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for american theater

# ARENA STAGE MEDIA RELEASE

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## REGISTRATION OPENS TODAY FOR THEATER 101, ARENA STAGE'S EXCLUSIVE PROGRAM WITH BEHIND-THE-SCENES ACCESS TO *MY FAIR LADY* DIRECTED BY MOLLY SMITH

(Washington, D.C.) Theater 101, an audience enrichment seminar part of **Arena Stage's Public Arena**, will launch its first session of the 2012/13 season with *My Fair Lady*, allowing participants to explore the unique challenges of reimagining a gold-standard American musical for Arena Stage's in-the-round Fichandler Stage. **Online registration for the program begins today, Tuesday, September 4, 2012.** The program will take place at the Mead Center for American Theater.

Theater 101 will follow the rehearsal process for *My Fair Lady*, directed by **Arena Stage Artistic Director Molly Smith** and based on *Pygmalion* by George Bernard Shaw, with book and lyrics by Alan Jay Lerner and music by Frederick Loewe. Scheduled events include **conversations** with the stage management, marketing and dramaturgy teams and **observation** of the first rehearsal; dance, music, book and technical rehearsals; the wandelprobe; and the invited dress rehearsal. Each event will be followed by a discussion moderated by an Arena Stage artistic staff member. Participants will also receive **one ticket to a performance of *My Fair Lady*.**

"There are a handful of musicals that are so brilliantly written and composed that they beg to be interpreted over and over again, and *My Fair Lady* is one of them," says **Smith**. "With Theater 101, we invite theater lovers to join us on this creative journey as we celebrate the language, music and characters in this dynamic musical. Theater 101 is an extraordinary opportunity to cultivate fans and invested theater goers by guiding them through the production from first rehearsal all the way through opening night."

Just as Molly Smith's record-breaking production of *Oklahoma!* was enthralling audiences at Arena Stage, her fresh reinterpretation of *My Fair Lady* set the all-time box office record at the prestigious Shaw Festival in Canada. Now Smith is reassembling many of her creative team members to bring this breathtaking musical to Arena Stage. When Professor Henry Higgins wagers he can transform a Cockney flower girl into an aristocratic lady, he never guesses that Eliza Doolittle will in turn transform him. Lerner and Loewe's sparkling score includes such enduring favorites as "I Could Have Danced All Night," "Wouldn't It Be Lovely," "The Rain in Spain," "On the Street Where You Live" and "Get Me to the Church on Time." Based on Shaw's most incisive social satire, *My Fair Lady* is a joyful, crowd-pleasing celebration for the entire family.

Now in its third season, Theater 101, which is loosely modeled after Steppenwolf Theatre Company's First Look 101 program, originated as part of Arena Stage's American Voices New Play Institute focused on new plays and then expanded to include other productions. Previous Theater 101 classes have followed Arena Stage productions of *every tongue confess*, *The Book Club Play* and *The Music Man*.

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## Registration for Arena Stage's Theater 101 opens today—Page 2

Registration will be limited to 50 participants, and enrollment will be held on a first-come, first-served basis. The registration fee, which includes the price of one ticket to see *My Fair Lady*, is \$150, or \$75 for participants under 30. Participants can register at [arenastage.org/new-play-institute/theater-101/](http://arenastage.org/new-play-institute/theater-101/).

For more information on Theater 101, visit [arenastage.org/new-play-institute/](http://arenastage.org/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](http://arenastage.org)*

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