



NEWS RELEASE

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ARIZONA THEATRE COMPANY'S ARIZONA ARTIST INITIATIVE WILL SPOTLIGHT THE STATE'S DIVERSE CULTURAL TALENT, IMPACT AND LASTING IMPRINT

When David Ivers was named Artistic Director at Arizona Theatre Company, he made a commitment to spotlight Arizona artists: those who live here, were born here, return to or move here or who write about Arizona or our surrounding region.

That Arizona Artist Initiative will launch when the curtain comes up on the 2018/19 season, the first fully programmed by Ivers. "Arizona has a rich art and cultural heritage and a remarkable legacy of individuals who have built upon that foundation," Ivers said. "Throughout the season, the Arizona Artist Initiative will celebrate the breadth and depth of that diversity in a season about family and coming home to Arizona."

Among those coming home so far:

- Scott Pask, who has designed more than 50 Broadway productions, earning Tony Awards for *The Pillowman*, *The Coast of Utopia* and *The Book of Mormon*. He currently is represented with five Broadway shows and this season received Tony Award nominations for Best Scenic Design of a Musical for both *The Band's Visit* and *Mean Girls*. Born and raised in Yuma, Pask received a Bachelor's Degree in architecture and an Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters from the University of Arizona. His current home in Tucson's Catalina Foothills was featured in *The New York Times* Style Magazine. He is scenic designer for ATC's production of the David Ivers-directed *Music Man* (Tucson: Dec.1-30, Phoenix: Jan. 5-27).
- Tucson native and legendary sound designer Abe Jacob whose remarkable achievements include the groundbreaking rock-and-roll sound system for the 1969 Broadway production of *Hair*. His credits also include the original Broadway productions of *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *Pippin*, *The Who's Tommy*, *A Chorus Line*, *Chicago*, *Evita* and *Cats*, among others. He will design the sound for *The Music Man*.
- Tucson native and renowned lighting designer Philip Rosenberg (Broadway: *Pretty Woman: The Musical*, *The Elephant Man*, *Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder*, *It's Only a Play*), whose

grandfather, George Rosenberg, was an ATC board member and interim CEO in the late 1980s. With Pask and Jacob, he forms a breathtaking trifecta for *Music Man*.

- Playwright José Cruz González, playwright-in-residence with Childsplay in Tempe, whose vibrant new comedy, *American Mariachi* (Tucson: March 9-30; Phoenix: April 4-21) is a heartwarming and hilarious play about music's power to heal and connect, and the freedom to dream big.
- Actor Robynn Rodriguez, who returns to the ATC stage for the first production of 52nd season, *Native Gardens*. Rodriguez was cast as Aoife Muldoon in ATC's production of *Outside Mullingar* last season. She also spent several years as a child in Tucson while her father attended the University of Arizona College of Pharmacy.
- Erma Bombeck, the Ohio wife, best-selling author, syndicated columnist and mother-turned-longtime Arizona resident, living in Phoenix for 30 years. *Erma Bombeck: At Wit's End* is a memorable and loving tribute written by Margaret and Allison Engel and directed by Casey Stangl. (Tucson: Oct. 20-Nov. 10; Phoenix: Nov. 15-Dec. 2).

ATC's production of *The Music Man* (Tucson: Dec. 1-30; Phoenix: Jan. 5-27, 2019) celebrates the musical's community theme with 11 cast members with Arizona ties. Featured roles include James Zanellis of Phoenix (Olin Britt); Nate Wiley of Tucson (Winthrop Paroo); Allison Jennings of Tucson (Amaryllis); Cydney Trent of Phoenix (Pick A Little Lady) and Carly Nicole Grossman (Zaneeta). The ensemble includes Connor Morlely (featured dancer) and Adia Bell (featured dancer), from the University of Arizona; Jules Grantham of Tucson (dancer); and Abe Jacobs' nephews Damon Matthew Martinez and Jacob Martinez and his niece, Gabby Martinez, all members of the ensemble.

"With the launch of this initiative, we hope to bring to the forefront an awareness of the multitude of artists who have strong ties to this state, and the pride in which Arizonans have and recognize in the impact these artists have generated locally, nationally and internationally," Ivers said. "We are incredibly excited about the upcoming season and its many connections to Arizona and our team continues to identify additional opportunities."

Season-ticket packages are now on sale.

The complete 2018/2019 season schedule:

- **Native Gardens**, Karen Zacarías' hilarious new comedy, is anything but neighborly (at the Temple of Music & Art in Tucson from Sept. 8-29 and at the Herberger Theater Center in Phoenix from Oct. 4-21). It's the story of high-powered lawyer Pablo and his wife, Tania, a doctoral student, who are working toward the American Dream. They move into a well-to-do, mostly white neighborhood in our nation's capital. A delicate disagreement over a long-standing fence line soon spirals into an all-out, laugh out loud comic border dispute, exploring what is an otherwise hot button issue through a refreshing comedic lens. "A true breath of comic fresh air." – *DC Theatre Scene*.

- **Erma Bombeck: At Wit's End**, by Margaret Engel and Allison Engel, directed by Casey Stangl (Tucson: Oct. 20-Nov. 10; Phoenix: Nov. 15-Dec. 2). A loving tribute to the Ohio wife and mother turned

long time Arizona resident who made herself into a national superstar as a best-selling author and syndicated journalist who was lauded for opening up the secret world of the mother and housewife. Discover the story behind America's beloved humorist who championed women's lives with wit that sprang from the most unexpected place of all – the truth. “Immensely entertaining.” –*TheaterMania*.

• ***The Music Man***, Music and Lyrics by Meredith Willson, Book by Meredith Willson and Franklin Lacey, directed by David Ivers (Tucson: Dec. 1-30; Phoenix: Jan. 5-27, 2019). The irresistible musical tribute to the power of make believe marches onto the ATC stages – and into your heart – with trumpets blaring! By turns wicked, funny, warm, romantic, and touching, ***The Music Man*** is American musical theatre at its best. “Even if you're seeing it for the umpteenth time, you can be surprised by the musical's vigor, warmth, uplift and virtually faultless construction. Here is both popular art and a model of musical theater craft.” – *New York Times*

• ***Two Trains Running***, by August Wilson, directed by Lou Bellamy (Tucson: Jan. 19-Feb. 9; Phoenix: Feb. 14-March 3.). From the writer of ***Fences***, the story of a new president in the White House and racial tensions on the rise. But no, it's not 2018. It's 1969 - and the Civil Rights Movement is sending tremors through Pittsburgh's Hill District. ***Two Trains Running*** explores a time of extraordinary change - and the ordinary people who get left behind. “Mr. Wilson's most adventurous and honest attempt to reveal the intimate heart of history.” – *New York Times*

• ***American Mariachi***, by José Cruz González (Tucson: March 9-30; Phoenix: April 4-21). Spending her days caring for her ailing mother, Lucha yearns to break her monotonous routine. Here's a wild idea: an all-girl mariachi band! But it's the 1970s, and girls can't be mariachis...or can they? A heartwarming and hilarious new comedy about music's power to heal and connect, featuring gorgeous live mariachi music that will send your heart soaring.

• ***Things I Know to be True***, by Andrew Bovell, directed by Mark Clements (Tucson: April 20-May 11; Phoenix: May 16-June 2). Can a parent love their children too much? Is it possible to not love them enough? These are questions that hover over ***Things I Know to be True***, a beautiful and painfully perceptive portrait of a family and the frictions that arise when grown-up children try to push beyond the confines of their loving parents' expectations.

The 2018/2019 season is dedicated to Geri Silvi, ATC's long-time Box Office Manager in Phoenix. The season is sponsored by I. Michael and Beth Kasser.

ATC has standardized curtain times in both cities. Performance times will be: Tuesdays through Saturday evenings at 7:30 p.m., Sunday evenings at 7:00 p.m. and all matinees will be held at 2:00 p.m.

For more information about season-ticket subscription, go to www.arizonatheatre.org or call the box office in Tucson at (520) 622-2823 or in Phoenix at (602) 256-6995.

Contact:

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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 52nd 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 Ivers, Managing Director Billy Russo and a dedicated Board of Trustees.

