

BERKELEY REP

NEWS RELEASE
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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BERKELEY REPERTORY THEATRE TO PRESENT THE WORLD PREMIERE OF JESSICA HUANG'S *MOTHER OF EXILES*

Directed by Jaki Bradley, *Mother of Exiles* is a multigenerational triptych that blends historical drama with supernatural encounters, weaving moments of surprising humor into a powerful portrait of belonging and resilience.

Berkeley Rep's Peet's Theatre
November 14–December 21, 2025

BERKELEY, CA (October 1, 2025) — This fall, **Berkeley Repertory Theatre** will present the world premiere of Jessica Huang's *Mother of Exiles* — a multigenerational triptych that blends historical drama with supernatural encounters, weaving moments of surprising humor into a powerful portrait of belonging and resilience — performing at **Berkeley Rep's Peet's Theatre** from **Friday, November 14 through Sunday, December 21, 2025**. Press night will be held on Wednesday, November 19, 2025. Single tickets (\$25–\$135) are available online at berkeleyrep.org or by phone at 510 647-2949 (Tue–Sun, 12–7pm). *Ticket prices are subject to change without notice.*

In 1898, on Angel Island, a pregnant Eddie Loi faces deportation amid America's tightening immigration laws. A century later, her great-grandson Braulio, through his role in the Miami border patrol, inadvertently conjures her spirit — unleashing a witty, opinionated ancestor. By 2063, their descendants, beset by climate catastrophe, embark on a perilous oceanic journey seeking sanctuary. From detention to diaspora, *Mother of Exiles* follows a single family's century-and-a-half odyssey — tracing their flight, fight, and the futures they dare imagine. *Mother of Exiles* was developed in The Ground Floor: Berkeley Rep's Center for the Creation and Development of New Work.

"I take great pride and pleasure in Berkeley Rep's deep and ongoing commitment to bringing brand new works to life for the first time, and am delighted that *Mother of Exiles* is the first of three world premiere productions this season," said **Berkeley Rep Artistic Director Johanna Pfaelzer**. "Jessica and Jaki worked on the play together during The Ground Floor's Summer Residency Lab, and it is a privilege to now fully realize it on our mainstage, in the presence of this community. Jessica's storytelling is a beautiful blend of heightened theatricality, deep truths, and the true comedy of the human existence, and to see her bring her specific lens to this depiction of multigenerational immigration stories feels incredibly potent in this moment."

"I've been dreaming of sharing my work with Berkeley Rep's audiences since 2019, when I first experienced Berkeley Rep's meticulous, compassionate, and deeply inspiring support at the Ground Floor," adds **Huang**. "For so many reasons, Berkeley Rep is the perfect place for *Mother of Exile's* world premiere — the story begins in the Bay, with the first movement taking place at Angel Island. It's a story about the communities that comprise the Bay Area, and how they've come together throughout history in mutual aid and support. It's a story about land and water and history and the future. Berkeley Rep has a material reputation in our field as a thoughtful producer of bold new work, and this play has been deemed "venturous" for a reason! With three distinct times and places, a cast of six incredible actors playing 20+ characters, a playful approach to tone that shifts from historical drama to farce to dystopic futurism, and themes of migration, ancestry, and cross-cultural love, *Mother of Exiles* is a big, dangerous, unapologetic expression of my heart at this moment. I'm so thrilled to bring it to life with the incredible team at Berkeley Rep, and to join the ranks of the plays and artists who have premiered their work in this celebrated theatre."

The cast of *Mother of Exiles* includes (in alphabetical order): **Michele Selene Ang, Emma Kikue, David Mason, Camila Moreno, Monica Orozco, and Ricardo Antonio Vazquez.**

Directed by **Jaki Bradley**, the creative team of *Mother of Exiles* includes **Riw Rakkulchon** (Scenic Design), **Haydee Zelideth** (Costume Design), **Reza Behjat** (Lighting Design), **Jake Rodriguez** (Sound Design), **Nick Hussong** (Video Design), **Stephanie Yankwitt, CSA** (Casting), **Kristy Bodall** (Stage Manager), and **Anthony Lopez** (Assistant Stage Manager).

Berkeley Rep recognizes the generous support of its Season Presenting Sponsors, including **Peet's Coffee** and **The Shubert Foundation** as well as **Stephen & Susan Chamberlin, Yogen & Peggy Dalal, Bruce Golden & Michelle Mercer, Marcia Grand, Jonathan Logan & John Piane, Arjay R. and Frances F. Miller Foundation, the Strauch Kulhanjian Family, and Gail & Arne Wagner.** Berkeley Rep is also delighted to acknowledge support at our season sponsor level from **The Hearst Foundations, The Hewlett Foundation, and OAK Airport as well as Frances Hellman & Warren Breslau, Wayne Jordan & Quinn Delaney, Jack & Betty Schafer, and Kelli & Steffan Tomlinson.** Berkeley Rep also acknowledges the generous support at the sponsor level from **The Sherri and Les Biller Family Foundation,** and at the associate sponsor level from **Rich & Robin Edwards, Rosalind & Sung-Hou Kim, and Jack Klingelhofer.**

Mother of Exiles received a **Venturous Playwright Fellowship** at the Playwrights' Center in St. Paul, MN, supported by **Venturous Theater Fund of the Tides Foundation.**

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ABOUT BERKELEY REP

Berkeley Repertory Theatre has grown from a storefront stage to an international leader in innovative theatre. Known for its ambition, relevance, and excellence, as well as its adventurous audience, the nonprofit has provided a welcoming home for emerging and established artists since 1968. Over 6 million people have enjoyed more than 500 shows at Berkeley Rep, including 88 world premieres. Berkeley Rep shows have gone on to win eight Tony Awards, nine Obie Awards, 11 Drama Desk Awards, a Grammy Award, a Pulitzer Prize, and many other honors. In recognition of its place on the national stage, Berkeley Rep received the Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre in 1997. Through its annual seven-play season, together with up to four special event presentations, Berkeley Rep invites audiences to enjoy an eclectic range of theatrical experiences featuring diverse artistic voices, themes,

and perspectives. To formalize, enhance, and expand the processes by which Berkeley Rep makes theatre, The Ground Floor: Berkeley Rep's Center for the Creation and Development of New Work was launched in 2012. Serving some 20,000 people a year, Berkeley Rep's School of Theatre ensures broad access to dynamic arts educational activities, especially for Bay Area youth, and provides immersive training for current and future theatre makers. In 2021, Berkeley Rep launched In Dialogue, a program that places its theatre-making skills and resources in service of the community. Using storytelling as an anchor, In Dialogue is developing long-term collaborations with local, socially centered organizations, as well as educating and activating our audiences around organizations whose work aligns with the themes of our productions. Berkeley Rep's bustling facilities — which include the 600-seat Roda Theatre, 400-seat Peet's Theatre, Medak Center, and a spacious campus in West Berkeley — are helping revitalize a renowned city. Learn more at berkeleyrep.org.