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San Francisco Playhouse presents
Bay Area Premiere of Broadway Smash Hit
Groundhog Day the Musical
Music and Lyrics by Tim Minchin
Book by Danny Rubin

Directed by Susi Damilano
Music Direction by Dave Dobrusky
Choreography by Nicole Helfer

Press Opening: Wednesday, November 27, 2019 at 7:00 P.M.

Run dates: November 20, 2019 – January 18, 2020

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: November 20, 21, 22, 23 at 8 p.m., November 23 at 3 p.m., November 24 at 2 p.m., and November 26 at 7:00 p.m.

San Francisco, CA (October 2019) – **San Francisco Playhouse** announced casting for the Bay Area premiere of ***Groundhog Day the Musical***, the hit Broadway comedy adapted from the timeless **Bill Murray** film. **Danny Rubin**, co-writer of the 1993 film, wrote the book, with music and lyrics supplied by Tony-winner **Tim Minchin** (*Matilda*). **Susi Damilano** will direct the Playhouse production, with music direction by **Dave Dobrusky** and choreography by **Nicole Helfer**.

It's February 2nd in Punxsutawney, PA, and a storm is coming. Phil Connors, a big-city weatherman, couldn't be more frustrated to be reporting on the small-town Groundhog Day Ceremony—until he finds himself reliving the same day over and over again. Stuck in an endless loop of arrogance and cynicism amongst the cheery townsfolk, Phil must learn to take advantage of his second, third, and fourth chances and break the cycle.

Groundhog Day the Musical premiered at London's The Old Vic in 2016, and had a Broadway run in 2017 that was nominated for 7 Tony Awards. The Playhouse production will mark the musical comedy's Bay Area premiere, after the show's originally-planned 18-month national tour was canceled last year.

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Groundhog Day the Musical

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“*Groundhog Day* is one of my all-time favorite movies, and when I saw local actor **Taylor Iman Jones** make her Broadway debut in the musical adaptation, I was sold,” said director Susi Damilano. “The underlying theme of the show – that we must practice empathy to make ourselves better people – makes this a perfect show for the Playhouse and the holiday season.”

The San Francisco Playhouse cast includes **Rinabeth Apostol, Jorge Luis Diaz, Ryan Drummond, Kathryn Han, Sophia Introna, Larissa Kelloway, Cameron La Brie, Dean Linnard, Michael Motroni, Montel Anthony Nord, Danielle Philapil, Anthony Rollins-Mullens, David Schiller, Loreigna Sinclair, Michael Gene Sullivan, and Scott Taylor-Cole.**

San Francisco Playhouse’s production of *Groundhog Day the musical* is made possible by executive producer **Robert Hulteng**; producers **Fred & Leslie Karren** and **Phylis & Jerry Rosenberg**; associate producers **Tom & Stephanie Lima** and **Edwin & Peggy Mihm**; and artistic sponsors **Fred Karren, Gary Glaser & Christine Miller, and Ruth & Les Finkelstein.**

Tim Minchin (Music and Lyrics) is a musician, actor, comedian, writer and director. He’s toured extensively in the US, UK and Australia, performing solo, with bands, and with symphony orchestras. He’s released five DVDs, the most recent recorded with the Heritage Orchestra at the Royal Albert Hall. Screen acting credits include *Robin Hood Origins* (2018), *Secret River* (2015), and *Californication* (Season 6 – 2013). Stage acting credits include *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* (Sydney Theatre Company) and *Jesus Christ Superstar* (UK/Australia tours). Tim has written extensively for theatre, and is the composer-lyricist of *Matilda the Musical* (with Dennis Kelly) and *Groundhog Day the Musical* (with Danny Rubin).

Danny Rubin (Book) After many years writing and performing with improvisational theater companies as well as scripting industrial films and children’s television, Danny Rubin began writing screenplays. His screen credits include *Hear No Evil*, *S.F.W.*, and *Groundhog Day*, for which he received the 1993 British Academy Award for Screenwriting and the Critics’ Circle Award for Screenwriter of the Year, as well as honors from the Writers Guild of America and the American Film Institute. Rubin has taught screenwriting throughout the US and internationally, and from 2008-2013 he served as the first Briggs-Copeland Lecturer on Screenwriting at Harvard University. *Groundhog Day the Musical* opened to rave reviews at the Old Vic Theatre in London in August of 2016 earning Rubin and composer/lyricist Tim Minchin the Oliver Award for Best New Musical. The show opened on Broadway in April of 2017 garnering 7 Tony

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nominations including Best Musical and Best Book to a Musical. Rubin holds a BA in biology from Brown University and an MA in radio, television, and film from Northwestern University. He is married to librarian, web-designer and architect Louise Rubin with whom he shares a home in New Mexico and at least two children.

Susi Damilano (Director, Producing Director) is co-founder and Producing Director of San Francisco Playhouse. Directing credits include Playhouse productions of *Cabaret*, *Mary Poppins*, *Born Yesterday*, *A Christmas Story: The Musical*, *Noises Off*, *She Loves Me*, *Stage Kiss*, *Company*, *Stupid Fucking Bird*, *Into the Woods*, *A Behanding in Spokane*, *Den of Thieves* and *Wirehead* (San Francisco Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle nomination), the West Coast premieres of *Honey Brown Eyes* (SFBATCC nomination), *Dead Man's Cell Phone*, *Coronado*, *The Mystery Plays* and *Roulette*, and the world premieres of *On Clover Road* by Steven Dietz, *From Red to Black* by Rhett Rossi, and *Seven Days* by Daniel Heath in the Sandbox Series. She is a five-time recipient of the Excellence in Theatre Award for Principal Actress – Play from the San Francisco Bay Area Critics Circle for *Abigail's Party*, *Harper Regan*, *Bug*, *Six Degrees of Separation* and *Reckless*. At the Playhouse, Susi has performed leading roles in *Yoga Play*, *Barbecue*, *The Roommate*, *Red Velvet*, *Tree*, *Bauer*, *Abigail's Party*, *Harper Regan*, *Coraline*, *Slasher*, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, *Landscape of the Body*, *First Person Shoot*, *Jesus Hopped the 'A' Train*, *The Crucible*, *Kimberly Akimbo*, *Our Town*, and *The Smell of the Kill*.

Dave Dobrusky (Music Director) is proud to have been associated with SF Playhouse for thirteen years: *Cabaret*, *Sunday in the Park with George**, *A Christmas Story*, *La Cage aux Folles*, *Company*, *Into the Woods*, *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: *110 in the Shade*, *Dames at Sea*, *Me and My Girl*, *Ain't Misbehavin*, *No No Nanette*, *Most Happy Fella*, *Scrooge in Love!* (world premiere), *Nick and Nora*, *The Boy Friend*, *Do I Hear a Waltz?*, *Three Sisters*, *Paint Your Wagon**, and cast recordings of Cole Porter's *Leave It to Me* and Jerome Kern's *The Cabaret Girl*. Other Bay Area credits include appearances at Theatre Rhinoceros, TheatreWorks, Center Rep, New Conservatory Theatre, and Playhouse West (*In This House**). Dave is from Albuquerque and was educated at Oberlin Conservatory.

* SF Bay Area Critics Circle awards

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Nicole Helfer (Choreography) is a Bay Area native and a graduate of San Francisco State University. Choreography credits include: *Cabaret* for San Francisco Playhouse, *Disney's Beauty and the Beast*, *Peter Pan* and *West Side Story* for Mountain Play, *In the Heights* for Broadway By The Bay (Theatre Bay Area Award-winner), *Dogfight* for OMG Productions, *Tarzan* for Contra Costa Musical Theater (Shellie Award nominee), *Rent* for Pacific Coast Repertory Theatre Company, *Measure for Measure* for San Francisco State University, *8 Track: The Sounds of the 70s*, *Six Women With Brain Death*, and *You're A Good Man Charlie Brown* (Shellie Award nominee) for Willows Theatre Company. She has also choreographed *Click Clack Moo* and the very successful *Pinkalicious* for Bay Area Children's Theater. In addition to performing regularly in regional musical theatre productions, she has taught dance and theatre classes for Young REP, Kid Stock, Inc., Dance Mission Theatre, Marilyn Izdebski Productions, YMCA and Spindrift School of Performing Arts. Currently, Nicole is happily teaching a variety of dance classes at the Ballet School in Walnut Creek and is theatre faculty at Oakland School for the Arts. She is so honored to be working with such an amazing creative team.

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 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: It's February 2nd in Punxsutawney, PA, and a storm is coming. Phil Connors, a big-city weatherman, couldn't be more frustrated to be reporting on the small-town Groundhog Day Ceremony—until he finds himself reliving the same day over and over again. Stuck in an endless loop of arrogance and cynicism amongst the cheery townsfolk, Phil must

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learn to take advantage of his second, third, and fourth chances and break the cycle.

THE CAST:

- Rinabeth Apostol** as Rita Hanson
- Jorge Luis Diaz** as Fred, DJ, Ralph
- Ryan Drummond** as Phil Connors
- Kathryn Han** as Doris, Piano Teacher
- Sophia Introna** as Nancy, Joelle, Healer
- Larissa Kelloway** as Mrs. Lancaster, Healer
- Cameron La Brie** as Chubby Man, Deputy
- Dean Linnard** as Ned Ryerson, Healer
- Michael Motroni** as Mr. Cleveland, Stormchaser, Elder
- Montel Anthony Nord** as Jeff, Groundhog, Bartender Billy
- Danielle Philapil** as Mrs. Cleveland, Stormchaser, Healer
- Anthony Rollins-Mullens** as Sheriff, Healer
- David Schiller** as Jenson, Elder
- Loreigna Sinclai** as Debbie, Nurse, DJ
- Michael Gene Sullivan** as Buster, Healer
- Scott Taylor-Cole** as Larry, Gus

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November 24 at 2 p.m., and November 26 at 7:00 p.m.
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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/groundhog-day/>

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