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For Immediate Release**BERKELEY REP'S OVATION GALA RAISES \$500,000
Event Also Toasted the Return of Live Theatre**

Highlights Included Special Appearances by Rita Moreno, Rodrick Covington, Adrian Blake Enscoe, Michael Esper, Rebecca Naomi Jones, and Ephraim Sykes

May 3, 2022 – This past Friday evening, April 29, Bay Area arts supporters gathered at The Presidio Theatre in San Francisco to celebrate Berkeley Rep's return to live theatre. The celebration raised \$500,000 for the Theatre's artistic and educational programming.

The evening began with an elegant seated dinner al fresco for **Ovation** sponsors presented by **McCalls**, the Bay Area's preeminent caterer for over 40 years, in the beautiful courtyard of the Presidio Theatre. After dinner, guests were ushered indoors for a night of tributes and appearances from a few of the talented artists who have graced Berkeley Rep's stage including: EGOT-winner **Rita Moreno**, **Rodrick Covington** (soon to be seen this summer in Berkeley Rep's world premiere production of *Goddess*), **Adrian Blake Enscoe** (*Swept Away*), **Michael Esper** (*American Idiot*) **Rebecca Naomi Jones** (*American Idiot*), and **Ephraim Sykes** (*Ain't Too Proud: The Life and Times of The Temptations*). Renowned choreographer **Lorin Latarro** (*Mrs. Doubtfire*, *Waitress*, *Monsoon Wedding*) directed; **Carmel Dean** (*American Idiot*, *Monsoon Wedding*) served as music director. After the show, the celebration continued with dancing under the stars with DJ E.T.

"What a tremendous evening we had," said Managing Director Susie Medak "I loved the sheer pleasure of celebrating the opportunity to be together-in real time and in one place. And having so many artists who have brought us so much joy over so many years...that made for a truly memorable, button-bursting evening of collective pride in what Berkeley Rep has nurtured."

"The event was a moment to come together, to celebrate the hard work of our staff, board, audience and community that allowed us to survive the last two years," said Artistic Director Johanna Pfaelzer. "And to look to the future in anticipation of artists and stories that will grace our stages, the students who will populate our School, and the audiences who will be our partners in bringing this work to life"

OVATION was made possible by the generosity of platinum sponsors **Michelle Mercer** and **Bruce Golden**, **Marcia Grand**, **The Strauch Kulhanjian Family**, and **Gail** and **Arne Wagner**. The planning committee for the event includes **Sandra Eggers** (co-chair), **Christine Rupp** (co-chair), **Ronnie Caplane**, **Narsai David**, **Richard Edwards**, **Robin Edwards**, **Jill Fugaro**, **Scott Haber**, **Sandra McCandless**, **Sudha Pennathur**, **Laura Severino**, **Audrey Rose Sockolov**, **Jean Strunsky**, and **Gail Wagner**.

For the 2022 season, Berkeley Rep recognizes the generous support of **BART** and **Peet's Coffee**, Berkeley Rep's official season sponsors. Berkeley Rep is also delighted to have **Stephen and Susan Chamberlin**, **Bruce Golden** and **Michelle Mercer**, **Frances Hellman** and **Warren Breslau**, **Wayne Jordan** and **Quinn Delaney**, **Gisele** and **Kenneth F. Miller**, **Jack** and **Betty Schafer**, and **The Strauch Kulhanjian Family** on board as season sponsors. In-kind season sponsorship provided by **Residence Inn by Marriott Berkeley**.

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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