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The 5th Avenue Theatre Presents
The Premiere of
Disney's *Aladdin*, a New Stage Musical
Stage Version of Disney Film to Close 2010-11 Season

SEATTLE, WA—The 5th Avenue Theatre is proud to announce that it will produce the premiere of *Aladdin*, a new stage musical adapted from Disney's 1992 animated feature film. *Aladdin*, featuring the Academy Award®-winning score by Alan Menken, Howard Ashman and Tim Rice, previews on July 7 and runs until July 31, 2011. The show replaces *Oklahoma!*, which will be postponed until the 2011-2012 season.

Aladdin will feature a cast and creative team drawn from Seattle and Broadway. Several 5th Avenue veterans return for the production, including acclaimed director and choreographer Casey Nicholaw, who received his first professional choreography gig at The 5th Avenue Theatre (*The Prince and the Pauper*, 2001) and where he later choreographed *My Fair Lady* (2002). On Broadway, Nicholaw won praise as the choreographer of *Spamalot*, and director/choreographer of *The Drowsy Chaperone* and *Elf: The Broadway Musical*, garnering three Tony nominations for his work.

Music for *Aladdin* is by Alan Menken (*Beauty and the Beast*, *The Little Mermaid*, *Tangled*), who has won a total of eight Oscars, more than any living person; lyrics are by the late Howard Ashman (*Little Shop of Horrors*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *The Little Mermaid*) and Tim Rice (*Jesus Christ Superstar*, *Chess*, *The Lion King*). Librettist Chad Beguelin wrote the books for *The Rhythm Club*, *Wicked City* and *The Wedding Singer*, which premiered at The 5th Avenue in 2006. Menken and Beguelin contribute additional lyrics.

This new *Aladdin* incorporates all of the beloved songs from the film's Oscar®-winning score plus never-before heard Menken/Ashman songs restored from early drafts of the score. It marks a return to the authors' original vision: a loving homage to the Hope-Crosby road pictures with a

score invoking the jazz sound of stars like Cab Calloway and Fats Waller.

Other confirmed production artists include set designer Anna Louizos (*White Christmas, In The Heights*), Tony Award®-winning costume designer Gregg Barnes (*The Drowsy Chaperone, Mame* at The 5th Avenue), Tony® winning lighting designer Natasha Katz (*Beauty and the Beast, Aida*), dance arranger Glen Kelly (*The Producers, Drowsy Chaperone*) and musical supervisor Michael Kosarin (*Beauty and the Beast, Sister Act*).

“New musicals have become a large part of the mission of The 5th Avenue Theatre and we are thrilled that Disney has selected our theatre to produce the premiere of this new work they have developed. I am especially thrilled to have Casey back here where his amazing career first got started,” says The 5th’s Artistic Director and Executive Producer David Armstrong.

Steve Fickinger, VP Creative Development and Licensing for Disney Theatrical Productions, said, “Responding to extraordinary demand from our licensing customers for a full length, two-act version of *Aladdin*, Alan Menken brought to us the idea of returning to the highly theatrical vision he and Howard Ashman had originally conceived but that had proved unsuitable for the film. Our goal with this pilot production of *Aladdin* at The 5th Avenue is to launch this title for inclusion in our innovative professional and regional theatre licensing catalog.”

The animated film *Aladdin* was released by Disney in 1992 and was a critical and box office smash, grossing over \$504 million worldwide and becoming the highest-grossing film of the year. Adapted from Arabian folktales and the famous “One Thousand and One Nights,” *Aladdin* tells the story of a resourceful young man who dares to woo a princess with the help of an all-powerful Genie. The film introduced the hit songs “Friend Like Me” and “A Whole New World,” which won one of the film’s two Academy Awards® as Best Original Song. Part of the “Disney Renaissance” that began with 1989’s *The Little Mermaid*, the film *Aladdin* was praised for its witty script and tuneful, eclectic score.

The 5th Avenue production of *Oklahoma!* is being postponed until the 2011-12 season, dates to be announced. Ticket holders for *Oklahoma!* will be receiving replacement tickets for *Aladdin*. Tickets for *Aladdin* are available by calling 206-625-1900/toll-free 888-5TH-4TIX (584-4849), at the box office at 1308 5th Avenue, Seattle, WA 98101, or online at 5thavenue.org.

Special thanks to The 5th’s 2010-11 season co-sponsors Safeco Insurance and US Bank.

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 premiere musicals, four 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 287,000 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 High School Musical Theatre Awards, the Student Matinee Program, and Spotlight Nights. For more information about The 5th Avenue Theatre, its season and its programs, please visit [5thavenue.org <http://www.5thavenue.org>](http://www.5thavenue.org)

Please contact **John Longenbaugh**, Public Relations Manager, at **(206) 625-1418** with questions.

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