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The 5th Avenue Theatre Announces 2017/18 Season Featuring Regional Premieres, a Rollicking National Tour and a World Premiere Musical from the Brilliant Mind of Jerry Zucker

(Monday, March 20, 2017 – SEATTLE, WA) The 5th Avenue Theatre has announced an incredible seven-show lineup for its 2017/18 season, which includes a mix of regional premieres, contemporary hits, a classic, a national tour direct from Broadway and a thrilling world premiere.

“We take great pride at The 5th in creating experiences that become life-long memories for our audience,” said Executive Producer and Artistic Director David Armstrong. “This season will include a side-splitting world premiere from a living comedy legend, three West Coast premieres (including the national tour of one of Broadway’s biggest hits), a Pacific Northwest premiere, a Golden Era classic and a musical for our time making its debut on our stage.”

The 2017/18 season opens with the completely original comedy smash, ***Something Rotten!* (September 12 – October 1, 2017)**. Welcome to the ‘90s—the 1590s—long before the dawn of premium tickets, star casting and reminders to turn off your cell phones. Brothers Nick and Nigel Bottom (Tony® nominee **Rob McClure** and Broadway’s **Josh Grisetti**) are desperate to write a hit play but are stuck in the shadow of that Renaissance rock star known as “The Bard” (Tony® nominee **Adam Pascal**). When a local soothsayer foretells that the future of theater involves singing, dancing and acting *at the same time*, Nick and Nigel set out to write the world’s very first MUSICAL! But amidst the scandalous excitement of Opening Night, the Bottom Brothers realize that reaching the top means being true to thine own self... and all that jazz. With its heart on its ruffled sleeve and sequins in its soul, ***Something Rotten!*** was nominated for 10 Tony® Awards, including Best Musical, and is an uproarious dose of pure Broadway fun and an irresistible ode to musicals — those dazzling creations that entertain us, inspire us, and remind us that everything’s better with an exclamation point! From the director of *Aladdin* and the co-director of *The Book of Mormon*, ***Something Rotten!*** is “Broadway’s big, fat hit!” (*NY Post*). Seattle audiences have been anticipating the arrival of this production with some excitement; ***Something Rotten!*** was originally announced for a pre-Broadway engagement at The 5th as a part of the 2014/15 season but the engagement was cancelled when, following several successful workshops, the show moved directly to a Broadway opening.

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In October The 5th Avenue Theatre will reinvent the powerful and sweeping classic, ***Ragtime (October 13 – November 5, 2017)***, a story about the American Dream. With sublime melodies and a deeply compelling story of love at its core, *Ragtime* is a musical theater masterpiece that will inspire and touch the soul. It's the turn of the century; everything is changing and anything is possible. Set in the volatile melting pot of New York City, three distinct American stories are woven together—a determined Jewish immigrant, a daring Harlem musician and an upper-class mother, united by their courage, compassion and belief in a better tomorrow. With a compelling book by **Terrence McNally** and a glorious score by **Stephen Flaherty** and **Lynn Ahrens**, *Ragtime* was nominated for 13 Tony Awards® and was honored with awards for Best Book and Best Score. Directed by **Peter Rothstein**, this 5th Avenue production will be modeled after the critically acclaimed engagement at Theatre Latté Da in Minneapolis with a streamlined set and cast, allowing the glory of the music and the stories to take center stage. The *Twin Cities Arts Reader* proclaimed in its review, “This production is not only very entertaining, its glaring relevance to today’s America reaches to the very heart.” This will be the first time *Ragtime* is produced on The 5th Avenue stage and will be performed in collaboration with Asolo Repertory Theatre in Florida.

This holiday season, The 5th will produce the Pacific Northwest premiere of the new musical delight, ***Irving Berlin’s Holiday Inn (November 24 – December 31, 2017)***, inspired by the Oscar-winning film. Jim leaves the bright lights of show business to settle down on a farm in Connecticut—but he finds the simple life is not as simple as he thought. Things take a spectacular turn when Jim meets Linda, a spirited school teacher with talent to spare. Together, they turn the farmhouse into a fabulous inn with dazzling performances to celebrate each holiday. With direction by 5th Avenue Theatre Executive Producer and Artistic Director **David Armstrong** and exciting new choreography by **James Rocco**, this magical holiday treat will feature spectacular show-stopping dance numbers, lavish sets and costumes from the recent Broadway production and 20 **Irving Berlin** songs including “White Christmas” and “Easter Parade.” The musical was adapted from the beloved film by **Gordon Greenburg** and **Chad Hodge**. Called “heartfelt musical eggnog” by the *New York Observer*, ***Holiday Inn*** is a heartwarming treat, sure to put the whole family in the best of holiday spirits.

The 5th Avenue Theatre will launch into 2018 with its 19th world premiere: ***INTERMISSION! THE MUSICAL! (February 9 – March 4, 2018)***, a sensationally funny new musical from the master of wacky comedies including cinematic sensations *Airplane!* and *The Naked Gun*, **Jerry Zucker**. ***INTERMISSION!*** is the story of two dim-witted brothers who come to Potku-Potku (a tiny monarchy located... somewhere...) after receiving an email from someone they never heard of, claiming that money has been left to them by a relative they never knew they had. They each fall in love, get caught up in a military coup, join a band of revolutionaries and have to save the country—of course. The book is by Zucker, with music and lyrics by **Alan Zachary** and **Michael Weiner**—in residence at The 5th for the third time following *Secondhand Lions* and the pre-Broadway development of *First Date*. Zucker directs with choreography and staging by **Anthony Van Laast**. ***INTERMISSION!*** joins an exciting tradition of world premiere musicals developed at The 5th that includes *Hairspray*, *Memphis*, *Disney’s Aladdin*, *Shrek*, *Catch Me if You Can* and many more.

The 5th Avenue Theatre continues its annual partnership with its neighbor and collaborator, ACT – A Contemporary Theatre with the Pacific Northwest premiere of a new musical still in development, ***Ride the Cyclone (March 9 – May 20, 2018)***. When the St. Cassian High School Chamber Choir boarded the Cyclone roller coaster, the front axle broke, sending them to their tragic demise. Trapped in fantastical carnival-like purgatory, the recently deceased teens discover a mechanical fortune teller, who invites each of them to tell their tragic stories of a life interrupted, with the promise of a prize like no other. This is *Ride the Cyclone*, a wildly original new musical. Part comedy, part tragedy, and completely unexpected, this wonderfully weird story is at every turn satirical, macabre, creepy, campy and hilarious. ***Ride the Cyclone*** features book, music and lyrics by **Brooke Maxwell** and **Jacob Richmond** and was called “A delightfully weird and just plain delightful show” by *The New York Times*. The production is directed by **Rachel Rockwell**, one of Chicago’s leading directors and choreographers.

In the spring, The 5th will produce an exhilarating new production of ***Kiss Me, Kate (April 6-29, 2018)*** as a part of the city-wide Seattle Celebrates Shakespeare festival. ***Kiss Me, Kate*** is the multi-Tony Award®-winning **Cole Porter** masterpiece that set the standard for great musicals and then broke the mold. A play-within-a-play inspired by William Shakespeare’s *The Taming of the Shrew*, this feisty sensation is a true battle of the sexes. A charming leading man and his superstar ex-wife are starring in a production of the Bard’s famous play. Both on stage and off, they revel in combat and romance. Who comes out on top? Perhaps it’s time to “brush up your Shakespeare...” ***Kiss Me, Kate*** features music and lyrics by **Cole Porter** with a book by **Samuel and Bella Spewack**. Utilizing the opulent sets and costumes from the critically acclaimed production by the Shakespeare Theatre Company in Washington, D.C., this 5th Avenue creation will be directed by **Alan Paul**.

The final show of the 2017/18 season will be the Pacific Northwest premiere of the breathtaking musical masterpiece, ***The Hunchback of Notre Dame (June 1-24, 2018)***. This remarkable work complete with a 30-person choir is a tale of sweeping romance unfolds onstage on a grand scale. A glorious reimagining of Victor Hugo’s epic masterpiece, this powerful tale of love, faith and prejudice will leave audiences utterly spellbound. The lush, beautiful score is unlike anything in musical theater today, featuring songs from the Disney animated feature and new music from legendary composer **Alan Menken** (iconic Disney films and Broadway musicals including: *The Little Mermaid*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Aladdin* and *Newsies*) and lyrics by Tony Award®-winner **Stephen Schwartz** (Broadway sensations including *Wicked*, *Godspell* and *Pippin*). This 5th Avenue staging will be directed by **Glenn Casale**, who staged the acclaimed production of *Disney’s The Little Mermaid* at The 5th Avenue Theatre last winter. Of the production’s staging at the Sacramento Music Circus, the *Sacramento Bee* proclaimed “Casale’s subtle touches highlight the story’s tugging sense of our shared humanity and leave a lasting impression.”

About the 2017/18 Sponsors

The 5th Avenue Theatre thanks its 2017/18 season sponsors ArtsFund, U.S. Bank and Alaska Airlines.

“The stage offers a tremendous opportunity for actors, musicians, stage hands and supporting staff to express their artistic talents...their own, individual ‘power of possible,’”

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said Mike Katz, US Bank president. "U.S. Bank is proud to sponsor The 5th Avenue Theatre."

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 2001, the Seattle-based company has produced 18 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 20,000 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:

The 5th Avenue Theatre's 2017/18 Season includes:

Something Rotten!

West Coast Premiere

September 12 – October 1, 2017

Book by Karey Kirkpatrick and John O'Farrell

Music and Lyrics by Karey and Wayne Kirkpatrick

Directed and Choreographed by Casey Nicholaw

Ragtime

First time on our stage

October 13 – November 5, 2017

Book by Terrence McNally

Music by Stephen Flaherty

Lyrics by Lynn Ahrens

Based on the novel *Ragtime* by E.L. Doctorow

Directed by Peter Rothstein

Produced in collaboration with Asolo Repertory Theatre in Florida

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Irving Berlin's Holiday Inn

West Coast Premiere

November 24 – December 31, 2017

Music and Lyrics by Irving Berlin

Book by Gordon Greenburg and Chad Hodge

Directed by David Armstrong

Choreographed by Jaime Rocco

INTERMISSION! THE MUSICAL!

World Premiere

February 9 – March 4, 2018

Book by Jerry Zucker

Music and Lyrics by Alan Zachary and Michael Weiner

Directed by Jerry Zucker

Choreography and Staging by Alan Van Laast

Ride the Cyclone

West Coast Premiere

A Co-Production with ACT—A Contemporary Theatre

March 9 – May 20, 2018

Book, Music and Lyrics by Brooke Maxwell & Jacob Richmond

Directed and Choreographed by Rachel Rockwell

Kiss Me, Kate

First time on our stage in 16 years

April 6-29, 2018

Music and Lyrics by Cole Porter

Book by Samuel and Bella Spewack

Directed by Alan Paul

The Hunchback of Notre Dame

Pacific Northwest Premiere

June 1-24, 2018

Music by Alan Menken

Lyrics by Stephen Schwartz

Book by Peter Parnell

Directed by Glenn Casale

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

SUBSCRIPTIONS:

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