FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BERKELEY REP ANNOUNCES ADDITIONAL PROGRAMMING FOR THE REP ON-AIR SERIES
Collaborations with Raúl Esparza, The New Yorker’s Tom Toro, Pulitzer Finalist Eisa Davis, Hershey Felder, and More Come to Life This Fall

Subscription Packages Available For 2021 Season

September 15, 2020—Berkeley Rep’s Artistic Director Johanna Pfaelzer today announced three additional virtual projects for the fall. The season, titled Rep On-Air, will include collaborations with Tony Award nominee Raúl Esparza (Company, Speed-the-Plow, and Taboo), celebrated New Yorker cartoon artist Tom Toro, Pulitzer Finalist Eisa Davis, and Bay Area favorite Hershey Felder. The three projects: Hershey Felder: A Paris Love Story featuring the music of Claude Debussy; The Waves in Quarantine: A Theatrical Experiment in 6 Movements conceived by Raúl Esparza and two-time Obie Award-winning director Lisa Peterson; and a series of location-based stories titled Place/Settings: Berkeley join the previously announced Emma Rice musical, Romantics Anonymous and the radio play, It Can’t Happen Here. All five productions feature the kind of innovative storytelling that speaks not only to our time, but also to the themes of hope, compassion, and connection.

“As we navigate this new virtual world, we are delighted to share the work of artists who are beloved by our audience, as well as to have the opportunity to introduce the Berkeley Rep community to extraordinary new voices,” said Artistic Director Johanna Pfaelzer. “In these isolating days, it is a pleasure and a privilege to be in support of these artists, to share the fruits of their imaginations with our audiences in a variety of formats, and to be in the presence of stories that connect us, even virtually.”

Managing Director Susie Medak will join Johanna Pfaelzer for a live Q&A on Thursday, September 24 at 1PM and 6PM PDT via Berkeley Rep’s Facebook Page on Facebook Live. Questions can be submitted in advance here. The two will discuss virtual programming and the upcoming 2021 season.

Hershey Felder
A Paris Love Story
Featuring the Music of Claude Debussy
Written and Performed by Hershey Felder
Directed by Stefano de’ Carli
Based on the Stage Play Directed by Trevor Hay
Livestream: Sunday, November 22, 5pm PDT; VOD will be available following the broadcast through Sunday, November 29.

Piano Virtuoso and Actor Hershey Felder takes us on his own personal journey to Paris, live from where the story actually takes place as he explores the life and music of Impressionist composer Claude Debussy. In A Paris Love Story, Felder brings to life a visionary who proclaimed nature his religion – creating music of ravishing beauty, color, and compassion, from the sweeping “La mer” to the evocative “Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune” and the mystical “Clair de lune.” Join us live for a journey through the magical City of Light and its music.
The Waves in Quarantine: A Theatrical Experiment in 6 Movements
Conceived by Raúl Esparza and Lisa Peterson
Based on a stage adaptation of Virginia Woolf’s The Waves
Book by Lisa Peterson
Music and lyrics by David Bucknam
Additional music and lyrics by Adam Gwon
Directed by Lisa Peterson
Featuring three-time Tony Award nominee Raúl Esparza, this exploration of Virginia Woolf’s innovative novel The Waves is transformed into a digital experience for our current time. The story follows the lives of six friends from first memory to the end of life, while also tracking the progress of the sun through one glorious day. The Waves in Quarantine incorporates dazzling choral music, passages from the novel itself, real-life situations of actors in quarantine, exquisite visual imagery, and more to create a truly unique work of interdisciplinary art.

Place/Settings: Berkeley
Stories surround us everywhere, whether we can see them or not. Ten writers – including Eisa Davis, Tom Toro, Daniel Handler aka Lemony Snicket, and Adam Mansbach – inspired by events in their own personal histories, take us on an aural adventure to specific locations around Berkeley. Audience members will receive a snail mailed surprise, lifting them out of the virtual realm and inviting them to explore the past hidden beneath the present.

PREVIOUSLY ANNOUNCED REP ON-AIR VIRTUAL PRODUCTIONS

Romantics Anonymous
Live from the Bristol Old Vic
Directed by Emma Rice
Book by Emma Rice
Lyrics by Christopher Dimond
Music by Michael Kooman
Based on the film Les Émotifs Anonymes written by Jean-Pierre Améris and Philippe Blasband
Saturday, September 26, 1pm PT
Emma Rice has delighted audiences with wondrous shows like The Wild Bride and Tristan & Yseult. And now Wise Children (Emma’s new company), Bristol Old Vic, and Plush Theatricals will produce her critically acclaimed musical adaptation of Romantics Anonymous — performed at Bristol Old Vic and broadcast live, direct to audience’s homes nationally and globally.

It Can’t Happen Here
By Tony Taccone and Bennett S. Cohen, adapted from the novel by Sinclair Lewis
Sound Design by Paul James Prendergast
Directed by Lisa Peterson
Tuesday, October 13 at 5PM PT via YouTube
Written in 1935 during the rise of fascism in Europe, Lewis’ darkly satirical 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 adaptation of Lewis’ prescient novel, one week after that production ended, the presidential election roiled our nation. Now, Berkeley Rep reprises that production with the same director, but this time as a radio play in four episodes, just in time for the 2020 presidential election. We’re delighted to welcome back much of the original cast including David Kelly as the candidate Buzz Windrip, and to have Academy Award nominee David Strathairn join us as the liberal protagonist Doremus Jessup. The audio drama is being offered free to organizations across the country. Berkeley Rep intends for the project to encourage dialogue and motivate citizens to exercise their civic power and vote.

In light of the ongoing global pandemic, Berkeley Rep will not reopen for live performances until it is determined to be safe, which the Theatre hopes will be in spring 2021. We will follow guidelines from the state, county, and the City of Berkeley’s Department of Health Services. In the event a production must
PREVIOUSLY ANNOUNCED 2021 SUBSCRIPTION SEASON IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER

_Cambodian Rock Band_ thrilled audiences across the country and off Broadway and now comes to Berkeley Rep! In this darkly funny, electric new play with music, a young woman attempts to piece together her family history and bring a Khmer Rouge war criminal to justice 30 years after her father fled Cambodia. With a live band playing contemporary Dengue Fever hits and classic Cambodian oldies, this thrilling story toggles back and forth in time as father and daughter face the music of the past. San Francisco-born, Steinberg Award-winning playwright _Lauren Yee_ receives her Berkeley Rep debut with _Cambodian Rock Band_, which was developed in our Ground Floor Summer Residency Lab. A Signature Theatre Production.

Berkeley Rep presents the world premiere musical _Goddess_, with a book by award-winning playwright _Jocelyn Bioh_ (School Girls; Or, The African Mean Girls Play), a score by composer _Michael Thurber_, and conceived by director _Saheem Ali_. A young man returns home to the coastal city of Mombasa, Kenya to marry his fiancée and step into his family’s political dynasty. But when he visits _Moto Moto_ — a steamy afro-jazz club and the stomping ground of his youth — he finds himself drawn to a mysterious new singer. Inspired by the myth of Marimba, who created beautiful songs from her heartbreak, _Goddess_ is infused with contemporary romance, ancient magic, and the irresistible vibes of African, jazz, and R&B music.

Three-time Tony Award nominee _Dave Malloy_ (Natasha, Pierre & The Great Comet of 1812) makes his Berkeley Rep debut with his latest off-Broadway hit, _Octet_. Eight internet addicts gather IRL to share their stories via a transcendent score for an a cappella chamber choir and an original libretto inspired by online comment boards, scientific debates, religious texts, and Sufi poetry. More than a takedown of our smartphone addictions, _Octet_ is a sublime and revelatory experience that asks how we can find ways to be truly present with each other. A co-production with Signature Theatre Company. _Octet_ was commissioned and received its world premiere at Signature Theatre Company, where Dave Malloy is resident playwright.

In the world premiere of _the ripple, the wave that carried me home_, commissioned by Berkeley Rep and developed in our Ground Floor, _Christina Anderson_ exquisitely evokes a story about justice, legacy, memory, and the ultimate challenge of forgiveness. Janice’s parents are prominent activists fighting for the integration of public swimming pools in 1960s Kansas. As injustice penetrates the warm bubble of her childhood, Janice grows apart from her family and starts a new life far away. When she receives a call asking her to speak at a ceremony honoring her father, she must decide whether she’s ready to reckon with her political inheritance and a past she has tried to forget. A co-production with Goodman Theatre.

In _Sanctuary City_ two young DREAMers fight like hell to establish a place for themselves in America, the only country they know as home. Pulitzer Prize winner _Martyna Majok_ brings us an urgent story about the power of perseverance, the promise of safety, and the question of who is entitled to pursue life, liberty, and happiness.

Tony Award-winning director _Michael Mayer_ (Spring Awakening, Hedwig and the Angry Inch) blew the roof off Berkeley Rep in 2009 with Green Day’s _American Idiot_. Now he returns with a captivating world premiere musical _Swept Away_, this time featuring a book by Tony Award-winning stage and screen writer _John Logan_ (Red, Broadway’s Moulin Rouge!, Skyfall, Gladiator), and music and lyrics by “America’s biggest roots band” (Rolling Stone) and multiple Grammy Award nominee _The Avett Brothers_. Originally scheduled for our 2019-20 season, _Swept Away_ was necessarily postponed. Berkeley Rep is thrilled that the creative team along with Tony Award-winning actor _John Gallagher, Jr._ and Tony Award nominee actor _Stark Sands_, will all be able to join the world premiere production next spring.

be canceled, patrons will be entitled to a refund. Those renewing or purchasing a Rep 7-Play subscription will receive free access to our virtual programming.
Berkeley Rep welcomes back playwright Charles L. Mee and director Les Waters for Wintertime. Jonathan brings Ariel to his family’s summer house in the winter woods and plans to propose. Then his mother Maria arrives with her lover Francois, and his father Frank shows up with his lover Edmund — and soon nothing goes as planned. This exhilarating rollercoaster of a play whisks us up the peaks of romance, then down to the depths of jealous despair, never letting us forget that love, like life, is always in motion.

Subscribers to Berkeley Rep get the best seats for these shows at the consistently lowest prices. In addition to our classic full season subscription package, Rep 7-Play, Berkeley Rep is introducing two new packages, Rep-Flex and Rep-Passport, to allow more people to enjoy some of the perks of a subscription but in more flexible and affordable combinations. Rep 7-Play guarantees tickets to all seven 2021 season shows plus all of our virtual programming and offers the biggest discounts and the best seats. Rep-Flex guarantees four tickets to be used on any of the seven 2021 season shows, offering the most flexibility and priority booking ahead of the general public. Rep-Passport is an affordable pay-as-you-go package, offering access to one discounted ticket per 2021 season show, and priority booking ahead of the general public. In addition to significant savings over single ticket prices, all Berkeley Rep subscribers receive valuable advantages such as the ability to reschedule performances for free, discounts to Berkeley Rep’s School of Theatre, and more.

Rep 7-Play season ticket packages start as low as $196. Additional subscription discounts for senior citizens, pre-K–12 educators, and patrons under age 35 make the cost of Rep 7-Play packages as low as $122.50. Rep-Flex is $300 for All Access Flex (any performance) or $240 for Weekday Flex (Tue-Fri), and Rep-Passport is $68. Ticket packages are available starting May 28.

For the 2021 season, Berkeley Rep recognizes the generous support of BART and Peet’s Coffee, Berkeley Rep’s official season sponsors. Berkeley Rep is also delighted to have Bruce Golden and Michelle Mercer, Jack and Betty Schafer, and The Strauch Kulhanjian Family on board as season sponsors.

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.