



CONTACT:

Michael Conrad 214-616-0320
Michael@Lovell-Fairchild.com

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Sight & Sound Theatres® *Backgrounder*

sight-sound.com

On a cold Pennsylvania morning in January 1997, the call came: *Fire!*

On that day, 20 years of work turned the sky red, orange and black as Sight & Sound Theatres® main performance building burned to the ground. Locals believed they'd witnessed the dramatic final act of Lancaster County's largest tourist draw. But Sight & Sound was in the business of unexpected plot twists, and a second act was about to take the stage.

The opening came slightly more than a year later, in September 1998, as Sight & Sound Theatres debuted their new state-of-the-art facility featuring a 2,000-seat opera house-sized auditorium. That night also debuted **Noah**—the biggest production in Sight & Sound Theatres history. On three sides, a panoramic 300-foot stage enveloped the audience. At the top of act two, as the stage lit up, the audience audibly gasped. Sitting in their seats, they were in the center of a four-story ark. Full of real animals. Forty feet high.

Sight & Sound was back.

But here's the question: how did an epic-production theater devoted exclusively to telling Bible stories materialize in the first place? How did a theatrical destination (ranked in the nation's top three) wind up in Lancaster County, PA, with a matching sister theater in Branson, MO?

Enter Glenn and Shirley Eshelman, Lancaster County natives barnstorming churches and civic performance venues in the 1970s with their slide projector and a record player, staging handcrafted, uplifting multimedia events deep in Christian faith.

Buoyed by popular demand, in 1976, the Eshelmans took the leap of faith to establish their own performance venue—the Sight & Sound Auditorium (later named Living Waters Theatre). Initially with multimedia shows, eventually adding live actors, in 1987 Sight & Sound launched its first full-length stage production, *Behold the Lamb*.

In a few years, the shows' popularity and audience hunger for large-scale productions led to the 1991 building of the Entertainment Center--the victim of that January fire.

Today more than a million people a year come to experience a Sight & Sound Theatres production in Lancaster County or Branson. Led by second-generation CEO Matt Neff and President and Chief Creative Officer Josh Enck, Sight & Sound Theatres remains Eshelman-family owned and family led, operating as a private, for-profit business.

For interviews, contact: Michael Conrad Michael@Lovell-Fairchild.com 214-616-0320

And visit Lovell-Fairchild.com for:

- Sight & Sound Theatres media tip sheet
- Q&A with CEO Matt Neff
- Suggested interview questions
- **Samson** press release
- **Samson** media tip sheet
- **Moses** press release
- **Moses** media tip sheet

Sight & Sound Theatres

For 40 years Sight & Sound Theatres has delivered unforgettable, uplifting experiences that bring the Bible to life onstage in jaw-dropping scale. In 2,000-seat theaters in Lancaster County, PA, and Branson, MO, more than a million people each year experience original dramatizations of the Bible's most famous stories of faith, courage and redemption. Sight & Sound Theatres' signature special features include spectacular digital effects, massive sets and live animals — on stage and in the aisles.