

For Immediate Release
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Carolyn Griffin Announces MetroStage's 2011-2012 Season

Producing Artistic Director Carolyn Griffin is pleased to announce the line-up of plays and musicals for the 2011-12 season that includes a US premiere, and the premiere of a newly reconfigured musical about a young Josephine Baker. Offering two plays, two musicals, and a one man show, the theatre continues to offer a broad and diverse range of theatrical experiences to its audiences.

The season opens with John Patrick Shanley's **Savage in Limbo**, directed by Lise Bruneau, and featuring Natascia Diaz as Denise Savage. This contemporary classic was originally presented as a staged reading at the 1984 National Playwrights Conference at the Eugene O'Neill Memorial Theater Center, and opened in New York City the following year. Shanley is the Oscar winning author of *Moonstruck* and received the Pulitzer and the Tony for *Doubt*. Ms. Diaz (who won the Helen Hayes Award for Outstanding Lead Actress for her role in MetroStage's production of *ROOMS a rock romance*) will be joined by Veronica del Cerro, Jenna Sokolowski, Michael Kevin Darnall (Cpl. Marcus Rodriguez from MetroStage's production of *Sandstorm, Stories from the Front*) and Sasha Olinick. This is a Bronx tale of a quintet of bar regulars (many of whom grew up together in Catholic grammar school) who are now questioning their lives, their loves and looking for change but wondering if change is ever possible. Shanley (deeply influenced by his Bronx, Catholic grammar school upbringing) has written a timeless classic with unforgettable characters and stunning, provocative dialogue.

Broadway Christmas Carol, created by Kathy Feininger, returns to MetroStage for the holiday season, running from Nov. 17-Dec. 18. This year Michael Sharp, one of the original Scrooges in the Round House production that ran for seven years, will be directing and reprising his role as Scrooge. Mr. Sharp was last seen at MetroStage when he appeared in *Starting Here Starting Now*, in 2001. **Broadway Christmas Carol** is a delightful cross between the classic Dickens' tale and uproarious song parodies of favorite Broadway songs. Sharp will be joined by returning actor Matt Anderson, and Capital Steps member Tracey Stevens. Aaron Broderick returns as music director and accompanist.

MetroStage welcomes Maurice Hines back (he won the Helen Hayes Award for Outstanding Choreography for MetroStage's production of *Cool Papa's Party*) to both direct and choreograph a newly reconfigured musical based on the early

years of Josephine Baker, entitled **Josephine Tonight**, running from Jan. 26-March 18. Having already staged a reading this summer to be followed by a workshop of this new work in the fall, **Josephine Tonight**, book and lyrics by Sherman Yellin and music by Wally Harper, is an exciting new musical with Broadway talent. It follows the path of Josie dancing in the streets of East St. Louis to the emergence of Josephine Baker on the nightclub stages in Paris. David A. Bunn will music direct and provide new arrangements, and Mel Johnson Jr. is the assistant director.

Be Careful! The Sharks Will Eat You! is a one man show written and performed by Jay Alvarez. This acclaimed play that has performed to sold out audiences in N.Y., Miami and L.A., tells the story of his family's remarkable escape from Cuba five years after Castro's rise to power, risking everything as they navigated the dark, shark-infested Caribbean Sea in a small boat heading for the American shore. This riveting story is a tribute to his father, Humberto Alvarez, and to all those who have sought a better life for their families. This is a three week limited engagement running from April 4-22.

This spring MetroStage is proud to present the U.S. premiere of **Playing Sinatra**, by the acclaimed eighty-five year old British playwright, poet and author, Bernard Kops, and directed by MetroStage favorite, John Vreeke, running from May 10-June 17. This fascinating play is about a brother and sister, Norman and Sandra Lewis, and what happens when an attractive stranger, Phillip de Groot, enters their lives. Kops is a master writer exploring life and the ever challenging possibilities of entrapment and escape, or not. This is another fascinating character study with unforgettable characters to close our season.

Performances are Thursdays and Fridays at 8, Saturdays at 3 or 5 (varies with the show) and 8, Sundays at 3 and 7. MetroStage is located at 1201 N. Royal St. in Alexandria, Virginia in North Old Town. Tickets may be ordered by calling 1-800-494-8497 or online at boxofficetickets.com. For group sales and information call the theatre at 703-548-9044. The theatre's website is www.metrostage.org.

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