

San Francisco Playhouse presents
THE WORLD PREMIERE OF
Born in East Berlin

By Rogelio Martinez
Directed by Margaret Perry

Press Opening: **FRIDAY, February 14, 8:00 P.M.**

Venue: THE CREATIVITY THEATER at The Children's Creativity Museum – 221 4th Street, San Francisco CA 94103

Performances: February 6 through February 29, 2020

Thurs 7pm / Fri, Sat 8pm / Sat 3pm

Note: Show times vary. See website for more details.

Preview Performances: February 6, 7, 8 at 8:00 PM, February 9 at 2:00 PM, February 13 at 7:00 PM

SAN FRANCISCO (January 2020) — San Francisco Playhouse announced casting for the second production of their 2019/2020 Sandbox Series of World Premieres: ***Born in East Berlin***, written by **Rogelio Martinez**. **Margarett Perry** will direct the world premiere production, presented at The Creativity Theater.

In 1988, Bruce Springsteen played a legendary concert in East Germany and 300,000 people showed up. *Born in East Berlin* explores the ultimate juxtaposition between the freedom of a rock concert and the captivity of an oppressive government during the time of a great historical and cultural shift. Who will succeed and who will fail when the end of the Cold War backs up against the force of American rock and roll?

“Even though ***Born in East Berlin*** is set in very distinct historical time period, it is not a history play, but more a play about today,” said Bill English, Artistic Director. “In this era where privacy concerns are mounting, where facial recognition is posing a huge risk to people’s privacies, it’s good to reflect on another time and place. East Berlin. Behind the wall. And a regime known for its capacity for collecting data on their citizens, colliding with their personal freedom.”

The cast of ***Born in East Berlin*** features **Lauren Hart***, **Patrick Andrew Jones***, **Isabel Langen**, **Ash Malloy***, **Griffin O’Connor**, **Christopher Reber***, and **Wera von Wulfen**.

SAN FRANCISCO PLAYHOUSE

Born in East Berlin

San Francisco Playhouse's production of *Born in East Berlin* is made possible by executive producers Cynthia and David Bogolub; producers Loni and Bob Dantzler, Keith Goldstein and Donna Warrington; associate producer Anne Maxwell; and artistic underwriters James Helman and Janet Seelinger.

Rogelio Martinez (Playwright) is an award-winning playwright whose plays have been workshopped and produced in theaters across the country and abroad. His newest play, *Blind Date*, was produced at the Goodman Theatre under the direction of Tony nominee Robert Falls. The play starred Tony Award winning actress Deanna Dunagan as Nancy Reagan. Her performance received a Joseph Jefferson Award nomination. *Blind Date* was awarded an Edgerton Foundation New Play Award. This is the second time his work has received an Edgerton Foundation New Play Award. *Blind Date* was one of only two plays awarded a Citation of Excellence by the Laurents / Hatcher Foundation. Martinez's play, *Born In East Berlin*, will be produced this coming season at the San Francisco Playhouse. In addition, the play will be workshopped by English Theater Berlin in collaboration with the Stasi Museum. This workshop will commemorate the 30th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall. Martinez is a recipient of a 2017 Guggenheim Fellowship. Martinez is also the winner of a Princess Grace Award, and a Mid-Career Fellowship at the Lark Theater Company. In the past he has received grants and awards from the New York Foundation for the Arts Grant, NEA/TCG, and the James Hammerstein Award among others. After being awarded an Alfred P. Sloan Foundation New Science and Technology Initiative Grant by the Denver Center, Martinez went on to write *When Tang Met Laika*, a post Cold War space exploration play; which was subsequently produced by the Denver Center. This inspired Martinez to bring the Cold War itself on stage and write a three play cycle exploring the time period. The first play in his Cold War trilogy is *Ping Pong*. The play is about U.S.-Chinese relations during the Nixon administration. It was presented at the Public Theatre as part of their Public Studio program and later published by Broadway Play Publishing. *Born in East Berlin*, the second play, tackled the impact a Springsteen concert had on East Germans just prior to the fall of the Berlin Wall. The play was workshopped at the Atlantic Theater Company and has since been translated into both Hungarian, Romanian, and German. It is published in Romanian. *Born in East Berlin* was workshopped at TheaterWorks. The trilogy's conclusion is *Blind Date*. It was originally commissioned by the Denver Center Theater Company. Martinez is currently writing a play/ musical about the AIDS crisis and punk rock set in the Cuba of the early 1990s. The play was commissioned by ShadowCatcher Entertainment. Martinez has been workshopped and commissioned by various theaters across the country including the Public Theater, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Mark Taper Forum, South Coast Repertory, Atlantic Theater Company, Arden Theater, Asolo Repertory, and Ojai Theater Company. For several years Martinez was a member of the Dorothy Strelsin New American Writer's Group at Primary Stages. Martinez is an alumnus of New Dramatists. As an advocate of the arts and an educator, Martinez has spoken before the Albany State legislature. He has worked with and mentored writers of all ages. In addition, many of his plays have been published by Broadway Play Publishing. Martinez has written for children's television. He is currently writing scripts for an upcoming show on Nickelodeon. He is also starting work on a second children's show. Martinez teaches graduate

SAN FRANCISCO PLAYHOUSE

Born in East Berlin

level playwriting at Columbia University and undergraduate playwriting at NYU. Over the last twenty years, Martinez has taught at various institutions including Rutgers University, Montclair State University, Goddard College, and City College of New York. In the summer of 2016, Martinez travelled to Portugal where he taught a two week playwriting workshop. Martinez has translated the work of both Mexican and Cuban playwrights. Martinez was born in Sancti-Spiritus, Cuba and came to this country on the Mariel boatlift in 1980.

Margarett Perry (Director) is an award-winning director of new plays. Previously at San Francisco Playhouse, she directed the world premiere of *Seared* by Theresa Rebeck. She has directed and developed new work Off-Broadway and in regional theatres across the country and the UK including Barrow Street, 59E59, Atlantic, Center Theatre Group, Public Theatre, Cherry Lane, Hudson Stage, Arizona Theatre Company, Kitchen, Human Race, Sacramento Theatre Company, Working Theatre, Resident Acting Company, Drilling Company, Hip-Hop Theatre Festival, Access Theater, Nylon Fusion, New Ohio, Whitefire, Dorset Theatre Festival, Assembly Rooms, St. James Theatre-London and her happy places—The New Harmony Project and The Lark. Favorite recent premieres include: *The House* by Brian Parks, *Call Me Waldo* by Rob Ackerman, *The Body Politic* by Richard Abrons, *Banned from Baseball* by Patricia O'Hara and several plays by Brian Dykstra including *Clean Alternatives*, *A Play on Words*, *Education*, *The Two of You* and *Selling Out*. Other favorites include: *Shrek the Musical*, *Electra*, *Doll's House Part 2*, *Private Lives*, *Sunset Baby*, *God of Carnage*, *Vanya & Sonia & Masha & Spike* and *Motherfucker with the Hat*. Margarett served as Resident Director at the Kitchen Theatre in Ithaca where she has directed over 25 productions including this season's *The Children* by Lucy Kirkwood. She is also a regular at The Human Race in Dayton where this Spring she will be directing *The Revolutionists* by Lauren Gunderson. Margarett is an Artistic Fellow at The Lark where she has worked with numerous writers developing new work. Member SDC. www.margarettperry.com

The **Sandbox Series** is San Francisco Playhouse's new works program. The Playhouse's commitment to new works in the Sandbox Series has been honored by grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the American Theatre Wing. Designed to bridge the gap between staged readings and Mainstage productions, the program combines top-notch directors and actors with limited design elements, allowing new voices in American theater to be heard while reducing the theatre's financial risk for full production at this stage of a play's development. The series has achieved significant critical and commercial milestones: Sandbox plays have won two Will Glickman Awards in the past three years; the Sandbox smash hit *Ideation* recently completed a successful Off-Broadway engagement in New York City; and George Brant's *Grounded* went on to international acclaim after its Sandbox premiere.

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

SAN FRANCISCO PLAYHOUSE
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FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:

WHAT: ***Born in East Berlin* by Rogelio Martinez**

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WHO: **Lauren Hart*** as Lotte
Patrick Andrew Jones* as Hans
Isabel Langen as Katja
Ash Malloy* as Anne
Griffin O'Connor as Gerhard
Christopher Reber* as Erich/Hugbert
Wera von Wulfen as Alix

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TICKETS: For tickets (\$30-\$40) or more information, the public may contact the San Francisco Playhouse box office at 415-677-9596, or <https://www.sfplayhouse.org/sfph/2019-2020-season/born-in-east-berlin/>