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San Francisco Playhouse presents
Bay Area Premiere of Pulitzer Finalist

Dance Nation

By Clare Barron

Directed by Becca Wolff
Choreography by Kimberly Richards

Press Opening: Saturday, September 28, 2019 at 8:00 P.M.

Run dates: September 24 to November 9, 2019

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday at 7 p.m.; Friday, Saturday at 8 p.m.

Matinees: Saturday at 3 p.m. and Sunday at 2 p.m.

Preview Performances: September 24, 25, 26, 27 at 8:00 P.M.

San Francisco, CA (August 2019) – **San Francisco Playhouse** announced complete casting for the Bay Area premiere of ***Dance Nation***, Clare Barron’s award-winning play about pre-teen competitive dancers. **Becca Wolff** will direct the Playhouse production, with choreography by **Kimberly Richards**.

A 2019 Pulitzer Prize Finalist and winner of the 2015 Relentless Award as well as the 2017 Susan Smith Blackburn Prize, ***Dance Nation*** received its world premiere at Playwrights Horizons in New York City in 2018.

Somewhere in America, an army of pre-teen competitive dancers plots to take over the world. And if their new routine is good enough, they’ll claw their way to the top at Nationals in Tampa Bay. ***Dance Nation*** is play about ambition, growing up, and finding our souls in the heat of it all.

“***Dance Nation*** will be one of the most edgy and surprisingly dangerous plays we have produced,” said Bill English, Artistic Director. “With a large cast of women of all ages portraying 13-year-old girls, it presents a multi-layered perspective on the joy and pain of becoming a woman, and shows us how we carry our past selves with us throughout our lives.”

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The cast includes **Julia Brothers***, **Ash Malloy***, **Bryan Munar**, **Krystle Piamonte***, **Mohana Rajagopal**, **Liam Robertson**, **Lauren Spencer***, **Michelle Talgarow***, and **Indiia Wilmott***.

San Francisco Playhouse's production of ***Dance Nation*** is made possible by Executive Producer **Betty Hoener**; Producers **Betty & Cliff Nakamoto**; Associate Producers **William J. Gregory** and **Linda Brewer**; and Artistic Sponsor **Kevin Gahagan**. *Dance Nation* is presented by special arrangement with Samuel French, Inc.

Clare Barron (Playwright) is a playwright and actor from Wenatchee, Washington. Her plays include *Dance Nation*, which was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize for Drama, the winner of the Susan Smith Blackburn Prize, the winner of the Relentless Award, the winner of an Obie Award and received its premiere at Playwrights Horizons in New York City and subsequently at the Almeida Theatre in London and is now playing across the country and internationally; *You Got Older*, which received its world premiere with Page 73 and later appeared at Steppenwolf (Obie Award for Playwriting, Drama Desk Nomination for Outstanding Play, Kilroys List, and Susan Smith Blackburn finalist); *I'll Never Love Again* (The Bushwick Starr, NYTimes & Time Out Critics' Picks); and *Baby Screams Miracle* (Woolly Mammoth, Clubbed Thumb). She is also the recipient of a Whiting Award, the Page 73 Playwriting Fellowship and the Paula Vogel Award at the Vineyard, and a former member of Youngblood and the Soho Rep Writer-Director Lab.

Becca Wolff (Director) is a California-based director and co-founder of Tilted Field Productions. She explores the intersection of the theatrical and the confessional, collaborating with virtuosic performer/creators to explore deeply personal material in bold new ways. *Our Country: The Antigone Project*, her collaboration with Annie Saunders of Wilderness will be touring this year to the Sibiu Festival in Romania. It was workshopped at New York Stage & Film's Powerhouse gathering this summer, and had its world premiere in Edinburgh, Scotland at Summerhall as part of the International Fringe Festival. The piece was commissioned by San Francisco Playhouse, and received development and showings at Basic Flowers, The Getty Villa and The Public Theater as part of the Incoming! Festival at Under the Radar. Other projects include Giovanni Adams' critically acclaimed solo *Love Is a Dirty Word*, which premiered in a sold out run at VS. Theatre Company in LA, and toured to Z Space in San Francisco. Also at Z Space, she directed the Kilbanes' smash-hit rock opera *Weightless*, produced in association with piece by piece productions. *Weightless* had its NYC premiere at the Under the Radar Festival, 2019

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and will be at ACT in San Francisco in May 2019. She has directed new plays and premieres by Lauren Yee, Harvey Fierstein, Jen Silverman and Sarah Gubbins at venues including ACT, Theatreworks, San Francisco Playhouse and Z Space. With Tilted Field, she created the electro-opera, *The Last Days of Mary Stuart* with Los Angeles band TONY. Her work has been named to Best Of lists in the SF Chronicle and LA Weekly. Awards and nominations for her work include Princess Grace, Outstanding Solo Show & Outstanding Musical at the NYC Fringe, Ovation (Los Angeles), Theatre Bay Area and Bay Area Critics Circle. She is a graduate of the Yale School of Drama and co-creator of SCOTUS Theater. Member SDC.

Kimberly Richards (Choreographer) launched her versatile career nearly 50 years ago: actress, aerialist, choreographer, comedienne, dancer, director, and illusionist. She co-starred (with Louis Parnell) in SF Playhouse's first production, *It Had to Be You*, and recently played Dottie in *Noises Off!* (2017), Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle nomination for Best Ensemble. Her choreography credits include productions in Las Vegas, and at SF Playhouse including *She Loves Me* (2016), *A Christmas Story – The Musical* (2017), and *Sunday in the Park with George* (2018). She won 3 BATCC Outstanding Choreographer Awards: *My Fair Lady* (2012), *Company* (2015), and *La Cage aux Folles* (2017), with multiple BATCC and Theatre Bay Area Choreography nominations for *Promises, Promises* (2014), *Into the Woods* (2014), and *Mary Poppins* (2018). She co-choreographed *Abe Lincoln's Big Gay Dance Party* with Tom Segal, awarded Best New Play in the 2009 New York International Fringe Festival. She is excited to collaborate with director Becca Wolff for the first time. Since 2001, Kim has toured the continent starring as "Sister" in all 7 installments of the hit one-woman comedy series *Late Nite Catechism*.

San Francisco Playhouse

Founded in 2003 and now the second largest non-profit theater in the city, San Francisco Playhouse is the only mid-sized professional venue in downtown San Francisco—an intimate alternative to the larger more traditional Union Square Theater fare. Presenting a diverse range of plays and musicals, **San Francisco Playhouse** produces new works as well as re-imagined classics, "making the edgy accessible and the traditional edgy." And with its bold Sandbox Series, dedicated to nurturing world premieres, the Playhouse has become a significant player in developing new works as well. **San Francisco Playhouse** is committed to providing a creative home and inspiring environment where actors, directors, writers, designers, and

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theater lovers converge to create and experience dramatic works that celebrate the human spirit.

**Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers.*

FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:

THE PLAY: Somewhere in America, an army of pre-teen competitive dancers plots to take over the world. And if their new routine is good enough, they'll claw their way to the top at Nationals in Tampa Bay. Winner of the 2017 Susan Smith Blackburn Prize, ***Dance Nation*** is play about ambition, growing up, and finding our souls in the heat of it all.

THE CAST: **Julia Brothers*** as Maeve
Ash Malloy* as Sofia
Bryan Munar as Luke
Krystle Piamonte* as Zuzu
Mohana Rajagopal as Connie
Liam Robertson as Dance Teacher Pat
Lauren Spencer* as Ashlee
Michelle Talgarow* as The Moms
Indiia Wilmott* as Amina

WHEN: **September 24 to November 9, 2019**
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WHERE: 450 Post Street, San Francisco, 2nd floor of the Kensington Park Hotel

TICKETS: For tickets (\$35 - \$125) or more information, the public may contact the San Francisco Playhouse box office at 415-677-9596, or online at <https://www.sfplayhouse.org/sfph/2019-2020-season/dance-nation/>

PHOTOS: Full-resolution images and photo credits at <https://www.sfplayhouse.org/sfph/press/#dancenation>