

ARENA STAGE MEDIA RELEASE

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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April 18, 2022

WOMEN'S RIGHTS ADVOCATE AMBASSADOR MELANNE VERVEER HONORED WITH BETH NEWBURGER SCHWARTZ AWARD

*AWARD PRESENTATION ON APRIL 14, 2022, PART OF ARENA STAGE'S SPRING BENEFIT,
FEATURING PERFORMANCE BY GRAMMY AND EMMY AWARD WINNER KRISTOLYN LLOYD*

(Washington, D.C.) Arena Stage Artistic Director **Molly Smith** and Executive Producer **Edgar Dobie** are pleased to have named **Ambassador Melanne Verveer** the recipient of the 2022 Beth Newburger Schwartz Award, in recognition of her illustrious efforts for women's rights and her continual support of the arts. The award was presented on **Thursday, April 14, 2022**, as part of Arena Stage's Spring Benefit.

The evening kicked off with a cocktail reception, followed by a seated dinner, the award presentation to Ambassador Verveer and an exclusive musical performance by television and Broadway star **Kristolyn Lloyd**. The night also included a special video message from **The Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton**, congratulating Ambassador Verveer on her well-deserved award.

Ambassador Verveer was co-founder, Chair and Co-CEO of Vital Voices Global Partnership, an international non-profit founded to invest in emerging women leaders. Her illustrious career includes many other highlights, such as her efforts as a founding partner at Seneca Point Global, her nomination by President Obama to be the first U.S. Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues, and her service as U.S. Representative to the UN Commission on the Status of Women. She continues to champion women's rights as the Executive Director of Georgetown University's Institute for Women, Peace and Security, which seeks to enhance national and global security by documenting the crucial role women play in peace-building and security.

"Arena Stage, under the exceptional leadership of Molly Smith, has become a national hub for the best in American theater in our nation's capital. The theater company has made it possible for the public to access innovative, engaging and transformative productions that not only entertain, but also inspire and even move us to action," shares **Ambassador Verveer**. "It is an honor to receive the Beth Newburger Schwartz Award as Beth has set a high and exemplary standard throughout her life as an entrepreneur and civic leader. We owe her an enormous debt of gratitude for her many contributions to our community."

The award was first presented to Arena Stage board chair Beth Newburger Schwartz in 2016. Preceding recipients include Arlene Kogod, D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser and Nina Totenberg. The award celebrates female leaders who strive to better the community in which they live through their own unique strengths and talents.

“Melanne Verveer is an international champion for girls and women. She is dynamic, she is brave and she is unabashedly driven about creating a better world with women, girls and vital voices,” says **Smith**. “A collaborative leader, Ambassador Verveer has been successful in changing attitudes and building bridges while promoting the critical role of women in establishing peace internationally. She is a huge proponent of the arts and we are thrilled to honor her with the Beth Newburger Schwartz Award.”

All proceeds support Arena Stage’s award-winning Artistic Productions and Community Engagement Programs.

Platinum Sponsorship of the Arena Stage Benefit is provided by **Daniel Korengold and Martha Dippell** and **Ourisman Automotive of Virginia**, with additional support from Arena Stage’s Board of Trustees and many friends in the community.

For more information and to view photos of the evening, please visit: <https://arenastage.org/benefit>.

***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*

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