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JQA

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ARENA STAGE

1101 Sixth Street SW Washington, DC 20024-2461 ADMINISTRATION 202-554-9066 SALES OFFICE 202-488-3300 TTY 202-484-0247 arenastage.org

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PROGRAM BOOK STAFF
Renée M. Littleton,
Senior Director of Marketing
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ARTISTICALLY SPEAKING



What could be more exciting than a new play forged in these raucous and conflicted days? The talented Aaron Posner is both writer and director of *JQA* as he is blessed with both skills. This performance is the culmination of years of gestation, research, imagining, drafting, re-drafting, designing, re-imagining, re-drafting, building and finally rehearsing and performing. There is probably another re-draft or two in there as well.

JQA is part of our expansive Power Plays initiative, where Arena is commissioning a new play or musical per decade from 1776 to the present about the people, ideas and incidents that revolve

around power in America. There is no better city than Washington, D.C. to drive this idea because we live, sleep and drink politics. The world travels to our city to understand what it means to be American.

Washington, D.C. has a unique position as a strong voice on power and politics. We live in the fire of local, national and international politics. Local news is national news and local politics is national politics. Today's play covers a span of time but is centered on the 1790s and the fascinating John Quincy Adams. This play is not trying to be a realistic historical drama but rather to explore the ideas and impact of America's sixth president.

The Power Plays initiative incorporates five cycles:

- Presidential Voices, illuminating exceptional Presidents and remarkable events in their lives and administrations:
- African-American Voices, heralding African-American stories in our country's history and politics;
- Insider Voices, offering an exclusive perspective on the complex workings of American institutions and culture;
- Musical Theater Voices, featuring musicals celebrating political ideas and events;
- · Women's Voices, shining a spotlight on female voices in our country's political life.

We are making significant and exciting progress with our program. In addition to JQA, five have had full productions: Camp David by Lawrence Wright; The Originalist by John Strand; Intelligence by Jacqueline Lawton; Snow Child with book by John Strand, music by Georgia Stitt and Bob Banghart, lyrics by Georgia Stitt (based on the novel by Eowyn Ivey); and Sovereignty by Mary Kathryn Nagle. Keep your eyes out for more next season.

At the end of our journey, we will have created a canon of American plays that reveal an idea of who we are as Americans.

Molly Smith
Artistic Director



Arena Stage is built on the land of the Piscataway people of the Algonquin-speaking tribes, as well as the lands of the Native American people of the greater Anacostia, Potomac and Tidewater regions.









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FROM THE EXECUTIVE PRODUCER



When on the brink of birthing a new play to the world like this premiere production of Aaron Posner's JQA, I am reminded of one of Arena's core values: to create a work culture that reflects and borrows from the culture of the rehearsal hall which values experimentation and collaboration. In divisive times like these, it is refreshing to embrace an aspiration like that.

Not all rehearsal halls are the same and those of you who have not had the delight of being in a rehearsal hall are probably asking what this means. Even we at Arena have asked this question, to be clear to ourselves and our guests what we expect and value.

THE PRINCIPLES OF ARENA STAGE'S CULTURE OF THE REHEARSAL HALL ENCOMPASS:

Responsibility

- Take responsibility for the position you hold and any amount of power you may have within this position. Do not use it abusively over others more vulnerable.
- · Be proactive, not reactive.
- · Lead by example.
- · Be responsive.

Empowerment

· Be an advocate for yourself. Call out inappropriate behavior, as appropriate.

Mutual Respect & Courtesy

- · Communication is open and civil at all levels.
- · Understand your audience, both on and off the stage.
- Navigate conflict. Arena is not a conflict-free zone; however, conflict should be handled in a respectful and positive manner.
- · Be helpful, not hurtful.

Creativity & Collaboration

Respect and celebrate our diverse backgrounds and experiences.

Integrity & Accountability

- · Demonstrate sound ethical principles, including honesty and integrity.
- · Assume positive intent.

Engagement & Pride

- Be involved and supportive of your colleagues and environment; make the investment.
- Encouragement of others is expected.
- Understand we all play an important role within our environment.

Resiliency & Adaptation

Honor our history and legacy, while embracing change.

Maintaining these values is not necessarily easy or simple, especially in stressful times. We recently made this into a poster and placed it around our offices, shops and backstage areas. Sometimes we all need a reminder to step back and remember we are all people, striving to do the best we can do under challenging circumstances. I have immense admiration for Arena Stage's staff, from the sales office window, to front of house, to our shops that build, to our offices that support. A production like this one has hit every aspect of Arena; the play was commissioned through our Power Plays initiative, so it truly grew from core idea to full production with the support of all of our organization, working hard at honoring the culture of the rehearsal hall!

Edgar Dobie

Executive Producer
President of the Corporation



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FRONT ROW LIVING



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PLAYWRIGHT'S NOTE



John Quincy Adams is a unique and quintessentially American figure. He was (in no particular order) a politician, poet, diarist, diplomat, author, essayist, translator, lawyer, linguist, rhetorician, scientist and (almost) an activist. He was also, by most accounts, a dry, difficult, truly brilliant, rather charmless civil servant and deeply flawed family man. While certainly subject to the prejudices and attitudes of his time, I believe he was a man of true integrity.

I chose to write about John Quincy Adams for several reasons. I won't tell you all of them, so as not to spoil the play for you. But some are: He is not very well known. He is complicated and

contradictory. He is nearly impossible, by today's standards, to categorize as a liberal or conservative, which I found very intriguing. While he belonged to several political parties during his long career, he was suspicious of parties and held a true allegiance only to the idea of the United States and its citizens (which you have to sort of love about him...). In my subjective (even whimsical) reading of his life, he evolved and changed in fascinating ways over the course of an extraordinary political career that covered the first half of the 19th century.

But let me be very clear: While this play is inspired by history, and the characters are in keeping with the traits and beliefs of their real-life counterparts, *this play is NOT historically accurate.* The language is fanciful and nearly entirely my own. The meetings and conversations it proposes are fictitious. If you go looking for facts, while you will certainly find some similarities to real people and real events, *this play is not to be trusted as accurate in any way!*

The goal here has always been provocation, not excavation; entertainment, not edification. This is a work of art—not history. Knowledge of John Quincy Adams and his influence on early American history is not necessary to understanding this play, because it is not really about history in the first place. Rather, it is an attempt to look at today through the lens of yesteryear.

On a personal note, I would like to thank the many, many people who have contributed to the evolution of the play over several years. In particular I would like to express my deep and lasting gratitude to Molly Smith, Edgar Dobie and the board and staff of Arena Stage for this extraordinary opportunity; to E.J. Dionne for the initial inspiration; to Jocelyn Clarke and Erin Weaver, for their transformative insights; to George Bernard Shaw and Aaron Sorkin, who taught me to love theatrical political passion; to Naysan, Anna'le, Dalia and the cast and designers on this production; and all of the other artists who were part of the readings and workshops (including the wonderful students at American University who were part of an initial workshop production) for all their many ineffable, innumerable and invaluable contributions.

-Aaron Posner

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SUCKS.

BY AARON POSNER

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FEATURING

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JQA WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY AARON POSNER

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MEGHAN RAHAM

COSTUME DESIGNER

HELEN HUANG

LIGHTING DESIGNER

JESSE BELSKY

SOUND DESIGNER KARIN GRAYBASH DIALECT AND VOCAL COACH

LISA NATHANS

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the mead center for american theater

SETTING / CAST

SETTING

Braintree, MA; Boston, MA; and Washington, D.C. from 1776 to 1847.

CAST (in alphabetical order)

JQA/Louisa Adams/Abraham LincolnJACQUELINE CORF	REA*
IQA/John Adams/Henry Clay ERIC HISS	OM*
JQA/George Washington/Abigail Adams/Louisa Adams PHYLLIS I	KAY*
JQA/Andrew Jackson/Frederick Douglass JOSHUA DAVID ROBINS	SON*
DitizensJORDAN LEE, JAKE O	WEN

^{*}Member of Actors' Equity Association

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Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater Molly Smith Study | 5:30 – 7:00 p.m.

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SUNDAY, MARCH 24, 2019 No designer babies?

How to deal with the coming bioengineering revolution.

SUNDAY, APRIL 14, 2019 Reforms or Revolution?

To achieve a "more perfect union," will electoral politics do, or do we need more profound social changes?

SUNDAY, MAY 26, 2019

Should free speech be denied to hate mongers, cultural appropriators, news fakers and traumatizers?

The first amendment, which in part provides for freedom of speech and of the press, has long been considered the most important of all our rights; however, certain voices are causing harm and pain. Should these voices be protected?

There will be a reception before each discussion, starting at 5:00 p.m.

For more information or to register, please visit

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FOR THIS PRODUCTION

FOR THIS PRODUCTION

Technical Director	NATALIE BELL
Properties Director	JENN SHEETZ
Costume Director	JOSEPH P. SALASOVICH
Master Electrician	CHRISTOPHER V. LEWTON
Sound & Video Supervisor	BRIAN BURCHETT
Directing Fellow	DALIA ASHURINA
Production Dramaturg/Script Supervisor	ANNA'LE HORNAK
Show Carpenter	HANNAH MARTIN
Props	
Light Board Operator	
Assistant to the Lighting Designer	VENUS GULBRANSON
Sound Operator	ADAM W. JOHNSON
Wardrobe Supervisor	ALICE HAWFIELD
Wardrobe	KRISTINA MARTIN
Additional Tailors	VALERIE GRUNER, ALL-STITCH OF ATLANTA
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CAST (in alphabetical order)



JACQUELINE CORREA (JQA/ Abraham Lincoln/Louisa Adams) last appeared at Arena Stage as Tania in Native Gardens directed by Blake Robison. Her regional theater credits include Native

Gardens (Guthrie Theater), Brick City (Premiere Stages), Macbeth (Arkansas Rep), The Women of Padilla (Two River Theater), Hamlet (Guthrie/The Acting Company), Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead (Guthrie/The Acting Company), Confluence (Guthrie Theater), On the Verge and American Tet (CATF) and Macbeth (Pennsylvania Shakespeare Theater). Other stage credits include Peter Pan directed by Mark Lamos, The Cradle Song directed by Jonathan Bank and A Christmas Carol directed by Joe Dowling. Jacqueline has appeared in the films The Dog Days and Once a Year. She holds an MFA from the Professional Theater Training Program at The University of Delaware. Instagram: @Ms_Jacqueline_Correa www.JacquelineCorrea.com



ERIC HISSOM (JQA/John Adams/Henry Clay) first appeared at Arena Stage in Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike. D.C. area credits include Twelve Angry Men and Born Yesterday at

Ford's; Cyrano, Arcadia (Helen Hayes Award) and Winter's Tale at the Folger; Everything is Illuminated, Body of an American and Life Sucks at Theatre J; Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo at Round House; The Effect at Studio; The Vibrator Play at Woolly Mammoth; and others. Eric did the national tour of The Thirty-Nine Steps, and has worked at regional theaters all over the country, including Seattle Rep, LaJolla Playhouse, Cleveland Playhouse, Milwaukee Rep, Asolo Rep, The Arden Theatre, Orlando Shakespeare Theater, Cape Playhouse and others. Eric has an MFA from the FSU/Asolo Conservatory.



PHYLLIS KAY (JQA/George Washington/Abigail Adams/Louisa Adams) is making her Arena Stage debut. She is a longtime member of the Trinity Rep Resident Acting Company and has worked

at several regional theaters. Favorite productions include Macbeth, Lend Me a Tenor, Angels in America, The Beauty Queen of Leenane, The Cider House Rules, The Merry Wives of Windsor, Cherry Orchard, All the King's Men, Cabaret, King Lear, Hunchback of Seville, Appropriate, Death of a Salesman and Into the Breeches! She has appeared in the films Smithereens, Federal Hill, Brooklyn Rules, The Proposal, Fairhaven, Some Freaks, Polka King, and on television in Miller's Court, Law & Order, The Sopranos and Body of Proof. She is a 2015 Lunt-Fontanne Fellow.



JOSHUA DAVID ROBINSON

(JQA/Frederick Douglass/ Andrew Jackson) is honored to be making his Arena Stage debut in this production, returning to perform in his hometown for

the first time. Joshua has appeared Off-Broadway in X: Or, Betty Shabazz v. The Nation (Theatre at St. Clement's, The New Victory Theater); The Convent of Pleasure (Cherry Lane Theatre); and Sense of an Ending (59E59 Theatres). Regionally Joshua has been seen in All the Way (Cleveland Playhouse); Sherwood: The Adventures of Robin Hood and Three Sisters (Playmakers Repertory); and A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court (The Guthrie). Holding an MFA from NYU Graduate Acting, Joshua is always working to use theater as a means to engage with his community and as a vehicle for social change.



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Contact Renée Littleton at ARENA@ARENASTAGE.ORG



the mead center for american theater

CREATIVE

AARON POSNER (Playwright/Director) is an award-winning playwright, director, teacher and former artistic director of two LORT theaters. His Helen Hayes Award-winning play, Stupid F**king Bird, was one of the ten most produced plays in the country in 2015. Other plays include Life Sucks and No Sisters (both re-inventions of Chekhov), District Merchants (inspired by The Merchant of Venice), Who Am I This Time? & Other Conundrums of Love (adapted from Kurt Vonnegut), The Chosen and My Name Is Asher Lev (adapted from Chaim Potok), Sometimes a Great Notion (adapted from Ken Kesey) and several more. He has directed more than 150 productions at major regional theaters across the country, including Arena Stage, and currently lives outside of D.C. with his wife, actress Erin Weaver, and his amazing daughter, Maisie.

MEGHAN RAHAM (Set Designer) is a scenic and costume designer with a strong interest in the development of new work. Design credits include Clay (Off-Broadway/Lincoln Center LCT3); Master Harold..., Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, The Night Alive and Fool for Love (Round House Theatre); Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf? (Ford's); She the People and Pike St. (Woolly Mammoth); District Merchants, Romeo and Juliet and The Conference of the Birds (Folger): Life Sucks (Theater J); The Aliens and Red Speedo (Studio Theatre); and The Kennedy Center. Chicago credits include You Got Older (Steppenwolf Theatre), Fedra (Lookingglass Theatre) and The Hypocrites' Frankenstein at the Museum of Contemporary Art, as well as regional credits at Barrington Stage (The Chosen), Kansas City Repertory Theatre and Center Theatre Group (LA). Meghan is an associate professor at American University.

HELEN HUANG (Costume Designer) Regional credits include Arena Stage's Oak & Ivy, Before It Hits Home (Oregon Shakespeare Festival), Guthrie Theater, Children's Theatre Company, Cincinnati Playhouse, Classic Stage Company, Studio Theatre, Woolly Mammoth Theatre, Ford's Theatre, Shakespeare Theatre

Company, Folger Theater, Signature Theatre, Syracuse Stage, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Milwaukee Repertory Theater, Philadelphia Theatre Company and Disney Entertainment. Additional credits include Boston Lyric Opera. The Washington Ballet, set and costume design for China National Opera House and China Central Television. Exhibitions include Prague Quadrennial, Costume Design at the Turn of the Century (Moscow) and Celebrating a Century of Women Designing for Live Performance (New York). Awards include Helen Hayes Award and Ivey Award. Teaching engagements include professor of Costume Design, University of Maryland, College Park. www.helenqhuang.com

JESSE BELSKY (Lighting Designer) previously designed The Year of Magical Thinking at Arena Stage. Other collaborations with Mr. Posner include the world premiere of No Sisters (Studio Theatre), Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf? (Ford's Theatre). The Winter's Tale and A Midsummer Night's Dream (Folger Theatre) and Everything is Illuminated (Theater J). Other D.C. designs include The Mystery of Love & Sex (Signature Theatre); Sense & Sensibility (Folger Theatre); The Effect, Three Sisters and ANIMAL (Studio Theatre); The Book of Will and Handbagged (Round House); and The Magic Play (Olney). Regional credits include productions at Yale Repertory, Playmakers Repertory, Actor's Theatre Louisville and Portland Center Stage. Jesse holds a BA from Duke and an MFA from Yale School of Drama, and has taught lighting design at Connecticut College and UNC Greensboro. www.jessebelsky.com

KARIN GRAYBASH (Sound Designer) has created numerous sound designs for regional theater and Off-Broadway, including Hartford Stage, Long Wharf, Berkeley Repertory, Dallas Theater Center, Yale Repertory, McCarter Theatre Center, Portland Stage, TheatreWorks and the Alliance, among others. Her work has been nominated for a variety of awards and she is a recipient of the Bay Area Theatre Critics Award for her sound design of Polk County at Berkeley Repertory Theatre. Karin was the original live sound consultant for the multi-

WHO'S WHO

media production Freedom Rising at the National Constitution Center. Many of her soundscapes can be heard at The Franklin Institute's exhibit entitled Your Brain. Karin also holds the position of sound supervisor for the Mason Gross School of the Arts at Rutgers University.

LISA NATHANS (Dialect and Vocal Coach) is thrilled to be coaching for Arena Stage! Other D.C. area credits include Arena Stage's Anything Goes, Shakespeare Theatre Company /5th Avenue Theatre's The Secret Garden (Broadway-bound co-production) and various productions with the Kennedy Center Theater for Young Audiences, Signature Theatre, Theater Alliance, Keegan Theatre and MetroStage. Regional credits include Guthrie Theater, The Road Theatre Company and Theatricum Botanicum. TV credits include National Geographic's Elemental: Hydrogen vs. Hindenburg. Private coaching/workshop development available; VASTA member. Teaching (USA and UK) engagements include University of Maryland TDPS (assistant professor: Voice, Speech, and Acting), CalArts, Stella Adler Academy, RADA, Royal Welsh, Royal Central, University of Washington (PATP MFA) and University of Minnesota (Guthrie BFA). Training: Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, MFA (Voice Studies); Boston University, BFA (Acting); Linklater Voice Designation; and Colaianni Speech Practitioner. Break legs all!

JOCELYN CLARKE (Dramaturg) is currently Theatre Adviser to the Arts Council of Ireland and Dramaturg at American Voices New Play Institute at Arena Stage in Washington, D.C. He has taught dramaturgy at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Columbia University and Trinity College Dublin. He was the Commissioning and Literary Manager of the Abbey Theatre for four years, and lead theater critic with The Sunday Tribune for nine years. He is an associate artist with The Civilians and Theatre Mitu in New York, He has written six plays for Anne Bogart and the SITI Company—Bob, Alice's Adventures Underground, Room, Score, Antigone and Trojan Women (After Euripides), and Chess Game No. 5.

KATE MURRAY, CSA (Casting Director) Casting credits include work with Bedlam, Center Theater Group, The Cherry Lane, Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival, LAByrinth, New Georges, TheaterWorks Hartford, Two River Theater and The Studio Theatre. Broadway credits (as casting associate) include The Crucible, A View from the Bridge, A Delicate Balance and A Raisin in the Sun. Kate is a casting director at The Public Theater.

HETHYR (RED) VERHOEF (Production Stage Manager) has been on the road with A Night With Janis Joplin both regionally and nationally (a musical that got its wings here at Arena). Hethyr has worked on numerous productions over the years as a stage manager and flyman, and continues to be deeply invested in theater, art, diversity and all the of the elements it takes to create it. Red is thrilled to return to Arena Stage for this exciting new work. She is also a proud member of AEA.

TREVOR A. RILEY (Rehearsal Stage Manager)'s previous Arena Stage credits include Anything Goes, Snow Child, Sovereignty, The Price, Intelligence, Carousel, Destiny of Desire and Our War. Other D.C. credits include South Pacific, My Fair Lady, The Diary of Anne Frank, Bakersfield Mist and Godspell (Olney Theatre Center) and You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown, The Jungle Book, Jack and Phil, Slayers of Giants, Inc. and A Year With Frog and Toad (Imagination Stage). Additional credits include Woolly Mammoth and Studio Theater.

EMILY ANN MELLON (Assistant Stage Manager) Arena Stage credits include Kleptocracy, Indecent, Dave, Hold These Truths, The Pajama Game, A Raisin in the Sun, Watch on the Rhine, Moby Dick, The Year of Magical Thinking, Born for This, Disgraced, All the Way, Akeelah and the Bee, Destiny of Desire and Dear Evan Hansen. Additional D.C. credits include Girlfriend (Signature); Wig Out! (Studio); The School for Lies (Shakespeare); and very still & hard to see (Rorschach). Other credits include Short North Stage, Evolution Theatre Co., Columbus Children's Theatre and CATCO-Phoenix Inc. in Columbus; Goodman Theatre in Chicago: and Good Day New York and Inside Edition in New York. She sends all of her love to her family.

ARENA STAGE LEADERSHIP

MOLLY SMITH (Artistic Director) has served as Artistic Director since 1998. Her more than 30 directing credits at Arena Stage include Anything Goes, Sovereignty, Carousel, The Originalist, Fiddler on the Roof, Camp David, Mother Courage and Her Children, Oklahoma!, A Moon for the Misbegotten, My Fair Lady, The Great White Hope, The Music Man, Legacy of Light, The Women of Brewster Place, Cabaret, South Pacific, All My Sons and How I Learned to Drive. Her directorial work has also been seen Off-Broadway at 59E59 in New York, Canada's Shaw Festival, The Court Theatre, The Old Globe, Asolo Repertory, Berkeley Repertory, Trinity Repertory, Toronto's Tarragon Theatre, Montreal's Centaur Theatre and Perseverance Theater in Juneau, Alaska, which she founded and ran from 1979-1998. Molly has been a leader in new play development for over 40 years. She is a great believer in first, second and third productions of new work and has championed projects including How I Learned to Drive; Passion Play, a cycle; Next to Normal; and Dear Evan Hansen. She led the re-invention of Arena Stage, focusing on the architecture and creation of the Mead Center for American Theater and positioning Arena Stage as a national center for American artists. During her time with the company, Arena Stage has workshopped more than 100 productions, produced 39 world premieres, staged numerous second and third productions and been an important part of nurturing nine projects that went on to have a life on Broadway. In 2014, Molly made her Broadway debut directing The Velocity of Autumn, following its critically acclaimed run at Arena Stage. She was awarded honorary doctorates from American University and Towson University. In 2018, she was honored as Person of the Year by the National Theatre Conference and inducted into the Washington D.C. Hall of Fame.

EDGAR DOBIE (Executive Producer) Born in Vernon, British Columbia, a village next to the Rocky Mountains (three years after Arena had its first performance in 1950). I am one of five brothers raised by my Dad - Edgar, a mechanic and small businessman - and Mom - Connie, a telephone operator and union organizer. I am the only Dobie to make a career in theater. Luckily for me, drama was an arts elective I was offered at the tender age of 12, so I hung up my hockey skates and joined the drama class, led by teacher Paddy Malcolm and her fledgling Powerhouse Community Theater after school. By the time I graduated from high school, we volunteers had built ourselves a 200-seat fully-equipped theater on its own piece of land in the center of town and found a sell-out audience for the full season of plays we had to offer. That experience taught me so many lessons about the power of theater to foster collaboration and share meaningful stories, as well as the public values that attach themselves to building a safe place where everyone is welcome. All those lessons served me well as a managing leader and producer both sides of the border, and both sides of the commercial and non-profit theater divide. Arriving here at Arena in 2009 makes me feel like I am wellequipped for the best job in the world.

This theater operates under an agreement between the League of Resident Theatres and Actors' Equity Association.



The actors and stage managers are members of Actors' Equity
Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.



The scenic, costume, lighting and sound designers in LORT theaters are represented by United Scenic Artists, Local USA-829 of the IATSE.



The Director and Choreographer are members of the STAGE DIRECTORS AND CHOREOGRAPHERS SOCIETY, a national theatrical labor union.

Arena Stage is a constituent of the Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national organization for the American theater.

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