



## NEWS RELEASE

### For Immediate Release

#### **HERSHEY FELDER: STORYTELLER, MUSICIAN, PERFORMER BRINGS IRVING BERLIN TO VIBRANT LIFE TO OPEN ARIZONA THEATRE COMPANY SEASON**

TUCSON, Ariz. (Aug. 10, 2015): Quintessential American songwriter Irving Berlin left an indelible mark on the classic American songbook with hits like “White Christmas,” “Puttin’ on the Ritz,” “There’s No Business Like Show Business” and, of course, “God Bless America.” Arizona Theatre Company brings Berlin’s story to vibrant, toe-tapping life in the 2015-16 season-opening production of *Hershey Felder as Irving Berlin*, Sept. 16-Oct. 4 at the Temple of Music and Art, 333 S. Scott Ave. in Tucson.

I. Michael and Beth Kasser are Arizona Theatre Company’s 2015-16 Season Sponsors. *Hershey Felder as Irving Berlin* is sponsored by BFC BeachFleischman.

From the depths of Czarist Russia, to New York’s Lower East Side, and ultimately all of America and the world, Irving Berlin’s story epitomizes the American dream. Felder, a bravura performer, compelling storyteller, and superb concert pianist, returns to ATC in another tour-de-force. This time, Felder brings to life the remarkable story of “America’s Composer.” Featuring Berlin’s most popular and enduring songs, Felder’s performance makes this evening an unforgettable and indelibly entertaining journey.

“That indefatigable purveyor of composers Felder now applies his singular blend of musical biography, character study and piano virtuosity toward the iconic songwriter about whom Jerome Kern famously said, ‘Irving Berlin has no place *in* American music - he *is* American music,’ wrote the Los Angeles Times. Broadway World raved about the premiere last year, writing that ***Hershey Felder as Irving Berlin*** is “enriching, humorous and replete with the brilliant Berlin tunes ... you do not want to miss a delicious moment of it!”

Felder previously performed ***George Gershwin Alone*** and ***Monsieur Chopin*** for ATC, both during the 2007-08 season, and later as ***Beethoven As I Knew Him*** in 2008-09.

“Our audiences in Arizona have a love affair with Hershey, and he assures me the feelings are mutual,” said ATC Artistic Director David Ira Goldstein. “When Hershey told me he was creating a new show about one of my favorite composers, I rushed to see the premiere engagement and immediately told Hershey we must have him back in Tucson and Phoenix. ***Hershey Felder as Irving Berlin*** is a master entertainer at the top of his game. My favorite Berlin song is ‘Always.’ What’s yours?”

Single ticket prices range from \$23 to 68.

In a special sing-along performance at 1 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 3, Felder will engage the audience to join him in singing some of Berlin’s most memorable tunes. Separate tickets are required. Single-tickets are \$46 until Sept. 1 when the price increases to \$52. Tickets can be purchased at [www.arizonatheatre.org](http://www.arizonatheatre.org).

***Hershey Felder as Irving Berlin*** will be followed by the Arizona premiere of Ayad Akhtar’s scintillating hit Broadway play, ***Disgraced*** (Oct. 17-Nov. 7). Stephen Schwartz’s new musical, ***Snapshots*** (Nov. 29-Dec. 19), brings some of his favorite songs into a new context wrapped in a story filled with humanity and family. Two great American classics follow with August Wilson’s masterpiece ***Fences*** (Jan. 16, 2016-Feb. 2) featuring favorite ATC artists, and John Steinbeck’s classic tale of friendship in hard circumstances, ***Of Mice and Men*** (March 5-26). In between, is a special presentation of the recent off-Broadway hit ***Sex With Strangers*** (Feb. 11-21) in a unique collaboration with ATC and popular Phoenix-based theatre company Stray Cat Theatre.

ATC's 2015-16 season comes to a sparkling close with the witty Arizona premiere of Scott Carter's new play, ***The Gospel According to Thomas Jefferson, Charles Dickens and Count Leo Tolstoy: Discord*** (April 9-30).

For more information call (520) 622-2823 or visit [www.arizonatheatre.org](http://www.arizonatheatre.org).

## BIOGRAPHIES

**HERSHEY FELDER** (*Irving Berlin/Playwright*) Mr. Felder created and performed *George Gershwin Alone*, which played on Broadway at the Helen Hayes Theatre, in the West End at the Duchess Theatre, and in theatres around the country. His Composers Sonata—*George Gershwin Alone; Monsieur Chopin; Beethoven, As I Knew Him; Maestro Bernstein; Hershey Felder as Franz Liszt in Musik, Hershey Felder as Irving Berlin*—has been presented at dozens of theatres across the U.S. and around the world. His compositions and recordings include *Aliyah, Concerto for Piano and Orchestra; Fairytale*, a musical; *Les Anges de Paris, Suite for Violin and Piano; Song Settings; Saltimbanques for Piano and Orchestra; Etudes Thematiques for Piano*; and *An American Story for Actor and Orchestra*. As director, he premiered Mona Golabek in *The Pianist of Willesden Lane* at the Geffen Playhouse in 2012 and, earlier this year, produced and created scenic design for Taylor Hackford's *Louis and Keely 'Live' at the Sahara*. Mr. Felder has been a scholar-in-residence at Harvard University's Department of Music and is married to Kim Campbell, the first female Prime Minister of Canada.

**TREVOR HAY** (Director) Directed the world premieres of *An American Story For Actor and Orchestra, Abe Lincoln's Piano* and *Hershey Felder As Franz Liszt In Musik*. He is Associate Director for Mona Golabek's *The Pianist of Willesden Lane* and for *Jack Lemmon Returns*. Included in his 23 seasons at the Old Globe were eleven seasons of the Summer Shakespeare Festival Repertory, as well work on Tracy Letts' *August: Osage County*, directed by Sam Gold, and Hershey Felder's *George Gershwin Alone, Monsieur Chopin and Maestro Bernstein*.

## CREATIVE TEAM

**Scenic Design:** Hershey Felder & Trevor Hay

**Lighting Design:** Richard Norwood

**Original Lighting Design:** Christopher Rynne

**Projection Design:** Andrew Wilder

**Sound Design/Production Manager:** Erik Carstensen

**Dramaturge/Research:** Meghan Maiya

**Scenic Decoration:** Meghan Maiya, Jordan Hay, Emma Hay

Tickets for *Hershey Felder as Irving Berlin* start at \$23 and are subject to change depending on time, date and section, and are available at [www.arizonatheatre.org](http://www.arizonatheatre.org) or by calling the box office at (520) 622-2823. Discounts are available for seniors and active military. A \$10 student ticket pricing is now available for all performances. Half-price rush tickets are available for balcony seating for all performances one hour prior to curtain at the ATC box office (subject to availability). **Pay What You Can** performance is Sept. 22 at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are available for a suggested \$10 donation. (Tickets must be purchased at the Temple of Music and Art starting one hour prior to curtain. Tickets are first-come, first served. *Cash only*. Two tickets maximum per person.) For discounts for groups of 10 or more, call (520) 622-2823.

**Arizona Theatre Company offers accessibility services for patrons with disabilities for select performances. Audio Description** provides patrons with vision loss a running audio

description of the movement and activities onstage through an infrared broadcast system. An Audio-Described performance is offered on Thursday, Sept. 17 at 2 p.m. Interested patrons with vision loss may request a tactile tour one hour prior to curtain. **American Sign Language Interpretation** is presented by professional, theatrically-trained ASL-interpreters for people who have deafness or hearing impairment. An ASL-interpreted performance is offered on Thursday, Oct. 1 at 7:30 p.m. **Open captioning** allows patrons to read the play's dialogue on an LED screen as the play progresses. An open captioned performance is offered on Thursday, Sept. 17 at 2 p.m. For open-captioned or ASL-interpreted performances, patrons should request seats best suited to ASL interpretation or captioning when purchasing tickets. Large print and Braille playbills and infrared listening amplification devices are also available at every ATC performance with reservation. TTY access for the box office is available in Tucson at (520) 884-9723 or via Arizona Relay at (800) 367-8939 (TTY/ASCII).

**Fact Sheet:**

*Hershey Felder as Irving Berlin*  
Lyrics and Music by Irving Berlin  
Book by Hershey Felder  
Directed by Trevor Hay

**Venue:**

The Temple of Music and Art  
330 S. Scott Avenue  
Tucson, AZ 85701

**Previews Begin:** Wednesday, Sept. 16 at 7:30 p.m.

**Opening Night:** Friday, Sept. 18 at 7:30 p.m.

**Closing Performance:** Sunday, Oct. 4 at 7 p.m.

**Ticket Info:**

Ticket prices currently start at \$23 and are available in-person at the Temple of Music and Art box office, via phone at (520) 622-2823 or online at [www.arizonatheatre.org](http://www.arizonatheatre.org).

**About Arizona Theatre Company:**

Arizona Theatre Company (ATC) is the preeminent fully professional theatre in the state of Arizona committed to inspiring, engaging, and entertaining - one moment, one production, and one audience at a time. Boasting the largest seasonal subscriber base in the performing arts in Arizona, ATC is the only resident company in the U.S. that is fully based in two cities providing its wide array of programming and community outreach across the region. Now in its 49th season, more than 130,000 people a year attend our performances at the historic Temple of Music and Art in Tucson, and the elegant Herberger Theater Center in downtown Phoenix. Each season of home-grown productions reflects the rich variety of world drama—from classics to contemporary plays, from musicals to new works—along with a wide array of community outreach programs, educational opportunities, access initiatives and new play programs. Designated The State Theatre of Arizona, ATC is led by Artistic Director David Ira Goldstein, Interim Managing Director Matt Lehrman, and a dedicated Board of Trustees.