For Immediate Release

BERKELEY REP ANNOUNCES FULL CAST FOR THE GOOD BOOK
Oscar and Emmy nominee Annette O'Toole to star in play by award-winning playwrights

March 5, 2019 – Berkeley Repertory Theatre today announced the full cast for The Good Book. After bringing the successful production of An Iliad to theatres around the country including Berkeley Rep, Tony Award-winner Denis O’Hare and Obie Award-winner and Associate Director Lisa Peterson are teaming up once again to unearth the all-too-human formation of the most influential book in Western history — the Bible. In addition to collaborating with O’Hare on the script, Petersen will also direct The Good Book.

This powerful play weaves together three distinct yet connected stories: a devout young man struggling to reconcile his belief with his identity; an atheist biblical scholar trying to find meaning as she faces her own mortality; and the creative journey of the Bible itself — from ancient Mesopotamia to medieval Ireland to suburban America — through the many hands, minds, hearts, and circumstances that molded this incredibly potent testament to the human spirit.

“Lisa Peterson and Denis O’Hare’s plays investigate the power of storytelling and the role that narratives play the world,” says Artistic Director Tony Taccone. “Has there been a more influential set of narratives in the history of Western civilization than those contained in the Bible? The Good Book examines how the Bible was created, and how we still need stories to sustain us, whether we believe in God or not. I look forward to having this duo back at Berkeley Rep as they show how narratives from the Bible continue to impact our society.”

The Bible and faith have been frequent themes within both O’Hare and Peterson’s lives. “Denis is a reformed believer, obsessed with the Bible. And I’m agnostic, nostalgic for a faith that I never actually had,” says Peterson. “So we decided to write about faith, and the lack of faith, and that most powerful, dangerous, glorious work of collective creation ever known to humankind: The Christian Bible. We want to understand how and why it exists, since it permeates every corner of American culture, and we all just don’t talk about that enough. What is this book?”

Previews for The Good Book begin Thursday, April 25, 2019 and the show runs through Sunday, June 9, 2019. Press day will be Thursday, May 2, 2019. Ticket prices for the run start at $30, and can be purchased online at berkeleyrep.org or by phone at 510 647-2949 (Tue-Sun, noon-7pm).

Denis O’Hare (Playwright)

Denis O’Hare is the co-author, along with Lisa Peterson, of the award winning solo performance play An Iliad (Obie and Lucille Lortel awards), which played at Berkeley Rep in 2012. He is currently starring in Tartuffe at the National Theatre in London and was most recently seen starring as Jessie in the NBC series, This Is Us. Denis wrote and starred in his first feature length film, The Parting Glass, directed by Stephen Moyer. His Broadway credits include Elling, Inherit the Wind, Sweet Charity (Drama Desk Award), Assassins (Tony nomination), Take Me Out (Tony, Drama Desk, Obie, and Lucille Lortel awards), Major Barbara, Cabaret, and Racing Demon. His off-Broadway credits include Helen, Silence, Cunning, Exile, and Into the Woods (The Public Theater); Vienna Lusthaus and An Iliad (New York Theatre Workshop – Obie Award); and Pig Farm (Roundabout Theatre Company). His film credits include The Goldfish (upcoming), Slano (upcoming), Late Night (upcoming), The Day Shall Come (upcoming), Private Life, Lizzie, Edgar Allan Poe: Buried Alive, Novitate, From Nowhere, The Normal Heart, Dallas Buyers Club, C.O.G., The Eagle, 5,000 Feet is the Best, Edge of Darkness, The Proposal, An Englishman in New York, Duplicity, Brief Interviews with Hideous Men, Milk, Changeling, Baby Mama, Charlie Wilson’s War, Michael Clayton, A Mighty Heart, Rocket Science, Half Nelson, Garden State, 21 Grams, The Anniversary
Party, and Sweet and Lowdown. Denis has also appeared in a number of television series including five seasons on American Horror Story and 2 seasons on True Blood. Some of his other television work includes This Is Us, When We Rise, The Good Wife, The Comedians, Banshee, Law & Order, Law & Order: SVU and CSI: Miami, Brothers and Sisters, Bored to Death, and 100 Centre Street.

Lisa Peterson (Playwright/Director)
Lisa is a two-time Obie Award-winning writer and director whose previous projects at Berkeley Rep include Office Hour (2018); 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 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.

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CAST

Elijah Alexander (Man 3)
Elijah returns to Berkeley Rep after appearing Watch on the Rhine and Much Ado About Nothing. He has been seen on Broadway in Metamorphoses and off Broadway in Shopping and Fucking (New York Theatre Workshop). Other New York credits include Throne of Blood at Brooklyn Academy of Music. He has performed with the Royal Shakespeare Company in Tantalus. Elijah’s regional credits include Playing with Fire (Guthrie Theater); Linda Vista (Mark Taper Forum); Shrew (South Coast Repertory); Fingersmith, Hamlet, Pride and Prejudice, and Henry VIII (Oregon Shakespeare Festival); Richard III, Julius Caesar, Gaslight, Midsummer Night’s Dream, and Art (Utah Shakespeare Festival); Man and Superman, Restoration Comedy, and An Ideal Husband (California Shakespeare Theater); Disgraced (Arizona Theatre Company); and The Invisible Hand (Gregory Award, A Contemporary Theatre, Seattle). His film and television credits include Mr. & Mrs. Smith, Amazing Love, Touch, Awake, JAG, and Summerland. Elijah received an MFA from the Yale School of Drama. Please visit elijahalexander.net.

Lance Gardner (Man 1)
Lance last appeared at Berkeley Rep in An Octoroon and previously in Yellowjackets. He has performed at California Shakespeare Theater, San Francisco Playhouse, TheatreWorks in Silicon Valley, Marin Theatre Company, Magic Theatre, Encore Theatre, Climate Theatre, and more. When he’s not on stage he’s producing audio for radio and podcast. His work can be found at KALW.org and LanceGardner.xyz.

Denmo Ibrahim (Woman 1)
Denmo is thrilled to make her Berkeley Rep debut. She was last seen as Zarina in The Who & The What (Marin Theatre Company) and Mariam in A Thousand Splendid Suns (American Conservatory Theater, The Old Globe, Seattle Repertory). Some U.S. stage credits include New York Theatre Workshop, California Shakespeare Theater, Aurora Theatre, Crowded Fire, and Yerba Buena Center for the Arts. She has collaborated with playwrights Mac Wellman, Eric Ehn, Yusef El Guind, Kristoffer Diaz, Thomas Bradshaw, Melinda Lopez, Dustin Chinn, and Tanya Saracho and originated roles with composers Claudio Bohorquez, Rinde Eckert, and Carla Kihlstedt. Her devised work has toured to international festivals in Egypt, France, and Germany. She is the recipient of a Theatre Bay Area Award and a San Francisco Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Award. Ibrahim has an MFA in Lecoq-Based Actor-Created Physical Theatre from Naropa University and a BFA in Acting from Boston University. She is a founding artistic director of Mugwumpin and a resident artist of Golden Thread Productions. Denmolbrahim.com
Keith Nobbs (Connor)

Annette O’Toole (Miriam)
This is Annette’s inaugural appearance with Berkeley Rep. Her New York and regional theatre work includes *A Lovely Sunday for Creve Coeur* and *The Show-Off* (Theatre St. Clement’s), *The Traveling Lady* (Cherry Lane Theatre), *Man from Nebraska* (Second Stage Theatre), *Southern Comfort* (The Public Theater) for which she received the Lucille Lortel Award for Best Actress in a Musical and Drama Desk and Drama League nominations, *Hamlet in Bed* (Rattlestick Playwrights Theater), *Magnolia* (Goodman Theatre), *Third* (Two River Theater), *Heresy* (Flea Theatre), *The Quality of Life* (Arena Stage), *Kindness* (Playwrights Horizons), and *The Seagull* (Classic Stage Company). Her film and television performances include *A Futile and Stupid Gesture, Women Who Kill, 48 Hrs., Superman III, Cat People, One on One, The Punisher, Search Party, 11.22.63, Halt and Catch Fire, Smallville,* and *The Kennedys of Massachusetts,* for which she received Emmy and Golden Globe nominations. Annette will soon be seen in the Netflix series *Virgin River* and the feature film, *Blow the Man Down.* Annette received an Academy Award nomination for Best Original Song for “A Kiss at the End of the Rainbow,” which she co-wrote with Michael McKean, from *Best in Show.*

Shannon Tyo (Woman 2)
Shannon is happy to be making her debut at Berkeley Rep. Off Broadway, she has appeared in *The Chinese Lady, Kentucky, Bikeman,* and *Dear Edwina.* Favorite regional credits include Baltimore Center Stage, Barrington Stage Company, Geva Theatre Center, The Old Globe, Music Theatre Wichita, Kitchen Theatre Company, Pioneer Theatre Company, and Tuacahn Center for the Arts. Shannon is a graduate of Syracuse University. shannon-tyo.com

Wayne Wilcox (Man 2)
Wayne is making is Berkeley Rep debut. Selected regional credits include *Fellow Travelers* at the Bay Street Theatre, *Sense and Sensibility* at The Old Globe and Chicago Shakespeare Theater, *It’s A Wonderful Life* at Bucks County Playhouse, *The Light in the Piazza* at Goodman Theatre, *The Last Five Years* at Philadelphia Theatre Company, and *Bright Star* at The Old Globe. Off Broadway credits include *Suddenly* and *Last Summer* at Roundabout Theatre Company, *The Great American Trailer Park Musical* at New World Stages, *Carrie* and *The Pride* at MCC Theater, *Rich Boyfriend* at the Lion Theater, and *A Man of No Importance* at Lincoln Center. Broadway credits include *Coram Boy, Priscilla Queen of the Desert,* *The Normal Heart* (Drama Desk Award), and *Chaplin.* Wayne can be seen in the upcoming FX series *Fosse/Verdon.* Additional television/film credits include Marty on *The Gilmore Girls, The Good Fight, Elementary, Law & Order, Mania Days, Under, Interview,* and *Rent.* Wayne received his BFA in acting from Boston University.

The creative team includes Rachel Hauck (scenic designer), Lydia Tanji (costume designer), Alexander V. Nichols (Lighting/Projection Designer), Mark Bennett (Co-Sound Designer), and Charles Coes (Co-Sound Designer).

For the 2018-19 season, Berkeley Rep recognizes the continued commitment and support 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 individual season sponsors. *The Good Book* is made possible by executive sponsors Kerry Francis and John Jimerson and the Mosse Artistic Development Fund.
ABOUT BERKELEY REP
Berkeley Repertory Theatre has grown from a storefront stage to an international leader in innovative theatre. Known for its ambition, relevance, and excellence, as well as its adventurous audience, the nonprofit has provided a welcoming home for emerging and established artists since 1968. Over 5.5 million people have enjoyed nearly 500 shows at Berkeley Rep, which have gone on to win five Tony Awards, seven Obie Awards, nine Drama Desk Awards, one Grammy Award, and many other honors. Berkeley Rep received the Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre in 1997. Its School of Theatre engages and educates some 20,000 people a year and helps build the audiences of tomorrow with its nationally recognized teen programs. Berkeley Rep’s bustling facilities – which also include the 400-seat Peet’s Theatre, the 600-seat Roda Theatre, and a spacious campus in West Berkeley – are helping revitalize a renowned city. Be a Rep. Learn more at berkeleyrep.org.

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