

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASEPress Contact: Kevin Kopjak, Prismatic Communications | kevin@prismaticcommunications.com**BERKELEY REPERTORY THEATRE LAUNCHES ITS 2026/27 SEASON WITH
EDUARDO MACHADO'S *THE COOK*****Directed by Berkeley Rep's Associate Artistic Director David Mendizábal, *The Cook* is a sharp, funny, and quietly devastating play where two worlds are held in tension****Berkeley Rep's Peet's Theatre
September 4–October 11, 2026**

BERKELEY, CA (July 21, 2026) — **Berkeley Repertory Theatre** launches its 2026/27 season with ***The Cook***—**Eduardo Machado's** sharp, funny, and quietly devastating play where two worlds are held in tension: the life carefully preserved, and the life that had to be lived. Directed by Berkeley Rep's Associate Artistic Director **David Mendizábal** (*All My Sons, Mexodus*), performances of ***The Cook*** will take place at **Berkeley Rep's Peet's Theatre** beginning **Friday, September 4 and running through Sunday, October 11, 2026**. Opening night (press night) will be held on Wednesday, September 9, 2026. Single tickets (\$25–\$137) are available online at berkeleyrep.org or by phone at 510 647-2949 (Tue–Sun, 12pm–7pm).

An aristocratic Cuban family flees from Havana to Miami on the eve of Castro's revolution, entrusting their mansion to their devoted cook Gladys who vows to protect it until their return. For 40 years, she keeps her promise, enduring loss, upheaval, and the slow unraveling of a country's dreams. But when the aristocrats' daughter returns, Gladys finds she has sacrificed everything for a bond that has been forgotten.

"I'm thrilled to be bringing Eduardo Machado's play *The Cook* to life at Berkeley Rep and opening our 2026/27 season with this timely play," said **Mendizábal**. "A landmark work in the American theatrical canon by a Latine playwright, the play illuminates Cuba's complex history surrounding Fidel Castro's revolution through richly drawn characters, focusing on their humanity, dreams, and ambitions. It is a deeply moving story about belonging and survival and asks the question, who has the greater claim to a nation's identity—the people who stayed or those who were forced to leave?"

The cast of ***The Cook*** features (*in alphabetical order*) **Gisela Chipe** (Adria/Lourdes), **Daniel Duque-Estrada** (Carlos), **Yesenia Iglesias** (Gladys), **Georgina Morillo** (Elena/Rosa), and **Ashton Muñiz** (Julio). Understudies include **Luis Kelly-Duarte**, **Georgina Morillo**, **Monica Rose Slater**, **Omar Stewart**, and **Courtney Thomas**. Casting is by **The Telsey Office**.

The creative team for ***The Cook*** includes **Eduardo Machado** (Playwright), **David Mendizábal** (Director), **Tanya Orellana** (Scenic Design), **Toni-Leslie James** (Costume Design), **Mextly Couzin** (Lighting Design), **Mikaal Sulaiman** (Sound Design & Original Music), **Matthew Armentrout** (Wigs & Hair), **Adi Cabral** (Voice & Dialect Coach), **Sofie Miller** (Stage Manager), and **Emma Walz** (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**, **Frances Hellman & Warren Breslau**, **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 **The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation**, as well as **Wayne Jordan & Quinn Delaney**, **Sudha Pennathur & Edward Messerly**, and **Jack & Betty Schafer**.

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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 91 world premieres. Berkeley Rep shows have gone on to win eight Tony Awards, nine Obie Awards, 14 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.