

# Best Places to See Live Theater in Phoenix

Written by Kendall Reaves

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It's not Broadway, but very close to it. Arizona holds an impressive amount of artistic talent when it comes to theater options. Talented Phoenixians pack in hundreds for performances weekly at any of these local theaters to support their local arts. Theater is something that inspires, moves and motivates audience members through music and acting, so take a break from running around, shut off the screens and have seat at any of these top-notch live and local Arizona theater destinations.

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## Arizona Broadway Theater

This venue is known for its specialty in outstanding Broadway musical theater performances. The theater, located in Peoria, was founded in 2004 and has become a stronger theater each year since. Morphing from an average theater experience to dinner theater, this one-of-a-kind experience has turned into a hit. The performance space holds 470 theatergoers to dine and take in a fantastic musical production. Anyone is open to come try out for a show, as the theater holds everything from children's musicals to adults-only performances. Currently come relax, watch and dine and as you get to watch their latest performance of "Saturday Night Fever." Tickets are [on sale](#) now.



## Herberger Theater

The [Herberger Theater Center](#) is a longtime staple for the arts community in Phoenix. The arts center and arts advocate works through a nonprofit and supports live theater and youth outreach programs. The resident acting companies that call this theater's stage home include: Center Dance Ensemble, iTheatre Collaborative, and the Arizona Theatre Company. The Center Stage, located in Downtown Phoenix, holds 800 audience members. Currently, you can head down to watch "Fiddler on a Hot Tin Roof" a special lunchtime theater show.

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## Desert Stages Theater

The local theater has marked its place in Scottsdale; as the city has changed, the theater has not. This nonprofit children’s theater specializes in putting on shows that light up life the way only a child’s smile could. The theater holds smaller stages, The Actor’s Café, and the Main stage Series in Cullity Hall. Founded by Gerry Cullity and now taken over by his wife Laurie, the theater has kept on a legacy that continues to shine. Currently, the theater is making its biggest move yet, heading into Scottsdale’s Fashion Square Mall this upcoming year from its original theater platform. Make sure you make it to see their next upcoming show, Gerry Cullity’s “Cinderella: A Ragtime Musical.” It will be sure to bring a new twist on a old princess classic. You can purchase tickets [online](#) now.

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## Mesa Arts Center

The Mesa Arts Center is a massive performing arts center located in Mesa and home to the largest performing arts center in Arizona. The center holds four theaters, five art galleries, and 14 art studios. Owned by the City of Mesa, the venue constantly holds strong lineups of performers every year. The East Valley Children’s Theater, Southwest Shakespeare Company, and Mesa Encore Theater call this state-of-the-art facility their home base. When it comes to theater, head on over to catch a showing of “Chicago The Musical,” starting Sept. 8 to the 24. Check out their [Web site](#) for a full list of all the art and theater events held at the center each week.



## Hale Center Theater

The Hale Center Theater knows what it’s doing—probably because it is the longest running privately owned theater company in the country. This Gilbert location is one only in Arizona but one of five theaters across three states. Since it’s opening day back in 2003, it has become a go-to hub for family-friendly plays and musicals. The venue holds 350 people located in Gilbert’s Downtown Heritage District. The family-run theater program produces around 10 shows a year. Swing by now to see the final weeks of the run of “Disney’s The Little Mermaid,” until August 19. You can check out a full schedule of shows on their [Web site](#).

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## Phoenix Theater

The Phoenix Theater, founded in 1920, is one of the oldest continually operating theaters in the West. Since opening in Phoenix, the venue has constantly put on top-notch productions. You are able to experience Broadway-style shows in a intimate setting of a main stage. Each show is aimed to inspire the audience to find hope and understanding and further create good in the world. The theater holds a long past, since it's ancient opening and guests are encouraged to take a historical tour of the halls of the theater as well. Head on down to the stage this September to see "Mama Mia!" Tickets for the musical experience are [online](#) now.

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## Valley Youth Theater



## Theater Works

Theater Works, also called the Peoria Center for the Performing Arts, is a 250-seat theater located in Peoria that opened its doors in December of 2006. The theater is operated chiefly by the company, Theater Works, and has consistently received raving reviews as well as the title for Best New Playhouse by the *Phoenix New Times*. Shows are run all year long with open auditions to the public available. The seasons are broken up between the Youth Theater, the Adult Theater, and the Puppet Theater. Guests are also welcome to checkout the comedy and cabaret shows as well. Check [online](#) for a full schedule of shows.