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**SEATTLE'S THEATRE ROYALTY WILL DAZZLE
HOLIDAY THEATER-GOERS IN
RODGERS & HAMMERSTEIN'S CINDERELLA
AT THE 5TH AVENUE THEATRE**

Music by Richard Rodgers; Book & Lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II

Directed by Brandon Ivie

November 25-December 31, 2011

(Friday, October 28, 2011 – SEATTLE, WA) An all-star cast of Seattle celebrities will waltz onto the stage of **The 5th Avenue Theatre** in a holiday ball audiences will never forget: **Rodgers & Hammerstein's Cinderella**. Under the direction of Seattle's own **Brandon Ivie**, this enchanting fairy tale features **Jennifer Paz** of *Miss Saigon* as Cinderella and *Wicked* star **Kendra Kassebaum** as the Fairy Godmother, as well as local luminaries **Suzanne Bouchard**, **Nick Garrison**, **Sarah Rudinoff**, **Brandon O'Neill**, **Cynthia Jones**, **Allen Fitzpatrick**, and **Greg McCormick Allen**. With lavish sets, stunning costumes, and spectacular choreography by **Noah Racey**, this delightful gem bubbles with magic, music, and cheer, proving that when the shoe fits, the unlikely of girls can become a princess and impossible dreams really do come true.

Rodgers & Hammerstein's Cinderella plays **November 25-December 31** (press opening December 1) at **The 5th Avenue Theatre** (1308 5th Avenue, Seattle). Tickets (starting at \$29.00) may be purchased at www.5thavenue.org, by phone at 206-625-1900, or at the Box Office at 1308 5th Avenue in downtown Seattle. From Thanksgiving to New Year's Eve, **Cinderella** will delight audiences of all ages, warming winter's chill with a pair of wicked stepsisters you'll love to hate, a magical carriage you'll dream of, and the romance of a lifetime.

About the Director

"This cast is truly an assembly of Seattle's theatrical royalty," says director **Brandon Ivie**. "I'm thrilled to have the opportunity to work with such incredible talent at The 5th Avenue Theatre, a company I have loved and supported for many years."

A Cinderella story all his own, Ivie makes his directorial debut at The 5th Avenue Theatre where he started his stage career five years ago as an intern. Determined and eager, he rose through the ranks and served as The 5th's casting associate and artistic projects manager for several years. He participated as an Associate Director on several productions including *Saving Aimee*,

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On the Town, *West Side Story*, and *Buddy: The Buddy Holly Story*. Additionally, Ivie directed *Rosie the Riveter* and *Northwest Bookshelf* for Adventure Musical Theatre Touring Company, The 5th Avenue Theatre education program that visits hundreds of schools across Washington State. In 2010, Brandon was named “Person to Watch” in 2010 by the Gregory Awards, and now he takes over The 5th Avenue mainstage with this Rodgers and Hammerstein classic.

Since moving to New York City in February, Ivie has directed the new plays *Unaccompanied Minors*, *True Love*, and *What Sarah Made*. As the founding artistic director of Contemporary Classics, he has directed and produced productions including *Zanna, Don't!*; *The Yellow Wood*; *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*; *john & jen*; *The Last 5 Years*; and *A New Brain*. His Broadway credits include dramaturgy on *Catch Me If You Can* and writer’s assistant to Brian Yorkey on *Next to Normal*.

About the Cast

Pint-sized power house and stunning ingénue **Jennifer Paz** returns to The 5th Avenue Theatre to play Cinderella, proving that great things come in small packages. She appeared previously in *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* as the Narrator and *Buddy: The Buddy Holly Musical* as Maria Elena Holly. She was extremely well received as Kim in the first national tour of *Miss Saigon* and also performed on Broadway in *Les Misérables*. She was hailed as a star in the pre-Broadway engagement of David Henry Hwang’s revision of *Flower Drum Song* at the Mark Taper Forum where she took over the role of Mei-Li for the production’s celebrated five-week extension. Paz most recently reprised the role of Kim in *Miss Saigon* at Maine’s Ogunquit Playhouse, and was last seen locally in *Jesus Christ Superstar* at Village Theatre.

Broadway star **Kendra Kassebaum** as the Fairy Godmother is no stranger to magic. Kassebaum originated the role of Glinda in the first national tour of *Wicked*, played the role on Broadway, and reprised it for a year and half sit-down production at San Francisco’s Orpheum Theatre. She has performed previously at The 5th Avenue Theatre in productions including *Company*, *Secret Garden*, and *A Little Night Music*. She recently appeared as Sam in *Leap of Faith* opposite Raul Esparza and Brooke Shields at the Ahmanson Theatre in Los Angeles, a production looking to make the leap to Broadway. Other Broadway credits include roles in *Rent*, *Grease*, and *A Chorus Line*.

Seattle diva **Suzanne Bouchard** is joined in her role as Cinderella’s Stepmother by celebrated comedic actor duo **Nick Garrison** and **Sarah Rudinoff** as Cinderella’s wicked Stepsisters. Bouchard was widely acclaimed for her recent performance as Queen Elizabeth in *Mary Stuart* at ACT. At The 5th, she has appeared previously in *Hello Dolly!* and *A Little Night Music*. Garrison was seen previously at The 5th Avenue Theatre as the Emcee in *Cabaret* and *The Rocky Horror Show* with other credits at Intiman Theatre, Seattle Rep, Empty Space, American Musical Theatre San Jose, and Re-Bar’s popular Brown Derby series. Genius Award-winner Sarah Rudinoff was last at The 5th in *On the Town*, *Smokey Joe’s Café*, and *Wonderful Town*. Other credits include Seattle Rep, Straw Shop, and among others. Garrison and Rudinoff’s first

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theatrical collaboration was as Hedwig and Yitzhak in *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*. They have since worked together in cabaret performances at The Crocodile, the Triple Door, Sorrento's and Fireside Room, among many others.

The 5th Avenue Theatre's favorite charmer **Brandon O'Neill** plays Cinderella's dashing Prince Christopher, with **Cynthia Jones** and **Allen Fitzpatrick** as the Queen and the King. O'Neill was most recently seen at The 5th as Harold MacPherson and Kenneth Ormiston in *Saving Aimee*, as well as Kassim in *Disney's Aladdin* and Sky Masterson in *Guys and Dolls*, among many others. Stage veteran Cynthia Jones makes her 5th Avenue debut in *Cinderella*. The award-winning actress has appeared at Seattle Rep, ACT Theatre, Intiman Theatre, Goodman Theatre, The Alley Theatre, and Mark Taper Forum. Long-time 5th Avenue performer Allen Fitzpatrick has appeared previously in *Sweeney Todd*, *Candide*, *On the Town*, *Memphis*, and *Cabaret*, among many others. His Broadway credits include *Les Misérables*, *42nd Street*, *Driving Miss Daisy*, and *Memphis*. Joining the palace staff as Lionel the Herald is comedic chameleon **Greg McCormick Allen**. *Cinderella* marks Allen's 20th performance at The 5th Avenue Theatre; his appearances have included *Guys and Dolls*, *Wonderful Town*, *The Wizard of Oz*, and *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*.

Seattle native **Noah Racey** returns from the Great White Way to the Emerald City to choreograph *Cinderella* at The 5th, where he recently choreographed *Guys and Dolls*. A graduate of Roosevelt High School, Racey 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 also Associate Choreographer), *Never Gonna Dance*, and *Curtains* as Bobby Pepper. Racey's choreography credits include the world premier of *Turn of the Century* at Chicago's Goodman Theatre 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 for *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.

Music director **Bruce Monroe**, a true Seattle treasure, returns to The 5th Avenue podium, having previously conducted *Yankee Doodle Dandy*, *the Wizard of Oz*, and the 75th Anniversary Gala. He has created many musical arrangements for this theatre over the past 11 seasons (including complete orchestrations of *Cabaret* and *Guys and Dolls*), as well as writing music and lyrics for the AMT shows *Grandma's Attic*, *Baseball Saved Us*, and *Coyote and the Firestick*. He has been a regular conductor at Village Theatre for many years and most recently, he conducted his original score for the local film *Ira Finkelstein's Christmas*.

In attendance at the ball are ensemble members **David Alewine, Jordon Anthony Bolden, Jared Michael Brown, Daniel Cruz, Antonía Darlene, Sarah Rose Davis, Nick DeSantis, Erin Herrick, Danny Kam, Corinna Lapid Munter, Matthew Steven Lawrence, Nikki Long, Cheryl Massey Peters, Trina Mills, Heath Saunders, Aaron Shanks, Jessica Skerritt, Fune Tautala, Indeah Thomaier, and Carolyn Willems Van Dijk.**

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The cast includes a children's ensemble featuring **Victoria Alkin, Brayden Daher, Olivia Elliott, Anna Ostrem, Akhilesh Vadari, DeChé Washington, Christian West, Noelle Whitman, and Samantha Yee.**

Taking Cinderella from the Page to the Stage

In this original rags-to-riches story Cinderella is living as servant to her wicked stepmother and stepsisters. Meanwhile, on the other side of the kingdom, the King and Queen are planning a royal ball for their son. Left out of the party by her family, Cinderella is visited by her Fairy Godmother who, in a burst of make-over magic, shows her that no dream is impossible. At the ball, Cinderella and Prince Christopher fall deeply in love, but when the clock strikes midnight and the magic disappears, Cinderella flees from the palace, losing her glass slipper as she runs away. Prince Christopher searches the kingdom for the woman whose foot fits the shoe, and ultimately finds a fairytale: happily-ever-after.

Cinderella was first broadcast live on CBS in March of 1957. It starred Julie Andrews in the title role, and was a vehicle for her stardom. Since then, it has twice been remade for television, once in 1965 and once in 1997. The 1965 version starred Lesley Ann Warren as Cinderella and Ginger Rogers as the Queen. The 1997 version featured a racially diverse cast, with big names Brandy, Whitney Houston, and Bernadette Peters. Added songs included "Falling in Love with Love," "The Sweetest Sounds," and "There's Music in You." With its updated script and all-star cast, this broadcast garnered 60 million viewers. *Rodgers and Hammerstein's Cinderella* made its stage debut in 1958 in London, and has since appeared in theaters all around the world. The changes made in the later TV versions have been incorporated on various levels into the stage versions over the years.

After long and highly distinguished careers with other collaborators, **Richard Rodgers** (composer, 1902-79) and **Oscar Hammerstein II** (librettist/lyricist, 1895-1960) joined forces in 1943 to create the most consistently fruitful and successful partnership in American musical theatre, collectively earning them 26 Tony Awards, two Pulitzer Prizes and two Grammy Awards. Rodgers and Hammerstein's first venture together was the smashing success *Oklahoma!*, followed by *Carousel* (1945), *Allegro* (1947), *South Pacific* (1949), *The King and I* (1951), *Me and Juliet* (1953), *Pipe Dream* (1955), *Flower Drum Song* (1958) and *The Sound of Music* (1959). The team also wrote one musical for the movies, *State Fair* (1945; adapted to the stage in 1995), and one for TV, *Cinderella* (1957).

Special thanks to The 5th's 2011-2012 season co-sponsors Safeco Insurance and US Bank. Additional thanks to *Cinderella's* production sponsors 4 Culture and Annie's Art and Frame.

More about The 5th Avenue Theatre

The 5th Avenue Theatre is one of the nation's premier incubators for new musicals. Since 1995, it has produced thirteen new musicals, six 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 Awards Honoring High School Musical Theatre, 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.

FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:

WHAT: As timeless and magical as the holiday season itself, the rarely-staged Rodgers and Hammerstein gem *Cinderella* waltzes into **The 5th Avenue Theatre**. Bubbling with laughter, music, and cheer, this exhilarating treat proves that when the shoe fits, the most unlikely of girls can become a princess and dreams really do come true. Featuring **Jennifer Paz** of *Miss Saigon* as Cinderella and *Wicked* star **Kendra Kassebaum** as the Fairy Godmother, and with direction by Seattle's own **Brandon Ivie**, this enchanting fairy tale includes such exquisitely romantic musical classics as "The Prince is Giving a Ball," "In My Own Little Corner," and "Impossible." From Thanksgiving to New Year's Eve, *Cinderella* will delight audiences of all ages, warming winter's chill with a pair of wicked stepsisters you'll love to hate, a magical carriage you'll dream of, and the romance of a lifetime.

WHEN: **November 25-December 31, 2011***
Previews: November 25-November 30, 2011
Opening Night: 8:00 PM December 1 (press night)
Show times vary; please visit the website for details.
**No performances on 12/25.*

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

TICKETS: For single tickets (starting at \$29.00) 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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