

SAN FRANCISCO PLAYHOUSE PRESENTS
FEROCIOUS FEMINIST TAKE ON GOTHIC HORROR FAVORITE

Dracula: A Feminist Revenge Fantasy, Really

Based on the novel by Bram Stoker

By Kate Hamill

Directed by Bill English

May 14 – June 27, 2026 (opening night: May 20)

SAN FRANCISCO, CA (18 March 2026) — **San Francisco Playhouse** will stage the Bay Area Premiere of **Kate Hamill's** imaginative ***Dracula: A Feminist Revenge Fantasy, Really***. This fierce new play turns Bram Stoker's gothic horror classic on its head, driving a stake through the heart of toxic masculinity. With a gender-bending cast, sexy supernatural baddies, and Hamill's signature piercing postmodern wit, this darkly comic drama skewers power dynamics and slays traditional women's roles. San Francisco Playhouse Artistic Director **Bill English** directs a thrilling cast including San Francisco Playhouse Producing Director/ Co-Founder **Susi Damilano** as vampire slayer Van Helsing who is in pursuit of the titular monster, played by Bay Area theatre veteran **Johnny Moreno**. ***Dracula: A Feminist Revenge Fantasy, Really*** will perform **May 14 – June 27, 2026 (opening night: May 20)** at San Francisco Playhouse, 450 Post Street. For tickets (\$52-\$145) and more information, the public may visit sfplayhouse.org or call the box office at **415-677-9596**.

Commissioned by and premiering at Classic Stage Company, Hamill's ***Dracula*** was deemed a "delicious feminist romp. This rollicking adaptation is frightening precisely because it's not so different from our own," by *The New York Times*. *The Wall Street Journal* hailed it as "tremendously entertaining. A timely spin on Stoker for the #MeToo era. Has GREAT BIG HIT stamped all over it." *TimeOut* decreed Hamill's ***Dracula*** is "an unabashed crowdpleaser. It is satisfying to see these ladies kick ass while rebelling against the subservient roles that so many stories want to cast them in."

"In this time of runaway male toxicity, exemplified by Weinstein and Epstein, Kate Hamill brings a necessary and refreshing new vision," said San Francisco Playhouse Artistic Director **Bill English**. "Following a long string of *Dracula* interpretations where we are asked to empathize with the vampire, Hamill's version of the classic makes it terrifyingly and hilariously clear that her *Dracula* is a predator who preys on women. He needs not our understanding, but to be stopped, and the women must take matters into their own hands."

Director English helms a talented cast for this thrilling romp. **Johnny Moreno** (he/him) returns to the Playhouse as Dracula. Moreno performed in the Playhouse's productions of *Heroes of the Fourth Turning*; *Art*; *The Fit*; *Noises Off*; *The Rules*; *Stupid Fucking Bird*; *Promises, Promises*; *Camelot*; *My Fair Lady*; and *Period of Adjustment*. He has also appeared onstage throughout the Bay Area including American Conservatory Theater, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, San Jose Stage Company, Marin Shakespeare Company, Center Repertory Company, Marin Theatre, Crowded Fire, The Marsh, and Pacific Repertory Theater.

Susi Damilano (she/her) returns to the stage as vampire slayer Van Helsing. Damilano is a six-time recipient of the SFBATCC Excellence in Theatre Award for Principal Actress in a Play for the Playhouse productions of *The Glass Menagerie*, *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*. Recently helming the Playhouse's *Into the Woods* and *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, Damilano directed the West Coast Premieres of *Honey Brown Eyes*, *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 *Waitress*, *The Play That Goes Wrong*, *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*.

Stacy Ross (she/her) returns to the Playhouse as Renfield, a madwoman who worships Dracula. Seen in San Francisco Playhouse productions of *M. Butterfly*, *Clue*, *Bauer*, *Coraline*, *First Day of School*, *Coronado*, and *The Smell of the Kill*, Ross has also starred in productions at other Bay Area leading theatres including American Conservatory Theater, TheatreWorks Silicon Valley, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Marin Theatre Company, California Shakespeare Theater, Magic Theatre, San Jose Repertory Theatre, and Aurora Theatre Company.

Performing in the Playhouse's *Waitress*, *Chinglish*, and *The Paper Dreams of Harry Chin*, **Sharon Shao** (she/they) returns as Mina Harker, a smart and loyal woman targeted by Dracula. Shao has also acted with Berkeley Repertory Theatre, TheatreWorks Silicon Valley, and California Shakespeare Theater. She is a company member of Oakland Theatre Project, Shotgun Players, and 8th Best Legs Productions.

Nemma Adeni (she/her) makes her Playhouse debut as Lucy Westenra, Mina's friend. Adeni's theatre credits include work with Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Eight Ball Theatre, and Golden Thread Productions. Her film work has screened at international festivals including Slamdance LA, Iris Prize UK, Raintance UK, InsideOut Toronto, DIFF NYC, Bentonville AK, among several others across the USA, Mexico, Australia, Norway, Scotland and beyond.

Seen in *Exotic Deadly: Or the MSG Play*, **James Aaron Oh** (he/him) returns to the Playhouse as Jonathan Harker, Mina's lawyer husband. Oh has also appeared onstage at Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Center Repertory Company, New Conservatory Theatre Center, San Jose Stage Company and Oklahoma City Repertory Theatre.

Charisse Loriaux (she/her) returns to the Playhouse as Marilla, a vampire accomplice to Dracula, as well as a maid. Seen in San Francisco Playhouse's *You Mean to Do Me Harm* and *Non-Player Character*, Loriaux has also performed with Marin Theatre, Aurora Theatre Company, San Jose Stage Company, Marin Shakespeare Company. She is a PlayGround SF company member and an Artistic Associate at Marin Shakespeare Company.

Elizabeth Cowperthwaite (she/her) makes her Playhouse debut as Drusilla, a vampire accomplice to Dracula, as well as asylum attendant Miller and a merchant looking to make a sale. Cowperthwaite has performed with Center Repertory Company, Weathervane Theatre, and Milton Theatre. She was also seen in the national tours of *Blippi: The Wonderful Tour* and *Blue's Clue & You! Live on Stage*.

Josh Schell (he/him) returns to the Playhouse as Doctor George Seward, the asylum's head physician. Schell's previous Playhouse performances include *Heroes of the Fourth Turning*, *The Nether*, *Jerusalem*, and *In Braunau*. He also appeared onstage at Marin Theatre, Aurora Theatre Company, Shotgun Players, Central Works, and Cutting Ball Theater. His film and TV credits include Lionsgate's *Freaky Tales*, Sony Pictures' *Feed*, and Hulu's "Bite Size Halloween."

PRODUCTION TEAM:

Dracula features direction by **Bill English**, scenic design by **Jackie Scott**, lighting design by **Michael Palumbo** with lighting design assistant **Tristan Fabiunke**, projections design by **Carl Erez**, costume design by **Kathleen Qiu**, sound design by **James Ard**, properties design by **Amy Benjamin**, and intimacy/ fight direction by **Zoe Swenson-Graham**. **Jackie Scott** is the blood designer, **Christian Cagigal** is the illusion/FX designer, and **Alicia Lerner** is the stage manager.

CREATIVE TEAM:

Kate Hamill (Playwright) is an award-winning NYC-based actor/playwright. Hamill was named 2017's Playwright of the Year by the *Wall Street Journal*. According to *American Theatre*, she has been one of the 10 most-produced playwrights in the country eight seasons running (2017-2026); in 2024-25 she tied for the top spot of most produced playwright. Her plays include award-winning adaptations of *Pride and Prejudice*, *Sense and Sensibility*, *Emma*, *Mansfield Park*, *Little Women*, *The Scarlet Letter*, *The Odyssey*, *Vanity Fair*, and *Dracula*. She also wrote *Ms. Holmes & Ms. Watson – Apt. 2B*; *The Little Fellow (or: the Queen of Tarts Tells All)*; *The Light and The Dark (the life and times of Artemisia Gentileschi)*; *Murder Play (or: The Aristocrats!)*; *BadAssGalBoss*; *Love Poem*, *In The Mines*, and *The Piper*. Her plays have been produced off-Broadway, at American Repertory Theatre, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, American Conservatory Theater, Guthrie Theater, Portland Center Stage, Seattle Repertory Theatre, PlayMakers Repertory Company, Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival, Dallas Theater Center, Folger Theatre, among others. As an actor, she has performed with Syracuse Stage, Classic Stage Company, Bedlam, and more. Hamill is also a screenwriter and is working on a feature film in development.

Bill English (Director) is the co-founder and Artistic Director of **San Francisco Playhouse**. Alongside co-founder Susi Damilano, he has guided its growth from a bare-bones storefront to the second-largest nonprofit theatre company in San Francisco. Milestone accomplishments include introducing Pulitzer Prize winner Stephen Adly Guirgis to the Bay Area by directing three of his plays; commissioning over 30 playwrights including Theresa Rebeck, Aaron Loeb, Lauren Gunderson, Lauren Yee, and Christopher Chen; and developing World Premieres from workshops to Sandbox Series to Mainstage Season to Off-Broadway (including the Off-Broadway transfers of *Ideation* and *Bauer*), and presenting the very first production of *Grounded* by George Brant which later played at The Public Theater.

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 Theatre District, San Francisco Playhouse is the city’s premier Off-Broadway company, an intimate alternative to the larger more traditional Union Square theatre 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 Playhouse also fosters the development of new work, including commissions, new play readings, and the company’s fan favorite Sandbox Series, which produces premieres on local stages. 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 theatre lovers converge to create and experience dramatic works that celebrate the human spirit.

FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:

WHAT: **San Francisco Playhouse** will stage the Bay Area Premiere of **Kate Hamill**’s imaginative ***Dracula: A Feminist Revenge Fantasy, Really***. This fierce new play turns Bram Stoker’s gothic horror classic on its head, driving a stake through the heart of toxic masculinity. With a gender-bending cast, sexy supernatural baddies, and Hamill’s signature piercing postmodern wit, this darkly comic drama skewers power dynamics and slays traditional women’s roles. Commissioned by and premiering at Classic Stage Company, Hamill’s ***Dracula*** was deemed a “delicious feminist romp. This rollicking adaptation is frightening precisely because it’s not so different from our own,” by *The New York Times*. *The Wall Street Journal* hailed it as “tremendously entertaining. A timely spin on Stoker for the #MeToo era. Has GREAT BIG HIT stamped all over it.” *TimeOut* decreed Hamill’s ***Dracula*** is “an unabashed crowdpleaser. It is satisfying to see these ladies kick ass while rebelling against the subservient roles that so many stories want to cast them in.” San Francisco Playhouse Artistic Director **Bill English** directs a thrilling cast including San Francisco Playhouse Producing Director/ Co-Founder **Susi Damilano** as vampire slayer Van Helsing who is in pursuit of the titular monster, played by Bay Area theatre veteran **Johnny Moreno**. Additional casting to be announced.

WHEN: Previews: Thursday, May 14 – Tuesday, May 19, 2026
Opening: Wednesday, May 20, 2026
Closes: Saturday, June 27, 2026

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

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

TICKETS: Single tickets (\$52-\$145). Pricing inclusive of fees and subject to change. For tickets and more information, the public may visit <https://sfplayhouse.org/2025-2026-season/dracula-a-feminist-revenge-fantasy-really/> or call the box office at 415-677-9596.

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PRESS: Contact Lauren Goldfarb, Carla Befera & Co. lauren@cb-pr.com

PHOTOS: Downloadable high-res photos are available: http://cbpr.co/press/sfp_dracula