

San Francisco Playhouse presents
SUNDAY IN THE PARK WITH GEORGE

Music and Lyrics by **Stephen Sondheim**

Book by **James Lapine**

Directed by **Bill English**

Music Direction by **Dave Dobrusky**

Choreography by **Kimberly Richards**

Press Opening: **WEDNESDAY, July 11th at 7pm**

Performances: July 5 – September 8, 2018

Tues, Wed, Thurs 7pm / Fri, Sat 8pm / Sat 3pm, Sun 2pm & 7pm

Preview Performances: July 5, 6 & 7 at 8pm, July 7 at 3pm, July 8 at 2pm and July 10 at 7pm

SAN FRANCISCO (July 2018) — San Francisco Playhouse (Artistic Director **Bill English**; Producing Director **Susi Damilano**) announced casting for the final show of its 2017-18 Mainstage Season--***Sunday in the Park with George***, the quintessential Stephen Sondheim musical about the art of creation and the creation of art. Bill English will direct the 1985 Pulitzer Prize-winning musical.

The cast of ***Sunday in the Park with George*** will star **John Bambery*** as George and **Nanci Zoppi*** as Dot and feature **Michelle Drexler, Ryan Drummond*, Elliott Hanson, Corrie Farbstein, Sam Faustine, Ayelet Firstenberg*, William Giammona, Abby Haug*, Gwen Herndon, Charlotte Ying Levy, Maureen McVerry*, Emily Radosevich, Xander Ritchey, Zac Schuman, and Anthony Rollins-Mullens.**

“This is a show I have always cherished and yet been terrified to bring to the stage because it feels so personal,” said Artistic Director Bill English. “The story exposes the vulnerability of art and how that deeply affects the artists who create it. *Sunday in the Park with George* examines how artists struggle to balance their passion for storytelling with the desire for intimacy, and is more resonant than ever, reminding us how essential art and artists are to a free and compassionate society.”

In the final days before the completion of his masterpiece, *A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte*, Georges Seurat is torn between making meaningful art and maintaining a relationship with his lover, Dot. One of the most acclaimed musicals of our time, ***Sunday in the Park with George*** won the Pulitzer Prize and was nominated for 10 Tony Awards including Best Musical.

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This stunning masterpiece merges past and present into beautiful, poignant truths about life, love and the creation of art. The story, spanning over a century, begins in 1884 with struggling artist Georges Seurat, who demands that the world look at art in a shocking new way. A century later, Seurat's grandson George—also an artist—is frustrated as he searches for his artistic path only to find the answer to his future is in the past.

San Francisco Playhouse's production of *Sunday in the Park with George* is made possible by Executive Producer Robert Hulteng; Producers Bill and Marsha Adler; Associate Producers Muffy Barkocy & John Merlino, Geoff Jue, Rowland Weinstein, Cliff and Betty Nakamoto; and Artistic Underwriter Marcy Taylor Pattinson.

Stephen Sondheim (Music and Lyrics) wrote the music and lyrics for *Saturday Night* (1954), *A Funny Thing Happened on the way to the Forum* (1962), *Anyone Can Whistle* (1964), *Company* (1970), *Follies* (1971), *A Little Night Music* (1973), *The Frogs* (1974), *Pacific Overtures* (1976), *Sweeney Todd* (1979), *Merrily We Roll Along* (1981), *Sunday in the Park with George* (1984), *Assassins* (1991), *Passion* (1994) and *Road Show* (2008) as well as lyrics for *West Side Story* (1957), *Gypsy* (1959) and *Do I Hear a Waltz?* (1965) and additional lyrics for *Candide* (1973). Anthologies of his work include *Side By Side with Sondheim* (1976), *Marry Me a Little* (1981), *You're Gonna Love Tomorrow* (1983), *Putting it Together* (1993/99) and *Sondheim on Sondheim* (2010). He composed the scores of the films "Stavisky" (1974) and "Reds" (1981) and songs for "Dick Tracy" (1990) and the television production "Evening Primrose" (1966). His collected lyrics with attendant essays have been published in two volumes: "Finishing the Hat" (2010) and "Look, I Made A Hat" (2011). In 2010 the Broadway theatre formerly known as Henry Miller's Theatre was renamed in his honor.

James Lapine (Book) has also worked with Stephen Sondheim on *Passion* as well as the recent Broadway show, *Sondheim on Sondheim*. He also directed the first revival of *Merrily We Roll Along* at La Jolla Playhouse in 1985. With William Finn he has collaborated on *Falsettos*, *A New Brain*, *25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, and the soon to be produced *Little Miss Sunshine*. Other Broadway credits: *The Diary of Anne Frank*, *Golden Child*, and *Amour*. He has written the plays: *Table Settings*; *Twelve Dreams*; *Luck, Pluck & Virtue*; *The Moment When*; *Fran's Bed*; and *Mrs. Miller Does Her Thing*.

Bill English (Director) is a co-founder and Artistic Director of San Francisco Playhouse, and in fifteen years with Susi Damilano, has guided its growth from a bare-bones storefront to the second-largest theatre in San Francisco. He designed the first theatre space at 536 Sutter Street and personally reconfigured a barn-like 700-seat hall to our currently gracious and intimate 200-seat venue. Along the way he has served as director, actor, set and sound designer, winning San Francisco Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle nominations or awards in all those categories. Bill is also an accomplished musician and

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builder. Milestone accomplishments include bringing Pulitzer Prize-winner Stephen Adly Guirgis to the Bay Area by directing three of his plays, commissioning twelve playwrights including Theresa Rebeck, Aaron Loeb, Lauren Gunderson, Lauren Yee, and Christopher Chen, and developing world premieres from workshops to Sandbox Series to our main stage to Off-Broadway (including the New York productions of *Ideation* and *Bauer*), and presenting the very first production of *Grounded* by George Brant which later played at the Public Theatre. He coined the phrase “the empathy gym” and it drives everything at the Playhouse.

Dave Dobrusky (Music Director) is proud to have been associated with San Francisco Playhouse for twelve years: *La Cage aux Folles*, *City of Angels*; *Company*; *Into the Woods*; *Camelot*; *My Fair Lady*; *Man of LaMancha**; *Putting It Together*. Dave is also the resident music director at 42nd Street Moon Theatre where he has played, conducted, arranged & orchestrated dozens of “uncommon” musicals since 1996. Favorites include: *No No Nanette*; *New Girl in Town*; *Scrooge in Love!* (world premiere); *Most Happy Fella*; *Boys from Syracuse*; *Nick and Nora*; *Do I Hear a Waltz?*; *...It's Superman!*; *Call Me Madam*; *Out of This World*; *Can-Can*; *Paint Your Wagon**; with cast recordings of Cole Porter's *Leave It to Me* and Jerome Kern's *The Cabaret Girl*. Other Bay Area credits include Theatre Rhinoceros: *Road Show*; *Marry Me a Little*; *Tick, Tick... Boom!*; TheatreWorks: *Violet*; *Side Show*; Playhouse West: *The Boy Friend*; *In This House**; USF: *The Wedding Singer*; *Rent*; and numerous cabaret appearances. Dave is from Albuquerque and was educated at Oberlin Conservatory. *BATCC award

Kimberly Richards (Choreographer) launched her versatile career forty-five years ago: actress, aerialist, choreographer, comedienne, dancer, director, and illusionist. She co-starred with Louis Parnell in *It Had to Be You*, the very first Playhouse production, and played Dottie here in *Noises Off* in 2017. Her choreography credits include numerous productions in Las Vegas and the Playhouse productions of *She Loves Me* (2016) and *A Christmas Story, The Musical* (2017). Kim won three San Francisco Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle awards for choreography for *My Fair Lady* (2012), *Company* (2015) and *La Cage aux Folles* (2017). She received multiple SFBATCC nominations and was a TBA finalist for *Promises, Promises* (2014) and *Into the Woods* (2014). She was co-choreographer for *Abraham Lincoln's Big, Gay Dance Party*, which was awarded Best New Play in the 2009 New York International Fringe Festival. Since 2001, Kim has toured the continent starring as Sister in all seven installments of the hit one-woman comedy series *Late Nite Catechism*. Kimberly is a proud member of Actors' Equity Association.

Founded by Bill English and Susi Damilano in 2003, **San Francisco Playhouse**—now in its 15th season—has been described by the New York Times as “a company that stages some of the most consistently high-quality work around,” and deemed “ever adventurous” by the Bay Area News Group. Located in the heart of the Union Square Theater District, **San Francisco Playhouse** is the city's premier Off-Broadway company, an intimate alternative to the larger more traditional Union Square theater fare. San Francisco Playhouse provides audiences the opportunity to experience professional theater with top-

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notch actors and world-class design in a setting where they are close to the action. The company has received multiple awards for overall productions, acting, and design, including the SF Weekly Best Theatre Award and the Bay Guardian's Best Off-Broadway Theatre Award. KQED/NPR recently described the company: "San Francisco Playhouse is one of the few theaters in the Bay Area that has a mission that actually shows up on stage. Artistic director Bill English's commitment to empathy as a guiding philosophical and aesthetic force is admirable and by living that mission, fascinating things happen onstage." **San Francisco Playhouse** is committed to providing a creative home and inspiring environment where actors, directors, writers, designers, and theater lovers converge to create and experience dramatic works that celebrate the human spirit.

**Actors appear courtesy of Actors' Equity Association*

FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:

- WHAT: In the final days before the completion of his masterpiece, *A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte*, Georges Seurat is torn between making meaningful art and maintaining a relationship with his lover, Dot. One of the most acclaimed musical of our time, ***Sunday in the Park with George*** won the Pulitzer Prize and was nominated for 10 Tony Awards including Best Musical.
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- WHERE: 450 Post Street, San Francisco, 2nd Floor of the Kensington Park Hotel.
- TICKETS: For tickets (\$20-\$125) or more information, the public may contact the San Francisco Playhouse box office at 415-677-9596, or <https://www.sfplayhouse.org/sfph/2017-2018-season/sunday-park-george/>