



**SEAN DANIELS** *The Kasser Family Artistic Director*

**GERI WRIGHT** *Managing Director*



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## **ARIZONA THEATRE COMPANY ANNOUNCES 54TH SEASON FOR 2021/2022**

### **Arizona's Premier Theatre is Counting Down the Days to Opening Night**

Arizona Theatre Company (ATC) unveiled its 54th Season today, including six productions in Tucson and six productions in Phoenix starting in September 2021 and running through July 2022. "To say that we're ecstatic to be back creating live, in-person theatre is an understatement," remarked The Kasser Family Artistic Director Sean Daniels. "We can't wait for the curtain to go up and for audiences to feel the thrill of a world-class play or musical."

As Arizonans emerge from this incredibly challenging year, ATC has carefully curated productions that tell stories about how we learn to heal and love each other – stories of reemergence, rebirth, and rejuvenation. As always, ATC's audiences will experience world-class theatre about what it means to be alive today – inspiring curiosity and creativity, sparking empathy and joy – bringing all Arizonans together.

ATC's lineup includes two world premieres: *Justice*, a musical about Supreme Court Justices Sandra Day O'Connor and Ruth Bader Ginsburg, and *how to make an American Son*, a moving new play about the complexities of privilege, citizenship, and family. Audiences will be the first to see productions that begin their journey at ATC and continue to national and world tours, a strong point of pride for Arizonans.

"This is just the beginning of shows starting in Arizona before they play the rest of the world," Daniels remarked. "*how to make an American Son* received funding from the National Endowment for the Arts and will go Off-Broadway after its run here. *Justice* already has theaters lining up to produce it. These are true examples of ATC becoming



the local theatre the world pays attention to, and I'm excited for other states to see what starts in Arizona."

In his third season at ATC, where he first fell in love with theatre growing up in Mesa, Daniels brings a wealth of national and international resources and connections to his first fully programmed season on stage since joining ATC.

The 54th Season includes three plays and three musicals, five of which are written or created by female artists. Daniels will direct three performances, while the other three will feature nationally noted directors, including Kimberly Senior, who is the director of Broadway's Pulitzer Prize-winning *Disgraced* and will direct ATC's *how to make an American Son*, and Tiffany Nichole Greene, resident director of Broadway's *Hamilton* and director of *Nina Simone: Four Women*. The director of *Justice* will be announced shortly.

"Based on the amazing support we have seen from our subscribers and overall excitement and anticipation to attend live performances once again, we are very enthusiastic about our reopening to live stage this fall," said Arizona Theatre Company's Managing Director Geri Wright. "We have worked hard to position ourselves stronger than ever to be ready for our patrons and provide them with high-quality entertainment while contributing to their journey of life-long learning."

With opening night still months away, ATC is committed to protecting the health of its audiences, artists, and staff. The theatre will communicate information about safety requirements to ticket holders as the first show date approaches. For ticket holders who are unready to return to the theatre, all mainstage plays will be professionally recorded with three cameras on Opening Night.

Although ATC's stages have been dark, audiences nationwide have tuned in to the theatre's digital play readings for more than a year. With more than 250,000 views of its digital work and 5,000-plus students at 70 schools across the state watching, these offerings gave audiences a peek into the play-making process and provided a welcomed option when live theatre was not possible. In addition to its mainstage productions, ATC will continue to provide digital play readings and access points throughout the coming season.

"Part of this new chapter for ATC is a focus on lifting up local voices," Daniels said. "This last year, we hired local legend Chanel Bragg to become our Associate Artistic Director and presented our month-long salute to Tucson playwright Elaine Romero. That type of home state love will continue as this season showcases local designers Connie Furr, William Kirkham, and Kish Finnegan; local music director Alan Plado; and local actors Seth Tucker, Chanel Bragg, Veronika Duerr, Cyndii Johnson, Lena Quach, and so many more. Part of

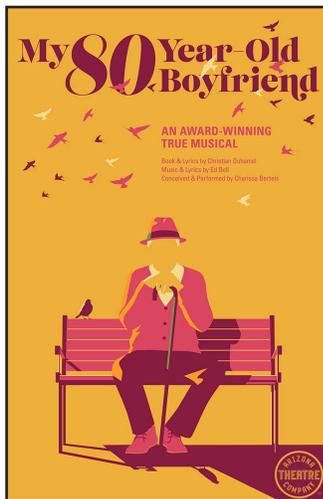


being the state theatre is showing that the best in the country want to come work here – and also live here.”

“Live theatre reminds us that we are not alone,” Daniels continued, adding that research shows that audience members’ heartbeats are synchronized when attending live theatre. “Theatre is more than what’s on stage; it’s the powerful engagement one feels from the audience as a whole – a truly shared experience at a time when we have all been separated for too long.”

New subscriptions will go on sale to the public on June 1 and single tickets in the fall. Both can be purchased at [www.arizonatheatre.org](http://www.arizonatheatre.org) or by emailing [boxoffice@arizonatheatre.org](mailto:boxoffice@arizonatheatre.org). Subscriptions alone do not cover the cost of our world-class productions, which are only possible through the generosity of our supporters. To make a donation, visit [www.arizonatheatre.org/give](http://www.arizonatheatre.org/give).

### ATC’s 2021/2022 Season Includes:



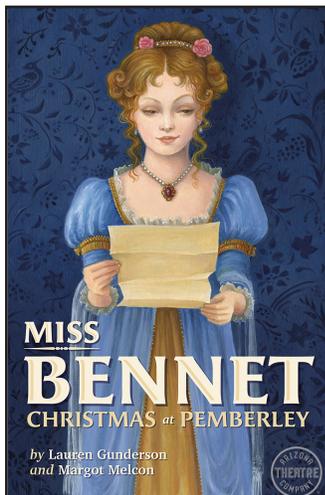
#### **My 80-Year-Old Boyfriend**

Book and Lyrics by Christian Duhamel,  
Music and Lyrics by Ed Bell,  
Conceived and Performed by Charissa Bertels  
Directed by Sean Daniels

Tucson: Sept. 25-Oct. 16, 2021  
Phoenix: Oct. 21-Nov. 7, 2021

What happens when a 20-something Broadway baby meets a Shakespeare- and Schubert-loving octogenarian? Much to their surprise, a friendship blossoms. A delightful award-winning musical about the magic that happens when we throw aside our fears and cross-generational barriers. Based on the true story of Broadway performer Charissa Bertels, and winner of the Kleban Award for best new libretto, *My 80-Year-Old Boyfriend* is a loving musical tale about a most unlikely pair discovering themselves as well as each other. This show will be going on tour after playing in Arizona. Be the first to see it at ATC!

“This is a master class in how to put on a show worth seeing. There is surely no one who wouldn’t enjoy this absolutely lovely story of a beautiful friendship, presented with humor, love, and Broadway-level entertainment.”  
– *Nashua Telegraph*



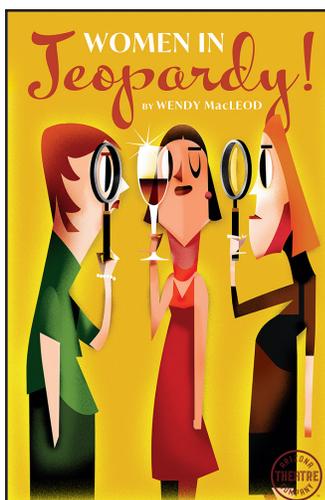
## Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley

By Lauren Gunderson & Margot Melcon  
Directed by Sean Daniels

Tucson: Nov. 6-Dec. 4, 2021  
Phoenix: Dec. 9, 2021-Jan. 2, 2022

From the pen of the writer of last season's hit *Silent Sky*, and America's most produced playwright, comes this charming and cleverly imagined sequel to *Pride and Prejudice*. It is two years later, and the Bennet family gathers at Pemberley to celebrate Christmas together. Unlike her witty and vibrant sisters, Mary Bennet is unmarried, nerdy, and growing tired of her role as the obedient middle sister. But an unexpected guest gives Mary the boost she needs to embrace her independence and find true love. *Miss Bennet* is an energetic, witty, and romantic holiday comedy about family, awkward nerd love, and personal transformation that will delight and enchant Jane Austen aficionados and newcomers alike.

"Highly entertaining and warm-spirited work, the kind of thing multiple generations can enjoy together." – *Chicago Tribune*



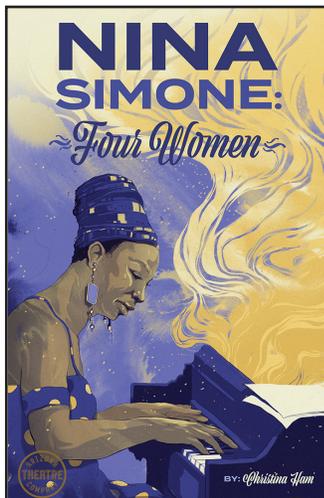
## Women in Jeopardy!

By Wendy MacLeod  
Directed by Sean Daniels

Tucson: Jan. 15-Feb. 5, 2022  
Phoenix: Feb. 10-27, 2022

Liz's best friends want her to be happy, but the dentist she's smitten with is just plain creepy. And they can't help but wonder if he may be a serial killer. When he is linked to a mysterious disappearance, they turn their book club into a mash-up of *Nancy Drew*, *Murder She Wrote*, and *Sex and the City*. This hilarious comedy reminds us about the value of friendship and the potential value of trading in wine glasses for spy glasses when the mid-life crisis just isn't your speed.

"The laughs in Wendy MacLeod's play ... come fast and furious. ... It's all good, silly fun, directed with precise comic timing by the seasoned Sean Daniels. ... a new work that's modern, lively, and loads of fun." – *Boston Globe*



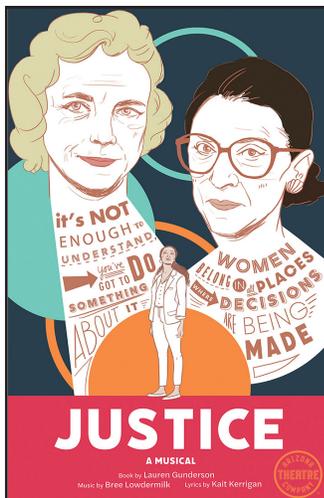
## Nina Simone: Four Women

By Christina Ham  
Directed by Tiffany Nichole Greene  
(Resident Director, *Hamilton* on Broadway)

Tucson: Feb. 26-Mar. 19, 2022  
Phoenix: Mar. 24-Apr. 10, 2022

A face-to-face musical evening with the fiery genius, activist, and musician that is Nina Simone. Following the 1963 bombing by the Ku Klux Klan at the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama, she rocked the nation with “Four Women,” her tribute in song to the four little girls lost in the tragedy. Infused with traditional hymns along with her own songs and covers, *Nina Simone: Four Women* imagines a conversation between Simone and three African-American women from various backgrounds and experiences and their fight to overcome second-class status, racism, and the stereotypes that seek to define them.

“A remarkable show in many ways — it is totally different from any revue you ever saw and ... it catches one of the great thinkers, activists, and musicians of the 20th century as she surely was feeling in that given moment in time.” – *Chicago Tribune*



## Justice

By Lauren Gunderson  
Music by Bree Lowdermilk  
Lyrics by Kait Kerrigan  
Director TBD

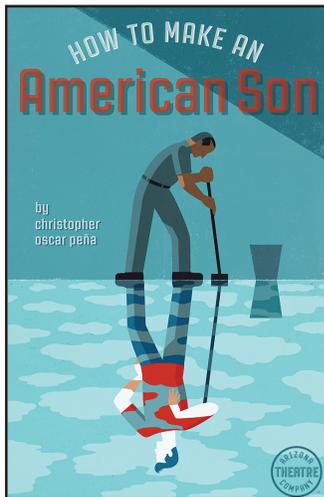
Tucson: Apr. 9-Apr. 30, 2022  
Phoenix: May 5-22, 2022

It is 1993, and Ruth Bader Ginsburg has just joined the United States Supreme Court; the first and only other woman there, Sandra Day O'Connor, is ready to welcome her and get to work. In an intimate, epic three-person new musical built of sweeping songs, urgent conversations about equality, and truly human heroines, we come to know these two iconic justices at the height of their power. Through a third character, Regina, rising through the ranks of the law, we discover how O'Connor and Ginsberg inspire, challenge, and propel the next generation of changemakers and trailblazers in American



jurisprudence. Ruth, Sandra, and Regina confront each other about equal justice under the law, strategy, civil rights, husbands, kids, dreams, sorrows, and how to set a new course for our country and the world.

ATC presents the World Premiere!



## how to make an American Son

By christopher oscar peña

Directed by Kimberly Senior

(Disgraced on Broadway)

In association with Rattlestick Playwrights Theater

Tucson: Jun. 4-Jun. 25, 2022

Phoenix: Jun. 30-Jul. 17, 2022

A moving new play about the complexities of privilege, citizenship, and the most complex relationship of all: family. A “Model Immigrant” and business mogul, Honduran-born Mando’s cleaning empire is bracing for a downturn at the exact same moment when he must rein in his over-privileged American son Orlando. In the wake of a personal crisis, Orlando suddenly finds himself responsible for the fate of a treasured undocumented worker and the future of his father’s entire enterprise. What happens when the promise of the American Dream collides with the reality of immigration and family?

Authored by christopher oscar peña, the new Artistic Associate at Arizona Theatre Company, this play, after having its world premiere, will go to Off-Broadway in collaboration with Rattlestick Playwrights Theater. “I wrote this play because immigrants were sold the idea of the American Dream,” peña said. “I was thinking of my father and how incredible he is. What he’s done, his accomplishments in this country in the face of insurmountable odds to survive. I wrote this because, in many ways, it’s a love letter to him.”

Two previously announced shows, *The Legend of Georgia McBride* by Matthew Lopez and *Pru Payne* by Steven Drukman, will appear in the 2022/2023 season.



**About Arizona Theatre Company:** Now celebrating its 54th Season, Arizona Theatre Company is Arizona’s preeminent professional theatre and truly “The State Theatre,” with the most extensive subscriber base of any performing arts organization in Arizona. More than 130,000 people each year attend performances at the historic Temple of Music and Art in Tucson and the elegant Herberger Theater Center in downtown Phoenix. Each Season of high-quality productions reflects the rich variety of world theatre – from classic to contemporary plays, from musicals to new works – and audiences enjoy the rich emotional experience and joy that can only be captured through live theatre.

Under the direction of The Kasser Family Artistic Director Sean Daniels and Managing Director Geri Wright, ATC is the only League of Resident Theaters (LORT) company in Arizona and is the only LORT in the country that operates in two cities. ATC shares the passion of the theatre through a wide array of outreach programs, educational opportunities, access initiatives, and community events. With more than 800 Education & Engagement activities through schools and summer programs, ATC focuses on teaching Arizona’s youth about the creative power of dramatic literature and how it can enrich their own lives in multiple ways. ATC reaches far beyond the metropolitan areas of Tucson and Phoenix, enriching the theatre learning experience nationally for current and future audiences.

**Media Contact:**

Please don’t hesitate to reach out to me directly if you have further questions about this announcement. For more information about our Season, please visit, [Arizona Theatre Company](#). For show imagery, please visit, [Show Key Art](#).

Karen Cahn  
520-547-3984  
[kcahn@arizonatheatre.org](mailto:kcahn@arizonatheatre.org)