

## News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### The Sound of Music Now On Sale to Members at The Hanover Theatre



**Worcester, Mass. (August 23, 2016)** Tickets for the brand new production of *The Sound of Music*, directed by three-time Tony Award winner Jack O'Brien, are now on sale. Tickets go on sale to the public on Tuesday, August 30 at 10 a.m. This lavish new production makes its Worcester premier at The Hanover Theatre December 28, 2016 through January 1, 2017.

Ben Davis (Broadway's *Violet*, *A Little Night Music*, *La Bohème*) plays Captain Georg von Trapp and Melody Betts plays The Mother Abbess with Merwin Foard as Max Detweiler, Teri Hansen as Elsa Schraeder, Austin Colby as Rolf and Paige Silvester as Liesl. The von Trapp children are played by Roy Gantz (Friedrich), Ashley Brooke (Louisa), Austin Levine (Kurt), Iris Davies (Brigitta), Kyla Carter (Marta) and Anika Lore Hatch (Gretl).

And introducing Jack O'Brien's brand new discovery, Kerstin Anderson as Maria Rainer. A current student at Pace University, Anderson won the coveted role from hundreds who auditioned. This is her first national tour.

Director O'Brien had this to say about his leading lady: "in looking over a great American classic, like *The Sound of Music*, sometimes you stumble on something you wonder if anyone ever saw before. For instance, I was privileged to actually see Mary Martin in the original production, as I was myself just a junior at the University of Michigan. She was a great star and was giving a 'great star's' performance. She was at the apex of her career, and she was both brilliant and 46 years old.

“But in reading it privately, something caught my eye. Maria is probably, as a postulant, no more than six or seven years older than Liesl! She may be many things, a country lass, a climber-of-trees, a young renegade, but she is clearly not an established star. How interesting!

“I’ve always believed Maria was a ‘star-making’ part, rather than the leading role we remember from the movies and our experience, so I went looking for someone with star-making magic. And in through the audition door one day walked Kerstin Anderson, still studying at Pace University in New York. She opened her mouth, she sang and the tears welled up in my eyes.

“If ever there were an enchanting young woman standing on the brink of discovery, this was it. And now, the discovery is about to be all of ours. Please, as I do... welcome her.”

The ensemble includes Carey Rebecca Brown, Ronald L. Brown, Cáitlín Burke, Christopher Carl, Patton Chandler, Donna Garner, Rosalie Graziano, Robert Mammana, Darren Matthias, Anna Mintzer, Julia Osborne, Zane Phillips, Rebecca Pitcher, Emily Trumble, Daniella Dalli, Meghan Hales and Adam Hill.

*The Sound of Music* features music by Richard Rodgers, lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II, book by Howard Lindsay and Russel Crouse, suggested by The Trapp Family Singers by Maria Augusta Trapp. This new production is directed by Jack O’Brien (credits include: *Hairspray*, *The Full Monty*, *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*, *The Coast of Utopia*), choreographed by Danny Mefford (*Fun Home*, *The Bridges of Madison County* and *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson*) and music supervision by Andy Einhorn (*Bullets Over Broadway*, *Rodgers & Hammerstein’s Cinderella*, *Brief Encounter*, *The Light in the Piazza*). The design and production team is comprised of Douglas W. Schmidt, set design (Tony Award nominee: *42nd Street*, *Into the Woods*); Jane Greenwood, costume design (2014 recipient of the Special Tony Award for Lifetime Achievement in the Theatre), Natasha Katz, lighting design (Five-time Tony Award® winner: *An American in Paris*, *Once*, *Aida*, *The Coast of Utopia*, *The Glass Menagerie*) and Ken Travis, sound design (*Aladdin*, *Newsies*, *Memphis*). Casting by Telsey + Company/Rachel Hoffman, CSA.

According to director Jack O’Brien, “*The Sound of Music* has been in our ears for decades, as it deserves to be. But it might be time to look once more, and more closely, at this remarkable work which, I feel, begins to reveal itself as deeper, richer, and more powerful than ever. It’s no longer ‘your mother’s’ familiar *Sound of Music*. We are tearing off the varnish of the past from one of the great glories of our theatergoing experience and making it fresh. This is an opportunity we’ve all longed to create.”

Producer Beth Williams (Grove Entertainment) said, “It’s a great privilege to bring this beloved Rodgers & Hammerstein musical to theatres across North America. We hope that people of all ages will continue to fall in love with it for the first time, or all over again, and that it will truly

become one of their ‘favorite things.’ From our distinguished team led by the creative master Jack O’Brien, audiences can expect a truly magnificent production of *The Sound of Music*.”

In the words of Ted Chapin, President of Rodgers & Hammerstein, “*The Sound of Music* continues to be the world’s most beloved musical. When a major national tour was suggested, I not only agreed, but was willing to roll up my sleeves and do whatever I could to fashion a new stage production that would re-engage today’s theatergoing public. The show was originally created for Broadway, and seeing it on stage only reinforces the power of the story and the score. And with Jack O’Brien at the directorial helm – well, we simply couldn’t do better. Landing somewhere between *The Coast of Utopia* and *Hairspray* (shows for which Jack won the Tony), his production is smart, focused and surprising.”

*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; 2015 marks the 50th anniversary of the film version, which continues to be the most successful movie musical in history. 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.

Tickets to *The Sound of Music* start at \$39. Discounts are available to members of The Hanover Theatre and groups of 10 or more. Tickets are available online at [TheHanoverTheatre.org](http://TheHanoverTheatre.org), by phone at 877.571.SHOW (7469) or at The Hanover Theatre box office located at 2 Southbridge Street in downtown Worcester.

### **About The Hanover Theatre**

The Hanover Theatre continues to draw over 180,000 patrons annually with world-class performances and headlining acts including Broadway hits (“Les Misérables,” “Jersey Boys”), comedians (Dave Chappelle, Jay Leno, Daniel Tosh), musical acts (Neil Young, Aretha Franklin, John Legend, Donny Osmond) and everything in between (“A Christmas Carol,” Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre, Alton Brown). POLLSTAR consistently ranks The Hanover Theatre as one of the Top Theatres in the World. After eight seasons, the award-winning, historic theatre continues to establish its place as a world-class performing arts venue, acting as a catalyst for the economic development of downtown Worcester. The Hanover Theatre’s acquisition of 551 Main Street houses new function space, offices, rental space for a restaurant on the ground floor and The Hanover Theatre Conservatory for the Performing Arts on the lower level.

Worcester Center for Performing Arts, a registered not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization, owns and operates The Hanover Theatre for the Performing Arts. All donations are tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law.

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