

THE MARSH BERKELEY PRESENTS
MY STROKE OF LUCK

Written and Performed by Diane Barnes
Directed by Rebecca Fisher
Developed with David Ford
Character Development with Julia McNeal
Coached by Jill Vice
May 2 – June 1, 2019

BERKELEY, CA (8 March 2019) – A captivating tale of a harrowing recovery, the hit solo show *My Stroke of Luck* will return to **The Marsh Berkeley** for a 2019 run. Not everyone knows that the average person loses 1.9 million brain cells every minute a stroke goes untreated, but Diane Barnes did. As a radiologist who diagnoses strokes, Barnes did not deal with having a stroke very well; it was more than 20 hours before she went to the hospital. *My Stroke of Luck* follows Barnes as she recounts her experience of having a stroke, her path to recovery, and more. A spellbinding and funny look at love, family, and seemingly insurmountable obstacles, Barnes shares the story of a single adoptive mother of special needs and gifted sons and how she forges a new identity after a debilitating stroke. *My Stroke of Luck*, directed by Rebecca Fisher and developed with David Ford, will be presented 8:00pm Thursdays and 5:00pm Saturdays **May 2 - June 1, 2019** at **The Marsh Berkeley**, 2120 Allston Way, Berkeley. For tickets (\$20-\$35 sliding scale, \$55-\$100 reserved), the public may visit www.themarsh.org or call The Marsh box office at **415-282-3055** (open 1-4pm, Monday through Friday).

In addition to being the 2017 United Solo Theatre Festival winner, *My Stroke of Luck* has been a hit with Bay Area audiences and critics alike. It debuted at The Marsh in November 2017 and was hailed “as riveting and moving account” (*Marin Independent Journal*), “a heartening illustration of Barnes' sentiment, savvy and survival skills” (*San Francisco Examiner*), and a show where Barnes' “stage presence glows with her personal warmth and the inner strength of someone who has worked hard to recover from a brain injury” (*The Huffington Post*). “No other

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show brings us so close to the heart of what matters,” added *Theatrius*. Since opening at The Marsh in 2017, the show has toured all over the US and internationally, including invitationals to stroke centers, medical schools, universities, and lifelong learning centers.

After surviving the catastrophe that inspired this show, **Diane Barnes** discovered improvisation. “Yes, and,” the mantra of improv, opened an alternate universe for this “Hmm...show me the evidence” skeptic scientist. Barnes’ first solo performance shared her experience negotiating the hurdles to single parent adoption. Audience response galvanized her with the power of storytelling and launched her new career. She left the practice of medicine in 2010. Now a Meisner-trained actor, Barnes also completed the American Conservatory Theater’s Summer Training Congress, and studied with Anna Deavere Smith, Ann Randolph, Keith Johnstone, and the Dell’Arte International School of Physical Theatre. She has appeared at Ross Valley Players, College of Marin, Studio One, BATS Improv, and Pan Theater. Barnes, a NYC transplant, and third generation physician, is a graduate of Stanford University and Yale University School of Medicine, and is board certified in Diagnostic Radiology.

Rebecca Fisher (Director) is the creator of The Marsh’s Writing Cabaret and the co-producer of the long-running Marsh series *Tell it on Tuesday*. Her solo performance work has been called “smart, challenging, and unmistakably affecting” by the *San Francisco Chronicle* and has won a San Francisco Best of Fringe award. She has directed solo shows in national fringe festivals, as well as Mark Kenward’s *Nantucket*, and Diane Barnes’ *My Stroke of Luck*, both presented at The Marsh. Fisher was a teaching artist with The Lincoln Center affiliated arts education program in Bay Area schools and has directed theater camps with the Berkeley Playhouse/Julia Morgan Center for the Arts and The Marsh.

David Ford (Developer) has been collaborating on new and unusual theater for three decades and has been associated with The Marsh for most of that time. The San Francisco press has variously called him “the solo performer maven,” “the monologue maestro,” “the dean of solo performance,” and “the solo performer’s best friend.” Collaborators include Geoff Hoyle, Echo Brown, Brian Copeland, Charlie Varon, Marilyn Pittman, Rebecca Fisher, Wayne Harris, and Marga Gomez. As a director, Ford has directed both solo and ensemble work regionally at The

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Public Theater, Second Stage, Theatre for the New City (NY), Highways (LA) and Woolly Mammoth (Washington, DC) as well as at theaters around the Bay Area including Magic Theatre and Marin Theatre Company. He is also a published playwright.

Julia McNeal (Character Development) is an award-winning actress and teacher whose distinct technique for Playing Multiple Characters is highly regarded and employed by numerous solo theater artists. She works with solo performers at The Marsh Theater and privately.

Jill Vice (Coach) is a San Francisco based playwright and solo performer as well as a director and acting coach to many new and unusual solo shows including Marga Gomez’s *Pound*, Elaine Magree’s *Holding the Edge*, Rebecca Fisher’s *The Magnificence of the Disaster*, and Lisa Rothman’s *Date Night at Pet Emergency*.

The Marsh is known as “a breeding ground for new performance.” It was launched in 1989 by Founder and Artistic Director Stephanie Weisman, and now annually hosts more than 600 performances of 175 shows across the company’s two venues in San Francisco and Berkeley. A leading outlet for solo performers, The Marsh’s specialty has been hailed by the *San Francisco Chronicle* as “solo performances that celebrate the power of storytelling at its simplest and purest.” The *East Bay Times* named The Marsh one of Bay Area’s best intimate theaters, calling it “one of the most thriving solo theaters in the nation. The live theatrical energy is simply irresistible.”

FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:

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WHEN: May 2 –June 1, 2019

SHOWS: 8:00pm Thursdays
5:00pm Saturdays

WHERE: **The Marsh Berkeley**, 2120 Allston Way, Berkeley
*Parking: Allston Way Garage, 2061 Allston Way between Milvia & Shattuck
The Downtown Berkeley BART station is one block away on Shattuck*

TICKETS: \$20-\$35 sliding scale, \$55-\$100 reserved

INFO: For information or to order tickets visit **themarsh.org** or call **(415) 282-3055**
(Monday through Friday, 1pm-4pm).

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PRESS: Contact Sydney Albin, Carla Befera & Co.
650.327.1200 | sydney@cb-pr.com

PHOTOS: Downloadable high-res photos are available here:
<http://cbpr.co/press/mystrokeofluck>