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**Arizona Theatre Company Delivers Tony Award-Winning Play *Master Class*  
*Hollywood and Broadway Actress Vicki Lewis to play opera diva Maria Callas***

**Phoenix, Ariz.** – Arizona Theatre Company continues its virtuosic season with the Tony Award winning play *Master Class*, by five-time Tony winner Terrence McNally. *Master Class* tells the story of opera superstar Maria Callas as she delivers a hilarious and harrowing masterclass to the future stars who are nipping at her heels.

Broadway and Hollywood actress Vicki Lewis will play Callas in ATC’s production. A star of the sit-com *NewsRadio*, Lewis has had extensive recurring roles on shows like *How I Met Your Mother*, *Modern Family*, *Home Improvement*, *Seinfeld* and *Grey’s Anatomy*, as well as in films that include *Finding Nemo*, *Mousehunt* and *Pushing Tin*. On stage, she has starred on Broadway in *Anastasia*, *Chicago*, *Damn Yankees*, *The Crucible* (as Mary Warren), the City Center production of *Pal Joey* as well as the LA Productions of *City of Angels*, *My One and Only* and *Hotel C’est L’amour* - for which she won an Ovation Award. She was also a soloist with the New York Pops at Carnegie Hall.

“It’s thrilling and intimidating to immerse myself in Maria Callas’ world,” Lewis says about the task of portraying the formidable star. “I’ve studied her music and listened to her recordings, both spoken and sung. But ultimately, I don’t think the play is about an impression or an imitation. It’s a play about what performers do, why they do it and at what cost.”

As Callas instructs each of her ambitious students, she reflects on the path that led to various moments in her life. She recounts the rise and fall of her career and the sacrifices she made along the way to get her to the top. Playwright McNally masterfully balances the severe moments with lighthearted punches that capture Callas’ dry sense of humor.

*Master Class* was awarded both a Drama Desk Award for Outstanding New Play and a Tony Award for Best Play in 1996. It earned Zoe Caldwell a Tony Award for Best Actress in a Play and Audra McDonald a Tony Award for Featured Actress in a Play that same year. ATC’s *Master Class* will reunite Lewis with Tony nominated director Marcia Milgrom Dodge with whom she has collaborated with many times. Dodge was last seen at ATC in 1994, directing *Some Enchanted Evening*.

ATC’s Kasser Family Artistic Director Matt August says “*Master Class* is the story of one of the world’s Elite Artists, and the focus, drive and sacrifices she had to make in order to achieve a level artistry that we mortals can only dream of. Music and sound seemed to course through her, as a vessel given to us from the gods, and while it brought her great acclaim and immortality, her personal story was more intimate, complex, and withheld. McNally opens this up and gives us universal story of examining our life to become our best self. It’s a remarkable, war-horse of a play.” August also notes that although Maria Callas passed away in 1977, interest in her life and her impact on opera is stronger than ever with a movie starring Angelina Jolie playing Callas scheduled for release later this year.

ATC's *Master Class* will run March 2 through March 23 in Tucson at the Temple of Music and Art (330 S. Scott Ave.) and March 29 through April 14 in Greater Phoenix at Tempe Center for the Arts (700 W. Rio Salado Pkwy.) Tickets are on sale now; prices begin at \$33. Tickets can be purchased at [atc.org](http://atc.org) or 1-833-ATC-SEAT.

### **About ATC's *Master Class***

*Master Class*, the Tony-winning play by Terrence McNally, tells the story of the uncompromising opera diva Maria Callas as she delivers a life altering master class to students at an elite opera training program. During the class, she encounters three vastly different students who are by turns hilariously crushed, soulfully uplifted, and profoundly inspired by her singular artistry. Based on a series of real-life classes Callas delivered at Juilliard, *Master Class* inspires us, transports us, and transforms us by carving a window into the soul of one of the most complicated and celebrated artists of the 20th century who pushed the boundaries of artistic sacrifice and quality.

**Temple of Music and Art** – Mar. 2 to Mar. 23, 2024

**Tempe Center for the Arts** – Mar. 29 to Apr. 14, 2024

Directed by Marcia Milgrom-Dodge

Featuring Vicki Lewis (Maria Callas), Rachel Gold (First Soprano Sophie), Kanisha Marie Feliciano (Second Soprano Sharon), Victor Ryan Robertson (Tenor Tony), Walter “Bobby” McCoy (Accompanist Manny), and Trent Mills (Stagehand).

### **About Arizona Theatre Company**

Arizona Theatre Company's performances bring Arizonans together to experience essential stories, from reimagined classics to contemporary plays, original works, and first-class musicals fostering continued conversation beyond the theatre walls. Founded in 1966 and celebrating its 56th season, ATC is a nonprofit led by Kasser Family Artistic Director Matt August and Executive Director Geri Wright. ATC is the preeminent professional theatre in Arizona and recognized as the Official Arizona State Theatre. As the only League of Resident Theatres (LORT) member in Arizona, ATC is also the only LORT of 80 theatre companies nationwide to operate in two cities: Tucson and Metro Phoenix. More at [atc.org](http://atc.org).