For Immediate Release

BERKELEY REP OPENS 2019-20 SEASON WITH THE AMERICAN PREMIERE OF THE GREAT WAVE
Obie Award winner Mark Wing-Davey to direct

July 31, 2019 – Berkeley Repertory Theatre today announced the cast and creative team for the American premiere of The Great Wave written by Francis Turnly and directed by Mark Wing-Davey.

In a Japanese coastal town in 1979, teenage sisters Hanako and Reiko run onto the beach during a tremendous storm on a dare. Hanako is tragically swept out to sea, while Reiko survives – but recalls seeing three mysterious men on the shoreline. The authorities determine that Hanako has drowned, but her mother insists that her missing daughter is still alive. Spanning over 20 years and the two vastly different countries of Japan and North Korea, The Great Wave by Francis Turnly is at once a riveting geopolitical thriller and a powerful story of the unshakable bonds between a mother, a daughter, and a sister who refuse to give up hope.

“Berkeley Rep has long been championing playwrights like Francis Turnly who offer us access to stories and worlds that aren’t often explored onstage,” says Artistic Director Johanna Pfaelzer. “The Great Wave illuminates a gripping story of international intrigue told through an intensely personal lens. Seeing it is like experiencing a propulsive page-turner, which I find rare in the theatre.”

The Great Wave begins previews on Thursday, September 12 and runs through Sunday, October 27. Individual tickets begin at $30 ($15 if you’re under 35) and can be purchased online at berkeleyrep.org or by phone at 510 647-2949 beginning Thursday, August 8, 2019. Subscription tickets are available now. Press night for the first show of the new season will be on Thursday, September 19.

Francis Turnly (Playwright) Francis is a playwright and screenwriter. He was a winner of a Channel 4 playwright bursary in 2015 and as a result was Writer in Residence at the Tricycle Theatre which culminated in him winning the Catherine Johnson Best Play Award in 2016. His play, The Great Wave, was co-produced by the National Theatre and the Tricycle in 2018. He is developing several projects for screen, including a feature film with Element Films/Film4 and has TV commissions with Balloon, Brightstar, and Bryncoed. Francis is Japanese/Northern Irish and is often inspired by stories from both countries.

Mark Wing-Davey (Director) Mark first came to prominence in the United States in 1992 with his celebrated production of Caryl Churchill’s Mad Forest at New York Theatre Workshop. Since then he has worked extensively in New York for Labyrinth Theater Company, Lincoln Center, Manhattan Theatre Club, Playwrights Horizons, and The Public Theater/New York Shakespeare Festival. The Great Wave is his sixth show at Berkeley Rep: after Mad Forest made its West Coast premiere here, he also staged The Beaux’ Stratagem, The Life of Galileo, the world premiere of Naomi Iizuka’s 36 Views, and Pericles, Prince of Tyre. He directed an acclaimed Angels in America at American Conservatory Theater, and directed Sarah Ruhl’s Passion Play at the Goodman, at Yale Rep, and most recently for Epic Theater Ensemble. His other credits include productions of new and classic plays at theatres across the U.S., as well as shows at the Edinburgh Festival, London’s National and Royal Court Theatres, and musicals in the West End and Australia. He is an Arts Professor at New York University’s Tisch School of the Arts.
and Chair of its Graduate Acting Program. He will be directing *The Vagrant Trilogy* by Mona Mansour at The Public Theater in spring 2020.

**CAST**

**Julian Cihi** (Tetsuo) Julian is making his Berkeley Rep debut. He was born and raised in Tokyo, Japan before moving to the U.S. to attend Brown University (BA) and later NYU Tisch Grad Acting (MFA). Theatre credits include *Doctor Zhivago* (Broadway), *Romeo and Juliet* (Classic Stage Company), *A Month in the Country* (Williamstown Theatre Festival), and *Wild Goose Dreams* (La Jolla Playhouse). Julian has also performed in several musicals in Japan, including *Rent* and a musical adaptation of *As You Like It*, all in Japanese. He most recently appeared in the second season of Amazon Prime’s original TV series *The Tick* as a villain named Edgelord.

**Yurié Collins** (Reiko) Yurié is honored to lend voice to the untold stories of people from her home country. Born and raised in Wakayama Japan, Yurié is currently based in New York City. She has appeared on stage with the Flea Theatre, 600 Highwaymen, Witness Immersive, and on screen for TV shows such as *Bull* (CBS), *Gotham* (FOX), and *Orange Is the New Black* (Netflix). Yurié also organizes with social and climate justice groups, and is passionate about combining acting and activism.

**Stephen Hu** (Kum-Chol) Stephen is thrilled to be returning to the Bay Area with his Berkeley Rep debut. New York credits include *F.O.B.* (Sheen Center) and *Puzzle the Will* (Davenport Theatre). Select regional credits include *Hamlet* (Repertory Theatre of St. Louis), *Macbeth* (Theatrlicum Botanicum), *Ching Chong Chinaman* (Artists at Play), and *Othello, Much Ado About Nothing, Measure for Measure, and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* (The Old Globe). His last appearance in the Bay was for *Vietgone* at American Conservatory Theater, for which he received the Best Featured Actor SF Theatre Critics Circle Award. He was recently seen on TV in *The Good Fight*. MFA, The Old Globe/USD.

**Cindy Im** (Jung Sun/Soldier Two) Cindy’s credits include *Vietgone, The Orphan of Zhao, Stuck Elevator* (American Conservatory Theater); *Hannah and the Dread Gazebo*, *Julius Caesar, Great Expectations, The Winter’s Tale* (Oregon Shakespeare Festival); *Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley* (Marin Theatre Company); *The Orphan of Zhao* (La Jolla Playhouse); *The World of Extreme Happiness* (Manhattan Theatre Club); *Twelfth Night* (Cal Shakes); *The World of Extreme Happiness* (Goodman Theatre); *Measure for Measure* (Seattle Shakespeare Company); and *11 Septembre 2001* (Theatre Dijon Bourgogne/REDCAT). Film/television credits include *Manifest* (NBC) and *Tigertail* (Netflix). Cindy is a TCG Fox Acting Fellow, RHE Foundation Fellow, and holds an MFA in Acting from CalArts.

**Paul Juhn** (Official) Paul last appeared at Berkeley Rep in 2007 in *after the quake*. Theatre credits include *Henry VI* (National Asian American Theatre Company); the world premiere of *Hannah and the Dread Gazebo, Merry Wives of Windsor, The Winter’s Tale, Secret Love in Peach Blossom Land, Antony and Cleopatra* (Oregon Shakespeare Festival); *Good Person of Szechwan* (The Public Theater); *Sides: The Fear Is Real* (Ma-Yi Theater); *White Chocolate* (The Culture Project). Film and TV credits include *Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt, Quantico, Salt, The Americans, 30 Rock, Person of Interest, Works of ART*. He is a founding member of both Mr. Miyagi’s Theatre Company and Suffolk Street Films. Paul received his MFA from UCSD.

**Jo Mei** (Hanako) This is Jo’s Berkeley Rep debut. Theatre credits include *We Are Among Us* (City Theatre, Pittsburgh), *Babette’s Feast* (off Broadway/Portland Stage), *Fingersmith* (American Repertory Theater), *World of Extreme Happiness* (Manhattan Theatre Club), *King of Hell’s Palace* (Goodman Theatre), *You for Me for You* (Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company). TV credits include *Crashing* (HBO), *Nicki* (Freeform), *Bones* (Fox), and *The Good Wife* (CBS). Jo stars in and co-wrote the award-winning film *A Picture of You*; other film credits include *Who We Are Now, Adult World, and The Grief of Others*. Jo is a graduate of The Juilliard School’s Drama Division. @jotomato

with George at the Guthrie Theater, Allegiance at The Old Globe, Mikado, Inc at Paper Mill Playhouse.
He has appeared in the films The Great Raid, Dark Metropolis, and Death Note. TV credits include ER, The Young and the Restless, and Deadbeat. He has voiced numerous characters for games, animated features, and TV, including Carmen Sandiego, which has been nominated for this year’s Emmy for best children’s programming.

Grace Chan Ng (Hana) Grace is thrilled to return to the Bay Area for her stage debut at Berkeley Rep, where she previously partook in the Ground Floor summer workshop of F*ck Miss Saigon. Recent regional credits include Dry Land and The Black Rider (Shotgun Players), You for Me for You (Crowded Fire), Hair (Bay Area Musicals), Fiddler on the Roof (Berkeley Playhouse), Life Is a Dream (Cutting Ball Theater), and the world premiere of Where the Mountain Meets the Moon (Bay Area Children’s Theatre), winner of three Theatre Bay Area Awards. Grace is a graduate of San Francisco State University.

Sharon Omi (Etsuko) Sharon is thrilled to be back at the Berkeley Rep. Before leaving for LA many years ago, she performed here in The Good Person of Szechuan, Top Girls at The Eureka Theater Co., Uncle Vanya at American Conservatory Theater, Tea at The Asian American Theater Co., among many others. She has worked at South Coast Repertory, Mark Taper Forum, Ahmanson Theatre, East West Players, Playwright’s Arena, and Odyssey Theatre. Recent TV work includes The Resident, Forever, The First, How to Get Away with Murder, and Criminal Minds. She starred in the indie film Eat with Me for which she won a best actress award from the Out On Film Festival in Atlanta. Los Angeles theatre favorites include And the Soul Shall Dance, Blood Wedding, Innocent When You Dream, and Tales of Clamor.

David Shih (Takeshi/Soldier One) This is Dave’s Berkeley Rep debut. His theatre credits include the National Asian American Theatre Company (NAATCO) productions of Henry VI: Shakespeare’s Trilogy in Two Parts, Awake and Sing!, and [veil widow conspiracy]; KPOP (Ars Nova); Somebody’s Daughter (Second Stage Theater); Tiger Style! (La Jolla Playhouse); Bike America (Ma-Yi Theatre Company); Crane Story (The Playwrights Realm). He has appeared on television in Billions, The Path, City on a Hill, Blindspot, Elementary, Madam Secretary, The Blacklist, and in the films Mr. Sushi, Eighth Grade, The Amazing Spider-Man 2, Saving Face. Dave works with Only Make Believe performing for children in hospitals and care facilities.

CREATIVE TEAM

Chika Shimizu (Scenic Designer) Chika is a New York-based scenic and projection designer. Her design credits include Awake (The Barrow Group), Hunky Boys Go Ding-Dong (Adult Swim Network), Another Dream (world premiere, Tribeca Film Festival), The Winning Side (Epic Theatre Ensemble), The Naturalists (Pond Theatre Company), Vietgone (TheatreSquared), Buyer and Cellar (Bucks County Playhouse), The Caucasian Chalk Circle (Yale Rep, Connecticut Critics Circle Award nomination), Romulus The Great (Yangtze Rep), False Stars (Corkscrew Theater Festival), The Seagull (Access Theater), Twelfth Night; Or, What You Will, The Visit (Yale School of Drama). She is a recipient of Donald and Zorca Oenslager Fellowship Award in Design. MFA in Design from Yale School of Drama. chikashimizu.com

Meg Neville (Costume Designer) Meg’s Berkeley Rep productions include Imaginary Comforts; It Can’t Happen Here; Hand to God; One Man, Two Guvnors; Party People; Macbeth; Pericles; The Intelligent Homosexual’s Guide…; Ghost Light; Eurydice. Regional credits include The Great Leap and Heisenberg at American Conservatory Theater, The Music Man at Arizona Theater Company, Blipte Spirit and The Cocoanuts at the Guthrie Theater, and Taming of the Shrew, Long Day’s Journey Into Night, and The Cocoanuts at Oregon Shakespeare Festival, as well as shows at California Shakespeare Theater, the Magic Theatre, Joe Goode Performance Group, Marin Theatre Company, South Coast Rep, Yale Rep, Hartford Stage, Center Stage Baltimore, Second Stage, Dallas Theater Center, Atlantic Theater Company, BAM, New York Stage and Film. She resides in Marin with her family. megneville.com

Lap Chi Chu (Lighting Designer) Lap has designed Ruined and Emotional Creature at Berkeley Rep. He has also recently designed the world premieres of Lynn Nottage’s Mlima’s Tale and Sarah DeLappe’s The Wolves. His other lighting designs can be seen at Lincoln Center, The Public Theater, New York
Theatre Workshop, Williamstown Theatre Festival, Mark Taper Forum, Geffen Playhouse, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, The Shakespeare Theater. Lap’s awards include the Lucille Lortel, 2018 Obie for Sustained Excellence in Lighting Design, Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle Angstrom Award for Career Achievement in Lighting Design, Ovation Award, and multiple Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Awards. He is also the head of lighting design at California Institute of the Arts. lapchichu.com

Bray Poor (Original Music and Sound Designer) Bray’s Berkeley Rep credits include Dear Elizabeth, Red, Eurydice, For Peter Pan on her 70th birthday, Changes of Heart (as an actor). Broadway: True West, The Glass Menagerie, The Real Thing, In the Next Room (or The Vibrator Play), American Plan. His sound and music have been heard in regional theatres all over the country and Europe. In New York, he has worked in numerous off-Broadway theatres, most recently at Second Stage on Bess Wohl’s Make Believe directed by Michael Greif. He’s been nominated several times for Lucille Lortel and Drama Desk Awards and won Obie Awards for Annie Baker’s John as well as for Sustained Excellence in Sound Design.

Tara Knight (Video Designer) Tara is delighted to be designing at Berkeley Rep for the first time. Previous projection design credits include Hollywood! (Craig Noel Award nomination for Outstanding Projection Design) and A Dram of Drumhicit at La Jolla Playhouse, Amazons and Their Men and Ballast at San Diego’s LGBTQ Diversionary Theater, and The Floating World at the San Diego Art Museum (Emmy Award). Her award-winning short animations and dance films have screened at festivals in New York, Ottawa, Montreal, Mexico City, Rio de Janeiro, Helsinki, London, Amsterdam, Lisbon, Zagreb, Hong Kong, Tokyo, Taipei, and most recently at the Annecy International Animation Festival in France.

For the 2019-20 season, Berkeley Rep recognizes BART, Peet's Coffee, and Wells Fargo, who have generously renewed their commitment as Berkeley Rep's official season sponsors. Berkeley Rep is also delighted to have Bruce Golden and Michelle Mercer, Michael and Sue Steinberg, Jack and Betty Schafer, and The Strauch Kulhanjian Family on board as season sponsors. The Bernard Osher Foundation and Kelli and Steffan Tomlinson.

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.

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