

ARENA STAGE MEDIA RELEASE

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Lauren McMillen/Samantha Schneider press@arenastage.org, 202-600-4055

September 5, 2019

ARENA STAGE ANNOUNCES CASTING FOR DISNEY'S NEWSIES DIRECTED BY MOLLY SMITH AT THE MEAD CENTER FOR AMERICAN THEATER NOVEMBER 1 – DECEMBER 22, 2019

*** Daniel J. Maldonado, Joe Montoya and Nova Payton among cast joining previously announced Erin Weaver and Edward Gero in Disney's Tony Award-winning musical ***

(Washington, D.C.) Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater announces casting for Disney's Tony Award-winning musical *Newsies*, an inspiring story about kids who fight for what is right at the turn of the century, with music by Alan Menken, lyrics by Jack Feldman and book by Harvey Fierstein. Inspired by the real-life Newsboys Strike of 1899 in New York City, this family-friendly musical follows the story of newsboys and newsgirls who dream of a better life and lead a crusade for justice. Just in time for the holidays, the score features fan favorites, including "King of New York," "Carrying the Banner" and "Seize the Day." *Newsies*, directed by *Molly Smith*, with choreography by *Parker Esse* and music direction by *Laura Bergquist*, will run *November 1-December 22*, 2019 in the iconic inthe-round Fichandler Stage.

"Newsies is a brilliant blending of a children's crusade and a contemporary Gold Standard musical," shares **Molly Smith**. "With today's young people fighting passionately for gun control and climate protection legislation in new children's crusades, we clearly see resonance with today's young people. The plight of the newsboys and girls at the turn of the century is a passionate story, because they stood up for themselves and fought for fairness. With music that is hummable, wonderful acting with a top-notch cast, dynamic choreography and plenty of young people on stage, this is an ideal production to bring the whole family to the theater during the holidays."

Newsies will feature **Daniel J. Maldonado** (Emerson Colonial Theatre's *Moulin Rogue!*) as Jack Kelly and D.C. actress **Erin Weaver** (Arena's *Mother Courage*) as Katherine Plumber with **Edward Gero** (Arena's *Junk* and *The Originalist*) as Joseph Pulitzer. Making their Arena Stage debuts are **Joe Montoya** as Crutchie and both **Josiah Smothers** (The National Theatre's *Finding Neverland*) and **Hazel Hay** as Les Jacobs.

Joining the cast are Arena veterans **Ethan Van Slyke** (Arena's Oliver!) as Davey Jacobs, **Thomas Adrian Simpson** (Arena's Anything Goes) as Wiesel, as well as D.C. native **Nova Payton** (Arena's Smokey Joe's Café) as Medda Larkin.

This front-page cast also includes **Rory Boyd** as Oscar Delancey, **Wyn Delano** as Snyder, **Michael Hewitt** as Morris Delancey and ensemble members **Christian Douglas**, **Jamie Smithson** and **Carole Denise Jones**.

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Rounding out the *Newsies* company are **Emre Ocak**, **Chaz Wolcott**, **Tro Shaw**, **Bridget Riley**, **Luke Spring** (Broadway's *A Christmas Story*, *The Musical*), **Michael John Hughes**, **Tomas Mátos**, **Tanner Pflueger**, **Matthew Davies** and **Kelli Youngman** as the newsies with swings **Lucy Spring** and **Shiloh Orr**.

Smith's creative collaborators for *Newsies* include Choreographer **Parker Esse**, who returns for his 17th Arena Stage production, Music Director **Laura Bergquist**, Set Designer **Ken MacDonald**, Costume Designer **Alejo Vietti**, Lighting Designer **Kimberly Purtell** and Sound Designer **Daniel Erdberg**.

The creative team for *Newsies* also includes Associate Director/Text Director **Anita Maynard-Losh**, Assistant Music Director **Suzanne Román Jones**, Assistant Choreographer **Michael John Hughes**, Dialect and Vocal Coach **Lisa Nathans**, Fight and Intimacy Consultant **Jenny Male**, Casting Directors **Victor Vazquez** and **Geoff Josselson**, Stage Manager **Susan R. White**, Assistant Stage Manager **Marne Anderson** and Production Assistant **Dayne Sundman**.

Alan Menken (Composer) Theater: God Bless You Mr Rosewater, Little Shop Of Horrors, Real Life Funnies, Atina: Evil Queen Of The Galaxy, Kicks, The Apprenticeship Of Duddy Kravitz, Beauty And The Beast, A Christmas Carol, Weird Romance, King David, Der Glöckner Von Notre Dame, The Little Mermaid, Sister Act, Leap Of Faith, Aladdin and Newsies. Film: Little Shop Of Horrors, The Little Mermaid, Beauty And The Beast, Newsies, Aladdin, Pocahontas, The Hunchback Of Notre Dame, Hercules, Life With Mikey, Lincoln, Home On The Range, Noel, Enchanted, Shaggy Dog, Tangled and Mirror Mirror. Songs: Rocky V, Home Alone 2 and Captain America. Awards: 8 Oscars (19 nominations), 11 Grammys (including Song of the Year), 7 Golden Globes, Tony® (plus 4 nominations), Drama Desk, Outer Critics Circle, New York Drama Critics, Olivier and London's Evening Standard Award, Drama League. Honors: Songwriter's Hall of Fame, Doctorates from New York University and University of North Carolina School of the Arts.

Jack Feldman (Lyrics) Broadway and Off Broadway: The Madwoman of Central Park West; Isn't It Romantic, by Wendy Wasserstein; Beyond Therapy, by Christopher Durang; Coming Attractions, by Ted Tally; Miami (book by Ms. Wasserstein). Regional: Music for Mr. Durang and Albert Innaurato's Idiots Karamazov at the Yale Repertory Theatre. Film: Oliver & Company; Tribute; Thumbelina; Newsies; Home Alone 2: Lost in New York; Used People; Life with Mikey; A Goofy Movie; The Lion King II: Simba's Pride; and 102 Dalmatians. TV: Music and lyrics for the PBS Theatre in America production of Eve Merriam's Out of Our Father's House; The Magic Hat; The Little Mermaid (TV special); Polly; "Sesame Street;" "Wubbulous World of Dr. Seuss;" and "Out of the Box." Also many pop songs, including the Grammy Award—winning "Copacabana," the top-10 hit "I Made It Through the Rain," and songs and special material for Sarah Vaughn, Carmen McRae, Liza Minnelli, Lily Tomlin, Dionne Warwick, and the Muppets.

Harvey Fierstein (Original Book) is a four-time Tony Award-winning writer and actor. His Broadway writing credits include Kinky Boots, Torch Song Trilogy (Tony, Drama Desk, Dramatists Guild Awards), Casa Valentina, Safe Sex, Legs Diamond and A Catered Affair (12 Drama Desk nominations and the Drama League Award for Best Musical). His La Cage Aux Folles is the only show to ever win Best Musical and 2 Best Revival Tony Awards. Other plays include Spookhouse, Forget Him and Flatbush Tosca. His teleplays include Tidy Endings for HBO (ACE Award), and On Common Ground for Showtime. His children's HBO special, The Sissy Duckling, won the Humanitas Prize and the book version is in its eighth printing. Other honors include the Drama League Award for Outstanding Performer of the Year, a special OBIE award, NY Magazine Award, and nominations for The Olivier Award and an Emmy. His political writings have been seen on PBS' series "In The Life" and published in The NY Times, Huffington Post and Hartford Courant. He was inducted into The Theater Hall of Fame in 2008.

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Molly Smith (Director) has served as Artistic Director since 1998. Her more than 30 directing credits at Arena Stage include large-scale musicals like Anything Goes, Carousel, Fiddler on the Roof, Oklahoma!, My Fair Lady, The Music Man, Cabaret, South Pacific; new plays like Sovereignty, The Originalist, Camp David, Legacy of Light, The Women of Brewster Place, How I Learned to Drive; and classics like Mother Courage and Her Children, A Moon for the Misbegotten, The Great White Hope and All My Sons. Her directorial work has also been seen Off-Broadway at 59E59 in New York, Portland Center Stage, Canada's Shaw Festival, The Court Theatre, 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 40 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 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 through its artistic programming. 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. In 2018, she was honored as Person of the Year by the National Theatre Conference and inducted into the Washington D.C. Hall of Fame.

Select Cast Biographies (in alphabetical order)

Rory Boyd (Oscar Delancey/Bill) is thrilled to be making his Arena Stage debut. He recently made his D.C.-area debut as Roger in Signature Theatre's world premiere of Blackbeard. Other career highlights include Matt (the Boy) in The Fantasticks (Opera House Arts); Mordred in Camelot (Lyric Stage Co. of Boston); and the Player King in Hamlet (Actors' Shakespeare Project). Rory grew up in Scotland where he appeared in productions of The Secret Garden; Honk!; and A Christmas Carol at the Byre Theatre of St Andrew's. He holds degrees from the University of Cambridge; University College London; and the Boston Conservatory. He resides in New York City with his wife, Clara, and their dog, Wallace. roryboyd.com

Matthew Davies (Specs/Ensemble/Davey U/S) is elated to be making his Arena Stage debut in Newsies! His most recent credits include: Guys and Dolls and Paint Your Wagon (MUNY); and A Funny Thing Happened...Forum (Gulfshore Playhouse). National tour credits include: Finding Neverland and Cinderella. Regional credits include: Music Theatre Wichita, MUNY, North Carolina Theatre, Gulfshore Playhouse and The Metropolitan Opera. Matthew holds a BFA in Musical Theatre from Brigham Young University. Sending gratitude to his family, parents, God, Bloc, Johnny, BYU, Parker and the whole production team for this amazing opportunity! Instagram: @matthewddavies www.matthewddavies.com

Wyn Delano (Snyder/Ensemble) is making his Arena Stage debut in Newsies. Recent D.C.-area credits include Into the Woods (Ford's Theatre), Beast in Beauty and the Beast (Creative Cauldron), A Civil War Christmas (First Stage), Parade (Keegan Theatre) and several leading roles at Riverside Center in Fredericksburg, VA. Last year, Wyn toured the country in the role of Major Gray as part of the First National Tour of the 2015 Broadway musical Amazing Grace. Favorite Regional credits include the southwest premiere of the magician-centric As We Lie Still (Contemporary Theatre of Dallas), several seasons with the Trinity Shakespeare Festival and A Tribute to Marvin Hamlisch featuring Donna McKechnie at Bass Hall. Wyn holds a BFA in Theatre from TCU in Fort Worth, TX.

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Edward Gero (Joseph Pulitzer)'s Arena Stage credits include Thomas Everson, Jr. in Junk, Antonin Scalia in The Originalist, Benjamin Hubbard in The Little Foxes and Mark Rothko in Red. He is a four-time Helen Hayes Award-winner and 16-time nominee. New York credits include The Originalist (59E59). Regional credits include The Originalist (Asolo Repertory, Pasadena Playhouse and Court Theatre, Joseph Jefferson Award nomination); Red and Gloucester in King Lear (Goodman); Nixon's Nixon and Night Alive (Round House); Sweeney Todd (Signature Theatre); Scrooge in A Christmas Carol (Ford's Theatre); and American Buffalo, Shining City and Skylight (Studio Theatre). In 32 seasons with Shakespeare Theatre Company, his over 70 roles include Helen Hayes turns in Henry IV, Richard II and Macbeth. Film/TV credits include "House of Cards," "TURN: Washington's Spies," "Die Hard 2," "Striking Distance" and narrations for Discovery Channel and PBS. He is a Ten Chimneys 2015 Lunt-Fontanne Fellow and associate professor of theater at George Mason University.

Daniel J. Maldonado (Jack Kelly) is very excited to be making his Arena Stage debut and to step back into Newsie Square! Some recent regional credits include: the world premiere of Moulin Rouge! The Musical based on Baz Luhrmann's critically acclaimed film (Emerson Colonial Theater, Boston); Grease (Pittsburgh CLO); Pippin (FreeFall Theatre); and The Graduate, Newsies, Rock of Ages and Tommy (Forestburgh Playhouse). He is a Rider University MT graduate and a proud AEA member. Thanks to the team at Nicolosi, Molly, Parker, Laura and Geoff! And a huge thank you to Mom, Dad, family, friends and Shelly for all the love and support. Love you all! Enjoy the show! Instagram: @DanielJ_Maldonado Twitter: @DanJMaldonado Website: danieljmaldonado.net

Joe Montoya (Crutchie) is honored to be making his Arena Stage debut in Newsies! Recent theater credits include: Les Miserables (Eponine), Modern Day Martyrdom (at Fuerza Fest NYC) and The Wild Party (Oscar D'Armano). Other favorite roles include Into the Woods (Jack) and Spring Awakening (Ernst). A recent graduate of Pace University's Musical Theater program, Joe has made concert appearances in New York City at 54Below, the Green Room 42, MCC Theater and Greenwich Village's the Duplex. Many thanks go out to the incredible cast and crew of Newsies! Love wins! Instagram: @jo_shortstack Website: JoeMontoyaOfficial.com

Nova Y. Payton (Medda Larkin/Nun) has performed extensively in the DC area. She is thrilled to be back at Arena for a second time. The last show Nova was in at Arena Stage was Smokey Joe's Café. Tour credits include: 3 Mo' Divas, Smokey Joe's Café (BJ). Regional credits include: The 5th: Man of La Mancha (Aldonza), A Night with Janis Joplin; Milwaukee Rep & Prince Music Theatre: Dreamgirls (Effie). DC Area credits include: Jelly's Last Jam, La Cage aux Folles, Defying Gravity: Making of a SuperNOVA, Dreamgirls (Helen Hayes Nom), The Best Little Whorehouse...(Jewel), Hairspray (Motormouth Mabelle, Helen Hayes recipient) (Signature); Caroline, or Change (Caroline) (Round House); Kiss Me, Kate (Hattie) (Shakespeare Theatre); A Year with Frog and Toad (Imagination Stage); Ragtime (Sarah) (Ford's Theatre); Godspell (Olney Theatre); and How To Succeed in Business (Kennedy Center). www.simply-nova.com.

Ethan Van Slyke (Davey Jacobs) returns to Arena Stage after last being seen in Oliver! (Fagin's Gang, Oliver U/S) and Watch on the Rhine (Joshua and Bodo U/S). Other professional credits include Creative Cauldron's Caroline or Change (Noah, Helen Hayes Nomination), NextStop Theatre's Singin' in the Rain (Rod/ Hollywood Tenor) and The Secret Garden (Colin). Ethan has also been a featured artist on the Kennedy Center's Millennium Stage. Currently a senior at Freedom High School (South Riding, VA), his school credits include Singin' in the Rain (Don Lockwood/Choreo.), The Music Man (Marcellus/Choreo.), Flowers for Algernon (Burt Seldon) and High School Musical (Ryan). Ethan would like to thank everyone at South Riding Dance Academy, his teachers, friends and family for their unconditional support. Instagram: @ethan.vanslyke Twitter: @ethanvABC

Erin Weaver (Katherine Plumber) is so excited to be back at Arena Stage where she was last seen as Katrin in Mother Courage (Helen Hayes Award). A seven-time Helen Hayes Award-winner, some of Erin's favorite roles locally include Mona Juul in Oslo, Nell Gwynn in Or (Helen Hayes Award) and Deb in Ordinary Days (Helen Hayes Award) at Round House Theatre; Marianne in Sense & Sensibility (Helen Hayes Award, Best Ensemble) and Thomasina in Arcadia (Helen Hayes Award) at the Folger Theatre; Amy in Company (Helen Hayes Award), Kathy in The Last Five Years and Kira in Xanadu at Signature Theatre; Jane in Me...Jane: The Dreams & Adventures of Young Jane Goodall at The Kennedy Center; and Sally in You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown at Imagination Stage. Erin lives outside of D.C. with her husband, Aaron Posner, and daughter, Maisie.

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For company biographies, please visit https://www.arenastage.org/tickets/1920-season/newsies/.

Newsies is generously sponsored by The Drutz Family Fund for Musical Theater, The Reef Team, Ilene and Steven Rosenthal and Sheila Stampfli.

Post-Show Conversations

Connect with our shows beyond the performance at a post-show conversation with artists and staff – November 19, November 20, December 4 and December 5 following the noon performance; November 26 following the 7:30 p.m. performance and November 21 following the 8 p.m. performance.

PRODUCTION INFORMATION

Disney's Newsies

Music by Alan Menken

Lyrics by Jack Feldman

Original Book by Harvey Fierstein

Directed by Molly Smith

Choreographed by Parker Esse

Music Direction by Laura Bergquist

In the Fichandler Stage | November 1 – December 22, 2019

ABOUT: In the summer of 1899, the newsboys of New York City took on two of the most powerful men in the country — Joseph Pulitzer and William Randolph Hearst — and won. Inspired by true events, the Broadway smash hit is a testament to the power of standing up and speaking out. The Tony Award-winning musical features fan-favorites like "Carrying the Banner," "King of New York" and "Seize the Day." *Newsies* is "a winning, high-energy musical" (*Entertainment Weekly*) just in time for the holidays and perfect for the whole family.

CAST:

Oscar Delancey/Bill: Rory Boyd

Specs/Ensemble/Davey u/s): Matthew Davies Bunsen/Stage Manager/Thug: Javier Del Pilar

Snyder/Ensemble: Wyn Delano

Seitz/Ensemble/Jack u/s: Christian Douglas

Joseph Pulitzer: Edward Gero Swing: Brett-Marco Glauser

Les: Hazel Hay

Morris Delancey/ Darcy: Michael Hewitt

Romeo/Spot Conlon/Ensemble/Dance Captain: Michael John Hughes Nun/Hannah/Bowery Beauty/Medda/Nun u/s: Carole Denise Jones

Fench/Ensemble: Tomás Matos

Crutchie: Joe Montoya

Newsie/Ensemble: Emre Ocak Mush/Ensemble: Shiloh Orr Nun/Medda Larkin: Nova Y. Pavton

Henry/Buttons/Ensemble: Tanner Pflueger

Bowery Beauty/Nun/Splasher/Woman/Ensemble/Katherine u/s: Bridget Riley

Tommy Boy/Scab/Ensemble: Tro Shaw

Wiesel/Mr. Jacobi/Mayor/Pulitzer u/s: Thomas Adrian Simpson Nunzio/Guard/Policeman/Teddy Roosevelt: Jamie Smithson

Les: Josiah Smothers Swing: Lucy Spring

Elmer/Ensemble: Luke Spring Davey Jacobs: Ethan Van Slyke

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Katherine Plumber: Erin Weaver

Race/Ensemble/Crutchie u/s: Chaz Wolcott

Jack Kelly: Daniel J. Maldonado Jo Jo/Ensemble: Kelli Youngman

CREATIVE TEAM:

Director: Molly Smith

Choreographer: Parker Esse
Music Director: Laura Bergquist
Set Designer: Ken MacDonald
Costume Designer: Alejo Vietti
Lighting Designer: Kimberly Purtell
Sound Designer: Daniel Erdberg

Associate Director/Text Director: Anita Maynard-Losh Assistant Choreographer: Michael John Hughes

Assistant Music Director: Suzanne Jones Dialect and Vocal Coach: Lisa Nathans Fight and Intimacy Consultant: Jenny Male

Casting Directors: Victor Vazquez, Geoff Josselson

Stage Manager: Susan R. White

Assistant Stage Manager: Marne Anderson Production Assistant: Dayne Sundman

PLAN YOUR VISIT

TICKETS: Tickets for *Newsies* are \$51-105, subject to change and based on availability, plus applicable fees. For information on savings programs such as pay-your-age tickets, student discounts, Southwest Nights and hero's discounts, visit <u>arenastage.org/tickets/savings-programs</u>.

Tickets may be purchased online at <u>arenastage.org</u>, by phone at 202-488-3300 or at the Sales Office at 1101 Sixth Street, 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 p.m.

Saturday & Sunday at 2 p.m.

Weekday matinees at 2 p.m. on Friday 11/29; at noon on Tuesday 11/19, Wednesday 11/20, Wednesday 12/4,

Thursday 12/5 and Thursday 12/12

Alternate times: Sunday, 11/17 at 1 p.m. and 6 p.m.

Closed captioning: GalaPro beings Friday, November 8

Open captioning: December 13 at 8 p.m.

Audio-described performance: Saturday, November 23 at 2 p.m.

Southwest Night: Tuesday, November 5 at 7:30 p.m.

Full Calendar: arenastage.org/tickets/calendar

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ARENA STAGE CAFÉ: ARENA STAGE CAFÉ: Prix fixe meals are available at Richard's Place, Arena Stage's casual dining café, with exciting new options available starting at \$20. To learn about these options, call 202-488-3300 or visit: https://www.arenastage.org/plan-your-visit/richards-place-cafe/prix-fixe/. To see the menu, call 202-488-3300 or visit https://www.arenastage.org/plan-your-visit/richards-place-cafe/menu/. The café opens two hours before the show. To pre-order refreshments, visit arenastage.org/plan-your-visit/richards-place-cafe/concessions

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 \$17. Single ticket buyers may purchase parking in advance for \$20 or on the day of the performance for \$24 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 \$15.

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.

For complete 2019/20 Season details, visit: arenastage.org/tickets/subscriptions.

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 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

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