MEDIA ADVISORY

TONY TACCONE TO REPLACE LIESL TOMMY AS DIRECTOR OF AUBERGINE IN WORLD PREMIERE PRODUCTION AT BERKELEY REP IN FEBRUARY 2016

October 21, 2015 --- Berkeley Repertory Theatre today announced that Michael Liebert Artistic Director Tony Taccone will direct the upcoming production of Aubergine, by Julia Cho, which is scheduled to have its world premiere performances at the Theatre in February 2016. Liesl Tommy, Berkeley Rep’s former associate director, has had to withdraw from the production following the just-announced Broadway transfer of Eclipsed, which Tommy is directing at the Public Theater in New York.

“I could not be more pleased to take on the exciting assignment of directing a Berkeley Rep commission and working with Julia Cho to bring her truly poignant play to life in our newly renovated Thrust Stage,” states Taccone. “Nor could I be happier for Liesl and her success with Eclipsed. It’s great news for everyone.”

Commissioned by Berkeley Rep and developed in The Ground Floor: Berkeley Rep’s Center for the Creation and Development of New Work, Aubergine will premiere in the newly renovated Thrust Stage; previews begin February 5, and opening night is scheduled for February 12, 2016. The play follows an estranged son, a father who’s ill, a visiting uncle carrying their memories in tow, a woman without an appetite, and a refugee from a forgotten country. These characters prove potent ingredients in this bittersweet and moving meditation on family, forgiveness, and the things that nourish us. When language fails, when the past fades, the perfect meal transcends time and culture and says more than words ever can. Cho’s plays have garnered critical praise from New York to Los Angeles.

During Tony Taccone’s tenure as artistic director of Berkeley Rep, the Tony Award–winning nonprofit has earned a reputation as an international leader in innovative theatre. In those 18 years, Berkeley Rep has presented more than 70 world, American, and West Coast premieres and sent 23 shows to New York, two to London, and one to Hong Kong. Taccone has staged more than 35 plays in Berkeley, including new work from Culture Clash, Rinde Eckert, David Edgar, Danny Hoch, Geoff Hoyle, Quincy Long, Itamar Moses, and Lemony Snicket. He directed shows that transferred to London, Continental Divide and Tiny Kushner, and two that landed on Broadway as well: Bridge & Tunnel and Wishful Drinking. Prior to working at Berkeley Rep, Taccone served as artistic director of Eureka Theatre, which produced the American premieres of plays by Dario Fo, Caryl Churchill, and David Edgar before focusing on a new generation of American writers. While at the Eureka, Taccone commissioned Tony Kushner’s legendary Angels in America and co-directed its world premiere. He has collaborated with Kushner on eight plays at Berkeley Rep, including last season’s The Intelligent Homosexual’s Guide to Capitalism and Socialism with a Key to the Scriptures. Taccone’s regional credits include Actors Theatre of Louisville, Arena Stage, Center Theatre Group, the Eureka Theatre, the Guthrie Theater, the Huntington Theatre Company, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, the Public Theater, and Seattle Repertory Theatre. As a playwright, he debuted Ghost Light, Rita Moreno: Life Without Makeup, and Game On, written with Dan Hoyle. In 2012, Taccone received the Margo Jones Award for “demonstrating a significant impact, understanding, and affirmation of playwriting, with a commitment to the living theatre.”

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