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PRESS RELEASE

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VENUE: 533 Sutter Street, @ Powell
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PERIOD OF ADJUSTMENT

By Tennessee Williams
Directed by Bill English
November 15th to January 14th
PRESS OPENING: November 19th

San Francisco, CA (October, 2011) - **The SF Playhouse** (Bill English, Artistic Director; Susi Damilano, Producing Director) have announced that a revival of Tennessee Williams' *Period of Adjustment* will fill the previously announced TBA for the second show of the 2011-12 season.

To celebrate the 100 year anniversary of one of our greatest playwrights, the SF Playhouse presents a rarity, a Christmas comedy by Tennessee Williams.

Christmas Eve in High Point, 1958. George takes his new bride to meet friend and fellow soldier, Ralph Bates, for the holiday celebrations. As snow settles outside, the idyllic Christmas scene begins to dissolve. While past hopes and dreams are recounted, the bittersweet reality of their marital relationships surface with comical and poignant results.

The play, which Williams subtitled "a serious comedy," was a departure from the playwright's usual dark dramas, and was written partly in response to a Hollywood columnist who had asked why his plays were always "plunging into the sewers." Williams responded to the criticism by writing *Period of Adjustment* and arguing, in a piece that ran in *The New York Times*, "The theatre has made its greatest artistic advance through the unlocking and lighting up and ventilation of the closets, attics, and basements of human behavior and experience. No significant area of human experience should be held inaccessible, provided it is presented with honest intention and taste, to the writers of our desperate time. "

Bill English, co-founder and Artistic Director of the SF Playhouse will direct a stunning cast including; **Patrick Alparone***, **Jean Forsman**, **MacKenzie Meehan***, **Joe Madero**, **Maggie Mason**, **Johnny Moreno***.

THE SF PLAYHOUSE

Period of Adjustment

Continued:

Period of Adjustment became a film in 1962 and marked the film debut of director George Roy Hill, a former actor and stage director who would soon become one of Hollywood's hottest directors (*Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* (1969). *The Sting*, 1973). The art direction/set decoration was nominated for an Oscar but lost to *To Kill a Mockingbird* (1962).

Jane Fonda, who starred in the film, often cites *Period of Adjustment* as one of her favorite movie experiences and said, "It was an enormous challenge for me, especially because with my two previous films (*Walk on the Wild Side*, *The Chapman Report*, both 1962) I felt I'd tried but not gotten a good grasp on the characters I was playing...I became an actress because I needed love and support from a lot of people, but at the beginning I never dreamed I'd end up in the movies. A stage career is what I wanted. But somehow making movies gets to you. It's ego-battering and it's much tougher work, because it's harder to create a performance. When I did get *Period of Adjustment*, I finally began to feel like an experienced film actress, and I decided movies were for me."

Tennessee Williams was a master playwright of the twentieth century, and his plays *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *The Glass Menagerie*, and *Cat On A Hot Tin Roof* are considered among the finest of the American stage. At their best, his twenty-five full-length plays combined lyrical intensity, haunting loneliness, and hypnotic violence. He is widely considered the greatest Southern playwright and one of the greatest playwrights in the history of American drama.

Williams graduated from the University of Iowa in 1938. He then moved to New Orleans, where he began going by the name Tennessee, a nickname he'd been given in college thanks to his southern drawl. After struggling with his sexuality through his youth, he finally entered a new life as a gay man, with a new name, a new home, and a promising new career.

His plays were a great success in the United States and abroad, and he was able to write works that were well-received by critics and popular with audiences, including *The Rose Tattoo* (1950), *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* (1955), *Night of the Iguana* (1961), and many others. *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* won Williams his second Pulitzer Prize, and was his last truly great artistic and commercial success.

THE SF PLAYHOUSE

Period of Adjustment

Continued:

He gave American theatergoers unforgettable characters, an incredible vision of life in the South, and a series of powerful portraits of the human condition. He was deeply interested in something he called "poetic realism," namely the use of everyday objects which, seen repeatedly and in the right contexts, become imbued with symbolic meaning. His plays also seemed preoccupied with the extremes of human brutality and sexual behavior: madness, rape, incest, nymphomania, as well as violent and fantastic deaths. Williams himself often commented on the violence in his own work, which to him seemed part of the human condition; he was conscious, also, of the violence in his plays being expressed in a particularly American setting. As with the work of Edward Albee, critics who attacked the "excesses" of Williams' work often were making thinly veiled attacks on his sexuality. Homosexuality was not discussed openly at that time, but in Williams' plays the themes of desire and isolation reveal, among other things, the influence of having grown up gay in a homophobic world.

He left behind an impressive body of work, including plays that continue to be performed the world over. In his worst work, his writing is melodramatic and overwrought, but at his best Tennessee Williams is a haunting, lyrical, and powerful voice, and one of the most important forces in twentieth-century American drama.

Founded by **Bill English and Susi Damilano** in 2003, **The SF Playhouse** is San Francisco's fastest growing and most awarded Theater Company and hailed as a "small delicacy" by *SF Weekly*, "eclectic" by the *San Francisco Bay Guardian*, and "local theater's best kept secret" by *San Francisco Magazine*. Located in Union Square, The SF Playhouse offers intimate, professional theatre with top notch actors and world class design. It has received multiple awards for overall productions, acting and design including the SF Weekly Best Theatre Award, Bay Guardian's Best Off-Broadway Theatre Award. The *San Francisco Chronicle* raved, ***"One of the most meteoric rises [of the decade] has been that of SF Playhouse, Bill English and Susi Damilano's 7-year-old-start-up that has been attracting more top-notch actors, directors, and scripts every year."*** The SF Playhouse has become the intimate theatre alternative to the traditional Union Square theatre fare, providing a creative home and inspiring environment where actors, directors, writers, designers, and theatre lovers converge to create works that celebrate the human spirit.

THE SF PLAYHOUSE
Period of Adjustment
Continued:

WHAT: Celebrating the 100th anniversary of great American playwright Tennessee Williams, SF Playhouse presents *Period of Adjustment*. Christmas Eve in High Point, 1958. George takes his new bride to meet friend and fellow soldier, Ralph Bates, for the holiday celebrations. As snow settles outside, the idyllic Christmas scene begins to dissolve. While past hopes and dreams are recounted, the bittersweet reality of their marital relationships surface with comical and poignant results.

SHOWS: Tues/Wed/Thurs. 7 p.m., Friday & Saturday 8 p.m., plus Saturdays 3 p.m.
Holiday schedule: No show 11/24 or 12/24, added shows: 11/27 3pm, 12/21 & 12/22 2pm.

WHERE: **The SF Playhouse**
533 Sutter Street (one block off Union Square, b/n Powell & Mason)

TICKETS: For tickets (\$20-\$50) or more information, the public may contact The SF Playhouse box office at **415-677-9596**, or www.sfplayhouse.org.

EVENTS: The SF Playhouse also now offers exclusive events in conjunction with our shows.

Talk backs: The public is invited to join us for a special talk-back featuring panel speakers along with members of our artistic team, directly following the performances on November 23th, December 7th, December 14th, and January 4th.

Tastings: Complimentary tastings to our patrons 45 minutes prior to each performance on the following dates:

 _Martin Rey Winery, 11/30, 12/8

 The Chai Cart , 12/1

 3141 Pie, 12/7, 12/15

 Vignette Wine Country Soda, 12/14

Thirsty Thursday -12/15 Join young professionals and socialize pre-show while enjoying \$1 beer, soda and pizza, great music, and a specially-discounted ticket.