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THE BERKELEY REP MAGAZINE 2011–12 · ISSUE 6

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MARCH
16 Teen Night, 6:30pm ■
16 First preview, 8pm
18 School of Theatre Sunday Sampler, 1pm ■
22 Opening night dinner, Hotel Shattuck Plaza, 5:30pm ●
22 Opening night, 8pm
23 Tasting: Raymond Vineyards, 7pm
25 Tasting: Ecology Center, 6pm
25 School of Theatre Night, 7pm ■
25 Final performance, A Doctor in Spite of Himself, 7pm
29 Producer night dinner, Bistro Liaison, 6pm ●
30 Tasting: Peterson Winery, 7pm
30 Teen One-Acts Festival, 8pm ■
31 Teen One-Acts Festival, 2pm ■
31 Tasting: The Bread Workshop, 7pm
31 Teen One-Acts Festival, 8pm ■

APRIL
1 Selected Shorts: Live in Performance, 2pm & 7pm
1 Tasting: Semifreddi’s, 6pm
2 School of Theatre spring session begins ■
4 Teen Council Meeting, 5pm ■
5 Post-show discussion, 8pm
6 Tasting: Dr. Kracker, 7pm
6 Teen One-Acts Festival, 8pm ■
7 Teen One-Acts Festival, 8pm ■
10 Post-show discussion, 8pm
13 Tasting: Urbano Cellars, 7pm
14 Tasting: Peterson Winery, 7pm
19 Student matinee, noon ■
20 Post-show discussion, 8pm
22 Middle School Sneak Peek, 1pm ■
25 First performance, In Paris, 8pm
28 ONSTAGE Gala, Four Seasons San Francisco, 5:30pm
29 Last performance, 7pm

School of Theatre event
Donor appreciation event
Join legendary actress Rita Moreno, our Mistress of Ceremonies, for a deliciously theatrical gala to benefit Berkeley Rep

Saturday, April 28, 2012
5:30 Reception & Silent Auction
7:30 Gourmet Dinner & Live Auction

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BERKELEYREP.ORG/ONSTAGE
FOR THE PAST EIGHT YEARS, we here at Berkeley Rep have had the great good fortune of counting Les Waters as a member of our staff. As most of you know, Les’ enormous talent and intelligence have left an indelible mark on our work. From Yellowman to The Glass Menagerie, from The Pillowman to Three Sisters, every one of the 16 plays he’s directed has been marked by a fierce visual imagination, an inspired illumination of the text, and a passion to reveal the power and depth of our shared, human experience.

But Les’ contribution exceeded his pure artistry. Trained in England and coming of age during the ’60s, he developed an insatiable appetite for new work. He brought that sensibility to Berkeley Rep, where he championed many new writers and directed premieres of plays written by Charles Mee, Will Eno, Todd Almond, Naomi Iizuka, and Sarah Ruhl. Those productions were among the best we have presented during the past decade — work that inspired us and sustained us in every conceivable manner. Playwrights simply love Les precisely because he has the utmost respect for their process. The same can be said of his relationships with designers and actors. Simply put, he lets his colleagues discover and explore the world of the play for themselves, then guides and shapes their ideas with an absolutely deft hand in an almost imperceptible manner. And to top it off, the guy has a wicked sense of humor.

Les has already embarked upon his next professional journey as artistic director of Actors Theatre of Louisville. But he returns to our shores to direct Red, the acclaimed play by John Logan that fictionalizes the interplay between master painter Mark Rothko and a young protégé. Here is another play that traffics in that “bewildering combination of fact and fiction” (as one of our bewildered critics recently put it when referring to another of our plays). But that blend is what makes Red so intriguing. And challenging. Watching Rothko and his student hash out the meaning of art while simultaneously revealing their deepest psychological paradigms requires a director who understands history, who loves art, and who can make manifest both what’s on the page and what exists between the lines. For that we have Mr. Waters and his talented creative team.

We welcome Les back to Berkeley Rep. We will miss not seeing him every day, but we look forward to working with him for years to come.

Sincerely,

Tony Taccone
THE SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY PRESENTS AMERICAN ORCHESTRAS

Cleveland Orchestra and Franz Welser-Möst

The Cleveland Orchestra, under Music Director Franz Welser-Möst, performs at Davies Symphony Hall for the first time since 2005.

Sun Apr 15 7pm
Franz Welser-Möst conductor
Cleveland Orchestra
Mendelssohn Symphony No. 3, Scottish
Kaija Saariaho Orion
(Cleveland Orchestra Commission)
Shostakovich Symphony No. 6
Kaija Saariaho’s Orion is a stunning work for large orchestra that is awash with shimmering and evocative sounds. This work is wonderfully contrasted with Mendelssohn’s inspired Scottish Symphony, and Shostakovich’s own symphonic masterpiece of spring, joy, and youth, his Sixth Symphony.

Mon Apr 16 8pm
Franz Welser-Möst conductor
Nicolaj Znaider violin
Cleveland Orchestra
Beethoven Violin Concerto
Thomas Adès Overture, Waltz, and Finale from Powder Her Face
(Cleveland Orchestra Co-Commission)
Smetana Three excerpts from Má Vlast
Adès’s orchestral suite is a dramatic work that centers on the Duchess of Argyll’s scandalous divorce proceedings. Also on the program are excerpts from Smetana’s multi-movement symphonic masterpiece, Má Vlast (“My Country”), and Beethoven’s treasured Violin Concerto.

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TICKETS AT $40

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DEAR FRIEND,

Even as shows launched from our stage continue to thrill audiences across the nation, Berkeley Rep is proud to invite you to a new year of exhilarating plays. We’ve just announced five of the seven shows selected for our 2012–13 Season, and I’m excited to tell you about them. The lineup features an incredible array of accomplished artists who have collectively earned nine Obie Awards and three Tony Awards — David Henry Hwang, Denis O’Hare, Lisa Peterson, Leigh Silverman, Mark Wing-Davey, and Mary Zimmerman — while introducing local audiences to exceptional young writer Dan LeFranc.

We begin with the West Coast premiere of *Chinglish*, the hilarious Broadway comedy written by Hwang and staged by Silverman. Then Zimmerman gives the Bay Area a beautiful gift for the holidays with *The White Snake*, before Wing-Davey brings the Bard back to Berkeley Rep with Shakespeare’s classic *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*. The Limited Season features Peterson and O’Hare’s visceral new version of *An Iliad* alongside the exuberant world premiere of LeFranc’s *Troublemaker, or The Freakin Kick-A Adventures of Bradley Boatright*. Plus, we’ll bring you two additional shows next spring.

It promises to be another year of exhilarating theatre at Berkeley Rep, and I hope you’ll share it with us. Here is why a ticket package to Berkeley Rep is the best value for your budget:

- The best seats at the consistently lowest prices
- Flexible exchange policy (yes, we do expect you to switch nights often)
- Guaranteed seats, even for sold-out shows
- Dibs on special-event offers
- Discounts for your guests — and we waive the fees
- A commitment that you will, indeed, get to all the great shows at Berkeley Rep

All that — and an emotional, visceral, and intellectual experience that can’t be measured with dollars. At Berkeley Rep, when the curtain comes down, we always hope you leave just a little bit different. Won’t you join us for the journey?

All the best,

Susan Medak
Managing Director
We’re proud to announce five of the seven plays for our upcoming season, featuring an array of accomplished artists who have collectively earned nine Obie Awards and three Tony Awards.

**2012–13**

**WEST COAST PREMIERE**

**Chinglish**

**WRITTEN BY DAVID HENRY HWANG**
**DIRECTED BY LEIGH SILVERMAN**

David Henry Hwang won three Obies and the Tony Award for Best Play with popular scripts like *M. Butterfly* and *FOB*. Now he’s back with a canny comedy of cross-cultural errors. In *Chinglish*, an American businessman heads to Asia to score a lucrative contract for his family’s firm—but the deal isn’t the only thing getting lost in translation when he collides with a Communist minister, a bumbling consultant, and a suspiciously sexy bureaucrat. Two-time Obie-winner Leigh Silverman returns to Berkeley Rep to stage the twists in a terrific play she took to Broadway. Love is on the line, and laughter fills the ledger in *Chinglish*.

**An Iliad**

**ADAPTED FROM HOMER**
**BY LISA PETERSON & DENIS O’HARE**
**TRANSLATION BY ROBERT FAGLES**
**DIRECTED BY LISA PETERSON**

An ancient tale comes roaring back to life in a compelling new telling filled with contemporary wit and wisdom. The clash of swords and shields, the broken hearts and broken oaths, the bonds of friendship and family—*An Iliad* arises on a bare stage, told by an old man who’s seen too much. Obie Award-winner Lisa Peterson directs a stunning show that captures the grief and glory of the battle for Troy. Homer removes his armor on behalf of all humanity and reveals the truth within each of us. A hawk, a dove... *An Iliad* races through time to become breathtakingly relevant today.

**The White Snake**

**CONCEIVED AND DIRECTED BY MARY ZIMMERMAN**

Mary Zimmerman is mesmerizing. From *Metamorphoses* to *The Arabian Nights*, audiences have embraced her enchanting adaptations of epic tales. Now the Tony Award-winning director casts a spell with *The White Snake*, a classic romance from Chinese legend. As she falls for a charming young man, a snake spirit discovers what it means to be human. But a monk objects, and the bride must unveil her magical powers to save their love. With the alluring and hypnotic *White Snake*, Zimmerman unwraps another exquisite gift for the holidays.

**WORLD PREMIERE**

**Troublemaker**

**or The Freakin Kick-A Adventures of Bradley Boatright**

**WRITTEN BY DAN LEFRANC**

Get ready for *Troublemaker, or The Freakin Kick-A Adventures of Bradley Boatright*. Only Berkeley Rep could unleash this wild world premiere, commissioned from hot young playwright Dan LeFranc. It’s nineteen mighty-eight. In working-class Rhode Island, Bradley and his bestest friend tangle with rich kid Jake Miller and his middle-school goons. And their nemesis has help from a bunch of zombies and grown-ups! Put down that backpack, turn up the soundtrack, and let’s cut class. Faster than a speedboat, more fun than a video game, *Troublemaker* has a sassy mouth and an irresistible heart of gold.

**Pericles, Prince of Tyre**

**WRITTEN BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE**
**DIRECTED BY MARK-WING DAVEY**

Action, adventure, emotion, and awe... Expect that and more when Mark Wing-Davey brings a nimble take on Shakespeare to Berkeley Rep. The Obie Award-winning director served up such diverse works as *Mad Forest*, *The Beaux’ Stratagem*, and *36 Views*. Now he delivers a riveting look at *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*. A virtuous man clings to the mast of a storm-tossed ship as his family reels from palace to brothel to a sacred Greek temple. Knights and pirates, villains and kings... Discover the excitement of Shakespeare all over again in *Pericles*. We promise: despite the tides of fate, the good guys are “led on by heaven and crown’d with joy at last.”

To order your ticket package, call the box office at 510 647-2949 Tue–Sun, noon–7pm
Paint the set Red

BY CARI TURLEY

THIS WEEK, LISA LÁZÁR’S JOB is to reproduce the masterpieces of Mark Rothko. Hey, no pressure.

Lisa is Berkeley Rep’s charge scenic artist, which means she and Scenic Art Fellow Anya Kazimierski are responsible for all the painted materials that appear onstage. For a show about a painter, that’s no mean feat. When I visit her in Berkeley Rep’s scene shop, I ask if it’s intimidating to recreate such recognizable works by a famous artist. “Uh, yeah,” she laughs. “Definitely. Then again, I’m no more an abstract expressionist [like Rothko] than I am a medieval painter or an art-deco stone carver,” she says, gesturing to pieces from previous shows that now hang on her shop walls.

Even more impressive, these disparate requests all need to be completed in just a few short weeks — no time for a master’s degree in expressionism first. It’s a bit like being a short-order cook.

CONTINUED
As if the Rothkos weren’t enough, the scene shop also needs to make thousands of fake bricks, build a radiator the length of the Thrust Stage, and find some sort of 15-foot-wide, seamless, translucent fabric to represent the temporary walls of the painter’s studio. All of which Lisa and Anya have to paint.

While the fabric is still being figured out, the bricks and radiator are both manufactured by “the robot,” which is the affectionate nickname for the computer-numerically-controlled router table that lives in the scene shop. Associate Technical Director Ryan O’Steen created the templates in AutoCAD (software for 3-D design and engineering), then sent them to the robot to be cut. The robot does a great first pass, but the most creative details come from the humans in the shop. I watched Master Carpenter Colin Babcock supervising the robot as it cut out a sheet of “bricks” from MDF (medium-density fiberboard), while a stack of modular “radiator” sections, also made of MDF, sat off to the side. When the robot was done, Colin sanded off the rough edges, added some finishing touches, and handed them off to the scenic art team for painting and texturing.

When matching a color or a texture, Lisa prefers to work from well-used reference books in lieu of internet printouts. Colors can vary from screen to screen, so rather than request photos via email, she calls the designers and asks them to pick specific images out of design handbooks they’re both sure to have. The decision is both practical and philosophical;

“Of course everything we make is brand new, but we want it to look like it’s always been there.”

Lisa Lázár
as Lisa says, “The internet is great, but we make all these real things.”

After a base coat of paint, the team adds texture to the bricks with “schmoo,” Lisa’s signature cocktail of recycled newspaper, paint, and glue. The bricks are left as is, but the radiator schmoo is chipped off in places after it dries to give the illusion of cracked and peeling paint.

Despite all that work, it’s such a subtle, almost subliminal touch that it would be easy to overlook the work of the scenic art department altogether... and that’s just how Lisa wants it. “My mantra is ‘inevitability,’” she says. “Of course everything we make is brand new, but we want it to look like it’s always been there.”

To maintain the illusion, Lisa’s work has to take into account the size and shape of the venue. In the larger Roda Theatre, everything is “opera-sized,” meaning that the designs are bolder and more obvious because some of the audience will be seeing the set from farther away. In the Thrust, on the other hand, the audience is so much closer that patrons could even walk across the set and touch the walls on the way to their seats (please don’t, though). Paint jobs in the Thrust have to be so subtle that Lisa’s rule of thumb is, would this be appropriate in someone’s living room?

Back to those prop Rothkos that Lisa is painting. In a substantial portion of the play, actors David Chandler and John Brummer make the paintings themselves—and splash a lot of paint around. So how does she keep the stage looking more Mark Rothko and less Jackson Pollock? “It’s better living through chemistry,” Lisa says. In order to prevent the paint that actors use from staining the floor, sets, or the actors themselves, the props department purchases paint that’s low in bonding agents, so it will stick just enough to the canvases and wash out.

Still, it’s not exactly Etch A Sketch; they can’t just shake the canvases clean every night. At the moment, the plan is to prepare eight canvases—enough for a week’s worth of performances—for the actor playing Rothko to paint his Rothko likenesses on. On Mondays, while David and John rest, the props department will remove the canvases, clean the stretchers, and re-cover them in time for Tuesday’s show. The floors have been treated with sealant to reduce staining from splashed paint. But where does this sealant come from? It turns out that each batch of paint has unique chemical properties that require a different approach. Just because something worked on the last show doesn’t mean it’ll work here.

This is why Lisa has a chemist in her speed dial. All the big paint manufacturers such as Benjamin Moore, and Golden Artist Colors have in-house chemists, and by now she’s on a first-name basis with many of them. By the time you read this, Lisa and her panel of experts will have figured out how to keep the paint exactly where she wants it. And hopefully, before that, you never noticed a thing.
walk by the costume shop on any given day and you wouldn’t be surprised to hear the whir of machines and see designers, drapers, and cutters bent over yards of fabric. But on one Friday afternoon in January you could hear a different sound: the buzz of artisans from the costume shop alongside their peers from the scenic art and prop shops. They were gathered for a fabric origami class taught by local artist Chris Palmer, the author of *Shadowfolds* who’s also featured in the documentary *Between the Folds*.

“This is so cool!” exclaimed Scenic Charge Artist Lisa Lázár as she coaxed fabric into complex geometric patterns. Inspired, she composed a blog post complete with about a dozen intriguing photos of the workshop. (You can read her post at blog.berkeleyrep.org.)

This is just one example of the culture of learning that’s deeply rooted in every department at Berkeley Rep. “We celebrate that,” says Managing Director Susan Medak, who also holds a faculty position at Yale School of Drama. “Because the nature of what we do changes all the time, we can either look at that as frustrating or as an opportunity to learn something new.”

And the opportunities are virtually unlimited, whether it’s an Excel workshop led by Associate Managing Director Meghan Pressman (don’t yawn: about 20 people showed up), the chance to attend a national conference with over 1,100 theatre practitioners, or a fireside chat with Emma Rice and Paul Crewes about Knee-high’s creative process on *The Wild Bride*. Additional personal learning opportunities

All Berkeley Rep’s a classroom

BY KYLE SIRCUS
UCSF has the only children’s hospital in San Francisco.

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To learn more go to: missionbayhospitals.ucsf.edu
outside the organization are generously supported by our board president, Marjorie Randolph, through a staff granting program begun just last season.

The fellowship program and Berkeley Rep’s School of Theatre are perhaps the most formalized examples of the Theatre’s commitment to lifelong learning. For Susan, “Our fellows and students at the School constantly remind us of the responsibility to mentor and build the workforce of tomorrow.” The training is all-encompassing, but Berkeley Rep has a continued focus on nurturing its own. “Twenty percent of our current staff was trained here,” she explains, “so we take mentorship very seriously.”

Employees can even participate in the School’s classes. Audience Development Manager Cari Turley and Bookkeeper Kristin Cato are among those who have taken advantage of this opportunity. Says Cari, “Having trained as a performer in college, I missed going to class and exercising that part of my brain.” Kristin, who’s also a filmmaker, notes, “The craft of acting remained a mystery to me. It was a missing link in what I brought to my work, and in my confidence about it. I could no longer deny it was time to face my fears and take a class.”

This benefit helps the school too: “Classes offer our staff an opportunity to gain a different understanding of how we operate,” says Rachel Fink, director of the School. “It allows everyone to connect to the creative work we do in a more personal way.”

Likewise, the costume shop’s Kitty Muntzel organized the workshop with Chris Palmer “as a way for three different departments to intermingle and support each other in our continued creative growth.”

In July, the creative synergy will really start crackling when Berkeley Rep launches The Ground Floor, its Center for the Creation and Development of New Work. The Harrison campus will become the nexus of over a dozen creative projects (and artists) from the Bay Area and around the country, all providing insight for our staff and community members. We’re already envisioning staff-and-artist dinners, but who knows? We all may end up in a sewing circle too.
We’re big on Berkeley

Making a difference with $3 million in 3 years

Wells Fargo has achieved a lot of growth since we first came to Berkeley in 1875, and one of the best things about our size today is what it allows us to give back. We’ve given $3 million to Berkeley community groups over the past 3 years, and our Alameda County team members recorded 9,384 volunteer hours in 2011 alone. We’re proud to support our community.

wellsfargo.com
Your gift in action

Imagine only seeing half the show. That’s what would happen if we produced theatre based solely on the price of your ticket. Your gift to Berkeley Rep makes up the rest, allowing us to produce extraordinary plays—and make them accessible to our diverse audience. The following are just a select few of the myriad ways your contribution helps us and your community.

Scenic and props shops

Our scenic, prop, (and costume) shops put together everything you see on stage—more than we could show here. These are just a few examples of how your contribution helps bring stunning shows to the stage.

- **$99**
  - pays for one of the 72 light reflectors made of spun aluminum, then punched and coated with powder. All are made in-house.

- **$200**
  - per week for thick canvas that stretch over large boards to be painted. The canvases are between 5’ and 11’ tall. About 200 yards of canvas will be used for all 53 performances.

- **$375**
  - for one of four sets of radiators.

  **FUN FACT**
  - 750 radiator pieces were made in our shop. The radiators are 5.5’ long with 32 fins per set.

For more information on how you can support Berkeley Rep, or to make a tax-deductible gift, call 510 647-2906 or click berkeleyrep.org/give
Company management

The company management department transports and houses out-of-town artists — and makes all artists feel welcomed and cared for while they’re at Berkeley Rep.

- $150 for one night’s housing for an out-of-town designer during technical rehearsals.
- $150 airfare to get Les Waters from Louisville, KY to Berkeley, CA and back again.
- $325 airfare to get David Chandler from New York to Berkeley and back again.

School of Theatre

Berkeley Rep runs one of the most comprehensive arts education programs of any professional arts organization in California. From student matinees and workshops in local schools to extensive programs for teens and theatre classes for all ages, the School serves over 24,000 Bay Area students every year.

- $50 for one student to be able to attend a student matinee of Red.
- $90 brings a 10-hour play creation workshop to a local high school student.
- $150 sends a teacher to a public school classroom for a one-hour theatre workshop.

Facilities

- $500 keeps the lights on in the Roda Theatre for one day.
David Chandler portraying Mark Rothko

Photo courtesy of kevinberne.com
Mark Rothko is one of the most significant painters of the 20th century, most recognized for his color field paintings and associated with the American Abstract Expressionists. His career spanned a number of styles and idioms, beginning with largely representational studies of landscapes and human figures, passing through surrealism, and ending with his own unique style characterized by dynamic interplay between floating rectangles and a luminous application of paint. His work features bold colors, and seeks to plumb new depths of the human experience. A profoundly spiritual and intellectual man, Rothko believed that “the exhilarated tragic experience is [...] the only source of art.” Though gregarious and capable of great wit and warmth, Rothko was also plagued by lifelong feelings of isolation and depression.

The early days: Dvinsk, Portland, and Yale
Mark Rothko was born Marcus Rothkowitz in 1903 in what is now Daugavpils, Latvia, but was then Dvinsk, Russia. Marcus was the youngest, by several years, of four children. While Dvinsk was spared the pogroms that raged through many other areas of Russia, there was nevertheless a great deal of anti-Semitism that the Rothkowitzes and roughly 35,000 other Jews in Dvinsk faced on a daily basis. As a form of protest against these injustices, Marcus’ father sent him to cheder (a school for young Jewish boys to learn Hebrew and the Scriptures). Marcus may have resented being forced to study the Talmud with such rigor, but at age 9 he was considered somewhat of a prodigy. In his lengthy and well-researched biography, James E.B. Breslin notes that even after Marcus’ official studies ceased, he continued to compose journal entries, poems, and even a play in Hebrew. Soon after Marcus started attending cheder, his father Jacob left for work in the U.S. Much of the family had already emigrated, and after three years of working and saving money, Jacob sent for the rest of his family.

The Rothkowitzes settled in Portland, Oregon, where some relatives had started a clothing business. The rest of the family, who were ambivalent about the move in the first place (Sophia, Marcus’ older sister, left behind a boyfriend and budding dentistry practice at her parents’ behest), found themselves in the awkward position of poor relations. To make matters worse, Jacob, after several months of illness, died of colon cancer soon after his family arrived.

Marcus’ adolescent years were spent in frustration, isolated from his community by his foreignness, his Jewishness, and his intellect. He was
extremely intelligent and motivated: though he was placed in the first grade at 10 years old because he was unable to speak English, he worked so hard over the years that he graduated high school early and was accepted to Yale on a scholarship. Yale, however, turned out to be just as isolating an environment as Portland. Instead of the academic rigor he sought, Marcus found waspish “old-boy” posturing and institutionalized anti-Semitism. While there, he co-founded *The Saturday Evening Pest*, a weekly satirical newsletter that was slipped beneath dorm-room doors when everyone was out on Saturday nights. This is also likely where he first encountered Friedrich Nietzsche, whose philosophical writings, particularly his book *The Birth of Tragedy*, greatly influenced Marcus’ later approach to art. After two years, Marcus dropped out and moved to New York, much to his family’s befuddlement. He knocked around for a while, trying to break into theatre and scrounging to make ends meet. Every once in a while he would have dinner with some cousins in New Haven, who had a sneaking suspicion that these were the only square meals Marcus was getting.

**New York: a clean canvas**

It wasn’t until 1925 that Rothkowitz wandered into the Art Students League of New York and found his true calling. A popular anecdote is that while he was waiting to meet a friend, he poked his head into a sketching class with a nude model and was forever hooked. It’s important to note that, at this point, Rothkowitz was no painter. He had never before considered art as a career. Though biographers share small anecdotes about a teenaged Rothkowitz sketching behind the counter at work, he actually saw himself more as a writer, or a musician, and it’s certainly safe to say that he had considerable abilities and interest in both. Over the years he expressed his ideas about art, philosophy, tragedy, and the human condition with great eloquence in essays and a short book, and, as we see in *Red*, he loved listening to the classical stylings of Mozart, Wagner, and Bach. He was impoverished for much of his adult life, but Rothkowitz usually possessed a mandolin and a piano or harpsichord that he would plunk away on.

Rothkowitz’s path to finding his identity as an artist was long and emotionally fraught. Though he didn’t receive much formal training as a painter, he spent several months taking classes under the tutelage of Max Weber, who encouraged his students to push beyond a purely representative approach. New York of the 1920s was fairly conservative as far as art was concerned. The inspiring and cutting-edge movements that were sweeping Europe — Cubism, German Expressionism, Surrealism, Dadaism — had yet to find their counterparts in the American painting scene. Galleries and museums were able to display the works of “modern” European painters such as Picasso, Matisse, and Klee, but limited their American displays to realism. Those few brave souls who were experimenting with less representational styles went largely unnoticed by critics and collectors alike.

This lack of public attention was a source of great frustration, but it also brought Rothkowitz together with a group of avant-garde New York artists that collectively

Rothko had become enormously particular about the way viewers would approach his work, giving galleries and museums precise instructions on what height his paintings could be placed and how close they could be to other installations.
came to be known as “The Whitney Dissenters” or “The Ten.” In protest against the Whitney Museum’s annual display of contemporary American art—which these painters felt privileged literal work and ignored the experimental and cutting-edge—The Ten put up their own display in the nearby Mercury Gallery. In addition to spending late nights drinking wine and talking about everything from politics to painting, The 10’s fight against conservative attitudes toward art paved the way for the American Abstract Expressionist movement.

They also traveled together, and in 1932 at an artists’ retreat in Lake George, Massachusetts, Rothko met his first wife, Edith Sachar. She was very young (19 to his 29), and a budding artist herself, working particularly with clay. Just as the two married and settled down to a life of blissful Bohemian deprivation, Rothko and Sachar had two solo shows: one in Portland, and one in New York. Despite these small victories, this was the height of the Great Depression. Art had become a luxury that precious few could afford, and those that could were not buying the work of these New York upstarts. So, Rothko got a job.

**Working for the man**

He started teaching at the Center Academy of the Brooklyn Jewish Center in 1929 and also began painting for the government program TRAP (Treasury Relief Art Project), which hired 300 artists to decorate government buildings. Bowing to fears of anti-Semitism and deportation in the wake of pro-Nazi sentiments, Marcus Rothkowitz became a U.S. citizen in 1938. He also changed his Jewish-sounding name to the ethnically enigmatic and now iconic “Rothko” in 1940, and switched from “Marcus” to “Mark.”

Though it is hard to imagine the surly, chain-smoking Rothko teaching art classes to bright-eyed Jewish children, it was apparently an environment in which he thrived. The children loved his gentle “Rothk,” who took them seriously and encouraged them to express themselves with their art. In turn, his dedication to his students allowed him to solidify some of his own ideas about painting. A talk he gave for parents was the seed of an unpublished piece called “The Scribble Book,” in which he outlines how children’s and “primitive” art demonstrate the ideal way an artist should approach making work. It is not the specific style they use that one should pay attention to, he argues, but rather, that their process is free from the inhibitions that come with a knowledge of culture, history, and one’s social identity.

Rothko’s art was all about trying to move towards a purer, more instinctual, more direct form of expression. His explorations of this new territory began with studies of the human, particularly female, figure, as well as small groups in urban settings. At first glance these early works may appear to be fairly straightforward, yet Rothko sought to use the human figure as a means to capture the drama of emotions — of isolation, frustration, impotence, and loss. Later, his compositions became more abstract as he turned to surrealist painters for inspiration and literary works such as Nietzsche’s *The Birth of Tragedy*, Freud’s *Interpretation of Dreams*, and James Frazer’s *The Golden Bough*. By Rothko’s own account, he took a solid year off from painting to read about Greek myths and dramas. (Whether he actually did so is doubtful; the point is that it was tremendously influential to his mindset.) In identifying these Ur emotional narratives, Rothko hoped to return myth to the modern consciousness. In such a secular, skeptical society, there was no longer any room for mystic experiences or venerating the unknown. Thus in his surrealist paintings of the early 1940s such as *The Omen of the Eagle* and *The Syrian Bull*, Rothko sought to provide himself and his viewers with “an unexpected and unprecedented resolution of an eternally familiar need.”

While wrestling with these ideas, Rothko was also struggling with his marriage. By all accounts, he was capable of rapid oscillations between vivacious extroversion and black, crushing despair. This, combined with his unhealthy and untidy personal habits and total lack of entrepreneurial spirit, made him very difficult to live with. Edith, who was an artist herself and used to roughing it, started to long for a slightly more comfortable, economically stable existence. She started her own jewelry business and pressed Rothko into service touting her wares at department stores, a task he despised. After a lengthy separation and troubled reunion, the pair separated for a final time and filed for divorce in 1943. Even though the split was a long time coming, Rothko nevertheless fell into a deep depression.

**New beginnings**

In order to rouse himself, the 40-year-old artist returned to Portland and spent the summer of 1943 in Berkeley, developing a friendship with Clyfford Still. (If you go to sfmoma, you’ll find that Rothko and Still’s paintings share a room.) In the spring or summer of 1944, he met Mary Alice Beistle (or Mell), and the two were married March 31, 1945. Mell was a balm for Rothko’s troubled spirit — she provided him with the structure, support, and emotional nourishment he needed to do battle with his innermost self. She also studied art in college and was working as a commercial artist when the two were introduced.

In 1946, Rothko was picked up by the Parsons Gallery; though he didn’t sell many paintings, he did gain exposure and a sympathetic environment in which to display his art. Rothko had become enormously particular about the way viewers would approach his work, giving galleries and museums precise instructions on what height his paintings could be placed at and how close they could be to other installations. Betty Parsons was undaunted by Rothko’s demands; unlike most gallery owners of the time, she allowed her artists to hang their work as they wished. Rothko also had a show at the prestigious Guggenheim Museum, where his *Slow Swirl at the Edge of the Sea* was met with a measure of critical acclaim. He still wasn’t making much money, but Rothko was getting more attention as a painter.

He spent two summers in San Francisco with Mell, living in a beautiful house on Russian Hill and teaching an advanced seminar at the California School of Fine Arts (now the San Francisco Art Institute). Once again, Rothko found himself as...
an interview with John Logan

By Neena Arndt
What was the impetus for *Red*?

My initial attraction was to the Seagram Murals themselves. I was in London filming *Sweeney Todd*, so I was there for months on end, and one day I walked into the Tate Modern and went to the room with the Seagram Murals. They had a very powerful effect on me. I knew very little about Mark Rothko, very little about Abstract Expressionism, but I found the paintings themselves profoundly moving and kinetic in a strange way. I went to the wall and read a little description about how he painted them originally for the Seagram Building and then decided to keep them and give the money back. And I thought, “Well, this is an interesting story.” So I decided that I would read a little more about it, and the more I read the more I thought that it was a play. And I almost immediately thought it was a two-hander play with Rothko and a young assistant. The shape of the play came to me very early in the contemplation of the work.

Do you have a background or training in visual art?

No. None whatsoever. The great, daunting challenge of *Red* is that Mark Rothko is such an intellectually challenging artist and he knew where he belonged in the continuum of his art. He had an encyclopedic knowledge of painting and of artists, so I realized I would have to gain a significant understanding of art history. I started with Abstract Expressionism and Rothko, and then I realized I needed to go back to what inspired him, and then I had to go all the way back. I spent eight or nine months researching art history. Going to museums, looking at paintings, and trying to see which artists had inspired Rothko, how he fit into the tradition, and why and how he broke with tradition. In a way it was like learning a new language for me — the language of visual art. It was necessary because that language was Mark Rothko’s frame of reference. Mark Rothko didn’t go to the movies, he didn’t read books, he didn’t listen to radio, he didn’t go to the theatre, he didn’t go to the opera. He would listen to records, but his frame of reference, his world, was entirely that of painting. So before the character could speak about anything, I felt as though I had to have some facility in the visual arts and in the specifics of the language of art history.

In what ways is Rothko important as an artist, or as an Abstract Expressionist?

He’s important because of his absolute, uncompromising purity. He deeply believed that art mattered. He felt that it should be like a religious experience, and his great dream was to create a space that was like a church. He wanted people to take art that seriously because he believed it was redemptive. He believed that it was important to the human spirit to create art, to experience art, to be open to art because he truly believed it allowed an exultation of the heart and the spirit. He was rigorous about exploring those themes in his work. I think he did something that no one else has quite done — particularly in Abstract Expressionism — and that is to create something that is profoundly simple and profoundly moving. There’s no clutter, there’s nothing unnecessary; his paintings are austere and savage. They’re like Greek tragedies. They’re not Racine, they’re not Chekhov, they’re not Ibsen — they’re Aeschylus. They’re that pure and that strong. And I think his contemporaries were influenced by other movements in art: Op Art, Pop Art, Impressionism. Rothko was too, of course, but he stayed the course on his vision, on single-mindedly do-
He believed that it was important to the human spirit to create art, to experience art, to be open to art because he truly believed it allowed an exultation of the heart and the spirit.

ing what he believed he could do. He was never as popular as Jackson Pollock or Andy Warhol, but he created art earnestly and completely and with his heart and soul. And I think for any artist that’s admirable.

Do you think Rothko’s level of dedication to his art had anything to do with his relationship to religion or faith? He was not religious as an adult, but do you see vestiges of his Jewish upbringing in his work?

Yes, I think there’s a rabbinical streak to his work. And he brought a Talmudic seriousness and level of analysis to everything he did, while still letting it be pure and simple.

In addition to needing to understand Rothko’s work in the context of art history, you also faced the challenge of portraying an infamous historical person on stage. How did you approach that?

Considering he’s such a major artist there’s not a whole lot of biographical information out there. There’s one major biography, by James E.B. Breslin. It’s very detailed and sensitively written, and it gives you not only an overview of his life, but also a lot of interpretation of Rothko’s work. Rothko’s own writings about art are also useful. He was a very important essayist on art and a very challenging thinker. It took me an incredible amount of time to work through the logic to understand them because his thoughts are so complex. So general biographical work, specific art history analysis, and his own writings became the bedrock of understanding what his voice was going to be.

And what about Rothko’s young assistant in the play, Ken? Was he inspired by an actual person?

No, he’s not based on an actual assistant. I just wanted him to be an emotionally agile person who begins the play in a really vulnerable position: wanting a hero. The point about writing a two-person play is that it’s a binary relationship. You have to let the characters respond to one another and segue back and forth. I knew that Rothko would have to be the prow of an ocean liner cutting through the ocean and Ken would have to be the wave that billows around it for most of the play.

One of the major ideas in the play is the idea that the son has to eventually kill the father, metaphorically speaking. Is that something that comes directly from Rothko?

No, that was entirely me. To me the play is really not about art at all, it’s not about painting; it’s about fathers and sons. I think people respond to the flamboyant grandeur and intensity of the character, but what really moves them is the father-son relationship. I wanted to write a play about teachers and students, mentors and protégés, fathers and sons. To me the piece has always been very domestic. Rothko had an awareness of young artists and an awareness of responsibility to young artists, but he wasn’t a teacher in any traditional sense. In fact, the relationship he has with Ken, his assistant, is not like the relationships he had with his actual assistants, which were very utilitarian. They were servants who did what he wanted them to do, but for the purposes of the play I allowed them to build a relationship.

Why did you choose to tell this story on stage rather than on screen?

I thought painting on stage would be really arresting and exciting. Movies are metaphorical by nature—things seem to be literal but they’re not. But when two men prime a canvas on stage, you’re seeing a real thing happen; the paint is really splattering over the actors. I wanted to do a work play, a play about all the things artists do. They’re not sitting around talking about painting—they’re painting. They’re stretching canvases, washing brushes, eating, doing all the minutiae of what they do. And from the very beginning, I knew it was going to be a play about language. The characters talk, I hope, in an exciting, muscular, visceral way, but they’re talking. And one thing cinema doesn’t do, at least not for great stretches of time, is dialogue. It doesn’t deal with the nuances of language. And since Rothko, as a man and as a character, is such a verbally dexterous person, everything about it said theatre to me.

You’re very busy as a screenwriter, but do you also plan to write more plays?

Yes. I started out writing plays, and theatre has always been incredibly important to me. I have an active and satisfying career in screenwriting which I hope to continue for as long as I live. But the theatre especially is something I’m drawn to. I always say, “Movies are my wife, but theatre is my mistress.” With Red, I rediscovered what it’s like to be a playwright and that was very fulfilling. As soon as Red was up and running, I started working on a new play because it’s satisfying work. And I’m working on the book for a couple of musicals, so my plan is to keep stepping between both worlds. I hope my movie work will inform my stage work and my stage work will inform my movie work. I’ve only ever wanted to be one thing: a dramatist. Whether I’m writing lines that are going to be spoken on film or on stage, or book scenes for musicals that will then segue into songs, it’s still being a dramatist. People frequently ask me, “Is writing plays different from writing movies?” My answer is no, not at all. Every day I wake up to write lines for actors, and I hope I will continue to be able to do that for many years, in many venues.
anticommercial sensibilities, the commission fee was awfully tempting ($35,000, which in today’s money would be more like $2 million), as was the opportunity to “ruin the appetite of every son of a bitch who ever eats in that room.” He rented a studio in the Bowery that closely matched the dimensions of the restaurant and set to work. The lights were kept extremely dim, and he set up a track along the wall that he could hang paintings from. Despite his cynicism about the project, Rothko was swept away by his enthusiasm for having a space dedicated entirely to his art. He worked feverishly (you can apparently still see red paint splattered on the floor of the studio), and completed the 40 paintings in record time. It is during this period of creation that we meet Rothko in Logan’s play.

From red to black

In the years after the Seagram Commission, the dark haze of depression that had always surrounded Rothko threatened to turn into an impenetrable wall of despair. His paintings, which had once been full of vibrant yellows, oranges, magentas, and cobalts, had dulled to dark greens, browns, and blacks. His health deteriorated so severely that he was no longer physically able to produce large-scale works, and had to rely entirely on assistants to build and paint his canvases. Rothko’s marriage also fell apart, and he moved out of his home with Mell and their two young children.

During this time, he began work on the Rothko Chapel, a nondenominational temple in Houston that would contain 14 of his paintings. Finally, here was an environment that could be a safe home for his work. He had total control over the way his paintings would be encountered — the lighting, the height, and the layout were his to decide. Nearly all the color had gone; Rothko was working primarily in blacks, grays, and maroons. In his own words, he wanted to paint “something you don’t want to look at.” Yet at the same time, Rothko achieved depths of spiritual insight with these 14 paintings, inviting viewers to contemplate their own mortality and the deepest reaches of their unconscious. The chapel paintings are Rothko’s ultimate expression of Nietzsche’s interpretation of Classical Greek tragedy: a finite, limiting, Apollonian definition of a yawning Dionysian mystery. They are windows into the Abyss, and looking through them can be both terrifying and profoundly centering. As a security guard at the chapel said in the 1980s, “You know, when I got this job, I’ll be honest: I didn’t get any of this stuff. But I got to tell you, I’ve seen these things in the morning, I’ve seen them at noon, I’ve seen them at night. And now I think they’re the most beautiful things I’ve ever seen.”

After completing the commission, with his health and personal life in a shambles, Rothko committed suicide in his studio on February 25, 1970, the day several of his Seagram Murals arrived at the Tate Modern in London. His assistant found him on the floor, where he had slit his wrists after overdosing on barbiturates. He ended his life the way he created his work — alone, and at the edge.

The Seagram Murals

In 1958, the Seagram Beverage Company asked Rothko to paint a series of murals that would go in the newly completed Seagram Building in Manhattan. Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, an architect from the Bauhaus school in Germany; Philip Johnson, an American architect; and Phyllis Lambert, daughter of the Seagram CEO, had collaborated on the design of the sleek new skyscraper on Park Avenue. An elegant new restaurant, The Four Seasons, was to go on the first floor, and they wanted Rothko’s paintings to decorate it. Rothko readily agreed. Though this might be surprising given his extremely
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Ken       John Brummer*
Mark Rothko       David Chandler*

PRODUCTION STAFF
Scenic Design       Louisa Thompson
Costume Design      Anna Oliver
Lighting Design     Alexander V. Nichols
Sound Design        Bray Poor
Dramaturg          Julie McCormick
Stage Manager      Michael Suenkel*
Assistant Stage Manager       Kimberly Mark Webb*
Casting            Amy Potozkin & Stephanie Klapper

Red premiered at the Donmar Warehouse Theatre, London on December 3, 2009, Michael Grandage, Artistic Director
Original Broadway Production Produced by Arielle Tepper Madover, Stephanie P. McClelland, Matthew Byam Shaw, Neal Street Productions, Fox Theatricals, Ruth Hendel/Barbara Whitman, Philip Hagemann/Murray Rosenthal and The Donmar Warehouse
Likenesses of the Rothko Seagram Mural Panels used with permission
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John Brummer
KEN

John is proud to be making his Berkeley Rep debut in Red. Most recently, he was a company member at PlayMakers Repertory Company where he played Algernon in The Importance of Being Earnest and George in All My Sons, among many other roles. John is a recent graduate of the University of North Carolina’s MFA program.

David Chandler
MARK ROTHKO

David is delighted to return to Berkeley Rep where he appeared as Boss Mangan in Les Waters’ 2007 production of Heartbreak House. David has performed on Broadway in American Clock, Death of a Salesman, and Lost in Yonkers, and he performed in A Question of Mercy at London’s Bush Theatre. Off Broadway, he has appeared in Black Sea Follies and Doris to Darlene (Playwrights Horizons); Cellini (Second Stage Theatre); The Grey Zone (mcc Theater); Private Jokes, Public Places (La MaMa Experimental Theatre Club); Slavs! (New York Theatre Workshop); The Swan (New York Shakespeare Festival); and Underneath the Lintel (SoHo Playhouse). A sampling of regional venues he has performed at include Baltimore CenterStage, California Shakespeare Theater, the Guthrie Theater, Long Wharf Theatre, McCarter Theatre Center, Willamstown Theatre Festival, Wilma Theatre, and Yale Repertory Theatre. David’s film and television credits include Becoming Helen Keller, a Salesman and Slavs! (mcc Theater); The Undeserved.

John Logan
PLAYWRIGHT

John received the Tony, Drama Desk, Outer Critics Circle, and Drama League Awards for Red. This play premiered at the Donmar Warehouse in London and at the Golden Theatre on Broadway. He is the author of more than a dozen other plays including Hauptmann and Never the Sinner. His adaptation of Ibsen’s The Master Builder premiered on the West End in 2003. As a screenwriter, John had three movies released in 2011: Coriolanus, Hugo, and Rango. John’s previous film work includes Any Given Sunday, The Aviator (Oscar, Golden Globe, British Academy of Film and Television Arts, and Writers Guild of America nomination), Gladiator (Oscar, Golden Globe, BAFTA, and WGA nominations), The Last Samurai, Kung Fu 281 (WGA Award and Emmy nomination), and Sweeney Todd (Golden Globe Award).

Les Waters
DIRECTOR

Les served as associate artistic director of Berkeley Rep for eight years. During that time, his shows ranked among the year’s best in The New Yorker, New York Times, Time Out New York, Time Magazine, and USA Today. Now he has taken on this artistic director of the renowned Actors Theatre of Louisville. Waters 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. In 2009, 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, Girlfriend, and To the Lighthouse; the American premiere of Tragedy: a tragedy; the West Coast premieres of Ruhl’s Eurydice and Three Sisters; and extended runs of The Glass Menagerie, The Lieutenant of Inishmore, The Pillowman, and Yellowwoman. Waters 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.

Louisa Thompson
SCENIC DESIGNER

Louisa’s work has been seen off Broadway in The Distance from Here and Fat Pig at mcc Theater, Manic Flight Reaction and This at Playwrights Horizons, and The Roaring Girl with the Foundry Theatre. Her other New York credits include Arabian Night, No. 11 (Blue and White), and Tex Arcana Waltz with the Play Company; Blasted (Obie and Hewes Awards), Elective Affinities, Molly’s Dream, [sic] (Obie and Hewes Awards), Suitcase, and The Year of the Baby at Soho Rep; Carson McCullers Talks About Love at Rattlestick Playwrights Theater; The Cherry Orchard with Salt Theater; First in Flight, Just So Stories, Max and Ruby, and Walk Two Moons with Theatreworks/USA; Gatz with Elevator Repair Service and The Public Theatre; and Tulsap with Target Margin Theatre. Louisa’s work has been seen regionally at Arden Theatre, Bard SummerScape, the Children’s Theatre Company, the Empty Space Theatre, Geva Theatre, the Juilliard School, the Kirk Douglas Theater, La Jolla Playhouse, McCarter, Paper Mill Playhouse, Philadelphia Theatre Company, Shakespeare Santa Cruz, Triad Stage, and Yale Rep. She has an MFA from Yale School of Drama and is an associate professor at Hunter College in New York.

Anna Oliver
COSTUME DESIGNER

Anna’s previous Berkeley Rep credits include Fräulein Else, Heartbreak House, The Lieutenant of Inishmore, The Magic Fire, and The Pillowman. Her work has also been seen locally in Candida, The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby, Man and Superman, and Restoration Comedy at Cal Shakes; The Constant Wife, The Guardsman, and The House of Mirth at American Conservatory Theater; Dear Master, The Devil’s Disciple, The Glass Menagerie, A Place with Pigs, Saint Joan, The Trojan Women, and others at Aurora Theatre Company; and the world premiere of Jeffrey Hatcher’s Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, Iphigenia in Aulis, and Major Barbara at San Jose Repertory Theatre. Anna’s work has also been seen at Arizona Theatre Company, Boston Lyric Opera, Brooklyn Academy of Music, the Canadian Opera Company, Dallas Theater Center, Houston Grand Opera, LA Opera, McCarter, New York City Opera, the Old Globe, San Francisco Opera, Seattle Repertory Theatre, and Welsh National Opera. She received a 2006 Helen Hayes Award nomination for best costumes, numerous Bay Area Theatre Critic Circle and Dean Goodman Awards, Craig Noel Awards, and a Garland Award. Anna earned her BFA from California College of Art in 1984 and her MFA from Yale School of Drama in 1992. Her upcoming projects include Anatol at Aurora and The Tempest at Cal Shakes.

Alexander V. Nichols
LIGHTING DESIGNER

Alex is returning to Berkeley Rep for his 24th production. His theatre credits include the Broadway productions of Hugh Jackman Back on Broadway and Wishful Drinking (originally presented by Berkeley Rep), and the off-Broadway productions of Bridge and Tunnel, Horizon, In the Wake, Los Big Names, Taking Over, and Through the Night. Alex’s other design credits include ACT, Arena Stage, Huntington Theatre Company, LIF, the Mark Taper Forum, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, and Seattle Rep. He was the resident designer for American Repertory Ballet, Hartford Ballet, and Pennsylvania Ballet; the lighting supervisor for American Ballet Theatre; and has been the resident visual designer for the Margaret Jenkins Dance Company. His designs are in the permanent repertory of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Boston Ballet, Hubbard Street Dance, ccc/sf, and San Francisco Ballet, among others. Alex’s recent projects include the museum installation Circle of Memory, presented in Stockholm, and video and visual design for Life: A Journey Through Time, presented at the Barbican Center.

Anna Olga
Send, M. ROBERTO

Anna’s previous Berkeley Rep credits include Fräulein Else, Heartbreak House, The Lieutenant of Inishmore, The Magic Fire, and The Pillowman. Her work has also been seen locally in Candida, The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby, Man and Superman, and Restoration Comedy at Cal Shakes; The Constant Wife, The Guardsman, and The House of Mirth at American Conservatory Theater; Dear Master, The Devil’s Disciple, The Glass Menagerie, A Place with Pigs, Saint Joan, The Trojan Women, and others at Aurora Theatre Company; and the world premiere of Jeffrey Hatcher’s Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, Iphigenia in Aulis, and Major Barbara at San Jose Repertory Theatre. Anna’s work has also been seen at Arizona Theatre Company, Boston Lyric Opera, Brooklyn Academy of Music, the Canadian Opera Company, Dallas Theater Center, Houston Grand Opera, LA Opera, McCarter, New York City Opera, the Old Globe, San Francisco Opera, Seattle Repertory Theatre, and Welsh National Opera. She received a 2006 Helen Hayes Award nomination for best costumes, numerous Bay Area Theatre Critic Circle and Dean Goodman Awards, Craig Noel Awards, and a Garland Award. Anna earned her BFA from California College of Art in 1984 and her MFA from Yale School of Drama in 1992. Her upcoming projects include Anatol at Aurora and The Tempest at Cal Shakes.
Bray Poor
**SOUND DESIGNER**
Bray is thrilled to be back at Berkeley Rep where he last worked on Concerning Strange Devices from the Distant West with Les Waters. Most recently he designed sound for Look Back in Anger at the Roundabout Theatre. Bray has designed sound and created music for numerous productions in New York, on Broadway and off, as well as regionally around the United States. His work has been heard at Actors Theatre of Louisville, Arena, Clubbed Thumb, Lincoln Center, Long Wharf, Manhattan Theater Club, NYTW, Playwrights Horizons, P.S. 122, The Public, Signature Theatre Company, Trinity Repertory Company, and Yale Rep, among others. He was nominated for a Drama Desk Award for John Doyle’s production of Wings at Second Stage. He recently started composing music for various short films for parentearth.com. From 2005 to 2007, Bray lived in Oaxaca, Mexico, studying music and creating multimedia art installations with a collective of Mexican and American artists.

Julie McCormick
**DRAMATURG**
Julie is the literary associate at Berkeley Rep, and **Red** is her first professional experience as a dramaturg. Julie was the 2011–12 Peter F. Sloss Literary/Dramaturgy Fellow, assisting with productions of *How to Write a New Book for The Bible*, *Rita Moreno: Life Without Makeup*, and *The Wild Bride*. In January, she ended her fellowship early in order to accept a permanent position at the Theatre. Before joining the Berkeley Rep team, Julie had a summer literary internship at Actors Theatre of Louisville in 2010. She holds a BA from Carleton College.

Amy Potozkin
**BAY AREA CASTING DIRECTOR**
Amy is in her 22nd season with Berkeley Rep. She has also had the pleasure of casting projects for ACT (Seattle), Arizona Theatre Company, Aurora, B Street Theatre, Bay Area Playwrights Festival, Dallas Theater Center, Marin Theatre Company, the Marsh, San Jose Rep, Social Impact Productions Inc., and Traveling Jewish Theatre. Amy cast roles for the film *Conceiving Ada*, starring Tilda Swinton; *Haiku Tunnel* and the upcoming *Love and Taxes* by Josh Kornbluth; and the upcoming feature film *Beyond Redemption* by Britta Sjogren. Amy received her MFA from Brandeis University, where she was also an artist-in-residence. She has been a coach to hundreds of actors, teaches acting at Mills College, and leads workshops at Berkeley Rep’s School of Theatre and numerous other venues in the Bay Area.
Stephanie Klapper  
**NEW YORK CASTING DIRECTOR**

Stephanie is delighted to continue her collaboration with Amy Potozkin, Les Waters, and Berkeley Rep. She handled New York casting for Mary Zimmerman's *The Arabian Nights* and will do the same for *Emotional Creature*. Her work has been seen on Broadway, off Broadway, regionally, internationally, on television, in film, and on the internet. She has ongoing projects for New York Classical Theatre, Pearl Theatre Company, Primary Stages, and many regional theatres, as well as numerous independent feature films. Stephanie is a member of the Casting Society of America and the League of Professional Theatre Women.

Michael Suenkel  
**STAGE MANAGER**

Michael began his association with Berkeley Rep as the stage management intern for the 1984–85 season and is now in his 18th 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, the Juste Pour Rire Festival in Montreal, ljp, Pittsburgh Public Theater, The Public and Second Stage Theatres in New York, and Yale Rep. For Magic Theatre, he stage-managed Albert Takaazuckas' *Breaking the Code* and Sam Shepard's *The Late Henry Moss*.

Kimberly Mark Webb  
**ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER**

Since joining Berkeley Rep in 1976, Kimberly has stage-managed more than 70 productions here in the ensuing decades. His other work includes many productions at ACT (most recently *Humor Abuse* and *Race*), as well as projects for Center Theatre Group in Los Angeles, the Huntington, Kansas City Repertory Theatre, and numerous Bay Area theatres.

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, Itamar Moses, and Lemony Snicket. Tony took two shows from Berkeley Rep to Broadway: Sarah Jones’ *Bridge & Tunnel*, which won a Tony Award for its star, and Carrie Fisher’s *Wishful Drinking*, which set box-office records in Berkeley before enjoying a six-city national tour. He commissioned Tony Kushner’s legendary *Angels in America*, co-directed its world premiere at the Taper, and has collaborated with Kushner on seven projects including *Brundibar* and *Tiny Kushner*. Two of Tony’s recent shows transferred to London: *Continental Divide* played the Barbican in 2004, and *Tiny Kushner* played the Tricycle...
Theatre in 2011. His many regional credits include Actors Theatre of Louisville, Arena, the Eureka Theatre, the Guthrie, the Huntington, OSF, The Public, Seattle Rep, and Yale Rep. Known as a director, he recently turned his hand to playwriting, and two of his scripts premiered last year: Ghost Light and Rita Moreno: Life Without Makeup.

Susan Medak  
MANAGING DIRECTOR

Susan has served as Berkeley Rep’s managing director since 1990, leading the administration and operations of the Theatre. She has served as president of the League of Resident Theatres (LORT) and treasurer of Theatre Communications Group, organizations that represent the interests of nonprofit theatres across the nation. Susan chaired two panels for the Massachusetts Arts Council and has also served on program panels for the National Endowment for the Arts. Closer to home, Susan chairs the Downtown Berkeley Business Improvement District and serves as president of the Downtown Berkeley Association. She is 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.

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 negotiations with both Actors’ Equity Association and the Union of Stage Directors and Choreographers. Prior to her tenure at Berkeley Rep, Karen worked for Theatre Bay Area as director of theatre services and as an independent producer at several Bay Area theatre companies. She has served on the boards of Climate Theater, Overtone Theatre Company, and Park Day School, and is currently on the board of the Julia Morgan Center. Karen is married to arts attorney MJ Bogatin and they have two children.
Madeleine Oldham
DIRECTOR, THE GROUND FLOOR/RESIDENT DRAMATURG

Madeleine is the director of Berkeley Rep's Ground Floor and its 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 Intiman. Madeleine served for four years 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, the Kennedy Center, New Dramatists, Eugene O'Neill Theatre Center, and Portland Center Stage.

Marjorie Randolph
SEASON PRODUCER

Marjorie is president of Berkeley Rep's board of trustees and a longtime supporter of the Theatre. She recently moved back to Berkeley after retiring as head of worldwide human resources for Walt Disney Studios. During her tenure at Berkeley Rep, she has produced 16 plays. A member of the California Bar and a former president of California Women Lawyers, she serves on the National Advisory Panel of the Institute for Research on Women and Gender at Stanford University.

Jack & Betty Schafer
SEASON PRODUCERS

Betty and Jack are proud to support Berkeley Rep. Jack, one of the Theatre's board members, also sits on the boards of the Jewish Community Endowment, San Francisco Opera, and the Straus Historical Society. He is also co-chair of the Oxbow School in Napa and is an emeritus trustee of the San Francisco Art Institute, where he served as board chair. Betty, a retired transitions coach, has resumed her earlier career as a nonfiction writer and poet. She serves on the boards of Brandeis Hillel Day School, Coro Foundation, Earthjustice, and JVS and represents the Jewish Community Foundation on a national allocation committee.

The Strauch Kulhanjian Family
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS

Roger Strauch is a former president of Berkeley Rep's board of trustees and a current member. He is chairman of the Roda Group (rodagroup.com), a venture-development company based in Berkeley and best known for launching Ask.com, PolyServe, and Sight-speed. Roger serves on the board of Game Ready, and his firm is the largest investor in Solazyme, a renewable oil and bio-products company.
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company based in South San Francisco (NASDAQ:SYM, solazyme.com). Roger is a member of the engineering dean’s college advisory boards of Cornell University and UC Berkeley. He is vice-chairman of the board of trustees for the Mathematical Sciences Research Institute (msri) and a co-founder of the William Saroyan Program in Armenian Studies at Cal. He is also an executive member of the Piedmont Council of the Boy Scouts of America. His wife, Julie A. Kulhanjian, is an attending physician at Oakland Children’s Hospital. They have three teenaged children.

**Thalia Dorwick PRODUCER**
Thalia became involved with the theatre when, at age 12, she wrote, produced, and starred in a Girl Scout play. Fortunately, she has been only a spectator since then. She serves on Berkeley Rep’s board and directs the docent program. She is also on the board of trustees of Case Western Reserve University. Thalia has a PhD in Spanish, taught at the university level for many years, and is the co-author of a number of Spanish textbooks. She retired seven years ago as editor-in-chief of McGraw-Hill Higher Education’s humanities, social sciences, and languages group.

**Patricia Sakai & Richard Shapiro PRODUCERS**
Patricia and Richard have both served on Berkeley Rep’s board of trustees over the past 22 years. They are proud to support the Theatre’s leading-edge artistic vision, innovative productions and programs, and a stellar staff that have earned Berkeley Rep its national reputation as a destination for both theatre artists and audiences. Patricia was a member of the board of directors of the Management Center of Northern California, served as director of continuing education at St. Mary’s College, and worked at several Bay Area corporations as a learning and organizational effectiveness leader. She is currently an independent consultant to both for-profit and nonprofit organizations and also performs with the San Francisco Choral Society. Richard has served on the boards of the Berkeley Art Museum/Pacific Film Archives, Camp Swig, the East Bay Conservation Corps, Legal Assistance to the Elderly, and the Urban School. He is a partner at Farella, Braun + Martel.

**Michael & Sue Steinberg PRODUCERS**
Michael and Sue have been interested in the arts since they met and enjoy music, ballet, and live theatre. Michael, who recently retired as chairman and chief executive officer of Macy’s West, served on Berkeley Rep’s board of trustees from 1999 to 2006 and currently serves on the board of directors of the Jewish Museum and UCSF Foundation. Sue serves on the boards of the San Francisco-based Smuin Ballet and World of Children. The Steinbergs have always enjoyed regional theatre and are delighted to produce Red.

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**Mark Rothko**

**ARTIST**

Born Marcus Rothkowitz in the town of Dvinsk, Latvia, then part of the Russian Empire, Mark Rothko immigrated to the United States with his family at the age of 10, settling in Portland, Oregon. A gifted student, Rothko attended Yale University on scholarship from 1921–23, but disillusioned by the social milieu and financial hardship, he dropped out and moved to New York to “bum around and starve a bit.” A chance invitation from a friend brought him to a drawing class at the Art Students League where he discovered his love of art. He took two classes there but was otherwise self-taught. Rothko painted in a figurative style for nearly 20 years, his portraits and depictions of urban life baring the soul of those living through the Great Depression in New York. The painter Milton Avery offered Rothko both artistic and nutritional nourishment during these lean years. In the 1930s, Rothko exhibited with The Ten, a close-knit group of nine (!) American painters, which included fellow Avery acolyte, Adolph Gottlieb. Success was moderate at best, but the group provided important incubation for the Abstract Expressionist school to come. The war years brought with them an influx of European surrealists, influencing most of the New York painters, among them Rothko, to take on a neo-surrealist style. Rothko experimented with mythic and symbolic painting for
five years before moving to pure abstraction in the mid-1940s and ultimately to his signature style of two or three rectangles floating in fields of saturated color in 1949. Beginning in the early 1950s Rothko was heralded, along with Jackson Pollock, Willem deKooning, Franz Kline, and others, as the standard bearers of the New American Painting—a truly American art that was not simply a derivative of European styles. By the late 1950s, Rothko was a celebrated (if not wealthy) artist, winning three mural commissions that would dominate the latter part of his career. Only in the last of these, the Rothko Chapel in Houston, was he able to realize his dream of a truly contemplative environment in which to interact deeply with his artwork. Red presents a fictionalized account of Rothko’s frustrated first attempt to create such a space in New York’s Four Seasons restaurant. Rothko sought to create art that was timeless: paintings that expressed basic human concerns and emotions that remain constant not merely across decades but across generations and epochs. He looked to communicate with his viewer at the most elemental level, and through his artwork have a conversation that was intense, personal, and, above all, honest. A viewer’s tears in front of one of his paintings told him he had succeeded. While creating a deeply expressive body of work and garnering critical acclaim, Rothko battled depression and his brilliant career ended in suicide in 1970.

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

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