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**BERKELEY REP ANNOUNCES SIX ENTHRALLING SHOWS
FOR UPCOMING 2015–16 SUBSCRIPTION SEASON**

Theatre presents a rich array of compelling plays for its 48th season

— *Plus one more show to be announced* —

MARCH 9, 2015 — Building on its national and international reputation as a home for talented artists, [Berkeley Repertory Theatre](#) proudly announces its 48th season – a trove of rich theatrical experiences featuring critically acclaimed productions and exhilarating new works. Today, Michael Leibert Artistic Director **Tony Taccone** revealed six of the seven productions selected for the Theatre’s 2015–16 subscription programming, including the world premiere musical ***Amélie***, based on the Academy Award-nominated film and directed by Tony Award winner **Pam MacKinnon**; the Berkeley Rep debut of Chicago theatre rebels **The Hypocrites** with their delightful, high-energy staging of ***Pirates of Penzance***; the 2013 Pulitzer Prize-winning ***Disgraced*** by **Ayad Akhtar**, helmed by **Kimberly Senior**, following its triumphant run on Broadway; a thrilling new production of ***Macbeth***, directed by Tony and Obie Award-winning director **Daniel Sullivan**; a lyrical and bittersweet new work from playwright **Julia Cho** and Berkeley Rep’s Associate Director **Liesl Tommy**; as well as the return of audience favorite and Tony Award-winning director **Mary Zimmerman** with her heart-pounding voyage to ***Treasure Island***, a co-production with Lookingglass Theatre Company.

“We remain steadfastly committed to showcasing powerful stories that engage, connect, and transport audiences,” **says Taccone**. “For the 2015-16 season we’ve assembled a collection of captivating plays that range from classic stories being inventively and fantastically retold to new works by some of the most prolific and exciting artists working in American theatre today. We’re offering vibrant music and storytelling in our season opener ***Amélie*** and The Hypocrites’ immersive and subversive ***Pirates of Penzance***. With ***Disgraced*** and ***Aubergine*** we have hard-hitting and rewarding dramas that probe definitions of family and the complexity of identity and faith. Add to that the return of Mary Zimmerman, who is back to stage ***Treasure Island***, and Daniel Sullivan’s ***Macbeth***, and we have a season that will take audiences on a journey that goes beyond mere entertainment and taps into our minds and hearts.”

In August, the season begins with the world premiere of ***Amélie***, an inventive and captivating new musical directed by Tony Award winner **Pam MacKinnon** (*Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*) written by **Craig Lucas** (*Prelude to a Kiss*). *Amélie* captured our hearts in the five-time Academy Award nominated film. Now she comes to the stage in a stirring score by **Daniel Messé** of the acclaimed band Hem with lyrics by **Nathan Tysen** (*The Burnt Part Boys*) and Messé. Embark on a mesmerizing journey with inquisitive and charmingly shy *Amélie* as she turns the streets of Montmartre into a world of her own imagining, while secretly orchestrating moments of joy for those around her.

MORE

RECIPIENT OF THE TONY AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING REGIONAL THEATRE

Known for their edgy and irreverent take on the classics, The Hypocrites bring their award-winning and audience favorite ***Pirates of Penzance*** to the Osher Studio in October. Get ready for a delightfully immersive, lovingly loopy, and fantastically eccentric interpretation of Gilbert and Sullivan's preposterous, topsy-turvy world. Frederic was mistakenly apprenticed as a young boy to a band of sentimental pirates. Now 21, he falls head-over-heels for the Major-General's daughter and forswears the buccaneer's life forever, or so he thinks. Get swept away in this buoyant remake the *Boston Globe* calls, "spirited, affectionate, and nearly irresistible."

In November, Berkeley Rep presents ***Disgraced***, a combustible drama that probes the complexity of identity, race, and religion, and the hidden prejudices still alive in liberal society. Amir Kapoor is living the American Dream – an Upper East Side apartment, Italian suits, and the promise of becoming partner at a law firm. But when he and his wife Emily, an artist influenced by Islamic imagery, host a dinner party for their friends and colleagues, lies and deception threaten to shatter Amir's carefully constructed life of cultural assimilation. Playwright **Ayad Akhtar** won the 2013 Pulitzer Prize for this critically acclaimed play; now director **Kimberly Senior** comes to Berkeley Rep to stage the provocative play that she shepherded from Chicago to London to its triumphant run on Broadway.

In February, the Theatre presents ***Aubergine***, a world premiere by **Julia Cho**, and a new production of Shakespeare's ***Macbeth*** directed by Tony and Obie Award-winning director **Daniel Sullivan**. Commissioned by Berkeley Rep and developed in **The Ground Floor: Berkeley Rep's Center for the Creation and Development of New Work**, ***Aubergine*** will premiere in the newly renovated Thrust Stage. The play introduces us to an estranged son, a father who's ill, a visiting uncle carrying their memories in tow, a woman without an appetite, and a refugee from a forgotten country. They all prove potent ingredients in this bittersweet and moving meditation on family, forgiveness, and the things that nourish us. When language fails, when the past fades, the perfect meal transcends time and culture and says more than words ever can. Cho's plays have garnered critical praise from New York to Los Angeles. She teams up with Obie Award-winning director **Liesl Tommy** (*Ruined* and *Party People*) for this elegant, poignant, and lyrical story.

Then the Theatre is proud to welcome acclaimed and celebrated director Daniel Sullivan – dubbed the go-to guy for Shakespeare by the *New York Times*. For his highly anticipated Berkeley Rep debut he helms a thrilling new production of ***Macbeth***, the bard's murderous play about the lust for power and the fickleness of fate. Driven by an evil prophesy and his scheming wife, Macbeth kills the king and claims his crown, thus beginning a moral descent into a reign of terror. For his critically lauded Shakespeare in the Park productions, the *New York Times* has called Sullivan's work "absolutely splendid" and rendered with "passion, expertise and uncommon intelligence."

In April, Berkeley Rep welcomes back audience favorite and Tony Award-winning director **Mary Zimmerman** for ***Treasure Island***, a visually tantalizing and exhilarating co-production with Chicago's Lookingglass Theatre Company. Next spring Zimmerman takes us aboard the ***Hispaniola*** for a heart-pounding voyage filled with tales of swashbuckling gentlemen o' fortune, a malicious mutiny led by infamous Long John Silver, and a deadly quest for fabled buried booty. Caught in the middle is cabin boy Jim Hawkins, who must find uncommon courage as he faces a murderous plot and navigates the ambiguous tides of morality.

"Next season emotional, intellectual, and artistic journeys await our audience," adds **Susan Medak, Berkeley Rep's managing director**. "While our work is often very idea-rich, very adult, this season offers some opportunities for people to attend with their children. Of course, no matter the show, it's still Berkeley Rep, so our shows will always be heady and edgy."

MORE

To continue enriching its relationship between artists, audiences, and new play development, next season Berkeley Rep will begin to realize the external manifestation of its three-year [Create Campaign](#), a \$50 million comprehensive fundraising effort to support development of new work and invest in theatre for the 21st century.

At the core of the three-year campaign are two major initiatives: the \$14 million expansion of the Theatre's Harrison Street campus into a center for artistic innovation, and a \$6 million renovation of the Thrust Stage, Berkeley Rep's signature performance space. Construction for the box office began this winter to accommodate the Theatre's three performance venues — the Thrust Stage, Roda Theatre, and Osher Studio across the street at Berkeley Central. Patrons can expect the revamped box office to open in summer of 2015. And in June, Berkeley Rep will close its beloved Thrust Stage for technical upgrades while carefully retaining the hallmark intimacy for which the Thrust is celebrated. The newly renovated Thrust will re-open late winter/early spring of 2016. Renovations for the Harrison Street campus will follow shortly after.

Also next season, as part of revitalizing efforts for Downtown Berkeley, the Addison Street garage will close for 18 months to undergo renovations. In anticipation of the closure, the Theatre has partnered with the Allston Way garage on Center Street to offer patrons an opportunity to purchase a guaranteed parking space for \$5 per play along with their tickets.

The 2015-16 season is supported by BART and Wells Fargo, who have generously renewed their commitment as Berkeley Rep's official season sponsors. Berkeley Rep is proud to have KPIX-TV (Channel 5) as a second-year season sponsor. Berkeley Rep is also delighted to have the Strauch Kulhanjian Family and Jack and Betty Schafer on board as a season sponsors.

Get the best seats for these shows at the consistently lowest prices by subscribing to Berkeley Rep. The 7-play full season package guarantees tickets for *Amélie*, *Pirates of Penzance*, *Disgraced*, *Aubergine*, *Macbeth*, and *Treasure Island* as well as one additional show to be announced. Best of all, subscribers have guaranteed seats to sold-out plays and can renew their packages now; 7-play full season packages are available from \$175 to \$598, while 5-play main season packages range from \$125 to \$426. In addition to significant savings, subscribers receive valuable advantages such as the ability to reschedule performances for free, discounts when purchasing tickets for friends, and the opportunity to secure seats before the general public for special events. Additional discounts are available for senior citizens and pre-K-12 educators. Students and patrons under 30 receive 50 percent off most subscription packages.

In four decades, four million people have enjoyed more than 300 shows at Berkeley Rep. These shows have gone on to win five Tony Awards, seven Obie Awards, nine Drama Desk Awards, one Grammy Award, and many other honors. Its bustling facilities — which include the 400-seat Thrust Stage, the 600-seat Roda Theatre, the Berkeley Rep School of Theatre, the Osher Studio, and a spacious new campus in West Berkeley — are helping revitalize an illustrious city. A not-for-profit organization, the Theatre welcomes an annual audience of 200,000, serves 23,000 students, and hosts dozens of community groups every year, thanks to 1,000 volunteers and more than 330 artists, artisans, and administrators. The Roda Theatre and the Thrust Stage are both located on Addison Street in downtown Berkeley, near bus lines, bike routes, and parking lots — and only half a block from BART. **For more information**, call (510) 647-2949 or visit: berkeleyrep.org.

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2015-16 SEASON SCHEDULE

AMÉLIE

Limited Season — Roda Theatre
World Premiere
Book by Craig Lucas
Music by Daniel Messé
Lyrics by Nathan Tysen & Daniel Messé
Musical direction by Kimberly Grigsby
Choreographed by Sam Pinkleton
Directed by Pam MacKinnon
Begins August 2015

THE HYPOCRITES' PIRATES OF PENZANCE

Limited Season — Osher Studio
Book by W. S. Gilbert
Music by Arthur Sullivan
Directed and adapted by Sean Graney
Co-adapted by Kevin O'Donnell
Co-directed by Thrisa Hodits
Music Direction by Andra Velis Simon
Begins October 2015

DISGRACED

Main Season — Roda Theatre
West Coast premiere
By Ayad Akhtar
Directed by Kimberly Senior
Begins November 2015

MACBETH

Main Season — Roda Theatre
By William Shakespeare
Directed by Daniel Sullivan
Begins February 2016

AUBERGINE

Main Season — Thrust Stage
World premiere
By Julia Cho
Directed by Liesl Tommy
Begins February 2016

TREASURE ISLAND

Main Season — Thrust Stage
Written by Robert Louis Stevenson
Adapted and directed by Mary Zimmerman
Co-production with Lookingglass Theatre Company
Begins April 2016

Plus one more show to be announced

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