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**The Tabard Theatre Company at Theatre on San Pedro Square
Announces Its 17th Season: “Our Choices become Us”**

***Including Several Area Premiere Productions and a new program:
Top of the Stairs!***

SAN JOSE, Calif. (January 26, 2017) – The Tabard Theatre Company announces its 2017-2018 mainstage season at Theatre on San Pedro Square, *The Destination for Arts Discovery* in downtown San Jose. The company’s 17th-season lineup, themed “Our Choices become Us”, includes the 2012 Tony Award-winning **PETER AND THE STARCATCHER**, an imaginative play with music that explores the backstories of Peter Pan and Captain Hook; **MOM’S GIFT**, family comedy with a surprising twist; **HOLIDAY AT THE SAVOY**, standards from the swing era blended with seasonal favorites set at the Savoy Ballroom, 1945; **EVELYN IN PURGATORY**, a West Coast premiere of a dramatic comedy centered on New York City’s policies toward suspended teachers; **THE MIRACLE WORKER**, the 1960 Tony-winning play based on Helen Keller’s powerful and inspiring biography *The Story of My Life*; and **ADRIFT IN MACAO**, a fabulous musical spoof of the Hollywood film noir classics of the 1940s and ‘50s.

With its 17th season, Tabard also introduces an exciting new play series called Top of the Stairs that will explore more mature and provocative content. The two plays that will kick off Top of the Stairs are both about American painters: **RED** about Mark Rothko and **O’Keeffe: Paintings from the Faraway Nearby**, focused on the life of Georgia O’Keefe. The plays will be performed in repertory, alternating throughout the run in June and July 2017.

The company’s lineup also includes three concerts by NINETEEN, San Jose’s Premier Jazz Orchestra. Several subscription packages for the 2017-2018 are available: 6-show Mainstage Productions; 2-show Top of the Stairs Productions; and the three concerts by NINETEEN. Opportunity to subscribe at the discounted Early Bird rate are available until May 5, 2017. Subscriptions may be purchased online at tabardtheatre.org, or by calling **408-679-2330**. Subscribers may add the Top of the Stairs series and NINETEEN concerts at the special subscriber discount rate when purchasing their subscription.

The season is themed “Choices,” because, as Tabard’s Artistic Director Cathy Spielberger Cassetta explains, “Each of our shows next season will recount, reflect, and/or reveal life options our characters

have before them and the choices they make. Several of our plays are founded in fact, focused on historical people or situations. Other shows explore choices through adventure, fantasy, and whimsy. This year, in addition to our six engaging main stage productions, we are introducing a new series called Top of the Stairs! We have made this choice to expand our programming options to give artists and audiences, alike, an opportunity to explore works with a mature bent.”

Commenting on Tabard’s 17th season, Executive Director Nick Nichols offered, “Once again, Cathy has put together a main stage season of plays and musicals that touch the heart, stimulate the mind and feed the soul. From the swashbuckling fantasy of “Peter and the Starcatcher” to the beautiful and gripping story of “The Miracle Worker”, this season offers substance, variety, great entertainment and laugh-out-loud fun for the whole family! I am also extremely excited about our new play series, Top of The Stairs, which will expand the type of theatrical experience and subject matter Tabard offers and gives our audience even more “Choices”.

TABARD’S 2017-2018 MAINSTAGE PRODUCTIONS

Exploring Choices

PETER AND THE STARCATCHER

Sept. 15 - Oct. 8, 2017

Tony Award-winner: Best Play

Written by Rick Elice. Music by Wayne Barker. Based on the 2004 novel by Dave Barry and Ridley Pearson

Ever wonder how Peter Pan became Peter Pan or what Captain Hook’s backstory is?

Well, wonder no more! Featuring a dozen actors portraying more than 100 engaging and unforgettable characters, this play with music uses the limitless possibilities of imagination to bring to life a prequel to Peter Pan through which we learn how he earned his flight credentials and how a mustachioed pirate became the dreaded Captain Hook.

Winner of 5 Tony Awards and based on the best-selling novels, *Peter and the Starcatcher* upends with panache, whimsy, and adventure the century-old story of how a miserable orphan boy becomes the legendary Peter Pan.

“Literate, eccentric, anachronistic, silly—in short, a celebration of endless verbal and physical shenanigans....” NYMetroParents

Exchanging Choices

MOM’S GIFT

Oct. 21 - Nov. 19, 2017

Northern California Premiere

Written by Phil Olson

In this comedy with a heart, Mom has been dead for 11 months and shows up at her husband’s birthday party as a ghost with a mission. Like Clarence in *It’s A Wonderful Life*, she has to accomplish a task to earn her wings. Only what the task actually is, is a mystery.

There are so many things to fix. The problem is complicated by the fact that the only person who can hear or see Mom is her daughter who has been ordered by the court to spend Dad's birthday with him as part of her Anger Management Program. One by one the family's secrets are peeled away revealing a shocking truth that surprises even our ghost.

"A crowd pleaser! ...'Mom's Gift' demonstrates playwright Olson's gift at creating the kind of old-fashioned feel-good comedy that hardly gets written anymore...." — Stage Scene LA

Engaging Choices

HOLIDAY AT THE SAVOY

Dec. 1 – 17, 2017

World Premiere

Created by Cathy Spielberger Cassetta and Gus Kambeitz

It's December 1945, New York City -- the first post-war holiday season at the famous Savoy ballroom in Harlem where singers, dancers, and musicians put on an exciting floor show filled with the swinging sounds and steps of the day in Savoy style.

Classic tunes from the swing era will be seasoned with festive holiday songs done big band style. Bring your dance shoes! The choice is yours for this engaging holiday tune fest to tap your feet at your seat or swirl and sway on the dance floor! Dressing in period attire optional!

Educating Choices

EVELYN IN PURGATORY

Jan. 12 - Jan. 28, 2018

West Coast Premiere

Written by Topher Payne

When a complaint is filed against one of the 70,000 teachers in New York's public schools, they're sent to a Reassignment Center. There, they sit and wait for their case to be reviewed. Based on real teacher "rubber rooms" in New York City, this surprising and engaging dramatic comedy follows five teachers one school year while they await their hearing.

Usually for months. Sometimes for over a year. A claim of improper behavior by a failing student lands Evelyn Reid in "the rubber room," where she encounters a group of teachers, some guilty, some not, who have long since lost any hope of returning to a classroom. Over the course of the school year, these colleagues form an unlikely alliance, reminding each other of forgotten passions, emerging to face life outside in unexpected new directions. They also learn French and workshop a screenplay.

"A very funny dramatic comedy, in the vein of "Steel Magnolias." -- ArtsAtlanta

Embracing Choices

THE MIRACLE WORKER

Feb. 16 - March 11, 2018

Tony Award-winner: Best Play

Written by William Gibson based on Helen Keller's biography *The Story of My Life*

20-year old Annie Sullivan embarked on a journey that would change the life of her charge, Helen Keller, who would, in turn, change the lives of others for generations. *The Miracle Worker* reveals the power of commitment and strength when the choice is made to reach beyond the understandable and tangible.

First performed on Broadway in 1959 with Tony Award-winning performances by Anne Bancroft and Patty Duke, this American classic provides us the opportunity to follow the impassioned journey of two remarkable women as they explore and embrace the choices before them. Every day was a choice. For Annie Sullivan it was to take or reject the assignment to tutor a blind, deaf, spoiled, and wild child. For Helen Keller the choice was to stay in her dark and silent world or embrace the choice to break open the world she knew.

We all know the ending to this inspiring story, but it's watching the story unfold that will leave us all deeply encouraged and emboldened to embrace the choices life presents us.

"Profoundly moving." – *New York Times*

Escaping Choices

ADRIFT IN MACAO

April 13 - May 6, 2018

Bay Area Premiere

Book and Lyrics by Christopher Durang; Music by Peter Melnick

With a drop-dead funny book and shamefully silly lyrics and lethally catchy music, this fast-paced musical, set in 1952 Macao, China, lovingly parodies the Hollywood film noir classics of the 1940s and '50s.

"...a playful romp, playing with the tropes and stories of film noir, reverential yet irreverent. It's camp at its campiest." – *Chicago Critic*

TABARD'S 2017-2018 TOP OF THE STAIRS PRODUCTIONS

Exhibiting Choices

RED

In rep with O'KEEFE June 23-July 9, 2017

Tony Award-winner: Best Play

Bay Area Premiere

Written by John Logan

A moving and compelling intimate play about one of the greatest artists of the 20th century, Mark Rothko, whose struggle to accept his growing riches and praise became his ultimate undoing that is played out on his canvases by a struggle between red and black.

"Intense and exciting...a study in artist appreciation, a portrait of an angry and brilliant mind that asks you to feel the shape and texture of thoughts...RED captures the dynamic relationship between an artist and his creations." —*New York Times*.

"RED captures the dynamic relationship between an artist and his creations." — *New York Times*

Eclipsing Choices

GEORGIA O'KEEFFE: Paintings from the Faraway Nearby

In rep June 23-July 9, 2017

West Coast Premiere

Written by Marki Shalloe

An insightful portrait of the legendary Irish American artist Georgia O'Keeffe, whose fierce independence of spirit and intimate expressions of the natural world made her one of the most popular artists of the 20th Century. Performed in rep with *Red*.

Speaking directly to the audience, we meet O'Keeffe in 1950, at the age of 63, as she is moving into her home in Abiquiu, New Mexico. She tells the story of her life, more or less from the beginning and working her way to the end, hitting on events and characters that shaped her life and art, primarily renowned photographer, Alfred Steiglitz, as well as her father, art teachers, and "the boys" - the male dominated art world that thinks women can never be great artists. Hear from this influential artist about the choices she made with her art and the people in her life.

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PHOTOS: High-resolution photos of artistic and music staff, performers, and previous Tabard productions are available at tabardtheatre.org/press.html.

The Tabard Theatre Company is sponsored in part by a Cultural Affairs Grant from the City of San Jose and a Local Arts Fund grant from Silicon Valley Creates.

About The Tabard Theatre Company

Founded in 2001, The Tabard Theatre Company is the managing and resident theatre company of Theatre on San Pedro Square. Tabard is committed to making a difference in the community through the arts by providing enlightening theatre experiences that are appropriate and affordable for audiences of all ages. Tabard is an inclusive environment where the community can participate in every area of the plays, musicals, educational programs, and music concerts we produce. We champion new works, innovative interpretations, and unique works rarely produced. With a specific focus on altruism and philanthropy, Tabard reaches out to the under-served, such as the blind/visually impaired and children in low-income areas, and donates a portion of each production's concession proceeds to a designated local charity whose work is thematically related to each show.

Entertaining Choices. Tabard.

About Theatre on San Pedro Square

Theatre on San Pedro Square is managed by The Tabard Theatre Company and is possibly downtown San Jose's best kept secret. The intimate venue hosts numerous **Tabard Events** throughout the year in addition to Tabard's regular season of theatrical productions, including its exciting live music series, TOSPS TUESDAYS (pronounced Tops Tuesdays), most Tuesday nights at 7pm, featuring local musicians of every genre, full bar service, and FREE admission.