

Hating Shakespeare Has Never Been this Fun!

The Phoenix Theatre Company Produces *Something Rotten!*

(March 6, 2020 – PHOENIX) Let's face it, Shakespeare is pretty hard to beat, but in *Something Rotten!*, two brothers of the Renaissance give it a go. *Something Rotten!* is a 10-time Tony-Award nominated musical extravaganza and it's on stage at The Phoenix Theatre Company March 18 – April 19, 2020.

In the untold story of Shakespeare's greatest competition, this hilarious musical comedy follows brothers Nick and Nigel Bottom on their creative journey. Thanks to a vision from Nostradamus's food-obsessed nephew, the brothers discover that the next big thing in theatre involves singing, dancing and acting – all at the same time. While the struggling playwrights are stuck in the shadow of the Renaissance rock star William Shakespeare, their big dreams lead to the invention of today's musical theatre and a whole lot of off-stage shenanigans. The rest is musical theatre history!

Combining everything audiences love about Broadway, including big song-and-dance numbers, a wacky cast of over-the-top characters, bold costumes and colorful sets, *Something Rotten!* is influenced by Broadway's most iconic styles, while also poking fun at them.

Director Kathy Fitzgerald takes her inspiration for *Something Rotten!* from some of the greatest names in comedy history. As a part of the cast of the original production of *The Producers* on Broadway, Fitzgerald cites Mel Brooks and Matthew Broderick as two of her biggest influences.

"Everything about this show is just a little bit tilted," said Fitzgerald. "Everyone has these big, wild, totally unrealistic dreams of greatness and that's where the comedy lives. When I first saw this musical, some of my closest friends were in the cast. It felt like a party on stage every night. You could tell how much fun they were having, and I wanted to recreate that feeling at The Phoenix Theatre Company. I want the audience to sense the chemistry of this great cast and to embrace that the characters are all totally out of their minds."

In addition to Fitzgerald's vision, choreographer Eric Sciotto, who worked on both the Broadway and touring productions of *Something Rotten!*, will bring a fresh take to the dance numbers in this production thanks to his deep knowledge of the material.

Songs like, "Welcome to the Renaissance" and "The Black Death," offer a delightfully wacky take on history. Audiences will love revisiting everything from Renaissance fashion to the bubonic plague through this hilariously twisted lens.

The professional cast has many familiar faces to The Phoenix Theatre Company audiences, including: Toby Yatso as Shakespeare; Sarah Ambrose as Portia; Trisha Ditsworth as Bea; Matravius Avent as Nigel; and D. Scott Withers as Jeremiah. Jonathan Shew, playing Nick Bottom, was part of the Broadway cast of *Bandstand* and toured nationally with *Wicked*.

Tickets for *Something Rotten!* are on sale now and start at just \$32. To purchase by phone, call (602) 254-2151 or visit www.phoenixtheatre.com.

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ABOUT THE PHOENIX THEATRE COMPANY

The Phoenix Theatre Company is the largest professional regional theatre company in Arizona. As the first arts organization in Arizona and a founding member of the Central Arts District, The Phoenix Theatre Company is committed to advancing performing arts in the Valley with nearly 500 performances each year on multiple stages. Located at 1825 N. Central Ave in Phoenix, The Phoenix Theatre Company's mission is to create exceptional experiences by using the arts to articulate messages that inspire hope and understanding. The Phoenix Theatre Company is currently celebrating its 100th anniversary. For more information, visit www.phoenixtheatre.com.

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