FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BERKELEY REP PRESENTS OFFICE HOUR
Provocative new play by acclaimed playwright Julia Cho

December 21, 2017 – Berkeley Repertory Theatre is proud to present Office Hour by playwright Julia Cho and directed by Berkeley Rep’s associate director, Lisa Peterson. A co-production with Long Wharf Theatre, Office Hour begins previews on Thursday, February 22 and runs through Sunday, March 25. Individual tickets start at $30 and can be purchased online at berkeleyrep.org or by phone, 510 647-2949. Press night will be on Thursday, March 1.

After enthralling audiences with Aubergine, Julia Cho returns to Berkeley Rep with a searing and touching play that tunes into the plight of “the other” in a country steeped in mistrust and intolerance. Hiding in the back of the classroom, Dennis’ sullen presence has his fellow students and professors on edge. But during an office visit, his writing instructor seeks to break through Dennis’ silence and earn his trust—with shocking results. A deeply personal story of empathy and redemption, Office Hour explores otherness and paranoia while revealing our essential human need for connection.

“I’ve known Julia for years, since our time together in Los Angeles and the new play scene at the Mark Taper Forum – but now I finally get to work with this unique, provocative playwright, and I’m so excited about that,” says director Lisa Peterson. “In Office Hour she has written a gritty, realistic play that turns into a surprising cubist puzzle; that transformation is one of the great things about the play. It also asks the question: how do we move past our terror and connect with each other?”

Julia Cho (Playwright)
Julia’s most recent play Aubergine was performed at Berkeley Rep during the 2015-16 season. Other plays include The Language Archive (Susan Smith Blackburn Award), The Piano Teacher, Durango, The Winchester House, BFE, The Architecture of Loss, and 99 Histories. They have been produced in New York at Roundabout Theatre Company, The Public Theater, Vineyard Theatre, Playwrights Horizons, and New York Theatre Workshop, and regionally at Long Wharf Theatre, South Coast Repertory, the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, and many others. Cho studied playwriting at Amherst College, New York University, and the Juilliard School, and was a member of New Dramatists. Her play Office Hour premiered at South Coast Rep in April 2016.

Lisa Peterson (Director)
Lisa is a two-time Obie Award-winning writer and director whose previous projects at Berkeley Rep include Watch on the Rhine (2017) It Can’t Happen Here (2016); Madwoman in the Volvo (2016); An Iliad (2012), which Lisa co-wrote with Denis O’Hare, and which won Obie and Lortel Awards for Best Solo Performance; Mother Courage (2006); The Fall (2001); and Antony & Cleopatra (1999). Other recent West Coast productions include You Never Can Tell (California Shakespeare Theater), Hamlet (Oregon Shakespeare Festival), and Chavez Ravine (Ovation Award for Best Production—Center Theatre Group). She has directed world premieres by many major American writers, including Tony Kushner, Beth Henley,
Donald Margulies, José Rivera, David Henry Hwang, Luis Alfaro, Marlene Meyer, Naomi Wallace, Basil Kreimendahl, and many others. She regularly works at the Guthrie Theater, Actors Theatre of Louisville, the Mark Taper Forum, La Jolla Playhouse, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Arena Stage, and New York Theatre Workshop. Lisa and Denis are working on a new play about faith called The Good Book, and a commission for McCarter Theatre Center titled The Song of Rome. Lisa is also writing a new music-theatre piece with Todd Almond called The Idea of Order, co-commissioned by La Jolla Playhouse, Berkeley Rep, and Seattle Rep.

Daniel Chung (Dennis)
Daniel’s favorite credits include Every 28 Hours and The Ice Cream Sandwich Incident (FaultLine Theater). He has appeared in numerous staged readings at PlayGround and Playwrights Foundation. Daniel studies at Berg Studios and graduated from UCLA.

Jackie Chung (Gina)
Jackie’s off-Broadway credits include microcrisis and The Children of Vonderly (Ma-Yi Theater Company), Mother Courage and Her Children (The Public Theater/NYSF), and After. (Partial Comfort Productions). Her regional credits include Caught (Firefly Theater & Films), Tiger Style! (La Jolla Playhouse), different words for the same thing (Center Theatre Group), brownsville song (b-side for Tray) (Actors Theatre of Louisville’s Humana Festival), Fast Company (South Coast Repertory), and Macbeth 1969 (Long Wharf Theatre). Film and TV credits include Grey’s Anatomy, Deadbeat, Someone Else. Jackie is a member of Partial Comfort Productions and the Ensemble Studio Theatre.

Jeremy Kahn (David)
Jeremy has appeared in peerless (Marin Theatre Company); Bad Jews (Capital Stage Company); Another Way Home (Magic Theatre); Peter and the Starcatcher (TheatreWorks); Tigers Be Still, The Fantasticks, Kimberly Akimbo, and 1 2 3 (San Francisco Playhouse); Tortilla Curtain (San Diego Repertory Theatre); Wittenberg (Aurora Theatre Company); The Liar, Baskerville, It Shoulda Been You, and The Storytelling Ability of a Boy (Center Repertory Company); The Rover (Shotgun Players); Max Understood (Paul Dresher Ensemble); Moonshiner (Jackalope Theatre Company); Shakespod (Edinburgh Fringe Festival 2008); and Would (NYC Fringe Festival 2012). Television and independent film credits include Looking (HBO), Unleashed, The Etruscan Smile (2017), Dirt (2017), and After Effect. Jeremy received a Bachelor’s of Fine Arts from The Theatre School at DePaul University. Visit ActorJeremyKahn.com.

Kerry Warren (Genevieve)
Kerry is excited to make her debut at Berkeley Rep in Office Hour. Her New York credits include The River on Broadway with Hugh Jackman (u/s Woman), Good Grief at Intar (Jessica), This Is How It Ends (Anti Christ) in Summer Shorts at 59E59 Theatres, and Much Ado About Nothing (Hero) with the Mobile Unit at The Public directed by Kwame Kwei-Armah. Regionally, she has performed at Dallas Theater Center in Romeo and Juliet (Juliet), at Center Stage in Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike (Cassandra), at Arena Stage in The Originalist (Cat), and at the Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival in Twelfth Night (Viola) and The Book of Will (Alice). She is a graduate of the Juilliard School Group 42. Visit kerryawarren.com.

The creative team includes: Matt Saunders (scenic designer), Maggie Morgan (costume designer), Scott Zielinski (lighting designer), and Rob Kaplowitz (sound designer).

For the 2017-18 season, Berkeley Rep recognizes the generosity of season sponsors BART, Peet’s Coffee, and Wells Fargo. Berkeley Rep is also delighted to have Jack and Betty Schafer, Michael and
Sue Steinberg, and The Strauch Kulhanjian Family on board as season sponsors. Office Hour is made possible by lead sponsors Bruce Golden and Michelle Mercer and executive sponsors Kerry Francis and John Jimerson, and Gail and Arne Wagner.

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 nearly 400 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 Peet's Theatre, the 600-seat Roda Theatre, the Berkeley Rep School of Theatre, and a spacious campus in West Berkeley – are helping revitalize a renowned city. Learn more at berkeleyrep.org