

# 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 ANNOUNCES CAST FOR SPARKLING ROMANTIC COMEDY

# HOLIDAY

By PHILIP BARRY

Directed by ANITA MAYNARD-LOSH

\*\*\*A Broadway classic about the haves and have-nots in 1920s New York comes to the DC stage this fall\*\*\*

(Washington, D.C.) Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater announced today the cast of its new production of Philip Barry's *Holiday*, a classic romantic comedy about the haves, have-nots, and pursuing a life worth living. The 1928 Broadway hit play was famously adapted into a 1938 motion picture directed by George Cukor and starring Cary Grant and Katharine Hepburn.

Written by **Philip Barry** (*The Joyous Season*, *The Philadelphia Story*), *Holiday* follows Johnny Case, an up-and-coming Wall Street lawyer from a working-class family who aspires to quit work and enjoy life once he's made enough money to do so. This prospect doesn't thrill his wealthy, well-born fiancée Julia, but excites her more unconventional sister Linda. Can his dreams survive his soon-to-be bride's narrow view of affluence?

Arena's own Director of Community Engagement/Senior Artistic Advisor **Anita Maynard-Losh** (*Catch Me If You Can*, Disney's *Newsies*) will direct the in-the-round production on Arena's Fichandler Stage. "I fell in love with *Holiday* when I was 15 years old, and still have the copy I bought from a used bookstore in San Francisco at the time," says **Maynard-Losh**. "I am delighted that **Molly Smith** asked me to direct it here at Arena Stage so many years later!"

Though nearly a century old, *Holiday* remains a timely commentary on opposing societal hierarchies, differing views of success, and ultimately, how to pursue a life worth living.

"At its heart, I think it asks the questions, 'What is our responsibility to ourselves to follow our dreams and create the life we want to live? And what are we willing to sacrifice in order to be true to ourselves?'," explains **Maynard-Losh**. "In a way it's a subversive anti-capitalist play in the trappings of a romantic comedy — although it definitely *is* a comedy, and it *is* romantic, *Holiday* also has a message about the freedom to decide how to live one's best life, and whether money is a tool or a trophy."

*Holiday* will run **October 7 – November 6, 2022**, in the iconic in-the-round **Fichandler Stage**, continuing Arena Stage's 2022/23 Season, which is driven by the theme of "surviving and thriving." Press Night for *Holiday* will be held on **Thursday, October 13 at 8 p.m.**

Returning to Arena Stage are cast members **John Austin** (*Right to Be Forgotten*, *Kleptocracy*), **Rachel Felstein** (*Right to Be Forgotten*), **Todd Scofield** (*The City of Conversation*, *Sovereignty*), and **Jamie Smithson** (Disney's *Newsies*, *Fiddler on the Roof*).

Joining the cast in their Arena Stage debuts are **Regina Aquino** (Kennedy Center's *Where Words Once Were*), **Claire Blackwelder** (Shakespeare Theatre's *The Merchant of Venice*), **Peter Boyer** (Metro Stage's *A Broadway Christmas Carol*), **Baize Buzan** (Broadway's *To Kill a Mockingbird*), **Bowen Fox** (Studio Theatre's *John Proctor is the Villain*), **Olivia Hebert** (Lincoln Center's *The Hard Problem*), **Ahmad Kamal** (Marin Theatre's *Hotter Than Egypt*), **Emily King Brown** (Classic Stage's *Antony and Cleopatra*), **Andrés F. Roa** (Silver Spring Stage's *Sweat*), and **Sean Wiberg** (Victory Gardens' *Truth and Reconciliation*).

The creative team for *Holiday* also includes Set Designer **Misha Kachman**, Costume Designer **Ivania Stack**, Lighting Designer **Pablo Santiago**, Sound Designer **Daniel Erdberg**, Original Music by Daniel Erdberg and **Ursula Kwong-Brown**, Hair and Wig Designer **Charles G. LaPointe**, Voice and Dialect Coach **Lisa Nathans**, Dramaturg **Otis Ramsey-Zöe**, Casting Director **Joseph Pinzon**, New York Casting **JZ Casting/Geoff Josselson, C.S.A.** and **Katja Zarolinski, C.S.A.**, Stage Manager **Christi B. Spann**, and Assistant Stage Managers **Emily Ann Mellon** and **Leigh Robinette**.

### **CAST BIOGRAPHIES (In alphabetical order)**

**Regina Aquino** (*Susan Potter*), she/her, is a DMV native Filipinx artist and activist who is thrilled to be making her Arena Stage debut. Nominated for multiple Helen Hayes Awards over 19 years, she was the first Filipino to have earned a Helen Hayes Award for Outstanding Lead Performer for her work in *The Events* at Theater Alliance. One of *Washingtonian* magazine's "10 Biggest Theater Stars DC," she advocates for equity in the industry and was co-chair of the theatreWashington 2021 Summit on anti-oppression. Selected DC credits include *We're Gonna Die* (Round House Theatre), *Vietgone*, *Red Light Winter* (Studio Theatre), *Describe the Night*, *The Arsonists* (Woolly Mammoth), *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Nell Gwynn* (Folger Theatre), *Tiger Style!* (Olney), *Birds of North America*, *Eureka Day* (Mosaic Theater). Off-Broadway: *Where Words Once Were* (Lincoln Center & Kennedy Center TYA). She's starring as a Filipino mother in the upcoming world premiere of *The Mortification of Fovea Munson* at the Kennedy Center this winter. For Riana and Mal, always. Instagram: @regina.r.aquino [www.ReginaAquino.com](http://www.ReginaAquino.com)

**John Austin** (*Ned Seton*) previously appeared at Arena Stage as Derril Lark in *Right to Be Forgotten* and various roles in *Kleptocracy*. Other DC area credits include *Oslo* (Round House), *Easy Women Smoking Loose Cigarettes* (Signature), and *Melancholy Play* (Constellation, Helen Award, Outstanding Production). John recently closed the national tour of *Me, Myself, & Shirley* starring Cindy Williams of the hit television show *Laverne & Shirley*. In his hometown of Austin, Texas, John won the B. Iden Payne Award for his portrayal of Young Zeus in *Zeus in Therapy*. He holds a BFA from Boston University (Summa Cum Laude, Dean's Award, Bette Davis Scholarship, Bette Davis Prize) as well as a Certificate in Classical Acting from LAMDA. Thank you for everything you've given to American theater, Molly Smith! [johnaustinator.com](http://johnaustinator.com)

**Claire Blackwelder** (*Delia / u/s Linda Seton/Susan Potter*) is thrilled to be making her Arena Stage debut. Regional theater credits include *The Merchant of Venice* (Shakespeare Theatre Co.), *Disposable Necessities* (Rogue Machine, world premiere), *IT* (Rockwell Table & Stage), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Theatricum Botanicum), and *The Brat Pack* (For The Record Live). TV and film credits include *Hillhead*, *Her Worst Nightmare*, and two seasons of *Power Rangers Dino Charge* on Nickelodeon. Claire is a professional vocalist who has performed at the Hollywood Bowl and Soho House. She recently received her MFA from the Academy for Classical Acting at GWU. Instagram: @claiblackwelder

**Peter Boyer** (*Henry / u/s Edward Seton*) has performed on stages across the country and in the DC area, including Ford's Theatre, Shakespeare Theatre, Imagination Stage, Olney Theatre, Rep Stage, Bay Theatre, Alliance for New Music Theatre, and Baltimore Shakespeare Festival. Notable roles include Ebenezer Scrooge in *A Broadway Christmas Carol* at MetroStage, Groucho Marx in *Groucho: A Life in Revue* at Wayside Theatre, Captain Hook in *Tinkerbell* and Captain Braidbeard in *How I Became a Pirate* at Adventure Theatre, and Charles

Dickens in *Discord* and Mr. Praed in *Mrs. Warren's Profession* at Washington Stage Guild. His one-person play *Captain Hook: My Story, or How I Clawed My Way to the Top* was produced in August at Spotlighters Theatre in collaboration with the Baltimore Playwrights Festival. [www.petersbrain.art](http://www.petersbrain.art)

**Baize Buzan** (*Linda Seton*) is a New York-based actress across theater, film, and television. She was most recently seen as Scout Finch in *To Kill a Mockingbird* on Broadway. Other select theater includes work with New York Stage and Film, Victory Gardens Theater, Yale Repertory Theatre, Steppenwolf, and Jackalope Theatre Company. Film and television credits include *Being the Ricardos*, the 2021 SXSW Narrative Competition selection *Our Father*, NBC's *Chicago Fire*, and the upcoming indie feature *Nobody's Home*. She is a graduate of Vassar College and the Yale School of Drama.

**Rachel Felstein** (*u/s Julia Seton/Laura Cram/Delia*) is delighted to be back at Arena Stage, where she was previously seen in the world premiere of *Right to Be Forgotten*. DC credits include *Mrs. Warren's Profession* and *Summerland* (Washington Stage Guild), *Pilgrims Musa and Sheri in the New World* (Mosaic Theater Company of DC), *Antigonick* (Taffety Punk), and two self-produced pandemic projects, both DC Metro Theater Arts 2021 Staff Picks — *Twelfth Night* (Her Majesty & Sons) and *Night@Newcastle*. New York credits: *This American Life - As Seen on Radio* (BAM), productions with Ensemble Studio Theatre, and *wRETCH - the final concert* (Fresh Fruit Festival). Regional credits: *Fun Home* (Virginia Stage Company), *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (Shakespeare Theatre NJ), and *Man of La Mancha* (National Tour). Instagram: @rfelsie [www.rachelfelstein.com](http://www.rachelfelstein.com)

**Bowen Fox** (*Charles / u/s Johnny Case/Ned Seton*) is thrilled to be making his professional DC debut with Arena. He recently understudied with Studio Theatre and Shakespeare Theatre Company this past year while completing his MFA through The Academy at STC and GWU. Bowen is a member of the Society of American Fight Directors and an Equity Membership Candidate. He would like to thank his family for all the love and support they continually give; he cannot imagine where he'd be without them. BFA: Savannah College of Art and Design. [www.bowenfox.com](http://www.bowenfox.com)

**Olivia Hebert** (*Julia Seton*) is so joyful to be making her Arena Stage debut. Her New York theater credits include *The Hard Problem* (Lincoln Center Theater) and *Boy Gets Violent* (Ars Nova). Other recent credits include *The Importance of Being Earnest* (Cape Playhouse), *Rat Jaw* (Stomping Ground), and *Nothing Can Stop What is Coming* (GreenHouse Theatre Project). She obtained her MFA from NYU where she performed roles in *Henry V*, *An American Daughter*, *Thyestes*, *An Ideal Husband*, *The Big Knife*, among others. She holds a BS from University of Evansville. Instagram: @ohlivialoraine

**Ahmad Kamal** (*Nick Potter*) is thrilled to be making his debut at Arena Stage! Regional credits include Shakespeare Theatre Company, Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company, Signature Theatre, Mosaic Theater Company, Olney Theatre Center, ACT Seattle, and Marin Theatre Company, among others. Ahmad is a graduate of the University of Virginia and Bristol Old Vic Theatre School. Instagram: @king\_o\_egypt.

**Emily King Brown** (*Laura Cram*), a native of Richmond, Virginia, is thrilled to be making her Arena debut! Highlights include: Original Cast of the re-imagined *Footloose* for Norwegian Creative, *Antony and Cleopatra* at NYC's Classic Stage (with Bard City), West Coast regional premiere of *Shrek the Musical* at 3-D Theatricals, national tour of *Anne of Green Gables*, and originating the title character in *Kentucky Madam*, an immersive theatrical experience. Starring roles in film and TV include *The Re-Renaissance*, *Kaleidoscope*, and the long-running hit, *A Haunting*. EKB is the CCO of the boutique production company Aging Millennial Productions, which first caught traction with the all-female sketch comedy group LibTarts (TikTok: @libtarts), where she also serves as a writer. Training: BFA / Shenandoah Conservatory, Advanced Acting Certificate / MxAT. [www.emilykingbrown.com](http://www.emilykingbrown.com)

**Andrés F. Roa** (*u/s Seton Cram/Nick Potter/Henry/Charles*) is thrilled to make his DC debut with Arena Stage. His most recent theater credits include *Sweat* (Silver Spring Stage), *Much Ado About Nothing* (Hope Summer Repertory Theatre), *As You Like It* and *Julius Caesar* (Houston Shakespeare Festival), and *Coriolanus* (Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey). Andrés is a queer, Colombian-American artist and educator who teaches Acting Basics at Montgomery College, and has taught actors of varying ages and experiences with Young Artists of America, Moonlit Wings, and the University of Houston. He is a proud graduate of the University of Houston's Professional Actor Training Program (MFA, 2019). [www.andresfroa.com](http://www.andresfroa.com)

**Todd Scofield** (*Edward Seton*) Arena Stage: *The City of Conversation* and *Sovereignty*. Also in DC, Todd has done numerous shows at Shakespeare (*Our Town*, *Richard III*, others), Folger (*Tempest*, *Hamlet*, others), and Round House Theatres (*Book of Will*, *Oslo*, others), as well as shows at Studio, Theater J, Ford's, Olney, Adventure Theatre, and Imagination Stage. Outside of DC, Todd has worked at Everyman Theatre, Arden Theatre, PlayMakers, Charlotte Rep, and four seasons at North Carolina Shakespeare Festival. Television: Recurring role in seasons 3 and 5 of *The Wire*.

**Jamie Smithson** (*Seton Cram*) has appeared at Arena Stage as Teddy Roosevelt/Nunzio in Disney's *Newsies* and Avram in *Fiddler on the Roof*. DC credits include: *Sense and Sensibility* with Bedlam at Folger Theatre (Helen Hayes nomination - Best Actor), *Cake Off* (Signature Theatre), *The Wanderers* (Theater J), *Boeing Boeing* (No Rules), *Twist Your Dickens* (The Kennedy Center, The Second City), and *Fly By Night* (1st Stage, Helen Hayes nomination - Best Actor). He has also performed in DC with Shakespeare Theatre Company, Ford's Theatre, Imagination Stage, and Round House Theatre. Regional theaters include: Everyman Theatre, The Guthrie, ART, Portland Center Stage, and with The Acting Company, among others. Recently he appeared Off-Broadway in Bedlam's world premiere of *Persuasion*. Jamie received his MFA in acting at Mason Gross School of the Arts, Rutgers University.

**Sean Wiberg** (*Johnny Case*) is a New York City-based artist. He recently graduated from The Juilliard School with his MFA in Acting. He's appeared in plays and television including HBO's *Search Party* and *Chicago P.D.* Before moving to New York, he cut his teeth in the exciting storefront theater scene of Chicago. Some of those credits include *Truth and Reconciliation* at Victory Gardens Theater and the Joseph Jefferson Award-winning *Posh* at Steep Theater.

For full company biographies, please visit [arenastage.org/holiday](http://arenastage.org/holiday).

## **PRODUCTION INFORMATION**

### ***Holiday***

**By Philip Barry**

**Directed by Anita Maynard-Losh**

**In the Fichandler Stage | October 7 – November 6, 2022**

**ABOUT:** An up-and-coming Wall Street lawyer from a working-class family aspires to quit his job and enjoy life once he's made enough money to do so. The prospect doesn't thrill his wealthy, well-born fiancée, but excites her more unconventional sister. Can his dreams survive his soon-to-be bride's narrow view of affluence? Opposing societal hierarchies and differing views of success confront each other in this classic romantic comedy set in the 1920s, which became a beloved 1938 film starring Cary Grant and Katharine Hepburn, and which is still a timely commentary on how to pursue a life worth living.

### **CAST:**

Susan Potter: Regina Aquino\*

Ned Seton: John Austin\*

Delia / u/s Linda Seton/Susan Potter: Claire Blackwelder\*

Henry / u/s Edward Seton: Peter Boyer\*

Linda Seton: Baize Buzan\*

u/s Julia Seton/Laura Cram/Delia: Rachel Felstein\*

Charles / u/s Johnny Case/Ned Seton: Bowen Fox

Julia Seton: Olivia Hebert\*

Nick Potter: Ahmad Kamal\*

Laura Cram: Emily King Brown\*

u/s Seton Cram/Nick Potter/Henry/Charles: Andrés F. Roa

Edward Seton: Todd Scofield\*

Seton Cram: Jamie Smithson\*

Johnny Case: Sean Wiberg\*

**CREATIVE TEAM:**

Playwright: Philip Barry  
Director: Anita Maynard-Losh  
Set Designer: Misha Kachman  
Costume Designer: Ivania Stack  
Lighting Designer: Pablo Santiago  
Sound Designer: Daniel Erdberg  
Original Music: Daniel Erdberg and Ursula Kwong-Brown  
Hair and Wig Designer: Charles G. LaPointe  
Voice and Dialect Coach: Lisa Nathans  
Dramaturg: Otis Ramsey-Zöe  
Casting Director: Joseph Pinzon  
New York Casting: JZ Casting/Geoff Josselson, C.S.A., Katja Zarolinski, C.S.A.  
Stage Manager: Christi B. Spann\*  
Assistant Stage Managers: Emily Ann Mellon\*, Leigh Robinette\*

\*Member of Actors' Equity Association

Support for *Holiday* is provided by **Clark Construction Group** and **GEICO**.

**PLAN YOUR VISIT**

**TICKETS:** Tickets for *Holiday* are \$56-\$95, 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 heroes discounts, visit [arenastage.org/savings-programs](https://arenastage.org/savings-programs).

Tickets may be purchased online at [arenastage.org](https://arenastage.org), by phone at 202-488-3300 (Tuesday – Sunday, 12:00-8:00 p.m.), or in person at the Sales Office at 1101 Sixth Street, SW, D.C. (only on performance days, and only starting 90 minutes prior until curtain).

Sales Office/Subscriptions: 202-488-3300  
Group Sales Hotline for 10+ Tickets: 202-488-4380

**PERFORMANCE DATES:**

Tuesday, Wednesday, and Sunday at 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, Friday, and Saturday at 8 p.m.

Saturday and Sunday at 2 p.m.

Weekday matinees at noon on Wednesday, October 19; Thursday, October 27; and Wednesday, November 2

Early Curtain: Sunday, October 23 at 6:00 p.m.

Southwest Nights: Tuesday, October 18 at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, October 30 at 7:30 p.m.

Closed Captioning: GalaPro begins Friday, October 14

**Full Calendar:** [arenastage.org/tickets/calendar](https://arenastage.org/tickets/calendar)

**SAFETY:** Arena Stage requires that patrons, staff, and volunteers wear facial masks inside the Mead Center, unless actively eating or drinking, regardless of vaccination status. These conditions are subject to change, and Arena continues to consult with medical professionals, monitor government best practice recommendations, and engage in industry trainings to ensure the health and safety of our patrons, artists, and staff. For up-to-date information, visit [arenastage.org/safety](https://arenastage.org/safety).

**TRAVEL:** Limited parking is available in Arena Stage's on-site garage and the Public Parking Garage at 1101 Fourth Street, SW, one block from the Mead Center for American Theater, and ranges from \$18-27. Please visit [arenastage.org/transportation](https://arenastage.org/transportation) for information on transportation to and parking around the Mead Center, and call 202-488-3300 to purchase parking in advance.

**For complete 2022/23 Season details, visit [arenastage.org/season](https://arenastage.org/season).**

**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](http://arenastage.org)

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