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**Tony-Nominated Star Portrays Arizona Hero Justice O'Connor in New Musical by America's Most Produced Playwright**

*World Premiere of Justice Tells the Story of Sandra Day O'Connor, Ruth Bader Ginsburg*

**TUCSON, Az.,** – [Arizona Theatre Company's](#) latest production captures an intimate snapshot of Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Sandra Day O'Connor at the height of their power in an exciting world premiere. *Justice*, written by the most produced playwright in America, Lauren Gunderson, along with music by Bree Lowdermilk and lyrics by Kait Kerrigan, stars Tony-nominated Nancy Opel, who has 15 Broadway credits under her belt, Joan Ryan, who recently performed at Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center, and Chanel Bragg, ATC's current Associate Artistic Director and recently listed as American Theatre's "10 Rising Black Women+ to Watch in Theatre". The production is directed by Melissa Crespo, who is the Associate Artistic Director of Syracuse Stage and was featured in the 2020 Broadway Women's Fund "Women to Watch on Broadway".

The creative team also includes Composer Bree Lowdermilk and Lyricist Kait Kerrigan, known for their acclaimed Off-Broadway shows *The Mad Ones* and *Henry and Mudge*, Music Director Annbritt duChateau, who is the current Associate Music Supervisor Worldwide for *Frozen* and *Aladdin* on Broadway, and Scenic Designer Tanya Orellana, who is currently designing for American Conservatory Theatre in San Francisco and has been a core member of new work ensemble Campo Santo since 2008. Costumes will be designed by Kish Finnegan, ATC's Resident Costume Designer. Lighting Designer William C. Kirkham is an Arizona native and current Arizona State University professor who has received the Joseph Jefferson and Suzi Bass Awards. The show's Sound Designer, Twi McCallum, just made her debut and history as the first woman of color sound designer on Broadway in the show *Chicken & Biscuits*. Lisa Renkel is the show's award-winning Projection Designer. Michelle Chin, the show's Movement Director, is a proud Arizona native, and Lisa Marie Rollins, Dramaturg, is a Sundance Institute Theatre Lab Fellow (Directing) and Associate Member of SDC.

Running April 9 through April 30 at the Temple of Music and Art in Tucson and May 5 through May 22 at the Herberger Theater Center in Phoenix, the musical journey follows the United States Supreme Court icons circa 1993 as they confront each other's views about equal justice through the lenses of dreams, law, love, and loss. The conclusions they draw come to shape not only America's future, but the world's.

Ginsburg, portrayed by Ryan, has just been appointed to the Supreme Court. Welcoming her is O'Connor, the only other woman there, played by Opel. Through a third character, Vera, played by Bragg, we discover how O'Connor and Ginsburg inspire, challenge, and propel the next generation of change-makers and trailblazers in American jurisprudence.

"There's a bit of magic to this play. We started writing it mid-lockdown in the summer of 2020 and decided to tell the remarkable stories of O'Connor and Ginsburg and how their pattern breaking careers helped pave the way for the next 'firsts,'" said Gunderson. "And now we have a new musical about a fictional first Black woman Justice nominee at the very time that we are watching the first Black woman Justice nominee in DC. What a thing! Learning about these women has taught me so much, and given me new heroes to admire and well as renewed my faith in what American democracy can do and be."



*Justice* marks Opel's Arizona Theatre Company debut. She is also known for her work on *Wicked*, *A Christmas Carol*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Cinderella* and many more on Broadway. Ryan's leading roles include *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Joseph...Technicolor Dreamcoat*, *Footloose*, *Les Miserables*, *Suds*, *The Mass*, and *Anyone Can Whistle*. Bragg's most notable performances include Frenchie in *Cabaret* and Alma Hix in *The Music Man* at Arizona Theatre Company. Gunderson's next musical, *The Time Traveler's Wife*, opens on the West End this fall.

Performances will be held at the Temple of Music and Art located at 330 S. Scott Ave. in Tucson and at the Herberger Theater Center located at 222 E. Monroe St. in Phoenix.

Tickets are on sale now, beginning at \$25. Tickets can be bought at [ATC.org](http://ATC.org).

#### **About Arizona Theatre Company**

Arizona Theatre Company's (ATC) performances bring people together to experience essential stories, from reimagined classics to contemporary plays, original works, and innovative musicals fostering continued conversation beyond the theatre walls. Founded in 1966 and celebrating its 54<sup>th</sup> season, ATC is led by Kasser Family Artistic Director Sean Daniels and Managing Director Geri Wright. ATC operates in two major cities and is the preeminent professional theatre in Arizona, recognized as the official State theatre.

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