FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 30, 2026

CONTACT
Arena Stage
Anastasia St. Hilaire, asthilaire@arenastage.org

Print Shop PR
Nicole Capatasto, nicole@printshoppr.com

ARENA STAGE
ANNOUNCES FINAL THREE PRODUCTIONS OF ITS 2026/27 SEASON

THE FOUR-TIME LUCILLE LORTEL AWARD WINNER AND *NEW YORK TIMES* CRITIC'S PICK

MEXODUS

Written by Brian Quijada and Nygel D. Robinson
Choreographed by Tony Thomas
Directed by David Mendizábal
In Partnership with Mosaic Theater Company
January 29 – March 7, 2027

THE RIOTOUS REUNION DECADES IN THE MAKING

BAD DATES: END GAME

By Theresa Rebeck
Directed by John Benjamin Hickey
Starring Julie White
In Association with Hartford Stage and George Street Playhouse
April 23 – June 6, 2027

THE INSPIRATION BEHIND THE OSCAR-WINNING FILM COMES TO THE STAGE

BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN

A Play by Ashley Robinson
With Songs by Dan Gillespie Sells
Based on Annie Proulx's Short Story
July 9 – August 29, 2027

(Washington, DC) **Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater** announced today the addition of three productions to its 2026/27 Season: Brian Quijada and Nygel D. Robinson's ***Mexodus***, Theresa Rebeck's ***Bad Dates: End Game***, and Ashley Robinson's ***Brokeback Mountain***. They will join *The Fruits of Our Labor* and *Are You Now or Have You Ever Been?,* both now in performances; *Step Afrika!'s Magical Musical Holiday Step Show*, DC's beloved holiday tradition; the U.S. regional premiere of Suzie Miller's *Prima Facie;* and the first-ever in-the-round staging of Branden Jacobs-Jenkins's *Purpose*.

“An apt analogy for this season is re-fueling in mid-flight,” shared Executive Producer **Edgar Dobie**. “I’m very proud of the way everyone in the organization pulled together to pivot after a dramatic shift in season planning. We’re pleased to announce the remaining shows in the 2026/27 Season, shows that are on-mission and will bring joy at a time when it's arguably in short supply. Your patience will be rewarded with top-notch theater.”

“Arena’s mission is to produce all that is passionate, exuberant, profound, entertaining, deep, and dangerous in the American spirit,” said Arena Stage Associate Artistic Director **Darren Johnston**. “Each of the three productions joining our 2026/27 Season further that mission and expand the definition of who we are as Americans. A rarely told chapter of American history blazes across our stage with musical virtuosity. An uproarious comedy insists that 60-year-old women are the heroes of their own lives, not the support. Two Wyoming sheepherders strive to love and connect, a love that was too long shunned. These are essential theatrical experiences, essential American stories, and essential Arena.”

The Lortel, Drama Desk, and Outer Critics Circle Award–winning ***Mexodus*** kicks off 2027 in the Kreeger Theater. This groundbreaking hip-hop musical reimagines the Underground Railroad heading south to Mexico—unearthing a powerful, untold chapter of American history. Written by **Brian Quijada and Nygel D. Robinson**, directed by **David Mendizábal** (Arena’s *Sanctuary City*), with choreography by **Tony Thomas** (Arena’s *Tempestuous Elements*), *Mexodus* uses instruments to build a live soundscape each night, layering rhythms, melodies, and harmonies to create full arrangements on the spot each performance.

Mexodus premiered in 2024 as a co-production with DC’s Mosaic Theater Company and Baltimore Center Stage. Following award-winning Off-Broadway runs in 2025 at Audible’s Minetta Lane Theatre and 2026 at the Daryl Roth Theatre, the musical returns to the DMV with its original creative team, including set designer **Riw Rakkulchon** (*& Juliet*), lighting designer **Mextly Couzin** (*JOB*), and Tony Award-winning sound designer **Mikhail Fiksel** (*Dana H.*), with costume design by **Mendizábal**. The cast will be announced at a later date.

“It is a thrill to partner with our friends at Arena Stage in bringing *Mexodus* back to DC!,” shared Mosaic Theater Company Artistic Director **Reginald L. Douglas**. “Developing and producing the 2024 world premiere production of this inspiring new musical with writers Brian Quijada and Nygel D. Robinson remains a highlight of Mosaic’s history and a personal honor for myself, Managing Director Serge Seiden, and the Mosaic community. Since that acclaimed production, *Mexodus* has taken the country by storm and its epic return back to the nation’s capital couldn’t be more timely. As we prepare for shifts in our local and national governments, I am confident that this innovative look at our country’s history will offer audiences inspiration and hope to fight back despair and discrimination with unity, strength, and joy.”

In April, two-time Emmy nominee **Theresa Rebeck** (*NYPD Blue*) reunites with Tony Award winners **John Benjamin Hickey** (*The Normal Heart*) and **Julie White** (*The Little Dog Laughed*) to reprise their roles as writer, director, and star, respectively, in the follow-up to Rebeck’s acclaimed 2003 comedy *Bad Dates*. This sequel finds Haley—now 58 and widowed—as she navigates new technology and dating apps. Sharp-witted and deeply human, ***Bad Dates: End Game*** is a funny, fearless, and fresh portrait of one woman learning—on her own terms—what comes next. The comedy makes its DC premiere following early 2027 runs at Hartford Stage and George Street Playhouse. The full creative team will be announced at a later date.

Adapted by **Ashley Robinson** from Pulitzer Prize winner **Annie Proulx**'s short story, with songs by **Dan Gillespie Sells** (*Everybody's Talking About Jamie*), ***Brokeback Mountain*** will close Arena's 2026/27 Season. In the summer of 1963, Ennis Del Mar and Jack Twist met while tending sheep on an isolated Wyoming mountain. Their unexpected connection becomes a love that endures across two decades, even as marriage, family, distance, and the threat of violence keep them apart. Country-and-western music and intimate theatrical storytelling express what the men cannot say aloud in this stage adaptation of the award-winning novel and film. This Summer 2027 production will mark this play with music's East Coast premiere, following earlier runs at London's @sohoplace and Chicago Shakespeare Theater. The full cast and creative team will be announced at a later date.

The previously announced production of *NIKOLA – A New Musical* will no longer run during the Arena Stage 2026/27 Season.

Tickets for *Mexodus*, *Bad Dates: End Game*, and *Brokeback Mountain*, as well as the previously announced *Prima Facie* and *Purpose*, are now available exclusively to Arena Stage subscribers and group sales.

Tickets will go on sale via Mix & Match packages beginning November 4.
Tickets will go on sale to the public on November 17.

COMPLETE 2026/27 SEASON DETAILS

THE FRUITS OF OUR LABOR
By Step Afrika!
Directed by Jakari Sherman
with Conrad R. Kelly II and Vusi Mdoyi
NOW IN PERFORMANCES: September 10 – November 1, 2026
In the Fichandler Stage

In commemoration of America's 250th anniversary, Step Afrika! premieres *The Fruits of Our Labor*—a powerful new production exploring rhythm, resilience, and the unfinished story of the American experience.

Blending stepping, percussion, and striking visual imagery, this visceral dance piece examines what it means to believe in a nation still in the making. Created in collaboration with artists Jakari Sherman, Conrad R. Kelly II, and Vusi Mdoyi, *The Fruits of Our Labor* asks: What have we inherited and what are we still fighting to become?

The Fruits of Our Labor is made possible through the extraordinary generosity and the visionary support of **Tiffeny Sanchez and Reg Brown, Lead Sponsors of the production and national tour.**

ARE YOU NOW OR HAVE YOU EVER BEEN?
By Eric Bentley
Directed by Anna D. Shapiro
NOW IN PERFORMANCES: October 17 – December 6, 2026

In the Kreeger Theater

Straight from Off-Broadway comes a timely revival of Eric Bentley's American docudrama, directed by Tony Award winner Anna D. Shapiro. This electrifying play drops you into the tense world of the 1940s House Un-American Activities Committee hearings, where fame offered no protection and political pressure could end a career.

Are You Now or Have You Ever Been? brings to life the words of iconic artists Arthur Miller, Jerome Robbins, Paul Robeson, Elia Kazan, Lillian Hellman, Abe Burrows, and Lionel Stander as they faced impossible choices: defend their integrity, protect their careers, or betray their peers. And yet the probing, chilling questions posed by the committee are as powerful as the testimonies themselves, revealing a climate of intimidation and moral conflict that resonates far beyond its time.

Are You Now or Have You Ever Been? is sponsored by **Decker Anstrom and Sherry Hiemstra**.

STEP AFRIKA!'S MAGICAL MUSICAL HOLIDAY STEP SHOW
December 4 – 23, 2026
In the Fichandler Stage

Step into the spirit with the joyful return of DC's favorite holiday tradition, *Step Afrika!'s Magical Musical Holiday Step Show*! With unforgettable moments for all ages, this family-friendly production is a celebration of music, movement, and cheer—featuring DJ Nutcracker and his Arctic friends alongside the award-winning Step Afrika! performers. As the world's first holiday show highlighting the African American tradition of stepping, this beloved performance promises to bring the spirit of the season to the stage and audiences out of their seats!

PRIMA FACIE
By Suzie Miller
Directed by Candis C. Jones
January 8 – March 7, 2027
In the Arlene and Robert Kogod Cradle

Tessa is a brilliant criminal defense attorney who has fought her way to the top of her field, defending men accused of sexual assault. She knows how to win, and she trusts the system that made her success possible. But when the unthinkable happens to her, she finds herself sitting where her clients' accusers once sat.

What follows is a reckoning with the law's patriarchal power and the gap between the burden of proof and truth. *Prima Facie* by Suzie Miller is an electrifying, award-winning one-woman show that doesn't just ask what justice means. It demands we do something about it.

Support for *Prima Facie* is provided by **Deborah Bowles and Derik Burgess**, **Catherine and Chris Guttman-McCabe**, and **Vicki J. Hicks**.

MEXODUS
Written by Brian Quijada and Nygel D. Robinson
Choreographed by Tony Thomas

Directed by David Mendizábal
In Partnership with Mosaic Theater Company
Presented by Arrangement with P3 Productions and Audible
January 29 – March 7, 2027
In the Kreeger Theater

A freedom seeker and an unlikely ally forge a bond that transcends borders in this thrilling hip-hop musical that uncovers a hidden chapter of American history—when thousands of enslaved people fled across the Rio Grande to freedom in Mexico. *Mexodus* is a two-person tour de force that blends live-looped music, storytelling, and raw theatricality.

Created by Brian Quijada and Nygel D. Robinson as a co-production with DC's Mosaic Theater Company and Baltimore Center Stage, and following award-winning Off-Broadway runs, this "electrifying theatrical experience" (*The New York Times*) runs to the nation's capital in Arena Stage's Kreeger Theater.

Support for *Mexodus* is provided by **Daniel Korengold, Martha Dippell, and Ourisman Automotive of Virginia,** and **Anthony D. Coley**.

PURPOSE
By Branden Jacobs-Jenkins
Directed by Jade King Carroll
March 12 – May 2, 2027
In the Fichandler Stage

Meet the Jaspers—a Black political dynasty of civil rights leaders, pastors, and congressmen who have long anchored Black American life. But beneath the surface, cracks and secrets simmer. When the youngest son, Naz, returns home with an unexpected guest, long-buried resentment boils over, fracturing the family's foundation.

Wickedly smart, outrageously funny, and ultimately devastating, Branden Jacobs-Jenkins's Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award-winning *Purpose* is a provocative, deeply felt exploration of legacy, belonging, and the cost of believing in something bigger than yourself.

Support for *Purpose* is provided by **Daniel W Hamilton**.

BAD DATES: END GAME
By Theresa Rebeck
Directed by John Benjamin Hickey
Starring Julie White
In Association with Hartford Stage and George Street Playhouse
April 23 – June 6, 2027
In the Kreeger Theater

Tony Award winner Julie White stars as Haley in this witty, heartfelt comedy about what life is like when you step back into the wild world of dating at 60. Three years after losing her husband, she's navigating dating apps, awkward setups, and men who were considerably more appealing in theory.

With a sharp sense of humor and plenty of reservations, White once again brings to life Theresa Rebeck's Haley in *Bad Dates: End Game*.

BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN
A Play by Ashley Robinson
With Songs by Dan Gillespie Sells
Based on Annie Proulx's Short Story
By Special Arrangement with Nica Burns and Adam Blanshay
July 9 – August 29, 2027
In the Kreeger Theater

On Brokeback Mountain, Ennis Del Mar and Jack Twist find something neither expected: a love that feels as open and unguarded as the landscape surrounding them. When the summer ends, they return to separate lives, carrying a connection too powerful to forget and too dangerous to name.

Framed through memory and accompanied by original country-and-western songs, Ashley Robinson's adaptation of Annie Proulx's short story follows Ennis and Jack through two decades of longing, tenderness, and precious time together. *Brokeback Mountain* gives music to everything the men struggle to say and celebrates a love that survives in every return, every touch, and every moment they manage to make their own.

The first racially integrated theater in our nation's capital and a pioneer of the regional theater movement, Arena Stage was founded in 1950 in Washington, DC. Today, under the leadership of Executive Producer Edgar Dobie, Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater is a national center dedicated to American voices and artists. We produce plays of all that is passionate, profound, deep, and dangerous in the American spirit, and present diverse and groundbreaking work from some of the best artists around the country. Consistently contributing to the American theatrical lexicon by commissioning and developing new plays, Arena Stage impacts the lives of over 10,000 students annually through its work in community engagement and serves a diverse annual audience of more than 300,000. [*arenastage.org*](arenastage.org)

###

CONNECT WITH US
facebook.com/arenastage
instagram.com/arenastage
youtube.com/arenastage1