FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

STEVEN EPP RETURNS TO BERKELEY REPERTORY THEATRE IN DARIO FO’S ACCIDENTAL DEATH OF AN ANARCHIST

Christopher Bayes and Steven Epp reunite for a rollicking political farce

February 6, 2014 – Director Christopher Bayes and comic actor Steven Epp — the duo behind the uproarious A Doctor in Spite of Himself — return to Berkeley Repertory Theatre with Accidental Death of an Anarchist, the explosive political farce by Nobel Prize-winning Italian playwright Dario Fo. A Berkeley Rep favorite, Epp delighted audiences in Figaro and The Miser — now the master comedian returns in a criminally funny production about corruption. Only one man can cut through massive bureaucratic duplicity and reveal what happened to the suspected anarchist who died from a fall out of a fourth-floor police station window. Did he jump? Or was he pushed? In this contemporary take on a beloved classic, Berkeley Rep hauls you down to the station for a hilarious interrogation of our culture. This madcap comedy starts previews in the Roda Theatre on March 7, opens March 12, and runs through April 20.

“It’s a true pleasure to have Steve Epp and Christopher Bayes back at Berkeley Rep,” says Michael Leibert Artistic Director Tony Taccone. “Steve is one of the best comics in America and Christopher has done seminal work for us in the past. These are two guys who are at the top of their game. Accidental Death of an Anarchist is one of my favorite plays and I’m looking forward to presenting this work to Berkeley Rep audiences.”

“I’m thrilled to be back at Berkeley Rep with another biting comedy,” says Epp. “The genius of Accidental Death of an Anarchist is Dario Fo’s ability to take a harsh subject fresh out of the headlines and turn it into a raucous farce, exposing our dirty political underbelly, while keeping us laughing all at the same time. We had a blast playing it to audiences in New Haven and can’t wait to bring to Berkeley Rep’s adventurous audience.”

This production of Accidental Death of an Anarchist premiered at Yale Repertory Theatre in November and found acclaim with audiences and critics alike:

“With seasoned artists who know how to shape Italian commedia dell’arte for contemporary times — the work is wild, hysterical and pointed. The Marx Brothers would definitely approve — and so would that radical chucklehead Karl,” hails the Hartford Currant.

“Christopher Bayes, Steven Epp, and an adept band of lunatic supporting players nail the needed anarchy. Accidental Death of an Anarchist clicks. Then it does even more than that. It explodes,” proclaims the New Haven Independent.

“Christopher Bayes, who directs this slaphappy farce, and Steven Epp, who plays the Maniac, are masters of stage comedy in all its forms. Their grasp of commedia dell’arte is fertile and fun, and that permits the kind of playful staging that Anarchist depends upon,” asserts the New Haven Review.

(MORE)
Adapted by Gavin Richards from a translation by Gillian Hanna, *Accidental Death of an Anarchist* is a co-production with Yale Repertory Theatre.

Director Christopher Bayes began his theatre career with the Tony Award-winning Theatre de la Jeune Lune, where he worked for five years as an actor, director, composer, designer, and artistic associate. In 1989 he joined the acting company of the Guthrie Theater for over 20 productions, including *The Tempest, King Lear, Marat/Sade, The Triumph of Love,* and his one-man show *This Ridiculous Dreaming,* based on Boll's novel *The Clown.* His directing credits include productions at Berkeley Rep (*A Doctor in Spite of Himself,* co-produced with Yale Repertory Theatre), Intiman Theatre, Court Theatre, Trinity Repertory Company, Touchstone Theater, and Idaho Shakespeare Festival. His New York work includes HERE Arts Center, Performance Space 122, Dixon Place, The Flea Theater, The Public Theater, the Juilliard School, NYU's Graduate Acting Program, and most recently the Atlantic Theater Company, where he designed the movement/choreography for John Guare's new evening of short plays, *3 Kinds of Exile.* He served as movement director and creator of additional movement for the Broadway and national touring productions of *The 39 Steps* (the Roundabout Theatre Company's American Airlines, Cort, and Helen Hayes theatres). He was a 1999/2000 Fox Fellow. He has served on the faculty of the Juilliard School and NYU's Graduate Acting Program, was the head of movement and physical theater at The Brown/Trinity Consortium, and has taught workshops for Cirque du Soleil, the Big Apple Circus, The Public Theater's Shakespeare Lab, and Williamstown Theatre Festival, among others. He is currently a professor at Yale School of Drama where he serves as head of physical acting.

Steven Epp has appeared at Berkeley Rep in *A Doctor in Spite of Himself, Figaro, The Miser, The Green Bird,* and *Don Juan Giovann.* He was an actor, writer, and co-artistic director at Theatre de la Lune, winner of the 2005 Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre, from 1983 to 2008. Title roles there included *Tartuffe, Crusoe, Hamlet, Gulliver, Figaro,* and *The Miser,* as well as major roles in *Yang Zen Froggs, Romeo and Juliet, Cyrano, Children of Paradise, Scapin, Germinal, Don Juan Giovanni,* *The Three Musketeers, Twelfth Night, The Magic Flute, The Hunchback of Notre Dame, The Seagull,* and *The Little Prince.* His Yale Repertory Theatre appearances include Theatre de la Jeune Lune’s *Children of Paradise: Shooting a Dream* (1993), Truffaldino in *The Servant of Two Masters* (2010), and Sganarelle in *A Doctor in Spite of Himself* (2011). His other theatre credits include productions at the Guthrie Theater, La Jolla Playhouse, Trinity Repertory Company, Spoleto Festival, American Repertory Theater, Actors Theatre of Louisville, the Alley Theatre, Intiman Theatre, Center Stage, off-Broadway's New Victory Theater, the Shakespeare Theatre Company, PlayMakers, Seattle Repertory Theatre, and ArtsEmerson World Stages. He is the co-artistic director of the Moving Company. Epp holds a degree in theatre and history from Gustavus Adolphus College. He was a 1999 Fox Fellow, a 2009 McKnight Theatre Artist Fellow, and was a Beinecke Fellow at Yale School of Drama this past fall. He lives in Minneapolis with his wife and three children.

The cast of *Accidental Death of an Anarchist* includes Liam Craig (Superintendent), Steven Epp (Maniac), Renata Friedman (Feletti), Allen Gilmore (Pissani), Eugene Ma (Constables), and Jesse J. Perez (Bertozzo). The creative team includes Aaron Halva (music director, composer, and musician), Travis Hendrix (musician), Kate Noll (scenic design), Elivia Bovenzi (costumes), Olivier Wason (lighting), Charles Coes (sound designer), Nathan Roberts (composer and sound designer), Michael F. Bergmann (projection designer). The stage manager for Berkeley Rep is Kimberly Mark Webb.
This season Berkeley Rep has partnered with the Theatre Development Fund to offer 10 open-captioned performances. An open-captioned performance for *Accidental Death of Anarchist* will take place Sunday, April 20, 2014 at 2:00 PM.

The 2013-14 season is supported by BART and Wells Fargo, who have generously renewed their commitment as Berkeley Rep’s official season sponsors. Berkeley Rep is also proud to have the *San Francisco Chronicle/SFGate.com* as a second-year season sponsor and the Strauch Kulhanjian Family on board as a season producer.

**ABOUT BERKELEY REP**

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. 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 visit [berkeleyrep.org](http://berkeleyrep.org).

**ABOUT YALE REPERTORY THEATRE**

Yale Repertory Theatre has produced well over 100 premieres — including two Pulitzer Prize winners and four other nominated finalists — by emerging and established playwrights. Eleven Yale Rep productions have advanced to Broadway, garnering more than 40 Tony Award nominations and eight Tony Awards. Yale Rep is also the recipient of the Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre. Professional assignments at Yale Rep are integral components of the program at Yale School of Drama, the nation’s leading graduate theatre training conservatory. Established in 2008, Yale’s Binger Center for New Theatre is an artist-driven initiative that devotes major resources to the commissioning, development, and production of new plays and musicals at Yale Rep and across the country. The Binger Center has supported the work of more than 40 commissioned artists and the world premieres and subsequent productions of 15 new American plays and musicals. Recent and upcoming Yale–commissioned world premieres include Amy Herzog’s *Belleville* and *The Realistic Joneses* by Will Eno (opening on Broadway this spring), cited among the year’s Top Ten by *The New York Times* in 2011 and 2012 respectively, and this season’s *These Papers Bullets*, adapted by Rolin Jones from William Shakespeare’s *Much Ado About Nothing*, with songs by Billie Joe Armstrong. Visit [yalerep.org/center](http://yalerep.org/center).

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FACT SHEET

ACCIDENTAL DEATH OF AN ANARCHIST

WHO: Written by Dario Fo
Directed by Christopher Bayes
Adapted by Gavin Richards from a translation by Gillian Hanna

Featuring: Liam Craig (Superintendent), Steven Epp (Maniac), Renata Friedman Feletti), Allen Gilmore (Pissani), Eugene Ma (Constables), and Jesse J. Perez (Bertozzo)

Creative team: The creative team includes Aaron Halva (music director, composer, and musician), Travis Hendrix (musician), Kate Noll (scenic design), Elivia Bovenzi (costumes), Olivier Wason (lighting), Charles Coes (sound designer), Nathan Roberts (composer and sound designer), Michael F. Bergmann (projection designer).

WHAT: A bank gets bombed, a suspect dies in custody, and the police inquiry turn into…a masterpiece of comedy? Berkeley Rep hauls you down to the station for a hilarious interrogation of our culture.

WHERE: Berkeley Repertory Theatre
Roda Theatre, 2015 Addison Street @ Shattuck, Berkeley, CA 94704

WHEN: March 7, 2014 – April 20, 2014

- Tuesdays and Fridays @ 8:00 PM; no performance on 4/18
- Wednesdays @ 7:00 PM except 8:00 PM 3/12
- Thursdays @ 8:00 PM except 2:00 PM and 8:00 PM on 3/20 & 4/17
- Saturdays @ 2:00 PM and 8:00 PM; no matinee on 3/8 & 3/22
- Sundays @ 2:00 PM and 7:00 PM; no matinee on 3/9

Special Events:

Low-cost previews: Friday 3/7, Saturday 3/8, Tuesday 3/11 @ 8:00 PM and Sunday 3/9 @ 7:00 PM

Opening night: Wednesday 3/12 @ 8:00 PM; pre-show dinner for donors at Bistro Liaison and a post-show party for audiences

Teen Night: Friday 3/7 @ 6:30 PM

Repartee: FREE docent talks before Tuesday and Thursday evening performances and free discussions after all matinees

Post-play discussions: Thursday 3/27, Tuesday 4/1, and Friday 4/11

Open-captioned performance: Sunday 4/20 @ 2:00 PM

HOW MUCH: $29 - $99 (subject to change), Tix & Info: (510) 647-2949 – berkeleyrep.org

- Discounts: Half-price tickets available for anyone under 30 years of age
- $10 discount for students and seniors one hour before curtain
- Groups of 10 or more, contact (510) 647-2918 or groups@berkeleyrep.org

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