

ARENA STAGE MEDIA RELEASE

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Lauren McMillen
press@arenastage.org, 202-600-4055

October 1, 2021

ARENA STAGE ANNOUNCES TERESA SAPIEN TO BECOME ASSOCIATE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

(Washington, D.C.) Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater Artistic Director Molly Smith and Executive Producer Edgar Dobie announce accomplished leader and artist **Teresa Sapien** as the institution's new Associate Artistic Director. Sapien joined the company in 2019 and most recently served as casting director/line producer.

"I am thrilled to announce Teresa Sapien as the new Associate Artistic Director at Arena Stage," shares **Smith**. "Teresa demonstrated powerful leadership during the pandemic, making sure the artistic department ran smoothly as it changed shape. She is a careful and thoughtful colleague with incredible organizational skills, a strong connection with artists and an ability to talk to anyone as a terrific problem solver and innovator. She immerses herself in the community and is committed to making every theater space a welcoming and inclusive place. She is a perfect fit."

As associate artistic director, Sapien reports directly to Smith and is responsible for leading the efforts of Arena Stage's artistic development department, which includes dramaturgy, casting and audience enrichment activities, as well as implementing of the artistic vision of the theater by assisting in the development of season planning, strategy and programming focused on advancing the theater's position as a center for American theater.

Named in *American Theatre Magazine's* "[6 Theatre Workers You Should Know](#)," Sapien has made her mark on the theater community, especially in San Diego at La Jolla Playhouse where she served for seven seasons, most recently as associate producer.

"I'm thrilled to be taking on this new role as Associate Artistic Director at Arena Stage. I would not have landed here without learning from and working with so many innovative artists through the years," states **Sapien**. "I'm eager to bring that same innovation and generosity to this new role, helping lead Arena with compassion and hold the doors open for future generations of theater artists."

Teresa Sapien joined Arena Stage's artistic staff in 2019 after seven seasons at La Jolla Playhouse. At the Playhouse she helped guide over fifty productions on the mainstage and out in the San Diego community, including new plays by Martyna Majok, Will Power and Hansol Jung. She was the curator and producer of the 2019 Without Walls Festival of site-based and immersive theater which hosted over twenty international and American companies. As the co-producer of the annual DNA New Work Series, she supported the development of over thirty-eight new plays and musicals. In addition to producing, she was the Playhouse's local casting director for numerous plays and musicals, including the world premieres of *Wild Goose Dreams*, *Junk* and *Come From Away*. She is a reader for The Playwrights Realm, Playwrights' Center Minneapolis, Native Voices at the Autry and a proud contributor to the Kilroys' List. Sapien is a graduate of the University of Evansville's theatre department.

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

###