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for american theater

ARENA STAGE MEDIA RELEASE

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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March 17, 2016

FULL DETAILS CONFIRMED FOR ONE-NIGHT-ONLY BENEFIT CELEBRATION

AN EVENING WITH ANA GASTEYER

FEATURING THE INAUGURAL PRESENTATION OF
THE BETH NEWBURGER SCHWARTZ AWARD

MONDAY, MAY 9, 2016

AT THE MEAD CENTER FOR AMERICAN THEATER

(Washington, D.C.) As previously announced, Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater will host **An Evening with Ana Gasteyer**, an exclusive celebration that includes the inaugural presentation of the **Beth Newburger Schwartz Award, Monday, May 9, 2016**. Additional details for the exclusive evening have been confirmed, including a host of D.C. luminaries serving on the honorary committee led by Event Chair and Arena Stage Board of Trustees Vice Chair **Michele G. Berman**. The evening will kick off with a VIP cocktail reception and three-course seated dinner, followed by the performance, after which guests will enjoy a post-show party with desserts and dancing.

A D.C. native and Sidwell Friends School alumna, Gasteyer, who recently appeared in *Grease: Live!* on FOX and is known for her six seasons on *Saturday Night Live* as well as memorable turns on Broadway in *Wicked* (Elphaba) and *The Threepenny Opera*, will perform hits from her new jazz album “I’m Hip,” delivering saucy and fun-loving renditions from the American songbook. Led by Music Director **Jon Spurney** on piano, the comedienne will be joined onstage by **Jeremy Chatzky** on upright bass, **Larry Lelli** on drums, **Greg Thymius** on woodwinds and **Rich Feridun** on electric guitar.

Dinner will feature the presentation of the inaugural award in honor of Arena Stage Board Chair Beth Newburger Schwartz, for her invaluable work at Arena Stage and throughout her career to promote and recognize women’s roles throughout American history. This honor will be awarded annually to a female leader who strives to better the community in which she lives through her own unique strengths and talents.

“Beth is a wonderful advocate for Arena and displays an unwavering commitment to the arts and our community. Her generosity and brilliant strategic thinking fuel her passion for accomplishing paramount work. Beth is a dear friend and instrumental leader at Arena,” shares **Arena Stage Artistic Director Molly Smith**. “Ana Gasteyer grew up in Washington and is a powerhouse on television, film and on stage. I could not think of a better artist to perform on such a special night—one local prominent woman to another, celebrating careers of achievement.”

“When Molly and Edgar shared Arena’s decision to annually honor a woman who has made a difference through her work in her community, her profession or the arts, I applauded them. When they added that it would be named after me, I was enormously honored and overcome by the significance,” adds **Newburger Schwartz**. “With Arena’s intentional decision to honor women who impact our lives, we inspire the next generation to act and lead. This award is a legacy for which I am so grateful.”

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All proceeds from the evening support Arena Stage's award-winning artistic and community engagement programs.

The Honorary Committee for *An Evening with Ana Gasteyer* includes Senator Ben Cardin, Senator Thad Cochran, Congressman Gerald E. Connolly, Congressman Elijah Cummings, Chair of the Incentive Auction Task Force for the Federal Communications Commission Gary Epstein, Managing Partner and Executive Committee Chair of The JBG Companies Michael Glosserman and his wife Marilyn, Congressman Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr., Senator Angus King, Congresswoman Betty McCollum, Senator Lisa Murkowski, Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton, Partner at Steptoe & Johnson Melanie Nussdorf, Chairman & CEO of Clark Enterprises, Inc. Larry Nussdorf, President of the Clark Charitable Foundation Courtney Clark Pastrick, President & CEO of Prime Policy Group Scott Pastrick, Congresswoman Lucille Roybal-Allard, Congressman Dutch Ruppersberger, Partner at Venable LLP A. Christopher Sega, Congresswoman Louise M. Slaughter, Congressman Chris Van Hollen, Senator Mark Warner and Senior Counsel at Covington & Burling LLP Stephen Weiswasser.

The Honorary Committee also includes Arena Stage trustees CEO of Ammerman Investment Partnerships Andrew R. Ammerman, Board Chair Elect Judith N. Batty (formerly senior counsel at Exxon Mobil), Event Chair Michele G. Berman, Executive Director of The Ambit Foundation Jeri Epstein, President of AT&T Government Solutions Kay Kapoor, President & CEO of Epoch Communications and Arena Stage Board Chair Beth Newburger Schwartz, Arena Stage Board President David Shiffrin (formerly senior counsel for real estate at the Resolution Trust Corporation) and Andrea Weiswasser (formerly partner at Wilmer, Cutler & Pickering).

Ana Gasteyer was a violin player from the tender age of five and always had an ear for music and a knack for timing. Years later, after a formal education as a classically-trained singer, she made the fateful discovery that she could get people laughing—and laugh they did every Saturday night at NBC's Studio 8H. Audiences fell in love with Gasteyer's flair for irony and character-driven comedy on six seasons of *Saturday Night Live*, where she unabashedly played, and often sang, at full-tilt. Eventually, Broadway came calling and Gasteyer spent several years belting out superstar vocals in shows like *Wicked*, *The Threepenny Opera* and *The Rocky Horror Show*. But she felt most at home crooning and chirping with a big band in a nightclub, amidst laughter and the inviting clink of ice in a glass. Her acclaimed shows, *Let it Rip* and *Elegant Songs from a Handsome Woman*, earned praise from audiences and critics alike who hailed the acts as "exuberant and rollicking entertainment" with "high-octane vocals" and "a topnotch swingin' ensemble." So the recent star of FOX's *Grease: Live!* (and vampy Weight Watchers spoke-singer) teamed with producer and "New York Nightclub Supernova" Julian Fleisher to make "I'm Hip," a moxie jazz album with an eclectic range of covers and reimagined classics. When Gasteyer steps up to the mic, she evokes the swagger of an era when a lady ruled a nightclub and an audience knew they were in for a good time. From songs like "One Mint Julep" and "Proper Cup of Coffee" to a surprisingly smooth rendition of Carrie Underwood's "Before He Cheats," Gasteyer's saucy selections tell stories with humor, heartbreak...and just a little splash of soda. Her vibe recalls that of a time when entertainers truly entertained, an era when a broad could bring home the bacon, swing a set of sultry standards and still be a gracious hostess. Her heroes are those fun-loving dames who downed a cocktail, donned a dress and fronted a band of dapper gents in sharp suits wielding shiny horns—think Barbara Stanwyck in *Ball of Fire* as she captures Gary Cooper's heart. And then breaks it.

Beth Newburger Schwartz is an entrepreneur who has founded and sold several businesses and is currently heading Richlynd Federal and Epoch Communications. She is known for her work as director of communications for the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Prior to joining the National Trust, she was appointed by President Clinton to co-chair the Presidential Women's History Commission and vice-chair the bi-partisan Congressional Women's Progress Commission. She also served in both Clinton administrations as associate administrator of the general services administration and outreach coordinator for the White House Office of Women's Initiatives and Outreach. Before entering public service, Beth was the founder and CEO of Corabi International Telemetrics, Inc., the company that invented and marketed the patented telepathology process that allows physicians to make diagnoses from a remote location. She was also the founder/president of Owlcat/Digital Research, Inc., the company that developed the first computer-based test preparation products for the SATs. Newburger Schwartz has also served as publisher of *Washington Woman* Magazine, chairman/CEO of Health Street, Inc., marketing

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manager of *The Washington Post* and the director of advertising for the *New Republic Magazine*. Newburger Schwartz is a former chairman and currently a trustee of the National Children's Museum and the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library. In addition to Arena Stage, she also serves on the boards of the Eleanor Roosevelt Papers, President's Council of Cornell Women, ApolloPacs and Boat Owners Association of the United States. The Cornell University graduate shared her love of theater and the arts with her late husband, Richard Schwartz, the founder of BoatUS and an extraordinary philanthropist.

[An Evening with Ana Gasteyer:](#)

Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater (1101 Sixth St., SW)

Monday, May 9, 2016

- 5:30 p.m. VIP Cocktail Reception
- 6:30 p.m. Dinner and the inaugural presentation of the Beth Newburger Schwartz Award
- 8:30 p.m. One-night-only performance starring Ana Gasteyer
Sips and Sweets post-show party with desserts and dancing immediately following

Complimentary valet parking will be available
Cocktail Attire

Sponsorship Levels

Producer Sponsor: \$50,000
Star Sponsor: \$25,000
Director Sponsor: \$10,000
Playwright Sponsor: \$5,000

Individual Tickets

Ensemble Sponsor: \$1,000 (VIP Cocktail Reception, dinner/award presentation, performance and post-show party)
Patron Sponsor: \$500 (Performance and post-show party)
Young Professional Ticket: \$150 (Ages 35 and under, performance and post-show party)

For additional event details including sponsorship benefits, visit arenastage.org/donate/special-events/an-evening-with-ana-gasteyer.

For information on individual ticket or table purchases please contact Maria Corso at 202-600-4025 or e-mail mcorso@arenastage.org. For information on corporate sponsorship packages, please contact Char Manlove-Laws at 202-600-4030 or e-mail cmanlove-laws@ArenaStage.org.

For media inquiries please e-mail press@arenastage.org.

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 through the American Voices New Play Institute. Arena Stage 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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