



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**New Conservatory Theatre Center Presents *The Temperamentals*
by Lambda Literary Award Winner Jon Marans**

San Francisco, October 25, 2011 — NCTC is proud to present *The Temperamentals* by Jon Marans. The show will be running from November 4, 2011 through December 18, 2011: Wednesday through Saturday at 8pm and Sunday at 2pm. All performances will take place at The New Conservatory Theatre Center (Walker Theatre), located at 25 Van Ness Ave. (near Market St.) in San Francisco, 94102. Tickets are \$25-\$45 each, and are available at the NCTC Box Office (415) 861-8972, or online at www.nctcsf.org.

“**Temperamental**” was the code word for a gay man in the early 1950s. It was part of a secret language that gay men used to communicate. Set against the dark backdrop of **1950s Los Angeles**, *The Temperamentals* is the story of the communist **Harry Hay** and the Viennese refugee **Rudy Gernreich** as they fall in love, and form the **Mattachine Society**, the first gay rights organization in the Pre-Stonewall climate of the United States. Through music and heated scenes, the audience is given a glimpse into the chaotic lives of these social innovators as they form a brotherhood of like-minded men, hide from a homophobic American government, and fight a judicial system that forces their very beliefs to be put on trial.

Jon Marans' newest play, *The Temperamentals*, produced by Daryl Roth and Stacy Shane, ran for over eight months Off-Broadway, first at the Barrow Group Theater and then moving to New World Stages. *The Temperamentals* was nominated for both the **Lucille Lortel** and the **Outer Critics Circle Award for Outstanding New Off-Broadway Play**, and Mr. Marans was **nominated for the John Gassner Award**. Mr. Marans also wrote *Old Wicked Songs*, which was a Pulitzer Prize Finalist for Drama, was included in "Otis Guernsey's Best Plays of 1996-97," won the New York Drama League Award, and won the L.A. Drama Logue Award. Mr. Marans' one-act *A Girl Scout World* opened at the 2010 Bloomington Playwrights Project where it was commissioned for the AwareFest. Mr. Marans' play *Jumping for Joy* had its world premiere at the Laguna Playhouse and was then subsequently produced at the International Adelaide Theater Festival in Adelaide, Australia. *Legacy of the Dragon Slayers* (book by Jon Marans, music and lyrics by Ronnie Gilbert) premiered at the San Jose Repertory Theatre; *Irrationals* (book & lyrics Jon Marans, music by Edward Thomas) was produced at the Village Theater in Seattle and ATA, NYC. In television, Mr. Marans was a writer for *Cookin' in Brooklyn* and a writer/lyricist for the 1991 *New Carol Burnett Show*. In film, Jon Marans and Yuri Sivo were hired by Universal Pictures/Tribeca Productions to write a political/war screenplay based on Roy Rowan's acclaimed book *Chasing the Dragon* which takes place in 1947 China, during their civil war. Mr. Marans is a graduate of Duke University in mathematics and a minor in music.

Director F. Allen Sawyer has been writing and directing in San Francisco since 1982. He is the author of many plays including *Whatever Happened To Sister George*, *Gross Indulgences: The Trials Of Liberace*, *Hot Pants Homo*, *Senator Swish*, and *Lavender Lockeroom*. At New Conservatory Theatre Allen has directed *It's Murder Mary!*, *Zanna Don't!*, *Dames At Sea*, *Dirty Little Showtunes*, *The Stops*, and cabaret shows starring Connie Champagne, Tom Orr, Darlene Popovic, and Stephanie Temple. He is profiled in *Contemporary Gay American Poets & Playwrights* from Greenwood Press.

The Temperamentals features an ensemble of five accomplished actors. **J. Conrad Frank** (Rudi Gernreich) is best known as Russian opera diva Katya Smirnoff-Sky who was named Best Drag Act 2008 by the San Francisco Bay Guardian and winner of the 2010 Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Award for Best Actor in a Musical. Conrad has also appeared as Mrs. Peacock in *Clue* at the Boxcar Theater, The Valkyrie in *Jerry Springer the Opera* at Ray of Light Theatre and Sylvia Fowler in *Jungle Red* at Artful Circle Theatre. **Justin Gillman** (Chuck Rowland) has appeared Off Broadway in *When Last We Flew* which received a GLAAD Award for Best Play, *Twelfth Night* at Classic Stage Company, *Hamlet* at Gallery Players, *Phoenician Women* at New York's Riverside Theatre, and locally in *As You Like It*, and *King Lear* at Shakespeare Santa Cruz, and *Timon of Athens* at the Theatre Artists Group. Gillman's film credits include *Monsters Inside Me* and *Mysteries of the Museum II*. **Jeffrey Hoffman** (Bob Hull) was recently seen in Theatre Q's *Lips Together*, *Teeth Apart* directed by Rebecca Longworth, and Crish Barth's *Reading With Friends* directed by Paul Cello. Hoffman is also involved in the readings of Pat Milton's *Believers* and Robin Lynn Rodriguez's *Hedge*. **Steven Salzman** (Harry Hay) has appeared recently in *Beardo* at Shotgun Players, *Connecticut Yankee* at Pear Avenue Theatre, and *SF Stories* at Wiley West Productions. Salzman is also part of Magic Theatre's Emerging Artist Lab and a member of the Dramatist Guild and Austin ScriptWorks. **Seth Thygesen** (Dale Jennings) had his debut at the New Conservatory Theatre Center in *A Perfect Ganesh*. This will be his 16th professional production in the Bay Area after having worked at Impact, Boxcar, and The Willows.

New Conservatory Theatre Center has recruited **three talented designers** for this Bay Area Premiere. **Jorge Hernandez** (costume design) has worked as assistant costumer with Lamplighters Theatre for *Bitter Sweet* and *My Fair Lady*. At New Conservatory Theatre he has designed *Dames At Sea*, *Holka Polka*, *Rehearsal For Murder*, *Dirty Little Show Tunes*, *Regrets Only*, and *The Stops*. Hernandez also makes costumes for *Vima Vice Squad*, a men's formation ballroom dance group from Vima Studio in San Francisco. **Christian Mejia** (lighting design) is a graduate of Tisch School of the Arts. New Conservatory Theatre Center audiences will remember his designs for *Waiting for Giovanni*, *A Perfect Ganesh*, and *Treefall*. Mejia has also designed for PunkkiCo Dance Company in San Francisco and is currently working on their production of *Pick Cells*. **Ali Maggin** (sound design) joins the New Conservatory Theatre Center from Purgatory Recording Studios in San Francisco where he creates sound for visual and audio productions. The stage manager for the production is **Myla Tutt**, who just completed a tour to China with *Miss Nelson Is Missing*. Recently Tutt stage-managed Hillbarn Theatre's production of *Holes* and *Between Yesterday and Tomorrow*.

During the run of the show, theatre lovers can enjoy a plethora of **special events**:

- A special *Sneak Peek* of the play including a Q&A with the actors and director will be taking place at the San Francisco Public Library on Tuesday, November 1 at 6:30pm.

- *Low-cost previews* take place on Friday, November 4; Saturday November 5; Sunday November 6; Wednesday November 9; Thursday November 10.
- *Press Night* will take place on Friday, November 11.
- *Opening Night* will take place on Saturday, November 12.
- *Free Onstage Insight* discussions will be taking place after four Sunday Matinee performances: November 20, November 27, December 4, and December 11. Onstage Insights will feature the cast, director, and special guest speakers Joey Cain, Susan Stryker, and Bettina Aptheker.

The Temperamentals takes place during a **very important time in the history** of the United States. During the height of the Cold War, Americans were obsessed with national loyalty. Investigations involving an individual's "American-ness" were plastered across newspapers and reported on radio programs. Every American was asked to be on alert for suspicious behavior amongst their neighbors and friends as a matter of national security. As a result of this constant search for "the enemy within," the American anti-Communist sentiment grew to a fever pitch, creating what became known as "McCarthyism," or as some would later call it, "**The Red Scare.**" When Undersecretary of State John Peurifoy testified later before the senate, he was asked questions regarding the loyalty of government workers. Peurifoy reported that since being under investigation, 91 people had resigned, "Most of these," he said, "were **homosexuals.**" Suddenly, McCarthy's America was gifted a new enemy, one of "deviants" and "perverts" lurking around every corner in well tailored slacks. Homosexuals began to be pressured out of government offices on charges of being "a security risk." This high pressure environment created a modern-day witch-hunt whereby being gay or being perceived as gay could lead to individuals being driven from their jobs and their homes. Those who were perceived to be homosexual were often scandalized in their communities and pressured out of public establishments. It was not uncommon during this era of fear to see stories about young men and women being jailed for what the media called "lewd and perverted behavior." Many activists regard this time as one of the most dangerous for the **gay community**, not only because of the rampant social mistrust occurring on a national level, but also because of the blatantly secretive actions of government offices around the world.

Founded in 1950, the **Mattachine Society** was the first long standing homosexual organization in the United States. Organized in Los Angeles by former Communist **Harry Hay**, the society's goal was to protect and improve the rights of homosexuals- a group that Hay felt had been an underrepresented cultural minority. After signing a petition of support for presidential candidate Henry A. Wallace titled the "Bachelors for Wallace" campaign at a party, Hay began to speak to other gay men about organizing a similar political group. When Hay tried to continue the conversation with party goers the next morning, his comrades' fervor had been replaced with hangovers. Determined, Hay continued working on his idea for two years, drafting documents and working on a group structure that he felt would suit his future community group and its members. In 1950, what Hays' manifesto referred to as "**The Call**" became an underground sensation. Hay began to talk about his manifesto with high society gentlemen in Los Angeles hoping to gain support. However, many of these gentlemen worked in politics or Hollywood and refused

to have their careers jeopardized by being affiliated with Hays' organization. In November of 1950, Hay joined forces with his lover **Rudi Gernreich**, and friends Bob Hull, Chuck Rowland, and Dale Jennings to officially form the Mattachine Society. Membership in the group grew slowly until Jennings was arrested on charges of "lewd behavior" and pleaded innocent. Although the case was not widely publicized, Jennings was acquitted. As word about the society spread throughout the gay community, Mattachine membership numbers skyrocketed. Most of the Mattachine Society's founding members had ties to the Communist Party. As the "Red Scare" surged through the United States, Hay, a member of the **Communist Party** for fifteen years, decided to step down as the organizations' leader. The Mattachine Society continued to grow as a national organization hosting discussions and meetings until 1961. Due to internal disagreements, the national organization disbanded, while local chapters in San Francisco, New York, and the Mid West continued under similar names until the early 1970's. Although the Mattachine Society was unable to formally influence any branch of government or law, their organization increased the visibility of homosexuals in America and helped build a foundation of organized resistance that future groups, like those of **Stonewall**, could stand upon.

New Conservatory Theatre Center has been in operation for thirty years in San Francisco. Under founding artistic director Ed Decker, the theatre has grown to become the only theatre in the nation offering a full season centered on theatrical work for youth and the **Queer and Allied community**. The theatres **mission** is to champion innovative, high quality productions and educational theatre experiences for youth, artists, and the queer and allied communities to affect personal and societal growth, enlightenment, and change. New Conservatory Theatre is known for its gay-positive productions, its foundational **anti-bullying** work with youth, and its welcoming environment for new and emerging local artists.

The Temperamentals

FACT SHEET

WHO: Written by Jon Marrans

Directed by F. Allen Sawyer

Designed by Jorge Hernandez (costumes), Christian Mejia (lights), Ali Maggin (sound)

Starring J.Conrad Frank (Rudi Gernreich), Justin Gillman (Chuck Rowland), Jeffrey Hoffman (Bob Hull), and Steve Salzman (Harry Hay), Seth Thygesen (Dale Jennings)

WHAT: *The Temperamentals*, the Bay Area premiere of a play about the first gay rights organization in pre-Stonewall America

WHERE: New Conservatory Theatre Center (Walker Theatre)
25 Van Ness Avenue @ Market Street, San Francisco, CA 94102

WHEN: November 4, 2011 - December 18, 2011

Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays at 8pm

Sundays at 2pm

No Show on Wednesday November 23, and Thursday November 24

SPECIAL EVENTS: Sneak Peek: Tuesday 11/1 @630pm. James C. Hormel Center- San Francisco Main Library

Press Night: Friday 11/11 @8pm

Opening Night: Saturday 11/12 @8pm

OnStage Insight Series: Following the 2pm matinee performances on Sunday 11/20, Sunday 11/27, Sunday 12/4 and Sunday 12/11

COST: \$25-\$45 (subject to change)

Discounts: Groups of 10 or more, contact 415-861-8972 or boxoffice@nctcsf.org

Half-price tickets are available 10 minutes prior to the show for students with I.D

PHOTOS: http://www.nctcsf.org/press_room/the_temperamentals.htm

TICKETS: Box Office (415) 861 8972, or online at www.nctcsf.org.