC's *Brothers & Sisters*, ABC's *thirtysomething*) will play Emma Brookner, a doctor who is physically challenged as a result of childhood polio.

They are joined by Tom Berklund (Broadway's *The Addams Family*) as Craig Donner/Grady, Michael Berresse (Broadway's *A Chorus Line*) as Mickey Marcus, Chris Dinolfo (Round House Theatre's *Next Fall*) as David, Christopher J. Hanke (Broadway's *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*) as Tommy Boatwright, Jon Levenson (understudy for Broadway's *The Normal Heart*) as Hiram Keebler/Examining Doctor, Nick Mennell (Broadway's *A Free Man of Color*) as Bruce Niles and John Procaccino (Lincoln Center Theater's *Blood and Gifts*) as Ben Weeks.

"Last year when we did the revival on Broadway it was thrilling to see critics rediscover what a great American play *The Normal Heart* is, and to see audiences, young and old, respond with such emotion and ferocity to the story," says Wolfe. "I'm so excited to be a part of bringing Larry's astonishing, funny, moving play to D.C. and to The Arena."

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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.

“I consider Washington my hometown and it's been exceedingly upsetting to me that it's taken so long for *The Normal Heart* to be professionally produced there and doubly exciting that Arena is doing it at last,” adds **Kramer**. “This is *the* most important city for this play. I hope Washington will respond to it as it finally joins with the many productions it's had all over the world.”

“*The Normal Heart* has been a labor of love for me from the first Benefit reading, to our 2011 Broadway Tony Award-winning production, and now here at Arena Stage,” contributes **Roth**. “Having this play in D.C. at this time was very important to me in order that *The Normal Heart* would be a part of the dialogue during AIDS 2012. It is a testament to Larry Kramer's ‘righteous rage’ 25 years ago when the play was written that allows us to again engage and touch those who remember, but most importantly, enlighten a younger generation learning their history and legacy.”

***The Normal Heart* is an Affiliated Independent Event of AIDS 2012, the biennial International AIDS Conference July 22-27, 2012 in D.C.** The world's preeminent gathering for those working in the field of HIV, as well as policy makers, persons living with HIV and other individuals committed to ending the pandemic, this global conference returns to the United States after 22 years. This also marks the first performing arts event that has ever been affiliated with the international conference. For more information, visit aids2012.org.

In order to spread awareness of the ongoing fight against AIDS, Arena Stage will be holding related events and partnering with organizations throughout the run of *The Normal Heart*. Sections of the **AIDS Memorial Quilt** will be on display in the Mead Center, along with images from the HIV and AIDS related collections of the **Archives Center at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History**; local clinics and HIV testing providers will have **HIV testing vans** parked outside the Mead Center on select weekends; **panel discussions** with guest speakers will follow select matinees to explore the impact of AIDS on our society today; and Arena Stage and the Washington AIDS Partnership will host a **benefit performance** of *The Normal Heart* July 23. **For event and partnership details, see below under Related Events.**

The Normal Heart reunites Broadway design team members Set Designer **David Rockwell**, Costume Designer **Martin Pakledinaz**, Lighting Designer **David Weiner**, sound design/original music by **David Van Tieghem** and projections by **Batwin & Robin**. Joining the creative team are Restaging Director **Leah C. Gardiner**, Stage Manager **Amber Dickerson** and Assistant Stage Manager **Kurt Hall**.

The 2011 production of *The Normal Heart* was produced on Broadway by Daryl Roth, Paul Boskind and Martian Entertainment in association with Gregory Rae and Jayne Baron Sherman/Alexander Fraser. The 25th anniversary Broadway staged reading of *The Normal Heart* was held on October 18, 2010, produced by Daryl Roth and directed by Joel Grey.

This production of *The Normal Heart* will be presented by American Conservatory Theater and Arena Stage in San Francisco from September 13-October 7, 2012.

Larry Kramer (Playwright) Co-founder, Gay Men's Health Crisis (world's first HIV/AIDS service organization). Founder, ACT UP (the international network of activists responsible for the development/release of most HIV/AIDS treatments). BA Yale (1957). Film: *Women in Love*, producer and screenplay (Oscar nomination). Plays: *Sissies' Scrapbook*, *The Normal Heart*, *Just Say No*, *The Destiny of Me* and *A Minor Dark Age*. Non-fiction: *Reports from the holocaust*, *The Making of an AIDS Activist* and *The Tragedy of Today's Gays*. Fiction: *Faggots* and *The American People* (forthcoming from Farrar Straus). Recipient: Award in Literature from the American Academy of Arts and Letters; first openly gay person to receive a Public Service Award from Common Cause. He and his lover, architect-designer David Webster, live in New York.

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George C. Wolfe (Director) Theatre directing credits include *Jelly's Last Jam* (Drama Desk and Outer Critics awards), *Angels In America: Millennium Approaches* (Tony and Drama Desk awards) and *Perestroika* (Drama Desk Award), *Bring In 'Da Noise, Bring In 'Da Funk* (Tony and Drama League awards), *Topdog/Underdog* (Obie Award), *Twilight: Los Angeles 1992* (Drama Desk Award), *Elaine Stritch At Liberty* (Tony Award, Unique Theatrical Event), *The Tempest*, *The Wild Party*, *Caroline Or Change*, *A Free Man Of Color* and *The Normal Heart* (Drama Desk Award). He is the writer of the award-winning *The Colored Museum*, directed *Spunk* (Obie Award), created *Harlem Song* for the world famous Apollo Theatre and conceived/directed a celebration of the American Musical at the White House. Mr. Wolfe directed the films *Nights in Rodanthe* and *Lackawana Blues*, for which he earned The Directors Guild Award, a National Board of Review Award, a Christopher Award and the Humanitas Prize. Additional awards include The Society of Directors and Choreographers' Mr. Abbott Award, The Dramatist Guild's Hull-Warner Award, Actors Equity Paul Roberson Award, The New Dramatist Outstanding Career Achievement Award, The NAACP Lifetime Achievement Award, The Lambda Liberty Award, The Spirit of the City Award, The Brendan Gill Prize, The Distinguished Alumni Award from NYU, a Princess Grace Award for fostering the careers of young artists, a Cultural Laureate Award and a Library Lion. From 1993-2005 he was the Producer of The Public Theatre/New York Shakespeare Festival, serves on The President's Committee For The Arts and The Humanities and was named a living landmark by the New York Landmark's Conservancy.

Daryl Roth (Producer) is proud to hold the singular distinction of producing 7 Pulitzer Prize-winning plays: Edward Albee's *Three Tall Women*, *Anna in the Tropics*, *How I Learned to Drive*, *Wit*, *Proof* (Tony Award), *August: Osage County* (Tony Award), and *Clybourne Park*. She has produced over 75 award winning productions on and Off-Broadway, including: Edward Albee's *The Goat, or Who Is Sylvia?*, *The Play About the Baby* and *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*; Bea Arthur on Broadway; *Caroline, or Change*; *A Catered Affair*; *Closer Than Ever*; *Curtains*; *De La Guarda*; *The Divine Sister*; *Driving Miss Daisy*; *Fela!*; *Irena's Vow*; *Leap of Faith*; *A Little Night Music*; *Love, Loss, and What I Wore*; *Medea*; *One Man, Two Guvnors*; *Salome*; *The Tale of the Allergist's Wife*; *The Temperamentals*; *Thom Pain*; *Through the Night*; *Thurgood*; *Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992*; and *The Year of Magical Thinking*. Her production last year of Larry Kramer's *The Normal Heart* was the recipient of 3 Tony Awards, including Best Revival of a Play. Upcoming: John Grisham's *A Time To Kill*, adapted by Rupert Holmes; and *Kinky Boots*, book by Harvey Fierstein, music by Cyndi Lauper.

The Cast of *The Normal Heart* (in alphabetical order)

Tom Berklund (Craig Donner/Grady) Broadway: *The Addams Family* (Ancestor, u/s Lurch) and *A Chorus Line* (Greg, u/s Zach). Regional: *Leap of Faith* (Ahmanson Theatre), Paper Mill Playhouse, Houston TUTS and Portland Center Stage. TV/film: *Enchanted* (Disney) and the Academy Awards.

Michael Berresse (Mickey Marcus) Broadway: [title of show] (dir./chor., Obie Award), *A Chorus Line*, *The Light in the Piazza*, *Kiss Me, Kate*, *Chicago*, *The Gershwin's Fascinating Rhythm*, *Damn Yankees*, *Guys and Dolls*, *Carousel*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *A Wonderful Life* (concert), *Busker Alley* (tour) and *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* (tour). Off-Broadway: *Now. Here. This.* (dir./chor.), *Forever Plaid* and *The Cocoanuts*. Encores!: *No, No, Nanette*, *Chicago*, *Call Me Madam* and *One Touch of Venus*. Film: *AI* and *State of Play*. TV: *Law & Order: SVU*, *Law & Order: Criminal Intent*, *Great Performances* and *Live From Lincoln Center*.

Patrick Breen (Ned Weeks) Broadway: *The Normal Heart*, *Next Fall*, *Brighton Beach Memoirs*, *Big River*. Off-Broadway: *Fuddy Meers*, *The Substance Of Fire*, *Celebration/The Room*, *View Of The Dome*, *Baby Anger*, *The Hothouse* and *Life And Limb*. Films include: *Men In Black*, *Get Shorty*, *Cirque Du Freak*, *Galaxy Quest*, *Radio*, *One True Thing*, *Christmas With The Kranks*, *Just A Kiss* and *The Bleeding House*. TV: *The Good Wife*, *Nurse Jackie*, *Kevin Hill*, *Sex and the City*, *Law and Order*, *Will and Grace*, *CSI*, *Frasier*, *21 Jump Street* and *Council of Dads* (Fox pilot).

Chris Dinolfo (David) DC: *Next Fall* (Round House Theatre), *King Lear* and *The Master and Margarita* (Synetic Theater), *Clybourne Park* (Woolly Mammoth) and numerous credits with Shakespeare Theatre Company, The Studio Theatre and Studio Theatre 2ndStage, Folger Theatre, The Kennedy Center Theater for Young Audiences, The Keegan Theatre and The Maryland Shakespeare Festival.

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Christopher J. Hanke (Tommy Boatwright) Broadway: *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* (Bud Frump), *Cry-Baby* (Baldwin), *Rent* (Mark) and *In My Life* (J.T.). NYC: Claude in *Hair* (The Public's Shakespeare in the Park), Buddy Baxter in *Golden Age*, Eddie in *Indian Blood* (LCT), Alvin in *The Story of My Life* (Manhattan Theatre Club). Tours: Deaf West's *Big River* (Tom Sawyer) and *The Full Monty* (Ethan). Regional: *The Matchmaker* (Barnaby). TV: *Three Rivers* (series regular), *Brothers & Sisters* and HBO's *Big Love* (recurring).

Jon Levenson (Hiram Keebler/Examining Doctor) Broadway: *The Normal Heart*. Off-Broadway: Harold in *The Boys in the Band* (Transport Group), *The Hairy Ape* (Irish Repertory Theatre) and *Crime and Punishment* (59 E 59). Regional: Orlando in *As You Like It*, The Baker in *Into the Woods* (Clarence Brown Theatre) and Treplev in *The Seagull* (Porchlight Theatre).

Luke Macfarlane (Felix Turner) Broadway: *The Normal Heart*. Off-Broadway: *The Busy World is Hushed*, *Where Do We Live* and *Juvenilia*. Feature film debut: Bill Condon's *Kinsey*. TV: Scotty on ABC's *Brothers & Sisters*, CBC miniseries *Iron Road*, starring role on FX's *Over There* and *Tanner on Tanner* (directed by Robert Altman).

Nick Mennell (Bruce Niles) Broadway: *A Free Man of Color*. Off-Broadway: *Hamlet*, *Lobby Hero*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Misalliance*, *Macbeth*, *American Occupation*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Richard III*, *Woyzeck*, *Birds*, *Odyssey*, *Three Sisters*, *The Erotic Nature of Funerals*, *A Memory of Two Mondays* and *Web*. Film: *Friday the 13th*, *The Lost Tribe*, *Halloween*, *My Little Eye*, *Cold Turkey* and *Echo's Pond*. TV: *Southland*, *Numb3rs* and *Sins of the City*.

John Procaccino (Ben Weeks) Broadway: *An American Daughter*, *A Thousand Clowns*, *Conversations With My Father* and *Art*. National tour: *The Light in the Piazza*. Regional: *Art*, *Good Boys* and *True* (Steppenwolf); *A Prayer for My Enemy* and *Down the Garden Paths* (Long Wharf Theatre); *A Moon for the Misbegotten*, *All the Kings Men*, *Arms and the Man* and *The Singing Forest* (Intiman Theatre); *Tartuffe*, *Caucasian Chalk Circle* and *Long Day's Journey Into Night* (Seattle Repertory); and *The Night of the Iguana*, *Dinner With Friends*, *Side Man* and *The Crucible* (ACT Theatre). Film and TV: *The Runner Stumbles*, *Three Fugitives*, *Born to Be Wild*, *Law & Order*, *NYPD Blue*, *Northern Exposure* and *Rose Red*.

Patricia Wettig (Emma Brookner) Circle Repertory Company: *The Woolgatherer*, *A Tale Told*, *Childe Byron* and *Innocent Thoughts*, *Harmless Intentions*. Other stage credits: Jon Robin Baitz's *A Paris Letter* (Kirk Douglas Theater, world premiere), *The Diviners*, *Angels Fall*, *The Dining Room*, *Crimes of the Heart*, *Nightfall*, *Three Sisters* and *A Streetcar Named Desire*. New York Stage and Film, playwright: *Headlong*, *A Life Imagined*, *F2M* and *My Andy* (finalist for the Susan Smith Blackburn Prize). Film: *City Slickers I & II*, *Guilty by Suspicion*, *Bong Water* and *Lackawanna Blues*, directed by George Wolfe. TV: *Brothers & Sisters* (Holly Harper), *Prison Break*, *Alias*, *St. Elsewhere*, *The Langoliers* and *thirtysomething* (three Emmy Awards and a Golden Globe Award).

Full bios and images available upon request. Please e-mail press@arenastage.org.

The Normal Heart Related Events, Ticket Information and Performance Calendar

For up-to-date information on related events visit arenastage.org/shows-tickets/the-season/productions/the-normal-heart/events/.

Sections of the AIDS Memorial Quilt on Display at the Mead Center

The AIDS Memorial Quilt – one of the most powerful symbols of the world's response to the AIDS epidemic – will return to the nation's capital this summer, and several sections of The Quilt will be on display at the Mead Center during the entire run of *The Normal Heart*. Designated an American Treasure by Congress, The Quilt consists of more than 47,000 panels representing more than 94,000 individuals taken by AIDS to date. For more information about The Quilt in Washington this summer visit Quilt2012.org. For more on hosting a panel display or other information visit AIDSquilt.org.

Free HIV Testing During Select Weekends of *The Normal Heart*

Arena Stage is partnering with local clinics and HIV testing providers to arrange for testing vans to be parked outside the Mead Center during select weekends of *The Normal Heart*.

Benefit Performance of *The Normal Heart* – Monday, July 23, 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. The evening will include a pre-performance VIP Cocktail Hour, intermission champagne toast and a festive dance party following the performance. **For corporate sponsorships, table purchases and tickets, please contact Laura Haynes at 202-600-4030 or thenormalheart@arenastage.org.**

Engage@ArenaStage Panel Series – Following Select Matinee Performances

Take part in a conversation following select matinee performances of *The Normal Heart* with guest panelists ranging from clinicians to community organizers. The panels will explore how HIV/AIDS is represented in the media and in the arts as well as how the virus continues to affect gay men, women, senior citizens, youth and people of color both nationally and in the Washington metro area. Panels are free and open to the public.

TICKETS: Tickets for *The Normal Heart* are \$40-\$94, subject to change and based on availability, plus applicable fees. For information on savings programs such as student discounts, Southwest Nights, Pay-Your-Age tickets, HOTTIX and Hero's Discounts, visit arenastage.org/shows-tickets/single-tickets/savings-programs/. Tickets may be purchased online at 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

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

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

Saturday & Sunday at 2:00 p.m.

Weekdays at noon on Tuesday, 7/3; Wednesday, 7/11 and Wednesday, 7/18

Full calendar: tickets.arenastage.org/single/psDetail.aspx?psn=13240

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. Advanced parking must be reserved by calling 202-488-3300. 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.

VALET PARKING: Arena Stage offers valet service at no additional cost to patrons with accessibility needs who have booked their parking in advance by calling 202-488-3300. Valet parking is available to general patrons one hour prior to show time for \$25, based upon availability. To use valet parking, pull up to the main entrance on Sixth 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 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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