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***Up-and-Coming Artists Share Productions in
Development at 24th Festival of New American
Theatre at The Phoenix Theatre Company
Audiences get an insider look into a play's journey
from script to stage***

(April 19, 2022 – PHOENIX) For many playwrights, seeing their work come alive on stage is something they only dream about, but thanks to a passion project at The Phoenix Theatre Company, several of these creators will see their dreams become a reality. This year, The Phoenix Theatre Company continues its longstanding commitment to the development of new works, playwrights and performers with the 24th Festival of New American Theatre, May 6, 7 and 8, and May 13, 14 and 15, 2022.

Hosted annually, the Festival amplifies new voices and expands the landscape of American theatre. This season, the Festival will feature the readings of two new musicals and one play as well as the addition of the Composer Lyricist Cabaret. The Festival is an opportunity for audiences to witness how a production goes from the page to the stage. All three productions are presented without staging, costumes or choreography. It's not uncommon for parts of a production to be reread and for edits to be made live onstage during the workshops.

"At The Phoenix Theatre Company, we pride ourselves on being a conduit for new stories, new voices, and new contributions to America's theatre cannon," said Michael Barnard, producing

artistic director. “We know the value of the creative process and the importance of providing a space for new artists of all kinds to see their work come alive on stage.”

Through a partnership with NYC’s Theatre Barn, a primary incubator of new musicals, The Phoenix Theatre Company will also feature the addition of a Choreography Lab this year which will explore how choreographers leave iconic marks on new musicals, on May 14 at 8 p.m. and May 15 at 6:30pm. Featured choreographers will be local favorites Nick Flores and Lauran Stanis. New York Theatre Barn Artistic Director Joe Barros will also present a keynote address on May 8 at 6:30 p.m., to be immediately followed by the New Works Reception with the artists and staff of The Phoenix Theatre Company.

A returning festival favorite, The First Draft Series will feature sit-down readings of three different one-act plays which competed and won Spotlight Youth Theatre’s 2021-2022 Playfest, an annual playwriting contest for young adults. The selections for the 2022 First Draft Series at The Phoenix Theatre Company include *Not Driving Ever Summer* by Rebecca Bain, *The Pickpocket’s Lament* by Katie Klobberdanz, and *Lost n’ Sound* by Zoey Waller. These new works will be presented May 14 a.m. at 11am and May 15 at 11 a.m.

The Composer Lyricist Cabaret is returning this year and will present two 45-minute works followed by an audience discussion. Craig Bohmer (composer), will join with Steven Mark Kohn and Marion Adler (lyricists) for a new work presentation. Composer/lyricist Drew Fornarola will also be featured, who penned *Tiananmen* that will have its world premiere at The Phoenix Theatre Company next season.

Barnard says the Festival is invaluable to artists in all specialties, with many shows workshopped in Phoenix taking the next steps for a national audience. In fact, this April, *Americano!*, a musical about an Arizona Dreamer, will open off-Broadway after being part of the Festival of New American Theatre in 2019.

The 2022 Festival of New American Theatre readings in development include:

A Beautiful Place - a new musical celebrating the life of artist Friedl Dicker-Brandeis, who was deported to the Theresienstadt concentration camp in 1942. There, Friedl secretly taught classes to hundreds of children, giving them the ability to escape the world around them by using their imaginations and the remarkable power of art. The legacy of these pieces continues to inspire and remind us how beauty and hope can exist within the darkness of despair. Witten by Linda DeArmond Grady and Michael Grady, with music by Craig Bohmler and lyrics by Steven Mark Kohn, directed by David Ira Goldstein, music directed by Craig Bohmler, this musical can be seen onstage May 6 at 7 p.m. and May 7 at 3 p.m.

ASL Interpretation will be provided on May 7 at 3 p.m.

Content Warning: Discussions of the Holocaust and violence.

The Belle of Tombstone - a new musical set in Tombstone, Arizona. Josie Marcus is nothing like the girls at home. Passionate and fearless, she escapes her upper-class Jewish family in 1879

San Francisco for a wild adventure in Tombstone, home of legendary frontier lawman Wyatt Earp. Weaving together Hollywood's golden era and the legendary West, the all-female musical, *The Belle of Tombstone*, excavates the untold true story of the Jewish wife of Wyatt Earp and the women of the American West. Written by Sheilah Rae and Thomas Edward West, with music by Michele Brourman and lyrics by Sheilah Rae, directed by Joe Barros, music directed by Josh Condon, this show will take the stage May 7 at 7 p.m. and May 8 at 3 p.m. *ASL Interpretation will be provided on May 8 at 3 p.m.*
Content Warning: Drug use and discussion of suicide.

Hollywood Nurses - a play that explores clandestine love. Nurse Jenny Tyler is running from her past. Nurse Suzanne Medford is running from her present. When the secret worlds of these nurses collide at Holly View Hospital, they ignite forbidden passions, erupting into a dangerous scandal that even the most modern medicine cannot cure. *Hollywood Nurses* is an homage to the lesbian pulp novels of the 1950s. Written by Peter Michael Marino and Sheila Head, directed by Carl Andress and produced by Norma Lana, this show will be presented May 13 at 7 p.m. and May 15 at 3 p.m.
ASL Interpretation will be provided on May 15 at 3 p.m.
Content Warning: Sexual violence

For more information or to get tickets, visit <https://phoenixtheatre.com/>.

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ABOUT THE PHOENIX THEATRE COMPANY

The Phoenix Theatre Company is the largest professional regional theatre company in the state. 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 theatrical experiences by using the arts to articulate messages that inspire hope and understanding. For more information visit, www.phoenixtheatre.com.