

## NEWS RELEASE

### *For Immediate Release*

# Classic Musical Returns to Stage for 100<sup>th</sup> Season

## *The Phoenix Theatre Company Brings Back Sound of Music to Mark Theatre's Success*

(Oct 2, 2019 – Phoenix, Ariz.) The hills are alive as Broadway's most beloved musical, *The Sound of Music*, makes its triumphant return to The Phoenix Theatre Company stage just in time for the holidays. With shows on stage Nov. 13 – Dec. 29, 2019, audiences will be reminded why this classic musical is cherished by generations.

*The Sound of Music* is the true-life story of Maria, a spirited young woman, who leaves the convent to become governess to the seven von Trapp children. As she explores the challenges of being a caretaker, she falls in love with the children and their widowed father, Captain von Trapp. Set in Austria during World War II, the von Trapp family is forced to flee the country to escape the Nazis regime and find freedom. With music by Richard Rodgers and lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II, *The Sound of Music* overflows with a determined spirit of survival and includes some of the most iconic songs of all time, including, "Do-Re-Mi," "Climb Ev'ry Mountain," "Edelweiss," and the unforgettable title tune.

"When you see this show, you're seeing the work of one of the greatest writing teams of all time in their peak," said Jeff Whiting, Director. "A lot of the magic in this show happens when the characters realize they're going their own way, and not following what might be expected of them. As an audience, you witness the struggle of hard choices and decisions made not because they are simple or easy, but because they are right. I think we can all identify with those kinds of difficult choices."

*The Sound of Music* is significant to The Phoenix Theatre Company and its milestone 100<sup>th</sup> season. More than 30 years ago, this show, and its cast featuring Valley legend Mary Jo West, was instrumental in reviving the theatre and bringing it back from financial hardship and potential bankruptcy.

"*The Sound of Music* holds a special place in our hearts at The Phoenix Theatre Company," said Michael Barnard, producing artistic director for The Phoenix Theatre Company. "In the mid-1980s, the theatre was struggling to keep its head above water financially. It was *The Sound of Music* that helped us through a very challenging time, a time where we worried about our long-term viability as an arts organization. We will forever be indebted to our audience members who came out in droves to see this show decades ago. We hope this rendition of *The Sound of Music* brings as much joy to today's audiences as it did all those years ago."

The Phoenix Theatre Company's production of *The Sound of Music* features Trisha Ditsworth as Maria and Mark Epperson as Captain von Trapp. Audience favorite Ditsworth has appeared on stage with The Phoenix Theatre Company many times but may best be remembered as the lead in *Mary Poppins*, while actor Mark Epperson is making his debut with The Phoenix Theatre Company. Directing is Jeff Whiting,

whom *The New York Times* called, a “director with a joyous touch.” His directorial credits include *The Scottsboro Boys* in 2017 for The Phoenix Theatre Company as well as several various directing and choreography credits for Broadway and Broadway-touring shows such as *Bullets Over Broadway*. The show will also feature local child actors in the roles of the seven von Trapp children.

Tickets are on sale now and start at just \$32. To purchase by phone, call (602) 254-2151 or visit [www.phoenixtheatre.com](http://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 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. For more information, visit [www.phoenixtheatre.com](http://www.phoenixtheatre.com).

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