

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - May 19, 2022

Cast and Creative Teams Announced for World Premiere of ***Ragtime: A Concert Performance*** presented by Arts Commons, the Calgary Philharmonic, and Theatre Calgary this June

May 19, 2022 - CALGARY – Arts Commons, the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra, and Theatre Calgary are thrilled to announce the casting and creative teams for the world premiere of ***Ragtime: A Concert Performance***, which will see a fantastic mix of performers from not only Calgary, but from across Canada and as far away as the UK. This production will be directed by Theatre Calgary’s Artistic Director Stafford Arima and features the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra. ***Ragtime: A Concert Performance*** runs for three performances only on **Friday & Saturday, June 10 & 11, 2022 at the Jack Singer Concert Hall at Arts Commons.**

The cast of 29 features Alberta-born **Tim Howar** in the role of Tateh. Howar is currently the co-frontman for the well-known British band **Mike + the Mechanics** and has numerous musical theatre credits and recordings, including West End and Broadway productions of *The Phantom of the Opera* (The Phantom) and *Rent* (Roger), respectively. We are also thrilled to feature Calgary’s **Tory Doctor** (Father), **Jessica Ekstadt** (Mother), **Misha Maseka** (Sarah), **David Webb** (Younger Brother), and **Tenaj Williams** (Coalhouse) in principal roles.

The cast of *Ragtime: A Concert Performance* also includes **Troy Goldthrop** (Henry Ford), **Jessica Horkas** (Sarah’s Friend), **Steven Jackson Jr.** (Booker T. Washington), **Doug McKeag** (Grandfather), **Katie McMillan** (Evelyn Nesbit), **Joel Schaefer** (JP Morgan), **Elizabeth Stepkowski-Tarhan** (Emma Goldman), **Eric Wigston** (Harry Houdini), **Ella Wilson** (Little Girl), **Oliver Woodruff** (Little Boy), and **Izuchi Otuka** (Baby Coalhouse). The Harlem Ensemble includes **Grace Ajele**, **Stanesha Deligence**, **Simone Andrea Denny**, **Christopher Parker**, and **Shaquille Pottinger**. The New Rochelle Ensemble includes **Rae Bernakevitch**, **Billy Brown**, **EJ Candelaria**, **Layne Labbe**, **Robyn Ord**, and **Michelle Rawlings**. The swings are **Cecilly Day**, **Jillian Hannah**, **Denis Lambert**, and **Marcus Nance**. More information is available at artscommons.ca/ragtime.

“I am so happy that we have been able to assemble a first-class ensemble of actors from Calgary, our province, and the West End of London. I cannot wait to start rehearsing with them, as we take on and bring life to these three diverse families of Ragtime,” says director **Stafford Arima**, who is no stranger to the show; he earned an Olivier nomination for directing the musical’s West End premiere in 2004.

Ragtime: A Concert Performance brings the musical power of the Tony Award-winning show to the stage in a new adaptation by the acclaimed Boston Pops orchestra, with book by Terrance McNally, music by Stephen Flaherty, lyrics by Lynn Ahrens, based on the novel, *Ragtime*, by E.L. Doctorow, orchestrations by William David Brown, and new orchestrations by Kim Scharnberg. *Ragtime* delves into ever-present issues of systemic racism, classism, and political upheaval that are no less relevant today than when the book was published in the mid-70s. While the main characters are fictional, their stories collide with real life figures like Booker T. Washington, Harry Houdini, and Emma Goldman.

Along with Arima, the creative team for *Ragtime: A Concert Performance* features Musical Director **James Moore**, whose Broadway music direction credits include the original and revival productions of *Ragtime*, along with recent productions of *On the Town*, *Gigi*, *Follies*, and *South Pacific*. Rounding out the creative team are **Samantha Currie** (Assistant Director), **Mark Limacher** (Associate Musical Director), **Michelle Latta** (Costume Coordinator), **Scott Reid** (Lighting Design), **Joshua D. Reid** (Sound Design), **Beth Kates** (Projection Design), **Joe Slabe** (Rehearsal Pianist), and **Niesa Silzer** (Stage Manager).

“The Calgary Phil is thrilled to team up with Theatre Calgary and Arts Commons to present Ragtime: A Concert Performance,” adds **Marc Stevens**, President + CEO of the Calgary Philharmonic. *“This work sheds light on timeless*

contradictions such as freedom and prejudice, racism and inclusivity. Like music itself, it reminds us of the power and resilience of the human spirit."

Forging a new blueprint for large-scale artistic collaboration in our city, *Ragtime: A Concert Performance* combines the specialized expertise and creative resources of three of Calgary's most established artistic institutions for an unmissable performance.

"The idea for this collaboration came about in a time when not many of us were feeling optimistic about what exciting prospects the future might hold," says Alex Sarian, President & CEO of Arts Commons. "I think it speaks to the spirit of Ragtime that we're seeing this phenomenal cast come together to bring a story of the indomitable nature of the human spirit to the stage."

Calgary's presentation will kick-off a three-city premiere of this adaptation created for the Boston Pops Orchestra with the support of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra.

What: *Ragtime: A Concert Performance*
When: June 10 at 7:30 p.m. and June 11 at 2:00 p.m. & 7:30 p.m.
Where: Arts Commons, Jack Singer Concert Hall
Who: Arts Commons, Calgary Philharmonic, and Theatre Calgary
Tickets: artscommons.ca/ragtime or call 403-294-9494

Don't miss this limited engagement of a one-of-a-kind concert, live in the majestic Jack Singer Concert Hall, for three performances only, on June 10 & 11, 2022. **Tickets are on sale now!** For more information, call the **Arts Commons box office at 403-294-9494** or visit artscommons.ca/ragtime.

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Arts Commons is the largest performing arts centre in Western Canada located in the heart of downtown Calgary. For over 35 years, it has been a key contributor to the social, economic, cultural, and intellectual life and well-being of Calgarians. It is home to six resident companies, including Alberta Theatre Projects, Arts Commons Presents, Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra, Downstage, One Yellow Rabbit, and Theatre Calgary. It houses six gallery spaces, five theatres, and the Jack Singer Concert Hall, and promotes local, national, international, emerging and established artists with a focus on inclusion, diversity, accessibility, and equity.

The **Calgary Philharmonic** celebrated 65 years as a pillar of Calgary's vibrant arts community in 2020 and has grown to be one of Canada's most celebrated live music ensembles. Led by Music Director Rune Bergmann, the Calgary Phil presents classical standards, pop favourites, bold collaborations, and cutting-edge new works, and attracts world-renowned guest artists and dynamic conductors. In a typical Season, the Orchestra welcomes over 100,000 visitors to the concert hall and reaches audiences around the world through its free and accessible digital programming and live-stream initiative — an immersive, online concert experience that launched in 2017.

Founded in 1969, **Theatre Calgary** is Calgary's first and largest professional theatrical company. Our mission is to stimulate, provoke, and delight through ambitious programming created to ignite local, national, and international engagement. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Stafford Arima and Executive Director Maya Choldin, we aim to stand amongst the best theatres globally as a leader in innovative, impactful, and diverse programming. For more information, visit us at theatre Calgary.com.