

# ARENA STAGE MEDIA RELEASE

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

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**ARENA STAGE ANNOUNCES GLORIA STEINEM AS POST-SHOW PANELIST  
FOR WORLD PREMIERE POWER PLAY SOVEREIGNTY  
RUNNING JANUARY 12-FEBRUARY 18, 2018**

**\*\*\* Gloria Steinem will join playwright Mary Kathryn Nagle in post-show conversation on January 28, focusing on tribal sovereignty and sovereignty of the female body \*\*\***

(Washington, D.C.) Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater will host a special post-show conversation with **Gloria Steinem** on **Sunday, January 28 following the 7:30 p.m. performance** during the run of **Mary Kathryn Nagle's** world premiere Power Play ***Sovereignty***. This gripping political exploration travels the intersections of personal and political truths, and historic and present struggles, in the fight to save the sovereignty of Cherokee Nation both past and present. Under the direction of Artistic Director **Molly Smith**, ***Sovereignty* runs January 12-February 18, 2018 in the Kreeger Theater.**

The post-show conversation will bring together feminist, journalist and socio-political activist Gloria Steinem with Cherokee playwright and lawyer Mary Kathryn Nagle, moderated by Molly Smith, and will focus on tribal sovereignty as well as the sovereignty of the female body. In September 2016, Nagle co-wrote an [opinion article](#) with Steinem, connecting the dots between the Dakota Access Pipeline and violence against women. This conversation will explore how these issues impact Americans daily.

*Sovereignty* is receiving its world premiere at Arena Stage and was commissioned as part of Arena Stage's **Power Plays** initiative, which will commission and develop 25 new plays and musicals over the course of the next 10 years, focused on stories of politics and power.

"Gloria has, for decades, stood alongside Native women to advocate for the restoration of tribal jurisdiction and the inherent sovereignty of our Native Nations," shares **Nagle**. "So often, the high rates of non-Indian perpetrated violence against Native women do not even enter the national dialogue around women's rights in the United States. I thank Gloria for taking time to travel and attend my play. It is my humble hope that *Sovereignty* truly honors the legacy of Gloria's dear friend, Wilma Mankiller, our first, and to date only woman, to be elected Chief of Cherokee Nation."

Tickets for *Sovereignty* are available online at [arenastage.org](http://arenastage.org) or by phone at 202-488-3300.

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## Page 2— Gloria Steinem announced as post-show panelist for *Sovereignty*

**Gloria Steinem** is a writer, lecturer, political activist and feminist organizer. She travels in this and other countries as an organizer and lecturer and is a frequent media spokeswoman on issues of equality. She is particularly interested in the shared origins of sex and race caste systems, gender roles and child abuse as roots of violence, non-violent conflict resolution, the cultures of indigenous peoples and organizing across boundaries for peace and justice. She lives in New York City, and is the author of the travelogue *My Life on the Road*.

**Mary Kathryn Nagle** (*Playwright*) is an enrolled citizen of the Cherokee Nation. She currently serves as the executive director of the Yale Indigenous Performing Arts Program. She is also a partner at Pipestem Law, P.C., where she works to protect tribal sovereignty and the inherent right of Indian Nations to protect their women and children from domestic violence and sexual assault. She has authored numerous briefs in federal appellate courts, including the United States Supreme Court. She has received commissions from Arena Stage; The Rose Theater in Omaha, Nebraska; Portland Center Stage; and Yale Repertory. Her other plays include *Manahatta*, *Return to Niobrara*, *Mnisose*, *Waaxe's Law*, *Sliver of a Full Moon*, *My Father's Bones* (co-authored with Suzan Shown Harjo), *Miss Lead* and *Fairly Traceable*.

**Molly Smith** (*Director*) has served as Artistic Director since 1998. Her more than 30 directing credits at Arena Stage include *The Originalist*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Camp David*, *Carousel*, *Mother Courage and Her Children*, *Oklahoma!*, *A Moon for the Misbegotten*, *My Fair Lady*, *The Great White Hope*, *The Music Man*, *Legacy of Light*, *The Women of Brewster Place*, *Cabaret*, *South Pacific*, *All My Sons* and *How I Learned to Drive*. Her directorial work has also been seen at Canada's Shaw Festival, Pasadena Playhouse, The Old Globe, Asolo Repertory, Berkeley Repertory, Trinity Repertory, Toronto's Tarragon Theatre, Montreal's Centaur Theatre and Perseverance Theater in Juneau, Alaska, which she founded and ran from 1979-1998. Molly has been a leader in new play development for over 30 years. She is a great believer in first, second and third productions of new work and has championed projects including *Dear Evan Hansen*; *Next to Normal*; *Passion Play*, a cycle; and *How I Learned to Drive*. She has worked alongside playwrights Sarah Ruhl, Paula Vogel, Wendy Wasserstein, Lawrence Wright, Karen Zacarias, John Murrell, Eric Coble, Charles Randolph-Wright and many others. She led the re-invention of Arena Stage, focusing on the architecture and creation of the Mead Center for American Theater and positioning Arena Stage as a national center for American artists. During her time with the company, Arena Stage has workshopped more than 100 productions, produced 39 world premieres, staged numerous second and third productions and been an important part of nurturing nine projects that went on to have a life on Broadway. In 2014, Molly made her Broadway debut directing *The Velocity of Autumn*, following its critically acclaimed run at Arena Stage. She was awarded honorary doctorates from American University and Towson University. This summer, she will direct *The Originalist* Off-Broadway at 59E59 Theaters.

Arena Stage is one of the seven originating theaters of the **Women's Voices Theater Festival**, which launched in 2015. *Sovereignty* is produced as a part of the citywide Festival, which will feature over 25 productions in the festival's second iteration in the nation's capital region, January through February 2018. For additional information on the Festival, please visit [womensvoicestheaterfestival.org](http://womensvoicestheaterfestival.org).

***Sovereignty* was generously commissioned by Drs. Elliot and Lily Gardner Feldman and BakerHostetler as part of Arena Stage's Women's Voices Power Play Cycle.**

**Additional commissioning support provided by The Virginia B. Toulmin Foundation's Women Playwrights Commissioning Program.**

***Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater*, under the leadership of Artistic Director Molly Smith and Executive Director 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 and impacts the lives of over 10,000 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](http://arenastage.org)