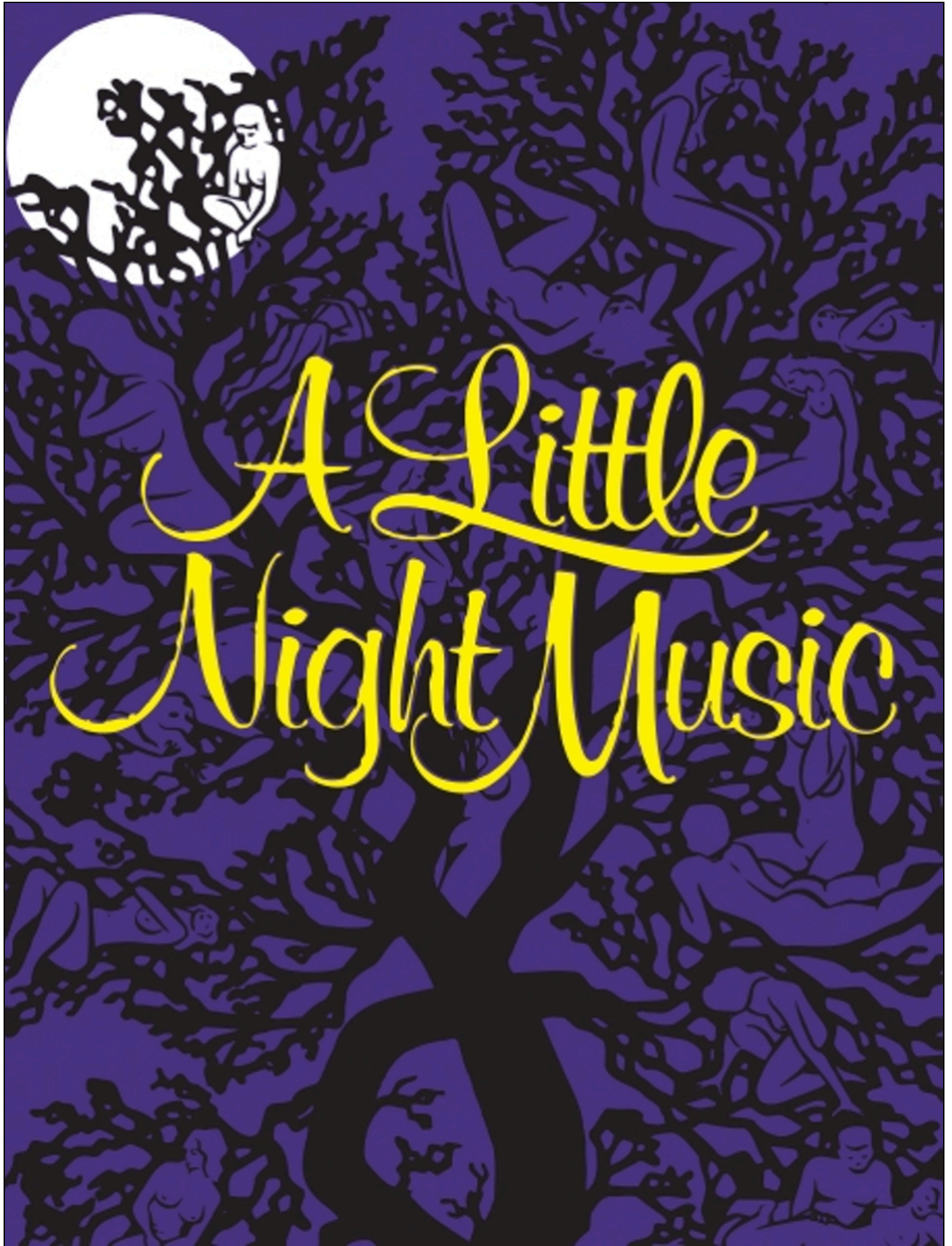


PLAYBILL®

Arizona Musical Theatre Orchestra
Central United Methodist Church
October 28th, 2023, 7:00 PM



The Arizona Musical Theatre Orchestra

PRESENTS

A LITTLE NIGHT MUSIC

Music and Lyrics by **STEPHEN SONDHEIM**

Book by **HUGH WHEELER**

Orchestrations by Jonathan Tunick

Suggested by a Film by Ingmar Bergman

Originally Produced and Directed on Broadway by Harold Prince

with

Conducted by Dr. Sharon Hansen
Chorus Master: Steve Hilderbrand

A Little Night Music is presented through special arrangement
with Music Theatre International (MTI).

All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI.
www.mtishows.com

The unauthorized recording of this production, in whole or in part,
is strictly prohibited. AZMTO thanks you for your cooperation.

The Arizona Musical Theatre Orchestra

The Arizona Musical Theatre Orchestra (AZMTO) was originally born out of frustration. In December of 2021, founder Stephen Schermitzler was upset by what he perceived to be a diminishing value of music in musical theatre. With pit sizes shrinking and directors finding themselves without adequate time to foster creative nuance in their casts, a problem surfaced: *theatres rarely get an opportunity to communicate the stories of musical theatre with their full artistic lifeblood intact.*

2021 brought sweeping changes to the theatre industry desperately trying to retain its identity in a pandemic. but the types of changes that were implemented for the industry's survival transcended Covid-19 in a truly jolting manner. In April of 2021, it was announced that the Phantom of the Opera orchestra on the West End was reducing its pit size by nearly 50%, from 27 players down to 14. Then, national touring houses (like Gammage) were told that local musicians would not be hired as often for pit orchestra gigs (those jobs would go to touring musicians). Recently, *Here Lies Love* (a musical that utilizes karaoke) forced a compromise from the Broadway Musician's Union for house minimum pit players.

Sadly, musicians have grown accustomed to such deterioration: it's been around for years (take the removal of the Tony Award for Sound Design in 2014 or the Musician's Union striking to save their jobs from synthesizers forty years ago). With the erosion of each chair, each rehearsal, and each harmony part from the theatre landscape, actors and musicians are suffering. But can this trend be reversed?

It's easy to forget that music provides *subtext*. It reveals how we respond to action. It provides a blueprint that helps characters overcome and adapt through circumstance. Watching a production without hearing the benefits of its full orchestration is akin to viewing the world through a blurry camera lens. We may be able to focus enough to get the point, but we miss the vibrancy of the full picture.

So how can we expect actors to reach a pinnacle of professional artistry so unapologetically sought-after in this industry without allowing them to hear their full musical environment? And how can developing musicians be expected to prepare for the unique challenges of a pit without authentic performance practice?

If appreciation for quality music in the theatre is declining, it should become the duty of all theatre musicians to "Showcase" why this artform is so *valuable* and so *necessary*. Enter: the Arizona Musical Theatre Orchestra. The purpose of AZMTO is to be the ultimate Broadway musical playground and training ground. For actors and pit musicians, we offer a unique way to reconnect with our shared humanity with minimal time commitment and maximum artistic reward. Quite simply, we provide quality theatrical opportunities to all in a fresh, bold way.

AZMTO doesn't just seek to perform shows with their intended orchestrations; instead, it aims to include as many people as possible to encourage people to embrace their most artistic selves. This orchestra proves that they're called *musicals* for a reason (not *dance-icals* or *stage-icals*) - and that the value of their substance makes us all better humans.

Thank you for your support of the arts, and for celebrating our purpose with us.

ABOUT...

A LITTLE NIGHT MUSIC

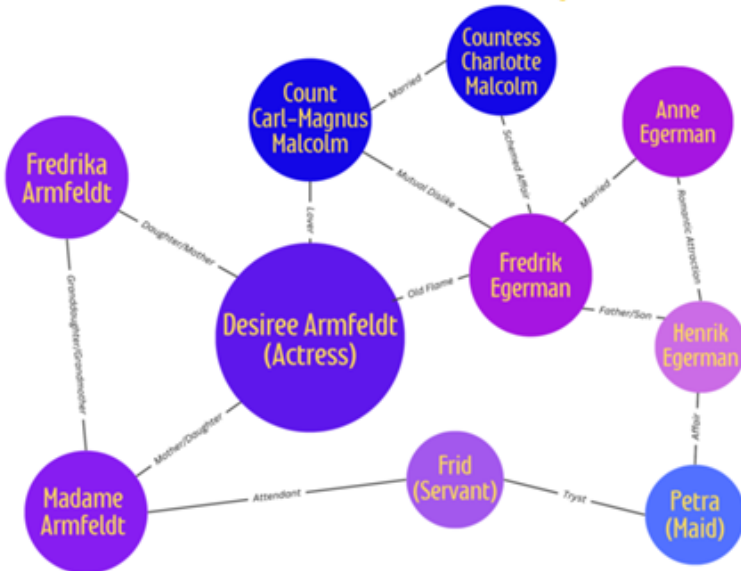
Sondheim creates a stunning tour de force when he takes Ingmar Bergman's comedy of manners, *Smiles of a Summer Night*, and turns it into a musical of masterful execution and elegance. Winner of four Tony Awards, this is a musical work that has forever entranced the world of theatre.

Set in 1900 Sweden, *A Little Night Music* explores the tangled web of affairs centered around actress, Desirée Armfeldt, and the men who love her: a lawyer by the name of Fredrik Egerman and the Count Carl-Magnus Malcom. When the traveling actress performs in Fredrik's town, the estranged lovers' passion rekindles. This strikes a flurry of jealousy and suspicion between Desirée; Fredrik; Fredrick's wife, Anne; Desirée's current lover, the Count; and the Count's wife, Charlotte. Both men – as well as their jealous wives – agree to join Desirée and her family for a weekend in the country at Desirée's mother's estate. With everyone in one place, infinite possibilities of new romances and second chances bring endless surprises.

A Little Night Music is full of hilariously witty and heartbreakingly moving moments of adoration, regret and desire. This dramatic musical celebration of love is perfect to showcase highly trained singers with its harmonically advanced score and masterful orchestrations, and contains Sondheim's popular song, the haunting "Send in the Clowns."

-- Music Theatre International, www.mtishows.com

Character Relationships



ABOUT...

DONATING TO AZMTO

Did you know that **100%** of AZMTO's funding comes from participants, private donors, and **YOU**, our audience?

Each Showcase performance can cost up to \$10,000. Where does the money go?

Licensing & materials	Up to \$2,500 (yes, for <i>one</i> show!)
Venue rental	Up to \$2,000
Staff/Leadership	Approx. \$3,000
Equipment rental/purchase	Up to \$1,000
Hospitality/Catered Meal	\$15/person (participants pay)

Our shows are pay-what-you-wish so they can be attended by anyone in the community. We suggest that our shows cost \$30 per ticket, and we gratefully accept contributions above and beyond this amount to cover our costs and *reduce* costs for our participants, who pay to perform in each event.

We want to see a world where actors, musicians, and directors are paid appropriately (sadly, artists currently in school may not realize how rare this is!).

Call us crazy, but we believe that artists' work has deep value and that they should make a living for their contributions. We resolve that the quality of AZMTO's programming merits a financial compensation that reflects the proper time for its artists to prepare and perform.

If you agree with us, please consider a financial contribution to achieve these efforts. **All contributions are tax-deductible** and are reinvested into AZMTO. Together, your help makes the arts accessible and sustainable for all.

HOW TO GIVE:

ONLINE via debit/credit card: www.azmto.org/donate

Give Cash/check to a volunteer (tax-deductible receipts on request)

Make checks payable to: **Satellite Collective**

Memo Line: **AZMTO**

Thank you for your generous support!

SONGS

Overture Orchestra, Mrs. Nordstrom, Mrs. Segstrom, Mrs. Anderssen, Mr. Lindquist, Mr. Erlanson, Ensemble

ACT I

First Waltz Mrs. Nordstrom, Mrs. Segstrom, Mrs. Anderssen, Mr. Lindquist, Mr. Erlanson, Ensemble

Now Fredrik

Later Henrik

Soon Anne, Henrik, Fredrik

The Glamorous Life Fredrika, Desirée, Madame Armfeldt, Mrs. Nordstrom, Mrs. Segstrom, Mrs. Anderssen, Mr. Lindquist, Mr. Erlanson, Ensemble

Remember? Mr. Lindquist, Mrs. Nordstrom, Mrs. Segstrom, Mr. Erlanson, Mrs. Anderssen

You Must Meet My Wife Fredrik, Desirée

Liaisons Madame Armfeldt

In Praise of Women Carl-Magnus

Every Day a Little Death Charlotte, Anne

A Weekend in the Country Company

ACT II

Night Waltz I (The Sun Won't Set) Mrs. Nordstrom, Mr. Erlanson, Mr. Lindquist, Mrs. Segstrom, Mrs. Anderssen, Ensemble

Night Waltz II Mrs. Nordstrom, Mr. Erlanson, Mr. Lindquist, Mrs. Segstrom, Mrs. Anderssen, Ensemble

The Woman Was Perfection Fredrik, Carl-Magnus

Night Waltz III (Perpetual Anticipation) Mrs. Nordstrom, Mrs. Segstrom, Mrs. Anderssen

SONGS

ACT II (continued)

Send in the Clowns	Desirée
The Miller's Son	Petra
Finale	Company
Soon (Reprise)	Mrs. Segstrom
You Must Meet My Wife (Reprise)	Mr. Erlanson
Every Day a Little Death (Reprise)	Mrs. Anderssen, Mrs. Segstrom
Send in the Clowns (Reprise)	Desiree, Fredrik
Last Waltz	Fredrika, Mme. Armfeldt, Orchestra

CAST

Cast Members

Fredrika Armfeldt	Zion Schneider
Madame Armfeldt	Leslie Fitzwater
Henrik Egerman	Chad Millar
Anne Egerman	Mandy Ressler
Fredrick Egerman	Mark Stoddard
Petra	Kathryn Smithyman
Desiree Armfeldt	Kelli James
Count Carl-Magnus Malcolm	Jesse Berger
Countess Charlotte Malcolm	Ashley Ziolk
Mr. Lindquist	William Marshall
Mrs. Nordstrom	Jennifer Couldry
Mrs. Anderssen	Robyn Pitman
Mr. Erlanson	William Mattison
Mrs. Segstrom	Patti Graetz
Frid	Joshua Hengst
Narrator	Joelle Boatwright
Soprano 1	Donna Biczo Christina Epp Linda Peters Laura Stevens
Soprano 2	Kerri Christie Kalinka Davis Margaret Miller Angela Schermitzler Kacie Stansfield Kathy Travous
Alto 1	Christina Clodt Vanity Lang Jennifer Michele Ann Pastor Kathryn Smithyman Valarie Vousden

CAST

Cast Members (continued)

Alto 2	Lisa Autrey Nancy Browne Vivian Lin Zion Schneider Jenna Sweet Lynne Traverse
Tenor	Casey Karapetian Parker Larson Steven O'Donnell Nicole Reeves Daniel See
Bass	Todd Corbeil Joshua Hengst Stephen Schermitzler Aaron Schneider Davis Shelmire

Production / Creative

Conductor	Dr. Sharon Hansen
Chorus Master	Steve Hilderbrand
Rehearsal Pianist	Joni Van Rossum
Audio Technician	Andrea Gudeyon
AZMTO Volunteers	Joelle Boatwright Edie Chudnow Michele Kahn Mary Kelly Lauren Kristy Rowan Kristy-Thompson Kyle Varble Susan Woods

Orchestra

Strings	Violin I: Joshua Lynch Violin II: Dylan Suehiro Viola: Ryan Grieser Cello: Abbey Hunt, Liz Galpin Bass: Rudy Trujillo Harp: Stephen Hartman
Reeds	Reed 1: Nancy Sowers Reed 2: Melissa Malork Reed 3: Mandy Gifford Reed 4: Denise Wilson Reed 5: David Rachor

CAST

Orchestra (continued)

Brass Trumpet 1: Brian Stoneberger
Trumpet 2: Joseph Pluth, Jr.
Horn 1: Kevin Kerr
Horn 2: Gail Rittenhouse
Horn 3/Trombone: Erik Ketcherside

Percussion Piano/Celeste: Lawrence Loeber
Percussion: Sonja Branch

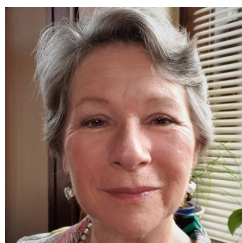
WHO'S WHO



Zion Schneider

as Fredrika Armfeldt

Zion is very excited to be back with AZMTO (*Titanic*, *Mamma Mia!*, *The Prince of Egypt*). She is currently performing at the Queen Creek Performing Arts Center as Scar in Disney's *The Lion King*. She'd like to thank her parents for their support, and Molly Jacobs & Kristen Dratham for growing her skills. Thanks to AZMTO for creating such a positive & enthusiastic environment!



Leslie Fitzwater

as Madame Armfeldt

Ms Fitzwater is thrilled to be revisiting *A Little Night Music* (Desiree) and debuting with AZMTO! Leslie spent 30 years as a principal performer at Skylight Music Theatre, performing in several classical theatre productions. She has performed with the Milwaukee Symphony, Present Music, Milwaukee Chamber Theatre, and Theatre Gigante. Thanks for the nudge, Dr. Hansen!



Chad Millar

as Henrik Eggerman

Chad Millar, tenor, began his opera career at the age of 9 singing in Menotti's *Amahl and the Night Visitors*. He is a Metropolitan Opera Arizona District winner. He was a member of the tenured San Francisco Opera chorus for a number of years and performed numerous roles during his tenure. He recently performed Archibald Craven in *The Secret Garden* with Inspire Theatre.



Mandy Ressler

as Anne Eggerman

Mandy is thrilled to be joining AZMTO again! Her favorite regional credits include Antonia (*Man of La Mancha*), Kate Murphy (*Titanic*), and Margaret White (*Carrie the Musical*). Mandy currently is the music director for One Rehearsal Short and on the stage management team for SFCT. She is incredibly thankful to her family, friends, vocal coach Korby Myrick, and to Leena.

WHO'S WHO



Mark Stoddard

as Fredrick Egerman

Mark is an award-winning theater director, actor, playwright, and arts educator. He is the new Associate Artistic Director of Valley Youth Theatre. His creative work has been seen at Phoenix Theater, Arizona Opera, Herberger Theater, Theaterworks, Phoenix Boys Choir, and Dream City Arts, earning many AriZoni & Broadway World awards. Love to Rachel, Philip, Fox, and Zach.



Kathryn Smithyman

as Petra

Kathryn is thrilled to be making her debut in an AZMTO principal role. Favorite previous roles include Chelsea (*On Golden Pond*), Curly's Wife (*Of Mice and Men*), and Anna, (*The King and I*). She would like to thank Stephen and everyone at AZMTO for this incredible opportunity, and her husband Jon for all of his love and support.



Kelli James

as Desiree Armfeldt

Kelli James has been seen in many award-winning productions including the original Tony Award winning Broadway production of *Les Misérables* (Eponine). Other notable productions include *Evita* (Hal Prince) and *Joseph...* starring opposite Donny Osmond. International credits have included performances alongside Glenn Close, Len Cariou, Sarah Brighman, and Sir Tim Rice.



Jesse Berger

as Count Carl-Magnus Malcolm

Jesse Berger is thrilled to perform in his 5th production with AZMTO, having previously performed in *Sweeney Todd* (Sweeney), *Man of La Mancha* (Don Quixote), *Parade* (D.A. Dorsey), and *Guys and Dolls* (Benny Southstreet). When not being run ragged by his two boys, Jesse is a legal assistant and sings in *December '63*, a tribute to Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons.



William Marshall

as Mr. Lindquist

Bill studied voice at Miami University (OH), winning the regional NATS competition at the University of Michigan. He was a section leader with the Chicago Symphony Chorus and sang with the Chicago Lyric Opera Chorus. Recent credits: *The Most Happy Fella* (Tony), Skylark Opera; *The Producers* (Bialystock), The Phipps Theater; *The Secret Garden* (Archibald), Plymouth Players.

WHO'S WHO



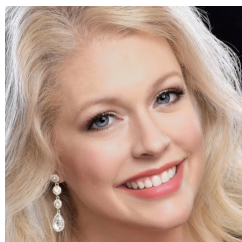
Ashley Ziolko *as Countess Charlotte Malcolm*

Ashley is excited to be making her AZMTO debut! She has most recently been performing with Queen Creek Performing Arts Center and Inspire Theatre Company. Recent credits: *The Secret Garden* (Dreamer), *Hello, Dolly!* (Irene), *The Music Man* (Eulalie), *Sister Act* (Mary Patrick), *Into the Woods* (Rapunzel). Thanks to Stephen, and enjoy a Weekend in the Country with Sondheim!



Jennifer Couldry *as Mrs. Nordstrom*

Jennifer Couldry holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Vocal Performance from ASU. She is a core member of the Arizona Opera Ensemble, and will perform *Roméo et Juliette* and *Don Giovanni* thi season. Prior performances include Angelica in *Suor Angelica* with the Mittelsächsische Philharmonie and Gerhilde in *Ride of the Valkyries* with the Landesbühnen Sachsen Orchestra.



Robyn Pitman *as Mrs. Anderssen*

Robyn is thrilled to be back with AZMTO! Regional Tours: *Brigadoon* (Fiona), *The Music Man* (Mrs. Squires, Marian U/ S), *Legally Blonde* (Elle's Mom, Judge). Regional Theatre: *The Music Man* (Marian), *Hello Dolly* (Irene), *I Love You...* (Woman One & Two), *Lucky Stiff* (Annabel), *Cinderella* (Portia), *The Full Monty* (Georgie), *1776* (Martha), *Into the Woods* (Rapunzel), *Titanic* (Alice).



Patti Graetz *as Mrs. Segstrom*

Patti Graetz is an award-winning soprano having sung leading roles with the Houston Grand Opera, Arizona Opera, Opera Fort Collins and others. Favorite operatic roles are the title roles in *Tosca* and *Adriana LeCouvreur*, and Mimi in *La Bohème*. Patti is now in her 6th season as Artistic Director of ProMusica Arizona orchestra & choir, and sings in the Sonoran Desert Chorale.

WHO'S WHO



William Mattison

as Mr. Erlanson

Billy is thrilled to be in his fourth AZMTO Showcase: *A Little Night Music*. He would like to dedicate this performance to his college voice teacher, Guy Rothfuss. Favorite acting credits include *The Music Man* (Winthrop), *The Sound of Music* (Frederick), *Seussical* (Horton), and *Les Miserables* (Enjolras). Indebted to Stephen's vision, he is thrilled for the future of AZMTO!

Joshua Hengst

as Frid

Josh can hardly believe he is part of this very talented cast! He is thrilled to be playing Frid in AZMTO's *A Little Night Music*.

You may have recently seen Josh as Plankton in *The Spongebob Musical* (Starlight) or as the villainous Molokov in *Chess* (Desert Stages).

Thanks to his life partner Christina, daughter Noel, stepdaughter Kenzie, & friends for the support!



Sharon Hansen

Widely known as a choral adjudicator, clinician, and conductor of professional ensembles and honor/all-state choirs in Europe and North America, **Sharon Hansen** is Emerita Professor of Conducting and Director of Choral Activities at the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee. Hansen was musical director for UWM's opera and musical theatre productions, and her premiere choral groups often appeared at state, regional, and national ACDA and NAfME conferences. Among her many credits, Hansen is founder of the Milwaukee Choral Artists; founder of the vocal pedagogy article series "On the Voice" for the American Choral Directors' Association; and author of numerous books and articles. Now calling Arizona home, Hansen is on the Board of Directors for the Arizona chapter of ACDA; serves as Chorus Director for the Arizona Musicfest Orchestra; and is absolutely thrilled to be conducting her favorite musical, "A Little Night Music," for the Arizona Musical Theatre Orchestra.



Steve Hilderbrand

Steve Hilderbrand (Chorus Director) is thrilled to continue his association with the works of Stephen Sondheim at AZMTO. This is his third experience with *Night Music* (MD/Conductor, vocal coach for Arizona Opera). As Music Director -- for Theatre Works: *Sunday in the Park With George*, *A Little Night Music*, *Follies*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Into the Woods*, *A Funny Thing...* and *Gypsy*. Phoenix Theatre: *Sondheim on Sondheim* (Pianist/Conductor). Regional Theatre: *Side By Side By Sondheim*, *Assassins*, *Company* (Director/Harry). Selected credits: Lippa's *The Wild Party*, *Parade*, *Ragtime*, *City of Angels*, *A Chorus Line*, *Man of La Mancha*. As Director/Choreographer: *Forever Plaid*, *Love is Here to Stay*, *Mame*, *Johnny Guitar* and *The Musical of Musicals: The Musical*. AriZoni Awards: For Musical Direction – *Forever Plaid* and *Love Is Here To Stay*; For Original Script (with Gary Gallner) – *I Get a Kick Out of Cole*. Hilderbrand is currently Musical Director for Unity of Phoenix Spiritual Center.

CREW WHO'S WHO



Joni Van Rossum

An accomplished musical director and composer, Joni Van Rossum (Collaborative Pianist) has been leaving a harmonious trail in the theatre world for over 15 years. Originally hailing from the Netherlands, Joni's passion for musical theatre led him on a journey to citizenship in the US.

In 2007, Joni's career took off in Amsterdam, where he found a mentor in the Dutch musical theatre pioneer, Frank Sanders. Recognizing Joni's talent, Frank welcomed him into the renowned Academy for Musical Theatre, where Joni flourished and secured a faculty position.

Joni has been associated with remarkable productions, including *Blood Brothers*, *Hair*, *Beauty & The Beast*, *The Lion King*, and many more. Since April 2016, Joni has been enriching the local musical landscape. He was the Music Director for the Scottsdale Musical Theatre Company, and now serves as the Director of Media & Production at a local Tempe church.



Stephen Schermitzler

Stephen Schermitzler is the Founder & Executive Director of the Arizona Musical Theatre Orchestra, now entering its second full season. After earning a BFA in Music Composition from ASU in 2010, Stephen became the resident music director for Detour Company Theatre and the Broadway Palm Dinner Theatre (now Silver Star), along with several independent local community productions.

As a pianist, he has collaborated with artists who have performed Broadway and National Touring runs of *1776*, *Dear Evan Hansen*, *Waitress*, *Hamilton*, *Camelot*, *New York, New York*, and *42nd Street*.

As a singer, he has been a featured vocal soloist or section leader with Arizona Musicfest, the Phoenix Chorale, the Arizona Bach Festival, the Symphony of the Southwest, the North Valley Chorale, and the West Valley Symphony, among others. He is intensely devoted to the nurture of authentic artistic development of all actors and musicians.

Love always to Ray and the Pod.

SPECIAL THANKS

Central United Methodist Church Staff -- for graciously facilitating venue arrangements, storage needs, piano tuning, sheet music supervision, etc, with full hearts and open minds.

AZMTO Volunteers -- for your relentless devotion to this artistic endeavor. You are the backbone of AZMTO and we simply could not do what we do without your support. Special thanks to Edie Chudnow and Susan Woods for volunteer coordination, concessions, dinner facilitation, and more!

Andrea Gudeyon -- for support as a technician and friend in all its forms, and for making us sound better and better with each new Showcase. You are dearly appreciated!

Sonja Branch -- for carting all percussion equipment to and from this venue, and extending your busy schedule to AZMTO's programming. Thanks for all you do!

Sharon Hansen, Steve Hilderbrand, & Joni Van Rossum -- for your care shown in your devotion to artistry, camaraderie, and community artistic growth, and for the hours (and *hours*) of preparation for one special performance. It is such a pleasure making art with you at the helm.

Our generous donors -- for ongoing financial support and in-kind donations of flights, equipment, snacks, etc, that keep us running strong! Your support helps us become leaders of artistic education & appreciation in our community. Thank you!

Music Theatre International -- for providing the licensing for *A Little Night Music* and many other AZMTO productions. Thank you for taking a chance and trusting AZMTO with this unique theatrical concept.

Satellite Collective -- for being the nonprofit fiscal sponsor that makes all AZMTO events possible (and all donations tax-deductible!).

Chipotle -- for catering a lovely dinner for cast & crew.

AZMTO Participants -- for literally buying in to this concept, using every ounce of passion you have to create Art for Art's Sake. Thank you for choosing this experience to lend your time and immense talents to.

Audience -- for your support and celebration of 100% LIVE theatre! Please continue to prioritize the arts by not only seeing familiar shows and people, but by embracing new experiences. This community is strong because of you. Thank you!



Join Us in 2024!

SHOWCASE

January 27

April 20

June 15

July 27

September 21

November 16

UNDERSCORE

February 24

March 16

May 18

August 24

October 19

December 28

All shows *TBA*

INFO: www.azmto.org