

ARENA STAGE MEDIA RELEASE

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Lauren Alexander/Skye Lindberg
press@arenastage.org, 202-600-4055

July 10, 2018

ARENA STAGE ANNOUNCES DIALOGUE STARTERS FOR ARENA CIVIL DIALOGUES ON AUGUST 12, 2018

***** Pulitzer Prize Award-winning playwright Ayad Akhtar announced for future Arena Civil Dialogues
on November 11, 2018 *****

(Washington, D.C.) Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater will continue to host Arena Civil Dialogues to engage the D.C.-area community. Scholar, professor and peacebuilder **Amitai Etzioni** will moderate a series of discussions focusing on topics and questions in today's headlines, the next topic will be **focusing on the increased presence of robots and technology use**. The next Arena Civil Dialogue will be held in the **Molly Smith Study at Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater from 5:30-7 p.m. on August 12, 2018**.

Arena Civil Dialogues will bring together Dialogue Starters with an expertise on the evening's topic, and the conversation on August 12 will discuss what happens to modern society with the addition of technology and robots. The Dialogue Starters that evening will include **Jared Bernstein**, Senior Fellow at the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities; **Molly Kinder**, Senior Adviser, Work, Workers & Technology, New America; **Ben Shneiderman**, University Professor of Computer Science, University of Maryland; **Mary Wareham**, Advocacy Director of the Arms Division, Human Rights Watch; and **Roman V. Yampolskiy**, Associate Professor, Department of Computer Engineering and Computer Science, University of Louisville.

Upcoming schedule

Sunday, August 12: *The robots are coming*

Will robots continue to take more of our jobs? Will they outsmart us? Can they start wars?

Sunday, September 16: *No deplorables here; how to understand each other*

A dialogue between Trump supporters and opponents.

Sunday, October 14: *Exploring well-being in a digital world*

In the digital age, does constant technology connection undermine our well-being? How can we use technology to improve our overall health? Can we prevent cyberbullying and online hate speech?

Sunday, November 11: *What makes a great America?*

Who decides what makes America great? What are the alternate views of what makes a great America, at home and in a global sense? Can America still call itself a global leader?

There will be a reception before the discussion, starting at 5 p.m. in the Grand Lobby. Due to space limitations, registration is required but there is no admission fee.

For more information and to register for future Arena Civil Dialogues, visit: www.arenastage.org/civildialogues

—continued—

Page 2— Arena Stage dialogue starters announced for August 12

The **November 11, 2018** Arena Civil Dialogues will discuss the question: What makes a great America? Joining the Dialogue Starters for this event will be Pulitzer Prize Award-winning playwright **Ayad Akhtar**, whose play *Junk* will run at Arena Stage from April 5 - May 5, 2019. He will be a part of the dialogue that explores: who decides what makes America great? What are the alternate views of what makes a great America, at home and in a global sense? Can America still call itself a global leader? Additional Dialogue Starters for this discussion will be announced at a later date.

Ayad Akhtar is the author of *Junk* (Lincoln Center, Broadway; 2018 Kennedy Prize for American Drama); *Disgraced* (Lincoln Center, Broadway; Pulitzer Prize for Drama, Tony nomination); *The Who & The What* (Lincoln Center); and *The Invisible Hand* (Obie Award, Outer Critics Circle John Gassner Award, Olivier and Evening Standard nominations). As a novelist, he is the author of *American Dervish* (Little, Brown & Co.) published in over 20 languages. Recipient of an Award in Literature from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, the 2017 Steinberg Playwriting Award, as well as fellowships from the American Academy in Rome, MacDowell, the Sundance Institute, and Yaddo, where he serves as a Board Director. Board Trustee at PEN/America and New York Theatre Workshop.

August 12 Dialogue Starter Biographies

Amitai Etzioni (moderator), University Professor and Professor of International Relations at The George Washington University. He served as a Senior Advisor at the Carter White House; taught at Columbia University, Harvard University, and University of California at Berkeley; and served as president of the American Sociological Association (ASA). A study by Richard Posner ranked him among the top 100 American intellectuals. Etzioni is the author of many books, including *The Limits of Privacy* (1999) and *Privacy in a Cyber Age* (2015). His most recent book, *Happiness is the Wrong Metric: A Liberal Communitarian Response to Populism*, was published by Springer in January 2018.

Jared Bernstein joined the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities in May 2011 as a Senior Fellow. From 2009 to 2011, Bernstein was the Chief Economist and Economic Adviser to Vice President Joe Biden, Executive Director of the White House Task Force on the Middle Class and a member of President Obama's economic team. Prior to joining the Obama administration, Bernstein was a senior economist and the director of the Living Standards Program at the Economic Policy Institute, and between 1995 and 1996, he held the post of Deputy Chief Economist at the U.S. Department of Labor. Bernstein holds a PhD in Social Welfare from Columbia University and is the author and coauthor of numerous books including *The Reconnection Agenda: Reuniting Growth and Prosperity*. Bernstein has published extensively in various venues, including *The New York Times*, *Washington Post* and *The American Prospect*. He is an on-air commentator for the cable station CNBC and a contributor to *The Washington Post's* PostEverything blog.

Molly Kinder is a Senior Adviser on Work, Workers and Technology at New America. She is also a research fellow and adjunct faculty at Georgetown's McCourt School of Public Policy, where she teaches a graduate policy seminar on the social, policy and economic implications of artificial intelligence. Previously, Kinder was co-founder and vice president of a \$200 million social impact fund and served in the Obama administration as a director in a new innovation program. She directed a Pakistan initiative at the Center for Global Development and co-authored the center's best-selling book. Kinder worked overseas in Liberia, India and Pakistan and holds a master's degree in public administration in international development from the Harvard Kennedy School.

Ben Shneiderman is a Distinguished University Professor in the Department of Computer Science, Founding Director (1983-2000) of the Human-Computer Interaction Laboratory and a Member of the UM Institute for Advanced Computer Studies (UMIACS) at the University of Maryland. He is a Fellow of the AAAS, ACM, IEEE and NAI, and a Member of the National Academy of Engineering, in recognition of his pioneering contributions to human-computer interaction and information visualization. His widely-used contributions include the clickable highlighted weblinks, high-precision touchscreen keyboards for mobile devices and tagging for photos. Shneiderman's advanced work on information visualization includes dynamic query sliders for Spotfire, development of treemaps for hierarchical data, novel network visualizations for NodeXL and event sequence analysis for electronic health records.

Page 3— Arena Stage dialogue starters announced for August 12

Ben wrote *The New ABCs of Research: Achieving Breakthrough Collaborations*, *Designing the User Interface: Strategies for Effective Human-Computer Interaction*, and his *Leonardo's Laptop: Human Needs the New Computing Technologies* won the IEEE book award for Distinguished Literary Contribution.

Mary Wareham is advocacy director of the Arms Division, where she leads Human Rights Watch's advocacy against particularly problematic weapons that pose a significant threat to civilians. She is also serving as the global coordinator of the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots. From 2006 to 2008, Wareham served as advocacy director for Oxfam New Zealand, leading its efforts to secure an arms trade treaty and the 2008 Convention on Cluster Munitions. From 1998 to 2006, Wareham was senior advocate for the Arms Division of Human Rights Watch and was responsible for global coordination of the Landmine Monitor research initiative, which verifies compliance and implementation of the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty. From 1996 to 1997, Wareham worked for the Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation, assisting Jody Williams in coordinating the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL), co-laureate of the 1997 Nobel Peace Prize together with Williams. Wareham worked as a researcher for the New Zealand parliament from 1995 to 1996 after receiving bachelor's and master's degrees in political science from Victoria University of Wellington.

Dr. Roman V. Yampolskiy is a Tenured Associate Professor in the department of Computer Engineering and Computer Science at the Speed School of Engineering, University of Louisville. He is the founding and current director of the Cyber Security Lab. During his tenure at UofL, Dr. Yampolskiy has been recognized as Distinguished Teaching Professor, Professor of the Year, Faculty Favorite, Top 4 Faculty, Leader in Engineering Education, Top 10 of Online College Professor of the Year and Outstanding Early Career in Education award winner. He is a Senior member of IEEE and AGI, Member of Kentucky Academy of Science and Research Advisor for MIRI and Associate of GCRI. Yampolskiy holds a PhD from the Department of Computer Science and Engineering at the University at Buffalo. He was a recipient of a four year National Science Foundation Integrative Graduate Education and Research Traineeship fellowship. Before beginning his doctoral studies Dr. Yampolskiy received a BS/MS (High Honors) combined degree in Computer Science from Rochester Institute of Technology. After completing his PhD dissertation, he held a position of an Affiliate Academic at the Center for Advanced Spatial Analysis, University of London, College of London. He had previously conducted research at the Laboratory for Applied Computing at the Rochester Institute of Technology and at the Center for Unified Biometrics and Sensors at the University at Buffalo. Dr. Yampolskiy is an alumnus of Singularity University and a Visiting Fellow of the Singularity Institute (Machine Intelligence Research Institute). Dr. Yampolskiy is an author of over 100 publications including multiple journal articles and books, including *Artificial Superintelligence: A Futuristic Approach*.

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 groundbreaking 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

###

