

ARENA STAGE MEDIA RELEASE

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

***PLEASE NOTE: this release has been updated as of 10/1/2012 to include band members.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CRITICALLY ACCLAIMED MUSICAL EVENT *ONE NIGHT WITH JANIS JOPLIN*
CELEBRATES THE LEGENDARY BLUES-INSPIRED ROCK STAR
AT ARENA STAGE AT THE MEAD CENTER FOR AMERICAN THEATER
SEPTEMBER 28 – NOVEMBER 4, 2012

(Washington, D.C.) Fresh off its acclaimed run at the Cleveland Play House, where *The Plain Dealer* called it “a feel-good, fist pumping, must-see concert,” *One Night with Janis Joplin* will take D.C. audiences on a musical journey into the life and inspirations of one of rock ‘n’ roll’s greatest legends. The production is led by Cleveland native **Mary Bridget Davies**, who performs with Joplin’s original band Big Brother and the Holding Company, and also features **Sabrina Elayne Carten** as the Blues Singer who pays homage to the artists that influenced Joplin’s incomparable blues-rock blend. Created, written and directed by **Randy Johnson**, the production is produced in partnership with Cleveland Play House in association with Todd Gershwin and Daniel Chilewich of Premiere Media, with support from The Estate of Janis Joplin and Jeff Jampol of JAM, Inc. *One Night with Janis Joplin* runs **September 28 – November 4, 2012 in the Kreeger Theater.**

“*One Night with Janis Joplin* is a full-on concert experience,” shares **Arena Stage Artistic Director Molly Smith**. “In the middle of the political season, this is the perfect chance for us to blow off steam and let go! In addition to the pure rock and roll fun of it, it is important to explore Janis Joplin’s life and music because she is an icon of a generation. Janis stood on the shoulders of the giants before her— she was deeply inspired by great African American female blues artists. Writer and director Randy Johnson makes sure we discover this through the production.”

About *One Night with Janis Joplin*: With a voice like whiskey and a laugh like pure joy, Janis Joplin took the music scene by storm. Simultaneously rough and vulnerable, Joplin was dubbed the Queen of Rock ‘n’ Roll, proving music wasn’t just a man’s world anymore. Packed with classic songs (“Piece of My Heart,” “Summertime,” “Mercedes Benz”), the show also shines the spotlight on trailblazers who influenced Janis— like Bessie Smith, Etta James and Aretha Franklin. Now, in a new musical event featuring more than a dozen singers and band members, playwright-director Randy Johnson creates “a compelling portrait of an artist” (*Culturemob*) through the words, inspiration and music of one of America’s greatest rock ‘n’ roll originals.

Johnson received unprecedented access to the Joplin family archives to create *One Night with Janis Joplin*, which enabled him to give audiences a profound immersion into this blues-belting innovator’s musical brilliance. Out of his research he notes, “I am constantly astonished and inspired by the depth of the wisdom she imparted in her music, interviews, her writings and her art. Janis provoked a lot of thought by simply being herself. There never has been and never will be another Janis Joplin.”

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Critically acclaimed musical event *One Night with Janis Joplin* at Arena Stage—Page 2

Of the production he adds, “This isn’t just Janis’ story: it’s all of our stories, in one way or another. We all touch and inform each other as we travel this life. The world is a better place because Janis was here for a moment and I trust that audiences will take away a piece of her heart, her spirit and her wisdom from the production. The recent run at Cleveland Play House was beyond all of our expectations and I am personally thrilled and honored to be working with Molly Smith and Arena Stage on this next step in the ongoing journey of *One Night with Janis Joplin*.”

Producers **Todd Gershwin** and **Dan Chilewich** add, “After a tremendous run in Cleveland, we look forward to bringing this new musical celebration of Janis Joplin and her musical influences to D.C. We are absolutely thrilled about the opportunity to work with Molly Smith and her incredibly talented team at Arena Stage. It’s particularly rewarding to be involved with a show where the audience is on their feet every night having fun.”

“Janis built her life through her love of music. To feel her and know her demands we travel together, exploring singers and styles she absorbed and made her own,” proclaims **Laura Joplin**. “I look forward to being in D.C. and watching Janis onstage in *One Night With Janis Joplin*, sharing her musical journey with us.”

Critical Acclaim for *One Night with Janis Joplin* in Cleveland:

- “A performance so raw, real and in-the-moment that it brought people to their feet again and again.” – *Cleveland Plain Dealer*
- “While there never has been and never will be another Janis Joplin, Mary Bridget Davies is awfully damn close.” – *The News Herald*
- “Carten... is phenomenal, mastering the blues, soul and gospel when the occasion calls for it and owning the stage at all times.” – *The News Herald*
- “Doesn’t matter if you are a blues, rock and roll, or Joplin fan or not, there is no way you aren’t going to leave this performance on an emotional high!” – *Broadway World*
- “A runaway hit ... [Mary Bridget Davies] does not just sing Janis...she is Janis ... She does not simply sing the blues...she is the blues ... It was FAR OUT MAN! As far as how many stars? It’s definitely a freakin’ five plus.” – *Cleveland Examiner*

Randy Johnson (*Creator/Writer/Director*). For the past 25 years, he has written, directed and produced some of the most original, ground-breaking and landmark events in the business. Selected theater credits include producer of the West Coast premiere of *The Normal Heart* starring Richard Dreyfus and Kathy Bates; original producer of *Always Patsy Cline*; and writer and director of *The Wildest – The Music of Louis Prima and Keely Smith*, published by Samuel French Inc. Writer and Director of *Conway Twitty – the Man, the Music, the Legend*, Johnson also co-conceived and directed *Elvis the Concert*, which premiered at Radio City Music Hall. *Elvis the Concert* is in the Guinness Book of World Records as “The most successful rock tour performed by a deceased artist.” He has directed in regional theaters nationwide and in Canada. Johnson staged and directed Pope Benedict’s most recent appearance in New York. Other work includes directing Katharine Hepburn in a PBS documentary on the life of Jimmy Stewart, *Mike Tyson – Undisputed Truth* (director/co-writer), and Carly Simon’s concert *A Miracle on 125th Street* at The Apollo Theatre in 2007. For PBS and DVD: *Carly Simon – A Moonlight Serenade Aboard the Queen Mary*. His autobiography *Adventures in Hotel Crazy* will be published in the fall of 2013. He is a member of Dramatists Guild, Stage Directors and Choreographers Society, and Canadian Actors Equity as a director. For his work with Aids Project Los Angeles, he is recipient of The Crystal Apple Award.

The Cast of *One Night with Janis Joplin*

Mary Bridget Davies (*Janis Joplin*) starred as Janis Joplin in the national tour of *Love, Janis* and was nominated for the Austin Circle of Theaters’ B. Iden Payne Award as well as voted “Best Moment in Theater” by Kansas City’s *The Pitch* newspaper for her portrayal in *Love, Janis*. Other favorites include *It Ain’t Nothin’ but the Blues* on Broadway and being a member of Something Dada Improvisational Comedy Troupe. Davies

Critically acclaimed musical event *One Night with Janis Joplin* at Arena Stage—Page 3

has received numerous awards for her voice and band, most recently winning second place at International Blues Challenge 2011. She tours internationally with Joplin's original band, Big Brother & the Holding Company.

Sabrina Elayne Carten (*Blues Singer*) began her career with Chautauqua Symphony Orchestra as the Strawberry Woman in *Porgy & Bess*. She has since performed in this opera at notable opera houses around the world. Her portrayal of Maria is considered one of the best. She played Tituba in *The Crucible* at Chautauqua Opera and Mobile Opera. She understudied and performed Queenie in Hal Prince's *Showboat* on the first national tour across the U.S. and Canada. She recently appeared with Mike Tyson in *Mike Tyson – Undisputed Truth* at MGM Grand in Las Vegas. She is a member of The American Spiritual Ensemble. Having performed in the Portland Center Stage world premiere, she is excited to reprise The Blues Singer in *One Night with Janis Joplin*.

Laura Carbonell (*Backup Singer/Janis Joplin Understudy*) Regional theater credits include the world premiere of Carter Lewis' *The Storytelling Ability of a Boy*, Florida Stage and *Glorious!*, Shadowland Theatre; New York credits include the new rock musicals *Destinations* at Le Poisson Rouge for The New York International Fringe Festival and *Twist* at the Kraine Theatre; Helena in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Pulse Ensemble Theatre; *The Wrath of Aphrodite*, GayFest NYC; and an *Andrews Sisters Musical Revue* with New York Dinner Theatre. Film credits include *The Captive*, a Sundance Channel Digital Short (People's Choice Webby Award for Best Drama and New York Television Festival Award for Best Web Series Pilot), and the upcoming *Please Say a Command* with Jerry Stiller. Carbonell holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Theatre from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts and the Stella Adler Conservatory.

Alison Cusano (*Backup Singer/Janis Joplin Alternate*) is honored to join the cast of *One Night with Janis Joplin* and make her Arena Stage debut. Regional credits include *Factory Girls* (Goodspeed Musicals); *The Full Monty* and *Hello Dolly* (Ogunquit Playhouse); and Sheila in *Hair* (Cohoes Music Hall). Other credits include Mrs. Walker in *Tommy*, Dorothy in *The Wizard of Oz* and *Factory Girls* at Joes Pub NYC. Alison has a BFA in Music Theatre from The Hartt School.

Shinnerrie Jackson (*Backup Singer/Blues Singer Understudy*) is a graduate of The University of Tennessee and Conservatory of Music – Oberlin College. Numerous roles include Susan in *Race*; member of the Female Chorus in *Electra*; Esther in *Intimate Apparel*; and *Ain't I a Woman*, a one-woman show about the heroines of African-American history. She has been seen on *30 Rock* and in Whit Stillmans' film *Damsels in Distress*.

The band for *One Night with Janis Joplin* features **Gavriel de Tarr** (trumpet), **Tyler Evans** (keyboard), **Stephen Flakus** (associate musical director, guitar), **Patrick Harry** (bass), **David Milne** (saxophone), **Ross Seligman** (guitar), **Anton van Oosbree** (trumpet) and **Mitch Wilson** (drums).

The *One Night with Janis Joplin* creative team also includes Musical Arrangements by **Len Rhodes**; Set and Lighting Designer **Justin Townsend**; Costume Designer **Jeff Cone**; Sound Designer **Carl Casella**; Projection Designer **Darrell Maloney**; Stage Manager **Jennifer Matheson Collins**; Assistant Stage Manager **Keri Schultz**; and Casting Direction by **Randy Dupre**, JRD Los Angeles.

For full bios, video and high-resolution images please e-mail press@arenastage.org.

[One Night with Janis Joplin Special Events, Ticket Information and Performance Calendar](#)

For up-to-date information on related events, visit arenastage.org/shows-tickets/the-season/productions/one-night-with-janis-joplin/events/.

Critically acclaimed musical event *One Night with Janis Joplin* at Arena Stage—Page 4

Bringing to Life a Woman That Rocks

October 22, 7:00-8:00 p.m. at the National Museum of Women in the Arts (1250 New York Ave, NW)

Arena Stage, in partnership with the National Museum of Women in the Arts, presents a behind-the-scenes look at the new rock 'n' roll event *One Night with Janis Joplin*. A truly original singer-songwriter with a voice like whiskey and an electric stage presence, Joplin was dubbed the Queen of Rock 'n' Roll. Get a backstage pass into how Joplin's life, spirit and wisdom are brought to life onstage from *One Night with Janis Joplin* cast members and members of Arena Stage's artistic staff. This event will take place in conjunction with the National Museum of Women in the Arts "Women Who Rock: Vision, Passion, Power" exhibit, on view September 7, 2012-January 6, 2013. For more information, visit nmwa.org/exhibitions/women-who-rock.

TICKETS: Tickets for *One Night with Janis Joplin* are \$45-\$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.

Weekday noon matinees on Wednesday, 10/10; Tuesday, 10/16 & Wednesday, 10/31

Open-captioned performances: Wednesday, October 24 at 7:30 p.m. and November 1 at 8:00 p.m.

Audio-described performances: Saturday, October 27 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 \$16. 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, and the garage closes one hour after the day's last performance ends. 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.

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Critically acclaimed musical event *One Night with Janis Joplin* at Arena Stage—Page 5

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.

Cleveland Play House was founded in 1915 and is America's first professional regional theatre. Throughout its rich history, Cleveland Play House has remained dedicated to its mission to inspire, stimulate and entertain diverse audiences in Northeast Ohio by producing plays and theatre education programs of the highest professional standards. It has produced more than 100 world and/or American premieres, and over its 97 years more than 12 million people have attended CPH's over 1,300 productions. Today, under the leadership of Artistic Director Michael Bloom and Managing Director Kevin Moore, Cleveland Play House looks towards its second centennial while performing in three state-of-the art venues at PlayhouseSquare in downtown Cleveland.

PREMIERE MEDIA, LLC is an entertainment production and management company. Premiere's roster of properties include a number of unique musical properties revolving around the iconic music and legacies of George and Ira Gershwin, including *Here to Stay – The Gershwin Experience*, and the Gershwin musical *'S Wonderful*. Other Premiere productions include *One Night with Janis Joplin*, *Over the Rainbow: Celebrating the Harold Arlen Songbook*, the national tour of the Tony Award-winning show *Blast* and the new musical being developed with multi-Grammy award winning gospel recording artist BeBe Winans.

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