

CAST ANNOUNCED FOR WEST COAST PREMIERE OF
THE POWER OF DUFF
WRITTEN BY **STEPHEN BELBER**
DIRECTED BY **PETER DuBOIS**

PERFORMANCES START APRIL 7; OPENING NIGHT IS APRIL 15, 2015
IN THE GIL CATES THEATER AT THE GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE

LOS ANGELES (March 12, 2015) – Geffen Playhouse announces the cast for its West Coast premiere production of *The Power of Duff* by Stephen Belber, directed by Peter DuBois. The production features Tanner Buchanan (*The Goldbergs*, *Bella and the Bulldogs*), Brendan Griffin (*Clybourne Park* on Broadway, *Person of Interest*), Eric Ladin (*Mad Men*, *Boardwalk Empire*), Joe Paulik (*The Good Wife*), Elizabeth Rodriguez (*Orange Is the New Black*, Tony Award nominee for *The Motherfucker with the Hat*) Josh Stamberg (*Parenthood*, *The Affair*) and Maurice Williams (*Pitbulls* at Rattlestick Playwrights Theater, *When January Feels Like Summer* Off-Broadway).

The Power of Duff runs April 7 through May 17, 2015 (opening night is April 15, 2015) in the Gil Cates Theater at the Geffen Playhouse.

When TV anchor Charlie Duff begins to sign-off each broadcast with a prayer, a growing crowd of believers becomes glued to their TV sets – wondering when their prayers will be answered. But what the prayers do – and don't do – to those closest to Duff tests the news anchor's own beliefs. Stephen Belber's sharp new play asks if there is anything more vital than the faith we have in one another.

Stephen Belber was an associate writer on Tectonic Theater Project's *The Laramie Project* (Drama Desk and Lucille Lortel Award nominations) and a co-writer on *The Laramie Project: Ten Years Later*. His plays have been performed in 25 countries, including his Broadway debut *Match* starring Frank Langella, which he recently directed as a movie starring Patrick Stewart.

Belber said, "I've simply tried to ask questions that most humans ask at one point or another: how can I feel more connected; what's the best way to be human; faith in *what*? It struck me as interesting to write a play about a person who is fundamentally ambivalent about religion, even about spirituality – who undergoes an emotional transformation, which in turn leads him to a position of being a suddenly looked-to spiritual 'leader' – even as his ambivalence continues. I like the question of what one should or can do when put in that position, and how one might act when faced with an almost undeniable spiritual reality taking place all around – and maybe even inside – him."

Huntington Theatre Company Artistic Director Peter DuBois, who helmed the Geffen Playhouse's hit *Rapture, Blister, Burn* last season, will direct this West Coast premiere. DuBois said, "Uniquely comic and unabashedly theatrical, *The Power of Duff* also pulses with incredible emotional clarity. It tells the transformative story of one man waking up to life, just as it seemed he was too lost and it was too late."

The Boston Globe said *The Power of Duff* is, "a smart take on a thorny subject, leavened with an intriguing blend of skepticism and sincerity ... as he sets out on a bumpy journey to make things right with his family, the question Charlie confronts is pretty much the one we all face at one time or another: Whether he has the power, not to change the world, but to change himself."

Broadway World said, "This is a play whose power creeps slowly into one's consciousness and then lingers long after the experience in the theater is over." *Theater Mania* said, "There are plenty of

cleverly constructed and well-written plays, but *The Power of Duff* possesses a rare strain of sincerity. That's what gives this well-put-together play its power to move, and to delight."

In addition to the opening night, the run of *The Power of Duff* will feature over a dozen pre-show and post-show Signature Series events. Ranging from the cerebral to the celebratory these include **TGIF at the Geffen**, **Talk Back Tuesdays** (Audience Q+A with artists), **Lounge Fridays**, **Girls Night Out** and **Wine Down Sundays**. Thanks to the support of Geffen Playhouse partners and sponsors, all elements of Signature Series evenings are complimentary as part of the ticket price. Signature Series events include:

- **Talk Back Tuesdays** give theater lovers a chance for a deeper conversation to discuss plot, character, themes or any other questions directly with the artists. Talk Back Tuesdays include a complimentary Keurig beverage before the show and a post-show Q+A.
- Happy hour **Lounge Fridays** turns the Geffen Playhouse into a haven to help fast-paced Angelenos ease into their weekend and unwind at this cultural happy hour. Complimentary sparkling joins other enticing refreshments starting at 7:00 pm.
- **Wine Down Sundays** provides the perfect pairing – pre-performance wine sampling poured directly by the winemaker or distributor. These evenings often feature different vintages for each production, so patrons who come regularly will discover new wine before their theatrical experience.
- Geared towards ladies, with enticements for guys, **Girls Night Out at the Geffen** is the ultimate night out in LA. For this after-party, Reka Lena – designs on silk inspired by Elena Avanesova's original oil paintings transformed into wearable designs will be showcased. Plus eclectic jams from DJ Mike, signature Deep Eddy vodka cocktails, delectable buffets, delicious Malibu Family Wines, the always popular Girls Night Out photo booth, a Keurig coffee and tea bar and Pixi Beauty take-away gift.
- **TGIF at the Geffen** takes place on Friday of preview week and is the ideal cultural meet up and hot-spot on the west side. Enjoy classic to contemporary tunes from DJ Mike pre-show on the Simms Courtyard patio plus drink specials at the concessions bar.

For Signature Series dates associated with the run of *The Power of Duff*, visit www.GeffenPlayhouse.com/ThePowerofDuffEvents.

Tickets currently range from \$39 – \$79 and can be purchased in-person, online at www.GeffenPlayhouse.com or by phone at 310.208.5454. Fees apply.

WEST COAST PREMIERE

The Power of Duff

Written by **Stephen Belber**

Directed by **Peter DuBois**

Previews: Tuesday, April 7 – Tuesday, April 14, 2015

Opening Night: Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Closing Night: Sunday, May 17, 2015

CAST

Tanner Buchanan as Ricky

Brendan Griffin as John Ebbs

Eric Ladin as Scott Zoellner

Joe Paulik as Ron Kirkpatrick

Elizabeth Rodriguez as Sue Raspell

Josh Stamberg as Charlie Duff

Maurice Williams as Casey

PRODUCTION TEAM

Scenic Design by **Clint Ramos**

Costume Design by **Bobby Frederick Tilley II**
Lighting Design by **Rui Rita**
Sound Design by **MuTTT Dogg**
Projection Design by **Aaron Rhyne**
Production Stage Manager **Kyra Hansen**
Assistant Stage Manager **Michael Vitale**
Casting Director **Phyllis Schuringa, CSA**

PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE

Monday	No performance
Tuesday – Friday	8:00pm
Saturday	3:00pm and 8:00pm
Sunday	2:00pm and 7:00pm

TICKET INFORMATION

Ticket prices are currently \$39 - \$79 and are available in-person at the Geffen Playhouse box office, via phone at 310.208.5454 or online at www.geffenplayhouse.com. Fees may apply.

LOCATION

Gil Cates Theater at the Geffen Playhouse
10886 Le Conte Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90024

ABOUT GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE

Geffen Playhouse has been a hub of the Los Angeles theater scene since opening its doors in 1995. Noted for its intimacy and celebrated for its world-renowned mix of classic and contemporary plays, provocative new works and second productions, the not-for-profit organization continues to present a body of work that has garnered national recognition. Named in honor of entertainment mogul and philanthropist David Geffen, who made the initial donation to the theater, the company was founded by Gilbert Cates, and is currently helmed by Artistic Director Randall Arney, Interim Managing Director Gil Cates Jr., and Co-Chairs of the Board Martha Henderson and Pamela Robinson Hollander. Proudly associated with UCLA, the Geffen welcomes an audience of more than 130,000 each year, and maintains an extensive education and outreach program, designed to engage young people and the community at large in the arts.

MEDIA CONTACT:

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