

For Immediate Release
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**MAGIC THEATRE PRESENTS A REVIVAL OF
PLAYWRIGHT CLAIRE CHAFEE'S 1993 HIT
WHY WE HAVE A BODY
OPENS MAGIC'S 2011-12 SEASON AUGUST 31st**

San Francisco, CA, August 4, 2011—Magic Theatre opens its 2011-12 season with a legacy revival of the 1993 Hit, *Why We Have A Body* by playwright Claire Chafee. Back in '93 the play ran for six months to sold out houses and went on to be produced Off-Broadway at the Judith Anderson Theatre by The Women's Project. It has gone on to dazzle audiences in numerous theatres around the country including Los Angeles, Seattle, Boston, Minneapolis, Dallas, Chicago, Florida and South Carolina as well as in Vancouver, Canada and Perth, Australia. A serious comedy, *Why We Have A Body* is one of the longest running plays in Magic Theatre's history.

Directing *Why We Have A Body* is critically acclaimed director Katie Pearl. Ms. Pearl has directed AND performed in projects across the country including a recent durational performance installation HOW TO BUILD A FOREST, presented by The Kitchen in June 2011, in collaboration with New Orleans artist Shawn Hall. Past projects include NITA & ZITA (OBIE award 2003), SLABBER, BIRD EYE BLUE PRINT, THE CATARACT, AND ANNA BELLA EEMA. Katie is a MAP and Creative Capital funded artist, a member of SDC, a Drama League Directing Fellow, and remains a proud member of the new works theater community of Austin, TX.

Why We Have A Body centers around Lili, (played by Lauren English) a lesbian P.I. who stalks men cheating on their wives. When she's not channeling Joan of Arc, Lili's sister Mary (played by Maggie Mason) holds up a 7-Eleven and directs traffic. Their mother Eleanor, (played by Lorri Holt) an archeologist, specializes in---what else? ---the female brain. As remarkable and resonant as the day it first opened in '93, *Why We Have A Body*'s sharp hilarity and poetic dialogue speaks to the very essence of human nature and to the complexity of relationships in all the different forms they take.

Playwright Chafee has an impressive resume. Her other plays include *Even Among These Rocks*, also produced at The Magic, *Darwin's Finches*, produced by Encore Theatre at The Thick House, *Five Women on a Hill In Spain* at the Minneapolis Fringe Festival and The Greene Theatre, Emerson, Boston and *Whisper from the Book of Etiquette* at New Georges, the Bay Area Playwrights Festival and New York Stage and Screen at Vassar. Her awards include a Drama-League Award, the Bay Area Critics' Circle Award, a Princess Grace Special Projects Award, and the Oppenheimer Award from New York Newsday for Best Emerging Playwright. She is a member of The Dramatists Guild, and holds an MFA from Brown University and an EdM in arts education from Harvard University. She teaches graduate creative writing at California

College of the Arts (CCA).

“We couldn’t be more elated to have Claire back with us”, said Artistic Director Loretta Greco. “ This season (as part of a salute to our upcoming 45th year) we wanted to present one legacy play that had a tremendous impact on our audiences at Magic Theatre in the past and that continues to speak to the nature of our San Francisco community today. Of course it was a very tough decision but we chose to start with *Why We Have A Body*. Claire’s writing is as touching and urgent now as it was in 1993, and is unique in its ability to transcend the confines of the era in which it was written. We couldn’t miss the opportunity to share this with our audiences now in celebration of Magic Theatre’s legacy and are proud to invite you to join us in revisiting this momentous piece of theatre”.

Magic Theatre offers many opportunities for audiences to experience the action of the play development process including: live interviews with the playwrights, actors and directors, pre and post show talkbacks, panel discussions, as well as meet and greet events and cocktail mixers. These are fun, informative and complimentary ways to involve yourself in the Magic family throughout the season.

August 24-3PM

On-line interview conducted by Artistic Director Loretta Greco with Playwright Claire Chafee --Live Chat @ magictheatre.org

Every Thursday

7PM @ Theatre Lounge

Pre-Show inside information with Magic Theatre docents. Complimentary wine

Every Friday

Post show talkbacks, panels and special guest-led discussions.

Actors Bios

Lauren English* (Lili) Lauren most recently worked on The World Premiere of *The Proud* at Studio Tisch New York. Before that she was back in the The Bay playing Kelly in World Premiere of *Reborn* by Zayd Dorn at The SF Playhouse. New York Theatre: Celia in TACT's Off Broadway Production of *The Cocktail Party*, Ophelia in *Hamlet* at The NJ Shakespeare, and Sally in *The Idealist* at The New York Times Theatre (with Allison Pill and Tony Roberts). She has also worked at The Public Theatre, The Ensemble Studio Theatre, The Lark, The Playwrights Realm, among others. Locally, she has worked at The California Shakespeare Festival, Word For Word, Marin Shakespeare, and is a Proud Founding Member of The SF Playhouse. Favorite SFPH roles are: Sally in *Cabaret*, Emily in *Our Town* and Lisa in *The Glory of Living*. She is a two time BACC award winner and three time Dean Goodman Award Recipient. A proud member of AEA. She holds a MFA From NYU's Graduate Acting Program.

Maggie Mason (Mary) New York credits include: Iole / Tecmessa in *These Seven Sicknesses* dir. Ed Sylvanus Iskandar (Exit, Pursued by a Bear), Rita in *Right to the Top*

(workshop) written and directed by Amy Freed, Ensemble in *Arok of Java* dir. Ed Iskandar (Exit, Pursued by a Bear). Bay Area: *Or*, dir. Loretta Greco (Magic Theatre) for which she was nominated 'Best Actress' in the Bay Area Critics Circle Awards; *You, Nero* dir. Sharon Ott and *Arabian Nights* (understudy) dir. Mary Zimmerman (Berkeley Repertory Theatre); *Rock and Roll* dir. Ken Kelleher (San Jose Stage); *Possibilidad* dir. Wilma Bonet (San Francisco Mime Troupe); *Hamlet* and *As You Like It* dir. Ken Kelleher (Pacific Repertory Theatre); *Future Me* (TheatreFIRST); *Translations*, and *The Collection* dir. Ed Sylvanus Iskandar (Stanford Summer Theatre); *Oskar the Bully* dir. Mary Sutton (Theatreworks) *The Heavy Hand* dir. Noona Nolan (Stage Werx). Film: *Mirad a Boy From Bosnia* dir. Jeremy Irons (starring Jeremy Irons and Sinead Cusak). Television: *Grange Hill* (BBC TV), lead (three seasons).

Lorri Holt* (Eleanor) Lorri was last seen at the Magic in Rebecca Gilman's *The Crowd You're In With*. Other Magic credits: *Hillary & Soon-Yi Shop For Ties*, by Michelle Carter, and *Three Hotels*, by Jon Robin Baitz. Ms. Holt has been a leading actress in Bay Area theatre for more than three decades, performing leading roles at Berkeley Rep, A.C.T., California Shakespeare Festival, San Jose Rep, TheatreWorks, Marin Theater Company, and in many commercial productions. This spring she played Emily in the world premiere of *Reborn* at SF Playhouse, where last year she portrayed Ilana in Rajiv Joseph's *Animals Out of Paper*. Lorri was a member of San Francisco groundbreaking Eureka Theater, where she originated numerous roles, among them Harper Pitt in Tony Kushner's *Angels In America*. Other regional theater: The Humana Festival at ATL; Birmingham Rep (England); La Jolla Playhouse and London's Barbican Theater. She is the recipient of numerous acting awards and honors. Film/tv credits include: *Back To The Streets of San Francisco*, *Bee Season*, *Patch Adams*; *Baby Steps*, and the upcoming *Love & Taxes*. Education: BA in Dramatic Art ~ UC Berkeley; MFA in Writing & Literature ~ Bennington College. She works frequently in voiceover and is an award-winning published writer, currently at work on a memoir.

Rebecca Dines* (Renee) is delighted to be back with Magic where she was last seen in Claire Chafee's *Even Among These Rocks*. She recently appeared as Pamela (et al) in TheatreWorks' production of *The 39 Steps*. Other TheatreWorks roles have included Lily Garland (*Twentieth Century*), Alexa Vere de Vere (*As Bees In Honey Drown*), Rosalind (*As You Like It*) and Puck (*Shakespeare In Hollywood*). She appeared for Kansas City Repertory Theatre in the one-woman show *Bad Dates* and the San Francisco and Lake Tahoe Shakespeare Festivals where her roles included Beatrice (*Much Ado About Nothing*), Kate (*Taming of the Shrew*), Helena (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*) and Lady Macbeth (*Macbeth*). In Lake Tahoe she was thrilled to also direct a production of *As You Like It*. Her favorite roles include Ruth (*The Homecoming*, Aurora Theatre Company) and Lorraine Sheldon (*The Man Who Came To Dinner*, TheatreWorks). She has appeared for Berkeley, San Jose, and South Coast Repertory Theaters, The Laguna Playhouse and in theatre and television in Australia and London.

About Magic Theatre: Located in Landmark Building D of San Francisco's Historic Fort Mason Center, Magic Theatre is one of the most prominent theatres in the nation solely dedicated to the development and production of new plays. The mission of Magic Theatre is to give voice to playwrights, both emerging and established, and to develop and promote the work of theatre artists. Magic Theatre engages audiences in intimate,

professional productions that speak to contemporary issues with originality and wit, a sense of urgency and adventure. For 44 years Magic has contributed to the inventiveness and relevance of the national canon while passionately ensuring the future vibrancy of the American theatre.

Why We Have A Body

August 31 thru October 2

Tickets:

415-441-8822 or <http://www.magictheatre.org>" www.magictheatre.org.

Performances:

Tues, 7PM

Wed, Thur, Fri, 8PM

Sat, 2:30PM, Sun, 2:30PM

Wine and other beverages are available for purchase during the show

@<http://www.magitheatre.org>" www.magitheatre.org for more details

Pricing:

\$30-\$75

Student & Under 30 Discount: Tickets Available To Students And People Under 30 Years Of Age With Valid ID

Senior & Educator Discount: \$5 Discount Available to Seniors (62 And Over) and Educators With Valid ID

Limited Rush Tickets Available for each performance, cash only first come first serve

Magic Theatre

Building D, Fort Mason Center, San Francisco, CA 94123 (Parking lot entrance at Marina Blvd. and Buchanan St.)

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