drama and desire

Japanese Paintings from the Floating World 1690–1850

February 15–May 4, 2008

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Image: Collectible of Suggestive Pictures (detail), about late Torii (1745–1796) or early Gion (1798–1887) era, by Hasegawa Shunso (active about 1745–1837). Watercolor, ink, color, gold, and mica on silk. William Struve Bequest Collection. Image courtesy of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

This exhibition is made possible by support from the Bernard Osher Foundation, the Heller and Tonnez Takahashi Charitable Foundation, the Blakemore Foundation, and United Artists. Media sponsors: The Mercury News and siliconvalley.com.

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THE BERKELEY REP MAGAZINE 2007–08 · ISSUE 5
The Berkeley Rep Magazine is published seven times per season.
For local advertising inquiries, please contact Ellen Felker at 510 548-0725 or efelker@berkeleyrep.org.

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CALENDAR
All events are for Wishful Drinking except as indicated

FEBRUARY
8 Previews begin
8 Target® Teen Night, 6:30pm★
12 Docent presentations begin, every Tue and Thu, 7pm
14 night/out, 8pm
15 Tasting: Craft Distillers spirits, 7pm
15 30 Below party, 7pm
16 Tasting: Domaine Carneros sparkling wine, 7pm
19 Press night, 8pm
22 Berkeley Rep Book Club: Postcards from the Edge, 6:30pm
24 Final performance of Taking Over extended run, 7pm
28 Carrie Fisher post-show discussion, 8pm
29 Tasting: Charles Chocolates, 7pm

MARCH
1 Tasting: Pyramid Brewery beer, 7pm
2 Family Series, 11am★
5 Teen Council, 5pm★
6 On the Town: Alvin Ailey♦
7 Page to Stage: Chad Jones interviews Les Waters and playwright Will Eno, 7pm
11 Post-show discussion, 8pm
14 Post-show discussion, 8pm
14 TRAGEDY: a tragedy previews begin, 8pm
14 TRAGEDY Target® Teen Night, 6:30pm★
14 TRAGEDY 30 Below party, 7pm
15 Tasting: Maritime East Restaurant seafood, 7pm
19 TRAGEDY press night
20 TRAGEDY post-show discussion, 8pm
28 Tasting: Raymond Vineyards, 7pm
28 TRAGEDY post-show discussion, 8pm
29 Tasting: Fra’ Mani salumi, 7pm
30 Wishful Drinking final performance, 7pm

★ Berkeley Rep School of Theatre
♦ Berkeley Rep donor event
When I was approached about directing Carrie Fisher’s show, I confess to being more than a little flabbergasted. Like many people, I was introduced to Carrie’s work through the fantastically weird lens of Princess Leia, her marriage to Paul Simon, and the traumatic adventures she so entertainingly presented in *Postcards From the Edge*. Aside from these few voyeuristic experiences, I knew nothing about her, and so I had absolutely no idea if we would have any grounds for conversation about a show that discussed her very different life.

Upon meeting her, I was immediately struck by two things about Carrie: a searing wit and a voracious mind. Her understanding of comic language, and her conscious use of that language as a tool not only to describe the world but to survive it, was disarming and almost disquieting. She was brazenly open about her past, about the legacy of celebrity she inherited subsequently enhanced by the astounding popularity of *Star Wars*. She was equally open about many other aspects of her life, in sickness and in health, for richer or poorer…and all other permutations of that expression. She told me about the wildness of her social escapades and her bouts with alcoholism and mental illness. We spoke about her unique position as a storyteller, about her existing simultaneously in two different worlds: personifying an exotic, famous icon in one; a hard-working comedy writer and mother in the other. She obviously had an amazingly unique experience of life, and her desire to share that experience from a fearlessly honest perspective was one that I found infectiously, overwhelmingly authentic.

This evening you will see Carrie Fisher as simply herself: ribald, smart, honest, and unadorned. You will see her as a performer, yes, but you will be unable to distinguish the performer from the person because there is no difference. That is the unique mark of this particular event. It offers us a chance to peek behind the mask of character, the mythos of Hollywood, and the artifice of celebrity to witness a person who recognizes the suffering, absurdity, and insanity of everything around her and who brazenly chooses to laugh it off. Given the options, she will tell you, it’s her only viable choice.

The gift she is offering is that we get to laugh along with her.

Tony Taccone
Subscribing—a habit to cultivate

BERKELEY REP HAS LONG BOASTED ONE OF THE MOST thoughtful and demanding subscription audiences in the nation. I am now proud to add that their numbers are growing. While many theatres are struggling with declining attendance, declining subscriptions, and an audience that is devoid of young people, Berkeley Rep is charting its own course. Among the faces in the house tonight, you’ll see people who have been attending since our College Avenue days. You’ll also see people who have discovered us more recently. We value our long-time ticket holders and we are thrilled that so many new ones are joining them. Last season alone, over 3,000 new audience members signed on to see at least three plays at Berkeley Rep.

What interests me about these new patrons is that their reasons for making an up-front commitment of time and money are the same reasons people have purchased season tickets to Berkeley Rep for years. Our new subscribers tell us, “If I don’t subscribe, I won’t make the time to attend.” Or, “the subscription prices are tantalizingly good,” and, “by buying a series, I see work that surprises me. Sometimes I like the plays—and sometimes I don’t—but they often give me something to talk about.”

All these reasons are good reasons to sign up for a Berkeley Rep series. But my favorite is the single one that unites all our season ticket holders: they feel Berkeley Rep produces the best productions that can be seen in the Bay Area.

So when your renewal form arrives at your doorstep this month, I hope you’ll respond by signing up for next year’s exciting program. And if you are sitting in the theatre for the first time this season, consider going to our website, checking out the line up for next year, and making 2008/2009 the season in which you start a great new habit.

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Susie Medak
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Month 2008
Volume XXX, No. XXX

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A story to tell
BY JESSICA MODRALL

WHEN A PIECE OF THEATRE FINDS ITS WAY TO THE STAGE, we often say it is the result of a long collaborative process. Yet, while workshops, auditions, rehearsals, sets, and costumes each add a new layer to the work you see on stage, we often forget that—before any of these things can take place—the process of creating a new play begins with a writer who has an idea for a story and the ability to put it on the page.

Berkeley Rep’s commitment to new work is reflected in the shows we select each season and in our 10-year initiative to commission 50 new plays. This commitment is also reflected at the Berkeley Rep School of Theatre, in the curriculum offered in our classrooms and our outreach in the community.

The School of Theatre offers playwriting classes each session. Many adults who attend these writing classes come as beginners, although students can return multiple times to continue developing a project. “Our playwriting class is designed so that people who’ve never tried writing before have the opportunity to get started, while more experienced playwrights can get important feedback to develop their plays,” explains MaryBeth Cavanaugh, the School’s associate director. “The only thing that everyone must share is an enthusiasm to try something new, and a willingness to trust one’s own point of view.”

For teens, play creation is a core component of the Summer Theatre Intensive for middle and high school students. Outreach programs at area high schools — such as Performance Lab and the Playmaking Project — also give students the chance to gain first-hand experience in creating theatre.

Perhaps most relevant to the student experience, the Target® Teen One Acts Festival produces two plays each year that are written, directed, produced, and performed entirely by high-school students. Leslie Ribovich, a graduate of Albany High who now attends Barnard College, saw her play Bookstore performed at last year’s festival. She was struck by the power of seeing her work on stage. “Your words are right there in front of you,” she remembers. “You’re sitting there with everyone else who worked with you on this artistic project, and you’re all watching this story unfold. And then, to feel the people around you respond to the story you created, it’s incredible.”

Often personal experience is a point of entry for the fledgling playwright—or even the aficionado new to theatre. “Asking students to share their own story, to create theatre from their own experience, is a huge component of what we do,” says the School’s director, Rachel Fink. “Whether the work they create is fiction or nonfiction, whether it’s a collaborative process or a solo production, the simple act of writing theatre gives students of all ages the chance to express themselves in a new way.”

The Berkeley Rep School of Theatre offers classes for all ages and levels. For more information email school@berkeleyrep.org, call 510 647-2972 or visit berkeleyrep.org/school. Spring classes begin April 7; Summer Theatre Intensive begins June 23.
IT’S ONLY FEBRUARY, BUT BEHIND THE SCENES, WE’RE ALREADY CREATING NEXT SEASON. ALTHOUGH WE HAVEN’T FINALIZED OUR PLAY SELECTIONS, WE WANT TO LET YOU KNOW WHICH SHOWS ARE UNDER CONSIDERATION FOR THE 2008-09 SEASON.

If you’re a seven-play Main Season or five-play Full Season subscriber, renewal notices go out this month via email and regular mail.

If you created your own season of three or more plays, don’t worry, we’ll be in touch with you shortly.

Not a current subscriber, and want to enjoy lower ticket prices, better seats, and special benefits like free ticket exchange? Subscriptions for our 2008-09 season go on sale soon. Call the box office now at 510 647-2949 and we’ll be sure to share subscription information with you as soon as it’s available.

We’re looking forward to next season, and hope you are too. Let’s embark on our fifth decade of award-winning theatre together!

Plays under consideration:

**THE ARABIAN NIGHTS**
Created and directed by Mary Zimmerman
*West Coast premiere*

The Tony Award-winning creator of *Argonautika* and *Metamorphoses* may return to Berkeley Rep to burnish another beloved classic with her inimitable style. It’s the story of Scheherazade and the 1,001 nights—where betrayal and anger battle with love and justice on our intimate Thrust Stage.

**JOE TURNER’S COME AND GONE**
*Written by August Wilson*
*Directed by Delroy Lindo*

Acclaimed actor Delroy Lindo may return to Berkeley Rep with the show that earned him a Tony nomination—but this time, he’s directing! August Wilson’s African-American epic promises to be even more moving than Lindo’s last directing challenge, the beautiful *Blue Door*.

**THE LIEUTENANT OF INISHMORE**
*By Martin McDonagh*

Last season, *The Pillowman* was an audience and critical favorite that sold out its extended run. We had such a good time with this deliciously gruesome script that we’re eager to bring

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★★★★ *SF Chronicle* Top 100 Restaurants Hall of Fame

*Gourmet Magazine* 1995
McDonagh back. Dark humor, vibrantly vicious characters, and deft plot turns may return to our stage, as part of our Limited Season.

THE VIBRATOR PLAY
By Sarah Ruhl
Directed by Les Waters
Three seasons ago, Associate Artistic Director Les Waters created a stunning production of Sarah Ruhl’s *Eurydice* which Berkeley Rep audiences held to their hearts. The play went on to New York, where *Time* magazine recognized it as one of the nation’s top 10 shows for 2007. Now, MacArthur “Genius” Ruhl and Obie Award-winner Waters team up for another exploration of love and longing in the world premiere of a play commissioned by Berkeley Rep.

YELLOWJACKETS
Written by Itamar Moses
Directed by Tony Taccone
Nationally-known playwright Itamar Moses returns to his hometown with the world premiere of a script set in the halls of his *alma mater*, Berkeley High School. Artistic Director Tony Taccone directs a searing examination of race and class that makes us examine our familiar surroundings with fresh eyes.

These are five shows we’re considering for our seven-play season. We’ll continue to keep you informed. Want to be among the first to know our plans for next year? Click berkeleyrep.org and sign up for email today!
The care and feeding of actors
Raising a glass to Christopher Jenkins

BY MEGAN WYGANT

Each Friday evening, Berkeley Rep staff gathers at the local watering hole for happy hour—a chance for everyone to unwind, trade stories from the week, and catch up with coworkers from other departments. The event is the brainchild of Berkeley Rep’s company manager, Christopher Jenkins.

Christopher is the Theatre’s self-appointed morale officer, and he presides over the event with the seasoned grace of someone who has spent his life making strangers feel at home. Recently, however, just as the party was hitting its stride, Christopher’s cell phone buzzed. He glanced at it and headed for the door.

“Gotta go,” he said. “An actor’s garbage disposal is overflowing.”

As company manager, Christopher is responsible not just for morale, but for organizing the logistics of what he describes as “all things actor.” Since Berkeley Rep is required by various unions to provide housing for actors, directors, designers, and stage managers who live more than 50 miles from the Theatre, “all things actor” covers quite a lot.

For the company members under Christopher’s care, taking a job at Berkeley Rep really means moving to the Bay Area for three months. On a basic level, Christopher arranges transportation, appropriate apartments, and the mundane details of moving so that our artists can do the job they were brought here to do. Of course, that means if an actor’s garbage disposal breaks down at 5:30 on a Friday night, Christopher’s still on the job—happy hour or no.

He jokes that he’s the company cruise director. “You make everyone happy, and facilitate the actors getting their basic needs met,” Christopher explains, “but each person requires a different level of care.” It runs the gamut: he claims the Theatre hires few divas, but alludes to actors from several seasons back who required constant hand-holding. Conversely, there are actors from earlier this season who he remembers fondly, even though he can’t quite remember their names— because “we picked them up at the airport and never heard from them until they needed to ship their stuff home.” The trick, he says, is learning how to read people and understand what they expect, because “no one wants to feel like they’re being a problem—or a diva. The
goal is to arrange everything without anyone ever having to ask.”

Christopher has an advantage here which is unusual for people in his position: he came to Berkeley Rep with several years of experience as an independent producer, so he often negotiates the contract too. He finds this early interaction offers great insight into how each artist thinks and what they feel is important—which comes in handy once they arrive at the Theatre.

That extra insight, perhaps, is a large part of why Christopher enjoys his work. “I started out as an actor, as I think everyone does when they get into theatre,” he explains. “Then I realized, ‘I really want to dictate where everyone stands,’ so I got into directing. And when I was directing, I started to think ‘You know, I really think that poster could be done better.’ That’s when I figured out that I should produce, because then I would get to control everything. Company management is a little like producing without the risk—it’s making things happen, taking care of people, and finding the deal that’s good for us and them.”

There is, however, a drawback to having a personal relationship with a show’s cast: “You can’t just watch the show,” he says. “Every time an actor onstage does anything that looks even a little bit dangerous, your heart starts to pound, because you care, and you want them to be safe. And if you know something’s wrong—for example, if you took someone to the doctor for a sore throat earlier that week—you find yourself watching them more closely, trying to gauge how they’re feeling and what’s going on. It gives you a completely different perspective on the show.”

And even at 5:30 on a Friday night, it’s a perspective that Christopher wouldn’t trade for any other in the world. So, next time you find yourself at a happy hour, raise a glass for Christopher—he might not be at his.
Off-Broadway class act comes to Berkeley Rep

Don’t get left behind when No Child... comes to Berkeley in May

As the breakout hit of New York’s 2007 theatre season, No Child... graduated with top honors, including the Obie Award for distinguished performance, the Lucille Lortel Award for best solo production, and Outer Critics Circle Award for best new American play. Now, Berkeley Rep is thrilled to announce that creator and performer Nilaja Sun will bring her incredible solo show to Berkeley Rep this May.

With No Child..., Nilaja Sun shines a light on the struggles—and miracles—of America’s public schools. In a stunning performance, she plays an entire classroom of children, their teachers, their parents, the principal, the janitor, and even a security guard with a metal detector at the front door. Sun takes on 17 roles in 70 minutes, transforming her eight-year adventure as a teaching artist into a master class on heartbreak, humor, and hope. No Child... proves one passionate person can still make a difference.

Tickets are now on sale for this spectacular play, which is not part of any subscription package. Discounts are available for Berkeley Rep subscribers who purchase tickets by March 1st, as well as teachers, seniors, and anyone under 30. Call the box office at 510 647-2949 or click berkeleyrep.org to reserve your seats today.

It’s a class act—don’t let No Child... leave you behind.

"Like Lily Tomlin and Whoopi Goldberg in their early work, Sun brings us not her world but the world... An object lesson in what should not be missing from any life curriculum: hope.”

—THE NEW YORKER

In New York, this Sun shone brightly at awards ceremonies—and she received top marks from New York critics, too. Here’s what a few of them had to say.

“A marvelous performance... touching and funny.” — New York Times

“Theatrically riveting... It’s enough to make the angels weep to watch this caring, committed performance artist recreate her experiences at notoriously bad-news schools... Every kid deserves a teacher like Nilaja Sun.” — Variety

“A couple seasons back, Sarah Jones burst onto the off-Broadway scene with Bridge & Tunnel and raised the proverbial bar for solo shows. Now, with the sensational No Child..., Nilaja Sun has pretty much obliterated it.”

— Entertainment Weekly

“An unexpected, superb achievement. No Child... is about the difference a single human being can make in the kingdom of the damned. No child left behind? Not while Nilaja Sun is around.” — New York Observer

“Sun doesn’t just shine, she blazes... If you’re seeking a follow-up to Sarah Jones’ brilliant Bridge & Tunnel, this is it... a bravura crowd-pleaser.”

— New York Newsday

“Virtuosic... intelligent, clear-eyed, and sometimes painfully funny.”

— Boston Globe
Raymond Vineyards celebrates five years with Berkeley Rep

As Berkeley Rep celebrates its 40th birthday, the Theatre also celebrates its five-year partnership with Raymond Vineyards, the Theatre’s preferred purveyor of wine.

“Fine wine and great art are a natural mix, and we feel that Berkeley Rep is the perfect fit,” says Krisi Raymond, the winery’s director of strategic planning. “The audiences here are savvy, and there’s a nice diversity in ages, economics, and interests—all of which work really well for Raymond. The Theatre is a national leader for developing new work and contributing to the canon of American drama. We’re excited and proud to support that.”

The winery donates over 140 cases of wine annually to Berkeley Rep, which patrons enjoy at opening night, 30 Below, night/out, and other events. It also contributes wine for the Narsai Toast, the gourmet gala and wine auction that is the Theatre’s largest fundraiser each year.

“Raymond really makes us look good,” says Managing Director Susie Medak. “For every event Berkeley Rep hosts, the winery is there to help us make the evening special with their great wines. We’re so very grateful for their support.”

During the run of Wishful Drinking, Raymond Vineyards will participate in Berkeley Rep’s new tasting series, where local culinary artisans come to the Theatre an hour before the performance on select dates to offer samples of their premium products. The winery will be at the Theatre on March 28 starting at 7pm to provide samples and talk to that evening’s audience about the qualities they should seek in a fine wine.

Did you miss the winery at the Theatre? Raymond wants to celebrate with Berkeley Rep patrons by inviting them to visit their Napa home. Click raymondvineyards.com for hours and directions, and drop by. Be sure to mention Berkeley Rep in the tasting room to receive a complimentary wine tasting.
They say that religion is the opiate of the masses; well, I just took masses of opiates religiously.
Carrie Fisher was born under the watchful gaze of the public eye, the child of two of the 1950s’ brightest stars: Eddie Fisher, teen idol and superstar crooner-cum-actor, and Debbie Reynolds, tap-dance queen and movie icon. Entering the world in the spotlight kickstarted her life in high gear, a life that prominently features the proverbial sex, drugs, and rock-and-roll with large helpings of therapy, panic attacks, and bipolar disorder thrown in to balance things out—or unbalance them as the case may be. What follows is a glimpse of her wry yet probing perspective on life—excerpts from Wishful Drinking that didn’t make it into tonight’s performance and our favorite Carrie Fisher-isms from Postcards from the Edge.

---

ON FAMILY AND UPBRINGING

FROM WISHFUL DRINKING
When I was really young, I saw the word fuck written on the handball court and I asked my mother what it meant and she said, “I’ll have to tell you later when I can draw you pictures.” And, you know, later never came and I think pictures would have come in handy. There’s also a story in my family that my grandmother married my grandfather at 15 so she could have her own room. He was much older than she was, and when she got to the wedding night no one had told her about sex—my great-grandmother had just left that out of the proceedings. So my grandmother refused to believe that this was what you had to do, and my grandfather had to spend three days drawing pictures. And no one in my family can actually draw, so those are a set of pictures I’d like to see. I’ve never drawn my daughter any pictures that I can recall, although we’ll have to wait for her book.

FROM WISHFUL DRINKING
They’re not just high-class problems, they’re nosebleed high, so you’re known as a poor little rich girl. And nobody wants to be that person, no one wants to be that person who grew up in a privileged existence that’s caught complaining about it. How unattractive is that? And I hope that no one feels that I’m complaining about anything. Any of the difficulties I’ve had in large part come from my choices, and my chemistry, and the consequences of that. It has nothing to do with my upbringing. Or, not a lot. Nature vs. nurture. My brother had the same upbringing and he’s not manic-depressive, not an alcoholic… he’s just religious. That’s a comfort to him (although you could argue that drugs were a comfort to me). They say that religion is the opiate of the masses; well, I just took masses of opiates religiously.

FROM POSTCARDS FROM THE EDGE
It was always like that .... You did a film for a few months and you got a family. An intimate family with its own dynamic, its own in-jokes, its own likes, dislikes, and romances. The intensity of it was heightened by the knowledge that it was all temporary. Not only did you know that it would end, but, give or take a week or two, you knew when. What you didn’t know was how the whole thing would turn out. It could be good entertainment, it could be bad. It could succeed, it could fail. It was mining for celluloid gold.

---

CARRIE’S BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENT FOR HER DAUGHTER BILLIE:
Someone’s summered in my stomach
Someone’s fallen through my legs
To make an infant omelet
Simply scramble sperm and eggs.
**ON RELATIONSHIPS**

**FROM POSTCARDS**
She thought he looked like an old boy—someone who should wear a backpack instead of carrying a briefcase, but a very high-style backpack. She realized with dismay that this was her type of guy. She always ended up with guys like this, in relationships she likened to being partners on a school science fair project. She always felt like calling them up afterward and saying, “You left your beaker and your petri dish here. Do you want me to bring it to class tomorrow?”

**FROM POSTCARDS**
She was one of those unfortunate women who did not find nice men interesting. She’d learned her lesson after him. She found undesirables desirable. She sought out unpleasant boyfriends, then complained about them as though the government had allocated them to her.

**FROM POSTCARDS**
The fact that she was quite pretty—and that, on some level, she even knew it—made it all the more bizarre when she opened her mouth and Phyllis Diller came out.

**FROM POSTCARDS**
She wanted to walk up to couples in the street and find out what their relationships were, as if that would somehow help her determine how hers was going. One Thursday she spent the entire afternoon in the Bodhi Tree bookstore. She discovered two things: you should communicate openly with your partner, and red meat is bad for everything, including relationships.

**FROM POSTCARDS**
There was a period early on, when she knew for certain he liked her a lot, that was decidedly unpleasant. Suddenly, everything he did annoyed her, everything he did after liking her. He held his head too still. He walked like a burglar. He touched his hair a lot, and he chewed too much gum. It was prissy to be so smart, he wasn’t that smart, why was he that smart? Who was he, anyway? Why had he been available? Who had put him up to this? The Russians? That was it. The Russians had trained him to impersonate a great guy on a date in order to penetrate Hollywood through Suzanne Vale. Well, she could see through their game. Did they think she was a fool? Maybe they should try being apart for a while. Maybe they should see other people. Maybe there was someone better.

**FROM POSTCARDS**
I envy people who have the capacity to sit with another human being and find them endlessly interesting. I would rather watch TV. Of course, this eventually becomes known to the other person.

“**She discovered two things: you should communicate openly with your partner, and red meat is bad for everything, including relationships.**”

**ON LOSING IT**

**FROM WISHFUL DRINKING**
So, I took a movie in Australia—it was a terrible movie but I took it ’cause it was in Australia. I went down there and I went off the lithium. I went to all these health doctors and they put me on, like, holistic lithium. Oh, that went well. And if I had ever been manic-depressive before, now I was whewwwww, really wild. I called my brother because I wanted him to go with me to China because China was very near to Australia. That was how my logic was going. So my brother met me in Singapore, then we went to Hong Kong, and then we went into China, and I was as nutty as fruitcake. So we go to the Great Wall and the Great Wall has two parts: one is somewhere you can walk and the other side is not. The guide says to us, “Go up on the right side, that’s where all the tourists go.” So in my keen bipolar thinking, I thought, “In Disneyland at The Matterhorn we enter on the left line, it’s much faster. The Matterhorn is much better, faster, on the left line so we’re gonna go up the left part of the Great Wall of China.” That is some beautiful manic logic right there. Going up the left side was like walking up a wall. Quite literally. And in my purse I had Christmas carols playing, and we went up the wall of China singing. My brother was filming the whole trip and I thought I was riveting at every step. But I kept thinking, “Why would anyone want to be with me, blah blah blah.” And then there was a huge incident at customs. Oh, it was a blast.

**FROM POSTCARDS**
She was in full-tilt panic, but she tried to look like she couldn’t imagine doing anything more relaxing than standing alone at a table next to something that looked like pink whipped cream but was probably salmon mousse and picking cashews out of a bowl of nuts in a room full of celebrities in Bel Air.

“**And then there was a huge incident at customs. Oh, it was a blast.**”
There are many downsides to being so ridiculously open. For one thing, it screws up your love life. Because you see how I’m talking to you incredibly intimately, and making myself so available to you? Well, I can do that with almost anybody, so what am I reserving exclusively for my primary relationship if I’m so intimate with everyone else? It’s inevitable that at a certain point the guy I’m with is going to feel cheated, like he’s just part of the crowd for whom I put on my Carrie Fisher talk show, or rather my never-shut-up show.

It’s almost as though if I’m not conveying myself to someone I cease to exist. If I can convince you of what I am, then you’ll give me back myself in a way that I can stomach. Plato said the unexamined life is not worth living, but the overexamined life is difficult to bear. I once wrote, “The flies are collecting on all my inspecting.” Knowledge is power, and I’ve tried so hard to learn everything I can about myself so that you can’t figure it out first. It’s a method of control. If I come in and say, “I know I’m 5 pounds overweight,” you don’t get to notice it. I own it, it’s mine, and maybe by my saying it, it matters less.

Remember what it was like when you’d be getting ready to jump rope, and two people were turning it, and you were waiting for exactly the right moment to jump in? I feel like that all the time.

Show business, Suzanne thought, as this man she had just met—this man she would probably know fairly intimately by the end of the week—played with her hair. It’s all about distraction, a way of being transported out of your life, of having someone else’s life for a while. Identifying with them. Feeling relief that their predicament isn’t yours, or feeling relief that it is. A way of dreaming outside your head. Tilting your head with the actors when they kiss, thinking, “It’s so real.”

Portraying reality had become her way of experiencing it. She knew how to act like a regular person. She was self-consciously unselfconscious. She didn’t mind being watched, but on some level she minded being recorded. It was as if she became an African native the moment the cameras started rolling, and felt her soul being robbed. If the natives were right about this, Suzanne figured her soul level was unacceptably low right now.

On her way to the bathroom she passed two women in their late twenties, who were standing by the phones and talking about how they could never live in L.A. because the nice weather all the time would annoy them. “I like seasons,” one of them said. When Suzanne came out they were still there, talking now about a mutual acquaintance of theirs. “I heard she blew Don Johnson,” said the woman who liked seasons.

She had read in Vogue that there was an operation that made your lips big like Nastassja Kinski’s. Unfortunately, it involved taking skin from your vagina and moving it to your mouth. Suzanne couldn’t quite bring herself to do this, fearing that it would ruin kissing for her. Still, it rolled around in her head for weeks as a vague possibility.

Sid said that drugs weren’t the problem, life was the problem. Drugs were the solution. I think Sid has a crush on me. He gets me up in the morning by coming into my room and holding my feet until I’m totally awake. I like having my feet held, even if it is by Sid.

She wanted so to be tranquil, to be someone who took walks in the late-afternoon sun, listening to the birds and crickets and feeling the whole world breathe. Instead, she lived in her head like a madwoman locked in a tower, hearing the wind howling through her hair and waiting for someone to come and rescue her from feeling things so deeply that her bones burned. She had plenty of evidence that she had a good life. She just couldn’t feel the life she had. It was as though she had cancer of the perspective.

“At a certain point the guy I’m with is going to feel cheated, like he’s just part of the crowd for whom I put on my Carrie Fisher talk show, or rather my never-shut-up show.”
"Will Eno is a Samuel Beckett for the Jon Stewart generation," proclaims the New York Times, calling his off-Broadway hit Thom Pain (based on nothing), an "acidly funny meditation on the indelible sorrows of life." Now Berkeley Rep presents the American premiere of Eno’s satire on the media, TRAGEDY: a tragedy. The sun—despite its shining record—has finally set. Reporters descend in a flurry of absurd questions and incoherent commentary, while the governor hysterically urges calm. As with his sold-out runs of The Glass Menagerie and The Pillowman, director Les Waters wryly mines the humor and heartache of TRAGEDY.
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CREATED AND PERFORMED BY
CARRIE FISHER

DIRECTED BY
TONY TACCONE

FEBRUARY 8 – MARCH 30
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The world premiere of Wishful Drinking was presented at the Geffen Playhouse, Los Angeles, 2006
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PROFILES

Carrie Fisher
Creater & Performer

Carrie Fisher has been a compelling force in the film industry since her feature film debut opposite Warren Beatty in the 1975 hit Shampoo. The daughter of Eddie Fisher and Debbie Reynolds, she became a cultural icon when she played Princess Leia in the original Star Wars trilogy. Her star-studded career includes roles in countless films such as Austin Powers, The Blues Brothers, The Burbs, Charlie’s Angels, Garbo Talks, Hannah and her Sisters, Jay and Silent Bob Strike Back, The Man with One Red Shoe, Scream 3, This Is My Life, When Harry Met Sally, and Wonderland. Her next films, Fanboys, White Lightnin’, and the remake of The Women, will be released this year. In 1987, Fisher’s book, Postcards from the Edge, leapt onto the New York Times’ bestseller list and netted her the Los Angeles Pen Award for Best First Novel. Three more bestsellers followed: Delusions of Grandma, Surrender the Pink, and The Best Awful. Fisher turned Postcards into a screenplay for the hit starring Shirley MacLaine and Meryl Streep, and is currently adapting The Best Awful for HBO with producers Bruce Cohen and Dan Jinks. Her writing has also appeared in Details, Harper’s Bazaar, the New York Times, Travel @ Leisure, Vogue, and many other major publications. Fisher hosted her own show on the Oxygen network, Conversations from the Edge. Her television credits range all the way from Laverne and Shirley to Sex in the City, with recent appearances on popular programs such as 30 Rock and Weeds. Her experiences with addiction and bipolar disorder — and her willingness to speak honestly about them — have made her a sought after speaker and respected advocate for these communities.

Tony Taccone
Director

Tony Taccone is in his 11th year as artistic director of Berkeley Rep, where he has staged more than 35 shows, including the world premieres of The Convict’s Return, Culture Clash in America, Culture Clash’s Zorro in Hell The First 100 Years, Geni(u)s, Ravenshead, Taking Over, and Virgin Molly. He commissioned Tony Kushner’s renowned Angels in America, codirected its world premiere at the Mark Taper Forum, and has collaborated with Kushner on six projects. Their latest piece, Brundibar, featured designs by beloved children’s author Maurice Sendak. It debuted at Berkeley Rep and then traveled to New Haven and New York, where it sold out its run and was nominated for two Drama Desk Awards. Tony recently made his Broadway debut with Bridge @ Tunnel, which was universally lauded by the critics and won a Tony Award for its star, Sarah Jones. He also staged the show’s record-breaking off-Broadway run, workshopped it for Broadway at Berkeley Rep, and directed Sarah’s previous hit, Surface Transit. In 2004, his production of David Edgar’s Continental Divide transferred to the Barbican in London after playing the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Berkeley Rep, La Jolla Playhouse, and England’s Birmingham Rep. His other regional credits include Actors Theatre of Louisville, Arizona Repertory Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse, San Jose Repertory Theatre, Seattle Repertory Theatre, and San Francisco’s Eureka Theatre, where he served six years as artistic director.

Alexander V. Nichols
Scenic, Lighting & Video Designer

Alexander V. Nichols returns to Berkeley Rep, having most recently provided the lighting and video design for Taking Over. Other Berkeley Rep designs include Continental Divide, Culture Clash in America, Fêtes de la Nuit, Mother Courage, Surface Transit, and Zorro in Hell, among others. He has also worked at American Conservatory Theater, Alley Theatre, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Arena Stage, Baltimore Center Stage, Boston Ballet, California Shakespeare Theatre, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, Huntington Theatre Company, the Kronos Quartet, National Theater of Taiwan, odc/SF, the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, the Paul Dresher Ensemble, Royal Winnipeg Ballet, San Francisco Ballet, as well as on projects with Rinde Eckert. Alexander has served as resident designer for the Hartford Ballet, Margaret Jenkins Dance Company, and Pennsylvania Ballet, and has been the lighting director for American Ballet Theater. His dance credits include designs for choreographers Christopher d’Amboise, Ann Carlson, Val Caniparoli, Jean Grand-Maitre, Bill T. Jones, Mark Morris, Mikko Nissinen, Kevin O’Day, Kirk Peterson, Stephen Petronio, Dwight Rhoden, Michael Smuin, and Brenda Way.

Christina Wright
Costume Designer

Christina Wright was born in Los Angeles, and studied post-modern theatre and criticism at Occidental College. She has designed costumes for the world premiere of Philip Glass and Robert Wilson’s Monsters of Grace, international productions of Bill Viola’s Memory and Quintet of the Astonished, and most recently, for Culture Clash’s The Birds at the Getty Villa and James Joyce’s The Dead at Open Fist Theatre Company. Christina’s other favorite productions include Jodi Long’s Surfing DNA at East/West Players, Jan Munroe’s Notes: On Performance at Wallenboyd Theatre, David Schweizer’s Transformations, and The Mystery of Irma Vep and Rocky Horror Picture Show at the Tiffany Theatre. For the past eight years, Christina has also designed and created the East Bay Specialists

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Nicole Dickerson
STAGE MANAGER
Nicole Dickerson returns to Berkeley Rep, having served as stage manager for 9 Parts of Desire, and assistant stage manager for The Guys and Master Class. Her most recent Bay Area project was a.c.t.’s production of A Christmas Carol. Other local credits include 8010, The Hopper Collection, and 3F, 4F at Magic Theatre; Colossus of Rhodes, For the Pleasure of Seeing Her Again, and The Little Foxes at a.c.t.; Displaced and Frozen at Marin Theatre Company; and King Lear, Man and Superman, and The Merchant of Venice at Cal Shakes. She also recently served as the lighting supervisor and stage manager for the US tour of Stories by Tobias Wolff with Word for Word, and assistant stage manager and production coordinator for Word for Word’s Tour de France 2004—2006 in Paris.

Susie Medak
MANAGING DIRECTOR
Susie has served as Berkeley Rep’s managing director since 1990, leading the administration and operations of the Theatre. She is president of the League of Resident Theatres (LORT) and recently completed two terms on the board of Theatre Communications Group (TCG), where she served three years as treasurer. Susie has served extensively with the National Endowment for the Arts’ Theatre Program panel, as well as on NEA panels in three other areas: Overview, Prescreening, and Creation and Presentation. She has chaired panels for both the Preservation and Heritage and the Education and Access programs, also serving as an onsite reporter for many years. In addition, she led two theatre panels for the Massachusetts Arts Council. Closer to home, Susie is a commissioner of the Downtown Business Improvement District, former vice president of the Downtown Berkeley Association, and the founding chair of the Berkeley Arts in Education Steering Committee for Berkeley Unified School District and the Berkeley Cultural Trust. A proud member of the Mont Blanc Ladies’ Literary Guild and Trekking Society, Susie lives in Berkeley with her husband and son.

Les Waters
ASSOCIATE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
Les is in his fifth year as associate artistic director of Berkeley Rep, where he has staged Eurydice, Fêtes de la Nuit, Finn in the Underworld, The Glass Menagerie, Heartbreak House, The Mystery of Irma Vep, The Pillowman, Suddenly Last Summer, To the Lighthouse, and Yellowman. He won an Obie Award for Big Love, directing its premiere at the Humana Festival and subsequent runs at Berkeley Rep, Brooklyn

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Academy of Music, the Goodman, and Long Wharf Theatre. In addition to Big Love, his New York credits include the Connelly Theatre, Manhattan Theatre Club, The Public Theater, Second Stage Theatre, and Signature Theatre Company. Elsewhere in America, he has directed for a.c.t., the Goodman Theatre, Guthrie Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse, Steppenwolf Theatre Company, and Yale Repertory Theatre. In his native England, Waters has staged work with the Bristol Old Vic, Hampstead Theatre Club, Joint Stock Theatre Group, National Theatre, Royal Court Theatre, and Traverse Theatre Club. He has a long history of working collaboratively with prominent playwrights like Caryl Churchill and Charles Mee, and champions important new voices, such as Jordan Harrison, Sarah Ruhl, and Anne Washburn. Waters is an associate artist of The Civilians, a New York-based theatre group, and former head of the MFA directing program at UC San Diego. His many honors include a Drama-Logue Award, an Edinburgh Fringe First Award, and several awards from critics’ circles in the Bay Area, Connecticut, and Tokyo.

Jonathan Reinis
CO-PRODUCER

Jonathan Reinis is the producer of over 150 plays, musicals, and dance performances including the Tony Award-winning Broadway productions of Dame Edna and Russell Simmons’s Def Poetry Jam; the Tony-nominated Bill Maher: Victory Begins at Home, and It Ain’t Nothin’ But the Blues, and Kiki and Herb: Alive on Broadway; as well as How The Grinch Stole Christmas: The Musical and Jerry Springer: The Opera starring Harvey Keitel at Carnegie Hall. Off Broadway, he was the producer for Shay Duffin as Brendan Behan, Marga Gomez’ Los Big Names, Josh Kornbluth’s Love is Taxes, and Room Service. Jonathan built and operated San Francisco’s Theatre on the Square from 1981 until 2002. His other local credits include the national tours of Dirty Blonde, Forever Tango, Gross Indecency: The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde, Guys and Dolls, The Piano Lesson, Eve Ensler’s The Vagina Monologues, the world premiere of John Leguizamo’s Freak, Steve Martin’s Picasso at the Lapin Agile, Sam Shepard’s The Late Henry Moss (with Woody Harrelson, Cheech Marin, Nick Nolte, and Sean Penn). He is a member of the Broadway League and ATPAM.

Bill Falik & Diana Cohen
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS

Bill Falik and Diana Cohen have been subscribers and supporters of Berkeley Rep since its earliest days on College Avenue. Diana served on the Theatre’s board of trustees for 10 years starting in 1991; Bill began a term on the board in 2006. As a family therapist, Diana worked in private practice for 25 years before retiring to focus on her painting, and is currently a member of Cal Performances’ board of trustees. Bill has been a real estate and land use lawyer practicing in the San Francisco Bay area for the past 35 years. He is currently the CEO of Live Oak Enterprises and Westpark Community Builders, which creates
master-planned communities in the greater Sacramento region. Bill is also currently a visiting professor at Boalt Hall School of Law. In addition to his service on Berkeley Rep’s board, he is actively involved in philanthropic activities throughout Northern California.

**John & Helen Meyer**
**EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS**

John and Helen Meyer have been Berkeley Rep subscribers for over 25 years. They own and operate Meyer Sound, a Berkeley-based company that designs and manufactures professional audio equipment and provides electro-acoustical architectural services. Meyer Sound employs over 350 people in their offices in Berkeley, Nashville, Canada, Germany, Mexico, and Australia. Helen Meyer has served on the Berkeley Rep board of trustees for the past 10 years. She also serves on the board of Mark Morris Dance Group and the Alameda County Workforce Investment Board. John Meyer, a fellow of the Audio Engineering Society, was recently awarded the Silver Award for outstanding technical contributions to his field and is also the recipient of an R&D 100 Award for measurement technology. The Meyers are delighted to play a part in outstanding theatre here at Berkeley Rep.

**Richard A. Rubin & H. Marcia Smolens**
**EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS**

Richard A. Rubin and H. Marcia Smolens are long-time theatre and musical arts supporters. A lawyer by training, Richard heads a San Francisco public affairs management firm. He is a member of the State Bar Board of Governors, a trustee of Kenyon College, and was recently appointed to the California Workforce Investment Board by the Governor. He is currently a visiting professor at USF’s Fromm Institute, where he teaches a course on presidential and congressional campaigns. He writes a monthly column on political issues for the Marin Independent Journal. Marcia heads a prominent government relations and lobbying firm in San Francisco and is a baseball and jazz enthusiast. She serves on the board of directors of both the Exploratorium and the Metta Fund. The couple resides in Marin County, and Richard’s five daughters fill out the supporting cast.

**The Strauch Kulhanjian Family**
**EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS**

Roger Strauch is a former president of Berkeley Rep’s board of trustees. He is chairman of the Roda Group (rodagroup.com), a venture development company based in Berkeley, best-known for launching Ask.com and PolyServe. Roger is on the board of directors for Game Ready, Ink2, and Sightspeed, all located in the East Bay. He is also a member of the Engineering Dean’s College Advisory Boards of Cornell University and UC Berkeley. He is an executive member of the board of trustees for the Mathematical Sciences Research Institute in Berkeley and co-founded the William Saroyan Program in Armenian Studies at UC Berkeley. His wife,
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Julie A. Kulhanjian, an attending physician at Oakland Children’s Hospital. They have three children.

Len & Barbara Rand
PRODUCERS
Len and Barbara Rand are avid theatre-goers and devoted supporters of Berkeley Rep. Len recently joined the Theatre's board of trustees. They are both thrilled to be involved with this production of *Wishful Drinking*.

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- Dry-erase “year at a glance” wall calendar

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As artists, actors are often encouraged to “wear your heart on your sleeve.” But what about wearing your art—on your sleeve, chest, or back? We’ve created a bunch of new Berkeley Rep gear so you can proudly show your support of the theatre you love. And on these pages, Berkeley Rep staff and friends strut their stuff in their stylin’ new outfits. Want some for yourself? Drop by the Berkeley Rep gift shop, located downstairs in the LECG lobby, and check it out.

1 Murray Komaromi, development mascot, models a stylish yet practical “Bark”-eley Rep dog vest. $21

2 Emily Fleisher, patron services manager, soaks up the sun in her clapping hands cap sleeve women’s tee. $22.

3 Facilities Manager Christopher Dawe stays cool in a clapping hands ballcap and Berkeley Rep track jacket. $20 and $44.

4 School of Theatre Administrator Jessica Modrall shows her love for the planet and “locally grown theatre” with an organic cotton shopping tote. $15. Former Theatre intern Kelli Jew stays close to her roots in a Berkeley Rep track jacket. $44.

5 Kate Gorman, production management intern, and Brandon Ballog, graphics intern, show off an essential part of the intern costume: clapping hands hoodies. $42.50.
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For more information on becoming a member, visit our website at berkeleyrep.org or contact Lynn Eve Komaromi, Director of Development, Annual Fund, at 510 647-2903 or lynneve@berkeleyrep.org.

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Retaining the core values upon which this company was founded 40 years ago requires the long-term commitment of our supporters. The following acknowledges Berkeley Repertory Theatre's active endowment funds. We are grateful for the generous support that these individuals and institutions have provided in ensuring the long-term vitality of our artistic programming and helping build the next generation of theatre talent and audiences.

THE MOSSIE FOUNDATION ARTISTIC DEVELOPMENT FUND

Created with a grant from the Mossie Foundation for the Arts and Education, this fund benefits artistic risk-taking and new play development. (Pictured: Roger Strauch, former Berkeley Rep trustee and Mossie Foundation for the Arts and Education president)

BRET C. HARTE YOUNG DIRECTORS FUND

Created in honor of Brett C. Harte, a passionate young theatre director and Berkeley Rep employee; benefits the artistic administration/directing internship. The following acknowledges donors whose contributions were received from August – December 2007. Find out more at brechtartefund.org.

THE DAVE ELLIOTT FUND

Created in honor of Dale Elliott, a former Berkeley Rep actor, the fund in his name benefits artistic initiatives.

For more information on these funds or to make a donation towards these funds, please contact Sara Fousekis, Director of Development, Campaign at 510 647-2902 or email sfousekis@berkeleyrep.org.
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Berkeley Repertory Theatre, now in its 40th season, is the recipient of the 1997 Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre. Founded in 1968 as the East Bay's first resident professional theatre, Berkeley Rep has established a national reputation for the quality of its productions and the innovation of its programming. Berkeley Rep's bold choice of material and vivid style of production reflect a commitment to diversity, excitement, and quality. The company is especially well known for its fresh adaptations of seldom-seen classics, as well as its presentation of important new dramatic voices. Berkeley Rep has attracted internationally acclaimed theatre artists such as Moisés Kaufman, Tony Kushner, Rita Moreno, Maurice Sendak, Anna Deavere Smith, Tadashi Suzuki, George C. Wolfe, and Mary Zimmerman, and has produced numerous world premieres of plays by renowned playwrights.

What does it mean to be a not-for-profit theatre?
At the most fundamental level, it means that 100 percent of the dollars Berkeley Rep receives are directed back into supporting the work. It also means that the Theatre is “owned” by the community, governed by a board of trustees, and exists to serve that community through its plays, educational programs, and outreach initiatives. Roughly 50 percent of Berkeley Rep's costs are covered by ticket sales, while the remaining 50 percent must be raised through contributions from individuals, corporations, foundations, and grants from government agencies. Berkeley Rep belongs to you, and needs your involvement. Volunteer. Donate what time you can. Contribute what you can afford. Continue to attend performances. Berkeley Rep is your theatre. Your participation and support are needed to create an outstanding theatre experience for all audiences.

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Emergency exits
Please note the nearest exit. In an emergency, walk—do not run—to the nearest exit.

Accessibility
Both theatres offer wheelchair seating and special services for those with vision- or hearing-impairment. Infrared listening devices are available at no charge in both theatre lobbies. Audio descriptions are available in the box office and require an advance reservation of two business days.

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Only subscribers may exchange their tickets for the same production. Exchanges can be made online until midnight (or 7pm by phone) the day preceding the scheduled performance. Exchanges are made on a seat-available basis.

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Call 510 647-2972 for information about discounted preschool and K–12 educator subscriptions, $10 student matinee tickets, classroom visits and teaching artist residencies, teacher training workshops, post-show discussions, teacher study guides, backstage tours, and more.

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Our store, located in the LECC lobby of the Roda Theatre, is open one hour before curtain, during intermission and after the show.

Considerations

Please keep perfume to a minimum
Many patrons are sensitive to the use of perfumes and other scents.

Beepers / phones / recordings
Please make sure your pager, cell phone, or watch alarm will not beep. Doctors may check pagers with the house manager and give seat location for messages. Use of recording equipment or taking of photographs in the theatre is strictly prohibited.

Please do not touch the set or props
You are welcome to take a closer look at the set, but please don’t step onto the stage. Some of the props can be fragile, and are placed in exact positions for the actors.

No children under seven
Many Berkeley Rep productions are unsuitable for children. Please inquire before bringing children to the Theatre.

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*No Thursday matinees for Limited Engagement shows

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Half-price advance tickets for anyone under the age of 30 for all shows, based on availability. Proof of age required.

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Tickets are just $10 each. Call the Berkeley Rep School of Theatre at 510 647-2972.

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