UPDATED APRIL 15, 2013

BERKELEY REP ANNOUNCES SIX EXHILARATING SHOWS FOR UPCOMING SEASON

Renowned artists bring smart and sophisticated shows to Berkeley Rep’s adventurous audience

MARCH 5, 2013 – Today, even as its first export to Asia finishes a sold-out run in Hong Kong, the Tony Award-winning Berkeley Repertory Theatre proudly announces a new year of exhilarating plays here at home. Artistic Director Tony Taccone revealed six of the seven shows selected for the 2013-14 season, featuring the world premiere of a captivating script commissioned from Marcus Gardley, powerful West Coast premieres from Kneehigh and Tony Kushner, another hilarious comedy from Steven Epp and Christopher Bayes, a true story of war-torn Europe from Mona Golabek and Hershey Felder, and an emotional production of Nina Raine’s Tribes, directed by Jonathan Moscone. Best of all, since Berkeley Rep insists that extraordinary art should be accessible and affordable, theatregoers can see three or more shows for as little as $25 each!

This entire experience is generously supported by BART and Wells Fargo, who serve as Berkeley Rep’s official season sponsors for the ninth straight year – and now they’re joined by the San Francisco Chronicle! The season producer for 2013-14 is the Strauch Kulhanjian Family.

“We are pleased to offer up a vigorous and versatile season,” Taccone remarks. “This mix of shows looks at love and family through comic and tragic lenses, which reveal and revel in our historical moment. The season blends seminal works from prominent artists – The Intelligent Homosexual’s Guide to Capitalism and Socialism with a Key to the Scriptures by Tony Kushner, Dario Fo’s Accidental Death of an Anarchist, and Tristan & Yseult from Emma Rice and Kneehigh – with compelling new plays from vital new voices, such as Nina Raine’s Tribes and Marcus Gardley’s The House That Will Not Stand. Add to that The Pianist of Willesden Lane, in which Mona Golabek’s musical talents take us to a place that transcends words, and we hope to bring our audience on another extraordinary journey.”

Thanks to the eclectic appetite of that audience, Berkeley Rep has grown from a storefront stage to a national leader in innovative theatre. Since 1968, it has provided a welcoming home for emerging and established artists, encouraging them to lovingly revive classics and

(MORE)
increasingly to create bold new work. In the last 12 years, three shows seen here landed in London, seven ended up on Broadway, and 13 arrived off Broadway, even as others turned into films or toured the nation – and Chinglish just became the first show from Berkeley Rep to cross the Pacific! Now the curtain rises on another year of smart and sophisticated plays for adventurous audiences in the Bay Area…

Set in Vienna in 1938 and in London during the Blitzkrieg, The Pianist of Willesden Lane tells the true story of Lisa Jura, a young Jewish musician whose dreams are interrupted by the Nazi regime. In this poignant show, Mona Golabek performs some of the world’s most beautiful music live – as she relates the real-life legacy of her mother’s quest to survive. Adapted and directed by Hershey Felder, Pianist is infused with hope and invokes the life-affirming power of music. Golabek is a Grammy-nominated concert pianist who has appeared at the Hollywood Bowl, the Kennedy Center, and the Royal Festival Hall. She also hosts The Romantic Hours, a syndicated radio program that airs across the nation. Felder is best known for his plays about composers – Beethoven, As I Knew Him; George Gershwin Alone; Maestro Bernstein; and Monsieur Chopin – as well as An American Story. According to Back Stage, “The Pianist of Willesden Lane is a touching and reassuring reminder that the ageless magnificence of great art can stubbornly, resolutely overshadow man’s inhumanity to man. It’s a message told with exquisite beauty and breathtakingly simple benevolence by Golabek and Felder, two world-class talents who epitomize the concept of artistic collaboration trumping all obstacles.” “This elegant heartfelt show is an arresting, deeply affecting triumph,” asserts the Los Angeles Times. “It’s all about Golabek, whose selfless desire to recount her mother’s remarkable tale of survival is enthralling, just as her gifts at the piano are self-evident. Stylistically shifting from Bach and Debussy to Mozart and Chopin with uncanny technique and phrasing, she differentiates between composers with the same subtlety that her mother, her maternal grandparents and the various entities that Lisa encounters register… It makes her unforgettable tribute an undiluted privilege to witness.” The Pianist of Willesden Lane plays on the intimate Thrust Stage beginning in October.

Then Kneehigh is back for the holidays! Britain’s beloved theatre company returns to the Roda Theatre with a glorious story of love. King Mark rules with his head, until he falls head over heels for his enemy’s sister. Based on an ancient tale, Tristan & Yseult revels in forbidden desires, broken hearts, grand passions, and tender truths. It’s another marriage of gorgeous music and ingenious staging from the acclaimed creators of Brief Encounter and The Wild Bride. Embrace
comedy and spontaneity in this West Coast premiere for an irresistible night of love! “This is a richly inventive triumph from start to finish,” declares the London Telegraph. “With a boldness that must owe something to their being able to claim the Cornish myth as their own, Kneehigh distil its essence through playfulness, artifice and even a dash of corniness. Their show is as cheeky as a kid and wild as the wind.” Adapted and directed by Emma Rice, Tristan & Yseult features writing by Carl Grose and Anna Maria Murphy. As the London Guardian explains, “Halfway through Kneehigh’s show, the band were playing, balloons were flying, hearts and minds were connecting and I suddenly realised how rare it is to have this much fun in the theatre. This evening is like a great gulp of refreshing sea air. It made me want to gurgle with delight… The production is thrillingly playful in every respect. It is childlike but never childish, full of music from a terrific band and it echoes with hoots of laughter and the whispered memory of despair. It embraces you so warmly that you feel as if you have been physically hugged. I loved it with a passion.”

In January, Berkeley Rep presents the world premiere of a new play from an Oakland native: The House That Will Not Stand by Marcus Gardley captures a single, steamy day for seven women in New Orleans. In 1836, white men in that city often live openly with their black Creole lovers. Yet wealth and freedom may not protect Beartrice when her man mysteriously dies… or conceal old secrets when another handsome bachelor calls on her daughters. Inspired by Lorca, The House That Will Not Stand is gripping family drama – sensuous, humorous, uplifting, heartbreaking – told in a rich and lyrical river of words. Gardley won the PEN/Laura Pels award for a Mid-Career Playwright. His work has been seen at Arena Stage, Lincoln Center, and Yale Repertory Theatre, while local audiences have enjoyed three of his plays: ...And Jesus Moonwalks the Mississippi, Love Is a Dream House in Lorin, and This World in a Woman’s Hands. “The 3[4]-year-old playwright’s talent is immense,” notes The New Yorker. “He traffics in lush images and plots that are as mysterious and surprising as forced flowers blossoming in winter… Gardley is an interesting heir to García Lorca, Pirandello, and Tennessee Williams.” The New York Times says, “Mr. Gardley, who graduated from the Yale School of Drama, writes with a ripe lyricism. The richness of his language, which often finds pungent poetry in the African-American vernacular, inevitably brings to mind the work of August Wilson.” The House That Will Not Stand was developed through The Ground Floor, Berkeley Rep’s center for the creation of new work. It emerges on the Thrust Stage with director Patricia McGregor, whose many credits include the off-Broadway premiere of Hurt Village and the celebrated production of Spunk at California Shakespeare Theater.

(MORE)
Next, a bank gets bombed, a suspect dies in custody, and the police inquiry turns into... a masterpiece of comedy? **Steven Epp** returns in February for a criminally funny production of *Accidental Death of an Anarchist*. He delighted audiences as *Figaro* and *The Miser* – now he’s back in another madcap show directed by **Christopher Bayes**. Nobel Prize-winner **Dario Fo** penned more than 70 incisive scripts, and this is by far his most famous. With Epp’s outrageous *Anarchist*, Berkeley Rep hauls you down to the station for a hilarious interrogation of our culture. “Steven Epp is a hoot and a half,” remarks the *Mercury News*, and the *New York Times* adds, “Epp manages to combine the cheerful hostility of Groucho Marx, the winsomeness of Tommy Smothers and the stupidity of Homer Simpson.” **The Washingtonian** agrees: “The sublime Steven Epp is a dream to watch. Loose-limbed, supple-voiced, and blessed with devastating comic timing.” Epp worked as an actor, director, and writer on more than 50 shows at Theatre de la Jeune Lune, leading the company to a Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre. Bayes has directed silly comedies on very serious stages in Berkeley, Chicago, New Haven, New York, Seattle, and other cities. Watch out when these friends team up for a fun-filled Fo in the Roda Theatre!

Then **Tribes** arrives in April. When three smart siblings move back home with their opinionated parents, the cacophony of their family hits a new high – even for Billy who’s deaf. **Nina Raine**’s profound and powerful new play became a hit in London and New York, now renowned director **Jonathan Moscone** brings it to Berkeley Rep. To fall in love or find a job, to forge an identity apart from your family, to fulfill that longing for somewhere to belong… is it as simple as following the signs? In **Tribes**, a deaf man learns to find his way in a world where everyone needs to be heard. The *Wall Street Journal* reports, “In 2006, Nina Raine won both British ‘most promising playwright’ awards. With **Tribes**, she keeps the promise; it’s the best-written, best-plotted, deepest, most daring – new play in recent years… It’s a paradox of sorts that a play about deafness should have such scintillating dialogue.” Raine earned the Most Promising Playwright Awards from the London Critics Circle and the *Evening Standard* for her first script, *Rabbit*. Last year, **Tribes** won the Drama Desk Award, New York Theatre Critics Circle Award, and Off-Broadway Alliance Award. It’s “rich and rewarding,” raves *Time Out New York*. “Raine’s capacious writing explores issues of communication, self-expression and individuation… There are moments in this play that I don’t think I will ever forget – scenes that tap the beauty that can live and resound in silence.” Moscone received the inaugural Zelda Fichandler Award for “transforming the American theatre through his unique and creative work.” The artistic director of Cal Shakes, his previous credits at Berkeley Rep include *Ghost Light*, *Ghosts*, and *Our Town*. Now he directs **Tribes** on the Thrust Stage.

(MORE)
The season concludes in May with *The Intelligent Homosexual’s Guide to Capitalism and Socialism with a Key to the Scriptures*. Winner of two Tony Awards, three Obies, an Emmy, and a Pulitzer Prize, **Tony Kushner** returns to Berkeley Rep for the West Coast premiere of his latest play. With his trademark mix of soaring intellect and searing emotion, the legendary writer unfurls an epic tale of love, family, sex, money, and politics – all set under the hard-earned roof of an Italian family in Brooklyn. When Gus decides to die, his kids come home with a raucous parade of lovers and spouses to find that even the house keeps secrets. Kushner reunites with one of his favorite collaborators, Artistic Director **Tony Taccone**, to bring this sweeping drama to the Roda Theatre. The two Tonys first collaborated in 1987 on *A Bright Room Called Day* at the Eureka Theatre. Then Taccone commissioned *Angels in America*, and co-directed its world premiere at the Mark Taper Forum in 1992. He has staged four of the playwright’s previous works at Berkeley Rep: *Slavs!* (1996); *Homebody/Kabul* (2002); *Brundibar* (2005), which also played off Broadway; and *Tiny Kushner* (2009), which transferred to London. The Theatre also produced *The Illusion* (1991) and *Hydriotaphia* (1998). “Bear witness to Tony Kushner’s roaring new play [and] banquet on rich and delectable passions and ideas, washed down with lashings of wit,” *The Nation* proclaims; it’s “that rarest of theater delights – a big, noisy, sexy play in which argument is hot and throbbing,” “It’s also lush and beautiful, funny and an education,” says the Associated Press. “Kushner uses a Brooklyn family to expose a place one is meant to avoid at polite cocktail parties: The battleground where politics and personal lives overlap and buckle.”

Get the best seats for these shows at the consistently lowest prices by subscribing to Berkeley Rep. The Main Season package guarantees tickets for *Accidental Death of an Anarchist*, *The House That Will Not Stand*, *IHO*, *The Pianist of Willesden Lane*, and *Tristan & Yseult*, while the Full Season package also includes seats for *Tribes* and a seventh show to be announced soon. Alternatively, you can “choose your own season” by selecting three or more plays that appeal to your palate. In addition to significant savings, subscribers receive valuable benefits such as the right to reschedule for free, discounts when purchasing tickets for friends, and the opportunity to secure seats before the general public for special events like *George Gershwin Alone*. Best of all, subscribers have guaranteed seats to sold-out plays while others are turned away.
Ticket packages begin as low as $125. Berkeley Rep also offers generous discounts for senior citizens, theatregoers under 30, and employees of nursery, elementary, and secondary schools – so discounted subscriptions start at only $67.50. Purchase a ticket package now, because individual seats don’t go on sale until August.

In four decades, four million people have enjoyed more than 300 shows at Berkeley Rep. These shows have gone on to win five Tony Awards, seven Obie Awards, nine Drama Desk Awards, one Grammy Award, and many other honors. In recognition of its place on the national stage, Berkeley Rep was honored with the Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre in 1997. Its bustling facilities – which include the 400-seat Thrust Stage, the 600-seat Roda Theatre, the Berkeley Rep School of Theatre, the Osher Studio, and a spacious new campus in West Berkeley – are helping revitalize an illustrious city. A not-for-profit organization, the theatre welcomes an annual audience of 200,000, serves 23,000 students, and hosts dozens of community groups every year, thanks to 1,000 volunteers and more than 330 artists, artisans, and administrators.

Come see tomorrow’s shows today at Berkeley Rep. The Roda Theatre and the Thrust Stage are both located on Addison Street in downtown Berkeley, near bus lines, bike routes, and parking lots – and only half a block from BART. For more information, call (510) 647-2949 or click berkeleyrep.org.
2013-14 SEASON SCHEDULE

TO BE ANNOUNCED
Limited Season Play #1 – Roda Theatre
September 20 – October 20, 2013
Opening night: September 25, 2013

THE PIANIST OF WILLESDEN LANE
Main Season Play #1 – Thrust Stage
Based on the book The Children of Willesden Lane by Mona Golabek and Lee Cohen
Adapted and directed by Hershey Felder
October 25 – December 8, 2013
Opening night: October 30, 2013

TRISTAN & YSEULT
Main Season Play #2 – Roda Theatre
West Coast premiere
Adapted and directed by Emma Rice
Written by Carl Grose and Anna Maria Murphy
November 22, 2013 – January 6, 2014
Opening night: November 26, 2013

THE HOUSE THAT WILL NOT STAND
Main Season Play #3 – Thrust Stage
World premiere
Written by Marcus Gardley
Directed by Patricia McGregor
January 31 – March 16, 2014
Opening night: February 5, 2014

ACCIDENTAL DEATH OF AN ANARCHIST
Main Season Play #4 – Roda Theatre
Written by Dario Fo
Directed by Christopher Bayes
March 7 – April 20, 2014
Opening night: March 12, 2014

TRIBES
Limited Season Play #2 – Thrust Stage
Written by Nina Raine
Directed by Jonathan Moscone
April 11 – May 11, 2014
Opening night: April 16, 2014

THE INTELLIGENT HOMOSEXUAL’S GUIDE TO CAPITALISM AND SOCIALISM WITH A KEY TO THE SCRIPTURES
Main Season Play #5 – Roda Theatre
West Coast premiere
Written by Tony Kushner
Directed by Tony Taccone
May 16 – June 29, 2014
Opening night: May 21, 2014

# # #