

ARENA STAGE MEDIA RELEASE

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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October 1, 2013

**ARENA STAGE HOSTS SPECIAL POST-SHOW EVENT WITH “DEAR PRUDENCE”
FAMILY MATTERS: A CONVERSATION WITH SLATE’S EMILY YOFFE AND LAURA HELMUTH
OCTOBER 12 FOLLOWING MATINEE OF *THE VELOCITY OF AUTUMN***

(Washington, D.C.) *Slate*’s **Emily Yoffe**, author of the advice column “[Dear Prudence](#),” joins **Laura Helmuth**, *Slate*’s science and health editor, as they take audience questions and discuss many of the personal and social implications presented in *The Velocity of Autumn* during **Family Matters: A Conversation with Emily Yoffe and Laura Helmuth, Saturday, October 12 following the 2:00 p.m. matinee**, at approximately 3:45 p.m. in the Kreeger Theater at Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater (1101 Sixth St, SW). The event is free and open to the public, but subject to availability.

In Eric Coble’s new play, Academy Award winner Estelle Parsons (*Bonnie and Clyde*, *Roseanne*) and two-time Tony Award winner Stephen Spinella (*Angels in America*, HBO’s upcoming film *The Normal Heart*) play a mother and son grappling with profound and challenging issues surrounding aging. Whether you have an aging parent or you are one there are important conversations to be explored on this topic, and during this special post-show event Yoffe and Helmuth will reflect on how *The Velocity of Autumn* offers a unique opportunity to spark the dialogue.

The Velocity of Autumn is currently playing to critical acclaim and must close October 20. It was praised by *Variety* as “Sublime...Parsons delivers a delightfully nuanced performance,” and by *The Washington Post*, who raved, “You’re in the presence of actors of the top rank. Under Molly Smith’s unassailable direction...the team of Parsons and Spinella feels right for almost any occasion.”

Laura Helmuth is *Slate*’s science and health editor. She recently published a series of articles in *Slate* called “Two Lives” about why life expectancy has doubled in the past 150 years. She was previously an editor for *Smithsonian* magazine and *Science* magazine’s news department. She has a Ph.D. in cognitive neuroscience from the University of California at Berkeley.

Emily Yoffe writes *Slate*’s “Dear Prudence” advice column, which appears twice weekly and offers advice on a wide range of human dilemmas from murderous mothers-in-law to bra-washing schedules. Formerly, she wrote a regular column at *Slate* called “Human Guinea Pig,” in which she undertook unusual activities such as being the first patient to be examined by 23 medical students, being a street performer, and entering the Mrs. America pageant. Her work has appeared in many publications, including *The New York Times*; *O, the Oprah Magazine*; *Esquire* and *The Washington Post*.

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Arena Stage hosts "Dear Prudence" post-show conversation for *The Velocity of Autumn*—Page 2

About *The Velocity of Autumn*

By Eric Coble

Directed by Molly Smith

Produced by special arrangement with HOP Theatricals, LLC

In the Kreeger Theater

Through October 20, 2013

Starring Estelle Parsons and Stephen Spinella

In a simple Brooklyn brownstone, 79-year-old Alexandra lives a solitary existence with her fleeting memories and enough explosives to take down most of the block. At an impasse with her family over how she should spend her autumn years, Alexandra's long-absent son enters as a most unlikely mediator, to try and save his mother's life as much as his own. Funny and dangerous, aching and revelatory, this perceptive play reveals both the fragility and ferocity of life. Academy Award winner Estelle Parsons (*Bonnie and Clyde*, *Roseanne*) and two-time Tony Award winner Stephen Spinella (*Angels in America*) make their Arena Stage debuts.

For more information, visit arenastage.org/shows-tickets/the-season/productions/the-velocity-of-autumn/.

TICKETS: Tickets for *The Velocity of Autumn* are \$40-\$90, 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

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 seventh decade, Arena Stage serves a diverse annual audience of more than 300,000. arenastage.org

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