For Immediate Release

BERKELEY REP PRESENTS THE WORLD PREMIERE PRODUCTION OF ROE
Landmark Case Is As Timely As Ever

January 13, 2017- Berkeley Repertory Theatre today announced the world premiere production of Roe written by Lisa Loomer and directed by Bill Rauch. Roe is a co-production with the Oregon Shakespeare Festival and Arena Stage. Previews begin Friday, March 3 and the show runs through Sunday, April 2. Individual tickets begin at $29 and can be purchased online at berkeleyrep.org or by phone, 510 647-2949. Press night will be on Friday, March 10.

Roe v. Wade — the landmark 1973 case that legalized abortion is still fiercely debated, over 40 years later. In her newest play, acclaimed writer Lisa Loomer cuts through the headlines and rhetoric to reveal the divergent personal journeys of lawyer Sarah Weddington and plaintiff Norma McCorvey (“Jane Roe”) in the years following the fateful decision. In turns shocking, humorous, and poignant, Roe reflects the polarization in America today while illuminating the heart and passion each person has for their cause.

“Lisa Loomer has done a terrific job telling the story of Roe through the personal stories of two women whose initial alliance is fractured over time and class differences,” says Michael Leibert Artistic Director Tony Taccone. “As the play unfolds, people may be forced to examine their beliefs about abortion, and it should be interesting to see what happens.”

Lisa Loomer (Playwright)
Lisa Loomer’s plays include Living Out, The Waiting Room, Distracted, Homefree, Café Vida, Expecting Isabel, Two Things You Don’t Talk About at Dinner, Birds, Bocón!, Marial! Maria Maria Maria, and Broken Hearts. Her work has been produced at Roundabout Theatre Company, Vineyard Theatre, Second Stage Theatre, INTAR, the Public Theater, Mark Taper Forum, Arena Stage, South Coast Repertory, Kennedy Center, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Denver Center Theatre Company, La Jolla Playhouse, Trinity Repertory Company, Williamstown Theatre Festival, Missouri Repertory, and Cornerstone Theater Company, and in Mexico, Israel, Egypt, and Germany. Screenwriting credits include Girl, Interrupted and comedies, dramas, and pilots for HBO, CBS, FOX, and Showtime. Lisa received the American Theatre Critics Award (twice), Kennedy Center Fund for New American Plays Award, Lurie Foundation Award, Edgerton Foundation New American Play Award, Jane Chambers Playwriting Award (twice), Imagen Award, Ovation Award, and Susan Smith Blackburn Prize.

Bill Rauch (Director)
Bill Rauch directed the Tony Award-winning All the Way on Broadway and the world premiere of The Clean House at Yale Repertory Theatre, where he is an associate artist, and its off-Broadway premiere (Lincoln Center). Other world premieres include Fingersmith, The Great Society, Equivocation, and By the Waters of Babylon (Oregon Shakespeare Festival); Living Out and For Here or to Go? (Mark Taper Forum); and My Wandering Boy and The Further Adventures of Hedda Gabler (South Coast Repertory). He became the OSF’s artistic director in 2007, having been co-founder and artistic director of Cornerstone Theater (1986-2006). Honors include the Helen Hayes, TCG’s Visionary Leadership, Fichandler, L.A. Weekly and Garland Awards; Margo Jones Medal; and Emmy and Ovation Award nominations.
Jim Abele (Ron Weddington/Jay Floyd/Flip Benham)
Jim Abele last appeared at Berkeley Rep in The Hairy Ape. New York credits include Hedda Gabler (Broadway) and View of the Dome, Edith Stein, The Country Girl, and Angel City (off Broadway). Regional credits include Opus and the Pleasure of His Company (the Old Globe), The Three Musketeers (Seattle Repertory Theatre), State of the Union (Ford’s Theatre), The Misanthrope (McCarter Theatre Center), The Tempest (Milwaukee Repertory Theater), Arcadia (Repertory Theatre of St. Louis), The Normal Heart (Pittsburgh Public Theater), and The Caine Mutiny Court Martial (Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park). Film/TV credits include guest and recurring roles on Code Black, Major Crimes, Transparent, NCIS, Pretty Little Liars, Mad Men, Dexter, The Middle, Cold Case, Big Love, West Wing, 24, NYPD Blue, and Six Feet Under, among others.

Sarah Jane Agnew (Sarah Weddington)
Sarah Jane Agnew appeared at Berkeley Rep in Theatre de la Jeune Lune’s Don Juan Giovanni, The Green Bird, and The Miser. Regional credits include Richard II and Dead Man’s Cell Phone (Oregon Shakespeare Festival), Hamlet (New Victory Theater), Twelfth Night (Shakespeare Theatre Company), The Servant of Two Masters (Yale Repertory Theatre), Sarah Ruhl’s Three Sisters and Behind The Eye (Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park), The Syringa Tree (Jungle Theater), and Time Stands Still, The 39 Steps, Dollhouse, Major Barbara, Home Place, The Secret Fall of Constance Wilde, and As You Like It (the Guthrie Theater). Sarah was a company member of Theatre de la Jeune Leune from 1997 to 2006, appearing in over 15 productions including The Hunchback of Notre Dame, Tartuffe, The Seagull, and The Miser. Film/TV credits include Lady Dynamite, Detective Fiction, and Older Than America. Sarah is a 2012 McKnight Theater Fellow and received the Cincinnati Acclaim Award and Princess Grace Honorarium.

Kenya Alexander (Roxanne)
Kenya Alexander makes her Berkeley Rep debut. Regional credits include Beneath in A Raisin in the Sun (Ebony Repertory Theatre and Kirk Douglas Theatre), Pecola in The Bluest Eye (Cape Fear Regional Theatre), and Hester/La Negrita in In the Blood (Carnegie Mellon). Her international credits include Irina in The Seagull (Moscow Art Theatre). Hailing from Houston, Texas, Kenya received her BFA in acting at Carnegie Mellon University School of Drama. During her senior year she accepted an elite invitation to attend a semester abroad at Europe’s premier theatre school, MXAT (Moscow Art Theatre School).

Mark Bedard (Henry McCluskey/Robert Flowers/Abortion Doctor)
Mark Bedard is pleased to make his Berkeley Rep debut. He appeared off Broadway in Midsummer Night’s Dream (Pearl Theatre) and Fashions for Men (Mint Theater Company). Before that, he was a company member for several years at Oregon Shakespeare Festival, where some of his favorite plays were The Servant of Two Masters, Paradise Lost, She Loves Me, Animal Crackers, and The Cocoanuts, the last of which he adapted. Additional regional credits include Cymbeline (Shakespeare Theatre Company), Touchstone in As You Like It (Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival), and Hysterium in A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum (Geva Theatre Center). Please visit markbedard.com.

Zoe Bishop (Melissa/Emily)
Zoe Bishop makes her Berkeley Rep debut. She spent time performing at Everett KidStage as Splat’s Mom in Splat the Cat, Grandma Georgina in Willy Wonka Kids, Hiccup’s Girlfriend in How to Train Your Dragon, and ensemble in Peter Pan. Zoe participated in weekly improv performances at LA Connections Comedy Club for several months. Her film/TV credits include My Son Wants To Be Gay, Geo Tag, the Healthy Eating video series on Amazon.com, and various commercial work. Twitter:@ZoeCStart, Instagram:@ZoeCStart.

Sara Bruner (Norma McCorvey)
Sara Bruner makes her Berkeley Rep debut. Regional credits include Twelfth Night, Fingersmith, Antony and Cleopatra, A Wrinkle in Time, and Black Swan Lab (Oregon Shakespeare Festival); Boeing Boeing (Delaware Theatre Company); The Fantasticks (Repertory Theatre of St. Louis); Sweeney Todd, Richard III, The Imaginary Invalid, Cabaret, The Taming of the Shrew, The Mousetrap, The Mystery of Edwin
Drood, Twelfth Night, The Crucible, The Tempest, Hay Fever, and A Midsummer Night’s Dream (Great Lakes Theater); Little Shop of Horrors, The Spitfire Grill, She Stoops to Conquer, As You Like It, The Importance of Being Earnest, and Scapin (Idaho Shakespeare Festival); and Brilliant Traces, The Physics of Regret, Lobby Hero, The Cherry Orchard, and The Cripple of Inishmaan (Boise Contemporary Theater). TV credits include MDs.

Catherine Castellanos (Ofelia/Connie Gonzalez)  
Catherine Castellanos makes her Berkeley Rep debut. She made her Oregon Shakespeare Festival debut last season in Richard II and originated the role of Connie in Roe. She’s been an associate artist with California Shakespeare Theater for 15 seasons, last seen as Prospero in their community tour of The Tempest. As a company member with the San Francisco-based theatre Campo Santo since 2001, she collaborates and performs in numerous premieres by critically acclaimed and award winning writers. Her regional credits include Magic Theatre, Shotgun Players, American Conservatory Theater, San Jose Repertory Theatre, Yale Repertory Theatre, La MaMa, the Lensic, the Ground Floor at Berkeley Rep and JAW/Portland Center Stage. She works in restorative justice teaching theatre arts to formerly incarcerated young women at Community Works West/Rising Voices and at San Quentin State Prison.

Gina Daniels (Aileen/Barbara/Uma/Third Pregnant Woman)  
Gina Daniels last appeared at Berkeley Rep in The White Snake. Broadway credits include All the Way. Off-Broadway credits include Abingdon Theatre Company, The 24 Hour Plays, Incumbo Theater Company, and Summer Play Festival. Regional credits include 10 seasons at Oregon Shakespeare Festival; Our Town (Portland Center Stage); Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike (Paper Mill Playhouse); Brokeology (TheatreWorks); Doubt (Kansas City Repertory Theatre); As You Like It, The Taming of the Shrew, Macbeth, and Dracula (Delaware Theatre Company); An Ideal Husband (Center Stage in Baltimore); Private Lives (Shakespeare Santa Cruz); Medea (Pittsburgh Public Theater); Arden Theatre Company; Geva Theatre Center; Milwaukee Repertory Theater; Lake Tahoe Shakespeare Festival; Charlotte Repertory Theatre; Willamette Repertory Theatre; Utah Shakespeare Festival; and TheatreVirginia. TV credits include Orange is the New Black. Please visit gina-daniels.com.

Pamela Dunlap (Molly/Mary)  
Pamela Dunlap makes her Berkeley Rep debut. She appeared at Arena Stage in The Cherry Orchard and You Can’t Take It With You. She created the role of Agnes in A.R. Gurney’s Love and Money (Signature Theatre Company), Lana in The Early Girl (Circle Repertory Company), and Marjorie Baverstock in The Musical Comedy Murders of 1940 on Broadway. Pamela is guest-starring in the new Jill Soloway comedy I Love Dick, and will be featured in Suburbicon for the Coen Brothers and the upcoming film Wetlands opposite Adewale Akinnuoye-Agbaje. Pamela had recurring roles on Mad Men, Commander in Chief, Maron, Doll, and Em, and was most recently was seen as Barb in Girls. She studied with Sanford Meisner, received an OOBRAward, and is a member of Circle Repertory Acting Company.

Richard Elmore (Doctor Kennedy/Henry Wade/Justice Blackmun)  
Richard Elmore is making his Berkeley Rep debut. He was last seen at Arena Stage in Equivocation. Regional credits include 33 seasons at Oregon Shakespeare Festival and work with Seattle Repertory Theatre, Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park, the Alliance Theatre, Indiana Repertory Theatre, Alabama Shakespeare Festival, Denver Center Theatre Company, Utah Shakespeare Festival, California Shakespeare Festival, Virginia Stage Company, Mill Mountain Theatre, Court Theatre, Geva Theatre, San Jose Repertory Theatre, Delaware Theatre Company, TheatreWorks, Portland Center Stage, and Artists Repertory Theatre. More than 100 radio, television, and print commercials. He is the winner of five Drama-Logue Awards and received his BA from Arizona State University.

Susan Lynskey (Linda Coffee/Judy/First Pregnant Woman/Peggy)  
Susan Lynskey makes her Berkeley Rep debut. She appeared at Arena Stage in Noises Off, Proof, Well, Born Yesterday, Book of Days, Intimations for Saxophone, and The Importance of Being Earnest. She is a proud new OSF company member who premiered in Roe, Richard II, Play On, and Black Swan Lab.
Regional credits include *Hostage* (Center Stage in Baltimore), *Citizen 13559* (Kennedy Center), Lisa Loomer’s *Living Out* (Round House Theatre), *The 39 Steps* and *The Laramie Project* (Olney Theatre Center, associate artist), *Intimate Apparel* (African Continuum), *Ghost-Writer* and *The Girl in the Goldfish Bowl* (MetroStage), *The BFG* (National Theatre), and *The Cripple of Inishmaan* (the Studio Theatre). Recent film/TV credits include *Turn* and *The Wire*. Susan is a Georgetown professor and recipient of multiple Helen Hayes nominations and awards, DCTS’s Audience Choice, and DCCAH’s Individual Artist Award.

**Amy Newman (Helen/Second Pregnant Woman/Ronda)**

Amy Newman makes her Berkeley Rep debut. Regional credits include *Great Expectations* (Oregon Shakespeare Festival); *The Miracle Worker*, *The Liar*, *Tribes*, *The Playboy of the Western World*, *Red Herring*, *Sherlock Holmes and the Case of The Christmas Carol*, *The Cherry Orchard*, *Ah, Wilderness!, Design for Living*, and *All My Sons* (Artists Repertory Theatre, resident artist since 2014); JAW: A Playwrights’ Festival and *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest* (Portland Center Stage); *Middletown*, *Gidion’s Knot*, *Noises Off*, and *Or* (Third Rail Repertory Theatre); and *God’s Ear*, *Freakshow*, and *The Long Christmas Ride Home* (Theatre Vertigo). Film/TV credits include *Grimm*. Amy is the recipient of Drammy Awards for *Gidion’s Knot* and *God’s Ear* and received her BA from Temple University.

The creative team includes Rachel Hauck (scenic designer), Raquel Barreto (costume designer), Jane Cox (lighting designer), Wendall K. Herrington (projection designer), and Paul James Prendergast (sound designer).

For the 2016-17 season, Berkeley Rep recognizes the generosity of season sponsors BART, Peet’s Coffee, and Wells Fargo. *Roe* is made possible thanks to the generous support of individual season sponsors Jack and Betty Schafer, Michael and Sue Steinberg, and the Strauch Kulhanjian Family. Lead sponsors are Bruce Golden and Michelle Mercer. Executive sponsors include Bill Falik and Diana Cohen, and Marjorie Randolph.

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