FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEARLY 100 BROADCAST PARTNERS JOIN BERKELEY REPERTORY THEATRE FOR AUDIO BROADCAST OF IT CAN’T HAPPEN HERE

October 6, 2020 — Berkeley Repertory Theatre today has announced that nearly 100 organizations nationwide are onboard to share the free radio play, It Can’t Happen Here. The new audio adaptation will premiere on Tuesday, October 13 at 5pm PST/8pm EST, followed by a live Q&A with the creative team, director Lisa Peterson and co-adaptors Tony Taccone and Bennett S. Cohen. Both segments will remain available on Berkeley Rep’s YouTube channel through Sunday, November 8. In addition, broadcast partner Roundabout Theatre will hold two community conversations to discuss the play and listeners’ responses via Zoom on Sunday, October 25 at 2pm and 5pm PST/8pm EST. Pre-register for the 2pm ET HERE or the 5pm ET HERE.

Written in 1935 during the rise of fascism in Europe, Sinclair Lewis’ darkly satirical novel It Can’t Happen Here follows the ascent of a demagogue who becomes president of the United States by promising to return the country to greatness. In 2016, Berkeley Rep unveiled a new stage play adapted from Lewis’ prescient novel. Now, Berkeley Rep reprises that production, but this time as a radio play in four episodes. The audio drama is offered free to organizations and audiences across the country. The Theatre intends for the project to encourage dialogue and motivate citizens to exercise their civic power and vote.

Broadcast Partners as of 10/06/2020

16th Street Theater (Berwyn, Illinois)
A/C Theatre Company (Phoenix, Arizona)
ACT - A Contemporary Theatre (Seattle, Washington)
Adams State University Theatre (Alamosa, Colorado)
Alley Theatre (Houston, Texas)
American Conservatory Theater (San Francisco, California)
American Stage Theatre Company (St. Petersburg, Florida)
Arden Theatre Company (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania)
Arena Stage (Washington, D.C.)
Aurora Theatre Company (Berkeley, California)
Bag&Baggage Productions (Hillsboro, Oregon)
Bishop Arts Theatre Center (Dallas, Texas)
Brüka Theatre Of The Sierra (Reno, Nevada)
Butler University Theatre (Indianapolis, Indiana)
Capital Repertory Theatre (Albany, New York)
Capital Stage Company (Sacramento, California)
Center Theatre Group (Los Angeles, California)
Central Works (Berkeley, California)
Childsplay (Tempe, Arizona)
Cinnabar Theater (Petaluma, California)
Columbia College Chicago Theatre Department (Chicago, Illinois)
Contra Costa Civic Theatre (El Cerrito, California)
Cornell University Department of Performing and Media Arts (Ithaca, New York)
Cottage Theatre (Cottage Grove, Oregon)
Custom Made Theatre Co. (San Francisco, California)
Edge Effect Theater (Madison, Wisconsin)
Episcopal High School (Baton Rouge, Louisiana)
Everyman Theatre (Baltimore, Maryland)
Festival Playhouse of Kalamazoo College (Kalamazoo, Michigan)
Foothill Theatre Arts (Los Altos, California)
George Street Playhouse (New Brunswick, New Jersey)
Goodman Theatre (Chicago, Illinois)
Griffin Theatre Company (Chicago, Illinois)
Guthrie Theater (Minneapolis, Minnesota)
Hammer Theatre Center at San Jose State University (San Jose, California)
Howard University Department of Theatre Arts (Washington, D.C.)
Huntington Theatre Company (Boston, Massachusetts)
Indiana Repertory Theatre (Indianapolis, Indiana)
International City Theatre (Long Beach, California)
Iowa Stage Theatre Company (Des Moines, Iowa)
Island Shakespeare Festival (Langley, Washington)
Jewel Theatre Company (Santa Cruz, California)
Juneteenth Theatre Justice Project (Berkeley, California)
Kent State University at Stark (North Canton, Ohio)
La Jolla Playhouse (La Jolla, California)
Lisbon Public Library (Lisbon, Iowa)
Main Street Theater (Houston, Texas)
Marbletown Arts Association (Stone Ridge, New York)
Marin Shakespeare Company (San Rafael, California)
Marin Theatre Company (Mill Valley, California)
Merced County Arts Council (Merced, California)
Merced Shakespearefest (Merced, California)
Michigan State University Department of Theatre (East Lansing, Michigan)
Minority Voices Theatre (Eugene, Oregon)
New Conservatory Theatre Center (San Francisco, California)
The New School College of Performing Arts (New York, New York)
Northlight Theatre (Skokie, Illinois)
Notre Dame Film, Television, and Theatre (Notre Dame, Indiana)
The Oasis Theatre Company (Santa Fe, New Mexico)
Oregon Contemporary Theatre (Eugene, Oregon)
Ozark Living Newspaper Theatre Company (Conway, Arkansas)
People's Light (Malvern, Pennsylvania)
Philadelphia Theatre Company (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania)
Phoenix Creative Collective (Merced, CA)
Pittsburgh Public Theater (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania)
Project Big Top (Merced, California)
Red Earth Theatre (Sedona, Arizona)
Remote Theater (Santa Clara, California)
Rivendell Theatre Ensemble (Chicago, Illinois)
Rogue Theater Company (Ashland, Oregon)
Roundabout Theatre Company (New York, New York)
Rutgers University-Newark (Newark, New Jersey)
Saint Cloud State University (Saint Cloud, Minnesota)
San Francisco Shakespeare Festival (San Francisco, California)
Santa Clara University (Santa Clara, California)
Santa Cruz Actors’ Theatre (Santa Cruz, California)
Seattle Repertory Theatre (Seattle, Washington)
Shotgun Players (Berkeley, California)
South Coast Repertory (Costa Mesa, California)
The State Theatre (Modesto, CA)
Stories on Stage (Boulder, Colorado)
Syracuse Stage (Syracuse, New York)
Texas A and M, Commerce (Commerce, Texas)
Theatreworks Colorado Springs (Colorado Springs, Colorado)
TheatreWorks Silicon Valley (Mountain View, California)
Trilogy Theater Group (Rio Vista, California)
University of Oklahoma/Helmerich School of Drama (Norman, Oklahoma)
USC School of Dramatic Arts (Los Angeles, California)
UC Merced (Merced, California)
UC Santa Barbara, Department of Theater and Dance (Santa Barbara, California)
Very Little Theatre (Eugene, Oregon)
The Village Repertory Co. (Charleston, South Carolina)
Water Street Barn (Shelburne Falls, Massachusetts)
We Players (San Francisco, California)
Wellfleet Harbor Actors Theater (Wellfleet, Massachusetts)
Z Space (San Francisco, California)

Creative Team

Tony Taccone (Adaptor) was the Michael Leibert Artistic Director of Berkeley Rep for over 20 years. During Taccone’s tenure as artistic director of Berkeley Rep, the Tony Award-winning nonprofit earned a reputation as an international leader in innovative theatre. In those years, Berkeley Rep presented more than 70 world, American, and West Coast premieres and sent 24 shows to New York, two to London, and one to Hong Kong. Taccone has staged more than 40 plays in Berkeley, including new work from Julia Cho, John Leguizamo, Daniel Handler, Culture Clash, Rinde Eckert, David Edgar, Danny Hoch, Geoff Hoyle, and Itamar Moses. He directed the shows that transferred to London, Continental Divide and Tiny Kushner, and three that landed on Broadway: Bridge & Tunnel, Wishful Drinking, and Latin History for Morons. Prior to working at Berkeley Rep, Taccone served as artistic director of Eureka Theatre, which produced the American premieres of plays by Dario Fo, Caryl Churchill, and David Edgar before focusing on a new generation of American writers. While at the Eureka, Taccone commissioned Tony Kushner’s legendary Angels in America and co-directed its world première. He has collaborated with Kushner on eight plays at Berkeley Rep, including The Intelligent Homosexual’s Guide to Capitalism and Socialism with a Key to the Scriptures. Taccone’s regional credits include Actors Theatre of Louisville, Arena Stage, Center Theatre Group, the Eureka Theatre, the Guthrie Theater, the Huntington Theatre Company, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, The Public Theater, and Seattle Repertory Theatre. As a playwright, he debuted Ghost Light, Rita Moreno: Life Without Makeup, Game On, written with Dan Hoyle, and It Can’t Happen Here, written with Bennett S. Cohen. In 2012, Taccone received the Margo Jones Award for “demonstrating a significant impact, understanding, and affirmation of playwriting, with a commitment to the living theatre.” In 2018 he directed the revival of Angels in America at Berkeley Rep. In 2019 he directed and co-wrote (with John Leguizamo) the world première of Kiss My Aztec! at Berkeley Rep.

Bennett S. Cohen (Adaptor) is a graduate of Yale University’s School of Drama and UC Berkeley. Cohen has worked in theatre, film, and television. His play American Music was chosen to be part of the National Playwrights Conferences at the Eugene O’Neill Theater Center and has had numerous productions. His play Tequila was originally produced by the Eureka Theatre in San Francisco and has been published in West Coast Plays #8. Cohen has written extensively for film and television, working with such companies as Showtime, Paramount Television, Universal Television, and Fox International Productions, among others. He has adapted two novels for the screen, Jack Higgins’ WWII-era thriller Night of the Fox and
Roderick Thorpe’s police drama Rainbow Drive. Most recently, Cohen wrote the feature film The Last Voyage of Zheng He. His book The Zebra Murders, written with Prentice Earl Sanders, is currently being adapted as a limited series by Seith Mann.

**Lisa Peterson** (Director), formerly Berkeley Rep’s associate director, returns to the Theatre, where she directed *Culture Clash (Still) in America, The Good Book* (co-written with Denis O’Hare), *Office Hour, Watch on the Rhine, It Can’t Happen Here, The Madwoman in the Volvo, An Iliad* (also co-written with Denis O’Hare), *Mother Courage, The Fall, and Antony & Cleopatra*. She directed Lauren Yee’s *The Great Leap* at American Conservatory Theatre last year. At Center Theatre Group, she recently directed Lynn Nottage’s *Sweat* as well as Culture Clash’s *Chavez Ravine* (2015 Ovation Award, Best Production), *Palestine, New Mexico, and Water and Power, among other plays*. A two-time Obie Award-winner, she has directed world premieres by Tony Kushner, Beth Henley, Naomi Wallace, Chay Yew, Luis Alfaro, Fernanda Coppol, David Henry Hwang, Stephen Belber, Jose Rivera, Ellen McLaughlin, Marlane Meyer, Philip Kan Gotanda, Lisa Ramirez, John Belluso, Caryl Churchill, Janusz Glowacki, Cheryl West, and many others at theatres including New York Theatre Workshop, The Public Theater, Vineyard Theatre, Manhattan Theatre Club, Primary Stages, Guthrie Theater, Actors Theater of Louisville, Seattle Repertory, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Arena Stage, the Alley, and McCarter Theatre Center. She was associate director at La Jolla Playhouse for three years and resident director at Mark Taper Forum for 10 years. She is currently working on a new version of her musical adaptation of Virginia Woolf’s *The Waves*, music by David Bucknam and Adam Gwon (premiered at NYTW 1990 and New York Stage and Film 2018); *The Song of Rome* with Denis O’Hare, commission for the McCarter Theater; and *The Idea of Order* with composer Todd Almond, commissioned by Berkeley Rep, La Jolla Playhouse, and Seattle Rep.

**Paul James Prendergast** (Sound Designer and Music) was the composer and sound designer on the 2016 production of *It Can’t Happen Here, Roe, Watch on the Rhine*, and *Culture Clash in AmeriCCa* at Berkeley Rep. His Broadway credits include *All the Way* and *The Great Society*. His regional credits include Oregon Shakespeare Festival (25 productions), La Jolla Playhouse, Guthrie Theater, Arena Stage, American Conservatory Theater, American Repertory Theater, Seattle Repertory Theatre, South Coast Repertory, Long Wharf Theatre, PlayMakers Repertory Company, Geffen Playhouse, People’s Light, Hartford Stage, California Shakespeare Theater, Utah Shakespeare Festival, Alley Theatre, Asolo Repertory Theatre, Great Lakes Theater, and Arizona Theatre Company. He is a former ensemble member of Cornerstone Theater Company. His commercial and dance work includes extensive theme park and museum installations and multiple projects with Diavolo Dance Theater. His honors include Grammy and Drama Desk nominations, Broadway World, Ovation, Drama-Logue, Garland, Gregory, Footlight, and Gypsy awards. Paul’s work as a singer/songwriter has appeared in films, on recordings, and in music venues nationwide.

The full cast for *It Can’t Happen Here*, in alphabetical order, includes:

- Elijah Alexander (General Edgeways/Bishop Prang)
- Danforth Comins (Philip Jessup)
- Scott Coopwood (Shad Leduc)
- William Thomas Hodgson (Dr. Fowler Greenhill)
- Anna Ishida (Mary Jessup Greenhill)
- David Kelly (Buzz Windrip)
- Sharon Lockwood (Emma Jessup/Adelaide Tarr Gimmitch)
- Eddie Lopez (David Greenhill/Mr. Dimick)
- Alex Lydon (Julian Falck)
- Tom Nelis (Buck Titus)
- Greta Oglesby (Lorinda Pike)
- Charles Shaw Robinson (Frank Tasbrough/Effingham Swan)
- Gerardo Rodriguez (Karl Pascal)
• Carolina Sanchez (Sissy Jessup)
• Mark Kenneth Smaltz (R.C. Crowley/John Pollkop)
• David Strathairn (Doremus Jessup)

Citizens, campaigners, soldiers, workers, radio voices, announcers, and many others all played by members of the company and Paul James Prendergast.

*It Can’t Happen Here* is made possible thanks to the generous support of sponsors Barbara & Rodgin Cohen and Paul Haahr & Susan Karp. Berkeley Rep also thanks its 2020-21 Season Sponsors: BART, Peet’s Coffee, Bruce Golden & Michelle Mercer, Jack & Betty Schafer, and The Strauch Kulhanjian Family.

**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.

**ABOUT ROUNDABOUT THEATRE COMPANY**
Roundabout Theatre Company celebrates the power of theatre by spotlighting classics from the past, cultivating new works of the present, and educating minds for the future. A not-for-profit company, Roundabout fulfills that mission by producing familiar and lesser-known plays and musicals; discovering and supporting talented playwrights; reducing the barriers that can inhibit theatergoing; collaborating with a diverse team of artists; building educational experiences; and archiving over five decades of production history. Roundabout Theatre Company presents a variety of plays, musicals and new works on its five stages: Broadway’s American Airlines Theatre, Studio 54 and Stephen Sondheim Theatre, and Off-Broadway’s Harold and Miriam Steinberg Center for Theatre, which houses the Laura Pels Theatre and Black Box Theatre. American Airlines is the official airline of Roundabout Theatre Company. Roundabout productions are supported, in part, with public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council, the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Cuomo and the New York State Legislature.

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