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# ARENA STAGE ANNOUNCES 2025/26 SEASON

## CELEBRATING 75 YEARS

## WITH:

**LYNN AHRENS  
THE BENGSONS  
LILI-ANNE BROWN  
RACHEL CHAVKIN  
CHRISTOPHER CHEN  
CHLOE O. DAVIS  
LEE SUNDAY EVANS  
SAVION GLOVER  
TONY GOLDWYN  
LAMEECE ISAAQ  
KWAME KWEI-ARMAH  
RICHARD LAGRAVENESE  
WILL POWER  
RYAN GUZZO PURCELL  
HANA S. SHARIF  
STEP AFRIKA!  
TLC  
SERGIO TRUJILLO  
REGGIE D. WHITE  
DOUG WRIGHT  
& MORE TO BE ANNOUNCED**

### ***THE 2025/26 SEASON INCLUDES:***

#### **DAMN YANKEES**

Music and Lyrics by **Richard Adler** and **Jerry Ross**Book by **George Abbott** and **Douglass Wallop**

Based on the Novel *The Year the Yankees Lost the Pennant* by Douglass Wallop  
New Adaptation by **Will Power** and **Doug Wright**  
Additional Lyrics by **Lynn Ahrens**  
Directed and Choreographed by **Sergio Trujillo**  
*September 9 – November 9, 2025*

The World Premiere of  
**FREMONT AVE.**  
By **Reggie D. White**  
Directed by **Lili-Anne Brown**  
A Co-Production with South Coast Repertory  
*October 8 – November 23, 2025*

The Highly Anticipated Return of the Beloved Holiday Tradition  
**STEP AFRIKA!'S MAGICAL MUSICAL HOLIDAY STEP SHOW**  
FOR A LIMITED HOLIDAY RUN  
*December 5 – December 21, 2025*

**PAL JOEY**  
Music by **Richard Rodgers**  
Lyrics by **Lorenz Hart**  
New Book by **Richard LaGravenese**  
With Additional Material by **Daniel "Koa" Beaty**  
Based on the Original Book by **John O'Hara**  
Co-Directed by **Tony Goldwyn**  
Co-Directed and Choreographed by **Savion Glover**  
*January 30 – March 15, 2026*

**INHERIT THE WIND**  
By **Jerome Lawrence** and **Robert E. Lee**  
Directed by **Ryan Guzzo Purcell**  
Produced in Association with The Feast  
*February 27 – April 5, 2026*

The Waterwell Production of  
**A GOOD DAY TO ME NOT TO YOU**  
By **Lameece Issaq**  
Directed by **Lee Sunday Evans**  
*March 27 – May 3, 2026*

**THE MOTION**  
By **Christopher Chen**  
Directed by **Hana S. Sharif**  
*May 6 – June 14, 2026*

The World Premiere of  
**CRAZYSEXYCOOL – THE TLC MUSICAL**

**Based on the Music Performed and Recorded by TLC**  
**Written and Directed by Kwame Kwei-Armah**  
**Choreographed by Chloe O. Davis**  
*June 12 – August 9, 2026*

The World Premiere of  
***MY JOY IS HEAVY***  
By **The Bengsons**  
Directed by **Rachel Chavkin**  
*Summer 2026*

## **SEASON TICKET PACKAGES NOW AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE**

[www.arenastage.org](http://www.arenastage.org)

(April 14, 2025 - Washington, DC) Arena Stage Artistic Director **Hana S. Sharif** and Executive Producer **Edgar Dobie** are proud to announce the company's diamond anniversary season. Celebrating 75 years of captivating, compelling, and immersive storytelling in the nation's capital—the 2025/26 Season lineup ignites the path ahead.

"The story of Arena has always been rooted in a simple, powerful truth—that theater, at its best, is a gathering place for reflection, for revelation, and for joy," said **Sharif**. "For seventy-four seasons, we have stood firmly in that purpose, tending to the dreams of visionaries past while welcoming the voices of tomorrow. This milestone anniversary is not just a culmination but a continuation, a living promise that the values which shaped our beginning will forever guide our way forward."

Boasting **nine powerful productions**, the season will kick off with one of America's most beloved musicals, dusted off and spit-shined for a new generation. In a new adaptation by Lucille Lortel Award winner **Will Power** and Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award winner **Doug Wright**, with additional lyrics by Tony Award winner **Lynn Ahrens**, and directed and choreographed by Tony Award winner **Sergio Trujillo**, the classic musical ***Damn Yankees*** has all the elements that made it famous—from a diehard love of baseball to one man's fateful (and hilarious) pact with the Devil to Broadway's sexiest femme fatale—all gently re-tooled for Arena Stage's season opener.

"*Damn Yankees* is the quintessential American musical. With its celebration of baseball and song, it joyfully remakes a Faustian tale into an uplifting parable of resilience, determination, and heart," said adapters **Power** and **Wright**. "As writers asked to delicately modernize and preserve this timeless classic, it has been quite the honor. We are beyond thrilled to bring *Damn Yankees* back to the American stage for its first major revival in 30 years. And we can think of no better theater to produce *Damn Yankees* than Arena Stage, one of the great American institutions for both new and revived theater works."

The fall sweeps in a soulful multi-generational dramatic-comedy about love, legacy, and a cutthroat game of Spades from Colman Domingo Award winner **Reggie D. White**. ***Fremont Ave.***, directed by two-time Helen Hayes Award winner **Lili-Anne Brown**, lays every card on the table and dares audiences to do the same. From young love and big dreams to buried resentment and unmet expectations, three generations of Black men face off at the card table for a reckoning with masculinity, identity, and the weight of silence passed down.

December delivers the gift of DC's favorite holiday step-tastic tradition! ***Step Afrika!'s Magical Musical Holiday Step Show*** will return for a fourth year—now with twice as many performances. Join DJ Nutcracker and his Arctic friends for an electrifying journey packed with high-energy stepping, festive music, and non-stop holiday cheer. This family favorite sold out last year!

The new year will commence with a reimagining of ***Pal Joey***, a jazzy musical about a slick-talking, velvet-voiced Chicago songster with dreams bigger than the bandstand. In a city where the right connections mean

everything, he is caught between a bright-eyed chorus girl and a wealthy widow who can bankroll his big break—for a price. Co-directed by Tony-winning choreographer **Savion Glover** and actor, director, and producer **Tony Goldwyn**, the stakes are high, the music is hot, and the game of romance and ambition never sounded so good.

“Ours is a totally reimagined *Pal Joey*, with a brand-new book that shifts the perspective of its groundbreaking anti-hero to that of a singularly passionate, sometimes ruthlessly focused artist—a jazz singer and hooper,” shared **Glover, Goldwyn, and Richard LaGravenese**. “Through *Joey*, we will experience an immersive, intoxicating world of music and dance. One of the joys of this *Pal Joey* is the addition of some of the great Rodgers and Hart songs: ‘Where or When,’ ‘This Can’t Be Love,’ ‘I Didn’t Know What Time It Was,’ ‘I Wish I Were in Love Again,’ as well ‘Where’s That Rainbow?’ and ‘This Funny World,’ which were never included in Rodgers and Hart’s theater work. Our fervent hope is that people will recognize the timeless wit and sophistication of Lorenz Hart’s lyrics, which should place him alongside the greats (like Porter and Sondheim) in that capacity. As in all reinventions of classics, we intend to give audiences something totally fresh and urgent, while bringing a new appreciation of a seminal work in American theater history.”

Returning to the Fichandler Stage—50 years since Arena’s original landmark production—two legal giants battle over the right to teach evolution in *Inherit the Wind*. Based on the real-life Scopes “Monkey” Trial, a small-town courtroom becomes the front line in America’s never-ending war over faith, truth, progress, and the freedom of thought. This enduring American classic by **Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee**, to be helmed by **Ryan Guzzo Purcell**, is a searing, visceral examination of a country still wrestling with the cost and courage of progress.

In the spring, **Lameece Issaq** and two-time Obie-winning director **Lee Sunday Evans** bring audiences a riotously funny and gut-wrenching play about the unpredictable, topsy-turvy life of a 40-something former dental lab tech who is emotionally multitasking everything on fire. A wildly candid and deeply human one-woman show, *A Good Day to Me Not to You* is about chasing dreams, dodging disasters, and surviving anything the world throws your way.

Next, audiences are taken on a fiercely intelligent and emotionally charged exploration of humanity with Obie Award winner **Christopher Chen’s *The Motion***, directed by Arena Stage Artistic Director **Hana S. Sharif**. What begins as a razor-sharp debate spirals into a world-altering unraveling as four scholars are thrust into a kaleidoscopic odyssey through memory, identity, and the fragile boundaries of belief.

Heating up the summer is a chart-topping world-premiere semi-biographical musical about the most successful female group of all time: *CrazySexyCool - The TLC Musical*. With their unforgettable anthems, fly dance moves, and head-turning style, four-time Grammy-winning and multi-platinum recording artists Tionne “**T-Boz**” Watkins, Lisa “**Left Eye**” Lopes, and Rozonda “**Chilli**” Thomas defined what it meant to be women in music. Visionary writer and director Olivier Award winner **Kwame Kwei-Armah** brings TLC’s (mostly true) story of unshakable sisterhood to the stage. Go beyond the fiery scandals, explosive creative clashes, and harrowing tragedies to experience this remarkable tale of defiance, triumph, and love.

“TLC is synonymous with rebellion—using their art to challenge, subvert, and entertain,” said **Kwei-Armah**. “Why a musical? Why now? Their lives need to be sung. It’s about that time!”

The 75th Season concludes with a soul-stirring, lyrical memoir about love, loss, and the importance of making each moment of happiness count. From Obie-winning duo **Abigail and Shaun Bengson** and Tony-winning director **Rachel Chavkin**, *My Joy is Heavy* is a gripping play about the Bengsons’ real-life journey through the grief of pregnancy loss and the unexpected moments of joy, humor, and connection that carried them forward.

Arena Stage’s 2025/26 Season celebrates a significant milestone and the continuation of its commitment to amplifying dynamic work that reflects the voices of its community and country. Packed with humor, music, drama, and stories that encourage unity, this year further reflects Arena’s dedication to staging original and new work that represents all stories. **WELCOME TO 75 SEASONS — AND BEYOND!**

Season packages are now available for purchase at [arenastage.org/75](http://arenastage.org/75).

**DETAILS FOR THE 2025/26 SEASON:**

**DAMN YANKEES**

**Music and Lyrics by Richard Adler and Jerry Ross**

**Book by George Abbott and Douglass Wallop**

**Based on the Novel *The Year the Yankees Lost the Pennant* by Douglass Wallop**

**New Adaptation by Lucille Lortel Award Winner Will Power and Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award Winner Doug Wright**

**Additional Lyrics by Tony Award Winner Lynn Ahrens**

**Directed and Choreographed by Tony Award Winner Sergio Trujillo**

**In the Fichandler Stage | *September 9 – November 9, 2025***

One of America's most beloved musicals is coming back, dusted off and spit-shined for a new generation. All the elements that made it famous are there: a diehard love of baseball, one man's fateful (and hilarious) pact with the Devil, and Broadway's sexiest femme fatale...but gently re-tooled for its first major revival in the 21st Century. Featuring iconic songs like "Whatever Lola Wants" and "Who's Got the Pain?," this production immerses audiences in a whirlwind of temptation, ambition, love, and sacrifice in this bold new adaptation by Lortel Award winner Will Power and Pulitzer and Tony Award winner Doug Wright, with additional lyrics by Tony Award winner Lynn Ahrens, and directed and choreographed by Tony Award winner Sergio Trujillo.

**FREMONT AVE.**

**By Colman Domingo Award Winner Reggie D. White**

**Directed by Helen Hayes Award Winner Lili-Anne Brown**

**A Co-Production with South Coast Repertory**

**In the Kreeger Theater | *October 8 – November 23, 2025***

Written by Reggie D. White and directed by Lili-Anne Brown, *Fremont Ave.* is a raw, electric world premiere that moves across decades with the force of memory and the rhythm of Spades. From young love and big dreams to buried resentment and unmet expectations, three generations of Black men face off at the card table and come face-to-face with each other. At the center of it all is the family's formidable matriarch: beloved, feared, and never forgotten. What begins as a game becomes a reckoning with masculinity, identity, and the weight of silence passed down. *Fremont Ave.* lays every card on the table and dares you to do the same.

**STEP AFRIKA!'S MAGICAL MUSICAL HOLIDAY STEP SHOW**

**In the Fichandler Stage | *December 5 - December 21, 2025***

Get ready to celebrate—*Step Afrika!'s Magical Musical Holiday Step Show* is back for its fourth spectacular year at Arena Stage! Bring the entire family to join DJ Nutcracker and his Arctic friends for an electrifying journey packed with high-energy stepping, festive music, and non-stop holiday cheer alongside the award-winning Step Afrika! performers. This fan-favorite tradition promises laughter, joy, and unforgettable moments. Last year's production sold out, so snag your tickets early.

**PAL JOEY**

**Music by Richard Rodgers**

**Lyrics by Lorenz Hart**

**New Book by Academy Award Nominee Richard LaGravenese**

**With Additional Material by Obie Award Winner Daniel "Koa" Beaty**

**Based on the Original Book by John O'Hara**

**Co-Directed by Tony Goldwyn**

**Co-Directed and Choreographed by Tony Award Winner Savion Glover**

**In the Kreeger Theater | January 30 – March 15, 2026**

The year is 1940-something, and Chicago's night scene is sizzling. Enter Joey Evans. A slick-talking, velvet-voiced songster with dreams bigger than the bandstand. But in a city where the right connections mean everything, he is caught between a bright-eyed chorus girl and a wealthy widow who can bankroll his big break—for a price. As the lights dim and the music swells, Joey's got a choice to make: play it straight or risk it all for the spotlight. This classic Rodgers and Hart score, including "Bewitched," "What is a Man," and "I Could Write a Book," now includes "Where or When," "This Can't Be Love," and "The Lady is a Tramp," among others. Co-directed by Tony-winning choreographer Savion Glover and actor, director, and producer Tony Goldwyn, the stakes are high, the music is hot, and the game of romance and ambition never sounded so good.

## **INHERIT THE WIND**

**By Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee**

**Directed by Ryan Guzzo Purcell**

**Produced in Association with The Feast**

**In the Fichandler Stage | February 27 – April 5, 2026**

Based on the real-life Scopes "Monkey" Trial, this electrifying courtroom drama pits two towering legal minds against each other in a small-town battle over science, religion, and the right to think freely. As the town becomes a stage for national attention, personal conviction clashes with public opinion in a trial that transcends its time. *Inherit the Wind*, the American classic by Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee, is a searing, deeply human portrait of a country still wrestling with the cost—and courage—of progress.

**The Waterwell Production of**

## **A GOOD DAY TO ME NOT TO YOU**

**By Lameece Issaq**

**Directed by Obie Award Winner Lee Sunday Evans**

**In the Arlene and Robert Kogod Cradle | March 27 – May 3, 2026**

A riotously funny and gut-wrenching new play written by Lameece Issaq and directed by two-time Obie Award winner Lee Sunday Evans brings audiences into the unpredictable, topsy-turvy life of a 40-something former dental lab tech who is emotionally multitasking everything on fire. From fending off deranged neighbors to unraveling a Rubik's cube of relationships, every day feels like speeding dating through life's chaos with zero emotional checkpoints. *A Good Day to Me Not to You* is a wildly candid, deeply human one-woman show about chasing dreams, dodging disasters, and surviving everything the world throws your way.

## **THE MOTION**

**By Obie Award Winner Christopher Chen**

**Directed by Arena Stage Artistic Director Hana S. Sharif**

**In the Fichandler Stage | May 6 – June 14, 2026**

What begins as a razor-sharp debate spirals into a world-altering unraveling as four scholars are thrust into a kaleidoscopic odyssey through memory, identity, and the fragile boundaries of belief. As the world around them transforms, they find unexpected solace, love, and companionship. Collectively, they wrestle with profound and unsettling questions about purpose, morality, and what it truly means to be alive. *The Motion* is a searing, intelligent, and emotionally charged journey into the core of the human condition—where certainty shatters, vulnerability reigns, and no conviction emerges unscathed.

## **CRAZYSEXYCOOL – THE TLC MUSICAL**

**Based on the Music Performed and Recorded by 4x Grammy Award Winners and Multi-Platinum Recording Artists TLC**

**Written and Directed by Olivier Award Winner Kwame Kwei-Armah**

**Choreographed by Chloe O. Davis**

**In the Kreeger Theater | June 12 – August 9, 2026**

TLC blazed a trail and changed the game. The trio stormed the 90s music scene, not only topping the charts—but creating the look, sound, and soul of a generation. With their unforgettable anthems, fly dance moves, and head-turning style, Tionne “T-Boz” Watkins, Lisa “Left Eye” Lopes, and Rozonda “Chilli” Thomas defined what it meant to be women in music. The most successful female group of all time, they’ve spent over three decades breaking boundaries and empowering generations. Now their journey comes to the stage with the fresh, new musical *CrazySexyCool*.

Visionary writer and director Kwame Kwei-Armah (*One Love: The Bob Marley Musical*) brings TLC’s (mostly true) story of unshakable sisterhood to the stage, featuring a powerhouse cast, high-octane choreography, and multi-platinum Billboard hits like “Waterfalls,” “Creep,” “Unpretty,” and, of course, “No Scrubs.” Go beyond the fiery scandals, explosive creative clashes, and harrowing tragedies to experience this remarkable tale of defiance, triumph, and love.

No Scrubs. Just Legends.

## **MY JOY IS HEAVY**

**By Obie Award Winners The Bengsons**

**Directed by Tony Award Winner Rachel Chavkin**

**In the Arlene and Robert Kogod Cradle | Summer 2026**

From Obie-winning duo Abigail and Shaun Bengson and Tony-winning director Rachel Chavkin, *My Joy Is Heavy* is a gripping play filled with music. Told through song, story, and raw honesty, the Bengsons invite audiences into their real-life journey through the grief of pregnancy loss and the unexpected moments of joy, humor, and connection that carried them forward. Woven with soul-stirring music and lyrical storytelling, their memoir unfolds with radical vulnerability, reminding us of the importance of making each moment of happiness all the more profound.

**Subscription packages are now on sale and may be purchased by visiting [arenastage.org/75](https://arenastage.org/75). Packages may also be purchased by phone at 202-488-3300, Tuesday through Sunday, from noon until 8 p.m., or in person at the Arena Stage Sales Office, at 1101 Sixth Street, SW, Tuesday through Sunday, 2 hours before a performance.**

*The first racially integrated theater in our nation’s capital and a pioneer of the regional theater movement, Arena Stage was founded in 1950 in Washington, D.C. Today, under the leadership of Artistic Director Hana S. Sharif and Executive Producer Edgar Dobie, Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater is a national center dedicated to American voices and artists. We produce plays of all that is passionate, profound, deep, and dangerous in the American spirit, and present diverse and groundbreaking work from some of the best artists around the country. Consistently contributing to the American theatrical lexicon by commissioning and developing new plays, Arena Stage impacts the lives of over 10,000 students annually through its work in community engagement and serves a diverse annual audience of more than 300,000. [arenastage.org](https://arenastage.org)*

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[arenastage.org](https://arenastage.org)