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This Holiday Season, Seattle is Alive with *Rodgers & Hammerstein's The Sound of Music*

All local cast begins rehearsals at The 5th Avenue Theatre this week.

November 24, 2015 – January 3, 2016

Music by Richard Rodgers; Lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II

Book by Russel Crouse and Howard Lindsay

Directed by David Bennett; Choreographed by Trina Mills

(Friday, October 30, 2015 – SEATTLE) Rehearsals started this week at The **5th Avenue Theatre** for the exultant classic musical, ***Rodgers & Hammerstein's The Sound of Music***, the iconic show sweeping Seattle for the holidays. Boasting such beloved songs as "Do Re Mi," "My Favorite Things," "Sixteen Going on Seventeen," and "Climb Ev'ry Mountain," this production of ***Rodgers & Hammerstein's The Sound of Music*** will be presented as only The 5th can do, complete with a sensational live orchestra, stunning costumes, and incredible sets. Under the direction of **David Bennett** and with choreography by **Trina Mills** and music direction by **Kat Sherrell**, this musical will feature an exuberant all-local cast of fresh faces and favorite performers that includes **Anne Allgood** as the Mother Abbess, joining the previously announced **David Pichette** as Max Detweiler and **Jessica Skerritt** as the Baroness Elsa Schraeder, with **Hans Altwies** as Captain Georg von Trapp and **Kirsten deLohr Helland** as Maria.

"*Rodgers & Hammerstein's The Sound of Music* is one of the greatest musicals written for the stage, known and loved by families young and old in virtually every part of the world," said Executive Producer and Artistic Director David Armstrong. "The iconic Maria is a role made famous first by Mary Martin on Broadway and then by Julie Andrews in the film. It takes a talented and charismatic performer to do the part justice, and Seattle's own Kirsten deLohr Helland will dazzle audiences when she makes the role her own."

Rodgers & Hammerstein's The Sound of Music plays **November 24, 2015 – January 3, 2016** (press opening Thursday, December 3, 2015) at The 5th Avenue Theatre (1308 5th Avenue, Seattle). For single tickets (starting at \$29) and information, please visit www.5thavenue.org, call the Box Office at (206) 625-1900 or visit the Box Office at 1308 5th Avenue in Downtown Seattle. Tickets may also be purchased at (888) 5TH-4TIX. Group tickets buyers (10 or more) may call (888) 625-1418.

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About The Cast

Seattle native **Kirsten deLohr Helland** takes center stage as the spirited governess Maria. Helland recently starred as Rizzo in The 5th Avenue's hit production of *Grease*, Whatsername in *American Idiot* at Arts West, and Siren in *Lizard Boy* at Seattle Rep, for which she received a Gregory Award for Outstanding Supporting Actress in a Musical. Additionally, Helland has previously been seen at The 5th in productions of *Rodgers & Hammerstein's Oklahoma!*, *ELF – The Musical*, *Hairspray in Concert* and *RENT*. Helland plays opposite **Hans Altwies** as Captain Georg von Trapp, most recently seen at The 5th as the menacing Bill Sikes in *Oliver!* He has held multiple starring roles locally at New Century Theatre Company (where he is co-artistic director), Seattle Repertory Theatre, Seattle Shakespeare Company, Wooden O, Intiman, Seattle Children's Theatre, and ACT – A Contemporary Theatre, as well as Shakespeare Santa Cruz. Altwies is the recipient of the 2010 Gregory Award for Outstanding Actor, and recently directed his first film, *Taste*, with MJ Sieber.

Anne Allgood joins the cast as the Mother Abbess. Allgood has appeared in over a dozen roles at The 5th, notably as the Old Woman in *Candide*, Ruth in *The Pirates of Penzance*, and most recently Nettie in *Rodgers & Hammerstein's Carousel*. Allgood has Broadway credits including *The Most Happy Fella*, *Carousel*, *The Sound of Music*, *Beauty and the Beast*, and *Imaginary Friends*. She has appeared in national tours of *Evita*, *Parade*, *Floyd Collins*, *South Pacific* and *Urinetown*. Allgood has performed at ACT – A Contemporary Theatre, Village Theatre, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Seattle Children's Theatre and Intiman Theatre.

Playing Max Detweiler is 5th Avenue stalwart **David Pichette**, who has appeared at The 5th most recently as Fagin in *Oliver!* and Major General Stanley in *Pirates of Penzance*. Additional credits include *1776*, *My Fair Lady* and *Candide*, among others. He is a company member at Utah Shakespeare Festival and has been seen regularly at ACT – A Contemporary Theatre, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Intiman, Seattle Children's Theatre, and Seattle Shakespeare.

Jessica Skerritt returns to The 5th as Baroness Elsa Schraeder following her performance as Mother in *A Christmas Story*, *The Musical*. Skerritt has performed numerous times at The 5th, with credits including roles in *ELF – The Musical*, *Hairspray in Concert*, and *Guys and Dolls*. She has also starred in 5th Avenue/ACT co-productions of *Little Shop of Horrors* and *Grey Gardens*. She has performed regionally at ACT – A Contemporary Theatre, Village Theatre, Coeur d'Alene Summer Theatre, and Arizona Theatre Company.

The von Trapp children are played by **Shaye Hodgins** (Liesl), **Mark Jeffrey James Weber** (Friedrich), **Victoria Smith** (Louisa), **Aubrey Thomas** (Brigitta), **Coleman Hunter** (Kurt) and **Isabel Menna** (Marta). Gretl is played by **Kendall Bonham** and **Tatum Poirrier** at alternating performances. **Kyan Zielinski** joins the cast as Friedrich and Kurt's cover. Additionally, **Jasmine Harrick** joins the cast as Louisa's cover and her sister **Eliana Harrick** joins the cast as Brigitta and Marta's cover.

The Sound of Music features **Peter Crook** as Franz, **Allen Fitzpatrick** as Baron Elberfeld and Admiral von Schrieber, **Darragh Kennan** as Herr Zeller, **Frances Leah King** as Sister Margaretta, **Lori Larsen** as Frau Schmidt, **Jayne Muirhead** as Sister Sophia, and **Carol Swarbrick** as Sister Berthe.

The ensemble includes **Jared Michael Brown**, **Megan Chenovick**, **Jim Dries**, **Sarah Rose Davis**, **Nick DeSantis**, **Candice Donehoo**, **Paul Flanagan**, **Corinna Lapid Munter**, **McKayla Marso**, **Jordan McClellan**, **Cheryl Massey Peters**, **Matt Owen**, **Matthew Posner**, **Erica Row**, **Aaron Shanks**, **Karen Skrinde** and **Carolyn Willems Van Dijk**. Performance interns include **Hannah Scheurman**, **Nicholas Tarabini**, **Mackenzie Taylor** and **Nick Watson**.

About the Director

Esteemed Seattle director **David Bennett** returns to The 5th following his hit acclaimed production of *A Chorus Line*. His previous 5th Avenue credits include *A Chorus Line*, *Miss Saigon*, *My Fair Lady*, *The Most Happy Fella*, and *Buddy: The Buddy Holly Story*. He has also directed productions of *Man of La Mancha* and *Once on this Island* at Village Theatre, and *Neverending Story*, *Bunnicula*, and *June B. Jones* for Seattle Children's Theatre. His production of *Torso* by Keri Healey at Printer's Devil received the Osborn New Play Award. His work has also been seen at Casa Mañana, Peterborough Players, North Carolina Theatre, Gateway Playhouse and Ordway Theater, among others.

About the Choreographer

Seattle native **Trina Mills** is a long time 5th Avenue performer. Her choreographic experience includes Rising Star Project presentations of *Monty Python's Spamalot* and *Rodgers & Hammerstein's Carousel*, as well as *Dogfight* and *American Idiot* at ArtsWest and work for the Seattle Sea Gals. Mills has assisted several choreographers on various productions here at The 5th Avenue as well. Although she has been onstage in many 5th Avenue productions, this is her main stage debut as choreographer.

About the Music Director

Kat Sherrell is in her second season as The 5th Avenue Theatre's Associate Music Supervisor. She has worked on a variety of projects, including Broadway shows *In the Heights*, *Bring It On*, and *The Book of Mormon*, and NBC's *Smash*. She has been associated with organizations such as the Diller-Quaile School of Music, Revolución Latina, and Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS. Sherrell has music directed and written arrangements for numerous shows, readings and festivals, and was the music coordinator for the Songs of Love Foundation. She is the composer-lyricist for a musical in development, *Sweethearts of Swing*, and the author of the forthcoming book *Experiencing Broadway: A Listener's Companion*.

About the Creative Team

The production features original scenic design by **James Fouchard** and original costume design by **Cathy Zuber** with additional design by **Amanda Seymour**. The design team also

includes scenic coordinator **Phillip Lienau**, costume coordinator **Melanie Burgess**, lighting designer **Mary Louise Geiger**, sound designer **Christopher Walker**, and hair and makeup designer **Mary Pyanowski**. Additional staff includes assistant director **Jessica Low**, assistant choreographer **Paul Flanagan**, assistant lighting designer **Tristan Roberson**, and assistant costume coordinator **Kelly McDonald**. The production features new orchestrations by **Bruce Monroe**, with additional music staff including associate music director **John Callahan**, and nun choirmaster **Joseph Crnko**. **Amy Gornet** is the production stage manager with assistant stage managers **Rachel Bury** and **Stina Lotti**.

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 company attracts an annual attendance of more than 300,000, including over 25,000 subscribers – one of the largest theater subscriptions in North America.

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 programs. For more information about The 5th Avenue Theatre, its season and its programs, please visit www.5thavenue.org.

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FOR CALENDAR EDITORS

WHAT: The 5th Avenue Theatre will sweep audiences away this holiday season with the exultant classic musical, *Rodgers & Hammerstein's The Sound of Music*, directed by **David Bennett** and choreographed by **Trina Mills**. The story of the young governess, Maria, who brings much-needed tenderness and joy to the von Trapp family, this iconic piece of musical theater has everything—romance, danger, bravery and love. This sumptuous production will be mounted with typical 5th Avenue care and dedication, with a full orchestra, stunning sets and costumes, and of course, a stellar cast of Seattle favorites including **Kirsten deLohr Helland** as Maria, with **Hans Altwies** as Captain Von Trapp, **Anne Allgood** as the Mother Abbess, **David Pichette** as Max and **Jessica Skerritt**

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as the Baroness. One of the most beloved musicals in the Rodgers & Hammerstein canon, the show features such memorable songs as “My Favorite Things,” “Do Re Mi,” “Climb Ev’ry Mountain,” and of course, “The Sound of Music.”

WHEN: *Previews Begin: Tuesday, November 24, 2015*

Opening Night: Thursday, December 3, 2015 (press night)

Closing Performance: Sunday, January 3, 2016

Performance times vary. Please visit www.5thavenue.org for details.

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

TICKETS: Please visit www.5thavenue.org or call the Box Office at (206) 625-1900. Tickets (starting at \$29) may also be purchased at (888) 5TH-4TIX.

Special thanks to The 5th Avenue Theatre's 2015/16 season sponsors Artsfund, U.S. Bank and *The Seattle Times*, and official airline Delta Air Lines. Additional thanks to production sponsor Snoqualmie Indian Tribe, contributing sponsor Macy's, and restaurant sponsor Il Fornaio.

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