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Calendar:
Docent presentations take place one hour before each Tuesday and Thursday performance.

JANUARY
11 The Last Cargo Cult first preview, 8pm
12 The Last Cargo Cult producer night dinner, 6:30pm, Bistro Liaison ●
12 The Last Cargo Cult opening night, 8pm
14 Tasting: Via Pacifica Selections, 7pm
15 Tasting: Calstar Cellars, 7pm
20 The Agony and the Ecstasy of Steve Jobs first preview, 8pm
21 30 Below, The Agony and the Ecstasy of Steve Jobs, 8pm
21 Teen Night, The Agony and the Ecstasy of Steve Jobs, 8pm
23 The Agony and the Ecstasy of Steve Jobs opening night dinner, Bistro Liaison, 5pm ●
23 The Agony and the Ecstasy of Steve Jobs opening night, 7pm
27 The Agony and the Ecstasy of Steve Jobs post-show discussion, 8pm
28 Tasting: Kent Rasmussen Winery, 7pm
29 Tasting: PIQ, 7pm
30 Tasting: Oren’s Kitchen, 6pm
31 Bret C. Harte Young Directors Fund Celebration, 7pm

FEBRUARY
2 Teen Council meeting, 5pm ■
4 Tasting: Raymond Vineyards, 7pm
5 Tasting: Artesa Vineyards & Winery, 7pm
6 Tasting: Kent Rasmussen Winery, 6pm
11 Tasting: Almare, 7pm
11 The Agony and the Ecstasy of Steve Jobs post-show discussion, 8pm
12 Backstage Tour, 9am ●
12 Tasting: Peterson Winery, 7pm
13 Tasting: Semifreddi’s, 6pm
15 The Last Cargo Cult post-show discussion, 8pm
15 On the Town: Next to Normal, 8pm ●
20 The Last Cargo Cult final performance, 7pm
25 Teen Night, Ruined, 8pm ■
25 Ruined first preview, 8pm
27 The Agony and the Ecstasy of Steve Jobs final performance, 7pm

School of Theatre event
Donor appreciation event
Isabelle de Borchgrave uses the medium of paper to form trompe l’oeil masterpieces inspired by the history of costume. Over 60 pieces will be included from Renaissance costumes and gowns worn by Elizabeth I and Marie-Antoinette to the grand couture creations of Dior, Chanel and Fortuny. The Legion of Honor is the first U.S. museum to host an overview of the artist’s work.
MIKE DAISEY IS A MASTER AT THE ART OF EXPOSING HIMSELF. Perched behind his little table, armed with only a few pints of water and the torrent of words that swim around in his considerable head, his performance feels utterly authentic and raw—combining the hysteria of a comedian, the intelligence of an essayist, the intensity of an actor, and the desperation of a raconteur. No subject is too sacred, no experience off limits. He simply finds a story that’s irresistible and then pursues it relentlessly until he has discovered something about himself and something about how the world works.

The stories themselves are as improbable as they are true. During this visit to the Bay Area, he brings us two tales that are focused on the one current topic that none of us can stop talking about: money. But these shows are not dry treatises on the state of the economy or discursive examinations about unemployment, tax cuts, or the state of the mortgage industry. No, Mike’s strategy is to present the entire issue of global capitalism as part of his personal travelogue. The associations he makes, regardless of how vast and imposing the subject, are all filtered through the small prism of his singular personality.

The results are spectacularly entertaining. In *The Last Cargo Cult*, he describes his visit to a tribe living on the island of Vanuatu in the South Pacific, whose members worship American capitalism and every material object it creates. In *The Agony and the Ecstasy of Steve Jobs*, he takes us to China, where workers in the tech industry literally put their lives on the line for the privilege of having a job.

In the end, it turns out that the age-old adage is true: nothing is stranger than reality. And the storyteller—especially this storyteller, equipped with his tools of emphasis and tone, with metaphor and irony, with embellishment and humor—the storyteller is the best person suited to describe that reality. Especially at its most absurd.

It’s a pleasure to have Mike at the head of our campfire.

Tony Taccone
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INCLUDED IN THIS ISSUE IS A STORY ABOUT OUR NEW CAMPUS in West Berkeley. For the first time in almost 30 years, we’ve reunited all of our staff members who support the rehearsal process in one facility. It may seem counterintuitive, in an age of downsizing and belt-tightening, to announce the acquisition of a new building—but this move is, in fact, part of a cost-cutting program we’ve undertaken in recent years to reduce our fixed costs, improve operations, and protect against future inflation. A year ago we purchased the Nevo Education Center, which houses our School of Theatre, saving $150,000 annually in lease payments. The acquisition of our new campus on Harrison Street also brings economic benefits (see page 8).

Over the years, we’ve had to relocate our offices, our rehearsal halls, our scene shop, and our storage facilities again and again. As property values have soared, buildings have been sold out from under us and rents have skyrocketed. We’ve struggled to find a space large enough to house rehearsals, yet still close enough to our costume and prop shops that our artisans could support the needs of actors and directors without losing valuable rehearsal time transporting materials. Every time we’ve moved, Berkeley Rep has spent hard-earned dollars outfitting new facilities—and, over the years, we’ve attempted to acquire almost every property adjacent to our Addison Street home in the hopes of creating an efficient campus. Each time, we’ve been outbid by those with deeper pockets than our own.

As a result, we’ve operated in conditions that are completely contrary to the collaborative nature of our work. Our artistic team has been divided between two buildings for more than 15 years, and the administrative staff has been divided for 20. Our scene shop has been five miles away, and our storage facility two miles distant. We figured out how to provide more shop space for the folks who create costumes and props, but it meant dividing them between four different parts of the Addison facility. Employees housed here with the Thrust Stage often worked in counterproductive and inefficient conditions. Master Electrician Fred Geffken, for example, used to have an office tucked under the seats in which you’re sitting. He wasn’t able to work during performances or technical rehearsals because even a phone conversation would distract from the show—and he grew accustomed to standing up slowly so he didn’t hit his head. I am thrilled that we’ve finally found a way to change all of this.

It is hard to imagine, when you see a show, that it is only the tip of an iceberg. Yet every show is supported by dozens of artisans, technicians, and administrative staff. You may never see them, but their work is evident in the quality of the productions you’ve come to expect from Berkeley Rep. Cutting costs while providing a more comfortable and collaborative work environment can only improve the quality of our work.

By the time you read this, our shops and offices will be up and running at our new building. But the last and most important piece of this project will not yet be complete. Much as we wanted to open the Harrison Street campus with our rehearsal halls in place, we realized we could not do so without additional financial support. We will need the backing of some generous angels to complete this final task, the centerpiece of our new complex. The most important work of the theatre gets done in the rehearsal hall, and those rooms are where our artists create the powerful and imaginative productions you see every time you attend this theatre.

Warmly,

Susan Medak
More for less
Berkeley Rep acquires Harrison Street building

BY KAREN MKEVITT
IN 1980, WE BUILT THE THRUST STAGE. IN 2001, WE OPENED THE RODA Theatre and the School of Theatre. Now Berkeley Rep is in the midst of another enterprising expansion plan. In November, we announced the purchase of a 62,000-square-foot building at 999 Harrison Street in West Berkeley. In December, Berkeley Rep’s artisans and administrators moved in, united under one roof for the first time in decades. The new campus provides a permanent home for the costume shop, prop shop, scene shop, storage, and administrative offices, which were previously divided among five different locations in two cities.

The purchase was made possible by a favorable real estate market and generous terms arranged because of Berkeley Rep’s long history serving the local community. After some essential improvements paid for with seed funding from the S.D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation and the Wayne & Gladys Valley Foundation, the new space will save the Theatre $250,000 each year. That’s 50% less expense for 50% more space.

Of course, all performance-related functions will continue at the Theatre. The box office remains on Addison Street, as well as the School, and the sound, electricity, and wardrobe crews continue to work backstage—with a lot more space. Plus, Berkeley Rep audiences can look forward to new amenities we’re planning for the Thrust Stage.

“It has long been our dream to reunite our staff under one roof,” says Artistic Director Tony Taccone. Besides improving staff efficiency, the Harrison Street campus fosters the kind of collaborative, creative work environment that Berkeley Rep’s artists, artisans, and administrators thrive on.

“We’ve been forced to move our shops, our storage, and our offices several times over the years,” says Managing Director Susan Medak. “It was particularly difficult when our scene shop burned down in 2005, and we had to outfit a replacement space in West Oakland. When that lease expired, it became imperative to find a permanent location.”

The Harrison campus allowed Berkeley Rep not only to bring the scene shop back to West Berkeley and uphold the area’s tradition of light manufacturing, but also to accomplish the larger goal of uniting our staff and securing autonomy. Susan sums it up: “Say goodbye to the days of being bounced from one rented space to another.”

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**Improves efficiency:** consolidates functions handled at five different locations in two cities.

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**Increases autonomy:** Berkeley Rep stops renting and owns all of its shop and office space.

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Budget cuts, higher class sizes, increased pressure to teach to the test—it’s the unfortunate worry list facing educators today, Jan Hunter, director of the Performing Arts Academy at Skyline High School in Oakland, notes, “It seems like all of us are affected by this budget crunch. And it’s affecting all of this great stuff that’s been going on, like taking my students to Berkeley Rep’s student matinees or having teaching artists in my classroom.”

Jan is one of nine enthusiastic teachers from across the Bay Area who comprise the Theatre’s newly formed Teacher Advisory Council, which meets three times each year. These meetings provide a place for teachers to connect and discuss topical issues in theatre education.

“Teachers kept telling me they wanted a place to connect with other teachers who use theatre in the classroom. They want a place to rejuvenate and talk about best practices in arts education,” says Dave Maier, Berkeley Rep’s Jan & Howard Oringer Outreach Coordinator. “We want to enhance the work they’re doing, not add to their workload. That’s why we created this new Council.”

“Sometimes it feels isolating to be the lone teacher using theatre to teach in the classroom,” says Marianne Philipp from George Washington High School in San Francisco. “We’re looking forward to this Council. We want more teachers to get excited about this work.”

The Council also helps inform curricular choices at Berkeley Rep’s School of Theatre and consults on the wide range of educational issues that arise out of the plays produced on its stages. These educators also help identify promising scholarship students for Berkeley Rep’s classes and the Summer Theatre Intensive.

Rachel Fink, the director of the School of Theatre, adds, “Our goal is to support the teachers who advocate for us in their communities. Through their critical feedback we are better able to serve the needs of Bay Area teachers and students.”

Berkeley Rep’s outreach workshops and student matinees have been an important part of many school theatre programs, and these educators are eager to keep the programs alive and thriving.

“Coming to Berkeley Rep is good for my students,” explains Jan. “Meeting people who are professional artists makes them feel special. They think, ‘That could be me! It makes it possible. The Teacher Advisory Council will help shape and provide access to these kinds of experiences.’

Know a great teacher? Bring a Berkeley Rep workshop to your favorite K–12 classroom. Visit berkeleyrep.org/outreach for more information.
Help Berkeley Rep’s School of Theatre bring dynamic arts education and outreach programs to over 20,000 young people around the Bay Area.

Make a gift to Berkeley Rep's Annual Fund today — call 510 647-2907 or click berkeleyrep.org/give.
A legacy of artistic excellence

These people are making great theatre their legacy. They’re all members of the Michael Leibert Society, which honors dedicated supporters who include Berkeley Rep in their estate plans.

Rick Hoskins and Lynne Frame
Attending together since 1995
Our parents took us to the theatre when we were growing up and our mutual love for theatre is part of what brought us together. Berkeley Rep consistently engages us by presenting innovative work that is often intellectually and philosophically challenging. Each year we get four subscriptions so that we can bring friends to every show, which inevitably leads to a stimulating post-show discussion. Berkeley Rep is included in our estate plan to help ensure the Theatre’s continuity for the benefit of our family and our community.

Dale and Don Marshall
Attending together since 2004
Berkeley Rep is a local jewel. It provides insights into life for the audience and for those who are touched by the educational outreach, which helps young people to make the transition from child to adult in a more meaningful way. Berkeley Rep is a part of our legacy, and we feel good that our children know of our support during our lifetime and beyond.
By making a gift through your estate, you can help to ensure that great theatre is available to your kids and your community for generations to come. Unless you specify otherwise, your gift will become a part of Berkeley Rep’s endowment, where it will provide income to the Theatre year after year. Your gift can cost you little or nothing now, may help reduce a tax burden on your family later, and will help artistic excellence flourish at Berkeley Rep forever.

For tools, tips, and information about estate planning and about becoming a member of the Michael Leibert Society, please click berkeleyrep.org/plannedgiving, or contact Daria Hepps at 510 647-2904 or dhepps@berkeleyrep.org.

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**Toni Mester**

**Attending since 1985**

Planned giving is not just for the wealthy. I have included Berkeley Rep as a beneficiary in my trust because theatre has enriched my life.
You call what you do “extemporaneous monologuing.” I thought briefly about writing a piece about other performers who do this. But I ended up reading about Spalding Gray and ... Spalding Gray. Are there other people whom you consider ancestors?

Well, there are two lenses we can look at this through: one is that there’s almost no one performing this way, so it’s a very strange and alien thing. On the other hand, you could say that everyone is performing this way and that, in fact, it’s the American theatre that’s the aberration.

I perform extemporaneously, so I speak in the air and the words compose themselves in real time. This is the dominant form of human expression — everyone who teaches in a class is performing extemporaneously; everyone who preaches in a church, a synagogue, or a mosque anywhere in the world; almost all comedy; lawyers arguing their cases — all are performing extemporaneously. So you could say it’s the theatre, in its very structured, locked-up form, that’s the odd man out.

But within the construct of the theatre there aren’t that many extemporaneous performers. So it can feel very strange,
You can feel very isolated. But then I just have to look at the world around me to realize I have many brothers and sisters.

You seem to have a tremendous appetite for new information. Have you had that since you were a kid?

I have always been interested in the world. The job of the monologue is fundamentally the pursuit of my obsessions: to illuminate them and to illuminate paths through them that an audience can follow and can participate in. It’s a wonderful job that I built for myself. I do tend to pick up obsessions with a lot of vigor. I really enjoy the chase, and then discovering the connections between the pieces of each individual monologue, and then also between the works from one to another. It’s one of the reasons why doing these two shows in repertory was exciting. When we’ve done pieces next to each other in the past, you learn a lot more about each of the pieces because of the way they relate to each other.

Can you say anything about how these two relate to each other, or do you not want to give that away?

Sure. These are both about commerce and our own obsessions. The Last Cargo Cult is about our economic system that spreads across the entire world. It’s a system of dominance and submission that really controls how we conduct human exchanges. A huge amount of that is about the acquisition of stuff, and our love of objects and tools. We’re very used to criticizing how much we love our shit, but one of the reasons we love it is that it is awesome. And that’s a legitimate thing—we love it because it’s awesome. That’s why we want it so much, and why, in fact, every culture that is introduced to our awesome shit loves it as well. And that’s the axis that the show revolves on.

The Agony and the Ecstasy of Steve Jobs is really that in microcosm. It examines our technology through a very personal kind of lens. It’s the stuff we actually mediate our minds through, especially in this age when we spend so much of our time on the net and on the web and communicating with one another virtually. Even you and I are having this conversation by telephone. When we do this—when we use systems to destroy space so that people who are far apart can connect to each other, these are actually massive shifts in human consciousness. And as we shift that way again and again we fetishize the objects enormously because they’re so important to us.
I regularly fall asleep with my iPhone in my bed—I have it right before bed and I fall asleep and in the morning I have to find it again. When I was younger, before cell phones, I never had an object—not my wallet, not my watch—I never had anything that I feel the way I feel about the iPhone. So I think it’s very important that we examine these objects and the circumstances under which they are actually built, which we are very, very unaware of. And even when we think we’re aware of it, we aren’t really fully aware. So I feel like the monologues speak to one another about our stuff and the importance of it and the power exchanges that happen in our culture.

How does something go from being an idea to being a show?  
Well, first, it isn’t really an idea in the traditional sense—it’s an obsession. When an obsession of mine might be related to or connected to a show, I can sort of feel that. Then it gestates for a long period in my mind, and I do research, and one of the things I’m looking for is another obsession. Because generally where a monologue emerges is where two obsessions are colliding. It’s not enough for me alone to be obsessed. It’s not enough even for me alone to be obsessed and then to also feel like my culture is obsessed, because if that were true, I would just make instructional videos. Where two obsessions are in collision is where it’s near the ignition point, and where it might be possible to make a monologue. So this generally involves a lot of research, and travel sometimes—in the case of both of these monologues, extensive travel as well as personal journeys. Then I collect all this information but nothing actually gets written because the monologues are not scripted. Nothing is written at all, including notes, until about 24 hours before the very first time the monologue is created in performance. At that point I create an outline. It’s very tense and very nerve-wracking—it’s a lot like giving birth, and then I perform it for the first time, which tends to be a very monumental thing. Only after that do we begin to use the tools of the traditional theatre to shape it.

How did you and your wife/director discover that working together was a good thing?  
That came about very early—on the very first monologue, actually. We met doing really bad theatre—a terrible German expressionist play in an awful production in Seattle that we were both acting in. It was just a dreadful production, and in that way that horrible theatre can bind people together for the rest of their lives, it did that for us and we found one another. It was really natural when we started working together and the relationship began around the same time, so things have always been intertwined. Our work life and our personal life and our marriage are really the same braid—the strands are woven around one another. And I think that shows in the work. It’s very rare in the American theatre—normally directors stay with shows until they open, then they fly off to the next location. The actors are then left on their own, and I think that you lose something ineffable and vital when a director goes away.

Jean-Michele and I work together on everything, and she’s been there for thousands of performances over the last 15 or so years. As a consequence, I feel like the quality of work would never be what it is now if she had not been devoted in that way. She is so exacting about what it means to have an image that’s precise and what it means to cut something just so. She is a fantastic editor, certainly the best editor, I think, in the American theatre. She has an amazing ability to see an image clearly and then to divine from watching it in three dimensions, as it’s playing out on stage, what needs to be cut or trimmed or sharpened to a point. So it’s been a really fantastic collaboration and a fantastic marriage, and really for us those two things are inseparable.

I think a lot about the separation between people’s work lives and their personal lives and how those lines have gotten very blurry in recent years—for a lot of people it all blends together, particularly now when it’s so easy to work remotely and be accessible all the time. This somehow relates in my mind to your appetite for technology and how you can operate on many different levels at once...

I do think people conceive their relationships in a wide variety of contexts. We spend more time together than any other couple I’ve ever heard of. Ever. So as a consequence I feel like we fall outside the normal bell curve of what people think of as constituting a collaboration. At the same time I love it. We wouldn’t do it if it didn’t feed us. I’m confident that had we come together much later in life, we’d have a very different relationship to the work, because when we came together we were both developing what kind of artists we were going to be. We were still finding our voices. I think that plays a role in the chorus that has emerged, and I know that the work would not be anywhere near what it is now without that collaboration. That’s incredibly clear. Not just aesthetically, but also economically and socially. The way the American theatre works, no one can afford to hire a director to be with you 24/7 that way. The only way you can do it is to do what we’ve done, which is basically like a commune, but it’s a commune of two. It may not be a perfect model, but given the way the arts are in my lifetime, this is the path we found to try and realize our visions and make them as vivid and real as possible. I think we’re able to achieve more together than we ever could have separately.
I’ve heard you say that you enjoy teaching. Why?

I do love teaching very much, and I love the extemporaneous nature of teaching. It’s also very instructive because you learn a lot about how you tell stories not just by doing it, but also by having to communicate to other people how you do it. It’s very illuminating. The process of having to break down what you did into resonant metaphors that might afford the possibility of shedding light on a creative process is actually a difficult undertaking. It’s really rewarding because first, if you succeed, even a little, there’s a chance you might have actually communicated. Which, I think, is why we go to the theatre night after night—in the hope, the dream, that someone might actually tell the truth. It happens so rarely that something leaps the gap and actually connects with us. When it does happen, it’s like the sunlight pouring in—it’s a marvelous thing. And for it to happen in teaching, there’s that chance that you could actually impart something that’s numinous, that goes on to illuminate a variety of contexts, and I love that. Often it doesn’t happen. When we think back in our education there were lots of days when we learned nothing, so it keeps you humble too. It keeps you honest. You can’t actually be speaking to one another, not from a script—we’re having this experience tonight and tonight alone, and I feel like activism is a natural outgrowth of that.

And we can’t rest on dogma: if the theatre is a living construct, it is exactly the place where things can actually be wrestled with. Because in theatre, people have to physically come into a space together. There’s this fantastic communion between what is happening on the stage and what is happening in the audience. In my work, the attempt is to dissolve as many boundaries as possible, so we’re actually speaking to one another, and constantly question what it is to stand for something and the incredible pull and tug and battle in our hearts and minds over what is right.

Do you consider your work a form of journalism?

Given the state of journalism today I don’t know if I should be slightly insulted. (Laughs.) No, I do actually. I think that journalism should be part of most art that we make. Because we should know what is happening in the world, we should know it in our bones and it should inform our work. I feel like the impulse in the theatre, and in many other art forms, is to distance ourselves from the concerns of the day in an attempt to then get an overview of life, but I think that’s a false dichotomy. I think that actually being cheek by jowl with life itself, with things that are actually happening, affords us an opportunity to have a specific dialogue that doesn’t exist otherwise. It lets us find these charged elements that can pull us along like a magnet and pull us somewhere where catharsis is possible. So I do think journalism is a huge part of that. Journalism has a fantastic framework to live up to: the attempt to actually transmit the truth even despite all the difficulties inherent to that undertaking. I find it very inspiring. A lot of my heroes are journalists.

In performance terms, how do you see the relationship between journalism and activism?

I think that in the arts world we have a strong bias against activism. We always say we don’t because that would seem like we were uncaring. But we do, because if we say someone is an activist artist, really what we mean is that we’ve ghettoized that artist and that we’re no longer as interested in what that artist might have to say as we would be if that artist didn’t have any kind of adjective attached to the front of his or her name. I feel like it’s the act of conscious citizens to be activists. I think that if you have no activism in your life, if you have nothing you’re advocating for or fighting for, then you are not conscious. There is so much that needs work, there is so much that cries out for people to have passion about, that I feel like people need to be activists, they need to search for what their activism means. That’s an ongoing search to clarify and illuminate a variety of contexts, that’s numinous, that goes on to afford the possibility of shedding light on a creative process. It’s very illuminating. The process of having to break down what you did into resonant metaphors that might afford the truth even despite all the difficulties inherent to that undertaking. I find it very inspiring.

You’ve been accused of biting the hand that feeds you, most notably with regard to your piece called How Theater Failed America. How do you respond to that?

It’s the job of people who are citizens to stand up and speak responsibly in their own workplaces and be truthful. I
think a lot of the talk about biting hands that feed you evolves mostly out of a fundamental disconnect: we’re not used to hearing a performer of any kind speak about the working conditions of the American theatre. As a group, actors and artists are so disenfranchised that they are effectively voiceless. If I was a traditional actor, I certainly wouldn’t have been able to make that monologue—I would never work again. One of the ways we make people voiceless is that we criticize them. Wouldn’t you want people to bite the hand that feeds them if they care? I want to see us have a healthy, vibrant American theatre that justifies its existence and creates works that are transporting and transformative. Our theatre doesn’t do that often enough. I get paid in the theatre to make work, and it’s my responsibility to speak up if I see things I think are wrong. If I remain silent out of some belief that because I make my living doing it this way that I should be silent, then I’m actually perpetuating the problem. I’d actually argue that it’s a conspiracy of silence in the American theatre that leads to a lot of our problems. People don’t speak, and they even have good reason not to speak because they will pay for it if they do. But nevertheless it’s going to require bravery—people need to stand up and say clearly what’s going on, and when people speak that’s when the possibility of change begins to emerge.

Are there people making work right now that you think, “Yes, we need more of this”? Oh yes. Particularly people making ensemble-based work, devised work. There’s a socioeconomic thread to it—I’m very interested in artists that control their own work and the circumstances under which the work is made. I am really touched by The Civilians. Tim Crouch does a lot of fantastic work that really connects with me that way. David Cromer’s Our Town was amazing. The people I get most excited about are the ones who feel like they are in control of their own destinies—especially when they’re doing work that speaks to local concerns or a constituency that actually gets to see and then participate in the work. And maybe after we’re done I’ll see if JM will chime in. You know, all the monologues end up feeling like your children, so it’s very hard to point to any one and be more proud of one than another. But also I think parents actually do have favorites, although they change from time to time, but you try not to tell anyone that you have favorites. The reality is that what I’m most proud of are things that exist outside the traditional aesthetic framework. I’m very proud of the teaching work we’ve done. I’m really proud we’ve been able to carve out a life together as independent artists in the theatre.

I’m really proud that we had the opportunity to take The Agony and the Ecstasy of Steve Jobs to India this summer. I got to perform early versions of this show talking about China’s labor policies in the context of performing in India with Indian audiences who are having the same multinational corporations move in and try to enforce the same labor standards. It was riveting to get to have these conversations late into the night with people and feel how this is a living story that really matters right now.

A small thing that often feeds me is that after the shows I generally go to the lobby. Unlike traditional theatre, I feel like it’s important for people to have an ability to connect with me because of the nature of the performance. Over many years I’ve gotten some wonderful opportunities to hear people’s stories, because when you tell them a story, often they feel inspired to share a story back to you. That feeds me the way it encourages real human contact—the way we’re actually talking to one another and the real way it pushes back the dark a little bit. I like that a lot.

Do you think you will do this kind of work forever and ever? I think that I’ll be telling stories forever. I think we all will. Storytelling is the only art form built with language that is actually intrinsic to human consciousness—everyone in every culture can tell stories. That’s a remarkable thing if you think about it. I have no doubt that I’ll keep telling stories for the rest of my life, because if I was not, I’d probably be dead.

If you weren’t doing this, what would you be doing? I’m obviously really passionate about monologue. I’m probably more likely to transform the format of the work I do into other idioms. I write books and I make films and things, but really the focus is this. Right now I’m working on a piece that’s a 24-hour monologue, a gigantic project that I’m deeply invested in that’s about many things. It’s largely about the history of Puritanism in America and how Puritanism functions as an essential American value right down the center of our country. It’s a huge project that transforms and explodes our traditional ideas about how long and large a piece can be and what the boundaries are of performance. So I’m investigating those sorts of things that are sufficiently outside the box of what constitutes performance at the theatres I often work at.

Is there a moment in your career you’re most proud of? That’s such a good question. I can’t speak for both of us, and maybe after we’re done I’ll see if JM will chime in. You know, all the monologues end up feeling like your children, so it’s very hard to point to any one and be more proud of one than another. But also I think parents actually do have favorites, although they change from time to time, but you try not to tell anyone that you have favorites. The reality is that what...
I’m very likely to go off in those sorts of directions. There’s been talk of and ideas about installations and large-scale happenings and things that sort of intensify the feeling that coming to the theatre is an event that happens once and once alone, and that this thing that happens is special and sort of sacred, and that we participate in it and realize it. It creates its own scarcity because once that event has happened, it is past. So I’m very interested in those things that work against the cookie-cutter mold where we make shows run for a certain amount of time and then repeat them, because I think they’re unrepeatable. Trying to find a balance between the art being realized and making it unrepeatable is part of the essential magic of theatre.

(At this point, Mike wanted me to ask Jean-Michele the question I’d just asked him about what he’s most proud of. She got on the phone, and I did.)

Jean-Michele: I think I’m always most proud of whatever we’re working on currently. Whatever the newest thing is, this is the one that has all my attention. But you know, we went to India this summer and we did a performance of The Agony and the Ecstasy at the Indian School of Business in Hyderabad. It was so cool because it was this hall packed with all these future business leaders, and I couldn’t believe the luck of getting to be there telling this story to these people, and then getting to talk to them afterwards and hearing their responses and their perspective on the situation. It’s a mixture of pride and luck, I guess.

Mike and I were just talking about his obsessions and how they appear in the work. Do you have obsessions that make their way into the work? Do the two of you share obsessions?

I function much more as an editor. I have my own obsessions, and if I were creating shows they’d probably be about very different things. What I’m trying to do is clarify his vision and fully understand the story that he’s trying to tell and the point he’s trying to make, and to make him aware of when the message isn’t coming through clearly or if there’s something blocking the flow of it. I find that the gap in our obsessions is helpful. Like everything I know about tech is by virtue of having spent a lifetime with him. That’s not something that I would be natively interested in. And so it can be very helpful when he’s speaking about those things to have an outsider perspective.

Is this situation something you look back on and think it makes sense how you got here, or is it completely surprising that this is how you’re making your living?

Well, I think it makes total sense that this is what I’d be doing — the fact that we’re making a living at it is the surprising part. I started doing theatre when I was a kid and so I always knew theatre was going to be a big part of my life. I grew up in Seattle and just assumed that I would always have a day job and the theatre would be what I would do at night. Honestly, it never really seemed like it was even possible that one could make a living at it. So the fact that we have been able to do this as our job always feels to me like this crazy wonderful lucky rare thing, like we won the lottery but even better because we’re getting to do what we love to do.
Upgrade and save!

See both *The Agony and the Ecstasy of Steve Jobs* and *The Last Cargo Cult*, and save 20% on tickets to your second show. Contact the box office at 510 647-2949 for personal service Tue–Sun noon–7pm.

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Lynn Nottage’s Pulitzer Prize–winning play provides a bleak yet beautiful look at the lives of women in the Congo. This intense and important tale, filled with humanity, hope, and unexpected humor, starts February 25 in the Roda Theatre.
Berkeley Repertory Theatre presents

The Agony and the Ecstasy of Steve Jobs

CREATED AND PERFORMED BY
MIKE DAISEY

DIRECTED BY
JEAN-MICHELE GREGORY

SET AND LIGHTING DESIGN BY SETH REISER

JANUARY 11–FEBRUARY 27, 2011 · THRUST STAGE

Remembering that you are going to die is the best way I know to avoid the trap of thinking you have something to lose. You are already naked.
—Steve Jobs

If you have money, you can make the ghosts and devils turn your grindstone.
—Chinese proverb

If you want to enjoy a good steak, don’t visit the slaughterhouse.
—American proverb

The Agony and the Ecstasy of Steve Jobs has been developed with the support of the Sloan Foundation, Ensemble Studio Theatre, Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company, the Cape Cod Theatre Project, Seattle Repertory Theatre, the US State Department Cultural Affairs program in India, the Chennai Hindu MetroPlus Theatre Festival, Vancouver’s PuSh International Festival, and the Portland Institute for Contemporary Art.

This is a work of nonfiction. Some names and identities have been changed to protect sources.

The Agony and the Ecstasy of Steve Jobs and The Last Cargo Cult are produced thanks to the generous support of
The Last Cargo Cult

CREATED AND PERFORMED BY MIKE DAISEY

DIRECTED BY JEAN-MICHELE GREGORY

SET AND LIGHTING DESIGN BY SETH REISER

JANUARY 11–FEBRUARY 27, 2011 · THRUST STAGE

MANI HEM I GUD LAIF.
BUT MANI I MEKEM MAN I,
STAP RAP EM BRATA MO SISTA
BLONG HEN.
BILIF IN UNION.
IN CUSTOM, SPIRIT,
STAMPA LAIF LONG WOL.
GUD LAIF.
—John Frum movement, traditional

There is a war between the rich and poor
A war between the man and the woman
There is a war between the ones who say there is a war
and the ones who say that there isn’t
Why don’t you come on back to the war?
That’s right, get in it
Why don’t you come on back to the war?
It’s just beginning
—Leonard Cohen, traditional

The Last Cargo Cult has been developed with the support of the Perth Literary Festival, the Victorian College of the Arts in Melbourne, Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company, Penobscot Theatre, the Southampton Writers Conference, the Portland Institute for Contemporary Art, the Richard Hugo House, the Public Theater, and the IRT Theater’s 3B Development Series.

This is a work of nonfiction.
Mike Daisey  
**CREATOR/PERFORMER**

Mike’s groundbreaking monologues weave together autobiography, gonzo journalism, and unscripted performance to tell hilarious and heartbreaking stories that cut to the bone, exposing secret histories and unexpected connections. His monologues include the critically acclaimed *If You See Something Say Something*, the controversial *How Theater Failed America*, the six-hour epic *Great Men of Genius*, the unrepeatable series *All Stories Are Fiction*, and the international sensation *21 Dog Years*. He has performed in venues on five continents, ranging from off Broadway at The Public Theater to remote islands in the South Pacific, from the Sydney Opera House to abandoned theatres in post-Communist Tajiki stan. He’s been a guest on the Late Show with David Letterman, as well as a commentator and contributor to the BBC, NPR, Salon, Slate, Vanity Fair, and Wired. His first film, *Layover*, was shown at the Cannes Film Festival this year, and a feature film of his monologue *If You See Something Say Something* is currently in post-production. His second book, *Rough Magic*, a collected anthology of his monologues, will be published next year. He has been nominated for two Drama League Awards and the Outer Critics Circle Award, and is the recipient of a MacDowell Fellowship, four Seattle Times Footlight Awards, and the Sloan Foundation’s Galileo Prize.

Jean-Michele Gregory  
**DIRECTOR**

Jean-Michele works as a director, editor, and dramaturg, focusing on extemporaneous theatrical works that live in the moment they are told. Working primarily with solo artists, for the last decade she has collaborated with monologist Mike Daisey, directing at venues across the globe including American Repertory Theatre, the Barrow Street Theatre, Berkeley Rep, Cherry Lane Theater, Intiman Theatre, Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, the Noorderzon Festival, Performance Space 122, The Public, the Spoleto Festival, the Sydney Opera House, the Under the Radar Festival, Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company, Yale Repertory Theatre, and many more. She has also directed New York storyteller Martin Dockery (*The Surprise, Wanderlust*) and the Seattle-based performer and writer Suzanne Morrison (*Optimism, Yoga Bitch*). Her productions have received four Seattle Times Footlight Awards (*21 Dog Years, The Last Cargo Cult, Monopoly, The Ugly American*), the Bay Area Critics Circle Award (*Great Men of Genius*), and nominations from the Drama League and Outer Critics Circle (*If You See Something Say Something*, New York Magazine, TheaterMania, and *Time Out New York* ranked her shows among the best plays of 2009.

Seth Reiser  
**SET & LIGHTING DESIGN**

Seth is pleased to be making his Bay Area debut at Berkeley Rep on these two extraordinary pieces of theatre. His design credits include *Apple Pie Order, Below*, and *Happy Thoughts* at Bard College; Mike Daisey’s *Barring the Unforeseen* at IRT; *Black Snow and Non-Play* with the New Ensemble; *Cactus Flower* at Capital Repertory Theatre; Dutch AV at La MaMa Experimental Theatre Club’s Under the Radar Festival; *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot* at Muhlenberg College; the Obie award-winning *Lily’s Revenge* at Here Arts (Henry Hewes Design Award nomination); *middlemen* with the Human Animals Collective; *Radio Play* with Tommy Smith and Reggie Watts; *The Seagull*...
Seth received his MFA from New York University. He lives in Brooklyn with his wife Mary and daughter Marion. Visit sethreiserdesign.com.

Tony Taccone
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Tony is artistic director of Berkeley Rep, where he has staged more than 35 shows—including world premieres by Culture Clash, Rinde Eckert, David Edgar, Danny Hoch, Geoff Hoyle, Quincy Long, Lemony Snicket, and Itamar Moses. Tony made his Broadway debut with Bridge & Tunnel, which was lauded by the critics and won a Tony Award for its star, Sarah Jones. In 2009, he returned to Broadway to direct Carrie Fisher's Wishful Drinking, which set box-office records at Berkeley Rep before enjoying a six-city national tour. He commissioned Tony Kushner's legendary Angels in America, co-directed its world premiere at the Mark Taper Forum, and has collaborated with Kushner on seven projects including Brundibar and the premiere of Tiny Kushner. Two of his recent shows transferred to London: Continental Divide played the Barbican in 2004, and Tiny Kushner played the Tricycle Theatre last fall. His many regional credits include Actors Theatre of Louisville, Arena Stage, the Eureka Theatre, the Guthrie Theater, the Huntington Theatre Company, The Public, Seattle Repertory Theatre, and Yale Rep. In 2011, two scripts penned by Tony will have their premieres.

Susan Medak
MANAGING DIRECTOR

Susan has served as Berkeley Rep’s managing director since 1990, leading the administration and operations of the Theatre. She is president of the League of Resident Theatres (LORT), the management association that represents 75 of the nation’s largest nonprofit theatres. Susan has often served on program panels for the National Endowment for the Arts and chaired two panels for the Massachusetts Arts Council as well. She served two terms on the board of Theatre Communications Group, including three years as the organization’s treasurer. Closer to home, Susan chairs the Downtown Berkeley Business Improvement District. She is president of the Downtown Berkeley Association and founding chair of the Berkeley Arts in Education Steering Committee for Berkeley Unified School District and the Berkeley Cultural Trust. Susan serves on the faculty of Yale School of Drama and is a proud member of the Mont Blanc Ladies’ Literary Guild and Trekking Society. She lives in Berkeley with her husband and son.

Les Waters
ASSOCIATE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Obie Award–winner Les Waters has served as associate artistic director of Berkeley Rep since 2003. In the last five years, his shows

at Columbia Stages; The Secret Lives of Coats at Whitman College; Transformations at Juilliard Opera; Transition at The Public Theater’s Under the Radar Festival; the Eugene O’Neill Theater Center’s Cabaret & Performance Conference; and Eryc Taylor Dance at Joyce SoHo. Seth received his MFA from New York University. He lives in Brooklyn with his wife Mary and daughter Marion. Visit sethreiserdesign.com.
BERKELEY REP PRESENTS

profiles

Madeleine Oldham DRAMATURG/LITERARY MANAGER
Madeleine is Berkeley Rep’s literary manager and resident dramaturg. As literary manager and associate dramaturg at Baltimore’s Centerstage, she produced the First Look reading series and headed up its young audience initiative. Before moving to Baltimore, she was the literary manager at Seattle Children’s Theatre, where she oversaw an extensive commissioning program. She also acted as assistant and interim literary manager at Seattle’s Intiman Theatre. Madeleine recently completed four years of service on the executive committee of Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas and has also worked with ACT/Seattle, Austin Scriptworks, Crowded Fire Theatre Company, Geva Theatre Center, the Kennedy Center, the Neo-Futurists, and Portland Center Stage.

Amy Potozkin CASTING DIRECTOR
Amy is in her 20th season with Berkeley Rep. She has also had the pleasure of casting for ACT/Seattle, Arizona Theatre Company, Aurora Theatre Company, B Street Theatre, the Bay Area Playwrights Festival, Dallas Theatre Company, Marin Theatre Company, The Marsh, San Jose Repertory Theatre, Social Impact Productions Inc., and Traveling Jewish Theatre. Amy cast roles for the film Conceiving Ada, starring Tilda Swinton, as well as Josh Kornbluth’s Haiku Tunnel and his upcoming Love and Taxes. Amy received her MFA from Brandeis University, where she was also an artist-in-residence. She is a coach to hundreds of actors and teaches classes and workshops at Berkeley Rep’s School of Theatre and various other venues in the Bay Area.

Karen Racanelli GENERAL MANAGER
Karen joined Berkeley Rep in November 1993 as education director. Under her supervision, Berkeley Rep’s Programs for Education provided live theatre for more than 20,000 students annually. In November 1995, she became general manager, and since then has overseen the day-to-day operations of the Theatre, supervising the box office, company management, and IT. She has represented the League of Resident Theatres during negotiations with both Actors’ Equity Association and the Union of Stage Directors and Choreographers. Prior to her tenure at Berkeley Rep, Karen worked as executive director for a small San Francisco–based theatre company and served as sponsorship manager for the San Francisco Fair. She also worked for Theatre Bay Area as director of theatre services. As an independent producer, Karen produced plays and events for Climate Theater, Intersection for the Arts, Life on the Water, Overtone Theatre Company, and San Jose Stage Company. She has served on the boards of Climate Theater, Overtone Theatre Company, and Park Day School and is currently on the board of the Julia Morgan Center.

Marjorie Randolph SEASON PRODUCER
Marjorie is president of Berkeley Rep’s board of trustees and a longtime supporter of the Theatre. She currently lives in Los Angeles, where she heads up worldwide human resources for Walt Disney Studios, although she still considers Berkeley her home. During her tenure at Berkeley Rep, she has produced 10 plays. She is a member of the California Bar and a former president of California Women Lawyers. She serves on the National Advisory Panel of the Institute for Research on Women and Gender at Stanford University.

The Strauch Kulhanjian Family EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS
Roger Strauch is a former president of Berkeley Rep’s board of trustees and a current member. He is chairman of The Roda Group (rodagroup.com), a venture-development company based in Berkeley, best known for launching Ask.com, PolyServe, and Sightspeed. Roger serves on the boards of Cardstore.com, GameReady, and Ravenflow, all located in the East Bay, and his firm is the lead investor in Solazyme, a renewable-energy company based in South San Francisco. Roger is a member of the engineering dean’s college advisory boards of Cornell University and UC Berkeley. At Cal, he is also an executive member of the board of trustees for the Mathematical Sciences Research Institute (msri) and a co-founder of the William Saroyan Program in Armenian Studies. He is also an executive member of the Piedmont Council of the Boy Scouts of America. His wife, Julie A. Kulhanjian, is an attending physician at Oakland Children’s Hospital. They have three teenage children.

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