

SAN FRANCISCO PLAYHOUSE BAKES UP A NEW PRODUCTION OF  
HIT BROADWAY MUSICAL

# WAITRESS

Music and lyrics by Sara Bareilles

Book by Jessie Nelson

Based upon the motion picture written by Adrienne Shelly

Directed by Susi Damilano, Music Direction by Dave Dobrusky, Choreography by Nicole Helfer

**November 21, 2024 – January 18, 2025** (*opening night: November 27*)

SAN FRANCISCO PLAYHOUSE

SAN FRANCISCO, CA (7 October 2024) —**San Francisco Playhouse** will serve up a holiday treat with the beloved Broadway favorite *Waitress*, directed by San Francisco Playhouse Producing Director and co-founder **Susi Damilano** with music direction by **Dave Dobrusky** and choreography by **Nicole Helfer**. Featuring a tasty, tuneful score by Grammy Award-winning singer/songwriter **Sara Bareilles** and a fresh-baked book by **Jessie Nelson**, this sweet musical confection follows Jenna, a waitress for a small-town diner. Trapped in a loveless marriage and unexpectedly pregnant, Jenna copes by crafting perfect pies and dabbling in a whirlwind romance with her doctor. A baking contest offers Jenna the hope to escape her unhappy life as she chases her dreams and rediscovers herself along the way. *Waitress* will perform **November 21, 2024 – January 18, 2025** (*opening night: November 27, 2024*) at San Francisco Playhouse 450, Post Street. For tickets (\$35-\$135) and more information, the public may visit [sfplayhouse.org](http://sfplayhouse.org) or call the box office at **415-677-9596**.

Based on the Fox Searchlight Pictures film of the same name written by Adrienne Shelly, *Waitress* premiered at American Repertory Theater before opening on Broadway. It was nominated for four Tony Awards including Best Musical and Best Original Score and ran for nearly four years followed by a limited return engagement. *Time Out New York* said, “the whole dish is love at first bite,” while *The New York Times* said the musical “rises to transporting heights and sweeps up your heart along with it.”

**San Francisco Playhouse** has assembled a cast of talented actors to bring the diner to life. **Ruby Day** (she/her) makes her San Francisco Playhouse debut as Jenna, a waitress with a gift for baking. Day has previously performed in *Beach Blanket Babylon* and in the national and international tours of *Annie*. Day has also performed at Presidio Theatre, Edinburgh Fringe Festival, and with the San Francisco Symphony

Receiving a San Francisco Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle (SFBATCC) Award nomination for her performance in *Nollywood Dreams*, **Tanika Baptiste** (she/they) returns to the Playhouse as Becky, a bold, no-nonsense waitress. Baptiste is a SFBATCC Award-winning director, actor, vocalist, and costume designer who is part of TBA’s 2023 Arts Leadership cohort with Theatre Rhinoceros. She has performed with Magic Theatre, Center Repertory Company, Lorraine Hansberry Theatre, Berkeley Playhouse, Woodminster Summer Musicals, Oakland Theater Project, Bay Area Children’s Theatre, Mountain Play Association, Ross Valley Players, Pittsburg Theatre Company, Town Hall Theatre Company.

Seen in *Chinglish* and *The Paper Dreams of Harry Chin*, **Sharon Shao** (she/they) returns to the Playhouse as Dawn, a shy waitress who's a hopeless romantic. She has also appeared in productions with Berkeley Repertory Theatre, California Shakespeare Theater, Shotgun Players, and Cutting Ball Theater.

Seen in *A Chorus Line* and *As You Like It*, **Zeke Edmonds** (he/him) returns as Dr. Pomatter, Jenna's handsome and endearing gynecologist. He has also appeared onstage at McCarter Theatre Center, Signature Theatre (Virginia), Westchester Broadway Theatre, and Syracuse Stage. Seen in *Sunday in the Park with George*, **Sam Faustine** (he/him) returns as the alternate for the role of Dr. Pomatter. Previously performing in the national tour of Broadway's *A Christmas Carol*, Faustine has also performed locally with TheatreWorks Silicon Valley, San Jose Stage Company, Lorraine Hansberry Theatre, Broadway by the Bay, Lamplighters Musical Theatre, Ray of Light Theatre, Pocket Opera, and San Francisco Symphony, among others.

**Michael Parrott** (he/him) debuts at the Playhouse as Ogie, a quirky customer of the diner. Parrott has performed with Center Repertory Company, La Jolla Playhouse, San Diego Repertory Theatre, San Diego Musical Theatre, Diversionary Theatre, Lamb's Players Theatre, and New Village Arts.

Performing in *Water by the Spoonful* and *Ideation*, **Ben Euphrat** (he/him) returns to the Playhouse as Earl, Jenna's gruff husband. He has also appeared onstage with Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Aurora Theatre Company, Center Repertory Company, Marin Theatre, Shotgun Players, City Lights Theater Company, and 42nd Street Moon.

Seen in *Clue* and *Water by the Spoonful*, **Dorian Lockett** (he/him) returns to the Playhouse as Cal, the diner's chef. His voice can be heard in Disney and Pixar's *Soul*, and his film/TV credits also include "13 Reasons Why," *The Ride*, and *Under a Black Cloud*. He has appeared onstage throughout the Bay Area in productions by Center Repertory Company, Oakland Theater Project (Ubuntu Theater), Word for Word, Altarena Playhouse, and Boxcar Theatre

Working on almost 20 productions with San Francisco Playhouse including most recently *A Chorus Line*, *Cabaret*, and *Follies*, **Louis Parnell** (he/him) returns as Joe, the owner of the diner. He has performed with American Conservatory Theater, TheatreWorks Silicon Valley, Marin Theatre, and Center Repertory Company, among others. His film and TV credits include "Nash Bridges," "America's Most Wanted," and "Trauma."

**Sophia Cooper**, **Kili Frasoni**, **Collette Endter**, and **Felicity Endter** alternate the role of Lulu, Jenna's daughter. **Malia Abayon**, **Jordan Covington**, **Ash Malloy**, and **Lucca Troutman** round out the ensemble.

#### **PRODUCTION TEAM:**

*Waitress* features music direction by **Dave Dobrusky**, choreography by **Nicole Helfer**, scenic design by **Jackie Scott**; lighting design by **Michael Palumbo**; costume design by **Kathleen Qiu**; sound design by **James Ard**, properties design by **Vincent Chau**, and dialect coaching by

## **Kimberly Mohne Hill.**

### **CREATIVE TEAM:**

Singer/songwriter **Sara Bareilles** (Music and Lyrics) has been nominated for nine Grammy Awards, won for Best American Roots Performance for “Saint Honesty,” and was featured on the Grammy Award-winning album for the revival of *Into the Woods*. She was nominated for an Emmy Award for music written for the TV series “Girls5eva,” in which she also stars. With chart-topping hit songs including “Love Song,” “King of Anything,” and “Brave,” Bareilles made her Broadway debut composing the score for *Waitress*, receiving Tony Award nominations for Best Score and Best Musical as well as a Grammy Award nomination for Best Musical Theatre Album.

**Jessie Nelson** (Book) wrote the book for *Waitress* and co-created the Apple TV+ show “Little Voice” with Sara Bareilles. Nelson wrote, directed, and produced *Corrina, Corrina* starring Whoopi Goldberg and Ray Liotta and *I Am Sam* starring Sean Penn, who received an Academy Award nomination for his performance. Her writing credits include *Stepmom* and *The Story of Us*. Nelson directed *Alice By Heart* which she co-wrote with Steven Sater with music by Duncan Sheik at the National Theatre Connections Program and again Off-Broadway at MCC Theater.

Recently helming the Playhouse’s *The Play That Goes Wrong*, **Susi Damilano** (Director) directed the West Coast Premieres of *Honey Brown Eyes* (SFBATCC nomination), *Dead Man’s Cell Phone*, *Coronado*, *The Mystery Plays*, and *Roulette*; and the World Premieres of *On Clover Road* by Steven Dietz, *From Red to Black* by Rhett Rossi, and *Seven Days* by Daniel Heath in the Sandbox Series. Other directing credits include Playhouse productions of *The 39 Steps*, *Clue*, *Groundhog Day the Musical*, *Cabaret*, *Mary Poppins*, *Noises Off*, *She Loves Me*, *Stage Kiss*, *Company*, *Stupid Fucking Bird*, *Into the Woods*, *A Behanding in Spokane*, *Den of Thieves*, and *Wirehead* (SFBATCC nomination). She is a five-time recipient of the SFBATCC Excellence in Theatre Award for Principal Actress in a Play for the Playhouse productions of *Bug*, *Six Degrees of Separation*, and *Reckless*. Damilano has also performed leading roles in the Playhouse’s *The Glass Menagerie*, *Yoga Play*, *The Effect*, *The Roommate*, *Red Velvet*, *Tree*, *Bauer*, *Abigail’s Party*, *Harper Regan*, *Coraline*, *Slasher*, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest*, *Landscape of the Body*, *First Person Shooter*, *Jesus Hopped the ‘A’ Train*, *The Crucible*, *Kimberly Akimbo*, *Our Town*, and *The Smell of the Kill*.

### **SAN FRANCISCO PLAYHOUSE:**

Founded by Bill English and Susi Damilano in 2003, **San Francisco Playhouse** has been described by *The New York Times* as “a company that stages some of the most consistently high-quality work around” and deemed “ever adventurous” by *The Mercury News*. Located in the heart of the Union Square Theater District, San Francisco Playhouse is the city’s premier Off-Broadway company, an intimate alternative to the larger more traditional Union Square theater fare. The Playhouse provides audiences the opportunity to experience professional theater with top-notch actors and world-class design in a setting where they are close to the action. The company has received multiple awards for overall productions, acting, and design, including the *SF Weekly* Best Theatre Award and the *Bay Guardian*’s Best Off-Broadway Theatre Award, as well as three consecutive San Francisco Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Awards for Best Entire Production in the Bay Area. *KQED/NPR* recently described the company as “one of the few

theaters in the Bay Area that has a mission that actually shows up on stage. Artistic Director Bill English’s commitment to empathy as a guiding philosophical and aesthetic force is admirable and by living that mission, fascinating things happen onstage.” The Playhouse is committed to providing a creative home and inspiring environment where actors, directors, writers, designers, and theater lovers converge to create and experience dramatic works that celebrate the human spirit.

*Waitress* is licensed by Music Theatre International.

## FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:

**WHAT:** **San Francisco Playhouse** will serve up a holiday treat with the beloved Broadway favorite *Waitress*, directed by San Francisco Playhouse Producing Director and co-founder **Susi Damilano** with music direction by **Dave Dobrusky** and choreography by **Nicole Helfer**. Featuring a tasty, tuneful score by Grammy Award-winning singer/songwriter **Sara Bareilles** and a fresh-baked book by **Jessie Nelson**, this sweet musical confection follows Jenna, a waitress for a small-town diner. Trapped in a loveless marriage and unexpectedly pregnant, Jenna copes by crafting perfect pies and dabbling in a whirlwind romance with her doctor. A baking contest offers Jenna the hope to escape her unhappy life as she chases her dreams and rediscovers herself along the way. Based on the Fox Searchlight Pictures film of the same name written by Adrienne Shelly, *Waitress* premiered at American Repertory Theater before opening on Broadway. It was nominated for four Tony Awards including Best Musical and Best Original Score and ran for nearly four years followed by a limited return engagement. *Time Out New York* said, “the whole dish is love at first bite,” while *The New York Times* said the musical “rises to transporting heights and sweeps up your heart along with it.”

*Waitress* is licensed by Music Theatre International.

**WHEN:** Previews: Saturday, November 21 – Tuesday, November 26, 2024  
*Opening: Wednesday, November 27, 2024*  
Closes: Saturday, January 18, 2025

**SHOWS:** Tuesdays and Thursdays: 7pm  
Wednesdays: 2pm & 7pm  
Fridays: 3pm & 8pm  
Saturdays: 3pm & 8pm  
Sundays: 2pm

*Visit [sfplayhouse.org](http://sfplayhouse.org) for holiday performance schedule.*

**WHERE:** San Francisco Playhouse (450 Post Street, San Francisco)

**TICKETS:** Single tickets (\$35-\$135) for *Waitress* and 2024-25 Season subscriptions are currently available. For tickets and more information, the public may visit <https://www.sfplayhouse.org/sfph/2024-2025-season/waitress/> or call the box office at 415-677-9596.

**-30-**

**PRESS:** Contact Lauren Goldfarb, Carla Befera & Co. [lauren@cb-pr.com](mailto:lauren@cb-pr.com)

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