

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Julia Suszynski

press@arenastage.org, 202-600-4056

August 1, 2012

**RED HOT PATRIOT: THE KICK-ASS WIT OF MOLLY IVINS
KICKS OFF ARENA STAGE'S 2012/13 SEASON
STARRING KATHLEEN TURNER
BY MARGARET ENGEL AND ALLISON ENGEL
DIRECTED BY DAVID ESBJORNSON
AUGUST 23-OCTOBER 28, 2012**

***** Public Arena engagement opportunities to include panels
with Molly Ivins' friends and colleagues *****

(Washington, D.C.) Iconic stage and screen actress **Kathleen Turner** returns to Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater to star in *Red Hot Patriot: The Kick-Ass Wit of Molly Ivins*, as the feisty, unforgettable political journalist. Written by twin-sister journalists **Margaret Engel** and **Allison Engel** and directed by **David Esbjornson** (Broadway's *The Goat, or Who is Sylvia?* and *Driving Miss Daisy*), the D.C. premiere kicks off Arena Stage's 2012/13 season playing **August 23 through October 28, 2012 in the Arlene and Robert Kogod Cradle.**

"Molly Ivins is a political news icon. Newspapers admired her, and politicians—even the ones she skewered—respected her brutally honest work. She makes a really wonderful stage character, and Kathleen Turner is the ideal match. Molly was a true crusader and activist in every sense of the word—and activists catch fire on stage," says **Arena Stage Artistic Director Molly Smith.**

In *Red Hot Patriot*, Academy Award and Tony Award nominee Kathleen Turner brings her sizzling blend of sensuality and intelligence to the bravado of newspaper columnist Molly Ivins. A dyed-in-the-wool liberal from deep in the heart of Texas, Ivins' rapier wit made her one of America's highest-regarded columnists, satirists and beloved rabble-rousers. The incomparable Turner "excels" (*Variety*) in this searing, 75-minute show that weaves personal anecdotes and a look at our national pastime—politics.

"I am thrilled to be bringing *Red Hot Patriot* to Arena Stage," shares **Turner.** "We had our first reading there, and the timing on this piece, before the election, couldn't be better. Can hardly wait."

The Engels researched and wrote the play based on Ivins' writings, interviews and speeches as well as through interviews with her friends and colleagues. *Red Hot Patriot* received a workshop and private reading with Turner at Arena Stage in 2009. The production reunites Turner with Esbjornson, who staged her in the piece for the Philadelphia Theatre Company world premiere in 2010 as well as the recent production at the Geffen Playhouse. *Red Hot Patriot* also marks the return of Turner to Arena Stage, where she last performed as Titania in the 1981 production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, in addition to participating more recently in a tribute performance to Edward Albee as part of the Edward Albee Festival in 2011.

—continued—

Red Hot Patriot kicks off Arena Stage's 2012/13 season, starring Kathleen Turner—Page 2

“People continually use Molly Ivins’ quotes to describe the current political climate,” add playwrights **Margaret Engel** and **Allison Engel**. “There’s a real hunger for Molly’s voice. While being hilariously funny, she always hit a nerve writing about politicians, economic injustice and the threats to our freedoms. We are thrilled that her voice will be coming to our nation’s capital right before the election.”

To further explore the reach of Molly Ivins on the arts and journalism communities, Arena Stage will host events through the Public Arena, including an **Engage@ArenaStage panel series** during the run of *Red Hot Patriot*, featuring prominent journalists and friends of Molly Ivins’. See below for full details.

Critical acclaim for *Red Hot Patriot* in Philadelphia and Los Angeles:

“A must-see for Turner and Ivins fans alike.” – *LAist*

“Those wishing columnist Molly Ivins (1944-2007) could cast her caustic, gimlet eye on the GOP primary doings will likely be drawn like a magnet to ... *Red Hot Patriot*.” – *Variety*

“Turner’s Ivins is a force of nature, a Texas tornado with a sharp wit and reporter’s determination.” – *Theatermania*

“Turner brings humanity and depth to this portrayal.” – *Backstage*

“*Red Hot Patriot* is a lot of feisty fun.” – *LA Arts Beat*

“Kathleen Turner shines ... expertly delivering the script’s zingy one-liners ... she perfectly balances the humor with the more poignant moments.” – *Broadway World*

For high-res images and further information contact press@arenastage.org.

Margaret Engel (playwright) directs the Alicia Patterson Journalism Foundation and was the managing editor of the Newseum. She was a reporter for the *Washington Post*, *Des Moines Register* and *Lorain Journal* and was a Nieman fellow at Harvard. She co-wrote *Food Finds: America’s Best Local Foods and the People Who Produce Them* with her twin Allison, and helped turn the book into a show for the Food Network, where it ran for seven years. She serves on the board of Theatre Washington/Helen Hayes Awards, the Fund for Investigative Journalism and chairs the Robert F. Kennedy Journalism awards board. She and her husband, Bruce Adams, wrote three editions of a travel guide to America’s baseball parks, with the help of their children, Emily and Hugh.

Allison Engel (playwright) has been a reporter for the *Des Moines Tribune*, *San Jose Mercury* and Pacific News Service, and was a Knight Journalism Fellow at Stanford University. She also has been a speechwriter and aide for former Iowa governor Tom Vilsack and lieutenant governor Sally Pederson. In Iowa, she was active in the Des Moines Playhouse, serving as president and head of play selection. She has been a food columnist for *Saveur*, an architecture columnist for *Renovation Style*, and has written for many other national publications. She recently spent five years as director of communications at the University of Southern California before becoming the associate director of the Los Angeles Institute for the Humanities at the university. She received an MA in screenwriting from USC in 2009. She is married to Scott Kirkpatrick, and they have two children, Miles and Nora.

David Esbjornson’s (director) premieres include: Edward Albee’s *The Goat, or Who is Sylvia?* (Broadway) and *The Play About the Baby* (Century), *The Ride Down Mt. Morgan* (Broadway) and *Resurrection Blues* by Arthur Miller (Guthrie), *Angels in America: Millennium Approaches* and the first staged presentation of *Perestroika* (Eureka), *Homebody/Kabul* (London), Neal Bell’s *Therese Raquin* (CSC), *In the Blood* by Suzan-Lori Parks (Public), Albom/Hatcher’s *Tuesdays with Morrie* (Minetta Lane), Israel Horowitz’ *My Old Lady* (Promenade), Kathleen Tolan’s *Memory House* (Playwrights), Ariel Dorfman’s *Purgatorio*, and Kevin Kling’s *How? How? Why? Why? Why?* (SRT). Recent work: *Lady from Dubuque* (SRT), *Measure for Measure* (NYSF Delacorte), Moira Buffini’s *Gabriel* and Peter Parnell’s *Trumpet* (Atlantic), Margaret Engel’s and Allison Engel’s *Red Hot Patriot* (PTC then Geffen Playhouse). Revivals include: *Driving Miss Daisy* (Broadway and West End), *Death of*

Red Hot Patriot kicks off Arena Stage's 2012/13 season, starring Kathleen Turner—Page 3

a *Salesman* (Gate-Dublin), *Hamlet* (TFNY), *A Few Good Men* (West End), *All My Sons* (Huntington), *Much Ado About Nothing* (NYSF), *The Normal Heart* (Public), *Mud and Drowning* (Signature), *The Entertainer*, *The Maids*, *Endgame*, *Entertaining Mr. Sloane* (CSC), *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, *Summer and Smoke* (Guthrie), *Farmyard* (NYTW). Mr. Esbjornson has served as Artistic Director of NYC Classic Stage Company and Seattle Repertory Theatre and is the current Chair of Theatre at Rutgers University.

The Cast of Red Hot Patriot: The Kick-Ass Wit of Molly Ivins

Screen icon **Kathleen Turner** (Molly Ivins) has garnered critical acclaim for her performances in various movies including *Body Heat*, for which she was nominated for a Golden Globe; *Romancing the Stone* and *Prizzi's Honor*, which earned her a Golden Globe Award for each; *Peggy Sue Got Married*, which brought Turner both an Academy Award nomination and a Golden Globe nomination; and *War of the Roses*, and yet another Golden Globe nomination. Turner's extensive film credits also include *The Man with Two Brains*, with Steve Martin; *Jewel of the Nile*, with Michael Douglas; *The Accidental Tourist*; *V.I. Warshawski*; John Waters' *Serial Mom*; *Naked in New York*; *Moonlight and Valentino*; *The Real Blonde*; and Sofia Coppola's *The Virgin Suicides*. Ms. Turner has also starred on Broadway in *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, for which she received a Tony nomination; *Indiscretions*; *The Graduate*; and *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, for which she received a second Tony nomination. Ms. Turner had a major recurring role last season playing the role of Sue Collini on Showtime's hit series *Californication*. In the spring of 2010 Ms. Turner starred as Molly Ivins in the world premiere of *Red Hot Patriot: The Kick Ass Wit of Molly Ivins* at Philadelphia Theater Center and immediately following that shot the starring role in an independent film called *The Perfect Family*, which opened across the country May 4th. Last year Ms. Turner starred on Broadway in the world premiere of a play by Matthew Lombardo called *High*. This past winter she performed *Red Hot Patriot: The Kick Ass Wit of Molly Ivins* at The Geffen Theater in Los Angeles and was on the road this spring performing *High* in various cities all over the country. In addition to her film and stage credits, Turner wrote of her many accomplishments and life experiences in her 2008 autobiography titled *Send Yourself Roses: Thoughts on My Life, Love, and Leading Roles*, which secured a position on *The New York Times* Best-Seller List.

Nicholas Yenson (Helper) is a proud member of Actors' Equity. He previously appeared in Arena productions of *The Music Man*, *You, Nero* and a reading of *The Beard of Avon*. Other theater credits include the McCarter Theater Center, the Hampton Theater Company and the New York Musical Theater Festival.

The Creative Team for *Red Hot Patriot: The Kick-Ass Wit of Molly Ivins* includes Set Designer **John Arnone**, Costume Designer **Elizabeth Hope Clancy**, Lighting Designer **Daniel Ionazzi**, Original Music & Sound Designers **Rob Milburn** and **Michael Bodeen**, Projection Designer **Maya Ciarrocchi**, Wig Designer **Paul Huntley**, Production Consultant **Mary Michele Miner** and Stage Manager **Kurt Hall**.

Red Hot Patriot is sponsored by Hank and Charlotte Schlosberg.

Red Hot Patriot Related Events, Ticket Information and Performance Calendar

For up-to-date information on related events, visit arenastage.org/shows-tickets/the-season/productions/red-hot-patriot/events/.

Engage@ArenaStage Panel Series – Following Select Sunday Matinees

Take part in a conversation following certain performances of *Red Hot Patriot* with guest panelists ranging from friends and colleagues of Molly Ivins' to prominent journalists, authors and artists. The series will take place following select Sunday matinees of *Red Hot Patriot* (at approximately 3:15 p.m.) September 9, 16, 23 and 30; and October 7. Panels are free and open to the public.

—continued—

From the Front Page to the Stage: The Creation of *Red Hot Patriot* – September 9 at 3:15 p.m.

Known for her feisty commentary and unapologetic critique, Molly Ivins' words and witticisms graced the eyes of millions of readers through her syndicated columns and best-selling books. But what was the process of getting this memorable writer from the page to the stage? Former *Houston Chronicle* columnist Cragg Hines sits down with playwright Margaret Engel for an insider's look into the inspiration behind *Red Hot Patriot*.

She Can't Say That, Can She?: Women in Journalism – September 16 at 3:15 p.m.

How has a woman's role in journalism evolved throughout the ages? Do female reporters today receive an equal voice in the newsroom? Author and former *Washington Post* reporter Myra MacPherson recounts her professional journey of breaking into the old boy's club with friend and colleague Molly Ivins.

The Lone Star State Lady – September 23 at 3:15 p.m.

Through her upbringing and work at the *Houston Chronicle*, *Texas Observer* and *Dallas Times Herald*, it's no surprise that Texas remained a prominent subject in Molly Ivins' writing. Hear from friends, colleagues and fellow Texans on how the Lone Star State impacted Ivins personally and influenced her professionally.

Curating the News – September 30 at 3:15 p.m.

How has the history of the news been documented? Newseum Vice Chairman Shelby Coffey III shares his experience with educating the public about the value of a free press in a free society and memorializing the stories of the world's important events in unique and engaging ways.

Up Close and Personal: Molly Ivins' Life and Legacy – October 7 at 3:15 p.m.

Eager to learn more about the woman behind the words? Join Molly Ivins' "Chief of Stuff" Betsy Moon in an intimate conversation about Molly's personality, career and her continued influence on journalists today.

Dinner Theater Package

Pre-ordered boxed meals are available for audience members attending *Red Hot Patriot* and may be purchased for \$17 each by visiting arenastage.org/plan-your-visit/the-cafe/ when purchasing tickets online or through the Sales Office at 202-488-3300.

TICKETS: Tickets for *Red Hot Patriot* are \$46-\$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. Please note that the Sales Office is open Tuesday through Sunday, from noon to 8:00 p.m.

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 matinee on Tuesday, 10/16.

—continued—

Red Hot Patriot kicks off Arena Stage's 2012/13 season, starring Kathleen Turner—Page 5

Performances at 6:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. on Thursday, 8/30; Thursday, 9/20 and Friday, 9/21.
Full calendar: tickets.arenastage.org/single/psDetail.aspx?psn=15190

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.

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

Follow Arena Stage on **Twitter** @arenastage or twitter.com/arenastage and mention *Red Hot Patriot* with #RedHotPatriot. Find us on **Facebook** at facebook.com/arenastage.

###