



**AURORA THEATRE COMPANY OPENS 26<sup>TH</sup> SEASON  
WITH BAY AREA PREMIERE OF  
REBECCA GILMAN'S LUNA GALE  
September 1 - October 1, 2017**

BERKELEY, Calif. (August 15, 2017) – **Aurora Theatre Company** opens its 26<sup>th</sup> season with Rebecca Gilman's (*Blue Surge*, *Spinning Into Butter*, *The Sweetest Swing in Baseball*) **LUNA GALE**. Aurora Artistic Director **Tom Ross** directs this powerful and arresting Bay Area Premiere, featuring **Jamie Jones** (*Edward Albee's A Delicate Balance*, *Mud Blue Sky*, *Gideon's Knot*), **Laura Jane Bailey** (*Mud Blue Sky*), **Devin S. O'Brien** (*Mud Blue Sky*), **Joshua Marx** (TheatreWorks), **Alix Cuadra** (Theatre of Yugen), **Kevin Kemp** (Shotgun Players), and **Jennifer Vega**. **LUNA GALE** plays **September 1 through October 1** at the Aurora Theatre in Berkeley. For tickets and information the public can call **(510) 843-4822** or visit **auroratheatre.org**.

The challenges facing foster youth are real. Veteran social worker Caroline thinks she has a typical case on her hands when she meets two teenaged drug addicts accused of neglecting their baby. She will do whatever it takes to protect baby Luna Gale, but when she moves the child out of one dangerous situation, she fears she may have placed her in another. Unraveling a tangle of buried secrets, hidden motives, and mistakes, **LUNA GALE** questions who decides what's best for a child when there are no good choices, only good intentions. Called "smart and absorbing... an engrossing exploration of the tough choices welfare workers contend with daily" by *The New York Times*, one of the "most valuable additions to American drama" by the *Los Angeles Times*, and "brilliant...not to be missed" by *The Hollywood Reporter*, **LUNA GALE** asks whether the end justifies the means in a human drama about how we fail our children when right and wrong are not always self-evident.

Playwright **Rebecca Gilman** is an Artistic Associate at Chicago's Goodman Theatre. In addition to **LUNA GALE**, her plays include: *A True History of the Johnstown Flood*, *Dollhouse*, *Boy Gets Girl*, *Spinning Into Butter*, *Blue Surge* (all of which were commissioned and originally produced by the Goodman), *The Glory of Living*, *The Sweetest Swing in Baseball*, *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter*, and *The Crowd You're in With*. She is the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship, The Harper Lee Award, The Scott McPherson Award, The Prince Prize for Commissioning New Work, The Roger L. Stevens Award from the Kennedy Center Fund for New American Plays, The Evening Standard Award for Most Promising Playwright, The George Devine Award, The Theatre Masters Visionary Award, The Great

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Plains Playwright Award and an Illinois Arts Council playwriting fellowship. *Boy Gets Girl* received an Olivier Award nomination for Best New Play and Gilman was named a finalist for the 2001 Pulitzer Prize for her play, *The Glory of Living*. Gilman is an associate professor of playwriting and screenwriting at Northwestern University as part of its MFA in Writing for the Screen and Stage program.

Aurora Theatre Company Artistic Director **Tom Ross** helms **LUNA GALE**. Ross inaugurated Aurora Theatre Company with Barbara Oliver in 1992 and has directed over 25 productions for the company, including *Temple*, *Mud Blue Sky*, *A Bright New Boise*, Neil LaBute's *This Is How It Goes*, Edward Albee's *A Delicate Balance*, Lanford Wilson's *Fifth of July*, *The Soldier's Tale* (co-directed with Muriel Maffre), Tennessee Williams' *The Eccentricities of a Nightingale*, the World Premiere of *The First Grade*, Gore Vidal's *The Best Man*, Mae West's *SEX*, and Harold Pinter's *The Birthday Party*. For Aurora Theatre Company, Ross has also directed acclaimed productions of *Marius*, *Blue/Orange*, *Betrayal*, *Lobby Hero*, which went on to be presented as a co-production between Aurora Theatre Company, Jonathan Reinis, Inc., and the Napa Valley Opera House, *The Shape of Things*, *The Entertainer*, *The Homecoming*, *The Weir*, *Death Defying Acts*, *Abigail's Party*, *The Mystery of Irma Vep* (co-directed with Danny Scheie), and *The Aspern Papers*, among others. He also wrote and directed *A Karen Carpenter Christmas* in both San Francisco and Seattle. Prior to coming to the Bay Area, Ross worked for eight years at The Public Theater in New York as Executive Assistant to Joseph Papp and as co-Director of Play and Musical Development. While in New York, Ross also penned the book adaptation of the New York Drama Desk nominated musical *Up Against It*, based on Joe Orton's screenplay for *The Beatles*.

Aurora Theatre Company has assembled a talented ensemble for **LUNA GALE**. Stage veteran **Jamie Jones** returns to Aurora Theatre Company as Caroline; she previously appeared in Aurora's productions of *Mud Blue Sky*, the Bay Area Premiere of *Gidion's Knot*, and the company's hit production of Edward Albee's *A Delicate Balance*. Regional credits include productions at American Conservatory Theater, B Street Theatre, Marin Theatre Company, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Encore Theatre Company, Sacramento Theatre Company, and Capital Stage Company, among others. In New York, she has performed at the Neighborhood Playhouse, the Connelly Theatre, the St. Clement's Theatre, and with the Lincoln Center Director's Lab, among others.

Also returning to the Aurora stage is **Laura Jane Bailey** as Cindy; she previously appeared in the Aurora's production of *Mud Blue Sky*. Additional credits include productions at TheatreWorks, San Francisco Playhouse, Crowded Fire Theater, Impact Theatre, Boxcar Theater, Dragon Productions, and

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Victory Gardens Theater in Chicago, among others. **Devin S. O’Brien** returns to the Aurora as Peter; credits include productions at Z Space, San Francisco Playhouse, Berkeley Repertory Theater, New Conservatory Theatre Center, Encore Theatre Company, and Sonoma Valley Shakespeare Company, among others.

**Alix Cuadra** makes her Aurora stage debut in **LUNA GALE** as Carlie; credits include productions at Theatre of Yugen, Brava Theater, Boxcar Theatre, and Center Stage, among others. **Joshua Marx** makes his Aurora stage debut as Cliff; credits include productions at TheatreWorks, 42<sup>nd</sup> Street Moon, Woodminster Summer Musicals, and Berkeley Playhouse, among others. Rounding out the cast are **Kevin Kemp** (Shotgun Players) as Pastor Jay and **Jennifer Vega** (*The Trojan Women*, U.C. Davis) as Lourdes.

Following **LUNA GALE**, Aurora Theatre Company continues its 26<sup>th</sup> season in November with the Bay Area Premiere of Marco Ramirez’s **THE ROYALE** directed by Darryl V. Jones, followed by a revival of George Bernard Shaw’s classic, **WIDOWERS’ HOUSES**, directed by Joy Carlin in January. Caryl Churchill’s **A NUMBER**, helmed by Barbara Damashek, will be staged in March followed by the World Premiere of Jonathan Spector’s **EUREKA DAY** in April, directed by Josh Costello. Closing the season is the Bay Area Premiere of Sarah Burgess’ off-Broadway hit **DRY POWDER** directed by Jennifer King in June.

Declared “one of the gems of the bustling Bay Area theater scene, the Aurora stands out as an institution that feeds the mind” by the *Bay Area News Group*, and about which the *San Francisco Chronicle* said, “Aurora reigns supreme in Bay Area theater for intellectual debate,” Aurora Theatre Company continues to offer challenging, literate, intelligent stage works to the Bay Area, each year increasing its reputation for top-notch theater. About the company, Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Edward Albee stated, “American theater, intelligent theater, is alive and well in the regional houses like Aurora, not Broadway.” Located in the heart of the Downtown Berkeley Arts District, Aurora Theatre Company was called “one of the Bay Area’s most respected theater companies” by the *East Bay Express*, with *The Wall Street Journal* having “nothing but praise for the Aurora.” Theatre Dogs affirmed, “To watch an actor lose herself or himself in an exquisitely crafted part is one of the greatest pleasures in the theater, and there’s no better vantage point for this than the Aurora.”

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**FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:**

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**DATES:**        Previews: September 1, 2 at 8pm; September 3 at 2pm; September 5, 6 at 7pm  
                  **Opens: September 7, 2017**  
                  Closes: October 1

**SHOWS:**        Tuesday and Wednesday at 7pm; Thursday through Saturday at 8pm; Sunday at 2, 7pm

**WHERE:**        Aurora Theatre Company, 2081 Addison Street, Berkeley, CA

**TICKETS:**     For single tickets (\$33-\$65) or subscriptions (\$99-\$360), the public can call  
**(510) 843-4822** or visit **auroratheatre.org**. Half-off tickets for Under 35; student, and  
group discounts available.

**PHOTOS:**     High-resolution photos for **LUNA GALE** can be found at **auroratheatre.org/index.php/press-**  
**room** or can be received as jpegs upon request by emailing **elewis@auroratheatre.org**

Aurora Theatre Company gratefully acknowledges Season Restaurant Sponsor Gecko Gecko and Season Floral Sponsor Darling Flowers for their support.

Aurora Theatre Company gratefully acknowledges Sponsors Hilary Perkins and Kathleen Garrison and David Wood, and Associate Sponsor Elizabeth Burwell for their support.

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