

ARENA STAGE MEDIA RELEASE

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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October 8, 2014

FULL COMPANY ANNOUNCED FOR *FIVE GUYS NAMED MOE*
DIRECTED BY ROBERT O'HARA
AT ARENA STAGE AT THE MEAD CENTER FOR AMERICAN THEATER
NOVEMBER 14-DECEMBER 28, 2014

*** Reimagined tribute to Louis Jordan features new orchestrations and contemporary twist ***

(Washington, D.C.) Come and dance the blues away with *Five Guys Named Moe*! Helen Hayes Award winner **Robert O'Hara** (*Bootcandy*, director of *The Mountaintop* at Arena Stage) returns to Arena Stage to direct an explosive, reimagined tribute to the "King of the Jukebox"—legendary composer and saxophonist Louis Jordan. This modernized production features new orchestrations for classic songs, including "Let the Good Times Roll" and "Is You Is or Is You Ain't My Baby," and a contemporary twist on the five Moes, now a hit boy band set in 2014. This dynamic musical revue features musical direction by **Darryl G. Ivey** (assistant music director for original Broadway production of *Five Guys Named Moe*) and choreography by **Byron Easley** (off-Broadway's *Langston in Harlem*). A co-production with Cleveland Play House, *Five Guys Named Moe* runs **November 14-December 28, 2014 in the Kreeger Theater**.

The cast features **Sheldon Henry** (*South Pacific* national tour) as Big Moe, **Kevin McAllister** (Ford's Theatre's *Violet*) as Nomax, **Paris Nix** (*Seussical* national tour) as Eat Moe, **Jobari Parker-Namdar** (Arena Stage's *My Fair Lady*) as No Moe, **Travis Porchia** (Drury Lane Theatre's *Hairspray*) as Four-Eyed Moe and **Clinton Roane** (Broadway's *The Scottsboro Boys*) as Little Moe.

"As with *One Night with Janis Joplin* and *Smokey Joe's Café*, we are reminded of the wealth and depth of American popular music," says Artistic Director **Molly Smith**. "Louis Jordan was at the forefront of the rock 'n' roll era, and it's great to get a modern take on his music through Robert O'Hara's production of *Five Guys Named Moe*."

"I love musicals, absolutely adore them, and I couldn't pass up the opportunity to reinvent this show using a modern vernacular," adds **O'Hara**. "When you listen to the original music of Louis Jordan, you hear the roots in rock 'n' roll, hip-hop and many of today's genres, therefore with this production you're going to hear Louis Jordan in a different way. We're in the age of Beyoncé, Jay-Z and Justin Timberlake, so it's not going to be soft—it's going to be loud, it's going to be in your face, it's going to be sexy and fun."

Louis Jordan (*Music and Lyrics*) has been called the "King of the Jukebox" and the "Grandfather of Rock 'n' Roll." As a bandleader in the 1940's, he pioneered a wildly popular blend of jazz and blues. The swinging shuffle

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rhythms played by singer/saxophonist Jordan and his Tympany Five got called “jump blues” or “jumpin' jive,” and it served as a forerunner of rhythm and blues and rock 'n' roll. At the height of his career he scored 18 number-one hit records and four of his songs are in the Grammy Hall of Fame, which honors recordings of lasting qualitative or historical significance. Jordan performed songs that appealed to millions of black and white listeners. Able to “straddle the fence” between these two audiences, Jordan emerged as one of the first successful crossover artists of American popular music.

Clarke Peters (*Playwright*) is an actor, singer and writer. He earned a Tony Award nomination for Best Book of a Musical for writing the revue *Five Guys Named Moe*. As an actor, he has appeared on Broadway in *The Iceman Cometh* (Theatre World Award) and as Billy Flynn in the revival of *Chicago*. Clarke's London credits include *Guys and Dolls*, *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*, *The Passion* and *Dispatches* at the Royal National Theatre. His West End credits include *Blues in the Night*, *Porgy and Bess*, *The Witches of Eastwick* and *Chicago*. In regional theater he has appeared in *Driving Miss Daisy*, *The Wiz*, *Bubbling Brown Sugar*, *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*, *Carmen Jones* and *The Amen Corner*. Clarke is familiar to television viewers for his roles on *The Wire*, *Treme* and *The Divide*. His film credits include *Mona Lisa*, *Notting Hill*, *Marley & Me*, *K-Pax* and *Freedomland*. As a director, his credits include *Blues for Mr. Charlie*, *Fascinating Aida*, *King* and *Martin Luther*.

Robert O'Hara (*Director*) directed *The Mountaintop* at Arena Stage. He received the NAACP Best Director Award for his direction of *Eclipsed*. He received the 2010 Helen Hayes Award for Outstanding New Play for *Antebellum* and an OBIE Award for his direction of the world premiere of the critically acclaimed *In the Continuum*. He wrote and directed the world premieres of *Insurrection: Holding History* and *Bootycandy*. He directed the world premieres of *Brother/Sister Plays (Part 2)* and *Wild with Happy*. He is currently an adjunct at NYU/Tisch School of the Arts and the Mellon Playwright in Residence at Woolly Mammoth Theatre.

Cast Biographies

Sheldon Henry (*Big Moe*) is a native New Yorker and has BFA from The Hartt School of Music. Some of his recent/favorite credits include *South Pacific* national tour (Seabee, U/S Henry), *Guys and Dolls* (Benny), *Dreamgirls* (Curtis), *Central Ave Breakdown* (NYMF/DIMF), *Five Guys Named Moe* (No Moe), *Buddy Holly* (Apollo Singer), *Tommy* (specialist, harmonica player), *Parade* (Newt Lee) and *A Christmas Carol* (Ghost of X-Mas Present). Sheldon is also a proud alum of Boys Choir of Harlem.

Kevin McAllister (*Nomax*) makes his Arena Stage debut. Other Washington appearances include Mitch Mahoney in *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* and Flick in *Violet* at Ford's Theatre, Lionel in *Cinderella* at Olney Theatre Center and Anton in Signature Theatre's world premiere of *Brother Russia*. He received a Helen Hayes nomination for his portrayal of Newt Lee/Jim Conley in the Ford's Theatre production of *Parade*. He has also performed regionally at ArtPark (Mereb in *Aida*). Other notable credits include Teatro 101 (Jake in *Sideshow*, Burrs in Lippa's *The Wild Party*), Toby's Dinner Theatre (Coalhouse in *Ragtime*, Collins in *Rent*) and the Kennedy Center (national tour of *The Phantom Tollbooth*). He will be seen next in the world premiere of *Freedom's Song* at Ford's Theatre.

Paris Nix (*Eat Moe*)'s favorite credits include *Once on This Island* (Daniel) for TheatreWorks in the Silicon Valley, which was nominated for six TBA awards; the Broadway national tour of *Seussical the Musical* (Horton u/s, Wickersham Bro 1&3) with Theatreworks USA; *Les Miserables* (Enjolras); *Shrek the Musical* (Donkey) for Weathervane Repertory Theatre; and *Ragtime* (Coalhouse Walker Jr.) at the Upper Darby Performing Arts Center. Paris is an accomplished violinist who has been featured in *Broadway's Rising Stars Concert* at Town Hall in NYC. Additionally, he has made appearances in the *Harlem Gospel Singers* international tour, as both a featured singer and violinist, along with debuting the world premiere of *R&B Juke Box* for Universal Studios Japan. Paris was born and bred in Philadelphia, PA and graduated from the American Musical Dramatic Academy.

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Jobari Parker-Namdar (*No Moe*) returns to Arena Stage after performing in *My Fair Lady*. Additional credits include readings of *Oracle* and *Redhand Guitar* at Arena Stage, *Snail in A Year with Frog and Toad* at Adventure Theatre (Helen Hayes nomination, Outstanding Actor in Supporting Role), Jobari in *The Stephen Schwartz Project* at Metro Stage, *Hairspray* and *Showboat* at Signature Theatre, Schroeder in *You're a Good Man Charlie Brown* at Adventure Theatre and Detroit in *From My Hometown* at The Ensemble Theatre. Jobari was also an artist in residence at the prestigious Strathmore Music Center.

Travis Porchia (*Four-Eyed Moe*) makes his Arena Stage debut. Favorite regional credits include *Hair* (American Theater Company), *The Color Purple* (The Mercury Theater Chicago), *Sweet Charity* (Writers' Theater), *Hairspray* (Drury Lane Oakbrook), *Chicago* (Peninsula Players), *Pippin* (BoHo Theater) and *The Petrified Forest* (Strawdog Theater). On TV, Travis has appeared in Jennifer Hudson's music video "Where You At" and the AT&T U-verse commercial "Boulevard."

Clinton Roane (*Little Moe*) was in the original Broadway cast of *The Scottsboro Boys*. He toured with the show regionally in the role of Roy Wright to The Old Globe, ACT, The Ahmanson Theatre and The Philadelphia Theatre Company (Barrymore nomination for Outstanding Supporting Actor in a Musical) and performed in the U.K. premiere at the Young Vic Theatre in London. He has also performed at Goodspeed (Noble T. Jones in *Hello! My Baby!*), Marriott Lincolnshire (New Rhythm Boy in *My One and Only*) and Adventure Theatre (Joey in *Frosty The Snowman*). Clinton was a background vocalist on Jason Mraz's "Mr. A-Z" album. He holds a BFA from Howard University and also trained at CAP21.

The creative team for *Five Guys Named Moe* includes set designer **Clint Ramos**, costume designer **Dede Ayite**, lighting designer **Alex Jainchill**, sound designer **Lindsay Jones**, projection designer **Jeff Sugg**, New York casting director **Paul Fouquet**, stage manager **William E. Cruttenden III** and assistant stage manager **Marne Anderson**.

Full company bios and images available upon request. Please e-mail press@arenastage.org.

Five Guys Named Moe Special Events

Post-Show Conversations

Connect with our shows beyond the performance at a post-show conversation with artists and staff. December 2, 3 and 17 following the noon performance; December 4 following the 8:00 p.m. performance and December 16 following the 7:30 p.m. performance.

Production Information

ABOUT: The boys are back in town, with a brand new look: bigger, bolder and badder than ever. Classics like "Let the Good Times Roll" and "Is You Is or Is You Ain't My Baby" have been remixed for an explosive, re-imagined tribute to "King of the Jukebox" Louis Jordan. Led by the fearless mind that stunned audiences with *Bootycandy*, director Robert O'Hara (*The Mountaintop*) is back at Arena Stage and once again "shaking up the world, one audience at a time" (*The New York Times*). Come and dance the blues away with Eat Moe, No Moe, Four-Eyed Moe, Big Moe and Little Moe, as big band meets boy band in this dynamic, dazzling musical revue.

CAST:

Big Moe: Sheldon Henry

Nomax: Kevin McAllister

Eat Moe: Paris Nix

No Moe: Jobari Parker-Namdar

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Four-Eyed Moe: Travis Porchia
Little Moe: Clinton Roane

CREATIVE TEAM:

Director: Robert O'Hara
Music Director: Darryl G. Ivey
Choreographer: Byron Easley
Set Designer: Clint Ramos
Costume Designer: Dede Ayite
Lighting Designer: Alex Jainchill
Sound Designer: Lindsay Jones
Projection Designer: Jeff Sugg
New York Casting Director: Paul Fouquet
Stage Manager: William E. Cruttenden III
Assistant Stage Manager: Marne Anderson

Plan Your Visit

TICKETS: Tickets for *Five Guys Named Moe* are \$50-\$99, 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, Family Fun Packs 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

PERFORMANCE DATES:

Sunday, Tuesday & Wednesday at 7:30 p.m.
Thursday, Friday & Saturday at 8:00 p.m.
Saturday & Sunday at 2:00 p.m.
Weekday matinees at noon on Tuesday, 12/2; Wednesday, 12/3 & Wednesday, 12/17
Full calendar: tickets.arenastage.org/single/PSDetail.aspx?psn=18745

Open-captioned performances: 12/18 at 8:00 p.m. & 12/24 at 7:30 p.m.

Audio-described performance: 12/6 at 2:00 p.m.

CATWALK CAFÉ: Prix fixe meals are now available at the Catwalk Café and include a choice of soup or salad, main entrée and dessert. Pre-ordered meals are only \$22 (\$25 if purchased that day). To pre-order and see the menu, call 202-488-3300 or visit arenastage.org/plan-your-visit/the-cafe/. The Catwalk Café opens two hours before the show, and reservations are recommended.

To **pre-order drinks** from the Catwalk Café for up to 50% savings (\$6 house wine and beer), visit tickets.arenastage.org/cart/precart.aspx?p=1007.

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.

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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 call 202-488-3300 in advance to request valet parking. On days when valet parking is being used for accessibility, it is also available to general patrons one hour prior to show time for \$25, based on availability. To use valet parking, pull up to the main entrance on Sixth Street.

Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater, under the leadership of Artistic Director Molly Smith and Executive Producer Edgar Dobie, is a national center dedicated to American voices and artists. Arena Stage produces plays of all that is passionate, 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. Arena Stage impacts the lives of thousands of students annually through its work in community engagement. Now in its seventh decade, Arena Stage serves a diverse annual audience of more than 300,000. arenastage.org.

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