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ARENA STAGE MEDIA RELEASE

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

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September 20, 2012

ARENA STAGE ANNOUNCES UPCOMING EVENTS AND PROGRAM UPDATES FOR AMERICAN VOICES NEW PLAY INSTITUTE

***** Now accepting applications for Playwrights' Arena, launching Kogod Cradle Series events and sharing updates from the Resident Playwrights *****

(Washington, D.C.) Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater announces upcoming events and program updates through the American Voices New Play Institute for the 2012/13 season. Joining the current programs of the Institute will be several new efforts launching this fall to further expand the avenues and opportunities for the development of new work. These new efforts include launching the previously announced **Playwrights' Arena**, which is now open for application, and initiating the **Kogod Cradle Series**, a series of readings and workshops for artists to explore the development process of new and devised work. The Institute continues to support the work of commissioned playwrights, as well as our Project Residents **Lynn Nottage** and **David Henry Hwang** and Resident Playwrights **Amy Freed**, **Katori Hall**, **Lisa Kron**, **Charles Randolph-Wright** and **Karen Zacarias**.

"Arena Stage is a hothouse for new work, and new work often requires privacy to flourish," says **Arena Stage Artistic Director Molly Smith**. "I'm thrilled when we can open a window into the work, like these new programs developed within the American Voices New Play Institute by our Director of Artistic Programming, David Snider. Alongside our resident playwrights and commissioned writers, artists will have a chance to cultivate their work at Arena – and audiences will see theater in progress."

The Playwrights' Arena – applications open until October 12, 2012

Aimed at nurturing the development of emerging local playwrights, the **Playwrights' Arena** will launch in January 2013 at the Mead Center. This will be a collaborative group of up to six D.C.-area playwrights dedicated to the support and development of each other's work and practice. Overseen by David Snider, the Playwrights' Arena will meet twice a month over the course of a year and will investigate each other's work and develop their dramaturgical practice as playwrights while creating new work.

They will meet regularly with the Arena Stage Resident Playwrights, as well as directors, designers and staff to discuss their work and topics of interest with them. Periodically, actors will read their work in private laboratory rehearsals, giving the playwrights a chance to hear and respond to their work. The playwrights will be supported as members of the Arena Stage artistic community and will have access to opening nights and special events. The group will meet from January to May, with a break from June to August, and will resume meetings from September to December. Participants must reside within the D.C.-Metro area, within 30 miles from Washington, D.C.

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Arena Stage announces events and programs for American Voices New Play Institute—Page 2

For full application requirements, visit arenastage.org/artistic-development/new-play-institute/playwrights-arena/. Applications are due by October 12, 2012 and may be submitted to playwrightsarena@arenastage.org or by mail to: Playwrights' Arena, Artistic Development, Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater, 1101 Sixth Street SW, Washington, DC 20024.

The Kogod Cradle Series

Also launching as part of the Institute this fall is the **Kogod Cradle Series**, which supports the exploration and development of new and emerging work in the Arlene and Robert Kogod Cradle with visiting companies, artists and ensembles. Designed to cradle creative risk-taking for artists throughout the D.C. area and across the country, this series of readings and workshops invites artists and audiences to explore the development process of new and devised work. While many events of the Kogod Cradle Series will be performances and workshops available for the public to attend, others may be more private development opportunities requested by the artists and companies involved. The Kogod Cradle Series seeks to provide the best format for each project.

The first Kogod Cradle Series events will take place in November during a celebration of new work by D.C. companies. **dog & pony dc** (dogandponydc.com) will workshop their latest work, *A Killing Game*, in anticipation of its official opening at the end of November at Capitol Hill Arts Workshop. This interactive performance workshop includes a game with the audience and will rely on audience feedback toward further development of the piece. Simultaneously, **banished? productions** (banishedproductions.org) will remount their hit *Into the Dollhouse* to explore how to restage and tour a previous installation piece. These productions are each an hour long and will perform in repertory together each night, **November 8-11**, giving audiences an opportunity to experience and participate in the work of both companies in a single evening. The focus of these performances will be on exploration, rather than presentation, and audiences will be invited to help develop these works in progress. **Tickets are \$10 and will go on sale October 2, 2012. For questions or more information, please call the Arena Stage Sales Office at 202-488-3300.**

During this week, **African Continuum Theatre Company** (africancontinuumtheatre.com) will also be exploring a new work that will be considered for a future production. The company has received several submissions of new work, and one of those will be selected for further examination through workshops in the Ammerman Rehearsal Hall **November 10-11**, culminating in an invitation-only reading.

Also during this time, Resident Playwrights **Randolph-Wright** and **Zacarias** will be at the Mead Center to workshop new projects of their own in private rehearsals. Randolph-Wright and Zacarias, along with the three visiting companies listed above, will have the opportunity to work with **Jocelyn Clarke**, dramaturg for the Institute, to help develop their work throughout the week.

As previously mentioned, the Institute's Resident Playwrights continue to utilize the benefits and resources of their residencies. To review personal summaries written by the playwrights regarding how their residency has already impacted their work, visit the New Play Blog at newplay.arenastage.org.

Excerpts from the Resident Playwrights' summaries:

"The residency's loose parameters and generosity have enabled a connectivity for me that I treasure." - Amy Freed

"Having a good space to write, a room of one's own, is the first step to creating work that is emotionally evocative, clear and steady, and I must say having this rock allowed a river to flow from me." - Katori Hall

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Arena Stage announces events and programs for American Voices New Play Institute—Page 3

“The support of the residency has allowed me to devote myself full-time to playing without worrying I would not be able to pay my rent or health insurance bills.” - Lisa Kron

“The residency has allotted me the time to write, dream and eat!” - Charles Randolph-Wright

“The ability to be able to work without having to constantly scramble and hustle has allowed me to deepen and expand my skills as a writer.” - Karen Zacarias

As previously announced, Samuel Hunter’s yearlong residency will begin in January 2013.

For the most up-to-date information on the various programs and offerings of the American Voices New Play Institute, visit arenastage.org/artistic-development/new-play-institute/.

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 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. arenastage.org.

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