

ARENA STAGE MEDIA RELEASE

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ARENA STAGE LAUNCHES ARTISTS MARKETPLACE

*****Marketplace creates new connections between artists and audiences*****

(Washington, D.C.) Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater announces the launch of **Artists Marketplace**, a new model for regional theaters to connect art, artists and their artistry directly with patrons. Patrons will have the opportunity to commission or purchase a work of art from the artists and artisans who have graced Arena's stages.

"I dreamed up the Artists Marketplace when I realized that despite the pandemic, artists and audience exist, both still hungry for each other," shares Deputy Artistic Director Seema Sueko. "Our regular delivery system of "gather artists, gather audiences and mix" is broken, but we can create new delivery systems and new models for regional theaters to serve our communities and earn income for artists now, rather than wait until theaters produce again."

"95% of artists nationally have lost work—62% have lost all work," shares Arena Stage Artistic Director Molly Smith. "Guess which sector of the arts has lost all work? Yes — theater artists. Seema's brilliant brainstorm of an idea provides a way for audiences to support artists and for artists to earn money to live. We work with extraordinary artists — come aboard and help support them through purchasing their art through experiences and objects."

With traditional methods of commemorating special events on hold, the Artists Marketplace gives people meaningful ways to express gratitude to frontline workers, to grieve with one another and to convey love and support. Artists can make these occasions and sentiments memorable in new ways. The diverse and engaging offerings include **personal concerts and greetings, original music compositions for a loved one, one-on-one acting and vocal coaching sessions, custom-made face masks, conflict resolution, custom-designed and performed puppet film of a person's life, cooking class and a song and a writing salon for you and your friends**. Patrons also have the chance to own **original, one-of-a-kind artwork** and to transform an outdoor yard into a beautifully designed **rock garden landscape**.

To view and learn more about marketplace, visit arenastage.org/artistsmarketplace.

Regional theaters hold deep relationships with our communities of artists and audience. Arena is proud to be the link between them, keeping these connections alive while closed.

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The Artists Marketplace will give audiences a new way to engage and build new audiences. For the artist, it is about maintaining their artistic livelihood and providing financial support.

Artists launching the Marketplace include actors **Kate Baldwin, Lise Bruneau, Marsha Mason, Nicholas Rodriguez, Dawn Ursula, Kirsten Wyatt**, musician **Victor Simonson**, designers **Paige Hathaway, Ken MacDonald, Jeanette Oi-Suk Yew**, writer **Mary Hall Surface**, Broadway Fight Master **David S. Leong**, Fight and Intimacy Choreographer **Jenny Male**, Voice and Dialect Coaches **Lisa Nathans** and **Zach Champion** and production department artisans and technicians **Deborah Lynn Nash** and **Timothy M. Thompson**. The Marketplace will be a dynamic space with new Arena Stage artists added over time.

Artists

Kate Baldwin starred in the Tony Award winning Broadway revival of *Hello, Dolly!* for which she personally received Tony Award, Drama Desk and Outer Critics Award nominations. Broadway: *Finian's Rainbow* (Tony Award, Drama Desk and Outer Critics Award nominations) *Big Fish*, *Wonderful Town*, *Thoroughly Modern Millie* and *The Full Monty*. Off-Broadway: *John & Jen* (Keen Company, Drama Desk nomination) *Giant* (Public, Drama Desk nomination) *Superhero* (Second Stage, Lortel nomination) *Songbird* (59E59). Kate calls Arena Stage one of her favorite places to work! Audiences will remember her as Nellie Forbush in *South Pacific* in 2002 and Marian Paroo in *The Music Man* in 2012. Her film work includes *Brooklyn Brothers Beat the Best*. TV: *Law & Order: SVU*, *PBS: First You Dream: The Music of Kander & Ebb* and *Live From Lincoln Center: Stephen Sondheim's Passion*. Concerts: Boston, Detroit, National, Portland, Chicago Symphony Orchestras and sold out appearances at 54 Below and the American Songbook Series at Lincoln Center. Featured solo recordings include *Let's See What Happens* and *She Loves Him: Live at Feinstein's* (PS Classics). www.kate-baldwin.com

Lise Bruneau is a huge fan and sometime collaborator with Arena Stage, having performed in *Junk*, *The Heiress*, *Watch on the Rhine*, *Mother Courage*, and Karen Zacarias' gorgeous *Legacy of Light*. Lise resides in D.C., where her local performing credits include *Eureka Day* at Mosaic; *Hamlet* and *Othello* at Shakespeare Theatre; *This* and *The Book Club Play* at Round House; and *Brighton Beach Memoirs*, *Mikveh*, (both HH nominations) and *Broken Glass* for Theatre J. She recently appeared on Broadway in *Cherry Orchard* with Diane Lane, and in various theatres across the country in such plays as *Sweat*, *The Revolutionists*, *Threepenny Opera*, and *Heartbreak House* (Henry Award). Directing credits include *Measure for Measure*, *4,000 Miles*, *Savage in Limbo*, *Hamlet*; and for Taffety Punk, the Riot Grrrls' productions of Shakespeare and many others – where she recently fulfilled a Bucket List dream and performed the role of Iago. Lise trained at RADA and is proud to be a Taffety Punk.

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Zach Champion worked in the Arena Stage sales office many years ago when he first moved to D.C. Since then, he has had the fortune of serving multiple award-winning productions for Arena Stage as a voice and dialect coach. Those productions include: *Smart People*, *The Price*, *Indecent*, *Kleptocracy*, *Sovereignty* and most recently *The Right to Be Forgotten*.

Paige Hathaway is a freelance scenic designer based in the Washington, D.C. area. In the D.C. area, she has recently designed at Arena Stage, Signature Theatre, Round House Theatre, Olney Theatre Center, Theater J, Woolly Mammoth, the Kennedy Center, Folger Theater, Adventure Theatre, Imagination Stage, Everyman Theatre, and Studio Theatre. Regionally, she has recently designed at The Muny in St. Louis, the Arden in Philadelphia, Asolo Rep in Sarasota, and the John W. Engeman Theatre in Long Island, among others. For more of her work, please visit her website at paigehathawaydesign.com or follow her on Instagram at @paigehathawaydesign.

David S. Leong served on the faculties at Brandeis University, the University of Maryland and the Julliard School before joining the VCU Department of Theatre as Chair and Professor. He currently teaches *how to give an elevator pitch* in the VCU Executive Master of Business Administration program. As a child growing up, he learned the art of landscape design from one of the best designers in the business - his father. William B.S. Leong was the Master Planner of the Duke University Garden considered one of the most beautiful botanical gardens in America.

Set designer **Ken MacDonald's** most recent production at Arena Stage's was *Newsies*. Previous productions there include *The Shoplifters*, *Sovereignty* and *Anything Goes*. Most recently, Ken designed the American tour of *A Thousand Splendid Suns* (ACT San Francisco; The Old Globe, San Diego; Seattle Repertory). His design for the international hit *The Overcoat* won him several awards. He has designed over 100 shows with his partner, Morris Panych (director and playwright), from *Vigil* (starring Olympia Dukakis / Mark Taper Forum and ACT) to *7 Stories* across Canada. Ken designed at the Shaw Festival (Niagara-on-the-Lake) for 16 seasons. He designed *Private Lives* at the Stratford Festival Ontario and this season will design there again for *Frankenstein Revived*. Then he will design *This London Life* with The Grand Theatre. Ken's awards include a Gemini (Best Production Design/film "The Overcoat"), four Dora Mavor Moore Awards (Toronto) and 17 Jessie Awards (Vancouver). www.kenandmorris.com

Jenny Male (she/her/hers) is a Certified Teacher with the Society of American Fight Directors and has served as the Fight Choreographer for such D.C./Baltimore theatres as Arena Stage, Ford's Theatre, Rep Stage, Constellation Theatre Company, Everyman Theatre, Factory 449, Washington Stage Guild, Adventure Theatre, Imagination Stage, and the Maryland Lyric Opera.

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Jenny is a certified Intimacy Director with Intimacy Directors & Coordinators and is Resident Fight & Intimacy Director for Rep Stage. In 2002, Jenny earned an MFA in Theatre Pedagogy with an emphasis in Movement & Fight Direction from Virginia Commonwealth University. Jenny is Associate Professor of Theatre at Howard Community College.

Marsha Mason has received an Outer Critics Circle Award and 4 Academy Awards nominations for her roles in the films *The Goodbye Girl*, *Cinderella Liberty*, *Only When I Laugh* and *Chapter Two*. She has been the recipient of 2 Golden Globe Awards for her film roles and an Emmy Award nomination for her role on *Frasier*. Her credits include *The Middle*, *The Good Wife*, *Madam Secretary* and *Grace & Frankie*. Her Broadway roles include *Impressionism* with Jeremy Irons, *Steel Magnolias*, *The Night of the Iguana*, *The Good Doctor*, *King Richard III* and *Cactus Flower*. Off-Broadway she co-starred in the world premiere of Terrence McNally's *Fire and Air* at Classic Stage. Regionally she has starred in *All's Well That Ends Well* at Shakespeare Theatre in Washington, D.C., *A Doll's House* at ACT in San Francisco, *Arms and The Man* at Old Globe Theatre in San Diego and *Watch on the Rhine* at Arena Stage in Washington, D.C. She has directed *Chapter Two* and *Steel Magnolias* at the Bucks County Playhouse, the first female *An Act of God* with Paige Davis at the Arizona Theatre Company and the world premiere of Tennessee Williams' *Talisman* *Roses* starring Amanda Plummer at the Tennessee Williams Festival in Provincetown, Mass. Marsha was Associate Director with Jack O'Brien for the Roundabout Theater's production of *All My Sons* recently on Broadway. Last summer, Marsha starred in the Irish Rep Theatre's acclaimed production of *Little Gem* and she most recently directed a reading of *The Man Who Came to Dinner* with Brooke Shields and Walter Bobbie at the Bucks County Playhouse and WP Theater in NYC.

Deborah Lynn Nash has been a member of the Arena Stage Costume Shop for the last 21 years as the Costume Craftsperson. As a Milliner, Dyer, and Crafts artist she works with both the designers and performers to help support the development of their art. During the summer, Deborah works for the Santa Fe Opera in New Mexico as Head Milliner, as well as doing freelance millinery and craftwork around the greater Washington D.C. area.

Lisa Nathans is an Assistant Professor of Voice and Acting at University of Maryland's School of Theatre, Dance, and Performance Studies. Her voice and accent coaching credits include Arena Stage, Kennedy Center, Shakespeare Theatre Company, Olney, Signature, Ford's, Folger, Guthrie (Minneapolis), 5th Avenue (Seattle), and Theatricum Botanicum (LA). Nathans trained at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama (MFA); Boston University (BFA). She is a Designated Linklater Voice teacher and Certified Colaianni Speech practitioner.

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Nicholas Rodriguez is perhaps best known at Arena Stage for his Helen Hayes Award winning performance as Curly in *Oklahoma!* to open the Mead Center for American Theater. Other Arena credits include: *Carousel* (Helen Hayes nomination), *Destiny of Desire*, *Mother Courage and Her Children*, *My Fair Lady* (Helen Hayes nomination) *Light in the Piazza* & *The Power of Two*. Broadway/National Tour: *Tarzan*®, *The Sound of Music* (*Captain Von Trapp*) directed by Jack O' Brien. Off-Broadway: *Toxic Avenger*, *Almost Heaven*, *Death for Five Voices*, *Collette Collage*, *Bajour*. Carnegie Hall: *Guys and Dolls*. **Tours:** *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *Evita*, *Hair*. Regional: Nicholas recently completed a run as Joe Gillis opposite Alice Ripley in *Sunset Boulevard* at North Shore Music Theatre. *Holiday Inn* at Papermill Playhouse, *The Ten Commandments* at the Kodak Theatre; *Jersey Boys*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Wizard of Oz*, *Tarzan*, *The Buddy Holly Story* at The MUNY; *Oklahoma!* at Pittsburgh CLO, *Mothers and Sons*, *Les Misérables*, *Master Class*, *Love!Valour!Compassion!* at ZACH Theatre. His debut CD *The First Time...* is available at www.psclassics.com and via iTunes. On TV, he is best known for his role as Nick Chavez on ABC's *One Life to Live* (GLAAD Award). His other television credits include *Tommy* (CBS) and *Madam Secretary* (CBS). **Film:** *Sex in the City II* (also soundtrack), *Still Here*, *Double Exposure*. He's a proud faculty member of The Broadway Dreams Foundation. www.thenickrod.com

Victor Simonson recently composed the score to AMEN CORNER that appeared in February 2020 at Shakespeare Theater. He was nominated for the Helen Hayes Award for music directing *Three Mo' Divas* in 2006. Composer for the groundbreaking HIPHOPERA, *STOMPING GROUNDS*, Glimmerglass Festival. Other Washington D.C. area appearances include Cover Conductor, *West Side Story*, National Symphony Orchestra, Music Director, *Bud Not Buddy*, Kennedy Center. Associate Conductor for *The Wiz*, *Ragtime*, *110 in the Shade*, *Freedom's Song* and *Violet* at the Ford's Theater; Associate Conductor, *Pajama Game*, *Newsies*, Arena Stage. *Matilda*, *Wicked*, *Addams Family*, *Evita*, *Aladdin*, and many other shows at the Kennedy Center; Tours - *The Lion King*, (Rafiki), *Memphis* (Nat'l), *The Color Purple* (Nat'l); *Three Mo' Tenors*; Regional - *A Civil War Christmas*, *The Wiz* at Centerstage Theater in Baltimore, MD; *Brooklyn*, *The Musical*, Denver Civic Theater. Film/TV—*Good Morning America*, *ABC Nightline*, *Rosie O'Donnell*, PBS, *WORD Network*, *NAACP Image Awards*. Concerts/Recitals - *Il Divo*, *Denyce Graves*, *Angela Brown*. Other— *On My Journey Now*, featuring Baritone Lester Lynch, (arranger, pianist), *The McLurkin Project* (Orchestrator); *Total Praise* (Grammy Nom. CD, composer); *Victory* (Debut CD, 2008). Candidate for M.Div, Wesley Theological Seminary. Victor thanks God for this opportunity and gives God praise for everything, most especially his wife Reverend Ciara Simonson of 10 years, his 7-year old daughter Victoria and 4-year old son Immanuel! www.VictorSimonson.com.

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Mary Hall Surface presents writing workshops through the Smithsonian Associates, Phillips Collection, and National Gallery of Art. She is the founding instructor of the NGA's popular Writing Salon, as featured in *The Washington Post*. A nine-time Helen Hayes Award nominee, she received the 2002 Outstanding Director of a Musical for her *Perseus Bayou*. Her plays have been produced across the US, Europe, Japan, Taiwan and Canada, including eighteen Kennedy Center productions. She is the proud founding artistic director of the Atlas INTERSECTIONS Festival, where she curated over 600 all-arts performances and events from 2009–2015.

Timothy M. Thompson is proud to be nearing 30 years with Arena Stage. 25 of those years as Sound Department head, during which he designed sound for over 100 mainstage shows, was involved in construction of our Mead Center, and has worked with so many incredible people along the way. Prior to Arena, Tim was an exhibit specialist at the Smithsonian Institution, an electronics technician with Heathkit Electronics, and a smattering of other fun jobs, including auto mechanic. BS in Electrical Engineering and American history, Tim finds happiness in woodworking, restoring old stuff, history, and generally obsessing on anything creative.

Dawn Ursula's chosen profession is to perform, normally on stage but on-camera too. She has great side gigs. She narrates books for the Library of Congress for the visually handicapped and the physically impaired and does voiceovers. She is also a mom, wife, sister, daughter etc. and like you, spending a lot of time at home. She last appeared at Arena Stage as Ruth in *A Raisin in the Sun* and Desiree in *Love in Afghanistan*. Other credits include: the Angel in *Angels in America 1 & 2* (Round House Theatre and Olney Theatre Center) and Grace Kumalo in *Lost in the Stars* (Washington National Opera). She has received two Helen Hayes Awards and thrice been nominated. On-camera credits include Isabella in PBS' *Prince Among Slaves* and Mrs. "Bunny" Colvin on HBO's *The Wire*. Pronouns: she/hers. www.dawnursula.com.

Kirsten Wyatt is an award-winning actress. Her work at Arena Stage as Tammy Faye Bakker in *Born for This* remains one the highlights of her career. Broadway: *Annie*, *A Christmas Story the Musical*, *Elf*, *Shrek*, *Grease* (2007 revival), *High Fidelity*, *The Pajama Game*, *Urinetown* and *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*. Favorite regional: Agnes Gooch in *Mame* at Goodspeed Musicals (Connecticut Critics Circle Award), Ellie Mae Chipley in *Show Boat* at San Francisco Opera and numerous Miss Adelaides in *Guys and Dolls*. Graduate of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. Creator and host of the web series *Broadway Nosh*.

Jeanette Oi-Suk Yew is a puppetry artist based in NYC. She devises interdisciplinary productions that experiments with and challenges the boundaries of puppetry. She seeks to use puppetry as a visual medium for contemporary storytelling within an interdisciplinary context. *New York Times* described her project with Target Margin Lab, Act 4 of *The Iceman Cometh*, as "consistently inventive". Her original works were often performed to sold-out houses at La MaMa, St. Ann's Warehouse, National Sawdust, and at the Prague Quadrennial.

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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 and impacting the lives of over 10,000 students annually through its work in community engagement. Now in its eighth decade, Arena Stage serves a diverse annual audience of more than 300,000. arenastage.org

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