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For Immediate Release**SUSIE MEDAK TO STEP DOWN AS MANAGING DIRECTOR OF
BERKELEY REPERTORY THEATRE IN AUGUST 2022****Departure will conclude 32 years at Berkeley Rep**

January 11, 2022—Berkeley Repertory Theatre today announced that long-time Managing Director Susie Medak will depart the company at the end of its current 53rd season, 2021/22. When Medak leaves she will have been on staff at the company for 32 years.

“It has been an honor and a privilege to lead this company for so many years,” said Medak. “I have had the rare opportunity to do the thing I loved 'almost' every day for the last 32 years. Making theater, making really good and impactful, entertaining and provocative theater has brought me into contact with so many simply remarkable people. In addition to all the artists, artisans, technicians, trustees, donors, volunteers, civic leaders and colleagues, I have been blessed with three uniquely skilled and talented artistic directors as partners: Sharon Ott, Tony Taccone and most recently, Johanna Pfaelzer. As far as I'm concerned, this has been the best job in the world. It is time for me to make room for someone new. Johanna is a superb leader, with a dynamic vision. She is also a thoughtful partner who will be a joy for whomever comes next. She deserves an equally dynamic partner so that together, they can shape this company for a new generation of theater lovers and theater makers.”

“I am unbelievably fortunate to have had Susie by my side for the last two and a half years,” said Pfaelzer. “Neither of us could have foretold that we would find ourselves in a partnership forged in the fire of a pandemic that has created more vulnerability in our field than anyone could have imagined, but I am deeply grateful to have had her wisdom and cool head as we have steered Berkeley Rep through the last two years. Her commitment to creating and sustaining a theatre which centers the art and the people who make it, on and off the stage, is everything I could hope for in a managing director. Susie's legacy will be in the generations of artists, artisans and organizational leaders she has championed over the years, and whose impact on this art form is immeasurable. It's hard to picture Berkeley Rep without her, but we will move forward holding fast to her commitment to the people of this company and this community.”

During Medak's tenure as Berkeley Rep's managing director, the Tony Award-winning nonprofit has earned a reputation as an international leader in innovative theatre. Over three decades, Berkeley Rep has presented more than 80 world, American, and West Coast premieres and delivered 34 shows to New York, two to London, and one to Hong Kong. Shows that originated at Berkeley Rep and found their way to Broadway include: *Paradise Square* (set to open in spring 2022), *Ain't Too Proud: The Life and Times of The Temptations*, *No Man's Land*, *Amelie*, *American Idiot*, *Passing Strange*, *Bridge and Tunnel* and *Wishful Drinking* among others.

Under Medak's leadership, Berkeley Rep also oversaw the unveiling of the state-of-the-art Roda Theatre, the renovation of the Peet's Theatre, the creation of the [School of Theatre](#), which supports the Teen

Council and other programming that has served countless young people since its inception in 2001. Medak helped transition Berkeley Rep from a theatre committed to adventuresome classics to a company known for its commitment to new work, exemplified by the creation of [The Ground Floor](#). In 2011, she secured Berkeley Rep's 62,000 square foot pre-production facility in West Berkeley, and leaves Berkeley Rep having placed the last piece of its facilities puzzle – a 45-unit apartment building adjacent to the Roda Theatre which will house guest artists and fellows and include a studio for showcasing new work. That project is slated to be completed within the year.

Medak, a titan in the theatre community nationally, has also expanded professional growth opportunities for young people by deepening Berkeley Rep's commitment to its fellowship program and by training 20 aspiring theater managers who graduated from The David Geffen School of Drama at Yale, many of whom are leading theatres around the country today. In addition, she served on the board of Theater Communications Group, and, for six years, as president of the League of Resident Theaters (LORT). Locally, she served on the board of the Downtown Berkeley Association for 20 years, and was the board chair for five. She co-founded the Berkeley Cultural Trust, the Berkeley Arts in Education Steering Committee and the East Bay Cultural Alliance. Medak was also instrumental in the creation of the Berkeley's Downtown Arts District.

"Susie has impacted so many people, communities and theaters in her career," said Berkeley Rep Board President Emily Shanks. "She has been instrumental in building Berkeley Rep into the nationally recognized theater it is today. We have been so fortunate to have had her leadership and partnership with three great artistic directors by her side. She will be dearly missed, but I am happy for her to be starting a new chapter in her life. It is well deserved."

Director Mary Zimmerman whose work has appeared on the Berkeley Rep stage numerous times continues the praise of Medak, saying "Berkeley Rep has been a second home to me for many, many years and a huge part of that has been Susie Medak. She has a kind of genius for life, for artistic collaboration and above all for making community. She understands people and she loves them; loves working with them, connecting them, introducing them to each other. She has endless energy and optimism while being nonetheless absolutely clear-eyed and pragmatic. Her heart and her house are always full of people -- friends-of-friends, visiting artists, strays that have nowhere else to go; and the houses of the theater she manages are full as well because she has phenomenal taste and acuity as both a producer and a member of her community. I have tried to learn from her in many ways."

Berkeley Rep's search team will be led by Board President, Emily Shanks and the Arts Consulting Group, ACG, led by Wyona Lynch-McWhite.

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 5.5 million people have enjoyed nearly 500 shows at Berkeley Rep, which have gone on to win six Tony Awards, seven Obie Awards, nine Drama Desk Awards, one Grammy Award, one Pulitzer Prize, and many other honors. Berkeley Rep received the Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre in 1997. 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. The Berkeley Rep School of Theatre engages and educates some 20,000 people a year and helps build the audiences of tomorrow with its nationally recognized teen programs. Berkeley Rep's bustling facilities — which also include the 400-seat Peet's Theatre, the 600-seat Roda Theatre, and a spacious campus in West Berkeley — are helping revitalize a renowned city. Learn more at berkeleyrep.org

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