



Contact:
Stephen Kougias
Public Relations
619.316.8748; skougias@sdrep.org

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For Immediate Release

San Diego Repertory Theatre Announces Cast for Tony Award-Winning *Fun Home*, Opening Show of Season 43; September 6-30, 2018

Most acclaimed musical of 2015, 'Fun Home' won five Tony Awards including Best Musical, Best Book of a Musical, Best Original Score, Best Leading Actor and Actress in a Musical

San Diego Repertory Theatre announced the cast lineup for ***Fun Home***, one of the most celebrated musicals in recent Broadway history. *Fun Home* is the coming-out memoir of **Alison Bechdel**, an exploration of family, memory, first love and a daughter's relationship with her father. *Fun Home* was nominated for 12 Tony Awards in 2015 winning five including Best Musical, Best Book of a Musical, Best Original Score, Best Leading Actor and Actress in a Musical. *Fun Home* was also winner of the New York Drama Critics Circle Award for Best Musical, Outer Critics Circle Award for Outstanding Off-Broadway Musical and the Obie Award for Musical Theatre.

Fun Home is based on Alison Bechdel's witty and wistful graphic novel of the same name. Past and present blend magically as we see Alison at three different ages: as a young girl playing games in the family's funeral home, as a college student joyously discovering her sexuality as a lesbian woman and now as an adult on an extraordinary quest to discover the truth about her father's secret life.

"I am in awe of the work from three incredible female artists that led to the musical *Fun Home*," states the show's director, **Sam Woodhouse**, who is also the artistic director of San Diego Repertory Theatre. "Alison Bechdel won the MacArthur Genius Award after the publication of her novel. **Lisa Kron** and **Jeanine Tesori** were the first female team in history to win the Tony Award for Best Musical and Best Score. The music of *Fun Home* seduces you from the first phrase and does not let you go until the final chord."

Fun Home, aching with memories, centers on two fascinating people: the lesbian pioneer graphic novelist and activist Alison (yes, this is an autobiography of sorts) and her mercurial and unpredictable father Bruce who teaches English, runs a funeral home and loves antiques in ways he cannot love his children.

In the *Detroit Free Press*, *Fun Home* lyricist and book writer Lisa Kron was quoted saying, "*Fun Home* was easy in some ways to adapt because she and Bechdel have plenty in common." Both she and Bechdel are gay and

in their mid-50s, and both came of age in small colleges. Kron continued, “I was at Kalamazoo College at the same time she (Alison) was at Oberlin. Writing those dorm room scenes, I was pictured in my own dorm in Kalamazoo. When she was going to the gay union, I was picturing the women’s interest group, which was our version at Kalamazoo. So I felt like I knew that world pretty well.”

Jeanine Tesori’s score for *Fun Home* is a magically hypnotic composition telling the story through melodically rich songs that summon both heartache and joy. In 2015, Tesori gave an interview to the online publication, *The Interval*. When asked about her relationship with music: Is it the color thing? Is it emotional? She responded, “It’s everything. My music library goes from Stravinsky to The Pretenders to The Talking Heads. I don’t have cast albums. I love making them, but I never listen to them. I have a lot of world music—I produced a lot of world music when I was in my twenties and I worked in Nashville. So it’s really, really eclectic. I think I react emotionally. I have perfect pitch so I see a lot of things in colors. I also feel like music is oceanic—there’s no end to what you can discover. And I really like getting to know a culture by how they sound; where their history is and why it’s like that. All of that stuff really fascinates me.”

FUN HOME **Cast and Creative Team**



Lisa Kron is a writer and performer whose work has been widely produced in New York, regionally, and internationally. Her plays include *Well*, *2.5 Minute Ride* and *The Ver**zon Play*. She wrote the book and lyrics for the musical *Fun Home* (with music by composer Jeanine Tesori), winner of five 2015 Tony Awards including Best Musical. Lisa and Jeanine were the first all-woman team to ever receive a Tony for best score. As an actor Lisa was most recently seen as Mrs. Mi-Tzu and Mrs. Yang in the Fundry Theater’s acclaimed production of *Good Person of Szechuan* (Lortel Award, Outstanding Featured Actress). Honors include a Guggenheim fellowship, a Doris Duke Performing Artists Award, and the Cal Arts/Alpert Award. She is a proud founding member of the OBIE- and Bessie-Award-winning collaborative theater company The

Five Lesbian Brothers. Lisa currently serves as Secretary of the Dramatists Guild Council and on the boards of the McDowell Colony and the Lilly Awards.



Jeanine Tesori has written a diverse catalog for Broadway, Opera, film and television. Her Broadway musicals include: *Fun Home* (2015 Tony Award Winner, Pulitzer finalist); *Violet*; *Caroline, or Change*; *Shrek the Musical*; *Thoroughly Modern Millie*; *Twelfth Night* (LCT); John Guare’s *A Free Man of Color*. Delacorte: *Mother Courage* (starring Meryl Streep). She has received five Tony nominations, three Obie Awards and three Drama Desk Awards. The hallmarks of her work have been described as "close-to-the-surface emotion, structural rigor and rhythmic drive". Her operas include: *The Lion, the Unicorn and Me*; *Blizzard on Marblehead Neck* (MET/LCT Opera/Theater and Glimmerglass Opera commission); and her upcoming collaboration with Tazewell Thompson, *Blue* was commissioned for

Glimmerglass Opera company and will premier there next season. She wrote the musical featured in the 2016 revival of *Gilmore Girls* and has also written special material for artists such as *The Girl in 14G* for Kristin Chenoweth and has been featured in documentaries *Show Business* and *Theater of War*. Jeanine Tesori became the founding Artistic Director of a new concert series at New York City Center called *Encores! Off-Center* for which she has helmed seasons joined by artists such as Stephen Sondheim, Lin Manuel-Miranda, Randy Newman, William Finn, Alan Menken, Renee Elise Goldsberry, Sutton Foster and Jonathan Groff. After producing four seasons of *Off-Center* concerts, she took one of those concerts, *Sunday in the Park with George* (starring Jake Gyllenhaal) to Broadway where she produced the 2017 revival, with ATG and Riva Marker. She was the recording producer for *Sunday* as well as the Original Cast Recordings of *Violet; Caroline, or Change; Shrek; Twelfth Night*; etc. A lecturer in music at Yale and on faculty at Columbia University, Tesori has spoken and taught at universities and programs all over the country. She is the founding Creative Director of the non-profit A BroaderWay, an arts empowerment program for young women. She was given the Einhorn Mentorship Award by Primary Stages for her exceptional work with young artists.



Amanda Naughton (Alison) Tours: *Fun Home*. *The Secret Garden* (Jeff Award Nominee) Broadway: *Into the Woods*, *The Secret Garden*. Off Broadway: *Romance in Hard Times*, *Hundreds of Hats*, *3Postcards*, *Mr. President*. Locally: *Bethany*, *A Doll's House*, *Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas!*, *Jane Austen's Emma*, *Lost in Yonkers*, *The Women*, *The Constant Wife*, *Loves & Hours*, *Paramour* (The Old Globe). *Come From Away*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (La Jolla Playhouse). And: The Public Theatre, Circle Rep, WPA, L.A. Opera, South Coast Repertory, La Mirada, Pittsburgh CLO, The Hangar, Forestburgh, Eugene O'Neill, George Street, Walnut Street, Geva. TV: Betty Roberts on "Remember WENN" (SAG Nominee), "Law & Order: C.I.", "SVU", "Chappelle's Show." Film: *Mexico City*, *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty*.



Claire Adams (Medium Alison): Claire is elated to be a part of this beautiful show and make her San Diego REP debut. She is a native Southern Californian and proud graduate of USC (Fight On!). Selected theatre credits: *Violet*, *Violet*; Actor Four, *Incognito*; *Cathy*, *The Last Five Years*; Annabel Glick, *Lucky Stiff*; Penny Pingleton, *Hairspray*; Squeaky Fromme, *Assassins*; Philia, *Funny Thing...* Selected film credits: *The Charmed Life of John Weld*, *Skinny Fat Girl*, *Slice*, *The Musical*. www.claireadams.me.



Taylor Coleman (Small Alison): Taylor is thrilled to be making her San Diego REP debut and thanks the entire team for this incredible opportunity. She is happy to be home after playing Marta on the Broadway National Tour of *The Sound of Music*, including five weeks at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. Taylor made her professional debut at age 7 and played Cindy Lou at The Old Globe's *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* for 3 seasons, followed up by 2 seasons as big sister Betty Lou. Other credits include: *Peter Pan* (Jane), *Shrek* (Young Fiona), *Music Man* (Gracie Shinn) and *Annie Get Your Gun* (Minnie Oakley).



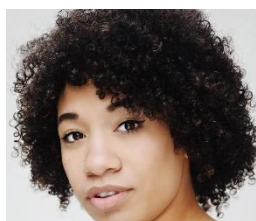
Isabella Pruter (Small Alison): Isabella is 12 years old and attends School of the Madeleine. She loves performing and making people smile while on stage. Her favorite past roles include Junie B. Jones in *Junie B. Jones the Musical* (CYT Central), Molly in *Annie* (CYT Central), Chip in *Beauty and the Beast* (CYT Central) and Ngana in *South Pacific* (SDMT).



Jim Stanek (Bruce): Jim is excited to be here at San Diego REP, and honored to be returning to the role of Bruce Bechdel, for which he was the Standby in the Original Broadway Cast of *Fun Home*. He is also overjoyed to be playing opposite Amanda Naughton, with whom he did one of his first NYC jobs! He most recently played the lead in *Finks*, at TheatreWorks Silicon Valley. Prior to that, he played the patriarch of the family, in the Off-Broadway musical, *Goldstein*. Other Broadway: *A Gentleman's Guide To Love And Murder; The Story Of My Life; Lestat; Little Women; The Rivals; A Funny Thing Happened On The Way To The Forum; Indiscretions*. Off-Broadway includes: *Freud's Last Session; Frankenstein; Jacques Brel...; I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change*. Film: *Bella; Borough Of Kings*. TV: *The Good Wife; Law and Order; Guiding Light*. Recordings include: *...Forum; Frankenstein; Three Musketeers*. Education: BFA-Carnegie Mellon University.



Bets Malone (Helen): Bets originated the role of Suzy Simpson in the hit show *The Marvelous Wonderettes* and can be heard on three Wonderette albums. Regional; *Mama Mia, Dirty Blonde, Aida, Seussical, Titanic, Big Fish, Mary Poppins, How The Grinch Stole Christmas, Sweeney Todd, 1776, Ragtime, On The Town, Evita, Annie Get Your Gun, Once Upon A Mattress*, and *Love, Loss And What I Wore*. She developed a one woman show entitled *Broadway The Broad Way* coming to a venue near you!



Alexis Young (Joan): Based in New York City, California native and elated to be back at her old stomping grounds. Alexis last performed with San Diego REP in their production of *In The Wake* in 2011. Nat'l Tour: *RENT 20th Anniversary* (Swing, u/s Joanne/Mimi) Regional: *Dontrell, Who Kissed the Sea* (Danielle), *The Trip to Bountiful* (Thelma) Other: Mainstage Performer with Disney Cruise Lines on the Disney Dream. Follow @mslexilouyou.



Conlan Ledwith (Roy/Pete/Mark/Bobby Jeremy): Conlan makes his San Diego REP debut. Conlan trained at the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art (LAMDA) and

French clown school L'École Internationale de Théâtre Philippe Gaulier. His American stage credits include Marriott Theatre Lincolnshire, First Stage Milwaukee, Northern Sky Theatre, and winning 1st place at the Utah Shakespeare Festival for *Richard III*. He was awarded the Dean's Award by BADA at Oxford, and appears in the forthcoming film *Sounds of Silence*.



Bobby Chiu (John): Bobby is thrilled to make his debut at San Diego Repertory Theatre as John in *Fun Home*! Some favorite roles include Jerome in *South Pacific* (SDMT), Eddie in *Last Wife* (Cygnet Theatre), Winthrop in *Music Man* (Welk Theatre), a Little Who in *How the Grinch Stole Christmas!* (The Old Globe) and Chip in *Beauty and the Beast* (J*Company).



Hayden Crocker (Christian): Hayden is a sixth grader at Skyline Elementary in Solana Beach. He began acting at age 9, when he joined J*Company Youth Theater in their production of *The Wiz*. He has landed leading roles including Gavroche in *Les Misérables*, Young Simba understudy in Disney's *The Lion King*, and Charlie Bucket understudy in *Willy Wonka Jr.*



Jacob Farry (John): Jacob is so honored to be making his San Diego REP debut in this very special show. His regional credits include the role of Colin Craven in *The Secret Garden* (New Village Arts Theater); Michael Darling in *Peter Pan* (Moonlight Theater); JoJo in *Seussical* (San Diego Christian College) and Dr. Pinch in Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors* (Theater Arts School of San Diego). Jacob provided the voice for Albeeno Hippo in *The Gools*, an animated film to be released later this year, and recently appeared in *Modern Family* and *Fresh Off the Boat*.



Luke Renner (Christian): Luke is thrilled to be a part of the *Fun Home* cast! He is a 5th grade student at Ocean Air School in Torrey Hills and has appeared in several of his elementary school musicals. Luke recently appeared as First Mate in Junior Theatre's production, *Pirates Past Noon*.

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Calendar

FUN HOME / San Diego Repertory Theatre - Lyceum Stage

Winner of five Tony Awards including Best Musical

Music by Jeanine Tesori / Book and Lyrics by Lisa Kron

Based on the Graphic Novel by Alison Bechdel / Directed by Sam Woodhouse

Dates: September 6 – 30, 2018 (Press Opening: Wednesday, September 12, 2018)

When her father dies unexpectedly, graphic novelist Alison Bechdel dives deep into her past to tell the story of the volatile, brilliant, one-of-a-kind man whose temperament and secrets defined her family and her life. Moving between past and present, Alison relives her distinctive childhood playing at the family's Bechdel Funeral Home, her growing understanding of her own sexuality and the looming, unanswerable questions about her father's hidden desires. This refreshingly honest musical is told through melodically rich songs that summon both heartache and joy. *Fun Home* was the most awarded and acclaimed musical of 2015, winning five Tony Awards including Best Musical, Best Book and Best Original Score.

Photos and Information for Fun Home are located on the REP's media room page:

http://www.sdrep.org/media_room.php

Location

San Diego Repertory Theatre

79 Horton Plaza

San Diego, CA 92101

Box Office: 619.544.1000

www.sdrep.org

Ticket Prices: \$23.50-\$77.00

Parking

Parking is available in the Horton Plaza parking garage for \$8 with validation. Enter the garage from Fourth Avenue just south of the Balboa Theatre. Follow entrance lanes, then turn right and continue to the third level to park. Horton Plaza parking tickets (issued from machines at entry) may be validated in the Lyceum Theatres lobby during your show. Validation will allow patrons to pay a flat \$8 rate.

Please note: if you do not validate your ticket at the theatre, the current rate charged at exit is \$2.00 for every 15 minutes (daily maximum charge = \$48.00). Westfield Horton Plaza parking garage rates are subject to change at any time. For any additional ABM Parking information, contact ABM Parking at 619.233.1491.

About San Diego Repertory Theatre

San Diego Repertory Theatre (San Diego REP) produces intimate, exotic, provocative theatre. Founded in 1976, San Diego Repertory Theatre is downtown San Diego's resident theatre, promoting a more inclusive community through work that nourishes progressive political and social values and celebrates the multiple

voices of our region. The company produces and hosts over 550 events and performances year-round on its three stages at the Lyceum Theatre. Since moving to the Lyceum, The REP has produced 45 main stage productions by Latino playwrights, and more than 40 world premieres. The company has received more than 200 awards for artistic excellence from the San Diego Theatre Critics Circle, Patté Theatre Awards, NAACP, Backstage West, Dramalogue and StageSceneLA. In 2005, the San Diego Theatre Critics Circle presented The REP with the Craig Noel Award “For 30 Years of Artistic Dedication to Downtown and Diversity.” San Diego Repertory Theatre feeds the curious soul. To learn more about San Diego Repertory Theatre, to purchase tickets, or make a donation, visit www.sdrep.org. Join us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter (@SanDiegoREP).

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