AUSLAN STAGE LEFT ANNOUNCES ERIN JAMES AS PATRON

Auslan Stage Left is proud to announce that AACTA Award and Film Critics Circle of Australia Award nominee Erin James has accepted the role of Patron of our organisation.

Erin has today committed to working with and supporting our not-for-profit organisation, which specialises in theatre interpreting for deaf audiences.

After working as a member of the Australian Theatre of the Deaf (ATOD) performing ensemble in 2006, Erin developed a love for Auslan and has been involved with the Deaf community ever since.

A rising star in the film world and an established performer in the Australian musical theatre scene, Erin has appeared in some of the country's biggest musicals including *CATS, South Pacific, Love Never Dies, Fiddler on the Roof, The King and I, Side By Side By Sondheim* and *Blood Brothers.* She hosted a backstage special for *South Pacific* at the Opera House on Channel 7 Two and has earned critical acclaim around the world for her role as an Auslan interpreter in the Australian feature film *The Little Death.*

As Patron of Auslan Stage Left, Erin James will promote the organisation's mission of providing quality access to the arts for Australia's Deaf community. A NAATI accredited Paraprofessional Interpreter, Erin is the ideal advocate for Auslan interpreters working on the stage.

Established in 2012, Auslan Stage Left has provided the Deaf community with access to over 200 arts events across Australia. These events have included large-scale musicals, festival events and mainstage plays, in productions such as Grease, Les Misérables, Wicked, Melbourne International Comedy Festival, Sydney Festival, Melbourne Writer's Festival, *The Lion King*, and in collaboration with venues such as Queensland Theatre Company and the Sydney Opera House.

Erin says "*I fell in love with Auslan a decade ago and it has been my absolute pleasure learning all about the rich culture of our Deaf community ever since. I am thrilled to now be working with such a wonderful organisation as Auslan Stage Left to help educate the wider community about the importance of access to the arts for our Deaf community, especially through Auslan interpreted theatre."*