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4Culture Awards The 5th Avenue Theatre Significant Building for Culture Grant Toward Updating Antiquated Sound System

*The 5th will receive \$217,645 toward
replacing its 35-year-old sound system.*

(Wednesday, December 9, 2015 – SEATTLE, WA) **The 5th Avenue Theatre** is an honored recipient of a significant **Building for Culture** grant from King County's **4Culture**. The historic theater nonprofit will receive **\$217,645** toward replacing its outdated sound system. This generous grant represents 10% of the total cost of replacing the current system and mixing console, and is the maximum amount that could be requested from 4Culture.

"The 5th Avenue Theatre has been exploring possibilities for quite some time with the intent of updating some of the antiquated acoustic technology in our beautiful historic building," said 5th Avenue Theatre Managing Director **Bernadine C. Griffin**. "This is a massive and expensive undertaking. We are so grateful to 4Culture and King County for this unprecedented cycle of Building for Culture grants that are such a gift to non-profit arts and cultural organizations like ours that work hard just to maintain a balanced budget each season. These funds allow us to go above and beyond our annual goals, and tackle projects that have been put off for far too long due to cost."

The existing sound system in the historic 5th Avenue Theatre was installed in 1980, with some enhancements made in 2002, and the system's analog technology can no longer be updated or serviced. Since the system's original installation, audio technology has rapidly advanced, quickly outpacing 5th Avenue capabilities. Not only is the system and console in danger of failing, but poor sound quality hinders 5th Avenue audiences from fully embracing the Broadway-caliber musical theater performances presented onstage.

The musical theater company plans to install a new, state-of-the-art sound system beginning in August of 2016. The system is being designed specifically for The 5th Avenue Theatre auditorium such that the speaker arrays and fills, and all related amplifiers and controls, will be perfectly placed, sized and balanced to the acoustics of the space. This will ensure the correct balance of power and bass/treble balance and to provide clearer sound throughout all spaces in the historic theater.

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About Building for Culture

Securing funds to acquire, build, or renovate specialized space is one of the most challenging experiences facing any arts organization. **4Culture's** Arts Facilities Program supports quality projects by organizations and local governments throughout King County, and has invested more than \$40 million in the past two decades.

This year, 4Culture and King County government have partnered to make an exceptional \$28.4 million investment in regional cultural infrastructure. The program will support jobs to create large, small, urban and rural arts and heritage facilities, improve access to cultural space for all, and preserve historic properties throughout King County. King County Executive Dow Constantine signed his proposal, approved by the King County Council, to make an historic investment of \$28.4 million in capital improvement grants to 100 cultural facilities and projects across the County.

"I proposed 'Building for Culture' to leverage lodging taxes paid by visitors, and reinvest them in the bricks and mortar of museums, theaters, and heritage sites so we can continue to attract more visitors and locals alike," said Executive Constantine. "What's special is the depth and breadth of these investments - youth and ethnic heritage centers; the historic theaters of downtown Seattle and new cultural destinations countywide; and landmarks and treasured historic buildings."

"A vibrant arts and cultural community is a hallmark of King County, something we are well known for nationally. The arts generate significant economic activity, provide a high quality of life for residents, inspire learning opportunities for youth, and attracts tourists," said Council Chair Larry Phillips. "Through support of our arts and heritage organizations, we recognize the important role that these cultural experiences have in strengthening communities and developing young minds."

About The 5th Avenue Theatre

The non-profit 5th Avenue Theatre is acclaimed as one of the nation's leading musical theater companies and is especially renowned for its production and development of new works. Since 2002, the Seattle-based company has produced 17 new musicals. To date, nine (including the sensational hit *Disney's Aladdin*) have moved on to Broadway premieres, earning a combined 15 Tony Awards, including two 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. Today, under the leadership of Executive Producer and Artistic Director David Armstrong, Managing Director Bernadine C. Griffin and Producing Artistic Director Bill Berry, this non-profit theater attracts an annual attendance of more than 300,000, including over 25,000 subscribers – one of the largest theater subscriptions in North America.

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In addition to its main stage productions, The 5th Avenue Theatre is also committed to encouraging the next generation of theatergoers through its extensive education and outreach programs. For more information about The 5th Avenue Theatre, its season and its programs, please visit www.5thavenue.org.

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