

LA JOLLA PLAYHOUSE ANNOUNCES CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM FOR WORLD PREMIERE OF *WORKING GIRL*

**Thrilling New Musical by Cyndi Lauper and Theresa Rebeck
Marks Christopher Ashley's Final Playhouse Production as Artistic Director**

La Jolla, CA – La Jolla Playhouse announces the cast and creative team for its world-premiere musical ***Working Girl***, music and lyrics by Tony and Grammy Award winner **Cyndi Lauper**, book by **Theresa Rebeck**, based on the Twentieth Century Fox motion picture written by Kevin Wade, directed by Tony Award winner **Christopher Ashley** and choreographed by **Sarah O'Leary**, running in the Playhouse's Mandell Weiss Theatre **October 28 – November 30**. For tickets and information, visit lajollaplayhouse.org.

Working Girl marks Christopher Ashley's final directorial project after 18 years as La Jolla Playhouse's Rich Family Artistic Director. "For nearly two decades, La Jolla Playhouse has been my home, my family, and the cornerstone of my career – fulfilling my passions as both an artist and a member of this extraordinary creative community," said **Ashley**. "I cannot think of a better show to wrap up my time here than *Working Girl*. This truly joyful new musical – based on the beloved '80s film, but very much in conversation with our current moment – perfectly encapsulates the Playhouse's unwavering commitment to developing new works for the American Theatre."

The cast features **Ashley Blanchet** as "Cyn," **Anoop Desai** as "Jack," **Leslie Rodriguez Kritzer** as "Katharine," **Joanna "JoJo" Levesque** as "Tess" and **Joey Taranto** as "Mick," along with ensemble members: **Jacqueline Arnold, Jesse Bhamrah, Michael Genet, Bailey Lee, Amy Hillner Larsen, Ashley Levin, Nathan Madden, Alisa Melendez, Sydni Moon, Jennifer Perry, Julio Rey, Elliot Sagay and Ian Ward**; and Swings: **Patricia Jewel, Jaxon Smith, Gabi Stapula and Sean Watkinson**.

The creative team includes **Rob Hyman** and **Sammy James, Jr.**, Additional Music and Lyrics; **AMP featuring Erica Jiaying Zhang**, Scenic Designer; **Linda Cho**, Costume Designer; **Amanda Zieve**, Lighting Designer; **Gareth Owen**, Sound Designer; **Hana S. Kim**, Projection Designer; **Charles G. LaPointe**, Wig Designer; **Stephen Oremus**, Music Supervisor; **Brian Usifer**, Associate Music Supervisor; **Julie McBride**, Music Director; **Stephen Oremus, Brian Usifer and Scott Wasserman**, Orchestrators; **Ann C. James**, Sensitivity Specialist; **The Telsey Office, Rachel Hoffman, CSA and Hannah Reinert**, Casting; **Victoria Navarro**, Stage Manager; and **Alexa Burn and Derric Nolte**, Assistant Stage Managers.

Tess McGill is a Staten Island secretary with big dreams and even bigger ideas, but when her scheming boss Katharine Parker steals one, Tess decides to take matters into her own hands. With Katharine unexpectedly out of town, Tess seizes the chance to prove herself, making a bold business move that could change her life forever. With some help from her savvy friends and a charming businessman, she's got one shot to pull it off – before the boss returns! This sharp and hilarious adaptation of the iconic 1988 film features an exhilarating original score by the legendary Cyndi Lauper, a smart, fresh book from award-winning playwright Theresa Rebeck, and direction by Playhouse Artistic Director Christopher Ashley. ***Working Girl*** is just as much about the power of friendship as it is about chasing ambition and success.

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Cyndi Lauper is a Grammy, Emmy, and Tony Award-winning songwriter and performing artist known for her iconic voice, influential punk glamor, and infectious live shows. Lauper won the Grammy Award for Best New Artist with her first album, "She's So Unusual." She became the first woman in history to have four top-five singles from a debut album, and went on to release nine additional studio albums. In 2006, she made her Broadway debut as a performer in *Threepenny Opera*, and made her Broadway debut as a composer in 2013 with *Kinky Boots*, becoming the first solo woman to win a Tony Award for Best Original Score. She also won a 2014 Grammy Award for the show's Cast Album. *Let the Canary Sing*, the acclaimed feature documentary film on her remarkable life and career, is now streaming on Paramount+, and Lauper just wrapped her international Farewell Tour. She has been inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame and the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, and is a NY Times best-selling author. Lauper is also a tireless advocate for the LGBTQ+ community, co-founding True Colors Fund in 2008. cyndilauper.com

Theresa Rebeck is an award-winning and widely-produced playwright whose work has been staged across the globe. Her Broadway plays include the record-breaking Roundabout Theatre-produced hit *I Need That* (starring Danny DeVito), along with *Bernhardt/Hamlet*, *Dead Accounts*, *Seminar* and *Mauritius*. Other notable plays include the *New York Times* Critic's Pick *Dig* (which she also directed) at Primary Stages/59E59 Theaters; *Mad House*, which premiered on London's West End starring David Harbour and Bill Pullman; *Seared* (MCC); *Downstairs* (Primary Stages); *The Scene*; *The Water's Edge*; *Loose Knit*; *The Family of Mann*; *Spike Heels* (Second Stage); *Bad Dates*; *The Butterfly Collection*; *Our House* (Playwrights Horizons); *The Understudy* (Roundabout); *View of the Dome* (NYTW); *What We're Up Against* (Women's Project); *Omnium Gatherum* (Pulitzer Prize finalist). As a director, her work has been seen at The Alley Theatre (Houston), the REP Company (Delaware), Dorset Theatre Festival, the Orchard Project and the Folger Theatre. Major film and TV projects include *Trouble*, with Anjelica Huston, Bill Pullman and David Morse (writer and director), *NYPD Blue*, the NBC series *Smash* (creator), the female spy thriller *355* (for Jessica Chastain's production company) and *Glimpse*. As a novelist, Rebeck's books include *Three Girls and Their Brother* and *I'm Glad About You*. Rebeck is the recipient of the William Inge New Voices Playwriting Award, the PEN/Laura Pels Foundation Award, and a Lilly Award. theresarebeck.com

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Tony Award winner **Christopher Ashley** has served as La Jolla Playhouse's Rich Family Artistic Director since 2007. During his tenure, he directed the world premieres of *Come From Away*, *The Heart*, *3 Summers of Lincoln*, *Babbitt*, *The Untitled Unauthorized Hunter S. Thompson Musical*, *Diana*, *Memphis*, *Escape to Margaritaville*, *The Squirrels*, *A Dram of Drummhicit*, *Restoration* and *Chasing the Song*, as well as *His Girl Friday*, *As You Like It*, *Glengarry Glen Ross*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Freaky Friday* and *Xanadu*. He also spearheaded the Without Walls (WOW) initiative, the DNA New Work Series and the Theatre-in-Residence program. Ashley directed *Come From Away* for AppleTV+ and *Diana: The Musical* for Netflix. Other screen credits include the feature films *Jeffrey* and *Lucky Stiff*, and the American Playhouse production of *Blown Sideways Through Life* for PBS. Broadway credits include *Come From Away* (Tony and Outer Critics Circle Awards), *Diana: The Musical*, *Escape to Margaritaville*, *Memphis* (Tony Award nomination), *Xanadu*, *Leap of Faith* (Drama Desk Award nomination), *All Shook Up* and *The Rocky Horror Show* (Tony, Drama Desk, Outer Critics Circle Award nominations). He also helmed productions of *Come From Away* in London (Olivier Award nomination), Toronto, Australia and on national tour. Other national tours include *Escape to Margaritaville*, *Memphis*, *Xanadu*, *All Shook Up* and *Seussical: The Musical*. Additional New York stage credits include *Blown Sideways Through Life*, *Jeffrey* (Lucille Lortel and Obie Awards), *The Most Fabulous Story Ever Told*, *Valhalla* (Lucille Lortel Award nomination), *Regrets Only*, *Wonder of the World*, *Communicating Doors*, *Bunny, Bunny*, *The Night Hank Williams Died* and *Fires in the Mirror* (Lucille Lortel Award), among others. He is the recipient of the Princess Grace Award, the Drama League Director Fellowship and an NEA/TCG Director Fellowship.

Sarah O'Gleby's choreography credits include *Shucked* (Broadway, US Tour, Regents Park, London); *Almost Famous* (Broadway); *The Wanderer* (Paper Mill Playhouse); *High Button Shoes* (Encores); *Mythic* (Charing Cross). As Resident Choreographer for TV: *Saturday Night Live* (NBC); *The Tonight Show with Jimmy Fallon*. Immersive Events: clients include Hermès, Target, Robin Hood Foundation, Rimowa, Google, Disney. SarahOGleby.com

La Jolla Playhouse is a place where artists and audiences come together to create what's new and next in the American theatre, from Tony Award-winning productions, to imaginative programs for young audiences, to interactive experiences outside our theatre walls. Founded in 1947 by Gregory Peck, Dorothy McGuire and Mel Ferrer, the Playhouse is currently led by Tony Award winner Christopher Ashley, the Rich Family Artistic Director of La Jolla Playhouse, and Managing Director Debby Buchholz. The Playhouse is internationally renowned for the development of new plays and musicals, including mounting 120 world premieres, commissioning 70 new works, and sending 37 productions to Broadway, garnering a total of 42 Tony Awards, as well as the 1993 Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre.

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FACT SHEET

WHAT: *Working Girl*
Music and Lyrics by Cyndi Lauper; Book by Theresa Rebeck
Based on the Twentieth Century Fox motion picture written by Kevin Wade
Choreographed by Sarah O'Gleby
Directed by Christopher Ashley

WHEN: **October 28 – November 30** (Press Dates: Nov 9, 12, 13)
Tue/Wed/Thu/Fri at 7:30pm; Sat at 2pm & 8pm; Sun at 1pm & 7pm

WHERE: **Mandell Weiss Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse, 2910 La Jolla Village Drive**
Website/Tickets: lajollaplayhouse.org; Phone: (858) 550-1010

WHO: Additional Music and Lyrics: Rob Hyman and Sammy James, Jr.
Scenic Design: AMP Featuring Erica Jiaying Zhang
Costume Design: Linda Cho
Lighting Design: Amanda Zieve
Sound Design: Gareth Owen
Projection Design: Hana S. Kim
Wig Design: Charles G. LaPointe
Music Supervisor: Stephen Oremus
Associate Music Supervisor: Brian Usifer
Music Director: Julie McBride
Orchestrators: Stephen Oremus, Brian Usifer, Scott Wasserman
Sensitivity Specialist: Ann C. James
Casting: The Telsey Office, Rachel Hoffman, CSA and Hannah Reinert
Stage Manager: Victoria Navarro
Assistant Stage Managers: Alexa Burn, Derric Nolte

CAST: *Cyn:* Ashley Blanchet
Jack: Anoop Desai
Katharine: Leslie Rodriguez Kritzer
Tess: Joanna "JoJo" Levesque
Mick: Joey Taranto

Ensemble: Jacqueline Arnold, Jesse Bhamrah, Michael Genet, Bailey Lee,
Amy Hillner Larsen, Ashley Levin, Nathan Madden,
Alisa Melendez Sydni Moon, Jennifer Perry, Julio Rey,
Elliot Sagay, Ian Ward

Swings: Patricia Jewel, Jaxon Smith, Gabi Stapula, Sean Watkinson

BACKGROUND:

Tess McGill is a Staten Island secretary with big dreams and even bigger ideas, but when her scheming boss Katharine Parker steals one, Tess decides to take matters into her own hands. With Katharine unexpectedly out of town, Tess seizes the chance to prove herself, making a bold business move that could change her life forever. With some help from her savvy friends and a charming businessman, she's got one shot to pull it off – before the boss returns! This sharp and hilarious adaptation of the iconic 1988 film features an exhilarating original score by the legendary Cyndi Lauper, a smart, fresh book from award-winning playwright Theresa Rebeck, and direction by Playhouse Artistic Director Christopher Ashley.

SPONSORS:

Weston Anson and Alice Mitchell, Denise and Lon Bevers, Sheri L. Jamieson, Veronica and Miguel Leff, Esq., Paula and Brian Powers, The Stockdale Family, Mintz, Show Imaging

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