It’s a Divine Musical Like Nun Other! Broadway’s Natalie Toro to Star as Mother Superior in The 5th Avenue Theatre’s Sister Act: Complete Casting Announced

March 14 – April 5, 2020

Music by Alan Menken
Lyrics by Glenn Slater
Book by Cheri and Bill Steinkellner
Directed and Choreographed by Lisa Shriver

(Wednesday, February 12, 2020—SEATTLE) Complete casting has been announced for The 5th Avenue Theatre’s new production of Sister Act, which begins rehearsals today. Joining the cast as Mother Superior is the acclaimed Broadway star Natalie Toro, who is known for her performances in A Bronx Tale (Madame Defarge, original cast), Les Misérables (Eponine), and Cats (Grizabella). Toro joins the previously announced 5th Avenue Theatre favorites Lisa Estridge (Mamma Mia!; Into the Woods; Company) as Deloris Van Cartier, Taylor Niemeyer (West Side Story, A Chorus Line) as Mary Robert, Sarah Russell (Kiss Me, Kate; Urinetown) as Mary Patrick, Brandon O’Neill (Urinetown; Rock of Ages) as Curtis Jackson, and Nathaniel Tenenbaum (Urinetown, Annie) as Eddie Souther.

The cast also features Carol Swarbrick as Mary Lazarus, Jason Kappus as Joey, Rico Lastrapes as Pablo, Alex Nicholson as TJ, and Brace Evans as Monsignor O’Hara. The ensemble includes Andi Alhadeff, Kristin Burch, Sarah Rose Davis, Candice Donehoo, Alexandria Henderson, Cristin Hubbard, Ellen McLain, Trina Mills, Shaunyce Omar, Richard Peacock, Jordan Iosua Taylor, and Tia Petersen (swing).

“Sister Act is pure joy – and this stellar cast is going to make it a party of a time,” said Bill Berry, The 5th Avenue Theatre’s Producing Artistic Director. “I’m so excited to have Lisa Estridge back on our stage playing her dream role. More than anything, this musical is an experience that can brighten the darkest of winter blues in the way only The 5th can do."

Sister Act features direction and choreography by Lisa Shriver, who returns to The 5th after choreographing this season’s world premiere production of Austen’s Pride and directing and choreographing last season’s Gregory Award-winning smash hit Rock of Ages.
Playing **March 14 – April 5, 2020** (press opening Friday, March 20, 2020), single tickets for *Sister Act* are on sale now at [www.5thavenue.org](http://www.5thavenue.org), by phone at 206.625.1900, or in person at the **Box Office** at 1308 5th Avenue in Downtown Seattle.

When disco diva Deloris Van Cartier witnesses a murder, she is put in protective custody in the one place the cops are sure she will not be found: a convent! Using her unique disco moves and singing talent to inspire the choir, Deloris breathes new life into the church and community. *Sister Act* is the feel-good musical comedy sensation based on the hit 1992 film that features original music by eight-time Oscar winner Alan Menken. This uplifting musical was nominated for five Tony Awards® including Best Musical.

**About the Cast**

**Natalie Toro** makes her 5th Avenue Theatre debut as Mother Superior. Her Broadway credits include *A Tale of Two Cities, Les Misérables, and A Christmas Carol*. She has performed in national tours of *Evita, Jesus Christ Superstar, Cats, and In The Heights*. She was in the Off-Broadway productions of *The Yellow Brick Road, Zombie Prom, and The Audience* and has performed regionally in productions of *Benny & Joon, Snow Child, The Bikinis, Zorba, Blood Brothers, Frances of Guernica, Everything’s Ducky, and The Fix*. Her television credits include *Law and Order: SVU, Elementary, Person of Interest, Black Box*, and PBS, and she can be seen in the new film adaptation of *West Side Story*, directed by Steven Spielberg (release date December 2020). Toro has been a soloist at Carnegie Hall, a headliner for major cruise lines, and is a recording artist.

**Lisa Estridge** returns to The 5th as Deloris Van Cartier. She was last seen at The 5th as Tanya in *Mamma Mia!* Her other 5th Avenue Theatre credits include *Into The Woods, Company, Buddy, Singin’ in the Rain, Smokey Joe’s Café, Hair, and Most Happy Fella*. Estridge now resides in Chicago, but Seattle will always be her theater home. She is a proud UW PATP graduate.

**Taylor Niemeyer** joins the cast as Mary Robert. Previous 5th Avenue Theatre credits include *West Side Story; Annie; The Hunchback of Notre Dame; Kiss Me, Kate; Romy and Michele’s High School Reunion; The Little Mermaid; How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying; A Chorus Line (Bebe); and The Music Man* (Zaneeta).

**Sarah Russell** returns to The 5th as Mary Patrick. Past credits at The 5th include *Urinetown* (co-production with ACT): *Miss Me, Kate; Grease; and RENT*. Her regional theatre credits include *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee, The Noteworthy Life of Howard Barnes, Dreamgirls, and My Heart is the Drum* at Village Theatre; *Big Fish* at Taproot Theatre Company; *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* at Seattle Children’s Theatre; and *The Little Engine That Could* at Storybrook Theater.

**Brandon O’Neill** returns to The 5th Avenue Theatre stage as Curtis Jackson. Select 5th Avenue Theatre credits include *Rock of Ages, The Hunchback of Notre Dame, Carousel, Pirates of Penzance, RENT, and Guys and Dolls*. His Broadway credits include *Aladdin* (Original Broadway Cast, Voice of Cave of Wonders worldwide) and *A Bronx Tale* (first replacement). Select regional credits include *Dracula, Oslo, Pride & Prejudice, A View from the Bridge, Assassins, Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, Beastsville, Beatrice and Benedict, Sondheim at the Pops*. O’Neill was a 2018 ACT Theatre Core Company member.

**Nathaniel Tenenbaum** joins the cast as Eddie Souther. His previous 5th Avenue Theatre credits include *Annie and Urinetown* (co-production with ACT). His regional credits include *Indecent* at Seattle Repertory Theatre and *Dreamgirls* at Village Theatre.
Carol Swarbrick returns to The 5th as Mary Lazarus. Her previous credits at The 5th include Sweeney Todd (Mrs. Lovett), Mame (Vera Charles), and White Christmas (Martha Watson). She has performed on Broadway in 42nd Street, a revival of Gentlemen Prefer Blondes, Side By Side By Sondheim, and the revival of Whoopee! Her focus of late has been the one-woman play, Lillian Carter - A Life Of Some Significance about Jimmy Carter’s mother, the basis of the upcoming docudrama, Miss Lillian.

Jason Kappus joins the cast as Joey. His previous 5th Avenue Theatre credits include Rock of Ages, West Side Story, and Catch Me If You Can. He was seen on Broadway in American Idiot and toured nationally in Jersey Boys and Legally Blonde. His other Seattle theatre credits include Shout Sister Shout (Seattle Rep); Hairspray and Million Dollar Quartet (Village Theatre); and High School Musical and Wizard of Oz (Seattle Children’s Theatre). Kappus will portray Glen Guglia in The Wedding Singer at Village Theatre this summer.

Alex Nicholson makes his 5th Avenue Theatre debut as TJ. His Off-Broadway credits include Vanity Fair, The Mutilated, and The Taming of The Shrew and his regional credits include In The Heights and Ragtime. National Tour: We The People. Nicholson is a Circle in the Square graduate.

Rico Lastrapes returns to The 5th as Pablo, having been last seen in West Side Story in 2019. Lastrapes received his BFA in Acting from the University of Central Florida. His regional credits include Newsies, In the Heights, ELF the Musical, Godspell, Last Stop on Market Street, and Peter and the Starcatcher.

Brace Evans makes his debut at The 5th Avenue Theatre as Monsignor O’Hara. He is an alumni of Garfield High School, University of Washington, Brooklyn College, Freehold Theatre, and Royal Academy of Dramatic Art: Acting Shakespeare. He has performed regionally with Seattle Repertory Theatre, Seattle Children’s Theatre, Intiman, Sound Theatre, Washington Ensemble Theatre, Seattle Shakespeare Company, and Book-It Repertory Theatre. His film credits include Fall City and Headless Into Night.


About the Director and Choreographer
Lisa Shriver returns to The 5th Avenue after directing and choreographing Rock of Ages and choreographing this season’s Austen’s Pride. Her Broadway credits include Jesus Christ Superstar, The Farnsworth Invention, The Story of My Life, and Ring of Fire. As Assistant Choreographer (selected) she has worked on Into the Woods w/Vanessa Williams, The Producers, and Titanic. Off-Broadway credits include Into the Woods (Lucille Lortel Nomination for Outstanding Choreography), Yellow Face (The Public), and Fetch Clay Make Man (NYTW) and her regional credits include Stratford Shakespeare Festival (Caesar and Cleopatra, The Tempest, both with Christopher Plummer), The Scottish Play, and Jesus Christ Superstar. Her film credits include A Beautiful Mind, Hysterical Blindness (HBO), and Disney’s A Christmas Carol with Jim Carrey (Director: Robert Zemeckis). Assistant Choreographer work includes The Polar Express, Mixed Nuts w/Steve Martin, and Center Stage. Her work has been seen on TV in A Very Murray Christmas with Bill Murray (Director: Sofia Coppola), Broad City, and The Detour. Other work includes Phish’s New Year’s Eve concert at Madison Square Garden, Busch Gardens, and Disney Cruise Line.

About the Music Director
Tim Symons returns to The 5th with Sister Act. His previous 5th Avenue Theatre credits include Rock of Ages, The Hunchback of Notre Dame, Romy and Michele’s High School Reunion, and Assassins (ACT/The 5th). Other credits include Spelling Bee, Hart Island, Matilda, Into the Woods, Billy Elliot, Jesus Christ Superstar, The Who’s Tommy at Village Theatre and Man of La Mancha and Xanadu at Arizona Theatre Company. Symons recently composed original scores for Corduroy at Seattle Children’s Theatre and As You Like It at Seattle Shakespeare Company. Symons is the resident music director at Village Theatre, and also composes and performs with Seattle jazz trio Fawcett Symons & Fogg.

About the Creative Team
Sister Act showcases scenic design by Adam Koch, costume design by Cathy Hunt, lighting design by Alex Berry, sound design by Walter Trarbach, and hair and wig design by Mary Pyanowski Jones.

Additional staff includes Graham Keen (associate director and choreographer), Trina Mills (assistant choreographer), R.J. Tancioco (associate music director), Devin Petersen (scenic coordinator), Michael Notestine (assistant costume designer), Thorn Michales (associate lighting design), Haley Parcher (associate sound design), Cathan Bordyn (fight coach), JR Welden (production stage manager), Rachel Bury and Rachael Dorman (assistant stage managers), and Claire Stark (production assistant).

FOR CALENDAR EDITORS
WHEN: Previews begin Saturday, March 14, 2020
Opening Night: Friday, March 20, 2020 (press night)
Closing Performance: Sunday, April 5, 2020
Tuesdays – Thursdays at 7:30pm
Fridays at 8:00pm
Saturdays at 2:00pm and 8:00pm
Sundays at 1:30pm and 7:00pm (no 7:00pm performance April 5)

WHERE: The 5th Avenue Theatre (1308 5th Avenue, Downtown Seattle)

TICKETS: Please visit www.5thavenue.org or call the Box Office at 206.625.1900 for tickets (starting at $29). Groups of 10 or more call 1.888.625.1418.

About The 5th Avenue Theatre
The 5th Avenue Theatre is one of America’s leading musical theater companies. We enrich the community we love with the art form we love—giving the Pacific Northwest a front-row seat to original powerhouse productions that go on to light up marques and audiences all the way to Broadway. From the page to the stage, we bring passion and epic scale to every musical we create. With big talent. Bigger-than-life productions. And did we mention dazzle? As a nonprofit theater company and our region’s largest performing arts employer, we spread the joy of great musicals with people of all ages across our region and state. Each year, we reach 75,000 young people through our nationally acclaimed education programs. Programs designed to develop new musicals ensure that the next generation of great musicals will be there to tell the stories that captivate tomorrow’s audiences. On the national stage, we are a leading voice for the power of this American art form to lift the human spirit.

For more information about The 5th Avenue Theatre, its season and its programs, please visit www.5thavenue.org.

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