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GAMBLERS, GANGSTERS, AND SHOW GIRLS TAKE OVER THE 5TH AVENUE THEATRE IN *GUYS AND DOLLS*

May 12-June 5, 2011

(Thursday April 21, 2011 SEATTLE, WA) – Gamblers and gangsters, shysters and low-lives alike will take over **The 5th Avenue Theatre** when ***Guys and Dolls*** swaggers on to the stage in a swinging reimagining of **Frank Loesser’s** iconic hit (book by Joe Swerling and Abe Burrows.) Featuring beloved hit songs including “Luck Be a Lady,” “If I were a Bell,” “Sit Down, You’re Rockin’ the Boat,” and the titular song “Guys and Dolls,” this celebrated ode to American gangsters and the dolls that love them was hailed by the *New York Times* as “the show that defines Broadway dazzle,” with *Newsweek* declaring “This is why Broadway was born!” Featuring a stellar cast including *30 Rock* regular **Todd Buonopane** and Seattle stage stars **Clayton Corzatte**, **Daniel Levine**, **Brandon O’Neill**, and **Billie Wildrick**, alongside rising starlet **Katherine Strohmaier**, with **Peter Rothstein** at the helm and choreography by **Noah Racey**, ***Guys and Dolls*** plays **May 12-June 5** (press opening *May 19*) at **The 5th Avenue Theatre** (1308 5th Avenue, Seattle.) For tickets and information, the public may visit www.5thavenue.org, or call the box office at (206) 625-1900. Tickets may also be purchased at 888-5TH-4TIX (584-4849).

Seattle native **Noah Racey** returns from the bright lights of Broadway to the Emerald City to choreograph this production. A graduate of Roosevelt High School, Racey is a performer, director, choreographer and educator who made his Broadway debut in the 2001 revival of *Follies*, and has since appeared in the original casts of *Thoroughly Modern Millie* (where he was

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also Associate Choreographer), *Never Gonna Dance* and *Curtains* as Bobby Pepper. He has performed at The 5th a number of times, including *Hot Shoe Shuffle*, *Tommy Tune & Sandy Duncan's Two For The Show*, and *The Wizard Of Oz*. Never one to sit still, Racey has been active as a choreographer, with credits including the world premier of *Turn of the Century* at Chicago's Goodman Theatre, starring Jeff Daniels and Rachel York, and the 2008-09 *White Christmas* national tour. He was Associate Director for Jeff Calhoun's *High School Musical* and *High School Musical 2* at the Fox Theatre in Atlanta, and *Shenandoah* starring Scott Bakula at Ford's Theatre in Washington D.C. He is the founder and Artistic Director of the internationally acclaimed *New York Song & Dance Company*.

Seattle star **Billie Wildrick** returns to The 5th Avenue Theatre as Adelaide alongside **Daniel C. Levine** as Nathan Detroit. Wildrick has been a long time favorite at The 5th Avenue Theatre, and has been seen most recently as Mary in *Vanities*, a co-production with ACT Theatre. She has appeared as Claire De Loone in *On the Town*, Dot in *Sunday in the Park with George*, and Cinderella in *Into the Woods*. Daniel C. Levine has been seen on The 5th Avenue stage in a show-stopping turn in *Joseph and the Technicolor Dreamcoat*, as well as *Company*. His Broadway credits include *The Rocky Horror Show*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, and *Chicago*. Other national credits include The Dentist in *Little Shop of Horrors* as well as roles in *Mamma Mia!*, *Les Misérables*, and *Tommy*.

Rising starlet **Katherine Strohmaier** (Sarah Brown) returns to the 5th Avenue where she was previously seen in *Singin' in the Rain*. Seattle audiences have seen her in *Lyle the Crocodile* at Seattle Children's Theatre, *The Gypsy King* and *Robin Hood* at Village Theatre, and *Follies* at Showtunes Theatre Company. **Brandon O'Neill** joins Ms. Strohmaier as the handsome gambler Sky Masterson. A regular at The 5th, Mr. O'Neill has been seen previously in *My Funny Valentine*, *A Christmas Story*, *Candide*, *Joseph and the Amazing Tehcnicolor Dream Coat*, *Cabaret*, *Buddy*, *Wonderful Town*, *Miss Saigon*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Smokey Joe's Cafe*, and *The Rocky Horror Show*.

The 5th Avenue Theatre is thrilled to bring theatrical royalty **Clayton Corzatte** back to our stage as Arvide Abernathy. Corzatte's acting career spans six decades. He made his break-through in New York in the late 1950's when he was cast as Sebastian, Viola's long-lost twin brother, in Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* opposite Katherine Hepburn. A regular Broadway performer, Corzatte received a 1967 Obie Award and a Tony Award nomination for "Best Featured Actor in a Play" for his performance in *A School for Scandal*. After a few short years in New York City, he relocated to Seattle and has since performed at top regional theatres around the country including The 5th Avenue Theatre, Intiman Theatre, Guthrie Theatre, Actors Theatre of Louisville, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Goodman Theatre, The Old Globe, and Oregon Shakespeare Festival, among many others.

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Todd Buonopane joins the cast in his 5th Avenue Theatre debut as Nicely Nicely Johnson. Audiences will recognize Buonopane from his recurring role as Jeffrey Weinerslav on the hit TV comedy *30 Rock*. His Broadway credits include roles in *Grease* as well as the original company of *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*. He has been seen Off-Broadway in *Henry and Mudge*, *Don't Quit Your Night Job*, and *The Butter and Egg Man*, and appeared in the 2001 national tour of *Godspell*.

Also featured are Seattle theatre luminaries **Allen Galli** (Rusty Charlie,) **David Drummond** (Big Jule,) **Bradford Farwell** (Harry the Horse,) **Jim Gall** (Lieutenant Brannigan,) **Laura Kenny** (General Cartwright,) **Greg McCormick Allen** (Benny Southstreet,) and **Bob De Dea** (Emsemble/Understudy for Arvide Abernathy.)

Rounding out the cast are **David Alewine**, **Joshua Carter**, **Ross Cornell**, **Gabriel Corey**, **Sarah Davis**, **Bojohn Dicile**, **Christian Duhamel**, **Michael Ericson**, **Eric Esteb**, **Brittany Jamieson**, **Ann McCormick Allen**, **Trina Mills**, **Kasey Nusbickel**, **Katie Rooney**, **Jessica Skerritt**, **Mara Solar**, and **Dane Stokinger**.

Director **Peter Rothstein** works extensively as a director of theater, musical theater, opera and new work development. He is the Founding Artistic Director of Theater Latté Da, a Twin Cities-based company dedicated to new musical theater. Rothstein directs extensively for the Guthrie Theater, Minneapolis Children's Theatre, and the Minnesota Opera. He is the creator of *All Is Calm: The Christmas Truce of 1914* and *Steerage Song*, both created in partnership with Minnesota Public Radio. Rothstein has been named one of Minnesota's Artist of the Year from the *Star Tribune*, Theater Artist of the Year by *Lavender Magazine*, and Best Director by *City Pages*. He has been awarded grants and fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, Theater Communications Group, and the Minnesota State Arts Board. He holds degrees in Music and Theater from St. John's University and a Master of Fine Arts degree in Directing from University of Wisconsin, Madison.

Guys and Dolls made its premiere on Broadway in 1950 where it was an instant hit, winning five 1951 Tony Awards including "Best Musical" and running for 1200 performances. ***Guys and Dolls*** rapidly took the lead as one of the iconic pieces of the American musical theatre canon and has gone on to a number of Broadway and West End revivals throughout the years. Most recently the show was revived in London in 2005, starring Ewan McGregor as Sky Masterson, where it ran for nearly two years. In 2009 Broadway brought its own revival to life with Oliver Platt as Nathan Detroit.

Guys and Dolls is a love story, of course, but it all starts with a bet. The cops are cracking down on gambling in the Big Apple, and with all the slickest high rollers in town, Nathan Detroit is under some extra pressure to score a new spot for his floating crap game. His best bet for a discreet location wants \$1000 and Nathan is coming up short. When he runs into Sky

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Masterson, the devilishly handsome and famously daring gambler, Nathan makes a wager he believes he cannot lose: Sky Masterson must take a doll of Nathan's choosing with him to Havana that night, or pay up to the order of \$1000 – and that doll is none other than Sergeant Sarah Brown of the Salvation Army, a woman on a mission to save the souls of New York's sinners.

Frank Loesser (music and lyrics) was an American songwriter from the Golden Age of musical theatre. Before his Broadway success, Loesser was known for the dozens of hit songs from his work in Hollywood, where he supplied lyrics to the music of Jule Styne, Hoagy Carmichael, Burton Lane and Arthur Schwartz, among others, producing such hits as "I Don't Want to Walk Without You" and "Heart and Soul," "What Are You Doing New Year's Eve?" "Spring Will Be a Little Late This Year," "On a Slow Boat to China," and the Oscar-winning "Baby, It's Cold Outside." His first Broadway collaboration with Abe Burrows was *Guys and Dolls*, a smash hit which earned him his first Tony Awards for "Music" and "Lyrics." They joined forces again, with Loesser behind the music and lyrics for *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*, a show that opened in 1961 and ran for a remarkable 1,417 performances, winning him the 1962 Pulitzer Prize for Drama and another Tony Award nomination for his music. *How to Succeed* also claimed the Tony Award for "Best Musical." He died of lung cancer at the age of 59.

Abe Burrows (book) was an American humorist, author, book writer, and stage director. His career began in radio with shows including *Duffy's Tavern* and Danny Kaye's radio comedy show before creating his own radio program in 1948 filled with comedic banter and music. In 1950 he made the transition to writing for the Great White Way with the book for *Guys and Dolls*. He is the winner of four Tony Awards including "Best Musical" for *Guys and Dolls*, as well as "Best Author of a Musical," "Best Direction of a Musical," and "Best Musical" for *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*. In 1962 he received the Pulitzer Prize for Drama for *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*.

Joe Swerling (book) was a respected playwright and screenwriter whose creative career began with sketches written for the Vaudeville stage. Swerling was in high demand as a screenwriter in Hollywood during the 1930s and '40s where he contributed to *Leave Her to Heaven*, *Blood and Sand*, *Pride of the Yankees* (for which he earned an Academy Award nomination,) and *It's a Wonderful Life*, among others. 1950 he co-wrote the book for *Guys and Dolls* with Abe Burrows, winning Tony and New York Drama Critics' Circle Awards for his effort.

Guys and Dolls is based on the short stories of **Damon Runyon** (1880-1946), a newspaper man and writer of short stories celebrating the world New York City during the Prohibition era. Runyon's characters were typically hustlers and gamblers, actors and gangsters that vividly illuminated (and certainly embellished) the seedy underbelly of New York City. *Guys and Dolls* is drawn primarily from his short stories "The Idyll of Miss Sarah Brown" and "Blood Pressure," with additional elements drawn from other Runyon stories including "Pick the Winner."

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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 High School Musical Theatre Awards, the Student Matinee Program, and Spotlight Nights. For more information about the Theatre, its season and its programs, please visit www.5thavenue.org.

FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:

WHAT: Gamblers and gangsters, shysters and low-lives alike will take over **The 5th Avenue Theatre** when *Guys and Dolls* swaggers on to the stage in a swinging reimagining **Frank Loesser's** iconic hit (book by Joe Swerling and Abe Burrows.) Featuring beloved hit songs including "Luck Be a Lady," "If I were a Bell," "Sit Down, You're Rockin' the Boat," and the titular song "Guys and Dolls," this celebrated ode to American gangsters and the dolls that love them was hailed by the *New York Times* as "the show that defines Broadway dazzle," with *Newsweek* declaring "This is why Broadway was born!"

WHEN: *Previews: May 12-May 18*
Opening Night: May 19 (press night)
Closing Performance: June 5

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The 5th Avenue Theatre presents *Guys and Dolls*

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SHOW Tuesdays & Wednesdays – 7:30 PM

TIMES: Thursdays & Fridays – 8:00 PM

Saturdays – 2:00 PM & 8:00 PM

Sundays – 1:30 PM & 7:00 PM

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

TICKETS: For single tickets (starting at \$28.00) and information, please visit www.5thavenue.org or call the box office at (206) 625-1900. Tickets may also be purchased at (888) 5TH-4TIX.

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