

Powerful, Poignant and Timely as Ever!

**The La Mirada Theatre for the Performing Arts & McCoy Rigby Entertainment
production of the most acclaimed musical of all time**

WEST SIDE STORY

Book by Arthur Laurents

Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim

Music by Leonard Bernstein

Musical Direction by Brent Crayon

Choreographed by John Todd

Directed by Richard Israel

March 10 to 12 -- Four performances only at Valley Performing Arts Center

April 21 to May 14 at La Mirada Theatre for the Performing Arts

(Press opening is April 22)

(Los Angeles, CA) February 23, 2017 – From the first notes to the final breath, *West Side Story* is one of the most memorable musicals and greatest love stories of all time. As powerful, poignant, and timely as ever, the thrilling Leonard Bernstein and Stephen Sondheim score – including “Tonight,” “Maria,” “America” and the classic “Somewhere,” remains one of the best-ever written. Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet* is transported to modern-day New York City, caught between warring street gangs, the Jets and the Sharks. Their struggle to survive in a world of hate, violence, and prejudice is one of the most innovative, heart-wrenching and relevant musical dramas of our time.

West Side Story will be presented for four performances March 10 to 12, 2017 at Valley Performing Arts Center (VPAC); followed by an engagement from April 21, 2017 through May 14, 2017 (press opening April 22) at La Mirada Theatre for the Performing Arts in La Mirada, California.

This La Mirada Theatre for the Performing Arts and McCoy Rigby production of *West Side Story* with book by Arthur Laurents and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim, music by Leonard Bernstein, is directed by Richard Israel, with musical direction by Brent Crayon, and choreography by John Todd.

As the world prepares for the Centennial of legendary American composer Leonard Bernstein to kick off in August, La Mirada Theatre and VPAC present perhaps his greatest musical; *West Side Story* is also only the second full-scale musical to be presented at VPAC, the award-winning performing arts center, following last season’s La Mirada Theatre-McCoy Rigby production of *Dreamgirls*.

The cast of *West Side Story* features Eddie Egan as Tony (McCoy Rigby tour of *Miss Saigon*); Ashley Marie as Maria (*West Side Story* at Musical Theatre West and Riverside Repertory Theatre); Marlene Martinez

as Anita (National Tour of *Mamma Mia!*); Michael Starr as Riff (McCoy Rigby *Carrie: The Musical*); and Armando Yearwood, Jr. as Bernardo (International Tour of *West Side Story*).

“We have some terrific news about our plans for the Bernstein@100 celebration that we’ll announce during the run of *West Side Story*,” said Thor Steingraber, Executive Director of VPAC. “We are also excited to continue our collaboration with McCoy Rigby Entertainment and La Mirada Theatre to bring full-scale musicals to our audience.” Tom McCoy said, “*West Side Story* is as timely now as ever before and I know our audiences will be captivated by this ground breaking show – and we are happy to have performances at VPAC prior to bringing it to our La Mirada home.”

Tickets for *West Side Story*

Tickets for *West Side Story*, March 10 to 12 at Valley Performing Arts Center, can be purchased by visiting ValleyPerformingArtsCenter.org or calling (818) 677-3000. Valley Performing Arts Center is located on the campus of California State University, Northridge (CSUN), 18111 Nordhoff Street Northridge, CA 91330-8448, at the corner of Nordhoff and Lindley.

Editors please note: West Side Story is not available for review until Saturday, April 22 at La Mirada Theatre for the Performing Arts. Press tickets for review purposes will not be made available during the Valley Performing Arts Center engagement; for more information please contact David Elzer at DAVIDELZER@ME.com | 818-508-1754.

Tickets for *West Side Story*, April 21 to May 14 (press opening April 22) at La Mirada Theatre for the Performing Arts, can be purchased by visiting LaMiradaTheatre.com or calling (562) 944-9801 or (714) 994-6310. La Mirada Theatre for the Performing Arts is located at 14900 La Mirada Boulevard in La Mirada, near the intersection of Rosecrans Avenue where the 91 and 5 freeways meet. Parking is free.

Cast and Design Team

The cast of *West Side Story* includes Adrian Arietta as Nibbles, JeanLuc Cavnar-Lewandowski as Big Deal, Max Chucker as A-Rab, Autumn Crockett Cooper as Consuelo, Maggie Darago as Graziella, Jake DuPree as Snowboy, Lance Galgon as Glad Hand, Erik Gratton as Krupke, Joe Hart as Lt. Schrank, April Josephine as Francisca, Natalie Iscovich as Rosalia, Danielle Kay as Anybodys, Chris Meissner as Baby John, Gabriel Navarro as Pepe, Dino Nicandros as Chino, Nich O’Neil as Luis, Clarice Ordaz as Teresita, Steven Rada as Anxious, Joshua Rivera as Indio, Mark Shunkey as Gee-Tar, Bailey Day Sonner as Velma, Alyssa Weldon as Minnie, Justin Michael Wilcox as Action, Time Winters as Doc, and Adam Ziv as Diesel.

The Design Team for *West Side Story* is as follows: Scenic Design by Stephan Gifford; Lighting Design by Steven Young; Sound Design by Julie Ferrin; Wardrobe Design by Tommy Marquez; Hair/Make-Up/Wig Design by Katie McCoy; and Props Design by Terry Hanrahan. Casting is by Julia Flores, and the Production Stage Manager is John Calder.

About the Creative Team

Richard Israel (Director) is thrilled and grateful to be returning to MRE/La Mirada Theatre, where he directed last year’s production of *Rent* and 2014’s *Floyd Collins* (LA Stage Alliance Ovation Awards for Directing and Outstanding Musical in a Large Venue). Most recently, Richard was the on-set *Avenue Q* coordinator for the upcoming HBO series *Big Little Lies*. Recent directing credits include *Our Town* at the

Actor's Co-Op, *From Foster Care To Fabulous* for NY Fringe, *Promises Promises* for MTG and the original Jeff Marx/Fat Mike musical *Home Street Home* at San Francisco's Z-Space. Other directing credits include *The Baker's Wife*, and *110 In The Shade* (LA Stage Alliance Award for Outstanding Musical in an Intimate Venue), *Kiss Me Kate* for Cabrillo Music Theatre, *Glorious!* for ICT, *Avenue Q* for DOMA Theatre and the multiple-Ovation nominated *Having It All* for the Laguna Playhouse. Intimate theatre credits include *Bronies!*, *The Full Monty*, *The Burnt Part Boys*, and *Falsettos* (all for the Third Street Theater), as well as *Gypsy*, *Assassins*, *Big* and the west coast premiere of *Anita Bryant Died For Your Sins* (all for West Coast Ensemble Theatre). For the Rubicon Theatre he has directed *George Gershwin In Concert* and *The Secret Garden In Concert*, and for MTG he has directed *Road Show*, *High Fidelity* and *Violet*, among others. He is on the musical theatre faculty of AMDA and is the recipient of the L.A. Drama Critics Circle Career Achievement Award for Directing.

Brent Crayon (Musical Director) has had the privilege to work with such notable artists as Stephen Schwartz, Daisy Prince, John Caird, Paul Gordon, Scott Schwartz, John Bucchino, and Richard Maltby, Jr. Favorite theatrical productions include the West Coast premieres of *Songs For a New World* and *Tick, Tick...BOOM!*, and the world premiere productions of Stephen Schwartz's *Snapshots*, John Bucchino's *It's Only Life*, and *Bubble Boy*, *The Musical* (Music Director/Orchestrator). Brent recently conducted *Les Misérables* in Anchorage, Alaska. An accomplished and multi-faceted musician, Brent has been a featured soloist in ensembles throughout Southern California, including Santa Monica Symphony Orchestra, the Long Beach Symphony Orchestra, and the Ventura Chamber Orchestra.

John Todd (Choreographer), a native of the Carolina's, received his training at the prestigious North Carolina School of the Arts, receiving a full scholarship at the age of 15. Taking his training into the world, John has worked with such luminaries as Martha Graham, Agnes de Mille, Hal Prince, Twyla Tharp and contemporary artists Robert Zemeckis, Coppola and Paul Feig. John's most recent experiences include directing/choreographing *West Side Story* at the Triandi Stage in Athens, Greece, choreographing multiple episodes of "Days Of Our Lives" for NBC, *Kiss Me Kate* at the Herod Atticus Theater in Athens, Greece. John's film and television credits include: "The Last Tycoon" (with Kelsey Grammer), "Saving Mr. Banks," "Mad Men," "About A Boy," "Ronna and Beverly," Marvel's "Agents of Shield," as well as choreographing the movie musical "Samantha Spade Ace Detective." Mr. Todd has also created 3 works for the prestigious Houston Ballet. For more info, please visit www.johnjtodd.com

About La Mirada Theatre for the Performing Arts and McCoy Rigby Entertainment

Winner of the L.A. Stage Alliance Ovation Award for 2012-2013 "Best Season of the Year," La Mirada Theatre for the Performing Arts, now in its fourth decade, has been hailed by the Los Angeles Times as "one of the best Broadway-style houses in Southern California." This beautiful state-of-the-art theatre has been producing quality productions for its Southern California audiences since 1977. The theatre has produced several national tours and is the recipient of many accolades including Ovation and Emmy Awards and Tony Award nominations. Brian Kite is the theatre's Producing Artistic Director. The theatre is located at 14900 La Mirada Boulevard in La Mirada, California, near the intersection of Rosecrans Avenue. Parking is theatre-adjacent and free. For further information call 562-944-9801 or visit LaMiradaTheatre.com

Celebrating its 21st Anniversary season at La Mirada Theatre for the Performing Arts, McCoy Rigby Entertainment (MRE), is one of the world's premier theatrical production companies. Headed by Executive Producers Tom McCoy and Cathy Rigby, MRE has produced over one hundred musicals, plays, and concerts featuring some of the biggest stars in the industry today. In addition, MRE has launched several Emmy Award-winning and Tony Award-nominated Broadway, international, and national touring

productions including: Peter Pan, Seussical the Musical, and Annie Get Your Gun, all starring Cathy Rigby; Frank Wildhorn's Jekyll and Hyde starring American Idol contender and Tony Award nominee Constantine Maroulis along with Grammy Award nominee and R&B superstar Deborah Cox; Jesus Christ Superstar starring Carl Anderson and Sebastian Bach; Camelot starring Michael York and Lou Diamond Phillips and Happy Days written by Gary Marshall and Paul Williams. Peter Pan starring Cathy Rigby has made four stops on Broadway and received four Tony Award nominations including Best Revival of a Musical and Best Actress in a Musical. The A&E TV network premiere of "Peter Pan," starring Cathy Rigby, received one Emmy Award and four Emmy Award nominations. MRE's other credits include numerous award-winning documentaries and stadium events.

Calendar Listing for WEST SIDE STORY

March 10 – 12, 2017

Valley Performing Arts Center

Venue: Valley Performing Arts Center
18111 Nordhoff Street
Northridge, CA 91330

Dates: Friday, March 10 at 8pm, Saturday, March 11 at 3pm and 8 pm
Sunday, March 12 at 3pm

Tickets: **Prices:** Starting at \$33
In Person: VPAC Ticket Office, located in the VPAC Courtyard
By Phone: (818) 677-3000
Online: ValleyPerformingArtsCenter.org

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April 21 – May 14, 2017

La Mirada Theatre for the Performing Arts

Venue: La Mirada Theatre for the Performing Arts
14900 La Mirada Blvd. in La Mirada, CA 90638.
Near the intersection of Rosecrans Avenue where the 91 and 5 freeways meet.
Free, ample lot parking.

Dates: Opens Saturday, April 22 through Sunday, May 14
Preview on Friday, April 21 at 8pm
Wednesdays & Thursdays at 7:30pm; Fridays at 8pm;
Saturdays at 2pm and 8pm; Sundays at 2pm.

Tickets: **Prices:** \$20 - \$70
By Phone: (562) 944-9801 or (714) 994-6310

Online: www.lamiradatheatre.com

Press

David Elzer, DEMAND PR

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Or visit www.demandpr.com

Photos and press information also available at lamiradatheatre.com