

ARENA STAGE MEDIA RELEASE

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

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For additional press materials, visit the online press room:
arenastage.org/press-room/press-kits/1920-press-kits/dear-jack-dear-louise-press-kit

ARENA STAGE ANNOUNCES WORLD PREMIERE OF KEN LUDWIG'S *DEAR JACK, DEAR LOUISE* NOVEMBER 21 – DECEMBER 29, 2019

*****Jackie Maxwell directs this joyous, heartfelt drama about Ludwig's parents
who meet by letter and fall in love during World War II*****

(Washington, D.C.) Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater announces the full company for the world premiere of **Ken Ludwig's** (Broadway's *Lend Me a Tenor*, *Crazy For You*) ***Dear Jack, Dear Louise***. Based on his own parents' love story, U.S. Army Captain Jacob S. Ludwig and aspiring actress, Louise Rabiner, meet through a series of letters and become pen pals. Set in 1942 during World War II, a romance begins and the two must find their way toward each other, even though they have never met. Directed by **Jackie Maxwell**, *Dear Jack, Dear Louise* runs **November 21 – December 29, 2019 in the Kreeger Theater**.

Arena Stage is excited to welcome back Ludwig, after his 2015 world-premiere production of *Baskerville: A Sherlock Holmes Mystery*.

"It is particularly exhilarating to be back at Arena Stage, working with this incredible team of artists to bring the story of my parents' courtship to life for the first time," explains **Ludwig**. "I've written a piece that goes deep into the hearts of two young lovers during World War II, in a way that's more personal than I've ever done before."

"Ken Ludwig's work runs the gamut: from farce to epic tales of heroism. He is a master of creating big stories with human souls. *Lend Me a Tenor*, *Baskerville*, *Crazy for You* are some of his often-produced works. *Dear Jack, Dear Louise* is his newest child, and I think it's his best," shares Artistic Director **Molly Smith**. "This is a classic love story and Ken is bucking his own trend by writing a two-person play, based on his parents, that brings us back to a time when written letters were the most important form of communication when separated. This is a flat-out beautiful new play."

Making their Arena Stage debuts are **Jake Epstein** (Broadway's *Beautiful: The Carole King Musical*, "Degraffi") as Jacob S. Ludwig and **Amelia Pedlow** (Studio's *Doubt*, Shakespeare's *Love's Labor's Lost*) as Louise Rabiner.

"I am absolutely thrilled to be bringing Ken's beautiful play to theatrical life at Arena Stage," said **Maxwell**. "We have a fabulous cast and creative team to bring out the joy, humor and humanity of Jack and Louise's story."

In addition to Maxwell, the creative team includes Set Designer **Beowulf Boritt**, Costume Designer **Linda Cho**, Lighting Designer **Jason Lyons**, Original Music and Sound Design **Lindsay Jones**, Casting Director **Geoff Josselson**, Stage Manager **Kurt Hall** and Assistant Stage Manager **Rachael Danielle Albert**.

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Ken Ludwig (*Playwright*) is a two-time Olivier Award-winning playwright who has written over 28 plays and musicals, including six shows on Broadway and seven in London's West End. *Lend Me A Tenor* won two Tony Awards and was called "one of the classic comedies of the 20th century" by the *Washington Post*. His best-known works include: *Crazy for You* (five years on Broadway, Tony and Olivier Awards for Best Musical); *Moon Over Buffalo*; *Baskerville*; *Shakespeare in Hollywood* (Helen Hayes Award); *Sherwood*; and a stage version of *Murder on the Orient Express*, written at the request of the Agatha Christie Estate. His book "How to Teach Your Children Shakespeare" won the Falstaff Award for Best Shakespeare Book of the Year. His work has been performed in over 30 countries, in more than 20 languages and is produced somewhere in the United States every night of the year. www.kenludwig.com

Jackie Maxwell (*Director*) previously directed Arena Stage's *Junk*, *Watch on the Rhine* and *Good People*. Jackie most recently directed a critically acclaimed production of *August: Osage County* for Toronto's Soulpepper Theatre. Other recent productions include the world premiere of *Paradise Lost* for the Stratford Festival and the Canadian premiere of *The Humans* for the Canadian Stage/Citadel Theatre. In 2016, she finished a 14-year tenure as artistic director of The Shaw Festival. Some favorite productions directed there include *Uncle Vanya*, *Sweeney Todd*, *The Divine* (world premiere), *Come Back Little Sheba*, *Major Barbara*, *Ragtime* and *Saint Joan*. Jackie has worked extensively throughout Canada and in the U.S. and was artistic director of Toronto's Factory Theatre for eight years. She has received many awards including two Dora Mavor Moore Awards for directing, two honorary degrees and the Order of Ontario. Upcoming projects include a remount of *Paradise Lost* for the Centaur Theatre Montreal and a return to the Shaw Festival to direct *Playboy of the Western World*.

Cast Biographies (in alphabetical order)

Jake Epstein (*Jack Ludwig*) last appeared in D.C. as Melchior in the National Tour of *Spring Awakening* at The Kennedy Center. On Broadway, he originated the role of Gerry Goffin in the Tony-nominated *Beautiful: The Carole King Musical* and survived playing Peter Parker/Spider-Man in *Spider-Man: Turn Off the Dark*. Other favorite theater credits include: *Straight* (Off-Broadway); *American Idiot* (1st National Tour); *Billy Elliot* (Mirvish); *Dog Sees God* (Canadian premiere); and *Therefore Choose Life* (co-writer, HGJT). On television, he is best known for "Deglassi" (Gemini Award); "Designated Survivor"; and "Suits." Recently, Jake premiered his solo show *Boy Falls from the Sky* at the Toronto Fringe Festival (Best of Fringe, Outstanding Production). Graduate of the National Theatre School of Canada. For Ness.

Amelia Pedlow (*Louise Rabiner*)'s D.C. credits include: *Doubt* at Studio Theatre; *Love's Labor's Lost* at The Folger; and *The Metromaniacs*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Merchant of Venice* with Shakespeare Theatre Company. Off-Broadway credits include: *Intelligence* (world premiere) at NYTW Next Door; *Pride & Prejudice* with Primary Stages (world premiere by Kate Hamill); *Tis Pity She's a Whore* with Red Bull Theatre Company; *The Liar* and *The Heir Apparent* with Classic Stage Company; and *You Never Can Tell* with The Pearl Theatre Company. Other regional credits include: *Playing with Fire* at The Guthrie; *Fortune* at The Hanger; *Pride & Prejudice* and *The General from America* with Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival; *Red Velvet* at The Old Globe; *Ether Dome* with La Jolla Playhouse, Hartford Stage and The Huntington; *The Glass Menagerie* and *Hamlet* with The Denver Center; and *Legacy of Light* with Cleveland Playhouse. Her TV credits include: "The Good Wife," "Blue Bloods," "Shades of Blue" and "The Blacklist." She received her B.F.A. from The Juilliard School.

For full company biographies, please visit arenastage.org/tickets/1920-season/dear-jack-dear-louise.

Dear Jack, Dear Louise is generously sponsored by the **Guttman-McCabe Family** in honor of **Fred and Ilse Ruben**, **Ingleside at Rock Creek**, **Daniel Korengold** and **Martha Dippell**, **Ourisman Automotive of Virginia** and **Hubert M. (Hank) Schlosberg**.

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Post-Show Conversations

Connect with our shows beyond the performance at a post-show conversation with artists and staff on December 11 following the 12 p.m. performance, December 12 following the 8 p.m. performance, December 17 following the 12 p.m. performance, December 18 following the 12 p.m. performance and December 24 following the 7:30 p.m. performance.

PRODUCTION INFORMATION

Ken Ludwig's

Dear Jack, Dear Louise

Directed by Jackie Maxwell

In the Kreeger Theater | November 21 – December 29, 2019

ABOUT: When two strangers meet by letter during World War II, a love story begins. U.S. Army Captain Jack Ludwig, a military doctor stationed in Oregon, begins writing to Louise Rabiner, an aspiring actress and dancer in New York City, hoping to meet her someday if the war will allow. But as the war continues, it threatens to end their relationship before it even starts. Tony Award-winning playwright Ken Ludwig (*Baskerville: A Sherlock Holmes Mystery, Lend Me a Tenor*) tells the joyous, heart-warming story of his parents' courtship during World War II and the results are anything but expected.

CAST:

Jack Ludwig: Jake Epstein

Louise Rabiner: Amelia Pedlow

CREATIVE TEAM:

Director: Jackie Maxwell

Set Designer: Beowulf Boritt

Costume Designer: Linda Cho

Lighting Designer: Jason Lyons

Original Music and Sound Design: Lindsay Jones

Casting Director: Geoff Josselson

Stage Manager: Kurt Hall

Assistant Stage Manager: Rachael Danielle Albert

PLAN YOUR VISIT

TICKETS: Tickets for *Dear Jack, Dear Louise* are \$41-95, 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/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 Street, 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 p.m.

Saturday & Sunday at 2 p.m.

Weekday matinees at noon on Wednesday, December 11, Tuesday, December 17 and Wednesday, December 18

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Closed captioning: GalaPro begins Friday, November 29

Open-captioned performance: Thursday, December 26 at 8 p.m.

Audio-described performance: Saturday, December 21 at 2 p.m.

Southwest Night: Wednesday, November 27 at 7:30 p.m.

Full Calendar: arenastage.org/tickets/calendar

ARENA STAGE CAFÉ: Prix fixe meals are available at Richard's Place, Arena Stage's casual dining café, with three-course meals available starting at \$25. To learn about these options, call 202-488-3300 or visit: arenastage.org/plan-your-visit/richards-place-cafe/prix-fixe/. To see the menu, call 202-488-3300 or visit arenastage.org/plan-your-visit/richards-place-cafe/menu/. The café opens two hours before the show. To pre-order refreshments, visit arenastage.org/plan-your-visit/richards-place-cafe/concessions

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.

PARKING: Parking is available in Arena Stage's on-site garage. Subscribers may purchase parking in advance for \$17. Single ticket buyers may purchase parking in advance for \$20 or on the day of the performance for \$24 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 \$15.

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.

For complete 2019/20 Season details, visit: arenastage.org/tickets/subscriptions.

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.
arenastage.org

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