



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - FEBRUARY 17, 2022**

Arts Commons, Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra, and Theatre Calgary Come Together for an Unprecedented Co-production on the Jack Singer Concert Hall Stage

***Ragtime: A Concert Performance* brings multi-Tony Award-winning musical with Canadian roots to Calgary in an engaging world premiere**

**February 17, 2022 - CALGARY** – *It was the music of something beginning, an era exploding...and people called it Ragtime!* To tell an epic and undeniably timely story about privilege, class and the relentless triumph of the human spirit, three of Calgary’s performing arts champions – Arts Commons, Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra and Theatre Calgary – are joining forces for the first time. ***Ragtime: A Concert Performance*** brings the power of the Tony Award-winning musical to the stage in the world premiere of a new adaptation by the acclaimed Boston Pops orchestra, directed by Theatre Calgary’s Stafford Arima and featuring the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra. This limited engagement runs **Friday & Saturday, June 10 & 11, 2022, for three performances only, at the Jack Singer Concert Hall.**

*Ragtime* follows the story of three vastly different families as their worlds collide in turn-of-the-Century New York as they search for the American Dream. Based on E.L. Doctorow’s historical fiction novel of the same name, *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.

Stafford Arima, Artistic Director of Theatre Calgary as well as director for *Ragtime: A Concert Performance*, is no stranger to the piece. In 2004 he directed the West End premiere of the musical, *Ragtime*, earning him a nomination for the prestigious Laurence Olivier Award as Best Director.

*“I feel so honoured to be able to collaborate with Arts Commons and the Calgary Philharmonic to bring this concert presentation to the Jack Singer, which will simply explode with the sound of this score,”* says Stafford Arima, Artistic Director of Theatre Calgary. *“This is a musical that hits the heartstrings, and makes you think about life and relationships in a meaningful and beautifully entertaining way.”*

With a title pulled from the genre of music that defined the time, *Ragtime* was meant for the stage. It first found its feet at the Ford Centre for the Performing Arts (later renamed the Toronto Centre for the Arts) in Toronto in 1996 from three of the most celebrated musical theatre writers of our time: Tony Award-winners Stephen Flaherty, Lynn Ahrens, and the late Terrence McNally, quickly making its way to debut in New York on Broadway in the very next year. An instant hit, *Ragtime* earned 13 Tony nominations and won four, including Best Original Score and Best Book of a Musical. To this day it continues to grow in appreciation as a modern Broadway masterpiece.

*“We’re excited to fill every corner of the concert hall with the lively sounds and rhythms of Ragtime,”* says Marc Stevens, President and CEO of the Calgary Philharmonic. *“This production celebrates a genre that had a tremendous influence on music then and now, paying tribute to composers like Scott Joplin, Joseph Scott, and James Lamb.”* The collaboration will be the final show of the Calgary Phil’s Spring series of concerts — the full lineup is online at [calgaryphil.com](http://calgaryphil.com). *“It’s fitting to finish this first season back since the turmoil began by working together and sharing this tale, still so relevant to issues we’re still grappling with in our communities.”*



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.

*"The pandemic has invited all of us to re-evaluate how we work together to improve the well-being of our neighbours, and this is no exception. We recognize that when we collaborate, Calgarians stand to benefit," says Alex Sarian, President & CEO of Arts Commons. "With Ragtime: A Concert Performance, not only will Calgary get to see an incredibly timely story from amazing performers, but also how three organizations can come together over their shared passion for this city. I am so very grateful to the Calgary Phil and Theatre Calgary for the generosity of spirit they've brought to our vision of bringing this world premiere concert to Calgary audiences at this moment."*

Calgary's presentation will lead a three-city premiere of this adaptation created for the Boston Pops orchestra and with the support of the Cincinnati Symphony.

**What:** *Ragtime: A Concert Performance*  
**When:** June 10 & 11, 2022 – 3 performances only  
**Where:** Arts Commons, Jack Singer Concert Hall  
**Who:** Arts Commons, Calgary Philharmonic, and Theatre Calgary  
**Tickets:** [artscommons.ca/ragtime](https://artscommons.ca/ragtime) or call 403-294-9494

Don't miss this limited engagement of a one-of-a-kind concert directed by Theatre Calgary Artistic Director Stafford Arima featuring the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra. Three performances only, June 10 & 11, 2022. **Public tickets go on sale March 1, 2022.** For more information, call the **Arts Commons box office at 403-294-9494** or visit [artscommons.ca](https://artscommons.ca)

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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 [theatrecalgary.com](https://theatrecalgary.com).