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## **The 5th Avenue Theatre's David Armstrong Makes his Broadway Debut this Fall**

*SCANDALOUS: The Life and Trials of Aimee Semple McPherson*  
Begins Previews on Broadway in October, 2012.

(Thursday, July 19, 2012 – SEATTLE, WA) As announced on the Thursday, July 19 edition of NBC "Today," this fall, The 5th Avenue Theatre's Artistic Director **David Armstrong** makes his Broadway debut as the director of ***Scandalous: The Life and Trials of Aimee Semple McPherson***. Previously titled *Saving Aimee*, the musical with book and lyrics by Kathie Lee Gifford and music by David Friedman and David Pomeranz played at Seattle's 5th Avenue Theatre in the fall of 2011. Starring two-time Tony Award nominee Carolee Carmello, ***Scandalous*** begins performances at Broadway's **Neil Simon Theatre** (250 W. 52nd St.) on Saturday, **October 13, 2012**. Opening Night is set for Thursday, November 15 (6:30 p.m.).

The 5th Avenue Theatre is thrilled to see Armstrong and *Aimee* make their Broadway debuts. "Seattle has known for years what Broadway is about to learn: David Armstrong is a wonderful and talented director," said The 5th's Managing Director Bernadine C. Griffin. "We are so proud to see him reach this remarkable milestone in his career, and for The 5th to send its seventh new musical to Broadway. We are excited to see *Saving Aimee* take on a new life on the Great White Way as *Scandalous: The Life and Trials of Aimee Semple McPherson*."

David Armstrong is the Executive Producer and Artistic Director of The 5th Avenue Theatre where he has directed acclaimed productions of *Candide*, *Sweeney Todd*, *HAIR*, *A Little Night Music*, *White Christmas*, *The Rocky Horror Show*, and *Saving Aimee*, among many others. Under his leadership The 5th Avenue has emerged as one of the nation's leading musical theater companies especially in regards to the development and production of new work. Over the past 10 years the company has produced 14 new musicals, five of which have transferred to Broadway, with two more announced (*Scandalous* and *A Christmas Story*).

Mr. Armstrong's direction and choreography have been seen in New York, Los Angeles and at many leading regional theaters including The Kennedy Center, Berkshire Theatre Festival, Ordway Center, Cincinnati Playhouse, St. Louis Rep, ACT Theater, Ford's Theater and Paper Mill Playhouse. As a writer he has created the books for The 5th's world premiere musical *Yankee Doodle Dandy!*, as well as several musicals for Theatreworks

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USA including *A Christmas Carol*, which ran Off-Broadway at the Lucille Lortel Theatre. His Cole Porter revue, *Hot N' Cole*, which he devised and directed, has been produced by scores of theaters throughout America.

*Scandalous: The Life and Trials of Aimee Semple McPherson* is based on the life of Aimee Semple McPherson (1890-1944), the world's first media superstar evangelist -- a woman whose passion for saving souls equaled her passion for making sensational headlines and attracting overflow crowds of thousands throughout the world. *Time Magazine* named Aimee Semple McPherson one of the most influential people of the twentieth century. Set in 1920's Los Angeles, holiness collides with Hollywood in this extraordinary tale of one remarkable woman's charismatic rise to fame amidst scandalous love affairs and growing controversy, inevitably ending in her much-publicized fall from grace.

*Scandalous* marks Carolee Carmello's 12th Broadway show. One of the theater's most respected and sought-after leading ladies, Ms. Carmello's recent Broadway credits include Mother Superior in *Sister Act*; Alice Beineke in *The Addams Family* (Drama Desk nomination); Donna Sheridan in the long-running hit *Mamma Mia!*; Penelope Pennywise in *Urinetown* and Lilli Vanessi in the revival of *Kiss Me, Kate*; in addition to her Tony-nominated performances as Gabrielle in *Lestat* and Lucille Frank in *Parade*.

Additional casting will be announced soon.

With choreography by Lorin Latarro (*Fanny* at City Center) and musical direction by Joel Fram, *Scandalous* features scenic design by Walt Spangler (*Desire Under the Elms*), costume design by Gregory A. Poplyk (Broadway debut), lighting design by Tony Award winner Natasha Katz (*Once, Aida*), sound design by Ken Travis (*Newsies, Memphis*) and orchestrations by Tony Award winner Bruce Coughlin (*The Light in the Piazza*).

*Scandalous: The Life and Trials of Aimee Semple McPherson* is produced by Dick and Betsy DeVos, Foursquare Foundation and Jeffrey Finn, Executive Producer, in association with The 5th Avenue Theatre (David Armstrong, Executive Producer and Artistic Director; Bernadine C. Griffin, Managing Director; Bill Berry, Producing Director).

Visit *Scandalous* online at [www.ScandalousOnBroadway.com](http://www.ScandalousOnBroadway.com).

### **About The 5th Avenue Theatre**

The 5th Avenue Theatre is one of the nation's premier incubators for new musical theater. Since 2002, the celebrated company has produced 14 new musicals. Five have moved on to Broadway premieres, earning a combined 14 Tony Awards, including two for Best Musical (*Hairspray* and *Memphis*). A sixth (*Saving Aimee* – now called *Scandalous: The Life and Trials of Aimee Semple McPherson*) and seventh (*A Christmas Story: The Musical*) 5th Avenue Theatre musical premiere have announced Broadway openings for 2012. 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

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presenting top-quality live musical theater. Today, under the leadership of Executive Producer and Artistic Director David Armstrong, Managing Director Bernadine C. 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 Awards Honoring High School Musical Theater, the Student Matinee Program, and Spotlight Nights.

For more information about The 5th Avenue Theatre, its season and its programs, please visit [www.5thavenue.org](http://www.5thavenue.org).

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