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The 5th Avenue Theatre Announces 2013/14 Season: The Launch of *Secondhand Lions* Plus Romance, Comedy & *The Gershwin's Porgy & Bess*

(Sunday, March 3, 2013 – SEATTLE, WA) With a capacity crowd of more than 2,000 subscribers in attendance, **The 5th Avenue Theatre** Executive Producer and Artistic Director **David Armstrong** revealed the season line-up for this celebrated theater's 2013/14 season. Opening with the launch of a brand new musical and featuring an engaging mix of romance, drama and comedy — both produced at The 5th and fresh from Broadway — the 33rd season promises to have something for just about everyone. Said Armstrong, "I think every audience member is going to find something they love in this season. With productions ranging from world premieres to family favorites, and contemporary classics to immortal musicals from the Golden Age of Broadway, this line-up for 2013/14 captures the full breadth and depth of America's great indigenous art form, The Musical."

The 2013/14 season opens with a roar and a brand new musical -- ***Secondhand Lions* (September 10-October 6, 2013)**. This exciting tale of adventure will be the 15th new musical produced by The 5th Avenue Theatre since 2002. Based on the popular film of the same name, this world premiere musical harkens back to a simpler time, when a boy's imagination was all that was needed to turn a summer on a Texas farm into the adventure of a lifetime. The tall tales that his two irascible uncles tell him – stories of heroism, hidden treasures, and beguiling princesses – take our young hero to the sands of Arabia and beyond. With a book by **Rupert Holmes** (*The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, *Say Goodnight, Gracie*) and featuring music and lyrics from **Alan Zachary** and **Michael Weiner**, (the songwriters behind *First Date*, the smash hit collaboration between The 5th Avenue and ACT – A Contemporary Theatre), this show is sure to be another runaway hit! The show will be helmed by award-winning director **Scott Schwartz**, whose Off-Broadway and Broadway credits include *Tick, Tick, Boom*, *Golda's Balcony*, and *Batboy: The Musical*.

Next up is the Broadway tour of the high-stepping tapper ***Anything Goes* (October 15-November 3, 2013)**. *The New York Times* called this 2011 Tony Award-winner for Best Revival "Zesty... with knockout numbers and white hot dancing." The show is packed with extraordinary **Cole Porter** songs -- from "You're the Top" and "I Get a Kick Out of You" to "It's De-Lovely" and, of course, "Anything Goes." Throw in a boatload of madcap Marx Brothers-style comedy, enough tap dancing to start an earthquake, and all the swanky Art Deco glamour of an era gone by (aboard a transatlantic ocean liner no less) and you have a saucy and splendid night at the theater! The original book was written by the writing teams of **P.G. Wodehouse & Guy Bolton** and **Howard Lindsay & Russel Crouse**. The new book is by **Timothy Crouse** and **John**

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Weidman. This Tony Award-winning production was directed and choreographed by **Kathleen Marshall.**

It will be a Dickensian Christmas at The 5th this year, with ***Oliver!* (November 29-December 31, 2013)** arriving in time for the holiday season. The new 5th Avenue production coincides with the 50th anniversary of the first Broadway production of this classic charmer, which brought home three Tony Awards including one for Best Original Score. Fagin, the Artful Dodger, Oliver – the iconic characters that Charles Dickens created, and their stories of triumph against impossible odds, touch something at the very core of our being. This classic musical has been absent from our stage for nearly two decades. Seattle is long overdue for a dose of “Consider Yourself,” “Where is Love?,” “Who Will Buy?” and “Food, Glorious Food,” just to name a few of the unforgettable tunes from this timeless show. The show is based on the novel *Oliver Twist* by **Charles Dickens**, with music and lyrics by **Lionel Bart.**

The 5th rolls into the New Year with an exciting, self-produced, hilarious hit - ***Monty Python’s Spamalot* (January 30-March 2, 2014).** The world of Monty Python blends a rare combination of cerebral audacity with slapstick absurdity. This Tony Award-winner for Best Musical, which is lovingly ripped off from the 1975 film *Monty Python and The Holy Grail*, is just plain hilarious fun. It’s no wonder *The New York Post* called the show “Fantastic! Gorgeously silly!” This whacked out, musical version of King Arthur’s search for the Grail features some of the Pythons’ best-loved schtick – The Knights Who Say Ni, a killer rabbit, and “Always Look on the Bright Side of Life.” The 5th Avenue’s production of *Spamalot* will be the perfect showcase for Seattle’s incredible comic talent, leaving audiences in stitches the whole way through! The book and lyrics are by **Eric Idle**, with music by **Eric Idle, John Du Prez, and Neil Innes.**

Just in time for spring, romance will bloom when The 5th produces ***A Room With a View* (April 8-May 4, 2014).** This enchanting new musical is based on the E.M. Forster novel that inspired the glorious Merchant Ivory film. The story is set in the same era as *Downton Abbey* – a world of privilege and tradition on the precipice of change. This beguiling romantic comedy is all about breaking with convention and living life to the fullest. It features a wonderfully rich contemporary score that reflects the lushness of the period and brings new life to this timeless tale. The music and lyrics are by **Jeffrey Stock**, with book and additional lyrics by **Marc Acito.** The 5th’s Executive Producer and Artistic Director **David Armstrong** will step into the role of director for this Seattle premiere production.

While romance is blooming on the main stage, a crazy love story of an entirely different kind will be taking place at ACT. **The 5th Avenue Theatre** and **ACT – A Contemporary Theatre** will continue their annual collaboration with a new co-production of ***Little Shop of Horrors* (April 12-June 29, 2014).** Based on Roger Corman’s cult horror B-movie, this delightfully demented musical comedy is hilariously funny and yet you’ll truly care about Seymour and Audrey, the hapless lovers at its center. Blending doo-wop, rock ‘n’ roll, and Motown, this was the show that gave Howard Ashman and Alan Menken (*The Little Mermaid, Beauty and the Beast, Aladdin*) their first gargantuan hit. You won’t soon forget the world’s most sadistic dentist, the Skid Row girl group, and the spectacular puppetry that animates Audrey II’s man-eating appetite. The book and lyrics are by **Howard Ashman**, with music by **Alan Menken.** The 5th Avenue’s Producing Director **Bill Berry**, whose recent successes include acclaimed productions of *First Date, RENT* and *The Music Man*, will direct.

To close the 2013/14 season, The 5th is bringing the dazzling Broadway tour of this year’s Tony

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Award winner for Best Revival – ***The Gershwin's Porgy & Bess (June 11-29, 2014)***. It is hard to believe that this American classic has never before been done at The 5th. Executive Director David Armstrong calls the stunning new staging of this Gershwin masterwork the highlight of the past Broadway season. The production is outstanding, and audiences will be swept away listening to "I Got Plenty of Nothing" and "Summertime." The music is, of course, by **George Gershwin** with lyrics by **Dubose and Dorothy Heyward** and **Ira Gershwin**. The new revival was adapted by Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright **Suzan-Lori Parks** (*Topdog/Underdog*) and Obie Award winning-composer **Diedre L. Murray**. The production was directed by American Repertory Theater Artistic Director **Diane Paulus** (*Prometheus Bound, The Donkey Show, Hair*).

More 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. Seven have moved on to Broadway premieres, including the recent debuts of *Scandalous: The Life and Trials of Aimee Semple McPherson* (formerly *Saving Aimee*) and *A Christmas Story, the Musical!* These seven Broadway musicals have earned a combined 14 Tony Awards, including two for Best Musical (*Hairspray* and *Memphis*). An eighth 5th Avenue premiere, *Disney's Aladdin*, has been announced for a Broadway debut in 2014. 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 mainstage productions, The 5th Avenue Theatre is also committed to encouraging the next generation of theatergoers through its extensive educational outreach programs which include: 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.

Special thanks to The 5th Avenue Theatre 2013/14 season co-sponsors Safeco Insurance and US Bank, and media sponsor *The Seattle Times*.

FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:

The 5th Avenue Theatre's 2013/14 Season includes:

Secondhand Lions

September 10-October 6, 2013 (A 5th Avenue Theatre Production)

Book by Rupert Holmes

Music and Lyrics by Alan Zachary and Michael Weiner

Directed by Scott Schwartz

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Anything Goes

October 15-November 3, 2013 (Tour)

Music and Lyrics by Cole Porter

Original book by P.G. Wodehouse & Guy Bolton and Howard Lindsey & Russel Crouse

New book by Timothy Crouse and John Weidman

Directed and choreographed by Kathleen Marshall

Oliver!

November 29-December 31, 2013 (A 5th Avenue Theatre Production)

Music and Lyrics by Lionel Bart

Based on the novel *Oliver Twist* by Charles Dickens

Monty Python's Spamalot

January 30-March 2, 2014 (A 5th Avenue Theatre Production)

Book and lyrics by Eric Idle

Music by Eric Idle, John Du Prez, and Neil Innes

Lovingly ripped off from the 1975 film *Monty Python and The Holy Grail*

A Room with a View

April 8-May 4, 2014 (A 5th Avenue Theatre Production)

Book by Marc Acito

Music and Lyrics by Jeffrey Stock

Based on the novel by E.M. Forster

Directed by David Armstrong

Little Shop of Horrors

April 12-June 29, 2014 (A 5th Avenue Theatre/ACT Theatre co-production)

Book and lyrics by Howard Ashman

Music by Alan Menken

Based on the film by Roger Corman

Directed by Bill Berry

The Gershwins' Porgy & Bess

July 11-29, 2014 (Tour)

Music by George Gershwin

Lyrics by Dubose and Dorothy Heyward and Ira Gershwin

Adapted by Suzan-Lori Parks and Diedre L. Murray

Directed by Diane Paulus

WHERE: The 5th Avenue Theatre, 1308 5th Avenue, Seattle, WA 98101

SUBSCRIPTIONS:

Online -- Beginning Sunday, March 3, at 9 PM

- Visit www.5thavenuetheatre.org

By Phone -- Beginning Monday, March 4, at 10 AM

- Call 206-625-1900 or Toll-free 888-5TH-4TIX (584-4849)

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In Person -- Beginning Monday, March 4, at 10 AM

- Visit the Box Office at 1308 5th Avenue, Seattle, WA 98101

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