



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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And the Nominees are...

*Excitement builds for the
Ninth Annual 5th Avenue Awards: Honoring High School Musical Theater
June 6, 2011 at Benaroya Hall
Sponsored by Wells Fargo*

(Tuesday May 17, 2011 SEATTLE, WA) – The 5th Avenue Theatre is pleased to announce the nominees for its ninth annual **5th Avenue Awards Honoring High School Musical Theater**, the acclaimed program sponsored by Wells Fargo and supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts. A high school version of the Tony™ Awards, this program allows theater students from across Washington to meet, celebrate, and honor the exceptional musical theater productions presented during the 2010-2011 school year. These awards are designed to shine the spotlight on high school musical theater programs and offer theater students the kind of support and recognition that accomplished high school athletes have received for decades. The 5th Avenue Awards will be held at **7:00 PM, Monday, June 6**, at **Benaroya Hall**.

Since its inception the program has grown in size and scope, from 31 productions and 3,100 students in 2003 to 84 productions and 8,400 students participating this year. 177 nominations and 121 honorable mentions were given to 84 productions in various categories. Schools from as far as Spokane, Lynden, Sequim and Vancouver are reporting back to The 5th Avenue that their involvement in this awards program has significantly helped their individual efforts to secure funding, improve curriculum and increase student participation.

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During the past school year, The 5th Avenue Theatre sent teams of theater professionals to evaluate each school's production. Nominations are made in 22 categories, from "Lobby Display" to "Overall Musical Production."

Nominated students and schools will perform excerpts from their shows and get a taste of what it's like to perform in front of a packed house. Dozens of high-profile elected officials and arts and media personalities will present the awards and show their support for school arts programs. An estimated 2,400 high school students are expected to attend, along with their families and friends. Tickets are available by contacting the drama departments of the nominated schools. The 5th Avenue sincerely thanks Wells Fargo for its sponsorship of this important event for the seventh year in a row.

For a full list of our nominees, visit our 2011 5th Avenue Awards Nominees page at <http://www.5thavenue.org/education/highschoolawards-2011.aspx>. Tickets for the Awards Ceremony are \$27.50 for adults, \$16.50 for students, and are available through participating schools. Tickets for the general public are subject to availability and are only on sale the day of the ceremony.

TVW will broadcast The 5th Avenue Awards Ceremony in its entirety as a live webcast. Please visit www.5thavenue.org to watch.

More about The 5th Avenue Theatre

The 5th Avenue Theatre is one of the nation's premier incubators for new musicals. In the past decade, it has produced ten new musicals, five of which have been produced on Broadway, and two of which have won Tony Awards for "Best Musical" (*Hairspray* and *Memphis*). The 5th Avenue Theatre is also known for its world class, critically acclaimed productions of musicals chosen from both the contemporary canon and the Golden Age of Broadway.

Unique in its Chinese-inspired design, this exquisite theater opened in 1926 as a venue for vaudeville and film. In 1980, the non-profit 5th Avenue Theatre began producing and presenting top-quality live musical theater. Today, under the leadership of Executive Producer and Artistic Director David Armstrong, Managing Director Bernadine Griffin and Producing Director Bill Berry, The 5th Avenue Theatre attracts an annual attendance of more than one quarter million patrons and ranks among the nation's largest and most respected musical theater companies.

In addition to its main stage productions, The 5th Avenue Theatre is also committed to encouraging the next generation of theatergoers through its extensive Educational Outreach Program which includes: The Adventure Musical Theatre Touring Company, The 5th Avenue Awards: Honoring High School Musical Theater, the Student Matinee Program, and Spotlight

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Nights. For more information about the Theatre, its season and its programs, please visit www.5thavenue.org.

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