FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PIANO VIRTUOSO HERSHEY FELDER RETURNS TO BERKELEY REP TO PERFORM IN
HERSHEY FELDER AS LEONARD BERNSTEIN IN MAESTRO

One-man theatrical event tells the story of iconic American composer this June

November 6, 2013 – Today Berkeley Repertory Theatre announces that award-winning actor and musician Hershey Felder will return to star in Hershey Felder as Leonard Bernstein in Maestro about the amazing life of American composer and conductor Leonard Bernstein. Felder, who is currently directing the deeply stirring one-woman show The Pianist of Willesden Lane on Berkeley Rep’s Thrust Stage, last appeared in George Gershwin Alone. This summer the master entertainer and virtuoso pianist is back with his popular and critically acclaimed theatrical event. Hershey Felder as Leonard Bernstein in Maestro plays only 22 performances on the intimate Thrust Stage. It previews on June 5, 2014, opens June 6, 2014, and plays through June 22, 2014. Tickets are on sale now to Berkeley Rep donors and subscribers to its 2013-14 season; the general public can access seats beginning on November 17, 2013.

"Hershey is a great musical talent," says Tony Taccone, Berkeley Rep’s Michael Leibert Artistic Director. "He is a consummate master of bringing musical geniuses to life. He thrilled audiences in his performance of George Gershwin Alone last summer. We know he will deliver, as he has in the past, a delightfully entertaining show."

In Maestro, Felder combines first-person narrative with the music of Bernstein and the artists who inspired him to present an engrossing journey that traces the composer’s musical and personal influences, struggles, and triumphs. Along the way, Felder examines Bernstein’s wide-ranging work as both a classical and popular theatrical composer, responsible for such timeless works as West Side Story, Candide, On the Town, and more.

"I’m elated to be returning to Berkeley Rep to share Bernstein’s story with its audience," remarks Felder. "What fascinates me most about Bernstein is that he was drawn to both classical and popular work just as I am. But there were never any barriers for him — ever — and that was true of every aspect of his life. I can’t wait to take audiences on an extraordinary journey through Bernstein’s life and career."

(MORE)
Hershey Felder as Leonard Bernstein in Maestro has played at theatres across the country to thunderous applause.

“Hershey Felder has the chutzpah to take on Leonard Bernstein in ‘Maestro’ and the talent to pull it off!” exclaims the Los Angeles Times. “He has considerable talent to take on this uniquely charismatic and supremely talented Bernstein. Somewhere, he is looking down on this show...deeply touched that we still, 20 years after his death, care.”

“His most popular and even enduring composer investigation!” hails Variety.

“Felder uncannily captures the brilliant, effusive, mercurial, overbearing, exuberantly needy, tortured, multi-talented Bernstein to perfection” proclaims the Chicago Sun-Times. “You will walk out of the theater realizing you’ve barely breathed for the duration of this astonishing musical and theatrical transmigration of souls.”

“Hits the right notes!” says the San Diego Union-Tribune. “Hershey Felder’s ‘Bernstein’ is a pleasure to watch, involving and rich. Like Bernstein, Felder seems to thrive on the impulse to instruct and illuminate. He’s a masterful pianist with a showman’s sense of drama and dynamics.”

Hershey Felder (Leonard Bernstein/Playwright) created and performed George Gershwin Alone, which played at Berkeley Rep, on Broadway at the Helen Hayes Theatre, at West End's Duchess Theatre, and a worldwide live broadcast. His Composers Sonata – George Gershwin Alone; Monsieur Chopin; Beethoven, As I Knew Him; Hershey Felder as Leonard Bernstein in Maestro; Hershey Felder as Franz Liszt in Rock Star – has been presented at dozens of theatres across the U.S. and around the world, including a command performance of Monsieur Chopin for the Polish Ambassador to the United States. His compositions include Aliyah, Concerto for Piano and Orchestra; Fairytale, a musical; Les Anges de Paris, Suite for Violin and Piano; Song Settings; Saltimbanques for Piano and Orchestra; Etudes Thematiques for Piano; An American Story for Actor and Orchestra. As director, he premiered Mona Golabek in The Pianist of Willesden Lane at the Geffen Playhouse in April 2012, and he will perform his world premiere of Abe Lincoln’s Piano at the Geffen in January. Felder has been a scholar-in-residence at Harvard University’s department of music and is married to Kim Campbell, former Prime Minister of Canada.

Joel Zwick (Director) directed My Big Fat Greek Wedding, the highest-grossing romantic comedy of all time. Zwick is recognized as one of Hollywood’s most prolific directors of episodic television, having the direction of 525 episodes to his credit. These include having directed 21 pilots which have gone on to become regular series. He directed the Broadway production of George Gershwin Alone as well as all subsequent productions. Previous New York productions have included Dance with Me (Tony nomination), Shenandoah (Broadway national tour), Oklahoma (national tour) and Cold Storage (American Place Theater). He directed Esther (Promenade Theater, NY), Merry-Go-Round (Chicago, Las Vegas), Last Chance Saloon, and Woycek (West End, London). Zwick has taught drama at the Yale School of Drama, Brooklyn College, Queens College, Wheaton College, and University of Southern California. A graduate (B.A., M.A.) of Brooklyn College, he is currently directing Shake It Up for the Disney Channel.
Tickets start at only $29 – half that for anyone under 30 years of age. Additional savings are available for groups, seniors, and students – meaning discounted seats can be obtained for as little as $14.50. The Thrust Stage is located at 2025 Addison Street, near bus lines, bike routes, and parking lots – and only half a block from BART. For tickets or information, call (510) 647-2949 or simply click berkeleyrep.org.

ABOUT BERKELEY REP
Berkeley Repertory Theatre has grown from a storefront stage to an international leader in innovative theatre. Known for its core values of imagination and excellence, as well as its educated and adventurous audience, the nonprofit has provided a welcoming home for emerging and established artists since 1968. 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 received 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 a renowned city.

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## FACT SHEET

**HERSHEY FELDER AS LEONARD BERNSTEIN IN MAESTRO**

### WHO:

- Music and lyrics by Leonard Bernstein and others
- Book by Hershey Felder
- With Hershey Felder as Leonard Bernstein
- Directed by Joel Zwick

Creative Team: François-Pierre Couture (scenic design, lighting co-design, and projection co-design), Christopher Rynne (lighting co-design), Erik Carstensen (sound design), and Andrew Wilder (projection design). The production stage manager for this show is Kimberly Mark Webb.

### WHAT:

**Hershey Felder as Leonard Bernstein in Maestro**
The master entertainer and virtuoso pianist is back with his popular and critically acclaimed *Hershey Felder as Leonard Bernstein in Maestro*, in which he brings one of America’s greatest musical legends to life.

### WHERE:

**Berkeley Repertory Theatre**
Thrust Stage, 2025 Addison Street @ Shattuck, Berkeley, CA 94704

### WHEN:

**June 5 – June 22, 2014**

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**Special Events:**
- Low-cost preview: Thursday 6/5 @ 8:00 PM
- Opening night: Friday 6/6 @ 8:00 PM

### HOW MUCH:

$29 - $87 (subject to change)  
Tix & Info: (510) 647-2949 – [berkeleyrep.org](http://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](mailto:groups@berkeleyrep.org)

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**Opening** | **Preview**
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