FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ACCLAIMED MUSICAL EVENT HERSHEY FELDER AS IRVING BERLIN COMES TO AUDIENCES LIVE FROM FLORENCE, ITALY

The one-time-only live-stream production to benefit Berkeley Rep and TheatreWorks

April 27, 2020 — The story and music of America’s Composer comes to you live in the comfort of your own home when Berkeley Repertory Theatre presents a live broadcast of Hershey Felder as Irving Berlin, a play-with-music written and performed by award-winning actor and musician Hershey Felder (George Gershwin Alone, Hershey Felder as Leonard Bernstein in Maestro). Directed by Trevor Hay, Hershey Felder as Irving Berlin will stream on Vimeo on Mother’s Day, Sunday, May 10, 2020 — 5PM PST — a portion of the proceeds benefit Berkeley Rep. The Theatre is proud to partner with fellow Bay Area theatre, TheatreWorks who is also providing access to this one-time only broadcast.

Berkeley Rep originally presented Hershey Felder as Irving Berlin to sold-out houses in 2017, where audiences experienced some of America’s greatest songs in the context in which they were written: “God Bless America,” “There’s No Business Like Show Business,” “Puttin’ on the Ritz,” “White Christmas,” “Always,” and others.

Tickets are $50 per household and can be purchased here: https://tickets.berkeleyrep.org/15545/15546

Patrons can view Hershey Felder as Irving Berlin on their Smart TV, computer, smartphone, or tablet. Purchasers will receive an email on Friday, May 8 by 9pm with a Vimeo viewing link and an instructive video demonstration for viewing on their device.

Hershey Felder as Irving Berlin has previously played to rave reviews and broken box office records at Los Angeles’ Geffen Playhouse, Chicago’s Royal George Theatre, the La Jolla Playhouse, Boston’s Majestic Theatre, and New York’s Town Hall. David C. Nichols of The Los Angeles Times wrote “that indefatigable purveyor of composers, Hershey Felder, applies his singular blend of musical biography, character study and piano virtuosity toward the iconic songwriter. The empathy, showmanship and craft on tap may just be the best match of historical figure and performing artist yet.” Chris Jones, writing in The Chicago Tribune, raved, “Felder is the impresario whose relationship with audiences is long-standing, intimate and mutually adoring.”

Internationally acclaimed virtuoso pianist Hershey Felder wowed Berkeley Rep audiences in recent seasons with his soaring portraits of composers like Bernstein, Chopin, and Gershwin. From Czarist Russia to New York’s Lower East Side, Irving Berlin’s story epitomizes the American Dream. Featuring the composer’s most popular and enduring songs, Felder’s signature creation of character and musical performance will make this evening with Irving Berlin an unforgettable journey.

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HERSHEY FELDER (Irving Berlin/Playwright) Named to Time Magazine’s 2016 Top 10 Plays and Musicals, Hershey Felder has played over 5,000 performances of his self-created solo productions at some of the world’s most prestigious theatres and has broken box office records consistently. American Theatre Magazine has said, “Hershey Felder is in a category all his own.” His shows include: George Gershwin Alone (Broadway’s Helen Hayes Theatre, West End’s Duchess Theatre); Monsieur Chopin; Beethoven; Maestro (Leonard Bernstein); Franz Liszt in Musik, Lincoln: An American Story, Hershey Felder as Irving Berlin, Our Great Tchaikovsky, and
A Paris Love Story. His compositions and recordings 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; and An American Story for Actor and Orchestra. Hershey is the adaptor, director and designer for the internationally performed play-with-music The Pianist of Willesden Lane with Steinway artist Mona Golabek; producer and designer for the musical Louis and Keely: ‘Live’ at the Sahara, directed by Taylor Hackford; and writer and director for Flying Solo, featuring opera legend Nathan Gunn. Upcoming projects include Anna and Sergei, a new play featuring the music of Sergei Rachmaninoff; as well as a new musical based on the award-winning book Out on a Ledge by Eva Libitzky. Hershey has operated a full-service production company since 2001. He has been a scholar-in-residence at Harvard University’s Department of Music and is married to Kim Campbell, the first female Prime Minister of Canada.

TREVOR HAY (Director/Scenic Co-Design) Directed the world premieres of An American Story for Actor and Orchestra, Abe Lincoln’s Piano, Hershey Felder as Franz Liszt in Musik, A Paris Love Story, and Our Great Tchaikovsky. He is Associate Director for Mona Golabek’s The Pianist of Willesden Lane. Former member of the historic Old Globe Theatre in San Diego where, at the age of nine, his first position was selling Old Globe memorabilia. Over the next 32 years, Mr. Hay went on to various aspects of production on more than 80 presentations, including the Broadway productions of Jack O’Brien’s Damn Yankees, How The Grinch Stole Christmas, and Twyla Tharp’s The Times They Are A-Changin’. Included in his 23 seasons at the Old Globe were eleven seasons of the Summer Shakespeare Festival Repertory, as well as work on Tracy Letts’ August: Osage County, directed by Sam Gold, and Hershey Felder’s George Gershwin Alone, Monsieur Chopin and Maestro Bernstein.

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 six Tony Awards, seven Obie Awards, nine Drama Desk Awards, one Grammy Award, one Pulitzer Prize, and many other honors. Berkeley Rep received the Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre in 1997. To formalize, enhance, and expand the processes by which Berkeley Rep makes theatre, The Ground Floor: Berkeley Rep’s Center for the Creation and Development of New Work was launched in 2012. The Berkeley Rep 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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