

POTUS

OR, BEHIND EVERY GREAT
DUMBASS ARE SEVEN WOMEN
TRYING TO KEEP HIM ALIVE



2023/24 SEASON



2023/24 SEASON NEXT AT ARENA STAGE

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CHOREOGRAPHED BY DAVID NEUMANN

NOVEMBER 25-DECEMBER 30

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BY KIA CORTHRON

DIRECTED BY PSALMAYENE 24

FEBRUARY 16-MARCH 17

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UNKNOWN SOLDIER

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LYRICS BY MICHAEL FRIEDMAN AND DANIEL GOLDSTEIN

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POTUS OR, BEHIND EVERY GREAT DUMBASS ARE SEVEN WOMEN TRYING TO KEEP HIM ALIVE

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ARENA STAGE MISSION

Arena Stage is the voice of American theater resident in our nation's capital. Focused on American artists, our productions are innovative and representative of stories from across the country. We nurture new plays and reimagine classics. We celebrate our democracy and diversity through a multitude of voices in our productions and community engagement programs to inspire people to action. We produce all that is passionate, exuberant, profound, entertaining, deep, and dangerous in the American spirit.



Arena Stage is built on the land of the Piscataway people of the Algonquin-speaking tribes, as well as the lands of the Native American people of the greater Anacostia, Potomac, and Tidewater regions.

ARTISTICALLY SPEAKING



I am delighted to welcome you to Arena Stage as your new Artistic Director! I am so grateful for the incredibly warm welcome I've received since joining the iconic Arena Stage family. I look forward to getting to know you throughout the season.

While still relatively new to residency in Washington, D.C., I am familiar with our capital city and the myriad ways politics are woven into every aspect of life. Helicopters, motorcades, and government shutdowns have a distinct and specific impact here that are mere reverberations in other parts of the country.

The indomitable spirit of our city is representative of the hope, grit, joy, and dreams that stretch from coast to coast. In taking the mantle of this incredible theatrical institution, I begin with the fundamental question of “*Who are we that make up this Capital (two states and a district)?*” What stories intrigue, challenge, delight, and inspire us? In programming, how is the work meaningfully reflecting the existential questions of our collective humanity while honoring the specificity and diversity of our lived experiences? How is the work galvanizing and inspiring people to action? Answering the call of these questions is essential to serving our mission and reflecting the full spectrum of the American Spirit.

Molly Smith understood answering the call should also harken joy, hilarity, and unassailable truth. Through the lens of the comedic and the familiar, we are able to most openly face our vulnerabilities and hypocrisies in service of our humanity. Nothing in the theatrical cannon more fully delivers on those points than a good farce. Most people can get behind a farce about the White House, regardless of political persuasion.

In *POTUS*, we tackle the power dynamic between men and women and the lengths to which we will go to protect the legacy of the leaders we follow. In the dedication of this play, Selina Fillinger frames the journey as a tribute to “*Kamala Harris, Elizabeth Warren, Hillary Clinton, Shirley Chisholm...and every other woman who's ever found herself the secondary character in a male farce.*” No men appear onstage, but their presence, proclivities, and perceived power are ever-present.

In this city of infinite possibility, where everything is seemingly negotiable, and every negotiation impacts millions—where and how we draw our moral lines of complicity are food for fodder. Selina's world exemplifies this question as we romp through one extraordinary day in the West Wing, pushing us from the ridiculous to the sublime.

There is a future where the faces of history are not only the men (*and one day, women*) who were vaulted to the top job but include the vast teams of people that form the network—and safety nets—for leadership to thrive. What a fantastic space to hold this story—Arena's iconic Fichandler Stage. It is a theater founded by a bold visionary woman who understood the power of the theater-in-the-round placing every audience member in the story. We see each other physically while posed questions challenge, delight, and illuminate our world. We become a community for these brief hours and hopefully extend part of that community into the rest of our lives.

What a gift to begin my adventure with you on this wild odyssey into the annals of Selina Fillinger's imagining of our political machine at work.

Thank you all for the warm welcome and joyful support of Arena Stage.

Buckle up, my friends, we are in for quite the ride!

Hana S. Sharif
Artistic Director

FROM THE EXECUTIVE PRODUCER



We have joined together today for *POTUS*, following the show's celebrated Broadway run last year. One of the founding principles of the resident theater movement was to have an alternative source of theater to the commercially-focused Broadway. Arena Stage is one of the early founders of the movement in 1950.

This is a quote from an Arena Stage Board of Trustees meeting, March 25, 1976:

"Al Miller reported that Arena Stage will become the first theater company outside New York City to be presented a Tony Award. Zelda Fichandler will accept the award on television (ABC-TV) on April 18, 1976. This Tony is one of several special awards made each year, at the same time that the competitive awards (Best Actor, Best Director, etc.) are made. The award will be presented by Al Pacino, an actor of note who began and still works in the resident theater movement. Arena Stage will certainly call the public's attention to its newest honor, but the Tony will not be overused as a symbol of Arena's accomplishment—it was noted that the Broadway hit-or-miss syndrome was one of the things Zelda wanted to get away from in 1950, when Arena began; it would now be ironic for Arena to enshrine Broadway's emblem."

Here in 2023, we proudly display that Tony Award in the lobby. Where once the resident (or regional) theater movement may have resisted these connections, there is a fruitful symbiosis both in resident theaters sending shows to New York and shows coming from New York. Ultimately what has been created is a nationwide field of theater makers who adapt between the not-for-profit and for-profit worlds.

As you may know, Arena has participated with the pre-Broadway runs of many shows, most recently *Sweat* (by Lynn Nottage) and *Dear Evan Hansen* (music and lyrics by Benj Pasek and Justin Paul, and book by Steven Levenson) and an example from farther back, *Joe Turner's Come and Gone* (by August Wilson, in 1987). Other examples of Arena producing shows shortly after their successful Broadway runs include *Other Desert Cities* (by Jon Robin Baitz, in 2013) and *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike* (by Christopher Durang, in 2015). These post-Broadway productions were not tours of the Broadway creative teams, but rather newly visioned productions of the show—just like this new in-the-round version of *POTUS*.

Great stories find their way around the country, and it's heartening to realize that the theater field envisioned by Zelda and her peers thrives by sharing this great theater, from Broadway and to Broadway. As you will see in *POTUS*, these stories demand to be told and can speak directly to our specific communities in interesting ways.

For me personally, there is another interesting connection. As you may see in my bio, I spent many adventurous years as President of Andrew Lloyd Webber's Really Useful Theatre Company. So, I will say my experience with shows featuring giant chandeliers above the stage is that they will be great successes!

Edgar Dobie
Executive Producer
President of the Corporation

**Proudly Shaping
the Local Landscape**

BETWEEN RUPTURE & RAPTURE

by Otis Ramsey-Zöe, Dramaturg

First of all, comedy does consist in the absence of something which is expected, but it can also consist in the presence of something where nothing is expected. Always, however, the situation must illustrate the absence of what ought to be, if it is to reveal comedy. The unexpected indication of the absence of perfection (the *ought*) constitutes the comic situation.

— James K. Feibleman, “The Meaning of Comedy”

We live in an age in which we can make the case for politics as a form of theater. We seemingly also live in an age of comedy; or, said another way, comedy as genre, lens, and rhetorical mode functions as a primary means of delivering and processing information. News and analysis travel by memes, apps like TikTok, and programs like *The Daily Show* and *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver*. For at least a decade and a half—perhaps the inflection point that added the greatest momentum to this era is *Saturday Night Live*’s September 2008 introduction of Tina Fey as Alaskan Governor and vice presidential candidate Sarah Palin—comedy has been essential to helping us reconcile and understand our increasingly absurd and often unrecognizable world. Selina Fillinger is both a student and master of perceiving the contemporary moment. Her play *POTUS: Or, Behind Every Great Dumbass Are Seven Women Trying to Keep Him Alive* skillfully combines political satire, parody-cum-backstage comedy, and farce to produce a scenario so outrageous that it will never happen. Yet, quite commonly, these days something once thought too ridiculous to occur happens. *POTUS* simultaneously epitomizes the zeitgeist and follows what has been the purpose of comedy dating back to the origins of western drama.

As a backstage comedy, *POTUS* takes place in a White House that amalgamates prior administrations and emerges from fevered amplification of possible future ones. The figures are nonpartisan composites drawn from both parties. We can recognize the unseen US President in the play; we’ve seen traces of him in various leaders stretching back decades. He is a man who engages in extramarital affairs, excels at bullying, exhibits poor leadership, wields a hot temper, and appears woefully ill-equipped for the job he holds. We have seen women in most, but not all, of the Executive Branch positions featured in the play, and this straightforward observation perhaps portends one of Fillinger’s percipient proffers.

Brace yourselves. *POTUS* begins *in medias res*, or without preamble, and at a rupture. In farce, the past is prologue. Circumstances fueling calamities and chaos that will unfold all stem from preceding events. Since the initiating problem has already occurred, characters find themselves in a game of catch-up as conditions spiral, new complications enter, and urgency ever increases. The play’s hapless head of state sets off concurrent crises, which the seven women closest to him must resolve. The women labor on behalf of

the titular dumbass and endeavor to keep up appearances, which dramatizes the impulse to conserve the status quo. Early and often in *POTUS*, there is a sense that things aren’t working and something must change. But, how? Or, what? Or, who? While comedy sometimes provide escape from society’s problems, *POTUS* bids viewers to lean into our political dysfunction to contemplate pressing questions about our democracy and responsibilities as citizens.

The entanglement of politics and comedy trace back to the earliest forms of comedy for which we have historical records. The oldest form of stage comedy in western dramatic tradition are what’s known as Old Comedy, which date to fifth century BC. All the works that shape our understanding of this initial phase in ancient Greek comedy come from a sole playwright, Aristophanes, whose dramatic output patently addressed political themes pertinent to Athenian institutions and democracy. In ancient Greece, theater performances took place during city festivals that were so important that attendance or participation was essential for standing as a good citizen. Broadly, ancient Greek tragedies centered on figures from traditional myths as a means of exploring an individual’s responsibility to self, family, and city-state. As tragedies routinely ended in unfavorable outcomes, lessons on how citizens ought to behave were often communicated by examples of how persons ought not behave; arguably, *POTUS* utilizes the same approach. In contrast, Old Comedy concerned familiar and present political conditions, and public figures, officials, and prominent citizens were blatantly criticized and had their policies derided. Aristophanes acted as a conscience of the people and did not shy away from exposing corruption and political mismanagement and ridiculing the offenders. *POTUS* synthesizes tragedies’ interrogation of individual responsibility and representations of less than model

behavior and Old Comedy’s analysis of current political zeitgeist.

Both comedy and politics are concerned with possibility. Aristotle once asserted that “politics is the art of the possible.” For Aristotle, *possible* refers to what is pragmatic. Yet, *possible* is capacious enough to hold anything that is conceivable, that which *ought* to be even if it hasn’t come to pass. Comedy shows us the folly in what *is* in order to arouse what could be, should be, and urgently must be. Breaches in comedy provide ways of testing out different perspectives, alternative social formations, verboten romantic and sexual pairing, fantastic solutions to common problems, and the subversive and transformative nature of language. As experimental worldmaking, comedy journeys us from rupture to rapture. Like the preamble to the US Constitution, *POTUS*’s project might be to encourage us to consider what is needed from each of us to move the nation in the direction of becoming “a more perfect union.” Or, perhaps, that’s too great a burden for a play, and its greatest ask is that we simply buckle up, lean in, and enjoy the ride; after all, this is a comedy.

LISTEN UP!

No, your ears do not deceive you! Our production of *POTUS* features the voices of some of our nation’s most iconic journalists. Listen for the unique tones of...

- | | |
|---|------------------------------|
| Rita Braver
CBS | Susan Stamberg
NPR |
| Major Garrett
CBS | Nina Totenberg
NPR |
| Rachel Martin
NPR | Neda Ulaby
NPR |
| David Smith
<i>The Guardian</i> | |



The cast of *POTUS* by Tony Powell.

ARENA STAGE

HANA S. SHARIF, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR | EDGAR DOBIE, EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

PRESENTS

POTUS

OR, BEHIND EVERY GREAT DUMBASS ARE SEVEN WOMEN TRYING TO KEEP HIM ALIVE

BY SELINA FILLINGER

DIRECTED BY MARGOT BORDELON

SET DESIGNER
REID THOMPSON

COSTUME DESIGNER
IVANIA STACK

LIGHTING DESIGNER
MARIKA KENT

ORIGINAL MUSIC
AND SOUND DESIGN
SINAN REFIK ZAFAR

WIG AND HAIR DESIGNER
TOMMY KURZMAN

DIALECT AND VOCAL COACH
LISA NATHANS

DRAMATURG
OTIS RAMSEY-ZÖE

CASTING DIRECTOR
JOSEPH PINZON

NEW YORK CASTING
KELLY GILLESPIE, CSA

STAGE MANAGER
CHRISTI B. SPANN

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER
DAYNE SUNDMAN

POTUS is made possible by a generous gift from **Beth Newburger Schwartz**, made in honor and welcome of **Hana S. Sharif** as Arena Stage's new Artistic Director.

Additional support is provided by **Sheila Stampfli**.

Arena Stage offers this production in memory of generous patron and longtime volunteer, **Naomi Horowitz**.

POTUS is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals on behalf of Samuel French, Inc.
www.concordtheatricals.com

POTUS was originally produced on Broadway by:
Seaview, 51 Entertainment, Glass Half Full, Level Forward
Salman Al-Rashid, Runyonland Productions, Sony Music Masterworks, One Community
Jay Alix and Una Jackman, Jonathan Demar,
Imagine Equal Entertainment, Lucas Katler, David J. Lynch, Leonid Makaron,
Mark Gordon Pictures, Liz Slager, Ted Snowdon, Natalie Gorman/Tish Brennan Throop
and the Shubert Organization (Mark Shackett, Executive Producer)

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#ArenaPOTUS #ArenaStage
 #ArenaStageDC #DCTheatre #ACreativeDC

SETTING / CAST / FOR THIS PRODUCTION

SETTING

The White House.
 Perhaps not the current administration, exactly—but broad strokes of past presidents, combined with stress dreams of future ones.
 And, if we're being honest, an amalgamation of them all...

CAST (in order of appearance)

Harriet (<i>His chief of staff.</i>)	NAOMI JACOBSON
Jean (<i>His press secretary.</i>).....	NATALYA LYNETTE RATHNAM
Stephanie (<i>His secretary.</i>).....	MEGAN HILL
Margaret (<i>His wife. The First Lady.</i>).....	FELICIA CURRY
Chris (<i>A journalist.</i>).....	YESENIA IGLESIAS
Dusty (<i>His dalliance.</i>).....	SARAH-ANNE MARTINEZ
Bernadette (<i>His sister.</i>)/ Fight Captain	KELLY MCANDREW
u/s Harriet/ Bernadette.....	JANET GREER
u/s Jean/ Stephanie.....	PEREGRINE TENG HEARD
u/s Margaret/ Chris/ Dusty.....	JASMINE JOY

FOR THIS PRODUCTION

Assistant Director	KAYLA A. WARREN
Fight and Intimacy Consultant	SIERRA YOUNG
Singing Coach	TRACY OLIVERA
Production Assistant.....	TIFFANY KO
Stage Carpenters.....	HANNAH MARTIN, SIMON SINNREICH
Props	ERICA FEIDELSEIT, ABBY FRY
Light Board Operator	SCOTT FOLSOM
Lighting Assistant	INDIGO GARCIA
Audio Engineer	DREW MOBERLEY
Wardrobe Supervisor.....	ALICE HAWFIELD
Wardrobe	ADELLE GRESOCK
Wigs, Hair, and Makeup Supervisor.....	JAIME BAGLEY
Crew Swing.....	TREVOR COMEAU

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WHO'S WHO

CAST



NAOMI JACOBSON

(Harriet)'s Arena Stage performances include Mary Todd Lincoln in Tazewell Thompson's *Mary T. & Lizzy K.* (premiere), *A View From the Bridge*, *The Misanthrope*, and *The Women*, among others. An Affiliated Artist at Shakespeare Theatre, and a company member at Woolly Mammoth, her DC credits include The Kennedy Center, Ford's Theatre, Studio, Signature, Folger, Round House, Olney, Theater J, and Wolf Trap Opera. She's traveled to the Guthrie Theater, Goodman Theatre, Cleveland Play House, Milwaukee Rep, Center Stage, Cincinnati Playhouse, Indiana Rep, Arizona Theatre Company, and Berkshire Theatre Festival. Voice-over work includes documentaries for NPR, PBS, Discovery Channel, and the Smithsonian. She's received three Helen Hayes Awards, numerous nominations, the Lunt-Fontanne Fellowship, the Anderson-Hopkins Award, and a DC Commission Individual Artist Grant. Visit www.naomijacobson.com for complete resume.



NATALYA LYNETTE RATHNAM

(Jean) last appeared at Arena Stage in *Our War*. Regional credits include *The Last Match*, *The Phlebotomist* (1st Stage); *A Nice Indian Boy* (Olney Theatre Center); *Bars and Measures*, *Shame 2.0*, *When January Feels Like Summer* (Mosaic Theater Company); *It's Christmas, Carol!* (Oregon Shakespeare Festival); *Memoirs of a Forgotten Man* (Washington Stage Guild); *A Wind in the Door*, *Kid Prince and Pablo*, *Mockingbird*, *The Wings of Ikarus Jackson* (Kennedy Center); *4,380 Nights* (Signature Theatre); *Death of A Salesman* (Ford's Theatre); *The Trojan Women* (Taffety Punk); *The Fire and The Rain* (Constellation Theatre Company); *The Fantasticks* (Rep Stage); *Glassheart* (Rorschach); *Illyria*, *Julius Caesar* (Virginia Shakespeare Festival); *A*

Midsummer Night's Dream, *Twelfth Night*, *All's Well That Ends Well* (Maryland Shakespeare Festival); *In the Blood*, *Lyme Park* (The Hegira). Instagram: [@lynetterathnam](https://www.instagram.com/lynetterathnam)



MEGAN HILL

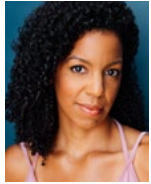
(Stephanie) is a Brooklyn-based actor and writer. Her play *The Last Class: A Jazzercise Play* has enjoyed runs in New York, DC, and Seattle. As an actor, she's originated roles in the world premieres of Ramiz Monsef's *The Ants*; Leah Nanako Winkler's *The Brightest Thing in the World and Kentucky*; Crystal Skillman's *Open and Cut*; Amy Staats' *Eddie and Dave*; Mara Nelson Greenberg's *Do You Feel Anger?*; Rob Askins' *Hand to God*; and Joshua Conkel and Matt Marks' *The House of Von Macramé*. Megan was nominated for a Drama Desk Award and was named one of the Best Comedic Performances of the Year by *The New York Times* for her portrayal of David Lee Roth in *Eddie and Dave*. BFA Acting/Original Works: Cornish College of the Arts. MFA: ART/MXAT IATT at Harvard. www.meganhill.net Instagram: [@meganhillwhat](https://www.instagram.com/meganhillwhat)



FELICIA CURRY

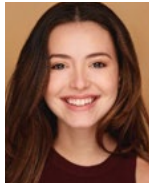
(Margaret) last appeared at Arena Stage in the Cabaret Nights series. She was last seen on DC stages in *Our Town* at Shakespeare Theatre Company and *My Lord, What a Night* at Ford's Theatre. Curry received a Helen Hayes Award for *Lela & Co.* at Factory 449 where she is a company member. She is also a Resident Company Member at Everyman Theatre and an Artistic Associate at Ford's Theatre. Felicia recently made her Broadway debut in the Tony-nominated revival of *Into the Woods*, and then toured with the show around the country, including The Kennedy Center. She has a Berkshire Theatre Critics Award, a RTCC Award, an Anderson Hopkins Award, and is an AUDELCO nominee for *Queens Girl in the World* at Abingdon Theatre off-Broadway. Felicia has been named one of "12 DC Stage Dynamos" by *The Washington Post*

and one of "DC's Biggest Theater Stars" by *Washingtonian* magazine. She is on the WAPAVA Board of Directors and the Emmy-nominated host of WETA Arts on PBS. Instagram: [@thefeliciacurry](#)



YESENIA IGLESIAS

(Chris) is thrilled to be making her Arena Stage debut with this incredible team. A selection of her DC regional credits includes *Dance Nation* (Olney Theatre Center); *Daphne's Dive*, *Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity* (Signature Theatre); *A Christmas Carol* (Ford's Theatre); *Kid Prince and Pablo* (Kennedy Center); *Love's Labor's Lost* (Folger Theatre); *The Legend of Georgia McBride* (Round House Theatre); *Hamlet*, and *King Charles III* (Shakespeare Theatre Company). Elsewhere in the DMV includes *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* and *The Arabian Nights* (Constellation Theatre Company), and *The Smartest Girl in the World* (Imagination Stage). Other notable credits include *Passing Strange* (ACT—Seattle), *Mwindo* (Seattle Children's Theatre), and *Water by the Spoonful* (Theatre 22). Yesenia is from Bayamón, Puerto Rico, and holds an MFA from the University of Washington. Instagram: [@ye_iglesias](#)



SARAH-ANNE MARTINEZ

(Dusty) is making her debut at Arena Stage! New York credits include *Leaving Eden* (NYMF, Outstanding Performer in a Leading Role Award). Regional credits include *Peter and the Starcatcher*, *The Addams Family*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Festival 56); and *Hello, Dolly!* (Tulane Summer Lyric). You can see her on television as Teen Marjorie in *Pretty Little Liars: Original Sin*. Other TV credits include *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel*, *Blue Bloods*, and *Evil*. Proud Ball State University alum and member of Actors' Equity and SAG-AFTRA. Thank you to the creative team of *POTUS* and to her agents at Stewart Talent. Much love to Brent! Instagram: [@sarahmartinezz](#)



KELLY McANDREW

(Bernadette/Fight Captain) is thrilled to return to Arena Stage, where in 2000 she played both Annie Sullivan in *The Miracle Worker* as well as Eleanor Bachman in the revival of *The Great White Hope*. Off-Broadway credits include roles at Playwrights Horizons, Atlantic Theater Company, MCC, Signature Theatre, Rattlestick, Transport Group, and Primary Stages. Regional theaters include Humana Festival ('16, '17, and '19), Westport Country Playhouse, Yale Rep, ART, Guthrie Theater, The Old Globe, and Olney Theatre (for which she received a Helen Hayes nomination for Best Actress in *Holiday* in 2001). TV: *New Amsterdam*, *The Sinner*, *The Good Fight*, *Daredevil* (recurring), *Orange Is the New Black* (recurring), *House of Cards*, *Elementary*, *Law & Order: SVU*, *Smash*, *Law & Order*, and *Gossip Girl*. Film: *Peas and Carrots* (upcoming), *A Kid Like Jake* (Sundance 2018), *Appropriate Behavior* (Sundance 2014), *In the Family* (Spirit nomination), and *Everybody's Fine* (with Robert DeNiro). Training: UMKC. [kellymcandrew.com](#)



JANET GREER

(u/s Harriet/Bernadette) was last seen at Arena Stage in *The Women*. She has performed at The Kennedy Center, Studio Theatre, Scena Theatre, and Source Theatre, and was nominated for a Helen Hayes Award in 2003. Her recent TV and film credits include *Awkwafina is Nora from Queens* opposite BD Wong, lead role in the indie feature *Frank and Edna Take on Le Mans*, NBC's *Homicide: Life on the Street*, and *Girl*, *Interrupted* opposite Winona Ryder. She is Meisner trained (Maggie Flanigan Studio) and received her BFA from George Mason University. Proud SAG/AFTRA/AEA member. Instagram: [@janetgreeractor](#)



PEREGRINE TENG HEARD

(u/s Jean/Stephanie)'s New York credits include the world premiere of Chuck Mee's *soot and spit* (The New Ohio), *Call Out Culture: or, the unbearable whiteness of being* (Ars Nova ANT Fest), *Ski End* (Piehole), and *Sehnsucht* (JACK). Peregrine is the artistic director of The Associates Theater Ensemble, with whom she has devised and performed *The Cousinhood* (The Center at West Park), *Sheila* (A.R.T./New York Theatres), *Black Protagonist* (124 Bank Street Theater), and *Freesome* (The Brick). Regional credits include *Tom Jones* and *Remix 38* at Actors Theatre of Louisville. Voice-over work includes ads for Cadillac, Sonos, and Roomba. Peregrine's play *Redemption Story* is a 2023 O'Neill National Playwrights Conference Semifinalist.



JASMINE JOY

(u/s Margaret/Chris/Dusty) is so excited to join Arena Stage for this hilarious, elegant production! Local credits include *Shear Madness* (The Kennedy Center); *The Hula-Hoopin' Queen*, *Corduroy*, *The Snow Queen* (Imagination Stage); *Dance Nation* (Olney Theatre Center); *The Mamalogues* (1st Stage); *A Chorus Within Her* (Theater Alliance); *Moon Man Walk* (Constellation Theatre); *A Wind in the Door* (The Kennedy Center TYA); *Womxn on Fire Festival* (Keegan Theatre); *The Powers That Be*, *#solestories* (Venus Theatre); and *The Gulf* (Peter's Alley). You can see Jasmine next in *Is God Is* at Constellation Theatre! Jasmine would love to thank her daughter, Calypso, for being her inspiration, her partner Matt, and her mom. You can visit Jasmine's website at [www.jasminejoybrooks.com](#).

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CREATIVE

SELINA FILLINGER (*Playwright*) is an LA-based writer and performer. Her plays include *The Collapse*, *Something Clean*, *Faceless*, and *The Armor Plays: Cinched/Strapped*. In 2022, *POTUS: Or, Behind Every Great Dumbass Are Seven Women Trying to Keep Him Alive* debuted on Broadway, earning three Tony Award nominations. Her plays have been developed at Roundabout Theatre Company, Manhattan Theatre Club, McCarter Theatre Center, Williamstown Theatre Festival, The Old Globe, Alley Theatre, Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, and Northlight Theatre. She's currently commissioned at South Coast Repertory and Roundabout. She was a Hawthornden Fellow and a resident of McCarter's Sallie B. Goodman Artists' Retreat; *Something Clean* is the recipient of the 2019 Laurents/Hatcher Award and *Cinched/Strapped* received the 2019 Williamstown Theatre Festival's L. Arnold Weissberger New Play Award. Selina wrote for the third season of Apple TV+'s *The Morning Show*; she's developing a feature with Chernin Entertainment/Netflix and a pilot with Hunting Lane/Hulu.

MARGOT BORDELON (*Director*)'s New York credits include *...what the end will be*, *Something Clean*, and *Too Heavy for Your Pocket* (Roundabout); *Let's Call Her Patty* and *Plot Points in Our Sexual Development* (LCT3); *peerless* (Primary Stages) and (Cherry Lane); *Wives* (Playwrights Horizons); *Do You Feel Anger?* (Vineyard); *Eddie and Dave* (Atlantic); *The Pen* (Premieres NYC); *A Delicate Ship* (Playwrights Realm); *Still* (Juilliard); *Wilder Gone* (Clubbed Thumb); and *The Last Class: A Jazzercise Play* (DODO). Regional credits include ACT Seattle, Actors Theatre of Louisville, Alliance, American Theater Company, Denver Center, Geffen Playhouse, Marin Theater Company, Miami New Drama, Round House, Steppenwolf, the Wilma, and Yale Rep. Upcoming: *John Proctor is the Villain* (Huntington), *The Lehman Trilogy* (Denver Center). www.margotbordelon.com

REID THOMPSON (*Set Designer*) is a Brooklyn-based scenic designer for plays, musicals, and opera. Selected scenic design credits include *Wives* at Playwrights Horizons; *Too Heavy for Your Pocket* at Roundabout and Alliance; *Something Clean* at Roundabout; *You Lost Me* at Denver Center; *A Doll's House, Part 2* at Actors Theatre of Louisville; *Eddie and Dave* at Atlantic; *Miss You Like Hell* at Baltimore Center Stage; *Fun Home* at Virginia Stage; *Gloria* and *Disgraced* at Asolo Rep; *Up and Away* at Pittsburgh CLO; *Wilder Gone* at Clubbed Thumb; and *Fruiting Bodies, Among the Dead*, and *House Rules* with Ma-Yi. Reid is an Associate Artist with Heartbeat Opera, where favorite credits include *Madama Butterfly*, *Fidelio*, and *La Susanna*. He trained in theatrical design at the Yale School of Drama, earning an MFA in 2014.

IVANIA STACK (*Costume Designer*) is delighted to return to Arena Stage, where she previously designed for *Holiday*, *Right to Be Forgotten*, *The Heiress*, *The Price*, *Two Trains Running*, and *Intelligence*. Her work has been seen at many other DC theaters including Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company (Company Member), Ford's Theatre, Round House Theatre (Resident Artist), The Kennedy Center, Signature Theatre, Imagination Stage, Olney Theatre Center, Studio Theatre, Theater J, Pointless Theatre, Synetic Theater, Forum Theatre, Theater Alliance, Rorschach Theatre, MetroStage, and GALA Hispanic Theatre. Her regional credits include designs for Seattle Rep, Baltimore Center Stage, McCarter Theatre, Philadelphia Theatre Company, Everyman Theatre, The Karski Project, Andy's Summer Playhouse, The Second City, and The Contemporary American Theater Festival. She has an MFA in design from the University of Maryland, College Park.

MARIKA KENT (*Lighting Designer*) is a Brooklyn-based lighting designer. Recent/upcoming credits include *Ulysses*, *Seagull* (Elevator Repair Service); *Bernarda's Daughters* (The New Group / NBT); *Amani* (National Black Theatre); *Catch as Catch Can* (Playwrights Horizons); *Choir Boy*, *Gem of the Ocean*, *School Girls*; *Or, The African Mean Girls Play* (Portland Center Stage);

Measure for Measure (Shakespeare & Company); *Generation Rise*, *Generation NYZ* (Ping Chong and Company); *Jazz Singer* (Abrons Arts Center); *Chimpanzee*, and *Fly Away* (Nick Lehane). Marika teaches design at NYU's Playwrights Horizons Theater School and is a member of USA Local 829. [she/her www.marikakent.com](http://she/her/www.marikakent.com)

SINAN REFIK ZAFAR (*Original Music and Sound Design*) is a New York-based sound designer and composer. His recent work includes *What the Constitution Means to Me* (Broadway, National Tour, Amazon Prime, NYTW, The Kennedy Center, Berkeley Rep, Clubbed Thumb); *What to Send Up When It Goes Down*, *And She Would Stand Like This* (The Movement Theatre Company); *Jump* (PlayMakers Rep); *peerless* (Yale Repertory Theatre); *Novenas for a Lost Hospital* (Rattlestick Playwrights Theater); *Hamlet* (Waterwell); *The Wolves*, *The Legend of Georgia McBride*, *Detroit*, *Intimate Apparel* (TheatreSquared); *We Are Proud to Present* (Yale Dramat); *Richard in 9 Poses* (Clubbed Thumb); *Midsummer* (Tiltyard); *Macbeth* (d. Will Frears) and Lindsey Ferrentino's *Amy and the Orphans* (Carlotta Festival of New Plays). Other regional credits include *O*, *Fallen One* (Curly Cue & Co); *Blood Knot* (Lounge Theatre); *Woyzeck* (Illyrian Players); and *Julius Caesar* (Griot Theatre of the West Valley). He holds an MFA from the Yale School of Drama and a BA in Drama with honors in sound design from the University of California, Irvine.

TOMMY KURZMAN (*Wig and Hair Designer*)'s Broadway credits include *The Cottage*, *Peter Pan Goes Wrong*, *Pictures From Home*, *The Collaboration*, *Macbeth*, *Mrs. Doubtfire*, *All My Sons*, *True West*, *Saint Joan*, *My Fair Lady*, *Little Foxes*, *Long Day's Journey*, *Bright Star*, and *Fiddler on the Roof*. Off-Broadway credits include *Little Shop of Horrors*-Westside Theatre, MCC, Atlantic, The New Group, The Public, MTC, and NWS. Regional credits include The Huntington, The Muny, Geva Theatre, Resident Ensemble Players, Cape Playhouse, Signature VA, and MSM. Associate Hair Designer on over 15 Broadway productions. Instagram: [@tommykurzmanwigs](https://www.instagram.com/tommykurzmanwigs)

LISA NATHANS (*Dialect and Vocal Coach*) is an Associate Professor of Voice and Acting at University of Maryland's School of Theatre, Dance, and Performance Studies. She's coached voices and accents for Arena Stage, Kennedy Center, Shakespeare Theatre Company, Olney, Signature, Ford's, Folger, Guthrie (Minneapolis), 5th Avenue (Seattle), and Theatricum Botanicum (LA). Lisa received her MFA from Central School of Speech and Drama and BFA from Boston University. She's a designated Linklater Voice teacher and a certified Colaiani Speech practitioner.

OTIS RAMSEY-ZÖE (*Dramaturg*) is a care worker, dramaturg, director, theater arts educator, Literary Manager at Arena Stage, and Lecturer in Dramaturgy at the David Geffen School of Drama at Yale. He has developed new works at such institutions as Sundance Institute, Kennedy Center, Alabama Shakespeare Festival, Playwrights Center, and National New Play Network. He has held posts in Theatre at Northeastern University, Dramaturgy at Carnegie Mellon University, Women's Studies and Honors Humanities at University of Maryland, Performing Arts at American University, and Theatre Arts at Howard University. He was Associate Artistic Director at banished? productions, Future Classics Program Coordinator at The Classical Theatre of Harlem, Literary Manager at Center Stage, and an Allen Lee Hughes Senior Fellow at Arena Stage.

JOSEPH PINZON (*Casting Director*) is the founder and creative producer of the contemporary circus company Short Round Productions and its award-winning show *Filament*. With over 25 years of performing experience, he has worked internationally with renowned companies such as Cirque Éloize, Compagnia Finzi Pasca, Cirque du Soleil, and The 7 Fingers. He holds an MS in Arts Leadership from USC, a BA in Psychology from UCLA, and graduated from the National Circus School in Montreal with a specialization in aerial techniques. He was the casting and resident director for Chamäleon Productions (Berlin) and Constellation Immersive (CAA's experiential affiliate). He is also a member of the Creative &

Independent Producer Alliance and a founding board member of the American Circus Alliance. You can see him causing chaos on season 6 of *Nailed It!* on Netflix, where (spoiler alert) he is a part of the series' first three-way tie.

KELLY GILLESPIE, CSA (*New York Casting*) is the Casting Director at Manhattan Theatre Club, where she has been on staff for the past fifteen years. Favorite recent MTC projects include *Prayer for the French Republic*, *The Best We Could*, *Skeleton Crew*, *Ink*, *Choir Boy*, and *The Explorers Club*. She has also cast plays for the WP Theater, The Old Globe, Two River Theater, Actors Theatre of Louisville, McCarter Theatre, Philadelphia Theatre Company, Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, Marin Theatre Company, Miami New Drama, City Theatre, Merrimack Rep, The Foundry Theatre, EST, 13P, T.A.C.T., and Keen Company, as well as a few radio projects for WNYC. She is a graduate of the University of Michigan.

CHRISTI B. SPANN (*Stage Manager*) has been working as a stage manager in DC since 2011. Recent Arena Stage productions include *Holiday*, *The High Ground*, and *Exclusion*. She previously spent 12 seasons on the stage management staff at the Denver Center Theatre Company and has also worked with The Great River Shakespeare Festival in Winona, MN and Virginia Repertory Theatre in Richmond, VA.

DAYNE SUNDMAN (*Assistant Stage Manager*) is happy to be back at Arena Stage. Some favorite past shows at Arena include *Angels in America: Part One*, *Millennium Approaches*; *American Prophet: Frederick Douglass in His Own Words*; *Catch Me If You Can*; *Mother Road*; *Newsies*; *Junk*; *The Heiress*; and *Anything Goes*. Select other credits include *Jane Anger*, *The Notebooks of Leonardo Da Vinci* (STC); *Natasha, Pierre & The Great Comet of 1812*, *Sense and Sensibility* (Idaho Shakespeare Festival). Baldwin Wallace University 2015.

ARENA STAGE LEADERSHIP

HANA S. SHARIF (*Artistic Director*) has enjoyed a multi-faceted theater career, including roles as an artistic leader, director, playwright, and producer with a specialty in strategic and cross-functional leadership. Hana began her professional career as an undergraduate student at Spelman College. From 1997 to 2003, Hana served as the co-founder and Artistic Director of Nasir Productions, a theater dedicated to underrepresented voices challenging traditional structure. Hana joined the Tony Award-winning regional theatre, Hartford Stage, in 2003. During her decade-long tenure at Hartford Stage, Hana served as the Associate Artistic Director, Director of New Play Development, and Artistic Producer. Hana launched the new play development program, expanded the community engagement and civic discourse initiatives, and developed and produced Tony, Grammy, Pulitzer, and Obie Award-winning shows. Starting in 2012, she served as Program Manager at ArtsEmerson, a leading world theater company based at Boston's Emerson College. During her tenure at ArtsEmerson, Hana launched an Artists in Residency program, led a research program assessing barriers to inclusion across the region, and leveraged her regional theater experience to freelance produce for smaller theater companies looking to expand and restructure their administrative teams. Hana was Baltimore Center Stage's Associate Artistic Director from 2014 to 2019 and was the architect of the innovative CS Digital program: a platform that pushes the boundaries of traditional theater and looks at the nexus point between art and technology. Her other achievements at Baltimore Center Stage included prototyping the Mobile Unit focused on historically underserved audiences, strengthening community engagement, producing multiple world

and regional premieres, and helping to guide the theater through a multi-million dollar building renovation and rebranding effort. Hana became the first Black woman to lead a major regional theater in 2018 when she was named the Augustin Family Artistic Director of The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis. During her tenure at The Rep, Hana guided the organization through a strategic alignment, revolutionized the New Works program, expanding access to underserved communities, and centering equity and anti-racism as the organization's foundational values. Hana holds a BA from Spelman College and an MFA from the University of Houston. Hana is the recipient of USITT's 2023 Distinguished Achievement Award, Spelman's 2022 National Community Service Award, the 2009-10 Aetna New Voices Fellowship, EMC Arts Working Open Fellowship, and Theatre Communications Group (TCG) New Generations Fellowship. Hana is a founding member of The Black Theatre Commons (BTC). She serves on the board of directors for the TCG, BTC, and the Sprott Family Foundation.

EDGAR DOBIE (*Executive Producer*) Born in Vernon, British Columbia, a village next to the Rocky Mountains (three years after Arena had its first performance in 1950), I am one of five brothers raised by my Dad Edgar, a mechanic and small businessman, and Mom Connie, a telephone operator and union organizer. I am the only Dobie to make a career in theater. Luckily for me, drama was an arts elective I was offered at the tender age of 12 so I hung up my hockey skates and joined the drama class, led by teacher Paddy Malcolm and her fledgling Powerhouse Community Theater after school. By the time I graduated from high school, we volunteers had built ourselves a 200-seat, fully equipped theater on its own piece of land in the center of town and found a sold-out audience for the full season of plays we had on offer. That experience taught me so many lessons about the power of theater to foster collaboration and share meaningful stories, as well as the public values that attach themselves to building a safe place where everyone is welcome. All those

lessons served me well as a managing leader and producer both sides of the border and both sides of the commercial and non-profit theater divide. Arriving here in Southwest with my good wife Tracy and our daughter Greta Lee in 2009 makes me feel like I am well-equipped to do a good job for you all. I am honored to have been recognized for my service to, and leadership of, the Washington, D.C.-area theater community as a recipient of Theatre Washington's inaugural Victor Shargai Leadership Award in 2022.

This theater operates under an agreement between the League of Resident Theatres and Actors' Equity Association.



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The Molly Smith Fund for New Work was created to honor the tremendous legacy of Molly Smith, Arena Stage's Artistic Director Emeritus, who retired at the end of the 2022/23 Season after 25 years of visionary leadership. The fund will support the artistic development of new work at Arena Stage, a pillar of Molly's vision.

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The cast of *The Pajama Game*. Photo by Margot Schulman.



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During her tenure as director of Community Engagement and senior artistic advisor, Anita directed, associate directed, and dialect coached on all our stages; co-founded the beloved Camp Arena Stage; wrote and directed plays with grieving youth; devised plays in Croatia and in six cities in India; and supported staff, fellows, and artists throughout Arena. Her work has impacted thousands upon thousands of artists, theater professionals, students, and community members. We wish her well in her retirement!

Thank you, Anita, for so many seasons of love



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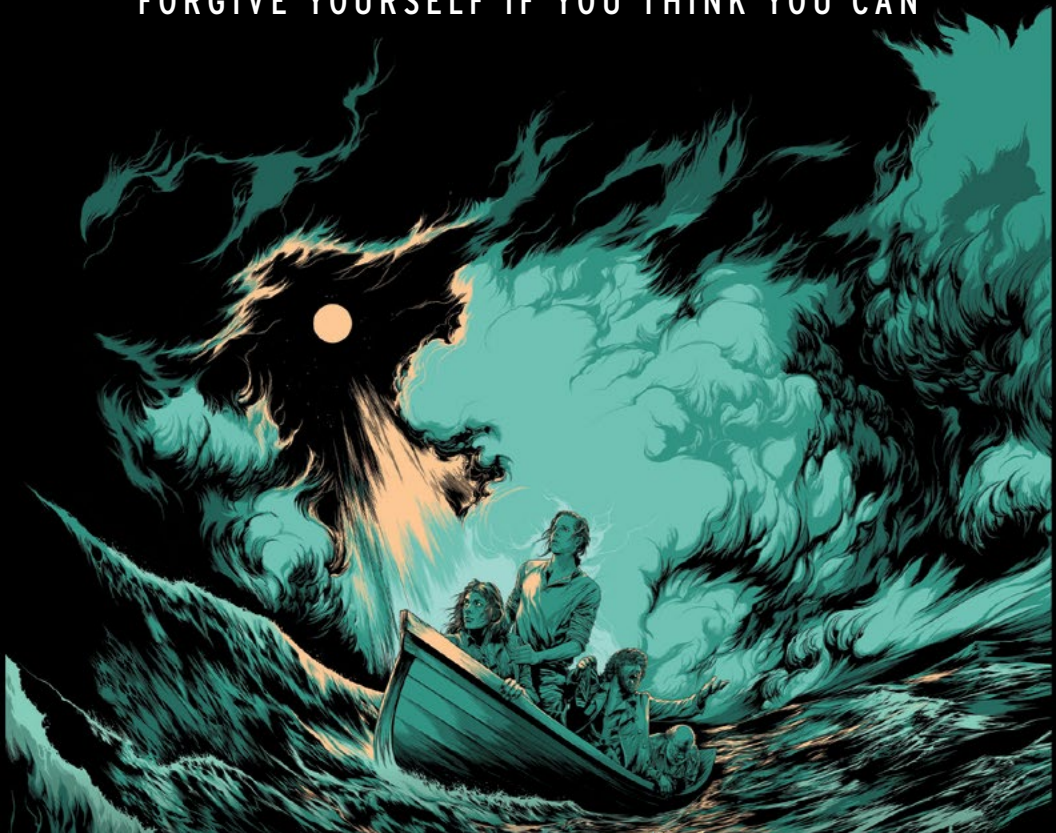
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NEUMANN**

DIRECTED
BY
**MICHAEL
MAYER**

NOVEMBER 25 - DECEMBER 30, 2023