

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Media Alert for Theatre Editors, Reviewers and Calendar Listings

**Chance Theater is proud to announce the California Premiere of  
“Ride the Cyclone”**

**This quirky, smart, and darkly hilarious musical is critically-acclaimed and currently striking a chord online, inspiring countless fan videos with hundreds of millions of views on social media platforms like TikTok**

**ANAHEIM, CA:** Chance Theater, Anaheim’s official resident theater company, is pleased to announce the California Premiere of “Ride the Cyclone.” Book, Music, and Lyrics by Jacob Richmond & Brooke Maxwell this lauded contemporary musical will preview from January 27 through February 3, and regular performances will begin February 4th and continue through February 26 at Chance Theater @ Bette Aitken theater arts Center on the Cripe Stage.

Directed by Chance Theater’s Associate Artistic Director and long-time Chance resident artist, Jocelyn A. Brown, “Ride the Cyclone” dares you to strap yourself in for a bracingly funny, supremely inventive musical journey with more twists and turns than the rickety roller coaster that sends six teenagers prematurely into the afterlife. Now trapped in a fantastical carnival-like purgatory, a mechanical fortune teller invites the teens to tell their stories of life interrupted with the promise of a prize like no other – the chance to return to life.

**NEW YORK TIMES’ BEST OF 2016!**

**“High-spirited and just plain fun from start to finish... a supremely witty book... the kind of thrills we look for in all musical comedies... This oddball charmer radiates warmth and wit from spooky start to surprisingly sob-worthy conclusion.” -- Charles Isherwood, *New York Times***

“A wonderful, touching and memorable roller coaster ride of a theatrical experience, for teen and adult audiences alike. With the show’s supernatural atmosphere... this is, quite simply, a beautiful ‘Dream of Life’ come true.” -- *Chicago Theatre Review*

“Both eerie and funny, as well as subversive, serious, touching, and great.” -- *Vulture*

The acclaim for this offbeat musical was there from the beginning, winning 3 Toronto Theatre Critics Awards (including Best New Musical) and the Dora Mavor Moore Award for Outstanding Touring Production in 2012. Once the show premiered off-Broadway in 2016, it garnered 5 Lucille Lortel Award nominations (including Outstanding Musical) and a Drama League Award nomination for Outstanding Production of an Off-Broadway Musical. The production was named by *The New York Times* as one of the Best Shows of 2016, being listed alongside “Dear Evan Hansen,” Pulitzer Prize Winner “Sweat,” and “Natasha, Pierre & The Great Comet of 1812.”

The show was a hit with critics and audiences, making it a strong candidate for moving to Broadway. However, the COVID-19 shutdown stopped all current plans of that happening. Meanwhile, the show has steadily building in popularity online, striking a chord with a younger audience. When you do a search for “ride the cyclone musical” on TikTok, you will find a list of videos that have racked up over [214 million views](#).

**Jocelyn A. Brown (Director)** has served as the Chance Theater’s Associate Artistic Director since 2001 and has been a Chance Resident Artist since 2001. Her directorial work at Chance Theater includes “Lizzie, the Musical” (Ovation Award winner for Best Musical), “Good People,” “The Big Meal,” “Never In My Lifetime,” “The Cherry Orchard,” “Big Love” and “In the Next Room (or the Vibrator Play),” each of which has garnered multiple awards and award nominations from Ovation and the OC Weekly to Back Stage and the Orange Curtain Review. She portrayed Diana in Chance’s 2022 production of “Next to Normal,” the Witch in “Into the Woods,” Cathy in “The Last Five Years,” Leigh Fondakowski in “The Laramie Project” and “The Laramie Project: Ten Years Later,” Ann in “Goodnight Children Everywhere” and Jo March in “Little Women.” She teaches at Laguna Hills High School and was an honoree for the California League of High Schools’ “Teacher of the Year” for Orange County in 2012.

Joining Brown on the design team are music director **Lex Leigh** (OC Theatre Guild Award winner for “Striking 12”), choreographer **Miguel Cardenas** (“Green Day’s American Idiot”), co-scenic designers **Bradley Kaye** (“Edges”) and **Antonio Beach** (“Fun Home”), costume designer **Bradley Allen Lock** (“The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity”), lighting designer **Masako Tobaru** (“Little Women - The Broadway Musical”), sound designer

**Rebecca Kessin** (“Tigers Be Still”), projection designer **Nick Santiago** (“The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity”), and stage manager **Bebe Herrera** (“Cry It Out”).

The cast of “Ride the Cyclone” will feature a mix of newcomers and returning actors – **Robert Foran** (“The Vandal,” Chance Resident Artist) will play The Amazing Karnak, **Haley Wolff** (Chance debut) is Ocean O’Connell Rosenberg, **Jared Machado** (“Green Day’s American Idiot”) is Mischa Bachinski, **Wyatt Hatfield** (“Green Day’s American Idiot”) plays Noel Gruber, **Jaylen Baham** (“Next to Normal”) is Ricky Potts, **Rose Pell** (Chance debut) will play Constance Blackwood, and **Em Flosi** (TACFA production of Disney’s “Beauty and The Beast”) is Jane Doe. For this production, **James Michael McHale** (“in a word,” Chance Resident Artist) will be the understudy for Mischa Bachinski.

Robert Berman is the Executive Producer for this production and Susan Bowman & Freddie Greenfield, Elizabeth Jones, and Laurie Smits Staude are the Associate Producers. Bette & Wylie Aitken are producers for the entire 2023 Season.

To schedule press interviews, arrange for press comps, request press photos, or for any additional information regarding this production, please contact Casey Long, the Chance’s managing director, at (626) 523-7151 or [casey@chancetheater.com](mailto:casey@chancetheater.com).

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## ABOUT CHANCE THEATER

Proud to be one of the leading ensemble-driven theatre companies in Southern California, CHANCE THEATER has received the National Theatre Company grant from American Theatre Wing for “nurturing a community of artists in ways that strengthen and demonstrate the quality, diversity, and dynamism of American theatre.” The Chance recently won eight OC Theatre Guild Awards, including Outstanding Production of a Musical for its intimate revival of *Fun Home*. Previously, Chance Theater won eight Ovation Awards, including four for Best Production of a Musical (Intimate Theatre), as well as four LADCC Awards, including the Polly Warfield Award for Outstanding Season. The Anaheim City Council named Chance Theater “the Official Resident Theater Company of Anaheim” in 2014, and Arts Orange County has twice named the Chance as “Outstanding Arts Organization.” Known for using bold and personal storytelling to promote dialogue and connection within the Southern California theatrical landscape, the Chance is committed to contributing to a more compassionate, connected and creative community. As a constituent member of Theatre Communications Group, The

Theatrical Producers League of Los Angeles, and OC Theatre Guild, Chance Theater continues to bring national attention to the Southern California and Orange County theater scenes.

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## **CALENDAR LISTING**

### **WHAT: Ride the Cyclone**

Strap yourself in for a bracingly funny, supremely inventive musical journey with more twists and turns than the rickety roller coaster that sends six teenagers prematurely into the afterlife. Now trapped in a fantastical carnival-like purgatory, a mechanical fortune teller invites the teens to tell their stories of life interrupted with the promise of a prize like no other – the chance to return to life. Already being lauded as a contemporary musical masterpiece, this quirky, smart, and darkly hilarious show reveals the resilience of the human spirit with a riveting score that skillfully mixes cabaret, hip-hop, and Broadway.

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**REVIEWERS AND OTHER PRESS are encouraged to come to Opening Night on Saturday, February 4 at 8 p.m.**

### **WHEN:**

Previews: January 27 – February 3, 2023; Friday and Saturday at 8 p.m., Sunday at 7 p.m.

Performances: February 4 – February 26, 2023; Thursdays at 7:30 p.m., Fridays at 8 p.m., Saturdays at 3 p.m. & 8 p.m., Sundays at 3 p.m.

**RUNNING TIME:** 1 hour, 30 minutes, with no intermission

**WHERE:** Chance Theater @ Bette Aitken theater arts Center on the Cripe Stage  
5522 E. La Palma Ave., Anaheim, CA 92807

**TICKETS:** \$25-\$49

**MORE INFO:** [www.ChanceTheater.com](http://www.ChanceTheater.com) or call (888) 455-4212

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