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**RITA RUDNER ANNOUNCES SHE WILL JOIN ENSEMBLE CAST OF
LAGUNA PLAYHOUSE WORLD PREMIERE PRODUCTION OF
TICKLED PINK IN APRIL 2012**

LAGUNA BEACH, CA, SEPTEMBER 21, 2011 – Award-winning comedian Rita Rudner began her show business career on stage in the national company of *Zorba* with Chita Rivera and John Raitt at the tender age of fifteen. After appearing in several Broadway shows, including *Follies* and *Mack and Mabel*, Rita made her last pre-comedian Broadway appearance in 1980 as Lily St. Regis in *Annie*.

This Spring Rita will return to her roots by joining the 13 member ensemble cast of The Laguna Playhouse's production of *Tickled Pink*, scheduled to make its World Premiere in April 2012 as the theatre's final production in its 2011-2012 season.

Written by Rudner and her longtime creative partner and husband, Martin Bergman, *Tickled Pink* is the stage adaptation of Rudner's 2002 well-received and best-selling novel. Bergman, who has a thirty year track record of producing, writing and directing for stage, TV and film, will direct the play and has already been actively involved in the early casting phases of the production.

Rudner quips with tongue-in-cheek per usual, "I'm so looking forward to acting in a play again. It's been a long time since I've been paid such little money."

Tickled Pink tracks the journey of a youthfully spirited and Broadway bound Mindy Solomon who moves from Florida to New York dreaming of a dancing career. Unexpected events force her to rethink her grand plan. Spending way too much time in the comedy club where her future ex-boyfriend works, Mindy nervously goes up on stage one night. People laugh. Not in the places where Mindy thought they'd laugh, but hey, it's a start.

Laguna Playhouse Executive Director Karen Wood states "We are extremely fortunate to call Rita and Martin neighbors and creative collaborators. They are delightful and savvy professionals and we couldn't be more thrilled to offer their world class talent to the Orange County community."

Tickled Pink is set to run April 24 – May 20, 2012 with single tickets being made available to the general public beginning December 1, 2011. Subscriptions that include *Tickled Pink* with premium seating options are available now. Single ticket prices range from \$30 - \$70 based on performance day and time.

"This is an exciting time in our artistic development and we are proud to continue our relationship with such a globally recognized and venerable team. No doubt this Spring will be theatrically special in Laguna Beach," exclaims Laguna Playhouse Artistic Director Ann E. Wareham.

ABOUT LAGUNA PLAYHOUSE

Founded in 1920 and celebrating its 90th anniversary in 2011-2012, The Laguna Playhouse is one of the oldest continuously-operating theatres on the West Coast. In January 2011, The Laguna Playhouse was honored at the Laguna Spirit Awards and received The Laguna Beach Chamber of Commerce Premiere Business of the Year award.

More than 100,000 theatergoers annually attend performances at the Laguna Playhouse. Its continued artistic excellence, audience popularity and critical acclaim have helped make The Playhouse one of Southern California's most important nonprofit theatre companies.

Over the years, the Laguna Playhouse has garnered numerous awards from LA Drama Critics Circle, NAACP, Backstage, OC Weekly, and many more, and was named Best Arts Organization by ArtsOC. Notable performers that have performed at The Laguna Playhouse include Bette Davis, Harrison Ford, Charles Durning, Marlo Thomas, Roddy McDowell, Rita Rudner, Cloris Leachman, and Sally Struthers.

The Laguna Playhouse is noted for its Youth Theater Education and Outreach programs. In 1989, its Youth Theater was recognized as "Outstanding Children's Theatre" by the American Alliance for Theatre and Education. The theater's touring production, TheatreReach, brings books to life on stage for elementary school children throughout southern California.

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