

ARENA STAGE MEDIA RELEASE

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

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**ARENA STAGE ANNOUNCES FULL COMPANY FOR
THE PAJAMA GAME DIRECTED BY ALAN PAUL
OCTOBER 27–DECEMBER 24, 2017**

***** Broadway veterans Nancy Anderson and Eddie Korbich among cast joining previously announced Donna McKechnie and Britney Coleman in golden age musical comedy *****

(Washington, D.C.) Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater announces the complete company for *The Pajama Game* directed by **Alan Paul** in his Arena Stage debut, with music and lyrics by Richard Adler and Jerry Ross, and book by George Abbott and Richard Bissell. Winner of the 1955 Tony Award for Best Musical and based on the novel *7½ Cents* by Richard Bissell, *The Pajama Game* follows Sid Sorokin and Babe Williams in a battle of the sexes romance that soars with seductive dance numbers like “Steam Heat” and “Hernando’s Hideaway.” Featuring Musical Direction by **James Cunningham** and Choreography by **Parker Esse**, *The Pajama Game* runs **October 27–December 24** in the iconic in-the-round **Fichandler Stage**.

“Alan Paul has shown a gift for musicals and I know he will make the Fichandler come alive,” says **Molly Smith**. “The refrain of ‘Seven and a Half Cents’ reminds us that little things are meaningful in the long run. It’s going to be fun to see Alan’s take on this story of unions and love. Finding compromise and friendship across a philosophical divide is an important story for our country to hear right now. And I know the great music and dynamic dancing with Parker Esse will leave us high during the holiday season.”

“*The Pajama Game* is many things: joyful, sexy, sly and entertaining,” shares **Paul**. “Along with all the fun, there’s a serious idea at its core: it’s about fighting for what you believe in, both at work and in our relationships. My first professional job, right out of college, was working as Molly Smith’s Assistant Director at Arena Stage. I’m thrilled to come full-circle to return and direct *The Pajama Game*.”

The Pajama Game will feature D.C.-area native **Tim Rogan** (*Beauty and the Beast* national tour) as Sid alongside the previously announced **Britney Coleman** (Broadway’s *Sunset Boulevard*) as Babe, with **Edward Gero** (Arena’s *The Originalist*, *The Little Foxes*) as Hasler and Tony Award winner **Donna McKechnie** (Broadway’s *A Chorus Line*) as Mabel. Joining the cast are Broadway veterans **Nancy Anderson** (*Sunset Boulevard*, *A Class Act*) as Gladys, **Eddie Korbich** (*Wicked*, *The Little Mermaid*) as Hines and **Blakely Slaybaugh** (*Paramour*, *Shrek The Musical* national tour) as Prez.

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Included in the lineup of D.C.-area actors are **Elliot Dash** as Pop/Ensemble, **Ben Gunderson** as Joe/Ensemble, **Gabi Stapula** as Mae and **Paul Scanlan** as Max/Ensemble, with ensemble members **Jay Adriel**, **Maggie Donnelly**, **Heidi Kershaw Quick**, **Kara-Tameika Watkins** and **Casey Wenger-Schulman**.

Rounding out the 23-member company are **Tony Neidenbach** (Dance Captain), **Bridget Riley**, **Victor Wisehart** and **Phil Young**, with swings **Katie Arthur** and **Tyler Roberts**.

Paul's creative collaborators for *The Pajama Game* include Music Director **Cunningham**, Choreographer **Esse** who returns for his 15th Arena Stage production, Set Designer **James Noone**, Costume Designer **Alejo Vietti**, Lighting Designer **Robert Wierzel** and Sound Designer **Daniel Erdberg**.

The creative team for *The Pajama Game* also includes Wig Designer **Anne Nesmith**, Dialect Coach **Lynn Watson**, Associate Music Director **Victor Simonson**, Assistant Choreographer **Tony Neidenbach**, Stage Manager **Kurt Hall**, Assistant Stage Manager **Anthony O Bullock** and Production Assistant **Emily Ann Mellon**.

George Abbott (*Book*) had one of the most active and distinguished careers in the entire history of the American theater as an actor, director, writer and producer. He directed his first musical, Rodgers and Hart's *Jumbo*, in 1935 and other directorial highlights include *A Funny Thing Happened On the Way to the Forum*, *On Your Toes*, *The Boys From Syracuse*, *Pal Joey*, *On the Town*, *The Pajama Game*, *Damn Yankees* and *Once Upon a Mattress*. He received numerous awards, including four Tony Awards, a Pulitzer Prize for *Fiorello!*, a New York Drama Critics Circle Award, four Donaldson Awards and a Handel Medallion from the City of New York. A Kennedy Center honoree, he died in 1995 at the age of 107.

Richard Pike Bissell (*Book*) worked for H.B. Glover Company, the garment factory founded by his grandfather. Bissell then began writing about his experiences and had his stories published in journals such as *Atlantic Monthly*, *Colliers* and *Esquire*. His greatest success came when he wrote a humorous novel based on the activities at the garment factory called *7 ½ Cents*. He turned the book into a musical for Broadway, titled *The Pajama Game*, which was a smash and soon became a motion picture. This experience provided the fodder for his novel *Say, Darling*, which later became a Broadway musical. He also wrote 12 books and numerous articles over the course of his career.

Richard Adler (*Music & Lyrics*) co-composed the music and lyrics for numerous musicals including *The Pajama Game* and *Damn Yankees*, both of which won Tony Awards for best musical and best score. His score for his musical *Kwamina* earned him a Tony Award nomination. Recordings of his biggest hit songs such as "You Gotta Have Heart," "Hey There," "Hernando's Hideaway," "Whatever Lola Wants," "Steam Heat," "Rags to Riches," "Another Time, Another Place" and "Everybody Loves a Lover", have sold over 30 million copies. Richard composed numerous symphonic works, four of which were Pulitzer Prize nominees. Awards and honors include Donaldson Awards, *Variety* Critics Choice Awards, a *London Evening Standard* Award, the University of North Carolina Playmakers Lifetime Achievement Award and a National Parks Service Honorary Ranger Award. Richard is a member of the Songwriters' Hall of Fame.

Jerry Ross (*Music & Lyrics*) died prematurely at age 29, but won Tony Awards for two of the best-loved musicals in Broadway history, *The Pajama Game* and *Damn Yankees* – both written with Richard Adler, his frequent collaborator. As a team, they put out a number of catchy songs including the number one hit "Rags to Riches" (sung by Tony Bennett), songs for the musical *Almanac* (a revue featuring Harry Belafonte, Hermione Gingold, Orson Bean and Polly Bergen) and of course *The Pajama Game*, an out-and-out hit, playing for 1,063 performances and winning several Tony Awards, including Best Musical and Best Choreography. *The Pajama Game* was made into a movie starring Doris Day. In 1955, Ross and Adler wrote *Damn Yankees* and won the Tony Award for Best Musical.

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Alan Paul (*Director*) is the Associate Artistic Director of Shakespeare Theatre Company, where he has directed *Romeo and Juliet*; *Kiss Me, Kate*; *Man of La Mancha*; *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* (Helen Hayes Award for Best Director of a Musical); *The Boys from Syracuse*; and revivals of *Twelfth Night* and *The Winter's Tale*. Local highlights include *Penny* (Washington National Opera); *I Am My Own Wife* (Signature Theatre); *Fully Committed* (MetroStage); *The Rocky Horror Show* and *Silence! The Musical* (Studio Theatre 2ndStage); and numerous collaborations with the National Symphony Orchestra. Alan was a 2013 finalist for the European Opera Directing Prize in Vienna, Austria. Upcoming projects include *Camelot* (Shakespeare Theatre Company) and *Kiss Me Kate* (Seattle's 5th Avenue Theatre). www.AlanPaulDirector.com

Select Cast Biographies (in alphabetical order)

Nancy Anderson (*Gladys*) makes her Arena Stage debut! Broadway shows include *A Class Act*, *Wonderful Town* and understudy to Glenn Close in the revival of *Sunset Boulevard*. She starred as Lois/Bianca in the national tour and West End premiere of *Kiss Me, Kate* (Helen Hayes and Olivier Award nominations). This year, Nancy received her third Drama Desk nomination for best solo performance in the Off-Broadway premiere of *The Pen*. Nancy received a Helen Hayes nomination for *Side By Side By Sondheim* (Signature Theatre) and performed in and music directed her husband/Ethan McSweeney's productions of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Tempest* (Shakespeare Theatre Company). Nancy appeared on *Madame Secretary* last year, and is featured on PBS/Great Performances broadcasts of *Kiss Me Kate* and *South Pacific* starring Reba McEntyre. www.nancyanderson.name

Britney Coleman (*Babe*) is thrilled to make her Arena Stage debut. She recently appeared on Broadway as Lucille in *Beautiful: The Carole King Musical* and in the revival of *Sunset Boulevard* starring Glenn Close and performed with the first national tour of *Beautiful: The Carole King Musical*. Regional credits include Guenevere in David Lee and Steve Orich's eight-person adaptation of *Camelot* (Two River Theater and Westport Country Playhouse) opposite Robert Sean Leonard and appearances at The Old Globe, Theater Under the Stars, Marriott Lincolnshire and North Shore Music Theater. She performed in *A Very Potter...Musical/Sequel/Senior Year* featuring Darren Criss and her fellow Starkids. Britney received her B.F.A. from University of Michigan. www.britneycoleman.com

Elliot Dash (*Pop/Ensemble*) makes his Arena Stage debut. Regional credits include *The Voice of The Plant* in *Little Shop of Horrors* (Ford's Theatre, Lyceum Theatre, Northern Lights Playhouse); Hoke in *Driving Miss Daisy* (Lyceum Theatre, Wayside Theatre); Tee Tot in *Hank Williams: Lost Highway* (Riverside Center, Totem Pole Playhouse, Lyceum Theatre, Riverside Theatre); King Triton in *The Little Mermaid* (Olney, Gretna Theatre); *Othello* (Wayside Theatre); *The Civil War* (Ford's Theatre); *Elizabeth the Queen* (Folger Theatre); and *Kiss Me, Kate*, *As You Like It*, *Hamlet* and *Henry V* (Shakespeare Theatre Company).

Edward Gero (*Hasler*)'s Arena Stage credits include Justice Antonin Scalia in *The Originalist*, Benjamin Hubbard in *The Little Foxes* and Mark Rothko in *Red*. He is a four-time Helen Hayes Award winner and 15-time nominee. Regional credits include *The Originalist* (Asolo Repertory, Pasadena Playhouse, Court Theatre); *Red* and *King Lear* (Goodman); *Nixon's Nixon* and *Night Alive* (Round House); *Sweeney Todd* (Signature Theatre); Scrooge in *A Christmas Carol* (Ford's Theatre); and *American Buffalo*, *Shining City* and *Skylight* (Studio Theatre). In 32 seasons with Shakespeare Theatre Company, his 70+ roles include *Henry IV*, *Richard II* and *Macbeth*. Film/TV credits include *House of Cards*, *TURN: Washington's Spies*, *Die Hard 2*, *Striking Distance* and narrations for Discovery Channel and PBS. He is a Ten Chimneys 2015 Lunt-Fontanne Fellow and associate professor of theater at George Mason University.

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Eddie Korbich (*Hines*) makes his Arena Stage debut. He was born in D.C. in 1960, and between then and now he has appeared in 11 Broadway shows and nine Off-Broadway shows including the original cast of *Wicked*, *The Little Mermaid* as Scuttle, *A Christmas Story* as Santa, *The Drowsy Chaperone*, *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder*, the revival of *Carousel* as Mr. Snow, and others. Film and TV credits include *Blue Bloods*, *Elementary*, *Law & Order* and *Deadbeat*. He has also provided voices for cartoon characters as a series regular on *Doug*, *PB&J Otter* and *Pinky Dinky Doo*. He is very happy to be back in D.C.

Donna McKechnie (*Mabel*) makes her Arena Stage debut. Broadway credits include *A Chorus Line* (original company, Tony Award for Best Actress in a Musical), *How To Succeed in Business...*, *The Education of Hyman Kaplan*, choreographer/actress in *Sondheim: A Musical Tribute*, *Promises-Promises*, *Company*, *On The Town*, *State Fair* (Fred Astaire Award) and *The Visit*. Donna co-starred in *The Wild Party* (West End), starred in and choreographed productions in London, Tokyo and Paris and was invited by Bob Fosse to lead the *Sweet Charity* national tour. Regional credits include *Follies*, *Mack and Mabel*, *Gypsy*, *The Glass Menagerie* and symphony orchestra appearances. Film/TV credits include *Fame*, *Cheers*, *Dark Shadows*, *Every Little Step* and *The Little Prince*. Donna released a memoir, *Time Steps: My Musical Comedy Life*, and is touring her one-woman show, *Same Place: Another Time*. www.donnamckechnie.com

Tim Rogan (*Sid*) is beyond grateful to be home again in the D.C.-area for his Arena Stage debut. He first started working professionally in local theaters including Signature Theatre, Shakespeare Theatre Company, Theater J, Toby's Dinner Theatre, Washington Savoyards, No Rules Theatre Co., Olney, the Kennedy Center, Adventure Theatre and Studio Theatre. National tour credits include Lancelot in *Camelot* and Gaston in Disney's *Beauty and the Beast*. Regional credits include Joseph in *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, Chad in *All Shook Up*, Miles Gloriosus in *A Funny Thing Happened...*, Trevor Graydon in *Thoroughly Modern Millie* and Tony Elliot in *Billy Elliot*. TV credits include *Younger* and *Shades of Blue*. He received his Bachelor of Music from Catholic University. Instagram: @tim_rogan.

Blakely Slaybaugh (*Prez*) makes his Arena Stage debut. Blakely was seen in D.C. in Shakespeare Theatre Company's *A Funny Thing Happened...* Earlier in the season he performed in the original Broadway cast of *Paramour*. Recent credits include Benny Southstreet in *Guys and Dolls* directed by Tony Award nominee Hunter Foster at Bucks County Playhouse and Robertson Ay in *Mary Poppins* at the Tony Award-winning Paper Mill Playhouse. He performed in the first national Broadway tours of *Shrek The Musical* as Pinocchio and *Rogers + Hammerstein's Cinderella* as the Raccoon/Jean-Michel understudy. Regional credits include Slim in *Oklahoma!*, Wickersham in *Seussical*, Emcee in *Cabaret* and Eugene in *Biloxi Blues*. Off stage, he can be found hiking and rock climbing with his partner in crime Beth. He received his B.F.A from CCM. Twitter/Instagram: @BSlaybs www.BlakelySlaybaugh.com

Gabi Stapula (*Mae*) is a Washington D.C.-area native and is ecstatic to make her Arena Stage debut. Regional theater credits include *The Unsinkable Molly Brown* and *Newsies* (The Munny) and *West Side Story*, *Oklahoma!*, *Crazy For You* and *Guys and Dolls* (Finger Lakes Musical Theater Festival). Gabi received her B.F.A from Pace University. She sends a huge thank you to Alan, Parker, MSA and her amazing family for their constant support! Instagram: @astoldbygabi www.gabistapula.com

For full company bios please visit arenastage.org/shows-tickets/the-season/productions/the-pajama-game/

The Pajama Game is generously sponsored by AT&T. Additional support is provided by Hubert (Hank) Schlosberg, George and Duffy Ftikas, Sheila Stampfli and GEICO. Choreography is sponsored by Virginia McGehee Friend.

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Post-Show Conversations

Connect with our shows beyond the performance at a post-show conversation with artists and staff—November 15, November 29 and December 5 following the noon performance; November 14 following the 7:30 p.m. performance; and November 30 following the 8:00 p.m. performance.

Production Information

The Pajama Game

Book by George Abbott and Richard Bissell

Music and Lyrics by Richard Adler and Jerry Ross

Directed by Alan Paul

Choreographed by Parker Esse

Music Direction by James Cunningham

In the Fichandler Stage | October 27-December 24, 2017

ABOUT: The Sleep-Tite Pajama Factory is a tiptop model of efficiency — so why are things getting so steamy? It could have something to do with how hard new superintendent Sid Sorokin has fallen for Babe Williams, the trouble-making head of the union grievance committee. Sparks really start to fly when a workers' strike pits management against labor and ignites an outrageous battle of the sexes. Packed with seductive dance numbers like "Steam Heat" and "Hernando's Hideaway," the best way to ensure a good night's rest during the hectic holiday season is to play *The Pajama Game!*

CAST:

Eddie/Steam Heat Boy/Ensemble: Jay Adriel

Gladys: Nancy Anderson

Swing: Katie Arthur

Babe: Britney Coleman

Pop/Ensemble: Elliot Dash

Brenda/Ensemble: Maggie Donnelly

Hasler: Edward Gero

Joe/Ensemble: Ben Gunderson

Hines: Eddie Korbich

Mabel: Donna McKechnie

Ensemble/Steam Heat Boy/Dance Captain/Assistant Choreographer: Tony Neidenbach

Ensemble: Heidi Kershaw Quick

Ensemble: Bridget Riley

Swing: Tyler Roberts

Sid: Tim Rogan

Max/Ensemble: Paul Scanlan

Prez: Blakely Slaybaugh

Mae: Gabi Stapula

Poopsie/Ensemble: Kara-Tameika Watkins

Ensemble: Casey Wenger-Schulman

Charlie/Ensemble: Victor Wisehart

Ensemble: Phil Young

CREATIVE TEAM:

Director: Alan Paul

Choreographer: Parker Esse

Music Director: James Cunningham

Set Designer: James Noone

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Costume Designer: Alejo Vietti
Lighting Designer: Robert Wierzel
Sound Designer: Daniel Erdberg
Wig Designer: Anne Nesmith
Dialect Coach: Lynn Watson
Associate Music Director: Victor Simonson
Assistant Choreographer: Tony Neidenbach
Stage Manager: Kurt Hall
Assistant Stage Manager: Anthony O Bullock
Production Assistant: Emily Ann Mellon

Plan Your Visit

TICKETS: Tickets for *The Pajama Game* are \$50-99, subject to change and based on availability, plus applicable fees. For information on savings programs such as pay-your-age tickets, student discounts, Southwest Nights and hero's discounts, visit arenastage.org/shows-tickets/single-tickets/savings-programs.

Tickets may be purchased online at arenastage.org by phone at 202-488-3300 or at the Sales Office at 1101 Sixth St., SW, D.C.

Sales Office/Subscriptions: 202-488-3300
Group Sales Hotline for 10+ Tickets: 202-488-4380
TTY for deaf patrons: 202-484-0247
Info for patrons with disabilities: 202-488-3300

PERFORMANCE DATES:

Sunday, Tuesday & Wednesday at 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, Friday & Saturday at 8:00 p.m.

Saturday & Sunday at 2:00 p.m.

Weekday matinees at noon on Wednesday, 11/15, Wednesday, 11/29, Tuesday, 12/5 and Wednesday 12/13

Full calendar: tickets.arenastage.org/single/PSDetail.aspx?psn=24864

Open-captioned performances: 11/9 at 8:00 p.m., 11/15 at 7:30 p.m. & 11/19 at 2:00 p.m.

Audio-described performances: 11/18 at 2:00 p.m.

ARENA STAGE CAFÉ: Prix fixe meals are available at Richard's Place, Arena Stage's casual dining café, and include a choice of soup or salad, main entrée and dessert. Pre-ordered meals are only \$22 (\$25 if purchased that day). To pre-order and see the menu, call 202-488-3300 or visit arenastage.org/plan-your-visit/the-café/. The café opens two hours before the show, and reservations are recommended. To **pre-order drinks** for up to 50% savings (\$6 house wine and beer), visit tickets.arenastage.org/cart/precart.aspx?p=1007.

METRO: Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater is only one block from the Waterfront-SEU Metro station (Green Line). When exiting the station, walk west on M Street toward Sixth Street, and the main entrance to the Mead Center is on the right.

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PARKING: Parking is available in Arena Stage’s on-site garage. Subscribers may purchase parking in advance for \$16. Single ticket buyers may purchase parking in advance for \$19 or on the day of the performance for \$22 on a first-come, first-served basis. Limited handicapped parking is available by reservation. Advanced parking must be reserved by calling 202-488-3300. The entrance to the Mead Center garage is on Maine Avenue between Sixth and Seventh streets, and the garage closes one hour after the day’s last performance ends. Patrons can also park at the Public Parking Garage at 1101 Fourth Street, one block from the Mead Center, for \$14.

VALET PARKING: Arena Stage offers valet service at no additional cost to patrons with accessibility needs who call 202-488-3300 in advance to request valet parking. On days when valet parking is being used for accessibility, it is also available to general patrons one hour prior to show time for \$25, based on availability. To use valet parking, pull up to the main entrance on Sixth Street.

Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater, under the leadership of Artistic Director Molly Smith and Executive Director 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 impacts the lives of over 10,000 students annually through its work in community engagement. Now in its seventh decade, Arena Stage serves a diverse annual audience of more than 300,000. arenastage.org

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