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One of the Greatest Love Stories Ever Told to Premiere at The Phoenix Theatre Company

Audiences are guaranteed to be swept off their feet

(Jan. 18, 2023 – PHOENIX) One of the most captivating musicals to ever be adapted for the stage, *An American in Paris*, makes its premiere at The Phoenix Theatre Company, January 25 through March 12, 2023. Inspired by the 1951 Academy Award-winning film of the same name that starred Gene Kelly and Leslie Caron, the lavish musical is set in the City of Lights as it emerges from the shadows of World War II.

Full of grandeur and set to the exhilarating music of George and Ira Gershwin, *An American in Paris* tells the romantic story of American soldier Jerry Mulligan who, hoping to start a new life, chooses newly-liberated Paris to make a name for himself as a painter. His life becomes complicated when he falls for Lise, a young Parisian shop girl, only to learn he is not her only suitor.

“This show is a love story for the ages,” said director Larry Raben. “*An American in Paris* is a story about finding happiness, love and a new lease on life, even after the darkest times. The stunning combination of iconic music, breathtaking ballet, energetic tap dancing, lavish sets and costumes, will wow audiences from across the Valley.”

The show is set to some of the Gershwins’ most timeless music, including favorites like, “S Wonderful,” “I Got Rhythm,” and “You Can’t Take That Away from Me.” Audiences can expect an emotional journey as the characters come back from the challenges of the war, fall in love, follow their dreams and celebrate the joys of being alive.

Raben promises a modern and theatrical telling of this musical, further strengthened by a remarkable cast of actors, singers and dancers.

“Very few theatres have done this piece regionally, post-Broadway, so to put our own spin on it is very exciting,” Raben added. “The Gershwins wrote the score with such care and tenderness, with energy and passion, and those are the things I want to bring to this piece for Valley audiences. I was mesmerized with the movie as a kid and I have no doubt audiences will be just as enamored with the theatrical performance.”

Raben’s promise of a modern telling is made possible because The Phoenix Theatre Company is a professional theatre, producing shows from start to finish in-house. This allows freedom in creative interpretation for directors, the construction of sets, the design and selection of costumes, and other components of putting together a live production. In the case of *An American in Paris*, this includes casting of professional actors and director, and professional tradespeople in set design and music production.

“I want people to walk out of the theatre feeling like they’ve seen the most romantic love story ever, and I just know they will be moved,” he added. “I think *An American in Paris* is one of the most beautiful pieces of music ever written.”

The Phoenix Theatre Company cast includes Michael Starr* as Jerry Mulligan; Brianna Abruzzo* as Lise Dassin; Amanda Lea LaVergne* as Milo Davenport; Nicholas Barakos as Adam Hochberg; Lucas Coatney* as Henri Baurel; María Amorocho* as Madame Baurel, and Clay Sanderson* as Monsieur Baurel. The ensemble includes Geoffrey Belliston, Bailee Cudmore, Kylie Victoria Edwards*, Albert Johnston, Casey Lamont, Derek Luscutoff*, Aidan Lutton, Darren McArthur*, Katie McFadzen, Carmiña Monserrat, Sarah Morgan, Grace Rogers, Trever Rex, Taylor Stanger*, and Sarah Wiechman. Dallyn Brunck, Kayden Oliver, Amber Skaggs, and Xingyu Wang are ensemble swings.

Select Mask Required Performances

In an effort to provide those who would feel more comfortable in a fully masked environment with an opportunity to attend our productions, we have designated a select upcoming performance of *An American in Paris* as "Mask Required:" Feb. 18, 2023, at 2 p.m.

During these performances, masks will be required for all patrons and staff in our lobbies and theatres unless actively eating/drinking. Food and drinks will be allowed in the theatre. We ask that the mask be placed back on between bites or sips. Proof of vaccination and temperature checks will not be required.

ASL/Audio Describe Night

Audio Description and American Sign Language Interpretation are available for each production. ASL/Audio Describe Night for *An American in Paris* is Thursday, Feb. 16 at 7 p.m.

**Denotes members of Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers.*

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 North Central Avenue 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.