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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Young performers roll the dice on *Guys and Dolls*

“When you see a guy reach for stars in the sky, you can bet that he’s doing it for some doll!”

JUNE 23, 2011 – Nathan Detroit, Miss Adelaide, Nicely-Nicely Johnson and the gang began life as characters in Damon Runyon short stories before they inhabited one of Broadway’s greatest musicals. This summer, they’ll gamble, lament and dance through Havana in the capable hands of impressive young San Francisco performers and a full symphony orchestra.

The San Francisco Arts Education Project is pleased to announce a special one-night-only staged concert performance of Frank Loesser’s *Guys and Dolls* on Monday, July 25, 7:30 p.m. at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music Concert Hall, 50 Oak St., San Francisco.

The production boasts a cast of more than 60 and features a wide array of our students:

- In the lead roles are alumni of SFArtsED programs: the Artists-in-Residence programs in the public schools and after-school programs; they serve as mentors to the younger students.
- In supporting roles are members of the SFArtsED Players, the youth musical theater program now in its 11th season.
- In the ensemble are students from the SFArtsED Summer Broadway Bound program, some of whom are making their stage debuts.

The performers are accompanied by the 36-member UC Berkeley Summer Symphony Orchestra conducted by Music Director Henry Shin. The production is directed by Danny Duncan, a celebrated local director and writer who has worked with SFArtsED for more than 20 years.

“*Guys and Dolls* is so iconic and so important in the history of musical theater,” Duncan says. “In my career, I’ve directed three productions of it with young people, and they love it. The music is fun, and the comedy is challenging. And it’s such a wonderful piece of Americana.”

“One of the wonderful things about our summer production is the return of our alumni, all of whom are off studying and performing and making their way toward great careers,” says Emily Keeler, SFArtsED artistic director. “They started their training with us and blossomed, so it’s gratifying to see them return and work with younger students who aim to follow in their footsteps. It’s absolutely inspiring to see the students become the teachers.”

Allen Darby, who is heading into his senior year as a theater major at the University of Southern California, began studying with SFArtsED more than 10 years ago. He’ll be playing Nathan Detroit in *Guys and Dolls* and says that the experience made him want to study theater and be a performer. “I liked that the teachers treated us like professionals, which meant that you worked hard, had fun and impressed audiences. Hearing applause for the first time – it’s what I wrote all my college essays about. I started out as a kid with ADHD bouncing off walls, and it took the discipline of the directors to focus me and make me serious. At school, I was that ‘weird theater kid,’ which made me stand out, helped me mature and gave me a creative outlet. The arts can really change somebody’s life.”

Duncan says that seeing the older students working with the younger is a “crowning achievement” in his 20-plus years with SFArtsED.

“We’ve helped raise a group of children into adults who are so enamored of what was given to them that they feel it’s necessary to come back and give back tenfold to younger people,” Duncan says. “It makes me feel so blessed and so rich to see these kids return from university and work with us during the summer, fostering younger performers and helping them the way they were helped.”

The *Guys and Dolls* creative team also includes other veterans of SFArtsED programs: accompanists Diana Lee and Luba Kravchenko, choreographers Natalie Greene and Erin Hewitt and costume designer Linda Ricciardi.

Photos: <http://sfartsed.squarespace.com/sfartsed-players-galleries/>

About SFArtsED

Founded in 1965 (as the Alvarado Arts Workshop) by renowned artist Ruth Asawa, SFArtsED has transformed the lives of children, their families, teachers, artists and volunteers. Programs include SFArtsED Summer, in-school Artists-in-Residence, arts-based after-school extended learning programs, the SFArtsED Players musical theater company, apprentice programs for college and high school students and public visual art exhibits.

About The SFArtsED Players

The SFArtsED Players is a musical theater company that reflects San Francisco in all its diversity. Hailing from the neighborhoods of the City and from around the bay, the SFArtsED Players comprises more than 50 theater performers who come from SFArtsED’s performing arts residencies as well as from the organization’s summer arts intensive, called SFArtsED Summer, held this year at James Lick Middle School. The young performers are selected for their talent, enthusiasm and commitment for the musical theater form. They work with directors of the company 10 hours each week, training as “triple threats” – actors, singers, dancers – and rehearsing for their performances. The company performs original musicals and revues as well as Broadway classics. The 2010-11 troupe represented 32 different Bay Area schools, including 18 public schools.

For more information or to set up interviews, photos or a rehearsal visit, please call 415.551.7990, e-mail chad.j@sfartsed.org or visit www.sfartsed.org.

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Guys and Dolls
FACT SHEET

- WHO:** The San Francisco Arts Education Project
- WHAT:** *Guys and Dolls*
A vibrant cast of young performers celebrates Frank Loesser's Broadway classic with the UC Berkeley Summer Symphony under the direction of Henry Shin. The cast includes alumni of SFArtsED programs; current members of the youth musical theater troupe the SFArtsED Players; and students from SFArtsED Summer's Broadway Bound program.
- WHERE:** San Francisco Conservatory of Music Concert Hall
50 Oak St.
San Francisco, CA 94102
- WHEN:** Monday, July 25, 7:30 p.m.
- HOW MUCH:** \$25 - \$45
- TIX & INFO:** City Box Office, www.cityboxoffice.com, 415.392.4400
SFArtsED, www.sfartsed.org, 415.551.7990

Downloadable photos from last year's gala concert production of *Carousel* with SFArtsED students and the UC Berkeley Summer Symphony are available at:
<http://sfartsed.squarespace.com/sfartsed-players-galleries/carousel-2010/>

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