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Upcoming Musical Tells a Star-Crossed Love Story from Two Perspectives, Chronologically and in Reverse

(Feb. 21, 2023-PHOENIX) There are two versions of every love story. The version you get depends on which half of the couple you ask. Audiences for *The Last Five Years*, running at The Phoenix Theatre Company March 15 through April 2, 2023, will get the story of a marriage from both perspectives, with a twist.

The musical imaginatively chronicles five years of a relationship, from meeting to break-up and from break-up to meeting. The story, told in chronological order by one character and reverse order by the other, follows Jamie Wellerstein, a rising novelist, and Cathy Hiatt, a struggling actress, in New York City.

“This show is special to me because it is truly about storytelling, whittled down to the simplest form. It takes the audience on an emotional journey with nothing more than the talent, the music and the stage,” said Dwayne Hartford, director. “While there are only two characters, they are extremely complex and interesting. The audience will be wowed by their talent and nostalgic about their own journey with young love that may, or may not, have worked out.”

The intimate and bittersweet musical by Jason Robert Brown captivates audiences with its emotional examination of relationships and the ingenious, interchanging structure between past and present. *The Last Five Years* is semi-autobiographical with Brown sharing that the inspiration came from “working through the very painful wreckage of a relationship that meant a lot to me.” His goal was to tell a simple story about a relationship falling apart.

Brown is a three-time Tony Award-winner whose Broadway credits include *Parade*, *The Bridges of Madison County* and *Mr. Saturday Night*. Since its premiere in Chicago in 2001, *The Last Five Years*, has enjoyed two Off-Broadway productions, an Off West-End production, and a film starring Anna Kendrick and Jeremy Jordan in 2014.

"The Scenic Design strives to capture the energy of young love in this whirlwind five year relationship, which pairs perfectly with the energy of New York City. An abstracted New York Skyline is silhouetted by what could be a sunrise or a sunset. A series of platforms emphasize a horizontal pulling apart and a turntable is used with minimal furnishings to set the scene for each moment we glimpse in their relationship. The six person band is onstage floating on their individual platforms to further feed the energy of this emotional journey between two people in and out of love," added Sarah Harris, scenic designer.

The Phoenix Theatre Company cast of *The Last Five Years* includes Šime Košta* as Jamie and Alyssa Chiarello* as Cathy. Understudies include Kade Bailey and Daniela Delahuerta.

Tickets for *The Last Five Years* are on sale now. To purchase, call (602) 254-2151 or visit www.phoenixtheatre.com.

Select Mask Required Performances

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 *The Last Five Years* as "Mask Required": Sunday, March 26, at 7 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 *The Last Five Years* is Thursday, March 30 at 7 p.m.

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

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ABOUT THE PHOENIX THEATRE COMPANY

The Phoenix Theatre Company is not only the largest professional regional theatre company in the state, but it's also the first arts organization in Arizona and a founding member of the Central Arts District. Committed to advancing the performing arts in the Valley, with nearly 500 performances each year on multiple stages, The Phoenix Theatre Company's mission is to create exceptional theatrical experiences that inspire hope and understanding. For more information about our upcoming shows, campus venue, located at 1825 N. Central Ave. in Phoenix, outreach programs, and more, visit www.phoenixtheatre.com.