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The Sound of Music
America's most beloved musical to be produced at ASF!

Montgomery, AL (October 24, 2018) Alabama Shakespeare Festival will present a new production of *The Sound of Music* beginning November 15, 2018, directed by ASF Artistic Director Rick Dildine. *The Sound of Music* features music by Richard Rodgers, lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein, and book by Howard Lindsay and Russel Crouse (suggested by "The Trapp Family Singers" by Maria Augusta Trapp.)

Performances run from November 15 through December 30, 2018. Evening performances begin at 7:00 p.m.; weekday and Saturday matinees begin at 2:00 p.m.; and Sunday matinees begin at 3:00 p.m. Ticket prices start at \$28 and are available anytime online at asf.net or by visiting the ASF Box Office or calling 334.271.5353 during Box Office business hours Monday through Saturday from 12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

The final collaboration between Rodgers and Hammerstein was destined to become the world's most beloved musical. When a postulant named Maria proves too high-spirited for the religious life of the convent, Mother Abbess dispatches her to serve as governess for the seven children of a widowed naval captain. Her growing rapport with the youngsters, coupled with her generosity of spirit, gradually captures the heart of the stern Captain Von Trapp. After Maria marries the captain, they return from their honeymoon to discover that the Nazis have invaded Austria and are demanding the captain's immediate service in their navy. The family's narrow escape over the mountains to Switzerland on the eve of World War II provides one of the most thrilling and inspirational finales ever presented in theatre. This delightful, heartwarming musical will thrill audiences with a lively yet poignant score that won a Tony, Grammy, and Academy Award.

Courtney Bassett will bring Maria to life on ASF's Festival Stage. Bassett most recently performed on Broadway in *Natasha, Pierre, & the Great Comet of 1812* with Josh Groban and Off-Broadway in *Bedbugs!!!* (Arclight Theatre), as well as in regional theatre in *The Great Comet* (American Repertory Theatre) and *The Light in the Piazza* (Clara, Pittsburgh Playhouse). She's also appeared on "Good Morning America," "The Today Show," and "The 71st Annual Tony Awards." Bassett is a singer/songwriter for Starbird and The Phoenix.

Gil Brady will portray Captain Von Trapp and was in national tours of *White Christmas* and *Annie*. He's been in Off-Broadway productions of *Shear Madness* (Davenport Theatre) and *National Pastime* (Playwrights Horizons), as well as regional productions of *Baskerville* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at Syracuse Stage; *Mamma Mia* at Totem Pole Playhouse and Capital Rep (Berkshire Theatre Award Nomination); *Outside Mullingar* and *Spamalot* at Florida Studio Theatre; and *Grease* at Fulton. Brady's television credits include "All My Children," "Law and Order: SVU," and the Lifetime Movie Network.

Ann Arvia will play the role of Mother Abbess. Arvia's New York credits include *Mary Poppins*, *Les Misérables* and, *Beauty and the Beast*, along with national tours of *Les Misérables* and *Ragtime*.

Additional cast members include AnnEliza Canning Skinner as Liesl; Cameron Edris as Rolf; Sandra DeNise as Elsa Schraeder; Angela Dickson as Baroness Elberfeld; Maureen Duke as Frau Schmidt; Renee Gagner as Ursula; Joy Lynn Jacobs as Sister Margaretta; Kevin Ligon as Max Detweiler; Nick Locilento as Admiral von Schreiber; Christopher Morrissey as Franz; Andrew O'Shanick as Herr Zeler; Emma Sohlberg as Sister Berhe; Taylor Stanger as Baron Elberfeld; and Olivia Vadnais as Sister Sophia. Other Ensemble members include Matthew Mucha, Rhys Scheibe, Tyler Sodoma, Bri Thomas, and Eileen Veghte.

Local children from Auburn, Montgomery, and Prattville are double-cast as the Von Trapp children and will alternate in their roles. The children's schedule of performances can be obtained at the ASF Box Office or online. Jayson Altieri (Prattville Junior High) and Andrew Gay (Baldwin Arts and Academic Magnet School) appear as Freidrich. Erin Mitchell (Trinity Presbyterian School) and Morgan McKenzie (Baldwin Arts and Academic Magnet School) appear as Louisa. Noah Henninger (Baldwin Arts and Academic Magnet School) and Matt Cone (The Montgomery Academy) appear as Kurt. Emma Sonnichsen (Eastwood Christian School) and Lillie Prestridge (Redland Elementary) appear as Brigitta; Angelina Dong (Wrights Mill Road Elementary) and Mary Grace Parsons (Bear Exploration Center Magnet School) appear as Marta. Karina Isbel Thamer-Diaz and Oliva Polito (Redland Elementary) appear as Gretl.

ASF Artistic Director Rick Dildine, who joined the Alabama Shakespeare Festival late in 2017, directs *The Sound of Music* as his inaugural musical on the Festival Stage. Dildine recently directed *Every Brilliant Thing* at ASF, of which the *Montgomery Advertiser* said "Brilliant... If this is the start of the Rick Dildine era, area theatergoers can only hope it is a sign of the entertainment to come."

Other members of the artistic team include choreographer Leigh Scheffler, musical director Michael Rice, associate musical director Joel Jones, scenic designer John Coyne, costume designer Jeffrey Todhunter, lighting designer John Wylie, sound designer Kenneth Goodwin, stage manager Ruth E. Kramer, assistant stage manager Victoria Broyles, production assistant Katie An Siegel, and assistant lighting designer Jessica Stevens.

ASF's production of *The Sound of Music* is generously sponsored by the J.K. Lowder Family Foundation.

The Sound of Music enjoyed extraordinary success as the first live television production of a musical in over 50 years when "The Sound of Music Live!" aired on NBC in December 2013. The 1965 film version starring Julie Andrews and Christopher Plummer continues to be the most successful movie musical in film history. ASF's production of the spirited, romantic, and beloved musical story of Maria and the Von Trapp family will once again thrill audiences with such songs as "My Favorite Things," "Do-Re-Mi," "Climb Ev'ry Mountain," "Edelweiss," and the title song, "The Sound of Music."

EMBRACING OUR COMMUNITY – ONE STORY AT A TIME.

Alabama Shakespeare Festival is a not-for-profit organization under the direction of Artistic Director Rick Dildine and Executive Director Todd Schmidt. Designated as The State Theatre of Alabama, ASF is a leader in education and outreach, serving more than 40,000 students annually with artistic programming. ASF is supported by grants from the Alabama State Council on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts.

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