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Admin: 510 647-2900
School of Theatre: 510 647-2972
Click berkeleyrep.org
Email info@berkeleyrep.org

CALENDAR
Unless otherwise noted, all pre- and post-show events are for Girlfriend.
Docent presentations take place one hour before each Tuesday and Thursday performance for the run of the show.

APRIL
9  Teen One-Acts Festival, 8pm ●
9  First preview, 8pm ●
9  30 Below post-show party, 8pm ●
10  Teen One-Acts Festival, 8pm ●
14  Concerning Strange Devices from the Distant West final performance, 7pm ●
14  Opening-night dinner, 6pm, Bistro Liaison ●
14  Opening night, 8pm ●
15  night/OUT post-show party, 8pm ●
15  Post-show discussion, 8pm ●
15  Teen Night, 6:30pm ●
16  Tasting: Ale Industries, 7pm ●
17  Tasting: Artesa Vineyards & Winery, 7pm ●
18  Tasting: Ale Industries, 6pm ●
20  American Idiot opens on Broadway ●
20  ONSTAGE! gala, 5:30pm ●
24  Tasting: Artesa Vineyards & Winery, 7pm ●
24  Tasting: Berkeley Farmers’ Market, 6pm ●
25  Tasting: Artesa Vineyards & Winery, 7pm ●
25  Student matinee, noon ●
29  Tasting: Artesa Vineyards & Winery, 7pm ●

MAY
1  Tasting: Meridian, 7pm ●
2  Tasting: Artesa Vineyards & Winery, 6pm ●
5  Teen Council meeting, 5pm ●
9  Final performance, 7pm ●
13  Corporate Night: A Feast for the Senses ●
14  In The Wake Teen Night, 6:30pm ●
14  In The Wake first preview, 8pm ●
19  In The Wake opening-night dinner, 6pm, FIVE ●
19  In The Wake opening night, 8pm ●
20  In The Wake night/OUT post-show party, 8pm ●
I think humanity can be divided into two distinct categories: those who hated high school and those who loved it. (If you derived even mild pleasure from the experience, you fall into the latter group.) I hated it. At least that’s how I like to remember it. Spent most of my time feeling astonishingly weird, even in what should have been the most comfortable of circumstances. I was pretty sure that everyone was looking right through me, that my skin was not actually skin but some kind of translucent surface designed to give onlookers the best possible view of my quivering self. And what self were they looking at? There wasn’t much of a self there, as far as I could tell.

But there were things that could save me, even on the darkest of days. My friends, for one. Or this really tight pair of pants that I wore with a pair of really pointy shoes. And music. Always the music. Music that spoke to my secret self, a self that was fantastic and brilliant and irresistible. If only the world knew what the music was telling me. If only I had the courage to act on the music. Like a zillion other teenagers on the planet, I sat in my room playing music—some albums over and over again, some songs on an endless loop. I played music not just because I loved it, but because my life depended on it.

Girlfriend is a story that captures the eternal and impossible yearning of the adolescent heart. Two high school boys try to come to terms with their feelings for each other. At stake are their identities, their relationships with their families, and their futures. Set to the rock music of Matthew Sweet (whose 1991 album of the same name was the inspiration for the story by Todd Almond), the play is an attempt to capture the sweetness that is buried within every teenage heart. It is a story without guile, without irony, without pretension. How oddly refreshing.

The intrepid Les Waters is at the helm again, wielding his directorial magic with a trusty team of sure-handed designers and two gifted young actors. It was Les’ inspiration to back the boys on stage with an all-girl band, giving the audience a full complement of interpretive choices. Because at the end of the play, it’s all about the choices. The ones you made or didn’t make. And the music you were listening to when you made them.

Enjoy.

Tony Taccone
Announcing the new season

WE ARE PROUD TO SHARE WITH YOU THE AMBITIOUS, ENTERTAINING shows chosen for Berkeley Rep's next season. You'll find the welcome return of favorites like Rita Moreno, Sarah Ruhl, and Mike Daisey as well as fantastic artists like Lemony Snicket, Lynn Nottage, and Rinne Groff making their Berkeley Rep debuts.

Compulsion

Written by Rinne Groff
Directed by Oskar Eustis
Co-production with Yale Repertory Theatre and The Public Theatre
Main Season · Thrust Stage
World-premiere production
September 10–October 24, 2010

Sid Silver is obsessed. When he learns about a young girl named Anne Frank and her extraordinary diary, he makes it his mission to ensure her tale is heard. But is the manuscript a work of art? A cultural treasure? Once publishers and producers get involved, it becomes “a very valuable product”—and Silver’s good intentions prove to be his undoing. Acclaimed director Oskar Eustis returns to the Bay Area with Rinne Groff’s Compulsion, a kaleidoscopic collision of history and culture inspired by the life of Meyer Levin and commissioned by Berkeley Rep. A moving story that combines stellar acting with marvel-ous marionettes, this world-premiere production takes us on a journey from passion to Compulsion.

The Great Game: Afghanistan

Directed by Nicolas Kent and Indhu Rubasingham
Limited Season · Roda Theatre
West Coast premiere
October 22–November 7, 2010

Whether you know it or not, you’re part of The Great Game. A sweeping cycle of short scripts by 12 top playwrights, this unprecedented show explores Afghanistan over the last 150 years. Direct from London, where it debuted to rave reviews, The Great Game makes its West Coast premiere at Berkeley Rep. It’s a captivating collection of stories performed by Britain’s finest actors. Presented in three parts—on different days or in one impassioned marathon—The Great Game explores the eternal struggle to control Central Asia. It’s an emotional event that illuminates the complex culture of Afghanistan. See one part as part of your subscription or see them all. Get your tickets for The Game!

Lemony Snicket’s The Composer is Dead

Written by Lemony Snicket
Music by Nathaniel Stookey
Directed by Tony Taccone
Main Season · Roda Theatre
World premiere
November 26, 2010–January 9, 2011

The show must go on? But the actor is mute, the director is crying, the dancer is lazy—and the composer is dead! This holiday season, Berkeley Rep presents a deliciously silly world premiere from beloved Bay Area artists. The Composer is Dead features text by bestselling author Lemony Snicket and a score by (living) composer Nathaniel Stookey. Tony Taccone’s raucous production unleashes laughs through classic clowning and plenty of uppity puppets from the pioneering Phantom Limb Company. When Geoff Hoyle pops up as an outlandish inspector bent on solving a murderous riddle, the show crescendos into comic absurdity.

The Agony and the Ecstasy of Steve Jobs

in repertory with
The Last Cargo Cult

Written and performed by Mike Daisey
Directed by Jean-Michele Gregory
Main Season · Thrust Stage
January 14–February 27, 2011

The New York Times dubbed Mike Daisey “the master storyteller” and “one of the finest solo performers of his generation.” Now he returns to Berkeley Rep in an incredible doubleheader: two provocative new monologues that examine our obsession with commerce. In The Agony and the Ecstasy of Steve Jobs, Daisey dives into the epic story of a real-life Willy Wonka whose personal obsessions profoundly affect our everyday lives—and follows the trail to China where millions toil in factories to create iPhones and iPods. With The Last Cargo Cult, Daisey travels to a remote island in the South Pacific whose inhabitants actually worship America and its goods. He observes their rituals as the world’s financial system collapses, spurring a soul-searching assessment of what money means and who is paying the price. With his wry eye and eccentric intellect, Daisey delivers two adventure stories—presented on different days—that cut deep with hilarious social critique.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE
Ruined
Written by Lynn Nottage
Directed by Liesl Tommy
Coproduced with the Huntington Theatre Company and La Jolla Playhouse
Main Season · Roda Theatre
February 25–April 10, 2011

Berkeley Rep proudly brings you Ruined, winner of the Pulitzer Prize. This powerful new play provides a bleak yet beautiful look at the lives of women in a land ruled by whiskey and bayonets. As civil war ravages the Congo, the lucky ones find a home—and a regular meal—in a ramshackle building that serves as both brothel and refuge. Mama Nadi protects her girls with rough compassion, even as she profits from their bodies. This celebrated script from Lynn Nottage tells an intense and important tale filled with humanity, hope, and unexpected humor. When Mama talks, you better listen.

The Three Sisters
Written by Anton Chekhov
English translation by Sarah Ruhl
Directed by Les Waters
Main Season · Thrust Stage
West Coast premiere
April 8–May 22, 2011

Audiences and critics on both coasts embraced Eurydice and In the Next Room (or the vibrator play), two shows steeped in longing from playwright Sarah Ruhl and director Les Waters. Now this talented team turns its attention to a fresh translation of a masterpiece. The Three Sisters by Anton Chekhov depicts an entire village of unlucky lovers struggling with the bittersweet distance between reality and dreams. Ruhl enlivens this classic with the same elegant understanding of intimacy that infused those earlier collaborations, while Waters and a cast of 14 deliver another sumptuous production. Discover the humor and heartbreak of one of the world’s great plays, told anew through the lyricism of two leading voices in contemporary theatre.

A New Show for Rita Moreno
Written by Tony Taccone
Directed by David Galligan
Limited Season · Roda Theatre
World premiere
May 13–June 12, 2011

During her spectacular career, Rita Moreno has portrayed some tough women, from Anita in West Side Story to Maria Callas in Master Class. Now this legendary performer takes on the toughest woman of all—herself. The star of stage and screen returns to Berkeley Rep to tell her tale in an irreverent and entertaining new show that’s full of surprises and songs. Expect another breathtaking performance from the lady who won the Oscar, the Tony, the Grammy, and two Emmys. Artistic Director Tony Taccone makes his debut as a playwright with this touching script. Don’t miss the rollercoaster ride as Rita Moreno takes you through the highs and lows—and solos—of her improbable life.
Playwriting and the power of yes

BY KATIE HENRY

The first and most important thing I learned at the Berkeley Rep School of Theatre was how to say yes. I was 13, awkward, and terrified of what was to be my first real acting experience in the Summer Theatre Intensive. I was onstage during improv class, and my scene partner had just asked me something completely absurd. It was strange and definitely not where I had wanted the scene to go. I froze, and looked to my teacher for support. “Just say yes,” my teacher said. “That’s all you have to do. Say yes.” I didn’t want to say yes. I was embarrassed and scared, and all I wanted was to go home and swear off this bizarre theatre world forever. But instead, for reasons unknown, I took a deep breath, turned to my partner, and said, “Yes.”

It soon became clear to me that “yes” was an underappreciated word in the real world, but around Berkeley Rep that summer, it was the one syllable that kept everything going. Even after the session ended, and I started at Berkeley High, the yeses kept coming. Yes, I would like to join Teen Council. Yes, I would like to go to New York with Teen Council, go to Broadway shows, and meet with theatre professionals and actors. Yes, I would love to go to Berkeley Rep shows at an incredible discount with my closest friends. Those answers were easy.

The first difficult answer came in 2007. For the two years prior, I had entered the Teen One-Acts Festival, and both years I had been turned down. Those first plays—one about Shakespeare, one about evangelical Christians—had been fun to write, but I didn’t mind when they weren’t chosen. I had no real personal connection to them. So when it came time to submit a new play, I was hesitant. I did have a play, but it was a dangerous, dangerous play. On the surface, it was about a group of high-school students who gather in the school basement for a meeting of the “Eccentricity Club,” a kind of support group for the weird, the freaky, and the otherwise Not Totally Normal.

But really, Room 12 was about my own high school experience—the feelings of alienation and self-judgment and just being “different.” If the selection committee rejected this play, I knew that it would hurt more, that it would feel as though they were rejecting my very personal experiences. So with great trepidation, I sent it in.

This time, they said yes.

And throughout the whole rehearsal process, I returned the favor. When my director wanted to try something new, I was open. When my mentor had editing suggestions, I took them. And when the cast asked me if Room 12 was about me, I took a deep breath, and said, “Yes.”

The next year, I entered with something equally personal, a comedy about four friends navigating the college...
Chaplin’s The Gold Rush On-Screen with the San Francisco Symphony
Thu Apr 15  2pm
Fri Apr 16  8pm
Sat Apr 17  2pm
Donato Cabrera conductor
San Francisco Symphony
Chaplin The Gold Rush (1925)
Silent film with live musical accompaniment
Most people know Charlie Chaplin as a comic genius. Few realize he wrote the music for his films. The Gold Rush is the movie for which Chaplin said he would most like to be remembered. In scene after scene—including one in which the Little Hobo transforms a shoe into a feast fit for a king—this 1925 silent film classic virtually defines visual comedy. The San Francisco Symphony plays Chaplin’s original score to accompany a rare screening of The Gold Rush above Davies Symphony Hall’s stage.

Inside Music: an informative talk free to ticketholders, begins one hour prior to concerts.
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My coworkers and I take a collective breath, put on our headsets, and ready ourselves for noon.

The clock ticks on in Berkeley Rep's box office, and the phones begin. On some days the ringing begins slowly, a tinny fugue that will build to crescendo around 12:45—the lunch rush. Other days, the advent of noon is like a gunshot at the beginning of a marathon: the calls barrel forward and don't let up until the phones turn off at 7. We go home with sore throats and weary minds. On rare and glorious days (made the sweeter by their scarcity), the phone rings intermittently and we have time to catch up on filing, one another's love lives (or lack thereof), and the proper way to shoot rubber bands without hurting our fingers in the process.

Though we answer dozens, even hundreds, of phone calls every day, we receive constant reminders that each call represents an individual with his or her own responsibilities, quirks, and sense of humor. In this world of multi-taskers, we get hundreds—hundreds!—of people calling to purchase tickets while driving. That's fine until we come to the obligatory credit card transaction, at which point we're torn between needing to complete the transaction and not wanting our patrons to get in a fiery crash while reading off their card numbers. Some of our phone calls can even be as entertaining and moving as our theatrical programming.

Two years ago, on one of my first days working in the box office, I remember answering a call from an unusually

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Above Box office agent D. Mark Blank assists a patron before an evening performance.
PHOTO BY CHESHIRE ISAACS
combative woman looking for tickets to a sold-out performance of Wishful Drinking. Horrified that my meekly repeated “I’m so sorry, ma’am” and “I completely understand” had no effect on her, I was ready to hang up, change my name to Elana Doesalot, and run away to London to live out the rest of my life as an earnest flower-seller prone to random bouts of song. When my sixth round of apologies was met with sudden silence, I assumed that the cell phone reception gods had smiled down on me and ended our call. As I reached for the “disconnect” button, I heard a strange noise on the other end—a sniffle. I froze. We had not covered this in training. What to do when a subscriber needs to exchange her tickets? Check. Nearby restaurants for pre-show dining? Check. What to do when the person on the other end of the line seems to be having an emotional breakdown? Somehow we’d missed that lesson.

“Ma’am?” I asked. “Ma’am? Is everything all—”

“I was just diagnosed with bipolar disorder. My husband’s leaving me, he’s taking the kids and I, I just...I need to see this play. I know I’m just one of the many, but...I could really use some hope right now.”

I ended up taking her number and finding her tickets to a different day, but what haunts me even two years after that conversation is how easily we could have disconnected without connecting. Though every day in the box office is (thankfully) not so dramatic, the phone calls we receive each represent a window into the lives and hearts of our patrons—from the man who recently shared a hilarious blonde joke with coworker Christina Cone (after which he paused awkwardly and said, “You’re not blonde, are you?”) to the long-time subscriber who sends us a personalized card each time we help him out with a ticket exchange.

Christine Bond, our ticket services director, concurs that one of the best parts of her job is “talking to patrons with whom I’ve developed relationships over the years.” Christine is not only in charge of managing customer relations, but also building a season into the ticketing system. “I divide my time among customer service, managing the staff, and working on the more technical, computer-oriented end of things,” she explains.

Indeed, it’s difficult to get bored in the box office. Even those of us working primarily on the customer-service end of things have learned to explain, finesse, and (hopefully) connect before disconnecting. Because theatre is such a uniquely personal and sometimes therapeutic experience, we have a great deal of respect for the public’s eagerness to experience our plays, and we take the time to get to know our patrons on a personal level. Next time you call in, feel free to introduce yourself. We’re listening.

The Berkeley Rep box office is open from noon to 7pm Tuesdays through Sundays. The staff is happy to connect with you at 510 647-2949.
Musical stages
Decades of music at Berkeley Rep

BY CHAD JONES

AT BERKELEY REP, THE WIND doesn't exactly go sweeping down the plain. And if you happen to hear 76 trombones, that probably means there's a parade on Addison Street.

Since its inception in 1968, Berkeley Rep has opted to produce many more plays than musicals, at least if your definition of a musical is My Fair Lady or The Sound of Music. But from the very beginning, music has been a major presence at the Theatre—often in surprising and inventive ways.

Madeleine Oldham, Berkeley Rep’s literary manager and dramaturg, appreciates the relationship Berkeley Rep has with music on stage. “Our love of music is vast and diverse, and as I see it, we’ve never felt constrained by a particular kind of sound,” she explains. “We’ll feature everything—from modern classical to rock ‘n’ roll to opera to folk—and blend it with our commitment to storytelling to create full, rich theatrical landscapes. I think music is inherently theatrical, and I love that it doesn’t have to sound like a ‘musical’ for us to want to put it on stage.”

Most recently, Berkeley Rep has produced several widely acclaimed rock-oriented shows with Stew and Heidi Rodewald’s Passing Strange and Green Day’s American Idiot, both of which ended up on Broadway. Now, with Matthew Sweet’s seminal album Girlfriend on stage, it might seem Berkeley Rep is in the musical theatre business. But music, in one fashion or another, has been there all along, just never in predictable ways.

Mitzi Sales, Berkeley Rep’s first managing director, recalls that musicals in the early years were an “occasional thing.” In general, she remembers, “Berkeley Rep rarely produced musicals in its first 15 years and never what one could call a well-known American musical.”
Long before *Twilight* took a bite out of its vampire-loving audience, Berkeley Rep produced a popular 1974 show called *Dracula: A Musical Nightmare*, with book and lyrics by Douglas Johnson (who also directed) and music by John Aschenbrenner. Turns out the script not only had teeth, it had legs—and it went on to productions in many cities. Aschenbrenner and Johnson also created the bicentennial musical *Yankee Doodle: A Myth with Music*, which featured Johnny Appleseed, Betsy Ross, and King George III as characters. One critic described it as "a gleeful cross between the Sonny and Cher Show and the live coverage of the SLA shootout in Los Angeles."

Some of the music heard at Berkeley Rep was created specifically for plays. Rock music pulsed through Sam Shepard’s *The Tooth of Crime* in 1985 and Stephen Dietz’s *Painting It Red* in 1987. Folk music could be heard in *Mother Jones* and Woody Guthrie’s *American Song*, and classical opera figured largely in *Don Juan Giovanni*, *Figaro*, and *Brundibar*. Even Celtic music (*Peter and Wendy*), traditional African-American music (*Spunk*, *Polk County*), and jazz (*The Hairy Ape*) has filled Berkeley Rep’s theatres. Among the great musicians who have created music at Berkeley Rep are Max Roach, Joshua Redman, Tan Dun, and Jon Jang.

Mitzi was especially fond of *The Tooth of Crime*, Shepard’s story of a battle between an old-school, Elvis-type rocker and a nihilist punk rocker. The score by Stephen LeGrand was performed on stage by a four-piece band, and as Mitzi remembers, “I would go down and stand in the vom on weekday matinees just to hear the music.”

Longtime subscriber David Rosenthal is a fan of musical theatre (especially of Stephen Sondheim) and has enjoyed the variety of musical offerings at Berkeley Rep through the years. His favorite was Caryl Churchill’s *Serious Money* in 1989, a ferocious satire of high-stakes finances written primarily in rhymed couplets and underscored with music by Stephen LeGrand and Eric Drew Feldman.

“I mentioned to Tony Taccone recently that *Serious Money* was ripe for a revival to show how unsurprising the recent financial crisis was,” David says. “Such a big undertaking with music might be too expensive today. Irony much?”

Berkeley Rep has conducted musical experiments as well, most notably in Virginia Woolf’s *To the Lighthouse*, which featured a sung third act with a score by Paul Dresher, and in Steven Mackey and Rinde Eckert’s *Ravenshead*, a solo opera.

This season happened to feature two very different rock musicals. Who knows how Berkeley Rep will surprise audiences and re-interpret the musical in the future?

“I’ve wondered since I was a kid why there only seemed to be show tunes in the theatre, and why there couldn’t be room for other styles and genres,” Madeleine asks. “Berkeley Rep has answered this question for me by providing that room. Many of our commissioned writers have expressed interest in exploring a musical component in their plays, and I find this very exciting. We are expanding the notion of what a musical can be.”

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**Report**

**It’s Time to Take Center Stage**

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- **Weekend Writer’s Retreat** July 17–18
- **Spanish for Travelers** June 1–July 6

UC Berkeley Extension

[extension.berkeley.edu/humanities](http://extension.berkeley.edu/humanities)
Why producing *Girlfriend* is sweet

By Sarah Nowicki

Guy Tiphane has been a producer at Berkeley Rep since *Tragedy*: A Tragedy in 2008. We talked recently about producing *Girlfriend* and why he remains involved with the Theatre.

What made you interested in producing *Girlfriend*?

Les Waters was the motivating factor, as I’ve produced shows he’s directed in the past and trust his artistic vision. *Girlfriend* is something I didn’t see Berkeley Rep doing. I saw it workshopped at TheatreWorks two years ago, and I kept saying, “I don’t like musicals.” When Berkeley Rep announced it as part of the season, Dramaturg Madeleine Oldham convinced me it’s not really a musical but more like a rock album. Before agreeing to produce, I listened to Matthew Sweet’s album and liked it, so I agreed to put my name on this one.

What do you enjoy about being a producer?

I enjoyed producing *The Lieutenant of Inishmore*. I was able to see it many times from different points of view. Les’ goal was to make the show over the top. I don’t like the sight of blood and the gory details, but the production worked because it was so absurd. I also produced *Tragedy*: A Tragedy. I enjoy being at the design presentations, and I love watching the show from the booth with the stage managers.

You’re bringing a large group to the performance on April 15, which is also night/OUt, a post-performance party for the LGBT community. Why do you keep coming back to Berkeley Rep’s special events?

I really like the opening-night events, with the preshow dinner and the party after the performance. I like the social aspect and the casual environment of these events. I’ve been to other theatres’ events, and they’re just not as much fun. I bring my friends with me, and it is a nice place for us to socialize.

You live in downtown Berkeley. How have you seen the downtown arts community change since you’ve been here?

I’ve lived downtown for three years. It’s been great to see the arts grow. After Freight & Salvage went in, I thought, “Where can I put in my own theatre?” It will be really great when the UC Theatre is renovated into a music venue.

Why do you support Berkeley Rep?

Berkeley Rep sustains the highest quality in every aspect of the production—from stage management to the design teams, even to the front-of-house staff. I know people who work in theatre, and they all look up to Berkeley Rep. Berkeley Rep sets a standard for the theatre community and provides valuable opportunities for people to get involved with productions who may not have done so otherwise.

Supporters at all levels are invited to catch a glimpse of the inner workings of Berkeley Rep.

For your invitation, click berkeleyrep.org/give or call 510 647-2907 and make your gift.
In it for the long haul
This Girlfriend is here to stay

Matthew Sweet’s Girlfriend may not have been a multi-platinum bestseller, but it captured the heart of many a discerning listener. Legions of fans remain fiercely devoted to Sweet’s emotional songwriting and underdog persona. When the album first came out, no one expected it to become the sensation it did. We talked with playwright Todd Almond and other diehard Matthew Sweet fans to find out what’s so special about this unassuming yet captivating collection of songs.

Can you articulate what drew you to the album?
I was unhappily living in Dullsville (Santa Fe), which is where my Dad lives. I hated it and was trying to move back to San Francisco. I was comforted by this music when I would play it while driving, and it would be one of the few things that I enjoyed doing. But this isn’t so much of a “memory” record for me. I can gladly listen to it nowadays and appreciate it on its own terms.

Michelle, usher at the Warfield Theatre

I listened to Girlfriend every day when it came out in the early ’90s. I dubbed copies (on cassette tape, of course) for my friends. I made my family listen to it on long road trips. I’ve bought it, misplaced it, replaced it, loaned it, uploaded it (these days), downloaded it, and gifted it over the years. I wrote a musical about it, for heaven’s sake. Girlfriend is a thing on the planet that I love very much, and this musical is as much a love-letter to that album as it is anything else.

Todd Almond, playwright

If you listen to the album today, what does it make you think of?
I’m listening to it right now, and it makes me think of the girlfriend I just broke up with. These nice little complete and decorated sentiments put that relationship into a bit of perspective. It makes me feel better, actually. Matthew Sweet has a way of pounding my own significance into the ground with backing vocals and searing guitars.

Jonathan, photographer
I didn’t know nobody, then I saw you coming my way

BY MIKE SABLONE

In 1992 (in suburban Massachusetts I wasn’t cutting-edge enough to have noticed that the album came out in 1991), I was 15 years old. My music taste, much like that of most suburban kids in a predominantly white suburb, started with comedy albums (Weird Al, Monty Python) and evolved into mostly rap and hip-hop (Public Enemy, Dr. Dre).

I had skipped bands like, say, the Rolling Stones, the Kinks, Led Zeppelin (I’m not too ashamed to admit that I just Googled their name to make sure I spelled it correctly), or that other band...the Beatles.

So when I first heard “Girlfriend” and “Evangeline” and “Divine Intervention,” it was like someone had plugged in my brain to this astonishing new series of sounds. Melody. Guitars. Drum fills. False endings. Vocal harmonies. I had no idea the history behind the album. All I knew was this record spoke to me.

Hearing the song “Girlfriend,” I finally understood what pop music was there for. It was there for me to understand that I wasn’t alone. It was there to tell me, “Don’t worry, I know you are a ball of terrified emotions right now, but this guy, this guy right here? He’s going to say everything you’re thinking. Everything you’re going to think. Everything that has been thought of before. And it’s all going to be OK.”

Popular music is popular because of this reason. This is why music works—it convinces teenagers that they’re not alone. It allows people to express everything they’re feeling, but in four minutes of perfect melody.

When I got to college two years later I met my best friend by talking to him about this album. We talked about how there was supposedly a college class that examined how perfect this album was. We talked about how pissed off we were that it wasn’t our college that offered this course. We then talked about the radio show we’d co-host for the next four years.

Girlfriend has a special place in my heart, but if I’m forced to say my favorite song it’s “Evangeline.” I remember MTV discussing the song, telling me that it was about a Japanese anime character. I remember trying to find out everything I could about this character. I remember then not caring, and making the song into a song that I wrote about whatever girl I had a hopeless crush on at the time.

You ask if the album still holds up for me? Ask me about the last girl I had a crush on. Ask me if I made her a mix CD. Do you need to ask me if I put “Evangeline” on there? (Well, I might not have, unless I’m feeling bold. I usually wait ‘til the second or third mix CD. You can’t put “Girlfriend” on there—that’s just too obvious, and also? Kinda creepy. But I can kind of, sort of [but not really] get away with “Evangeline.” Note: this could be why I’m still single. I haven’t found the girl who appreciates this song as much as I do.)

I saw Matthew Sweet perform every time he came to Providence while I was in college. I drove down during the summer to see him in, like, 1995. WBRU, the terrible college radio station in Providence was playing “Good” by Better Than Ezra seemingly every five minutes. Driving around post-concert, I swore that if they played it twice while we hung out I’d buy the damn album to get them to stop playing it (the theory being that once I bought the record the radio station wouldn’t need to sell it so relentlessly to me). They, of course, played it four more times in the next 90 minutes. The next day I went and bought the record. I have no idea where that record is. I can still tell you exactly where my copy of Girlfriend is.

And that, ladies and gentlemen, is why I would take a bullet for Matthew Sweet.

Mike Sablone is a dramaturg working for Center Theatre Group in Los Angeles, where he develops new plays and musicals. He warns you not to get him started on anything music-related as he won’t shut up. He is currently working on a 500-song Best of the Decade compilation that will rank songs, in reverse order of amazingness from 500 to 1. The CD will also include liner notes.
PICTURE SOMEONE WHO HAS DEDICATED HIS LIFE TO rock ’n’ roll: Matthew Sweet is hardly the first person who comes to mind. A polite, generous, hard-working Midwestern boy, Sweet comes across as, well….very sweet. Born in Lincoln, Nebraska in 1964, he has built a lengthy musical career through talent, perseverance, and authenticity that defies traditional stereotypes of the raging, self-destructive musician. He has managed to remain his approachable and unpretentious self in the face of a world that revolves around flash and image. Berkeley Rep’s dramaturg and literary manager, Madeleine Oldham, had a chance to talk with Sweet last year during his Sunshine Lies tour, and the following are excerpts from that conversation. You can read the full interview on our website at berkeleyrep.org.

You’ve been making music for a very long time now. Is it still fun?

You know, that’s a really good question. I think it is still fun for me. It’s a very hard business as far as trying to make it support you and your life and all that, and so I think there’s always this tendency when things aren’t going well to think, “Well, maybe I just have to do something else.” And I’ve gotten to a point a couple times where I felt that way. But I always tend to feel a lot better when I do music. It’s just what I do. I think there were times when I was afraid nobody cared, and I had to get used to the idea that no one else has to care about it but me. But other than that, I think it’s always remained pretty fun for me. People will ask me, “Why did you get into music when you were really young?” And it’s the same kind of thing—it made me feel better than anything else, and I could lose myself in it and feel somehow freed a little bit from life, you know? And I think it’s still that way when it’s fun because it’s just something different; it’s a whole other way of feeling and thinking. It just kind of takes me away from real life.

And when you had those moments of “maybe nobody cares,” did you ever seriously think about doing something else?

I don’t think so, really. When I started out, I didn’t have any concept of what it would be like to have fans and all that. I really only cared about recording and writing songs and making a record. I didn’t really realize that you won’t get to keep doing that if you don’t sell some, you know? And my first couple records didn’t really sell, but I was lucky enough to follow the guy who had signed me around to a couple of labels. Then when Girlfriend took off, which was kind of a slow process, then it was like this whole other dimension of what people thought about me. That sort of freaked me out and also added a lot of pressure, business-wise, to come up with something someone was gonna like, which wasn’t the kind of artist I was to begin with. So I think it put a damper sometimes on my spirit, just knowing there was that kind of pressure there, and in a weird way, even at the times I did the best, there was still this feeling it was not enough. And the music business was already heading the way it ended up at the end of the ’90s, where it really started dissolving into people caring less and less about the music and more and more about actual numbers they could move.
So I think only when I was asking myself, “Will I get to make more records?” did I ever start to get worried and lose faith. But I like to go on my own MySpace page and see what everybody says about me and interact with people. Whenever I get it together to release something, I’m always really surprised that there’s anybody out there that cares. And it doesn’t need to be a large amount now, cause I’ve been around for a long time and the game has changed so much and I can sell small amounts of records. We’ll break even and make more records. And I think there’s some correlation between the less big business it is, the more I’m able to relax and get back to feeling like I did initially, which was just excited about music and doing it really mainly for me.

I also love playing live because you find out there are people out there who really do care about music, and they also care about seeing music live. And so I think that right now, people like me are trying to figure out how exactly you get to the people who do care if you release something.

And do you have thoughts about how you do that?

It’s really the same way we got going on Girlfriend in the beginning. I mean, it wasn’t like it suddenly happened. It started really small on a grassroots level, and lots of people worked hard to get other people turned on to it.

And that’s how we used to feel about so many artists—all those artists that we just revered from the ‘60s and ‘70s. Then records became less important as computers came in, and the Internet and all that, and there were just so many things to look at and be into. Back when we were into records, we would just sit in our rooms and it was all you had as your shield against your parents, or whatever.

How do you see the music business now?

Music itself is so unique, that I think it really can be independent of all those things. That’s why I think if you’re a musician who just does it, you can get in the mode of it, and it has its own life. And you hope it will find people that like it so you can make a living. I mean, I wish somebody would just give me millions of dollars, and I would give my music away for free for the rest of my life — I’d rather do that! Before people were downloading music I would say to my manager, “Can’t we just, like, give it away free and just make money some other way?” ‘Cause I hated that feeling of pressure on the music to be successful.

Why do you think Girlfriend was such a successful album for you?

Well, I think basically people related to it. I was talking about feelings and relationships at a time when really it was an era of bands that were much less clear about what they were saying. The record didn’t sound like any other records right then either. So it was kind of radical sounding at the moment, which gave it this sort of grooviness thing. But I really think people just related to the feelings in the songs. It’s an interesting thing to see, and it’s really cool how much impact that can have. Like, that makes someone really never forget you, you know?
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Berkeley Rep
Girlfriend

BOOK BY
TODD ALMOND

MUSIC AND LYRICS BY
MATTHEW SWEET

CHOREOGRAPHED BY
JOE GOODE

DIRECTED BY
LES WATERS

APRIL 9 – MAY 9, 2010
THRUST STAGE · LIMITED SEASON

GIRLFRIEND IS PERFORMED IN TWO ACTS
WITH A 15-MINUTE INTERMISSION

CAST
(IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE)

Will Ryder Bach*
Mike Jason Hite

BAND
Rhythm Guitar, Keyboards, Backing Vocals
Julie Wolf
Lead Guitar, Backing Vocals
Shelley Doty
Bass
Jean DuSablon
Drums
ieela Grant

PRODUCTION STAFF
Vocal Arrangements and Additional Orchestrations
Todd Almond
Scenic & Costume Design
David Zinn
Lighting Design
Japhy Weideman
Sound Design
Jake Rodriguez
Music Director
Julie Wolf
Stage Manager
Michael Suenkel*

*The Actors and Stage Managers employed in this production are members of Actors’ Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

All musicians in this production are members of Musicians Union Local 6, American Federation of Musicians.

Music published by EMI Blackwood Music Inc.

Girlfriend was developed with the assistance of director Patrick Trettenero.

This production is made possible thanks to the support of

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The commissioning and development of this production has been supported in part by

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2009–10 · NUMBER 6 · THE BERKELEY REP MAGAZINE · 19
Ryder Bach

While playing Will in the TheatreWorks workshop of Girlfriend, Ryder was grateful to be part of a piece that was not only well-crafted, but also topical. He is now proud to make his Berkeley Rep debut in the same work. Ryder’s Bay Area credits include Harold and Maude: The Musical at TheatreWorks and The Sound of Music at American Musical Theatre of San Jose. In Los Angeles he performed in Center Theatre Group’s production of The History Boys and the Coast Playhouse’s Baby, It’s You. He resides in Chinatown, Los Angeles, where he puts his heart and soul into his band, The Body Parts. He would like to thank Matt, Alina, and his parents.

Jason Hite

Jason is thrilled to be making his Berkeley Rep debut in this amazing production. Most recently he was seen as Mark Cohen in the East Bay premiere of Rent with Golden State Theatre Productions. He has also worked with Center Repertory Company, Contra Costa Musical Theatre, and Exit Stage Left. He is a proud member of the Fantasy Forum Actors Ensemble. Jason trained at the Young REP Theatre Workshop in Walnut Creek. This one’s for you, Mom!

Todd Almond

Todd is a composer, lyricist, and playwright. His musicals include Ahrahnsak at Theater Mitu with director Ruben Polendo, Kansas City Choir Boy with director Sam Gold, and the award-winning People Like Us with director Gus Kaikkonen. His upcoming shows include On the Levee, coming to LCT3 this summer with playwright Marcus Gardley and director Lear deBessonet, and We Have Always Lived in the Castle with playwright Adam Bock. Todd served as music director for the world premiere of Michael John LaChiusa’s Tres Ninas, and he has written musicals for Juilliard and New York University. He has also music-directed and reconceived classic works, most notably the “bald” Hair at the Skirball Cultural Center. In collaboration with composer Ellen Mandel, Todd has recorded two albums of songs with texts by e.e. cummings, Seamus Heaney, W.B. Yeats, and other poets. He also recently released Mexico City, a CD of original songs. Visit toddalmond.com.

Matthew Sweet

Of the significant bands and artists to emerge in the ‘90s, Lincoln, Nebraska–born Matthew Sweet is the odd man out. During a decade when cynicism, overstatement, and meanness ruled, Matthew found a sizable audience by expressing himself with unconsciousness, subtlety, penetrating honesty, and the sheer joy of constructing something cool. While so many of his contemporaries disdained rock ‘n roll’s past, Matthew has deftly channeled it, picking up where his
inspirations from previous decades left off. A sophisticated aural architect, Matthew absorbed the work of the three "Bs" of 60s rock—the Beach Boys, Beatles, and Byrds, along with '70s avatars Neil Young and Big Star. With such a deep understanding of the spirit as well as the craft behind the music of the old masters, he was able to use these timeless palates in a fresh, highly personal way. Matthew is that rare artist who seems directly and intimately knowable through his work, causing his audience to feel a close bond with him—to put them on what they think of as a first-name basis. His albums include 100% Fun (1999), Altered Beast (1993), Blue Sky on Mars (1997), Earth (1989), Girlfriend (1991), In Reverse (1999), Inside (1986), Kimi Ga Suki (2004), Living Things (2004), Son of Altered Beast (1994), and The Thorns (2003). He has recorded two volumes of classic hit duets from the '60s and '70s, Under the Covers 1 and 2, with Susan Cowsills Hoffs, and his most recent solo album is Sunshine Lies (2008). Matthew is also a skilled potter. His handmade ceramics are available at etsy.com/shop/lolinaartpottery. Visit matthewsweet.com.

Les Waters

DIRECTOR

Obie Award–winner Les Waters has served as associate artistic director of Berkeley Rep since 2003. In the last five years, his shows have ranked among the year’s best in The New Yorker, New York Times, Time Out New York, Time Magazine, and usa Today. Les has a history of collaborating with prominent playwrights like Caryl Churchill, Charles Mee, and Wallace Shawn, and champions important new voices such as Will Eno, Jordan Harrison, Sarah Ruhl, and Anne Washburn. Last fall, he made his Broadway debut with In the Next Room (or the vibrator play), which began in Berkeley. His other productions at Berkeley Rep include the world premieres of Concerning Strange Devices from the Distant West, Fêtes de la Nuit, Finn in the Underworld, and To the Lighthouse; the American premiere of Tragedy: a tragedy; the West Coast premiere of Euridice; and extended runs of The Glass Menagerie, The Lieutenant of Inishmore, The Pillowman, and Yellowman. Les has numerous credits in New York, his native England, and at theatres across America. He led the MFA directing program at UC San Diego and is an associate artist of The Civilians, a theatre group in New York.

David Zinn

SCENIC AND COSTUME DESIGN

At Berkeley Rep and on Broadway, David designed the costumes for In the Next Room (or the vibrator play). For Berkeley Rep, David also designed the costumes for Mother Courage and Love! Valour! Compassion! Regionally his set and costume designs have been seen at Actors Repertory Theatre, California Shakespeare Theater, Centerstage, A Contemporary Theatre (Act/Seattle), Intiman Theatre, the Guthrie Theater, La Jolla Playhouse, the Mark Taper Forum, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Shakespeare Santa Cruz, and Yale Repertory Theatre, among others. On Broadway, David has designed the costumes for A Tale of Two Cities and Xanadu. In New York, his set and costume designs have also been seen at Atlantic Theater Company, Manhattan Theatre Club, Playwright’s Horizons (Circle Mirror Transformation), MCC (The Pride), Second Stage Theatre, Theatre for a New Audience (Chair, Measure for Measure, Orpheus X), and Target Margin Theater. His designs for opera have been seen at Los Angeles Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, New York City Opera, San Francisco Opera, Santa Fe Opera, Washington National Opera, and others. He received an Obie Award in 2008 for Sustained Achievement in Set and Costume Design. Visit mrdavidzinn.com.

Japhy Weideman

LIGHTING DESIGN

Japhy is delighted to be making his Berkeley Rep debut. His recent work in the Bay Area includes Curse of the Starving Class at American Conservatory Theater (2009 Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Award) and A Picasso at San Jose Repertory Theatre. His other recent projects include As You Like It at the Shakespearean Theatre in Washington, DC; Bluebeard’s Castle/Il Prigioniero at the Nederlandse Opera in Amsterdam; and Creditors at La Jolla Playhouse (2009 San Diego Theatre Critics Circle Award). Some of his notable work in New York includes The Flying Machine’s Frankenstein at Soho Rep (Drama Desk nomination); Jack Goes Boating at The Public Theater (Drama Desk nomination); The Last Days of Judas Iscariot and Little Flower of East Orange for LAByrinth Theater Company, directed by Phillip Seymour Hoffman; and Stunning for Lincoln Center at the Duke Theater Center on 42nd Street. His regional credits include Houston Grand Opera, Huntington Theater Company, Kansas City Repertory Theatre, Santa Fe Opera, Signature Theatre Company, Westport Country Playhouse, and others. Internationally, Japhy has designed Blackbird (West End), Bluebeard’s Castle/Il Prigioniero (Teatro alla Scala-Milan), Electra (Ancient Theater of Epidaurus-Greece), Eugene Onegin (Opéra de Lyon), and Troilus and Cressida (Royal Shakespeare Company and Edinburgh International Festival), all directed by Peter Stein. Visit japhyweideman.com.

Jake Rodriguez

SOUND DESIGN

Jake has carved out sound and music for multiple theatres across the Bay Area and beyond. His Berkeley Rep credits include Fêtes de la Nuit, Ghosts, Passing Strange, and The People’s Temple. His other recent productions include Blackbird, Rock ‘n Roll, and Speed the Plow at A.C.T.; Salomé at Aurora Theatre Company; The Comedy of Errors, The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby, and The Tempest at Cal Shakes; Oedipus el Rey at Magic Theatre; Euridice at Milwaukee Repertory Theatre; and Dogbody with Theatre of Yugen. Jake received a 2003 Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Award in sound design for The Death of Meyerhold and a 2004 Princess Grace Award.
Joe Goode
CHOREOGRAPHER

Joe is a choreographer, writer, and director widely known as an innovator in the field of dance for his willingness to collide movement with spoken word, song, and visual imagery. He was awarded a John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship in 2007 and the United States Artists Glover Fellowship in 2008. In 2006 Joe directed the opera Transformations for the San Francisco Opera Center. His play Body Familiar, commissioned by the Magic in 2003, was met with critical acclaim. The Joe Goode Performance Group, formed in 1986, tours regularly throughout the US and has toured internationally to Africa, Canada, Europe, the Middle East, and South America. Joe is known as a master teacher; his summer workshops in “felt performance” attract participants from around the world, and the company’s teaching residencies on tour are hugely popular. He is a professor in the department of Theatre, Dance, and Performance Studies at the University of California, Berkeley. Goode’s performance-installation works have been commissioned by the Capp Street Project, Fowler Museum of Natural History, Krannert Art Museum, the M.H. de Young Museum, and Yerba Buena Center for the Arts. His dance-theatre work has been commissioned by AXIS Dance Company, Dance Alloy Theater, Pennsylvania Ballet, and Zenon Dance Company, among others. Joe and his work have won numerous awards for excellence including the Isadora Duncan Dance Awards (Izzies), and the New York Dance and Performance Awards (Bessies). His work has also been recognized by the American Council on the Arts.

Julie Wolf
MUSIC DIRECTOR, RHYTHM GUITAR, KEYBOARDS, BACKING VOCALS

Julie is a multi-instrumentalist and composer. Her work has graced stages across the world and is found on a growing number of critically acclaimed recordings. She has collaborated with Bruce Cockburn, Ani DiFranco, Indigo Girls, Maceo Parker, Amy Ray, and Sia, among many others. When not on the road, she lives in Oakland and runs Sonic Wolf Productions, a music house specializing in sound design, music editing, record producing, and composing for film and other media. Most recently, her original music for the 2009 documentary Sweet Crude was nominated for Best Original Score at the Maverick Movie Awards and won rave reviews in Variety. Julie is thrilled to be joining forces with Berkeley Rep for the world premiere of Girlfriend.

Shelley Doty
LEAD GUITAR AND BACKING VOCALS

Shelley is thrilled and honored to make her Berkeley Rep debut with electric guitar in hand, rocking the tremendous lead guitar lines from Matthew Sweet’s Girlfriend. She has years of touring and recording under her belt, but currently sticks closer to home and performs relentlessly with local bands Clair, Shelley Doty X-tet, and black-girl-rock-goddesses Sistas in the Pit. She also stays a little too busy playing lead guitar for indie luminaries Alexis Harte, Bonfire Madigan, Shana Morrison, and Pyeng Threadgill. In her free time, Shelley is the co-creator, co-screenwriter, and musical director for the queer-themed teen and adult animated science-fiction film strange frame: Love and Sax. Watch shelleydoty.com for news of its projected 2010 release. Shelley was raised in Berkeley and is having an excellent time raising her young son Zev to appreciate the unique wonder and wackiness that the city embodies.

Jean DuSablon
BASS

Jean’s music career began in Austin, Texas, performing and touring with the outspoken dyke-rock band Girls in the Nose. She’s collaborated with a diverse range of musicians, including Rachel Garlin, Diana Jones, Kristi Martel, and Berkeley-based folk trio Rebecca Riots. Her theatre credits include acting, dancing, and singing with the I Love Lezzie Comedy Troupe at San Francisco’s Theatre Rhinoceros (1999–2002), the 2002 Gay Games and Cultural Events in Sydney, and a staged reading of Jan Stafford’s musical Ball and Chain at San Jose’s City Lights Theatre Company in 2006. Jean made her film acting debut in the provocative short The Sheep and the Ranch Hand, which premiered at the 2008 San Francisco International GLBT Film Festival and continues to draw critical acclaim at film festivals all over the world. She currently thumps her bass with the Bay Area-based rock band Clair.

ieela Grant
DRUMS

The founder of the band Sistas in the Pit, ieela is the hard-hitting drummer for this Bay Area power trio. She has enjoyed sharing the stage with musical greats ranging from Bad Brains to Macy Gray. Her passion for music has taken her to China and Switzerland, as well as on a national tour with punk-rock icons Iggy Pop and the Stooges. ieela is a dedicated and inspiring full-time preschool teacher at Little Bear School in San Francisco, where she has created an after-school drumming program for children ages 3 to 6. She is excited to be a part of her first musical.
EMI Music Publishing

EMI Music Publishing is the world’s leading publisher of popular music, representing more than one million copyrights including some of the best known songs ever written—“Always on My Mind,” “I Heard It Through the Grapevine,” “Lady Marmalade,” “New York, New York,” “Over the Rainbow,” “Singin’ in the Rain,” and “You’ve Got a Friend.” Its current hit songwriters include Beyoncé, James Blunt, Jay-Z, Norah Jones, Alicia Keys, Pink, Pharrell Williams, and Amy Winehouse. EMI has also supplied music content for some of Broadway's top productions, including Fela!, Jersey Boys, Mamma Mia!, and Rock of Ages.

Michael Suenkel
Production Stage Manager

Michael began his association with Berkeley Rep as the stage management intern for the 1984–85 season and is now in his 16th year as production stage manager. Some of his favorite shows include 36 Views, Endgame, Eurydice, Hydriotaphia, and Mad Forest. He has also worked with the Barbican in London, the Huntington Theatre in Boston, the Juste Pour Rire Festival in Montreal, La Jolla Playhouse in San Diego, Pittsburgh Public Theater, The Public and Second Stage Theatres in New York, and Yale Rep. For the Magic, he stage-managed Albert Takazauckas' Breaking the Code and Sam Shepard’s The Late Henry Moss.

Tony Taccone
Artistic Director

Tony is artistic director of Berkeley Rep, where he has staged more than 35 shows — including world premieres by Culture Clash, Rinde Eckert, David Edgar, Danny Hoch, Geoff Hoyle, Quincy Long, and Itamar Moses. Tony made his Broadway debut with Bridge @ Tunnel, which was lauded by the critics and won a Tony Award for its star, Sarah Jones. In 2009, he returned to Broadway to direct Carrie Fisher’s Wishful Drinking, which set box-office records at Berkeley Rep before enjoying a six-city national tour. Tony commissioned Tony Kushner’s legendary Angels in America, co-directed its world premiere at the Mark Taper Forum, and has collaborated with Kushner on seven projects including Brundibar and the premiere of Tiny Kushner. In 2004, his production of 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 many regional credits include Actors Theatre of Louisville, Arena Stage, Arizona Repertory Theatre, the Eureka Theatre, the Guthrie Theater, Hartford Stage, the Huntington, The Public, San Jose Rep, Seattle Repertory Theatre, and Yale Rep.

Susan Medak
Managing Director

Susan 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), the management association that represents 75 of the nation’s largest nonprofit theatres. Susan has often served on program panels for the National Endowment for the Arts and chaired two panels for the Massachusetts Arts Council as well. She served two terms on the board of Theatre Communications Group, including three years as the organization’s treasurer. Closer to home, Susan chairs the Downtown Berkeley Business Improvement District. She is the 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. Susan serves on the faculty of Yale School of Drama and is a proud member of the Mont Blanc Ladies’ Literary Guild and Trekking Society. She lives in Berkeley with her husband and son.

Karen Racanelli
General Manager

Karen joined Berkeley Rep in November 1993 as education director. Under her supervision, Berkeley Rep’s Programs for Education provided live theatre for more than 20,000 students annually. In November 1995, she became general manager, and since then has overseen the day-to-day operations of the Theatre, supervising the box office, company management, and IT. She has represented the League of Resident Theatres during negotia-
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PROFILES

Madeleine Oldham
DRAMATURG

Madeleine is Berkeley Rep's literary manager and resident dramaturg. As literary manager and associate dramaturg at Baltimore’s Centerstage, she produced the First Look reading series and headed up its young audience initiative. Before moving to Baltimore, she was the literary manager at Seattle Children’s Theatre, where she oversaw an extensive commissioning program. She also acted as assistant and interim literary manager at Seattle's Intiman Theatre. Madeleine recently completed four years of service on the executive committee of Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas and has also worked with Act/Seattle, Austin Scriptworks, Crowded Fire Theatre Company, Geva Theatre Center, the Kennedy Center, the Neo-Futurists, and Portland Center Stage.

Amy Potozkin
CASTING DIRECTOR

Amy is in her 20th season with Berkeley Rep. She has also had the pleasure of casting for Act/Seattle, Arizona Theatre Company, Aurora Theatre Company, B Street Theatre, the Bay Area Playwrights Festival, Dallas Theatre Company, Marin Theatre Company, The Marsh, San Jose Rep, Social Impact Productions Inc., and A Traveling Jewish Theatre. Amy has cast roles for the films Conceiving Ada, starring Tilda Swinton, and Josh Kornbluth’s Haiku Tunnel and his upcoming Love and Taxes. Amy received her MFA from Brandeis University, where she was also an artist-in-residence. She is a coach to hundreds of actors and teaches classes and workshops at Berkeley Rep’s School of Theatre and various other venues in the Bay Area.

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The Strauch Kulhanjian Family
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS
Roger Strauch is a former president of Berkeley Rep’s board of trustees and is a current member. He is chairman of The Roda Group (rodagroup.com), a venture-development company based in Berkeley, best known for launching Ask.com, PolyServe, and Sightspeed. Roger serves on the boards of Cardstore.com, GameReady, and Ravenflow, all located in the East Bay, and his firm is the lead investor in Solazyme, a renewable-energy company based in South San Francisco. Roger is a member of the engineering dean’s college advisory boards of Cornell University and UC Berkeley. At Cal, he is also an executive member of the board of trustees for the Mathematical Sciences Research Institute (msri) and a co-founder of the William Saroyan Program in Armenian Studies. His wife, Julie A. Kulhanjian, is an attending physician at Oakland Children’s Hospital. They have three teenage children.

Guy Tiphane
PRODUCER
Guy is very pleased to support Berkeley Rep as a producer for another great season. Many of his short stories and poems are self-published and available on his website, guy.tiphane.org. He lives in Berkeley, car-free, a few blocks from the Theatre.

Gail & Arne Wagner
PRODUCERS
Arne Wagner is an attorney with Calvo and Clark in San Francisco. Gail Wagner is a hematologist/oncologist at Kaiser Permanente in Hayward. She is the founder of the Matibabu Foundation (matibabu.org), an organization dedicated to building community healthcare in rural Kenya. Mama Sarah Obama, Barack’s Kenyan grandmother, is a Matibabu patient! Arne and Gail have been attending Berkeley Rep since they were students in 1972.

Additional support
Assistant Director
Mina Morita
Props Artisan
Justin Goldwater
Understudy
Tyler Costin
(for Mr. Bach and Mr. Hite)
Special Thanks
Henry Hopkins and The Freewheelers Car Club

Holly & Barry Walter
PRODUCERS
After over 30 years as avid theatregoers and supporters, Holly and Barry are now thrilled to have the time to be producers. Holly is a trustee for San Jose Rep and the Alameda County Library Foundation. Barry volunteers for Berkeley Rep as a docent. Barry owns Design Assurance Engineers, a consulting company that provides product design and testing services. Holly and Barry also share a passion for the blues and are partners in the Legendary Rhythm & Blues Cruise (visit bluescruise.com), chartering ships for week-long trips with 19 bands to the Caribbean and Mexico. They have two grown daughters.

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Playwriting
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

admissions process called Perfect Score. That year, I learned far more than to simply say yes. I learned what worked on stage, how to make a scene active, and why tech week and sleep will never be compatible. And most importantly, I learned that if you write with truth, the audience will respond. They will say yes to you. The response to Perfect Score was overwhelming, from frustrated high schoolers to my own college counselor who sat front row on opening night. I saw the power that theatre had to influence and speak to people’s hearts.

I graduated from Berkeley High and started at New York University, majoring in playwriting. And as opportunities for contests and productions came in, most of my classmates shrugged and said they’d never have a shot at winning. They saw no reason to try. But Berkeley Rep had taught me well, and I applied to everything. And most of the time, the vast majority of the time, they said no. But on occasion they said yes, and that is how Perfect Score, a play that was developed and came to life in the Berkeley Rep School of Theatre, came to be published by Playscripts Inc. in February 2010. It can now be purchased in book form or licensed for performance, and that is certainly not where I thought I’d be at age 19.

In the larger world, in the world outside Berkeley Rep, young people, especially young artists, are often discounted. We are told that we are too young, that we haven’t lived enough. We are told that we have nothing real to say. The School of Theatre constantly assures its students that they always have something to say, that their stories and their voices are important. Berkeley Rep gave me the guidance and the opportunities to discover my own voice and hone my writing and collaboration skills. But most importantly, they taught me that the most important word in theatre is, and always will be, yes.

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Please make sure your cell phone, pager, 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 precisely.

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

Theatre store  
Berkeley Rep merchandise and show-related books are available in the Hoag Theatre Store in the Roda Theatre and our kiosk in the Thrust Stage lobby.

Theatre info  
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; please request these materials at least two days in advance.

Ticket exchange  
Only subscribers may exchange their tickets for another performance of the same show. 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.

Educators  
Bring Berkeley Rep to your school! Call the School of Theatre at 510 647-2972 for information about free and low-cost workshops for elementary, middle, and high schools. Call Elissa Dunn at 510 647-2918 for $10 student-matinee tickets. Call the box office at 510 647-2949 for information on discount subscriptions for preschool and K–12 educators.

Request information  
To request mailings or change your address, write to Berkeley Rep, 2025 Addison Street, Berkeley, CA 94704; call 510 647-2949; email patron@berkeleyrep.org; or click berkeleyrep.org/subscribe. If you use Hotmail, Yahoo, or other online email accounts, please authorize berkeleyrep@berkeleyrep.pmail.us.

Tickets/box office  
Box office hours: noon–7pm, Tue–Sun  
Call 510 647-2949 · toll-free: 888 4-BRT-TIX  
Click berkeleyrep.org anytime  
Fax: 510 647-2975  
Groups (10+) call 510 647-2918

2009–10 ticket prices

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*No Thursday matinees for Limited Engagement shows.

Under 30? Half-price advance tickets!  
For anyone under the age of 30, based on availability. Proof of age required. Some restrictions apply.

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

Senior/student rush  
Full-time students and seniors 65+ save $10 on sections A and B. One ticket per ID, one hour before showtime. Proof of eligibility required. Subject to availability. Sorry, we can’t give refunds or offer retroactive discounts.

Theatre maps

Considerations

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

Recycle and compost your waste  
Help us be more green by using the recycling and compost containers found throughout the Theatre.

Phones / electronics / recordings  
Please make sure your cell phone, pager, 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.

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Resident Ted Weber, Retired Publishing Executive

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