

# THE SF PLAYHOUSE

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## PRESS RELEASE

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\*\*\*WEST COAST PREMIERE\*\*\*

### CORONADO

By Dennis Lehane

Directed by Susi Damilano

Opens (Press Night) March 22 through April 26, 2008

Previews March 19, 20 and 21

The POWER of CONNECTIONS

#### Casting Announcement

San Francisco, CA (February 2008) – The SF Playhouse (Bill English, Artistic Director; Susi Damilano, Producing Director) are pleased to announce the fourth show in their 2007-2008 season as the West Coast Premiere of *Coronado* by Dennis Lehane, directed by Susi Damilano.

The cast includes: **Kate Del Castillo, Chad Deverman, Bill English\***, Loraine Olsen, **Louis Parnell\***, Stacy Ross\*, Will Springhorn Jr., Rebecca Schweitzer, and Phillip Torretto.

\*Appear courtesy of Actor's Equity.

*Coronado*, a mystery thriller from the pen of Dennis Lehane (*Mystic River*, *Gone Baby Gone*), is a crime-noir ride through the lives and passions of Middle Americans told through three intertwining tales: a father and son searching for a missing girl and a stolen diamond, a psychiatrist and a patient having an illicit affair, and two lovers plotting a murder. Complete with shady characters, sex, and murder, *Coronado* taps into that unsettling place where the familiar turns eerie as it explores our connection to our past and future selves and the things we are willing to do for love, for money, and finally, for redemption.

*Coronado*, Lehane's first play, debuted in New York in December 2005. It had its regional premiere at American Stage in St. Petersburg in April 2006 and its Midwest premiere in the fall of 2007 with Steep Theatre Company in Chicago, and is based on Lehane's acclaimed short story "Until Gwen," which was originally published in *The Atlantic Monthly* and was selected for both *The Best American Short Stories* and *The Best Mystery Short Stories* of 2005.

The idea for *Coronado* came to Lehane around Christmas of 2004. He was working on a new novel, but he says he "needed a break, or the top of [his] head was going to come off." It

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### *Coronado*

By **Dennis Lehane**

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happened that his older brother Gerry, an actor and member of New York's Invisible City Theatre Company, was visiting with some fellow actors, and the two brothers began talking about adapting "Until Gwen" for the stage. "We started messing around with the idea," Lehane says. "They were supposed to spend two days and they stayed two weeks." He spent part of the next summer and fall in New York, working on the script and watching rehearsals, making changes up until the day the show opened. This collaboration marks the first time the brothers had worked together—which, according to Lehane, was the highlight of the experience.

**For tickets** (\$20 previews and \$38 regular performances) or more information, the public may contact The SF Playhouse box office at **415-677-9596**, or visit **www.sfplayhouse.org**, **TicketWeb.com**, or the **TIX** box office on Union Square.

**Dennis Lehane** was born and raised in Dorchester, Massachusetts. Before becoming a full-time writer, Mr. Lehane worked as a counselor with mentally handicapped and abused children, waited tables, parked cars, drove limos, worked in bookstores, and loaded tractor-trailers. His one regret is that no one ever gave him a chance to tend bar. He lives in the Boston area.

His first book, *A Drink Before the War* (1994), which introduced the recurring characters Patrick Kenzie and Angela Gennaro, won the 1995 Shamus Award for Best First P.I. Novel. The fourth book in the series, *Gone, Baby, Gone*, has been adapted to a film of the same title directed by Ben Affleck in 2007. Lehane's *Mystic River* was made into a film in 2003; also called *Mystic River* and directed by Clint Eastwood, it starred Sean Penn, Tim Robbins, and Kevin Bacon. The novel itself was a finalist for the PEN/Winship Award and won the Anthony Award and the Barry Award for Best Novel, the Massachusetts Book Award in Fiction, and France's Prix Mystere de la Critique.

Lehane joined the writing staff of the HBO drama series *The Wire* in 2004. In May 2005, Lehane was presented with an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree from Eckerd College and was appointed to Eckerd's Board of Trustees later that year. As of June 2006, he was living temporarily in St. Petersburg, Florida, and teaching as writer-in-residence at Eckerd (usually

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*Continued:*

during the spring semester), where he also co-directs the Writers in Paradise conference each January.

On 22 October 2007 Columbia Pictures announced that they had optioned Lehane's *Shutter Island*, with Martin Scorsese, the director of *The Departed*, attached as director. The Laeta Kalogridis-scripted adaptation has Leonardo DiCaprio in final talks to play U.S. Marshal Teddy Daniels, who is "investigating the disappearance of a murderess who escaped from a hospital for the criminally insane and is presumed to be hiding on the remote Shutter Island."

**Director Susi Damilano** is co-founder and Producing Director of The SF Playhouse, where she has directed the West Coast Premieres of *The Mystery Plays*, and *Roulette*. Susi has performed in The SF Playhouse productions of *Six Degrees of Separation*, *First Person Shooter*, *Jesus Hopped the 'A' Train*, *Reckless* (for which she tied with Rita Moreno for the Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Award for best Principle Performance), *The Crucible*, *Kimberly Akimbo*, *Our Town*, and *The Smell of the Kill*.

Founded by **Bill English and Susi Damilano** in 2003, **The SF Playhouse** is Union Square's intimate, professional theatre. Using professional actors and world class design, The SF Playhouse, which won the Bay Guardian's 2006 Best Off Broadway Theatre Award and about which the *San Francisco Chronicle* raved, "San Francisco's newest theatre isn't just another tiny stage carved out of a storefront . . . its an enticing introduction to a new company," has become an intimate theatre alternative to the traditional Union Square theatre fare, garnering 20 Bay Area Theatre Critic nominations in its first year. Providing a creative home and inspiring environment where actors, directors, writers, designers, and theatre lovers converge, The SF Playhouse, hailed as a "small delicacy" by *SF Weekly* and "eclectic" by the *San Francisco Bay Guardian*, strives to create works that celebrate the human spirit.

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*Coronado*  
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*Continued:*

**FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:**

**WHAT:** *Coronado*, a mystery thriller from the pen of Dennis Lehane, (*Mystic River*, *Gone Baby Gone*) is a crime-noir ride through the lives and passions of Middle Americans told through three intertwining tales: a father and son searching for a missing girl and a stolen diamond, a psychiatrist and a patient having an illicit affair, and two lovers plotting a murder. Complete with shady characters, sex and murder, *Coronado* taps into that unsettling place where the familiar turns eerie as it explores our connection to our past and future selves and the things we are willing to do for love, for money, and finally, for redemption.

**DATES:** Previews: **March 19, 20, and 21 2008**  
Open: **March 22, 2008**  
Close: **April 26, 2008**

**SHOWS:** Wednesday through Saturday at 8 p.m., plus Saturdays 3p.m.

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

**TICKETS:** For tickets (\$20 previews, \$38 regular, \$65 Opening Night Gala) or more information, the public may contact The SF Playhouse box office at **415-677-9596**, **TicketWeb.com**.