

CAROLINA AUDIO DESCRIBERS



Logo Description: Our logo is a square frame outlining the silhouette profile of a non-specific person's head and neck against a white background. The figure faces left, and wears a white headphone covering the left ear.

WHAT IS AUDIO DESCRIPTION?

It is “the visual made verbal”. Think of it as interpreting for the patrons who have low or no vision. The patrons hear the dialogue and music, but miss the costumes, sets, body language and sight gags. The describers provide that information.

HOW IS IT DONE?

- Two professionally trained Audio Describers review the script and research the era, music, show, actors, characters, costumes, and comments from critics.
- They view the show on opening night, then write:
 - a 10-minute preshow commentary to prepare the patron for Act 1;
 - play-by-play descriptions for Act 1;
 - a 3-5 minute intermission commentary in preparation for Act 2;
 - play-by-play descriptions for Act 2 and the curtain calls.
- Timing of the play-by-play descriptions is crucial. Professional describers do not speak over dialogue or interrupt music that is either iconic (*Memories* from *Cats*; *Defying Gravity* from *Wicked*) or furthers the plot or characters.
- They attend another performance prior to the requested show in order to polish the performance – tighten up the timing and verify the choice of words. This is referred to as their “dress rehearsal”. They use the equipment but they are the only ones listening to the description.
- On the day of the performance they arrive no sooner than one hour prior to curtain. They inform customer service what time the pre-show commentary will begin so they can tell the patrons, and take their places in the booth.

WHAT DO THE DESCRIBERS NEED FROM THE THEATER?

- Collaboration with the Describer Coordinator with Carolina Audio Describers;
- A contract signed by both parties;
- An emailed copy of the script, preferably weeks prior to the performance;
- Parking that is free or validated;
- A location to work that includes seats, a table, electric outlets, an unobstructed view of the stage and areas of the theater where action occurs; and is far enough away from other patrons so they will not be disturbed by our lights and sound;
- Equipment to speak into that will ensure transmitted to patrons who have vision loss, receivers and headsets/earbuds for the patrons, a receiver and headsets/earbuds for each of the describers;

- Equipment that broadcasts the show for the describers to hear at the same time as the patrons. This includes ambient music piped into the theater, announcements that can be heard in the theater, the orchestra, and the sounds from the stage. This ensures that the description does not interrupt other audio from the theater;
- Confidence that the ushers and other staff of the theater are aware of proper etiquette when talking with and assisting patrons with low or no vision.

WHAT DOES CAROLINA AUDIO DESCRIBERS PROVIDE TO THE THEATER?

- Two professionally trained and qualified Audio Describers with identifying badges;
- Quality audio description for the live performance;
- Compliance with the effective communication provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act;
- Training on the Americans with Disabilities Act, if requested;
- Training on disability awareness to ushers and other staff, if requested.