

ARENA STAGE MEDIA RELEASE

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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July 28, 2014

FULL COMPANY ANNOUNCED FOR MORRIS PANYCH'S
WORLD-PREMIERE COMEDY *THE SHOPLIFTERS*
AT ARENA STAGE AT THE MEAD CENTER FOR AMERICAN THEATER
SEPTEMBER 5-OCTOBER 19, 2014

*** Tony Award nominee Jayne Houdyshell and stage and screen actor Delaney Williams lead cast ***

(Washington, D.C.) Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater kicks off the 2014/15 season with the world premiere of **Morris Panych's *The Shoplifters***, a biting comedy about society's haves and have-nots and how much they might *actually* have in common. Noted Canadian playwright and director Panych, a two-time recipient of the Governor General's Literary Award, makes his Arena Stage debut with an expertly drawn cast of oddball characters and a high-stakes battle of wills involving a career shoplifter whose life of petty crime is halted by an overzealous rookie security guard and his ambivalent mentor. ***The Shoplifters* runs September 5-October 19, 2014 in the Kreeger Theater.**

Stage and screen actor **Delaney Williams** (HBO's *The Wire*, Arena Stage's *A View from the Bridge*) portrays Otto and joins the previously announced Tony Award nominee **Jayne Houdyshell** (Broadway's *Romeo and Juliet*, *Follies*) in her D.C. theater debut as Alma. The production also features Helen Hayes Award winner **Jenna Sokolowski** (Center Stage's *Clybourne Park*) as Phyllis and **Adi Stein** (Theater J's *Body Awareness*) as Dom.

"I'm delighted to have Morris Panych, one of Canada's premier playwrights and directors, at Arena Stage this season," says Artistic Director **Molly Smith**. "It's perfect timing for Morris' complex look at human beings—finding humor in these tricky times."

"I'm so excited to be premiering my play at Arena Stage," shares **Panych**. "Since getting to know Molly I have come to admire her commitment to bold, innovative theater, to big ideas and to sharing those ideas by reaching deep into the community to engage audiences in an ongoing and vibrant social dialogue. It's a great compliment to me that Molly has chosen *The Shoplifters* as part of her dynamic theatrical discourse."

Morris Panych (*Playwright/Director*) is a native of Calgary, Alberta and is arguably Canada's most celebrated playwright and director. His plays have garnered countless awards including two Governor General's Literary Awards for Drama (for *The Ends of the Earth* and *Girl in the Goldfish Bowl*), 14 Jessie Richardson Awards (Vancouver) and five Dora Mavor Moore Awards (Toronto). Productions of the much lauded *Vigil*, *Girl in the Goldfish Bowl*, *Gordon*, *The Trespassers* and *Lawrence and Holloman* are being mounted throughout Canada, the U.S., Europe, Asia, Australia and New Zealand. His plays have been produced in over two dozen languages. Morris has directed over 90 productions across Canada and the U.S.

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The cast of *The Shoplifters* (in alphabetical order)

Jayne Houdyshell (*Alma*) makes her Arena Stage debut with *The Shoplifters*. In 2006 she won a Theater World Award and received her first Tony nomination for her portrayal of Ann in Lisa Kron's *Well*. She also received a Tony nomination in 2012 for *Follies*. Other Broadway credits include *Romeo and Juliet*, *Dead Accounts*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Bye Bye Birdie* and *Wicked*. Off-Broadway, Jayne has appeared in *Harrison Texas* at Primary Stages; *The Language Archive* at Roundabout Theater Company, *Coraline* at MCC (for which she received a Drama Desk Nomination); *The New Century* at Lincoln Center; *The Receptionist* at Manhattan Theatre Club (Lucille Lortel Nomination); *The Pain and the Itch* at Playwrights Horizons; *Much Ado about Nothing* at the New York Shakespeare Festival; and *Well* at the Public Theatre, for which she won the Obie Award. Jayne has worked at regional theaters across the country, including *The Pain and The Itch* at Steppenwolf Theatre (2005 Jefferson Award), *The Clean House* at Philadelphia's Wilma Theatre (2005 Barrymore Award), Yale Repertory Theater, McCarter Theatre, Actors Theater of Louisville and many others. Her work on film includes *Garden State*, *Carol*, *Lucky Stiff*, *Morning Glory*, *Bounty Hunter* and *Everybody's Fine* while her work on television includes *Blue Bloods*, *Law & Order* (all versions), *Loving Leah* and *Third Watch*. Last year, Jayne received a special Drama Desk award for "her artistry as an exceptionally versatile and distinctive Broadway and off-Broadway performer."

Jenna Sokolowski (*Phyllis*) makes her Arena Stage debut after enjoying more than 10 years of acting in the D.C. area. Other regional appearances include *Beneath's Place* and *Clybourne Park* at CenterStage, Maria in *Mr. Burns, A Post-Electric Play* at Woolly Mammoth Theatre, Susan in *Title of Show* at Signature Theatre, Eurydice in *Eurydice* at Round House Theatre and Beatrice in *John & Beatrice* at the Hub Theatre. She received a Helen Hayes award in 2006 for her work as Sally in *Urinetown* at Signature Theatre and holds a BFA in Musical Theatre from Syracuse University.

Adi Stein (*Dom*) makes his Arena Stage debut. Theater credits include *Moth* at Studio Theatre (Sebastian replacement), *Body Awareness* at Theater J (Jared), *Aquarium* at Imagination Stage (Jack), *A Few Good Men* at Keegan Theatre (Downey), *8* at Round House Theater (Elliot), *The Wonderful World of Dissocia* at Theater Alliance (Goat/Biffer), *Staring at the Sun* at Flying V (Monkey/Durango) and *Shirley Dreaming* at The Apron Theatre Company (Steve). Film/television credits include: *Stolen Summer* (Pete O'Malley), *House of Cards* (Busboy) and *Veep* (Dream Metric).

Delaney Williams (*Otto*) is, first and foremost, a dad to two brilliant and beautiful young men. He is also well known to Arena audiences from his appearances as Eddie in *A View from the Bridge*, as Sheriff Thomas in *The Rainmaker* and as Talbott in *Orpheus Descending*, as well as many other roles going back almost 20 years. Other local stage appearances include roles at Everyman Theatre, Folger Theatre, Ford's Theatre, Olney Theatre, Rep Stage, Round House Theatre, Shakespeare Theatre Company, Signature Theatre, Source Theatre, Studio Theatre, Theatre J, WSC Avant Bard, Washington Stage Guild and Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company. He is also well known for his work in film and on television, most notably, in his currently recurring role as John Buchanan on NBC's *Law & Order: SVU* and as Sgt. Jay Landsman on HBO's *The Wire*. Other credits include HBO's *VEEP*; NBC's *The West Wing*, *Law & Order: CI* and *Homicide*; CBS' *Cold Case* and *The District*; and the recent Toronto IFF and Tribeca Film Festival feature selection *Beneath the Harvest Sky*, with Aidan Gillen, Carrie Preston, Callan McAuliffe and Carla Gallo.

The creative team for *The Shoplifters* includes Set & Costume Designer **Ken MacDonald**, Lighting Designer **Nancy Schertler**, Original Composition & Sound Designer **David Van Teighem**, Casting Director **Geoff Josselson**, Stage Managers **Kurt Hall** and **Martha Knight** and Assistant Stage Manager **Pat Cochran**.

Actor John Carroll Lynch, who was previously confirmed to play the role of Otto, withdrew from the production due to unexpected commitments.

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

The Shoplifters is generously sponsored by Beth Newburger Schwartz and Richard Schwartz and is the recipient of an Edgerton Foundation New American Plays Award.

The Shoplifters Special Events

Post-Show Conversations

Connect with our shows beyond the performance at a post-show conversation with artists and staff. September 17, October 1 and October 14 following the noon performance; September 23 following the 7:30 p.m. performance and October 9 following the 8:00 p.m. performance.

Production Information

The Shoplifters

Written and directed by Morris Panych

September 5-October 19, 2014 in the Kreeger Theater

ABOUT: Meet Alma, a career shoplifter who prefers the “five-finger discount” over some lousy senior citizen deal. When her life of petty crime is halted by an overzealous rookie security guard and his ambivalent mentor, she risks losing her freedom, her resolve and maybe even the steak she has stuffed in her pants. Tony-nominee Jayne Houdyshell (Broadway’s *Romeo and Juliet*, *Follies*) leads an expertly drawn cast of oddball characters in this biting, world-premiere comedy about society’s haves and have-nots and how much they might *actually* have in common.

CAST:

Alma: Jayne Houdyshell
Otto: Delaney Williams
Phyllis: Jenna Sokolowski
Dom: Adi Stein

CREATIVE TEAM:

Playwright & Director: Morris Panych
Set & Costume Designer: Ken MacDonald
Lighting Designer: Nancy Schertler
Original Composition & Sound Designer: David Van Teighem
Stage Managers: Kurt Hall and Martha Knight
Assistant Stage Manager: Pat Cochran

Plan Your Visit

TICKETS: Tickets for *The Shoplifters* are \$45-\$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 and Hero’s Discounts, visit arenastage.org/shows-tickets/single-tickets/savings-programs/. **As of July 29th, 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

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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 Wednesday, 9/17; Wednesday, 10/1 & Tuesday, 10/14

Full calendar: tickets.arenastage.org/single/PSDetail.aspx?psn=18073

Open-captioned performances: 10/15 at 7:30 p.m. & 10/16 at 8:00 p.m.

Audio-described performance: 9/20 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.

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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