

ARENA STAGE MEDIA RELEASE

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

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ARENA STAGE TO HONOR MAY ADRALES WITH THE ANDREW R. AMMERMAN DIRECTING AWARD THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2021

*** May Adrales serves as Artistic Director of The Lark ***

(Washington, D.C.) Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater will present the Andrew R. Ammerman Directing Award to The Lark's recently named Artistic Director, **May Adrales**, on **Thursday, September 9, 2021**. This distinguished award for excellence in the field of theater will be presented at the opening night dinner of *Toni Stone* by Lydia R. Diamond in the Molly Smith Study. This award was created to highlight a female director who has distinguished herself through her artistry and vision in directing.

"May Adrales is a wonderful artist and so deserving of this award," shares Artistic Director **Molly Smith**. "There are very few awards for women directors in the American theater. With the support of Board member Andrew Ammerman, we have embarked on creating a new award for a woman in the middle of her career as a dynamic director. May is on the tipping point of an exploding career. She is inventive and creative and brave. I feel it is critical to support women directors and especially so at a moment in their careers that help push them to their fullest potential in the prime of life."

Adrales was chosen by panelists including Arena Stage Artistic Director Molly Smith, Director Timothy Douglas and Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company Artistic Director Maria Manuela Goyanes. Adrales will receive \$15,000 and national recognition.

Previously serving as associate artistic director and director of new play development at Milwaukee Rep, Adrales moved into her new role earlier this year at The Lark, an international play development think tank and laboratory. She is an advocate for playwrights and new works, and her work has been seen around the country.

"I am deeply grateful and humbled to receive the Ammerman Award. The recognition from my esteemed colleagues and the meaningful financial support offers encouragement for me to be bold and brave and to continue to tell the stories I want to tell—stories that question, interrogate and reflect our epoch," explains **Adrales**. "Arena Stage continues to be a pioneer in the field as it offers an important and visible platform for women directors."

This award is made possible by **Andrew R. Ammerman**, a longtime member of Arena Stage's Board of Trustees. The Ammerman family has made many generous contributions to Arena Stage, including support of unique partnership programs with Mercersburg Academy in Pennsylvania and Georgetown University. The partnership has helped the development of new works; mentorship of new artists and administrators; community engagement; and a deepening of dialogue on important issues in the field.

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May Adrales is a director, artistic leader and teacher and has directed over 25 world premieres. Her work has been seen at Second Stage, Manhattan Theater Club, Signature Theater, LCT3, The Public Theater, WP, New York Theater Workshop, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Seattle Rep, Milwaukee Rep, South Coast Rep and Baltimore Center Stage. A passionate advocate for playwrights and new works, she serves as the artistic director of The Lark and as the former director of artistic programs. She served as an associate artistic director and director of new play development at Milwaukee Rep, artistic associate at The Playwrights Center and artistic associate at The Public Theater. She was awarded the prestigious Theater Communications Group Alan Schneider 2018 Award for freelance directors. She is a Drama League Directing Fellow, Van Lier Directing Fellow at 2nd Stage, Women's Project Lab Director, SoHo Rep Writers/Directors Lab and New York Theater Workshop directing fellow, TCG New Generations grantee, SDC Denham Fellowship and Paul Green Directing Award. She serves on the board of Theater Communications Group. May has directed and taught at Juilliard, Harvard/ART, ACT, Fordham, NYU and Bard College. May has served on faculty at the Yale School of Drama and Brown/Trinity MFA program. MFA, Yale School of Drama. www.mayadrales.net

For media inquiries, please email press@arenastage.org.

*Prime Sponsorship for Toni Stone and Arena Stage is generously provided by **Beth Newburger Schwartz**. Supporting Sponsorship for Toni Stone is generously provided by **AT&T, Susan and Steve Bralove, Exelon and Sue Henry and Carter Phillips**.*

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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 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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