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NEW REPERTORY THEATRE ANNOUNCES OPEN CAPTIONED PERFORMANCES IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THEATRE DEVELOPMENT FUND

[WATERTOWN] New Repertory Theatre, the professional theatre company in residence at the Mosesian Center for the Arts, is proud to announce one Open Captioned performance at each of their six productions in the 2019-2020 season. Support for Open Captioning is provided in part by Theatre Development Fund (TDF). This project is supported in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts.

“We are delighted to be able to offer Open Captioning at each of our upcoming productions” says incoming Artistic Director, Michael J. Bobbitt. “It is central to New Rep’s mission to make the theatre we produce as accessible as possible, so that all may enjoy it. With the generous support from TDF, we are now pleased to provide New Rep audience members who have limited hearing the opportunity to experience our work fully through this technology.”

“New Rep has been long committed to providing accessibility services to our performances,” continues New Rep’s Managing Director, Harriet Sheets. “We understand that hearing and visual limitations affect many of our subscribers and newer audience members alike. In the past, we’ve been able to offer ASL interpretation and audio-described performances with support from other organizations, in addition to the permanent T-Coil LOOP system in our MainStage Theater. We are deeply grateful to TDF for supporting us in our efforts to make our work accessible and enjoyable for everyone.”

New Rep received the 2016 Excellence in Accessibility Planning Award from the Boston Chapters of the Hearing Loss Association of America and Association of Late Deafened Adults for its commitment to providing hearing assistive performances.

In recognition of additional financial costs experienced by individuals with hearing loss, New Rep is pleased to offer discounted tickets for those who require Open Captioned services.

What is Open Captioning and how does it work?

Open Captioning is a general term used to describe text displayed simultaneously to live speech, dialogue, or performance. Also referred to as “OC,” it is derived from its analogue, closed captioning, which began as text-based access to broadcast programs. The term “caption” is used to define text associated with a picture. The signal was “closed” because it required special equipment for viewing. By contrast, open captions do not require the user to have any special equipment for viewing the text and are always “open” to anyone. The terms have crossed over to non-broadcast venues whereby “Open Captioned” translates to mean open for all to view and “Closed Captioned” to require the viewer to use specific equipment.

Captioning is intended to be an alternate form of accessibility for the estimated population of 30 million Hard of Hearing and Deaf in the United States, and specifically the 98% who do not use American Sign Language. TDF and their partner, c2 Inc., subscribe to the model of “universal design”, and the “passive assistance” of OC so patrons may enjoy captioning discretely, as part of the general audience at large, without being singled out and needing “distinguishing” equipment. Open captions have the additional benefit of enhancing the enjoyment of audience members who have either not self-identified their hearing loss or merely wish to catch a missed word or phrase.

About New Repertory Theatre

New Repertory Theatre is the award-winning, professional theatre company in residence at the Arsenal Center for the Arts in Watertown, MA. For over 30 years, New Rep has been a leader of self-produced theatre in greater Boston, producing contemporary and classic dramas, comedies, and musicals in both the 340-seat Charles Mosesian Theater and the 90-seat Black Box Theater. In addition to its mainstage productions, New Rep produces Next Voices, a program dedicated to developing new plays through staged readings and world premiere productions. Under its Lifelong Enrichment Arts Programs (LEAP), New Rep also produces its Classic Repertory Company, Page to Stage, Insider Experiences, and Spotlight Symposium Series.



TRANSITION

2019-2020 SEASON

MICHAEL J. BOBBITT
artistic director

HARRIET SHEETS
managing director

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New Rep's Mission

New Repertory Theatre produces plays that speak powerfully to the vital ideas of our time. Through the passion and electricity of live theater performed to the highest standards of excellence, New Rep expands and challenges the human spirit of both artists and audience. New Rep presents world premieres, contemporary and classic works in several intimate settings. We are committed to education and outreach, including special dedication to the creation of innovative in-school programming and providing access to underserved audiences. New Rep is an active advocate for the arts and a major voice in the national dialogue defining the role of theater in our culture.

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