



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**TOWN HALL THEATRE ANNOUNCES NEW MUSICAL, *WOMEN ON THE VERGE OF A NERVOUS BREAKDOWN***

APRIL 23, 2019 – Closing out the Town Hall Theatre 2018/19 “Lost & Found” Season with a bang is ***WOMEN ON THE VERGE OF A NERVOUS BREAKDOWN***, a sizzling musical farce of female resilience, with book by Jeffrey Lane, music and lyrics by David Yazbek, based on the Academy Award nominated film by Pedro Almodóvar. ***WOMEN ON THE VERGE OF A NERVOUS BREAKDOWN*** will have 12 performances, including two previews, May 30 through June 22, 2019, at Town Hall Theatre Company, 3535 School Street, in Lafayette, CA. Tickets are \$18 - \$35, and are available through the Box Office at (925) 283-1557 or online at [www.TownHallTheatre.com](http://www.TownHallTheatre.com).

THT will host four Special Events for ***WOMEN ON THE VERGE OF A NERVOUS BREAKDOWN***: an *Opening Night Gala* on Saturday, June 1, 2019; *LIT UP at Town Hall*, a literary salon, on Wednesday, June 12, 2019; and Theatre Club, our post-show talk-backs with complimentary wine, on Friday, June 7, and Friday, June 21, 2019. For ***WOMEN ON THE VERGE OF A NERVOUS BREAKDOWN***, Town Hall Theatre’s newest community partner is “Dress For Success San Francisco.” At each performance through June 9<sup>th</sup>, Town Hall’s audience members can make a difference in the lives of women across the Bay Area by donating new and gently-used handbags, shoes and office attire.

As always, one hour before performances, we welcome audiences to enjoy THT's full bar and entertainment in our lobby.

"A joyous evening: an affectionate, poignant and defiant tribute to female resilience" – *Financial Times*

Newly revised and streamlined for the London West End, **WOMEN ON THE VERGE OF A NERVOUS BREAKDOWN** whisks us off to sexy 1980s Madrid, and to the unravelling world of a voice-over artist – Pepa – Pepa's wandering lover, the lover's wacky ex-wife, their son and his fiancée, Pepa's angsty model friend and her suspicious boyfriend, plus a lawyer, and a talkative taxi driver. All this black comic chaos is served up with a very specially laced gazpacho, and an irresistible Spanish-flavored beat.

"When I was a boy, I grew up surrounded by strong women ... the kind of generation of women who saved our country from the [Spanish Civil] war," the Spanish director Pedro Almodóvar said, in a symposium shortly before the London premiere. It was these women who passed on to him the "inspiration for the female characters" he has created throughout his career. The vibrant Pepa and her female friends in **Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown** are ultimately survivors. Even the eye-popping Technicolor colors which are a trademark of the film, and now imbue the musical stage version, are more than a simple fashion statement, representing an expression of release from the many years of a repressive regime.

Town Hall Theatre is excited to be offering the Bay Area a first look at the West End 2015 revised version of **Women on the Verge**. In an interview, composer Yazbek has said he and Lane wanted to revisit the show because they wanted to focus more on the main character's story, keeping the story thread clear. Yazbek describes the show as not only very funny, but also quite timely and moving.

“ ... gloriously camp yet seriously heartfelt celebration of female powers of survival and self-emancipation ...” -- *The Independent*

THT's creative team for **WOMEN ON THE VERGE OF A NERVOUS BREAKDOWN** is composed of 75% female theatre artists, including the Director, Music Director, Choreographer, Sound Designer, Costume Designer and Properties Designer. **WOMEN ON THE VERGE OF A NERVOUS BREAKDOWN** is directed by Dawn Monique Williams with music direction by Lindsey Schmeltzer, choreography by Roberta E. Inscho-Cox, and showcases an ensemble of amazingly talented Bay Area performers: Patricia Pitpitan as Pepa, Sheila Viramontes as Lucía, Marah Sotelo as Candela, Keaton Wilkerson as the Taxi Driver, Paul Plain as Iván, Madison Gerringe as Marisa, Steven McCloud as Carlos, Debbie Lynn Carriger as Paulina, and Melvign Badiola, Gianna Capozzi, Isabella Capozzi, Reg Clay, Kathy Ferber, and Carolina Morones in the ensemble.

The award-winning team of designers, boasting credits from all around the Bay Area, include: Martin Flynn (scenic design, previously designed *Song of the Nightingale* among many other productions at Town Hall); Delayne Medoff (lighting design); Lana Palmer (sound design); Valera Coble (costume design); and Debbie Shelley (properties design).

### **Performance History**

**WOMEN ON THE VERGE OF A NERVOUS BREAKDOWN** is a stage adaptation of Pedro Almodóvar's film of the same name. *Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown* had workshop readings in October 2009 and March 2010; the latter was directed by Tony winner Bartlett Sher. The musical opened on Broadway at the Belasco Theatre in Lincoln Center on November 4, 2010. The regional premiere of the musical took place in September 2014 at the Theatre at the Center in Chicago. A West End production, also directed by Sher, opened at

the Playhouse Theatre in January 2015, starring Olivier Award-winning performer Tamsin Greig. Celebrities that have starred in *Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown* include: Patti LuPone (Lucía), Salma Hayek, Jessica Biel, Matthew Morrison, Justin Guarini (Carlos), Sherie Rene Scott (Pepa), Brian Stokes Mitchell (Ivan), Danny Burstein (Taxi Driver), Paulo Szot (Iván), Mary Beth Peil (Concierge) and Laura Benanti (Candela).

### **ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT**

**Jeffrey Lane** (Book) was most recently represented on Broadway by his work with David Yazbek for *Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown*. His work for *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels* earned him both Tony and Drama Desk nominations, as well as the Drama League Award for Best Musical. Perhaps best known for such television programs as "Mad About You," "Ryan's Hope," "Lou Grant," "Cagney & Lacey," "The AFI Life Achievement Awards," "The Tony Awards," "The Days and Nights of Molly Dodd," and the miniseries "The Murder of Mary Phagan," he is the winner of five Emmy Awards, three Writers Guild Awards, two Peabodys, a Golden Globe and the Christopher Award.

**David Yazbek** (Music and Lyrics): A varied career as a recording artist, Emmy-winning TV and film writer, music producer and pianist led Yazbek to a career on Broadway. His four shows, *The Full Monty*, *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*, *Women on The Verge of a Nervous Breakdown*, and *The Band's Visit* were all Tony nominated for Best Score, with the latter winning the 2018 Tony Award. *The Full Monty* won him the Drama Desk Award for Best Music. He also produced the original cast albums of *The Band's Visit*, *The Full Monty*, *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*, and *Women on The Verge of a Nervous Breakdown*, the first three of which were nominated for Grammy Awards. Yazbek scored the final season of HBO's *Boardwalk Empire*, and scored and performed the music for Larry David's *Fish in the Dark*. Yazbek is

currently collaborating on the new musical *Tootsie*, opening on Broadway, Spring 2019.

### **ABOUT THE DIRECTOR**

**Dawn Monique Williams** is a Princess Grace Award winning director. A native of Oakland, Dawn was a resident artist at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival for six seasons where she directed *Merry Wives of Windsor* in 2017. Recent directing credits include *The Secretaries* (Willamette Week's Top 10 Portland Theater Productions of 2018), *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Romeo and Juliet*, August Wilson's *The Piano Lesson*, and Lynn Nottage's *By the Way, Meet Stark*. For Town Hall Dawn directed *A Civil War Christmas* last season. She has worked at theatres across the country including: Profile Theatre (Portland), Chautauqua Theater Company, African American Shakespeare Company, WaterTower Theatre, Ashland New Plays Festival, Impact Theatre, Barrington Stage Company, California Shakespeare Theater, Marin Shakespeare Company. Awards include a TCG Leadership U residency grant with Bill Rauch, the Killian Directing Fellowship at OSF, a Drama League Directing Fellowship, and she was featured in Theatre Bay Area magazine as one to "Keep an Eye On." Dawn holds an MA in Dramatic Literature and an MFA in Directing, and is a proud member of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society.

### **ABOUT THE MUSIC DIRECTOR**

**Lindsey Schmeltzer** is happy to be back at Town Hall, this time as Musical Director. Some of Lindsey's musical direction credits include: *Alone World* at Milwaukee Repertory Theater, *As You Like It* at Livermore Shakespeare Festival, *Hairspray* and *Man of La Mancha* at Garland Civic Theatre, and *Little Shop of Horrors* at Garland Summer Musicals.

### **ABOUT TOWN HALL THEATRE COMPANY**

Established in 1944 as the Dramateurs, Town Hall Theatre turns 75 this year, making it the oldest continuously active theatre in Contra Costa County. Town Hall Theatre was awarded Best Theatre Troupe 2016 in *Diablo Magazines, Best of The East Bay*, and is the past recipient of numerous Shellie Awards, and regional Theatre Bay Area Awards. THT is also home to an extensive children's educational program, twice voted the "Best Children's Theatre Company" by *Bay Area Parent Magazine*. THT's 104-year old historical building is managed by the Lafayette Association (LIA).

Town Hall Theatre Company, 3535 School Street, in Lafayette, CA 94549. The Box Office is open Tuesday through Friday, 4:00 to 6:00PM and Saturday 2:00-4:00 pm and can be reached at 925.283.1557. Information is also available at [www.TownHallTheatre.com](http://www.TownHallTheatre.com).

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## **CALENDAR Information on *WOMEN ON THE VERGE OF A NERVOUS BREAKDOWN***

**WHO: TOWN HALL THEATRE COMPANY presents**

**WHAT: *WOMEN ON THE VERGE OF A NERVOUS BREAKDOWN***, directed by Dawn Monique Williams, with music direction by Lindsey Schmeltzer

**CAST:** Melvign Badiola, Gianna Capozzi, Isabella Capozzi, Debbie Lynn Carriger, Reg Clay, Kathy Ferber, Madison Gerringe, Steven McCloud, Carolina Morones, Patricia Pitpitan, Paul Plain, Marah Sotelo, Sheila Viramontes, Keaton Wilkerson

**DATES:** Thursday, May 30, 2019, Preview @ 8:00 p.m.

Friday, May 31, 2019, Preview @ 8:00 p.m.

Saturday, June 1, 2019: OPENING RECEPTION

THROUGH June 22, 2019

**SHOWTIMES:** May 30 – June 22, 2019

Thursdays, May 30 and June 20 @ 8:00PM

Fridays and Saturdays @ 8:00pm

Sundays, June 9 and June 16 @ 2:00 PM

**CLOSES: June 22, 2019**

**WHERE: Town Hall Theatre Company**, 3535 School Street, Lafayette, CA 94549

**SPECIAL EVENTS:**

June 1, 2019: *Opening Night*

June 12, 2019: *LIT UP at Town Hall*, a Literary Salon, 7:30-9:00pm,  
theme: *Borderlines*

June 7 and June 21, 2019: *Theatre Club*, Post-Show Talk-Back

**TICKETS:** \$18 Previews

\$32-35 Thurs. eve., Fri. eve., Sat. eve

\$30-32 Sun. matinees

Discounts available for Seniors and youth

**BOX OFFICE:** (925) 283-1557; [www.townhalltheatre.com](http://www.townhalltheatre.com)