

ARENA STAGE MEDIA RELEASE

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ARENA STAGE ANNOUNCES INSTALLATION OF GALAPRO SOFTWARE TO INCREASE AUDIENCE ACCESSIBILITY AND ENHANCE AUDIENCE EXPERIENCE

***** Closed captioning will be available on mobile devices through this free application
beginning with the world-premiere production of JQA *****

(Washington, D.C.) Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater has announced that it has partnered with **GalaPro** to provide closed captioning in all three performance spaces. This new service will be available at Arena Stage beginning Friday, March 8 with the production of Aaron Posner's world-premiere *JQA*, running March 1 – April 14 in the Arlene and Robert Kogod Cradle.

"In 2006, we recognized a need amongst the hearing-impaired community when we introduced open-captioned performances," shares Executive Producer **Edgar Dobie**. "How wonderful is it now to embrace the most up to date technology to make a monumental improvement for those who have listening difficulties to appreciate the work on our stages."

The GalaPro app can be downloaded for free onto a patron's individual mobile device (Android or iOS). All content is pre-loaded and provided to the patron in real time, using voice recognition technology which syncs directly with the live action on stage. In this way, patrons can utilize the service from any seat, at any performance. The app is used while mobile devices are in airplane mode and connected to a dedicated GalaPro WiFi service. Captions are displayed on a black screen in either grey or red text. For those without mobile devices, Arena Stage has units that can be checked out per performance.

"We are excited to welcome Arena Stage to our growing family of accessible theaters," says **Mai Yamada**, GalaPro's head of U.S. Operations and Marketing. "GalaPro was specifically designed for the performing space, and we are thrilled to provide our cutting-edge technology in Washington, D.C."

GalaPro received the 2018 Sapolin Accessibility Award for Communication and Technology from the NYC Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities. Currently GalaPro provides closed captioning at a majority of Broadway theaters, as well as a number of Off-Broadway houses. Arena Stage is the first theater in Washington, D.C. to offer GalaPro in all of its performance spaces.

For additional details, visit arenastage.org/accessibility

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About GalaPro

GalaPro is an Israel-based startup founded in June, 2015, by Dr. Elena Litsyn and Hagai Pipko. GalaPro’s mission is to guarantee that live performances are an inclusive experience that everyone can enjoy. GalaPro works to make shows accessible to everyone based on the company’s core value that culture and entertainment are foundational elements of our communities. GalaPro has designed a system to support all live show closed captioning, multilingual subtitling, dubbing and audio description, all while maintaining accessibility and minimizing costs. More information is available at GalaPro.com.

GalaPro is made possible in part by funding from the D.C. Commission on the Arts and Humanities.

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 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.

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