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WHAT A DELIGHT to welcome Culture Clash back to the Bay!

As I was programming this season, my first at this beautiful theatre, I wanted to make sure the work we are sharing together includes artists like Jocelyn Bioh, Suzan-Lori Parks, and The Avett Brothers, who are new to Berkeley Rep (and in the case of the Avetts, new to theatre entirely!). It was equally important to me to honor the deep relationships that Berkeley Rep has forged over the last 50 years with artists including Mark Wing-Davey, Michael Mayer, and Sarah Ruhl. Lisa Peterson is part of that grand extended family, but also someone with whom I have had the privilege of collaborating many times during my decades at New York Stage and Film. She was one of the people I reached out to as I was planning this first season, and she told me of the work Culture Clash was doing to update their seminal piece Culture Clash in AmeriCCa for these complicated times.

It’s no surprise, really, that we turn to our clowns to help us make sense of the world as it spins ever more rapidly in ways we struggle to understand. Sixteenth-century Italians had commedia dell’arte’s Arlecchino and Pantalone sending up their societal and political structures; Lear had his Fool to illuminate for him the absurdities of his behavior; and we have Stephen Colbert and Trevor Noah and Tina Fey to whom we turn for escape, information, and entertainment.

Culture Clash sits within that grand tradition of satirists whose work allows us to see ourselves, our community, our country in new ways. And while Richard and Ric and Herbert are lauded all over the country, they also are so specifically Californian, their work born from the histories and the people of the Central Valley, the East Bay, the Mission District. They have been making work all along this coast for decades, and I am proud to welcome them back to Berkeley Rep.

Buckle up!!

Warmly,

Johanna Pfaelzer
Richard Montoya came to visit with us weeks before he and his colleagues, Ric Salinas and Herbert Siguenza, officially returned to Berkeley with *Culture Clash (Still) in America*, an update of *Culture Clash in AmeriCCa*, which we premiered in 2002.

The world is certainly a different place than it was 18 years ago. Our relationship to our neighbors on the Southern border has taken a profound turn. Our national policy has moved increasingly toward isolationism with a particular antipathy to immigrants from the South. Ironically (or not!) here in California, the percentage of residents identifying as Latinx has continued to grow.

When I first arrived here from Chicago, one of the aspects of living in California that was so new and so fascinating to me was this state’s relationship to our Mexican and southern neighbors. Of course there were simply more Latinx people here than in any of the Midwestern cities where I’d previously resided. That in itself was an education. But what was also such an enormous education was the recognition of how long this constituency had lived on this land. When I went to school in the Midwest there wasn’t a lot of discussion about how California had been part of Mexico at one time, so meeting people whose families had been Californians since before California was a state was one of the eye-opening experiences of my slow but steady conversion from being a Midwestern girl to a committed Californian.

I got this education, full bore, and it came almost upon my arrival, from Richard, Ric, and Herbert. Then artistic director, Sharon Ott, had commissioned what was at the time a young, iconoclastic band of enfant terribles to create a piece specifically to tour to Bay Area schools. I suppose it speaks to whom we’ve always been that 30 years ago we were commissioning work by early career artists exploring new forms and new narratives. In this case we were also creating that work for school-age kids.

So it was with real fascination that I heard Richard reflect on how his politics, his sense of himself as an artist, and his sense of the artist’s role and responsibilities has changed over time. That sense of evolution only enhances the joy of having them back on our stages.

It is a great pleasure to allow our longtime audiences to revisit *Culture Clash*’s early work, seen through a new lens, and to introduce new audiences to this iconic company. Enjoy!

Best regards,

Susie Medak
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While Berkeley Rep loves to entertain, we’ve also striven to make art that, as our mission states, “provokes civic engagement.” Indeed, our artists, staff, and audiences have a rich history of taking action. In 2018, we formed an internal committee — dubbed Citizen Rep — to build on this track record by investigating opportunities for civic engagement on behalf of the Theatre. From partnering with experts and activists in our community, to registering voters in our lobby, to supporting our staff’s volunteer efforts, to raising funds in times of crisis or around an issue central to a production, Citizen Rep explores ways for Berkeley Rep to engage creatively with our community offstage.
Often, our activities are inspired by our plays’ direct or implicit calls to action. The second act of Anna Devere Smith’s Notes from the Field directly engaged audiences in facilitated reflections on the school-to-prison pipeline and asked them to be agents of change in their government, schools, and communities. In the fall of 2016, we produced a new adaptation of It Can’t Happen Here, Sinclair Lewis’ novel about the ascent of a demagogue who becomes president of the United States by promising to return the country to greatness. During the run, we held voter registration at our open house and co-hosted free outdoor screenings of the presidential debates with our neighbors at the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive.

That same fall, during rehearsals for Jeff Augustin’s play The Last Tiger in Haiti, Hurricane Matthew struck parts of Haiti and left massive destruction in its path. After every performance the cast, with the help of Berkeley Rep’s volunteer ushers, invited audience members to make donations to aid those affected by the hurricane. By the end of the run, donations to two Haitian organizations totaled $92,000.

Sometimes, the content of our plays spurs us to forge or deepen a relationship with Bay Area people and organizations whose work intersects with the issues on stage. When we produced Lisa Loomer’s play Roe, centered on the inception of Roe v. Wade and the history of American abortion rights, we invited local women’s health experts to co-moderate our nightly post-show discussions alongside Berkeley Rep staff. For Julia Cho’s Office Hour, which addressed gun violence in schools, we co-moderated discussions with experts from the Brady Campaign, Berkeley Media Studies Group, Hope and Heal Fund, and Speak for Safety. We also shared information about days of action during the run, including the ENOUGH School Walkout and March for Our Lives.

Given the Bay Area’s critical role in LGBTQIA+ history and activism, we were thrilled to partner with and highlight the work of many local nonprofits during our production of Tony Kushner’s Angels in America. We also hosted a free panel on AIDS activism and displayed panels of the AIDS Memorial Quilt in our lobby.

During the run of Kiss My Aztec!, which playfully depicted and reimagined Aztec history to celebrate Latinx resilience and culture, our cast was compelled to act in response to the humanitarian crisis at our nation’s southern borders and ICE detention centers. For two weeks, they raised funds at curtain call to support RAICES, which provides free and low-cost legal services to underserved immigrant children, families, and refugees; and Border Angels, which works for humane immigration reform and a reduction in fatalities along the U.S.-Mexico border.

As we put the finishing touches on this issue of The Berkeley Rep Magazine, Citizen Rep is hard at work forging partnerships with local organizations and individuals for Culture Clash (Still) in America. See the sidebar for information about some of these partners, and discover more about our additional partners on our social media channels and our display in the lobby. At the same time, Citizen Rep is developing ways to engage in the primary and general 2020 election processes. Berkeley Rep’s full-time employees may take two paid days per year to participate in a volunteer activity; several members of our staff regularly volunteer to help with voter registration and poll watching. Citizen Rep is sharing information about California’s primary process and local elections with our full staff.

In this moment, we’re hearing from audience members, staff, and artists alike that it’s easy to feel isolated and overwhelmed by the issues facing our community, country, and world. While theatre certainly can’t solve everything, we can offer a place to gather together, to collectively think and feel — and sometimes, to learn about opportunities for concrete action.

Throughout the performances of Culture Clash (Still) in America, Berkeley Rep has partnered with four local service organizations. Join us in amplifying the work they do.

### EAST BAY SANCTUARY COVENANT

**EAST BAY SANCTUARY COVENANT**

Founded in 1982 and based in Berkeley, East Bay Sanctuary Covenant provides legal services, community organizing, and transformative education to support low-income immigrants and people fleeing violence and persecution. EBSC programs address the legal and social barriers that immigrants face and connect the broader community with the immigrant experience.

[eastbaysanctuary.com](http://eastbaysanctuary.com)

### LA CLÍNICA

**LA CLÍNICA**

La Clínica was founded in 1971 to address health barriers and create better lives for the underserved. It was founded on the tenets of fighting systematic racism and healing racial inequalities. Today, La Clínica continues to be the community’s first choice for providing multilingual, accessible, comprehensive health care services in the Bay Area, no matter a patient’s income level or insurance status. Find us on Facebook and Twitter! Look for La Clínica de La Raza.

[secure.qgiv.com/for/laclinica](http://secure.qgiv.com/for/laclinica)

### LA PEÑA CULTURAL CENTER

**LA PEÑA CULTURAL CENTER**

La Peña is a vibrant nonprofit community cultural center with a global vision that has promoted social justice, arts participation, and intercultural understanding since 1975. As an internationally recognized gathering place, we support a multitude of cultural traditions, support progressive movements, and keep alive peoples’ cultures through community events, performances, and classes rooted in Latin American cultural traditions and beyond.

[lapena.org](http://lapena.org)

### OASIS LEGAL SERVICES

**OASIS LEGAL SERVICES**

Oasis Legal Services proudly provides quality legal immigration services to under-represented low-income groups with a focus on LGBTQIA+ communities.

[oasislegalservices.org](http://oasislegalservices.org)
"A BUILDING OF EXUBERANT
BEYOND THOSE CONSTRUCTION WALLS just down the street from Berkeley Rep’s theatres, an innovative new project is brewing: artist housing. Berkeley Rep is one of the first companies in the city to undertake a workforce housing project, and the city of Berkeley is one of the first cities in the nation to develop artist housing in collaboration with a leading regional theatre.

“Berkeley Rep is looking to the future with this project,” says Managing Director Susie Medak. “The rental units we currently utilize have nearly tripled in cost over the past decade. This variable expense is a challenge to our long-term stability, and we committed ourselves to containing these costs.”

In addition to the 45 apartment units that will house visiting artists as well as the 15 young professionals in Berkeley Rep’s season-long fellowship program, the seven-floor building will include classroom and showcase space for the Berkeley Rep School of Theatre, 500 square feet of terrace space for events, balconies, bike parking, and a video marquee.

“This isn’t a run of the mill building,” says architect Jorge de Quesada. “It’s not just an apartment building. It’s actually combining many different kinds of uses. That’s what makes it exciting.”

This project was a long time coming. Berkeley Rep built what’s now called the Peet’s Theatre in the early 1980s, and we completed the Roda Theatre in 2001. We were finally able to activate the remaining undeveloped property to the west of the Roda when Signature Bank, a supporter of New York theatre that recently commenced operations in San Francisco, committed to financing the project.

Jorge and his team at De Quesada Architects, Inc. created the first design plans in 2017, long before the new brightly colored Center Street Garage, which sits directly across the street from what will be Berkeley Rep’s new building, was completed. Wary of creating something too flashy at the time, the team opted for a design that blended into the aesthetic of Addison Street. That is, it frankly looked a bit utilitarian.

Berkeley’s Design Review Committee sent us back to the drawing board. The new design, with its dynamic video screens, lots of glass with orange pops of color, embraces the excitement of theatre and works in harmony with the eye-catching garage across the street. “They said the new design was ‘a building of exuberant repose,’” says Sarah Williams, who was the project’s manager and Berkeley Rep’s associate managing director until she started her new position as managing director of California Shakespeare Theater last September.

The building is designed to be LEED Gold certified, and the furnished apartments will include full kitchens, bike parking, air conditioning, and efficient filtered ventilation systems. Because more and more of our visiting artists have young children, the apartments have been designed with families and flexibility in mind. Five units boast two bedrooms, and Murphy beds allow artists to transform their apartments and create more floor space.

“Artist housing is linked to Berkeley Rep’s commitment to providing art of the highest caliber,” says Sarah. “We want to create a living space where artists could work and create the best art for our stage — where they could also make a home away from home.”

What’s more, other local nonprofits can benefit from Berkeley Rep’s new building. “We’ll have a few apartment units that other companies — like Aurora Theatre, Freight & Salvage, and organizations in Oakland — can rent on a short-term basis,” says Susie. “We’ve made space at our theatres and at our Harrison Street campus available for public use for many years, and we’re pleased to be able to do the same with our new building.”

From the start, the City of Berkeley, its staff, and its Office of Economic Development have thrown their full support behind the project, which is expected to be completed in early 2021. “The need to develop artist housing is essential for the sustainability of Berkeley’s world-renowned cultural arts community,” says Mayor Jesse Arreguín. Our block of Addison Street is already a thriving, dynamic cultural ecosystem, and Berkeley Rep’s new building will further enhance the importance of the arts district in downtown Berkeley.
THE ORIGIN STORY

BERKELEY REP’S PREVIOUS ARTISTIC DIRECTOR Tony Taccone first encountered Culture Clash in San Francisco in the 1980s, when he was the artistic director at the Eureka Theatre Company. The Latino group had just begun to grow their Bay Area fame as sketch comedians, and when Taccone cast Ricardo Salinas and Richard Montoya in Eureka Theatre’s The Roosters in 1987, a collaboration began. When Taccone joined Berkeley Rep as associate artistic director, he and then Artistic Director Sharon Ott commissioned Culture Clash in 1990 to create The Yo, Frankiel Show, a satirical children’s show that toured Northern California schools.

By the late 1990s, Culture Clash was traveling the country. They had transformed their comedy shows from collections of standup and sketches into three-act plays. One such play was their take on Aristophanes’ The Birds. This “postmodern funk-punk fun” adaptation, produced by Berkeley Rep in 1998, satirized Berkeley culture and featured a four-piece band in place of a Greek chorus. Their swashbuckling Zorro in Hell, based on the legendary masked vigilante who defends the oppressed in Spanish California, played here in 2006.

Along with these reworkings of classic myths and tales, Culture Clash produced site-specific plays based on interviews. Their documentary theatre career exploded in the late 1990s with plays based on communities across the country, including SF’s Mission District; Washington, D.C.; and Miami. In 2001, they compiled the various characters and storylines from each of these site-specific pieces into a big mashup performance they called Culture Clash in AmeriCCa. Produced by Berkeley Rep in 2002, Culture Clash in AmeriCCa brought what the Clasheros call “social archaeology”—an unearthing of the diverse cultural experiences they encountered across the country—into a multilayered comedic play that resonated strongly with audiences.

Fast forward nearly 20 years. The strands of Berkeley Rep’s past with Culture Clash and our love for longtime Berkeley Rep director Lisa Peterson wove together at the perfect time to produce Culture Clash (Still) in America. This show, grown from Culture Clash in AmeriCCa and reworked to reflect our world today, played at South Coast Rep late last year. The Clasheros return to Berkeley with a script that integrates their insider Bay Area knowledge and responds to our ever-changing current political climate. Culture Clash, as always, stirs up the wackiness that is America, filters it through their fantastic sense of humor, and makes some noise.
Hi! This is Charlie calling from Berkeley Rep! I have some questions about *Culture Clash (Still) in America* and your creative process in general, does that sound—

Richard Montoya: Horrible!

—like what you’re prepared for?

RM: Sounds horrible!

Herbert Siguenza: You know what I say? I say that’s malarkey.

Malarkey. Great! So, *Culture Clash (Still) in America* has (Still) stuck right in the middle. Because it’s a re-thinking of *Culture Clash in AmeriCCa*, which was at Berkeley Rep nearly 20 years ago now. Can you talk about what inspired the original piece and why you’re revisiting it this year?

RM: Enthusiastic, chipper Charlie. This is Montoya. What was the goddamn question again? Ah, I remember. A couple years before *Culture Clash in AmeriCCa*, we were taking our plays around the country. Sometime between going to Miami and the Lower East Side of New York it became clear to us that we needed to record the stories of the amazing people that we were meeting. It wasn’t an over-night decision. Prior to this kind of site-specific work—which Anna Deavere Smith and Danny Hoch were also doing right at the same time—our work was about our Chicano identity and Latino existence in the urban centers of America. Those shows were popular, got us all over the country. But while we were in these cultural hot spots, we thought, “We’ve gotta turn the camera and the recorders around to the people that we’re talking to.” And the gambit worked because people had something fascinating to say. They were boiling cauldrons of culture—and different cultures, in Miami, y’know, we met gentile Anglo-South people. We met African Americans from the Deep South, we met Jewish Americans, we met Cubans, we met Dominicans and Venezuelans, and so our head was really swimming with authentic voices, and we thought, “That’s the show.” There was something really alive in that relationship between Culture Clash and the people we were interviewing. We worked really hard to interview cops, border patrol agents—not just the
WE’RE LIKE JAZZ MUSICIANS, THE THREE OF US. WE’VE BEEN TOGETHER FOR 35 YEARS AND, Y’KNOW, I CAN SEE WHAT HERBERT’S GONNA DO, WHAT RICHARD’S GONNA BE.”

RICARDO SALINAS

border crosser, but the border patrol agent. Sheriffs, doctors, lawyers, homeless people, transgender people, the gay and lesbian community in San Francisco. It allowed us access to a part of the American culture I don’t think we would have got to as fast.

HS: The original Culture Clash in AmeriCCa was a compilation of different characters that we pulled from the different site-specific plays like Radio Mambo, Anthems, Mission Magic Mystery Tour, and Bordertown. Then, it wasn’t about one specific city anymore, it was about America in general. Tony [Taccone, Berkeley Rep’s previous artistic director] helped us put that show together.

Ricardo Salinas: What’s great about doing this work now is we’ve actually aged into some of the monologues. We’re now more mature, we’re better actors also! To have these plays directed by Taccone and now Lisa Peterson is just really fine-tuning our work as actors. We’re like jazz musicians, the three of us. We’ve been together for 35 years and, y’know, I can see what Herbert’s gonna do, what Richard’s gonna be. We’re also putting the lens on each other. We’re interviewing, and as we’re portraying these characters we have a Culture Clash member onstage, a chronicler. Because that’s what we’re doing — we’re chronicling, we’re doing storytelling, the oldest art form. And for us to be working with Lisa Peterson is just a gift.

HS: We have a 20-year record with Lisa.
RS: So when we’re gonna be looking at our characters that we’ve done before, or that we’re revisiting, or re-editing, it’s just brand new. It’s a brand-new piece.

How exactly does your collaboration work with Lisa?
RM: It starts with the writing. We have a certain language with Lisa. She has a way of helping us shape the work. The trick is to get the script up on its feet and start shaping it live with her. Back to the whole idea of (Still), that word “still” is about us as Culture Clash. That word is about three chroniclers that are still out there doing the job. It’s not that we wanted to make characters out of ourselves, but y’know, dammit, we were there and we drag all that equipment with us through the night. And the only way to talk to people is by sitting down across from them. Also, Trump’s America has very much impacted (Still). The show always was about voices in the margin, and with a lot of immigrant stories tied in, but that’s even more centralized now. And so this atmosphere — this moment that this country’s in right now — is very much impacting the work. We and Lisa are both living this life that, yes we’re artists, but there’s a responsibility to be an American citizen, so 25 years later we’re back in the streets, we’re back marching, we’re marching with our sisters, we’re marching with our immigrants, so we’re not taking this lightly and we’re not taking it quietly.

HS: Still here.

Still here. A lot of those stories are pretty serious, and you might even call some of the stories tragic, so why the comedic bent of the show?

HS: The stories stay serious, but we contrast them with other characters that have a lot more humor. The dark is dark, we don’t make fun of that. And then we know that some characters are much lighter. But even the light characters in our play have something to say, it’s not like they’re just frivolous. There’s a pain, or there’s a tragedy under it, or loneliness. Something underneath the laughter.

RS: I just wanted to go back a bit to Lisa Peterson. We’re three Latino actors and writers, and being a Latino in this theatre world is, y’know, you only get so many chances to get on the big stage. Yet, Lisa sees us as almost like a blank canvas, y’know? We can get into roles that are not ethnically specific to who we are — we are portraying THE STORIES STAY SERIOUS, BUT WE CONTRAST THEM WITH OTHER CHARACTERS THAT HAVE A LOT MORE HUMOR. BUT EVEN THE LIGHT CHARACTERS IN OUR PLAY HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY.”

HERBERT SIGUENZ

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HERBERT SIGUENZA
other ethnicities and other genders, even. And so for us to work with Lisa, she sees us as shapeshifters. We’re not just coming in as Latinos into a theatre — you get pigeonholed or you get stereotyped — it’s just really rewarding for us to be seen on par with anybody else who’s onstage.

HS: Yeah, and the kids that are in cages look a lot like our kids, y’know? And it’s very hard to be onstage and doing a musical at this point, y’know? It doesn’t seem responsible at all.

RM: Unless it’s Kiss My Aztec! That deserves to be onstage. Teacher’s pet. Boopadaboopadaboopadaboop.

Yes it does!

RM: I want to go back to something that you asked, Charlie. Our comedy is never a matter of turning a dramatic monologue funny. The humor is much more in the tension of sitting across from someone who’s deadly serious about something, but there’s a cultural misunderstanding. The awkwardness — what are these three guys doing in the home of a Haitian man, why are we in the prison talking to people. There’s funny situations that arise out of that. We are comedic opportunists, looking for the opportunity where we’re in the darkness and a little shred of light comes in and it completely impacts the evening. Comedy has to be performed because you know right then and there if it’s working or if it’s not. Drama, we can go the whole night — How was it? Oh it was wonderful. Or, it was dreadful. Comedy? No. It lets you know, on the spot, if it’s working or not.

You’re all living in LA, in California. What draws you here?

HS: We’re not the young bucks that used to go around the country staying at Motel 6 sharing a room with triple bunk beds, y’know? But we did that. I mean, we’ve been to Texas, New York — you name it, we’ve been there — check out our trajectory. Just recently, though, California — it’s a hotbed. We’re leading sometimes the dialogue that’s going around the country. So I think we’re at the right spot.

RS: Coming to Berkeley Rep is an honor because it’s a theatre that has pushed the envelope in the regional scene and in the greater scope of American theatre. And we’re glad to be part of that history.

RM: We originally started in the Mission District of San Francisco, so coming to Berkeley Rep is gonna be a great homecoming. There’s a lotta places that know our work, and a lotta new folks that have never seen us. I think people are going to respond to this kind of blue collar theatre that celebrates the worker and also celebrates the interview subjects. It celebrates the country that we know is better than our current state. We don’t have to be caging children at the fucking border. This is not the America that we foresaw. We thought we saw the worst of it, and here we are now with policies, and a vitriol, and a xenophobia, focused squarely at our people. It’s time to replant that flag for people in the Bay Area to see our kind of theatre again. I’ve worked very closely with Campo Santo in the Bay, I’m excited to be near and around them, we just did the 60th anniversary for the Mime Troupe, y’know, all of our heroes are there.

RS: We do still bring in a new audience no matter where we play, and we love grooving with the subscribers who we love! We used to make fun of subscribers saying they were too old, and what do they know, but they’ve got years and years of theatre knowledge that surprises us, whether they’re conservative or whether they’re liberal. And it’s gonna be comedy ultimately as a way to spoon-feed some of these heavy subject matters. It’s a great night of theatre for folks. They usually leave thinking and laughing.

RM: We were in Chicago, not long ago, and we did a version of this, and the audience was packed with African-American and Latino kids, and mixed in with them was the graduate theatre class of DePaul University. To have both those groups side-by-side vibing and feeling with lots of tears and lots of laughter. The most important thing is not that they see three actors and writers, but what they see in this show is something that they could easily do. They could go record with their iPhones: their grandmother, their grandfather, their moms, their people, their preacher, the cops on the street — they can go record and make a show in the same way that we made a show. That’s very empowering. That’s why I said the word “blue collar.” Those are the moments.

HS: It’s important to develop a new audience. The audience is the teacher.
THE CULTURE CLASH STORY BEGINS with René Yañez, the curator of the Galería de la Raza in San Francisco. Yañez, one of the first people to introduce the contemporary concept of Mexico’s Day of the Dead to the U.S., thrived on supporting Latino and Chicano artists of all genres in his space. In 1984, Yañez gathered actors/writers Richard Montoya, Ricardo Salinas, Herbert Siguenza, Marga Gomez, Monica Palacios, and the late José Antonio Burciaga to form the comedy troupe now known as Culture Clash. The group bonded over a shared sense of humor — something they all felt was lacking in the performance art scene at the time. Referring to that period of time, Montoya said, “Even in Chicano literature, there is a humor that goes back to a very Mexican sensibility of life and death and irony.” The comedy troupe, originally called Comedy Fiesta, performed shows together until the late 1980s, when Gomez, Palacios, and Burciaga left the group to explore other interests. The remaining three members are still going strong.

Herbert Siguenza, born in San Francisco of Salvadorian descent, saw a lot of circus in El Salvador that influenced his work with Culture Clash. He graduated from California College of Arts and Crafts with a degree in art, printmaking, and silk-screening. After serving as the art director at La Raza Graphics Center — a hub for community political posters — he moved into theatre, sparked by the famed Luis Valdez play Zoot Suit. He said, “It was just another tool, another way of expressing or communicating to the people. When Culture Clash happened… I found my place because I was about to be myself, my bicultural self, and it just felt right, very natural and very organic, because we were able to be ourselves…the good and the bad.” Siguenza has since become the playwright-in-residence at San Diego Repertory Theatre and served as cultural consultant and voice actor for the Pixar film Coco.

Ricardo Salinas, born El Salvador, grew up in San Francisco in the Mission District and graduated from SF State. Though his degrees are in broadcasting and communication, he stumbled into theatre as well. He said, “I was doing teatro and it was all kinds of angry, political theatre — sometimes a little bit too dogmatic.” He rapped in Spanish and English, did breakdancing, and honed his skills as an actor in his early days as a performer. One incident comes up again and again in profiles on Salinas: in 1989 he saw a kid being beaten up outside his house, ran for help, was hit by bullets from a sawed-off shotgun, and landed in the hospital where he lay comatose for three days. This incident informed his writing and acting choices: he has subsequently acted in plays that tackle the topics of gang violence and immigration, and has written skits about both topics for Culture Clash as well.

Richard Montoya, born in San Diego, moved north with his family as a child, living in Oakland, Marysville, Lincoln, and other small towns. Eventually his family settled in Sacramen-
An adaptation of Aristophanes’ The Birds, where his father, José Montoya, co-founded an artistic collective called the Royal Chicano Air Force (rcaf) in 1969. The collective expressed the goals of the Chicano civil rights and labor organizing movement of the United Farm Workers. rcaf painted murals, printed silkscreens, performed theatre, and disseminated photography—all of it bicultural/bilingual, available to the public, and inherently participatory. Greatly influenced by his father’s work, Montoya said, “I remember as a child, when the first Delano-to-Sacramento farmworker march landed in—I believe it was ’66 or ’67—my mom and a lot of the women would cook for the masses. There were like five to ten thousand farmworkers, camped out in parks. I remember like three o’clock in the morning, I was helping peel potatoes or something, and everybody was camped out like Zapata’s army, except about every five hundredth person, you’d see a light, a flashlight or a lantern, and a kind of slumped-over body that wasn’t sleeping, and I asked my mom, ‘Who are those people?’ She goes, ‘Those are the people who are writing about what’s happening right now. Those are the people that are documenting what’s going on.’ That burned an image in my head that one day I wanted to be one of those people.”

Culture Clash creates theatre collaboratively, since they are all writers and performers. Inspired by the comedy of Lenny Bruce, Richard Pryor, Charlie Chaplin, and the Mexican comedian Cantinflas, their sense of humor equally offended and tickled audiences. When they started out performing at La Peña Cultural Center in Berkeley or at The Public Theater in New York audiences would boo at their political incorrectness. They shot out jokes about Frida Kahlo and Che Guevara—sacred figures to many—and countered the narrative that only projecting positive images would help Latino people “get ahead.” Montoya said, “We’re very interested in the notion that our people as a whole can advance…it means exploring dysfunction, it means exploring all those little dark secrets that we’ve tucked away for so long.” This approach developed in contrast with the serious sensibility many took when it came to representation of Latino people in the U.S. The Clasheros (as they are also known) purposefully shook up assumptions by playing characters from all walks of life, many derived from real-life interviews they conducted across the country.

These interviews and jokes come together to create a kind of performance collage. History, journalism, music, and poetry filter through a distinctly Chicano point of view—what performance artist Guillermo Gómez-Peña describes as “reverse anthropology.” Layering is inherent to the group’s work: even as the actors play a character, they are always simultaneously performing themselves. Scholar Antonia Nakano Glenn argues that “Montoya, Salinas and Siguenza have continued to play the roles of activist clowns, resisting, subverting and hijacking the very productions that they write and perform…They enact familiar performative signatures: Richard is acerbic and lewd, and recites spoken word poetry; Ric is sweet and earnest, and does rap and a variety of dances, from breakdancing to salsa; Herbert is more serious, and is known for his comical impersonations.” Something Culture Clash is known for is breaking the fourth wall to talk directly to the audience. Even though their venues have grown—they’ve even aired an SNL-style Latino sketch comedy TV show—the Clasheros maintain an authenticity in how they talk to their audiences. This style follows in the footsteps of their theatrical forebears: commedia dell’arte, San Francisco Mime Troupe, and Luis Valdez’s El Teatro Campesino. That artist-audience connection informs how the material changes from night to night.

Part of what makes Culture Clash’s work stand out is recognizing where it sits within the theatrical landscape. When they first traveled throughout the regional theatre circuit, they broke ground as some of the first Latino artists to play at those theatres. Happily, they became forerunners to a whole new wave of Latino playwrights and comedians. But the Clasheros never rest on their laurels. Their prolific work is relentlessly obsessed with America and how different cultures literally clash. Who lives in the margins of this society? What do they have to say? Where are their struggles and conflicts? By bringing voices from their travels into the room with us, and layering their own strong personalities into the work, they hold the very complicated country that is America in their hands.

**THE BIRDS (1998)**

*An adaptation of Aristophanes’ The Birds for South Coast Rep and Berkeley Rep. As episodic as a TV sitcom, The Birds is about two people from “the greatest nation on Earth” who set out to find what they’re missing on Earth by entering the celestial, seemingly uncomplicated realm of birds.*

**NYUORICAN STORIES (1999)**

*Explores the lives of several well-known Nuyorican, Puerto Ricans, African Americans, and Chicanos from the past 30 years.*

**MISSION MAGIC MYSTERY TOUR (2001)**

*A mourning and remembering of the neighborhood from which Culture Clash sprang. In this show, they recall the Mission District of the past, where Jerry Garcia, Carlos Santana, and the Brown Buffalo once met up, and the Mission of today, filled with hipsters, addicts, and mariachis.*

**ANTHEMS: CULTURE CLASH IN THE DISTRICT (2002)**

*This DC-focused show takes a look at the city in the aftermath of 9/11. Characters include a Jordanian cabbie, a local electric company worker, postal employees, patrons of a fundraising event at the zoo, a newly arrived Salvadoran waiter who’s struck by the populace he encounters (“Where are the gringos?”), and even the much-beloved former parking lot attendant at Arena Stage, where the show premiered.*

**CHAVEZ RAVINE (2003)**

*An interview-based look at the controversial history of Chavez Ravine, the immigrant community that once existed on the site that is now Dodger Stadium in Los Angeles.*

**ZORRO IN HELL (2006)**

*A Berkeley Rep premiere, this play uses Zorro’s legend to explore homeland security in the Wild West—when Anglo Americans struggled with Mexican immigration, Indian gambling, and a governor born on foreign soil.*
We can place several of our Chicano writers, intellectuals, art students, activists, potential café society lotharios, gallery rats, and poets on Telegraph Avenue in the fall of 1959. While Che & Fidel descended unto Havana from the jungles looking like bushy rock stars our forebears arrived in Berkeley carrying a hunger sharpened in the bitter fields of the San Joaquin yet emboldened with their GI Bills following dedicated service to country in the Pacific Theater.

The very same Chicano poets who hung out on infamous Lower East Side streets in New York City with Miguel Piñero and the Nuyorican Poets in the early '70s first found their swagger on these East Bay streets. This lit fact is blood-rooted in our creative dna; it's baked into the anthology of our own work and continues to yield good stuff you will see on the boards tonight. It also provides for Culture Clash a sort of literary timeline and landscape that puts our poets and Brechtian clowns on the same blocks at the same time as the legendary Beats as they Howled from North Beach to the Berkeley Library and every café, bar, and house party happening in between.

Two Clash co-founders were born in 1959, José Montoya, legendary poet laureate of Sacramento and ring master of the Royal Chicano Air Force collective, packed his growing family into a green Chevy and enrolled into the California College of Arts & Crafts (CCAC) on College Avenue that very year. Soon several of his compadres including Esteban Villa, Roy Scott, Ralph Ornelas, and Queso Torrez opened a tiny art gallery on Telegraph Avenue christened the Three Seater in the bustling neighborhood. Montoya, also a part-time teacher at Oakland High, moved his family into the coveted Lockwood Housing Projects in the Fruitvale neighborhood of Oaktown — at that time waiting lists held the names of those anxious for domicile at this government housing leviathan. The projects were packed with university students, pre-hippy collectives, Russian, Jewish, Armenian, African American, Mexican American, Asian American, and every kind of American co-existed in this post-war housing experiment with its inherent echoes of co-op socialist romance! Communal gardens anybody? Mint-me People's Parks in the people's projects before the People's Park!

If we could transport ourselves, time travel in a hot tub perhaps back to Telegraph Avenue and the Bay Area in '59 what would we find? A more genteel Berkeley perhaps with entire families of all ethnicities living next to artists and poets and students. We may also find a certain American restlessness, a refusal to drift up the suburban tributaries to the sleepy northeast bedroom metropolises of Tracy or Sacramento!

I see Los Vatos crossing Telegraph near Robbie's and a notorious chop suey joint discussing Bauhaus and “La Bam-ba” where they once tangled with members of the Hells Angels from the infamous Oakland charter over a stolen book written by Jack Kerouac: Mexico City Blues printed in — wait for it — 1959!

The stories and storytelling emanating from these very Berkeley streets and East Bay mitos at this very specific moment continue to reverberate with loud echoes in our plays, our poems, and our scholarship now more than ever. Like the early CCAC crew that would embark on the shores of Emeryville to construct driftwood sculptures whose roots can be traced forward to Burning Man, the stories and wood though weathered richly burnish over time.

René Yañez, Culture Clash founder established in 1984, Godfather, and noted instigator of the first U.S. Day of the
Dead and primary carrier of Frida Kahlo awareness, would arrive and join the ranks of our pioneering existential vatos.

At a recent gathering of good folks observing the 60th anniversary of the San Francisco Mime Troupe, the projected film strip history and archival footage began in 1959, through the years the familiar faces and the lives of those committed comrades to art & social justice of the Mime Troupe began to collide with our own: Legendary East Bay Printmaker Malaquías Montoya’s Mime Troupe posters give us another sense of purpose, place, and pride.

I caught glimpses of Jack Wicker, the Mime Troupe musician, elegant horn player, and original artistic director of The Farm as he flickered across the screen sometime after Peter Coyote and before a young ingénue named Sharon Lockwood. Mr. Wicker who lived on a boathouse on Mission Creek was cut from the whole cloth of working-class Irish American kids from the Mission whose parents worked at Bethlehem Steel. Jack was an early California History buff who aided us immeasurably with piano, song, and text for an early Zorro in Hell workshop for Berkeley Rep and Mr. Taccone.

If you ever heard Jerry Garcia or Carlos Santana at the Greek Theatre, or Mercedes Sosa at the Berkeley Civic, their guitar riffs and voices soaring high above the green puffs of clouds carried similar stories and trajectories.

A few streets over and decades later on Shattuck Avenue we found the old studios of KPFA Radio where we cut our first comedy jams with Miguel “Gavilán” Molina and Chuy Varela for La Onda Bajita, the oldest Lowrider and social Justice radio show in the U.S. Here we met a young Michael Franti who was as bemused by us as we were taken by his majestic gorgeousness!

A bit further down Shattuck we met los Chilenos de La Peña Cultural Center, where some of our earliest paying gigs for a sometimes-indifferent audience occurred, but we were never 86’d from La Peña! A badge of pride though we probably should have been. No, the Chilean Brothers & Sisters were patient with us, most of Berkeley was really, like they waited for us to grow up and discover Nueva Canción and to know what true exile on the American Continent meant. “Que Viva El Victor Jara y Los Chilenos!” we cry anew as Chile roils yet again!

Berkeley it seems has always been generous and giving. Ours is a western romance born in and of The West, after all, those telegraph lines on the avenues have carried written and spoken word since the 1800s. Our Maestros must be bowed too as well! The fierce poetas and revolutionary filmmakers who taught us here: Lourdes Portillo, Lucha Corpi, Lorna Dee Cervantes, and seminal artist Yolanda López whose Cal classes are legend. Respect too to Philip Kan Gotanda, Robert Bedoya, Donald & LoEshé Lacy!

May the East Bay inspire new generations of Latinx writers and artists!

Oakland, you gave us our empathy, our sense of purpose. Your unions and respect of labor for nurses and teachers and shipyard workers inspires us!

Sister Berkeley/Mother Oakland you both gave us our sense of our history and of ourselves in equal measure. And so this return to the East Bay of her prodigal sons, back to Addison Street, back to Berkeley Rep with longtime collaborator and director Lisa Peterson for the inaugural season of Johanna Pfaelzer is both honor and duty! At Berkeley Rep we continue a ceremonial circle, street ritual, and comedic locura we did not create but now in our role as chroniclers will humbly carry headwaters carefully dipped from the cool confluence on Telegraph Ave. Where our People had gathered before...
"PLAYFUL AND PIQUANT...CHARMING COMEDY OF ADOLESCENT ANGST"
WASHINGTON POST

SCHOOL GIRLS;
OR, THE AFRICAN MEAN GIRLS PLAY

BY JOCelyn BIOH
DIRECTED BY AWOYE TIMPO
RODA THEATRE · STARTS MAR 19
CULTURE CLASH (STILL) IN AMERICA

WRITTEN AND PERFORMED BY
CULTURE CLASH
RICHARD MONTOYA,
RICARDO SALINAS,
AND HERBERT SIGUENZA

DIRECTED BY
LISA PETERSON

FEBRUARY 20–APRIL 5, 2020
PEET’S THEATRE · MAIN SEASON
This show is performed without an intermission.

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CAST
Richard Montoya
Ricardo Salinas
Herbert Siguenza

PRODUCTION STAFF
Christopher Acebo
Carolyn Mazuca
Tom Ontiveros
Paul James Prendergast
Dani Bae

The actors and stage manager are members of Actors’ Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

Affiliations
The director is a member of the Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers, Inc., an independent national labor union. The Scenic, Costume, Lighting, and Sound Designers in LORT Theatres are represented by United Scenic Artists Local usa-829, iatse.
CULTURE CLASH
WRITERS/PERFORMERS
Culture Clash has previously appeared at Berkeley Rep’s larger stages in The Birds, the world premiere of Culture Clash in AméricaCa, and the world premiere of Culture Clash’s Zorro in Hell. 2019 marks their 35th anniversary as a vital American theatre company with works ranging from satire to social realism and drama, with adaptations of Aristophanes’ The Birds, Peace, and Frogs aka Sapo to co-writing Frank Loesser’s long-lost musical, Señor Discretion Himself, based on a story by the late Budd Schulberg. In 2007 Water & Power won the LA Drama Critics Circle Award, and in 2016 they received a Best Production of the Year Ovation Award for their critically acclaimed play Chavez Ravine, remounted at the Kirk Douglas Theatre. In collaboration with the Long Beach Opera, Culture Clash premiered a remixed, reimagined, and refreshed adaptation of Fairy Queen by Henry Purcell, based on Shakespeare’s A Midsummer Night’s Dream (2017). In the spring of 2018, Culture Clash premiered Bordertown Now at the Pasadena Playhouse and remounted Culture Clash (Still) in America at the South Coast Rep in now blue Orange County! Founded in 1984 on May 5 (Cinco de Mayo) in San Francisco’s historic Mission District, Culture Clash is Richard Montoya, Ricardo Salinas, and Herbert Siguenza. This prolific group’s plays include American Night: The Ballad of Juan José (2010) for Oregon Shakespeare Festival (Ashland, Ore.), This play was selected to launch o5s’s “American Revolutions: The United States History Cycle,” along with other writers David Henry Hwang, Suzan-Lori Parks, Naomi Wallace, and Robert Schenkkan. Their work has been produced by the nation’s leading theatres including the Mark Taper Forum, Lincoln Center, The Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, La Jolla Playhouse, Huntington Theatre Company (Boston), Alley Theatre (Houston), South Coast Repertory, and Seattle Repertory Theatre, to name a few. Culture Clash’s site-specific theatre work weaves personal narratives culled from interviews bringing voices in from the margins of the U.S. to create an ongoing dramatic American tapestry. Culture Clash has three books of compilations: Culture Clash: Life, Death and Revolutionary Comedy, Culture Clash in AméricaCa, and Oh Wild West: The California Plays with tcg Books and several books by Samuel French for Montoya’s three solo plays: Water & Power; American Night; and Palestine, New Mexico.

New works include films based on their plays and a Broadway musical on the life of Ritchie Valens with music by Los Lobos and directed by Tony Tomlin! Culture Clash (Still) in America marks their return to the Bay from which they were creatively born and caps a long and fruitful relationship with director Lisa Peterson and her team of amazing designers. Los Clasheros look forward to more years of making critical noise and infusing their work with social justice and searing satire. Which was the original intent on a corner in San Francisco’s Mission District with curator René Yañez in 1984! Orale!

LISA PETERSON
DIRECTOR
Lisa, formerly Berkeley Rep’s associate director, returns to the Theatre, where she directed The Good Book (also co-written with Denis O’Hare), Office Hour, Watch on the Rhine, It Can’t Happen Here, Madwoman in the Volvo, An Iliad (also co-written with Denis O’Hare), Mother Courage, The Fall, and Antony & Cleopatra. She directed Lauren Yee’s The Great Leap at American Conservatory Theatre last year. At Center Theatre Group, she recently directed Lynn Nottage’s Sweat as well as Culture Clash’s Chavez Ravine (2015 Ovation Award, Best Production); Palestine, New Mexico, and Water & Power; among other Theatre. She co-wrote and directed An Iliad with Denis O’Hare (Broad Stage, New York Theatre Workshop, Obie and Lucille Lortel awards). A two-time Obie Award winner, she has directed world premieres by Tony Kushner, Beth Henley, Naomi Wallace, Chay Yew, Luis Alfaro, Fernanda Coppel, David Henry Hwang, Stephen Belber, Jose Rivera, Ellen McLaughlin, Marlene Meyer, Philip Kan Gotanda, Lisa Ramirez, John Belluso, Caryl Churchill, Janusz Glowacki, Cheryl West, and many others at theatres including New York Theatre Workshop, The Public Theater, Vineyard Theatre, Manhattan Theatre Club, Primary Stages, Guthrie Theater, Actors Theatre of Louisville, Seattle Repertory, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Arena Stage, the Alley, and McCarter Theatre Center. She was associate director at La Jolla Playhouse for three years and resident director at Mark Taper Forum for 10 years. She is currently working on a new version of her musical adaptation of Virginia Woolf’s The Waves, music by David Bucknam and Adam Gwon (premiered at NYTW 1960 and New York Stage and Film 2018); The Song of Rome with Denis O’Hare, commission for the McCarter Theater; and The Idea of Order with composer Todd Almond, commissioned by Berkeley Rep, La Jolla Playhouse, and Seattle Rep.

CHRISTOPHER ACEBO
SCENIC DESIGNER
Christopher returns to Berkeley Rep where he previously designed Culture Clash’s Zorro in Hell. On Broadway, he designed All the Way (2014 Tony Award, Best Play). His regional credits include Oregon Shakespeare Festival (associate artistic director for 13 seasons) with world premieres of All the Way, Equivocation, Head Over Heels, Fingersmith, Mojada, and more than 30 other productions; The Clean House (Lincoln Center Theatre); Throne of Blood (Brooklyn Academy of Music); Zoot Suit, Electricidad, Chavez Ravine, Water & Power, and Living Out (Center Theatre Group); West Side Story (Guthrie Theater); and The Year to Come and Culture Clash’s Zorro in Hell (La Jolla Playhouse). He has designed for Goodman Theatre, Yale Repertory Theatre, South Coast Rep, Denver Center Theatre, The Kennedy Center, and Arizona Theatre Company, among others. He is on the Oregon Arts Commission and has served on the board of Theatre Communications Group. He earned his MFA from UC San Diego. acebocreative.com

CAROLYN MAZUCA
COSTUME DESIGNER
Carolyn is a freelance costume designer based in Los Angeles. Her designs have most recently decorated productions of Mojada: A Madea in Los Angeles at St. Louis Repertory, Mother Road at Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Culture Clash (Still) in America at South Coast Repertory, and Earl’s Birds at Atwater Village Theatre. Carolyn is the costume designer for upcoming productions of Mother Road at Arena Stage and Everything That Never Happened at Oregon Shakespeare Festival. Carolyn also pursues costume work in the film and TV industry, working on productions such as Kids Baking Championship, My Dinner with Hervé, and Coop and Cami Ask the World. Most recently, Carolyn is the costume designer of What?, a black and white silent film where a deaf actor, sick of agreeing to increasingly humiliating tasks just to get a role, decides to take matters into his own hands. Carolyn can’t wait to see what amazing future projects await her! carolynmazuca.com

TOM ONTIVEROS
LIGHTING AND PROJECTION DESIGNER
Tom’s Off-Broadway credits include The Exonerated (The Culture Project) and Tune in Festival (Park Avenue Armory). His other New York credits include Happy Days (The Flea Theater), Patience, Fortitude and Other Antidepressants (NNTAR Theatre), Nada Que Declarar (Danspace Project), and Veils, Vestiges and the Aesthetics of Hidden Things (Ontological-Hysteric Theater). His regional theatre credits include The Constant Wife (Denver Center for the Performing Arts); Othello, Romeo and Juliet, Off the Rails (Oregon Shakespeare Festival); Native Gardens (Pasadena Playhouse); Underneath the Lintel (Geffen Playhouse); They Don’t Talk Back (Geffen Playhouse); and The White Witch (Geffen Playhouse). His Los Angeles credits include Figure 1920 (LA Opera); Vietgone, Animals Out of Paper (West End Players); and Café Vida, Seed, West Hollywood Musical (Corner-
County Museum of Art, and Autry National Center. His dance credits include Diavolo Dance Theatre, Momix, and Parsons Dance. His honors include a Grammy Award nomination, Broadway World, Ovation, Drama-Logue, Garland, Gregory, Footlight, and Gypsy awards. His work as a singer/songwriter has been featured in films, on recordings, and in music venues nationwide.

DANI BAE
STAGE MANAGER
Dani is thrilled to be working at Berkeley Repertory Theatre. Local credits include Testmatch, Her Portmanteau, Heisenberg, The Birthday Party, and A Thousand Splendid Suns (American Conservatory Theatre); The Year of Magical Thinking, Detroit '67, and Dry Powder (Aurora Theatre Company). Other SM credits include A Thousand Splendid Suns (Arena Stage, Seattle Repertory Theatre), Urinetown: The Musical (American Theatre of Actors), and the Bard Music Festival (Bard SummerScape). She has a BFA in stage management from Syracuse University.

JOHANNA PFÄLZER
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
Johanna is delighted to join Berkeley Rep, and honored to serve as its fourth artistic director. She recently spent 12 years as the artistic director of New York Stage and Film (NYSAF), a New York City–based organization dedicated to the development of new works for theatre, film, and television. NYSAF is known for providing a rigorous and nurturing environment for writers, directors, and other artists to realize work that has gone on to production at the highest levels of the profession. Notable works that were developed under Johanna’s leadership include the 2016 Tony Award winners Hamilton by Lin-Manuel Miranda, and The Humans by Stephen Karam, The Wolves by Sarah DeLappe, Junk and The Invisible Hand by Ayad Akhtar, A 24-Decade History of Popular Music by Taylor Mac, Hadestown by Anaïs Mitchell, The Homecoming Queen by Ngozi Anyanwu, The Great Leap by Lauren Yee, John Patrick Shanley’s Pulitzer- and Tony Award–winning Doubt, The Fortress of Solitude by Michael Friedman and Itamar Moses, The Jacksonian by Beth Henley, and Green Day’s American Idiot.

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 (TCG), organizations that represent the interests of nonprofit theatres across the nation. Susan chaired panels for the Massachusetts Arts Council and has also served on program panels for Arts Midwest, the Joyce Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts. Closer to home, she is the founding chair of the Berkeley Arts in Education Steering Committee for Berkeley Unified School District and the Berkeley Cultural Trust, and served on the board of the Downtown Berkeley Association. Susan serves on the faculty of Yale School of Drama

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I just moved back to the Bay Area ... the TBA membership was the first thing I got to reacquaint myself with the Bay Area community.”

Actor Melissa Wol/Klain
2019 TBA Award Recipient, Outstanding Performance in a Featured Role in a Musical

Audrey Hoo
Production Manager
Audrey fell in love with the wild people and power of storytelling in theatre when she was 18 and has never looked back. With over 20 years of experience in production management, Audrey has worked with a wide range of international artists across all performance arts genres such as Paul Simon, Elaine Stritch, William Kentridge, Sam Mendes, Catherine Martin, and Bill T. Jones, and with institutions such as bam, Esplanade Singapore, La Jolla Playhouse, and American Conservatory Theater. Always loving a new story to tell and another “impossible” technical puzzle to solve, Audrey is grateful to be part of the Berkeley Rep family and is particularly proud to work alongside the immensely talented and dedicated production staff and artisans. Audrey holds an MFA in Technical Direction from the University of North Carolina School of the Arts.

Amy Potozkin
Director of Casting/Artistic Associate
Amy begins her 30th season with Berkeley Rep. Through the years she has also had the pleasure of casting plays for ACT (Seattle), Arizona Theatre Company, Aurora Theatre Company, B Street Theatre, Bay Area Playwrights Festival, Dallas Theater Center, Marin Theatre Company, the Marsh, San Jose Repertory Theatre, Social Impact Productions Inc., and Traveling Jewish Theatre. She worked on various independent films, including Conceiving Ada, starring Tilda Swinton; The 8th Year of the Emergency by Maureen Towey; and is a member of the International Women’s Forum and the Mont Blanc Ladies’ Literary Guild and Trekking Society. She was awarded the 2012 Benjamin Ide Wheeler Medal by the Berkeley Community Fund and the 2017 Visionary Leadership Award by TCG. During her time in Berkeley, Susan has been instrumental in the construction of the Roda Theatre, the Nevo Education Center, the renovation of the Peet’s Theatre, and in the acquisition of the Harrison Street campus. She also worked with three consecutive mayors to help create Berkeley’s Downtown Arts District.

Theresa Von Klug
General Manager
Theresa is excited to begin her fifth season at Berkeley Rep. Previously, she had over 20 years of experience in the New York not-for-profit performing arts sector where she has planned and executed events for dance, theatre, music, television, and film. Her previous positions include the interim general manager for The Public Theater; general manager/line producer for Theatre for a New Audience, where she opened its new state-of-the-art theatre in Brooklyn and filmed a major motion picture of the inaugural production of Julie Taymor’s A Midsummer Night’s Dream, released June 2015; production manager at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center and New York City Center, including the famous Encores! Great American Musicals in Concert; and field representative/lead negotiator for the Association of Theatrical Press Agents and Managers. She holds a MS in Labor Relations and Human Resources Management from Baruch College.
Haiku Tunnel and Love & Taxes, both by Josh Kornbluth; and Beyond Redemption by Britta Sjogren. Amy received her MFA from Brandeis University, where she was also an artist in residence. She has been an audition coach to hundreds of actors and a presentation/communication coach to many businesspeople. She taught acting at Mills College and audition technique at Berkeley Rep’s School of Theatre, and has led workshops at numerous other venues in the Bay Area. Amy is a member of CSA, the Casting Society of America, and received an Artios Award for Excellence in Casting for Angels in America.

MADELEINE OLDHAM
RESIDENT DRAMATURG/DIRECTOR, THE GROUND FLOOR
Madeleine is the director of The Ground Floor: Berkeley Rep’s Center for the Creation and Development of New Work and the Theatre’s resident dramaturg. She oversees commissioning and new play development, and dramaturged the world premiere productions of Fairview, AUBERGINE, THE HOUSE THAT WILL NOT STAND, PASSING STRANGE, and IN THE NEXT ROOM (OR THE VIBRATOR PLAY), among others. As literary manager and associate dramaturg at Center Stage in Baltimore, 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 Theatre in Seattle. 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, the Eugene O’Neill Theatre Center, the Kennedy Center, New Dramatists, Playwrights Center, and Portland Center Stage.

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 26th season as production stage manager. He has also worked with the Huntington Theatre (Boston), The Public Theater and New Victory Theatre (New York), La Jolla Playhouse, Yale Repertory Theatre, and many others. Internationally he has stage managed shows in Hong Kong, the United Kingdom, and Canada. Among his favorite Berkeley Rep productions are ANGELS IN AMERICA, THE INTELLIGENT HOMOSEXUAL’S GUIDE TO CAPITALISM AND SOCIALISM WITH A KEY TO THE SCRIPTURES, EURYDICE, ENDOGANE, THE BEAUX’ STRATAGEM, and MAD FOREST.

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Michelle and Bruce have been ardent supporters of Berkeley Rep since 1993, when they moved with two young children in tow to Berkeley. Their favorite evenings at Berkeley Rep were usually the discussion nights, where often friends would join them for an early dinner, an evening of great theatre, followed by a lively discussion with members of the cast. Over the past 25+ years, Michelle and Bruce have recognized Berkeley Rep’s almost singular role in the
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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. Sue serves on the board of the World of Children. The Steinbergs have always enjoyed regional theatre and are delighted to sponsor Berkeley Rep this season.

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Paul T. Friedman
Nicholas M. Graves
David Hoffman
Richard F. Hoskins
Dale Rogers Marshall
Helen Meyer
Dugan Moore
Peter Pervere
Marjorie Randolph
Patricia Saiki
Jack Scharf
William Schaff
Emily Shanks
Michael Steinberg
Michael Strunsky
Martin Zinkel

Founding Director
Michael W. Leibert

Producing Director, 1968–83

2019–20 ISSUE 4 – THE BERKELEY REP MAGAZINE – 33

STAFF AND BOARD
BERKELEY REP has a robust fellowship program in which 15 intrepid individuals spend a season sharpening their skills in all aspects of the theatre (you can see the current list of fellows on the previous page). Here, scenic art fellow Sam Welsing adds texture to boards that will eventually become part of the set you’re seeing at this performance.

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SATURDAY, APRIL 18, 2020

THE RITZ-CARLTON, SAN FRANCISCO

Join us as we pay tribute to actor, writer, and teacher ANNA DEAVERE SMITH for her many creative achievements and the tremendous influence she has had on the American theatre. Founded up the street from Berkeley Rep in 1966, PEET’S COFFEE has shared the Theatre’s values of excellence in craft, innovation, and community. We’re delighted to celebrate the impact they’ve made in Berkeley and beyond for over 50 years.

Make your reservation today for the party of the season.

BERKELEY REP’S OVATION is a night to celebrate artistic excellence, bold imagination, and ambitious theatre-making. It’s also an evening when we honor those in our artistic and philanthropic communities who have shaped the landscape of the Bay Area and beyond.

TICKETS START AT $750 PER PERSON

Proceeds from OVATION support the work of Berkeley Rep, from its productions to its comprehensive arts education programs, which serve thousands of Bay Area students each year.
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