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IN THIS ISSUE

From the artistic director · 5
From the managing director · 6
Runs in the family: Berkeley Rep inspires generations of theatregoers · 9
What’s in store · 10

FEATURES

PigPen Theatre Co.’s The Tale of Despereaux: A New Musical: the origin story · 12
“Anything can be anything”: PigPen on mice, men, and trusting our imaginations · 12
With the light must come the dark: The brilliance of The Tale of Despereaux · 16

BERKELEY REP PRESENTS

PigPen’s The Tale of Despereaux: A New Musical · 18
Who’s Who · 20

CONTRIBUTORS

Foundation, corporate, and in-kind sponsors · 26
Individual donors to the Annual Fund · 27
Michael Leibert Society · 28

ABOUT BERKELEY REP

Staff, board of trustees, and sustaining advisors · 29

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On the cover
The original cast of The Tale of Despereaux at The Old Globe (photo by Jim Cox)
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A NUMBER OF YEARS AGO, I dragged my son Jasper with me on a weekend afternoon to see a show in a basement downtown, in New York City. These things happen to you when your parents work in theatre. It’s hardly the worst thing, but it can be a bore if you’re 7 years old and would rather be on a soccer field. But that afternoon, Jasper and I were equally captivated by this ridiculously talented ensemble of young men, and a story told with music and puppets full of rough magic, ease and charm, humor, and vast imagination. It was *The Old Man and The Old Moon*, and my first introduction to PigPen Theatre Co.

So I was thrilled to learn last year that PigPen was working with Universal and the director Marc Bruni, bringing their unique perspective and rangy set of skills to the creation of a theatrical version of *The Tale of Despereaux*. The combination of this delightful piece of literature with the inherent cool of an indie band — sounds like Berkeley to me!

In addition to the delight of having a piece of theatre that we can share with our families over the holidays, in these times I especially love the fact that *Despereaux* tells the story of an individual who discovers their strength. Of someone (somemouse?) who comes to understand that the very qualities that separate them from the norm are the traits that will ultimately allow them to realize their own heroism, and help to save their community.

These days I often feel that I, like Despereaux, long to be a knight, setting out to slay a dragon — there are so many that could benefit from some slaying at the moment! I think that’s above my paygrade, but together with the fantastic writer/performers of PigPen, their wonderful castmates, the brilliant Marc Bruni, the amazing design team, and the extraordinary staff here at Berkeley Rep, we can help to create a world in which people are brought together as a community, in the presence of a story that will inspire them to marshal their resources, embrace the things that make them different, and make their kingdoms safe.

Happy holidays from all of us at Berkeley Rep. And a wish that, even as the days grow shorter, we may help each other to find the light.

Warmly,

Johanna Pfaelzer
I CAN VIVIDLY REMEMBER the first production of a play that I attended with my family. It was Oklahoma at Chicago’s Goodman Theatre. And what stands out with such power in my mind is the color! Who knows any longer what color those rows of corn really were. But in my mind, they were greener than green could possibly be. They were more real than real could be. They embodied everything that I still love about the theatre, that heightened sense of reality that both grounds you in the real world while taking you always, ever so slightly, outside of the real. There is the pretense of realism that acknowledges the artificiality of performance. It coexists with my willing suspension of disbelief. I think kids have an innate understanding of the rules of performance. When they play they automatically operate by the same rules. Artificiality coexists with absolute belief in the reality of the moment. There is no contradiction. And that is why it is so much fun to have families in the house this month for The Tale of Despereaux. It is such a pleasure to see adults sharing this space with a new generation of theatregoers.

Oftentimes I will get asked by older members of our audience, “Where are the youngsters?” So much of Berkeley Rep’s programming is created for adults that we, too, put a lot of energy into this question. And while we don’t have all the answers, we have created many opportunities to bring that next generation through our doors. Berkeley Rep has been bringing artists into Bay Area schools since 1985, first with full productions and later with teaching artists. Since the creation of the Berkeley Rep School of Theatre in 2001, we have consistently served over 20,000 people a year. Among those are the thousands who attend both our student matinees and our evening performances. Our Teen Council, which engages over 400 teens from 50 high schools, has become the model for programs across the country. Our thousands of discounts for students have an economic impact that we are happy to absorb. And as we all know, our younger generations are burdened by costs that include high interest student loans and astronomical rents. It was because of that Berkeley Rep raised the age for half-price tickets to anyone under the age of 35. Now, people under 35 often make up over 15 percent of all our single ticket buyers. While that is a number we are proud of, we want that number to keep growing over time.

What we know is that we can always get a new theatregoer to come back. But to do that, we have to get them here for the first time. That’s where we need your help. The Tale of Despereaux is the perfect introduction for many young people to live theatre. If tonight you came with your spouse or friend, thank you! Now would you think about what young person you might bring back with you for a second time? Make sure Despereaux is on their radar.

You’ve seen our banner: Be A Rep. This is exactly what we mean by that. Be a Rep. Stand by us, and be our champion. Help us create a next generation of theatre lovers.

Best regards,

Susie Medak
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Gary Wilmes, Laurena Allan, Scott Shepherd, and Annie McNamara in Gatz
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WHEN SANDY YUEN’S DAUGHTER JAMIE WAS 7, they went to see *Rent* on Broadway. At intermission, waiting in line for the restroom, another woman gave Sandy a scandalized glare. “I told her, ‘We’re from San Francisco,’” Sandy says, laughing, “and she just looked so relieved!” It wasn’t the first time that Sandy took her daughter to the theatre, and it certainly wouldn’t be the last.

Sandy and her husband, Larry Shore, started bringing Jamie to Berkeley Rep when Jamie was around 10 years old, and added her as a subscriber when she was about 12. The very first show they went to together was *36 Views* by Naomi Iizuka. The play was slightly more adult than Sandy realized: “It had an adult scene in it that caught me off guard — I remember trying to cover Jamie’s eyes, and she pushed my hand away!” Sandy laughs. She remembers Jamie later telling her that “Mom must have thought I was pretty mature to bring me to this play!” According to Sandy, “It was a very sophisticated play...but obviously it didn’t turn her off to theatre.” She originally chose the play because it was created by a mixed-race playwright. Sandy and her family are mixed Asian and white, so she often seeks out plays with diverse artists. “I think it meant a lot to her, and [Jamie] remembers seeing a play written by somebody kind of like Jamie.”

They continued seeing plays together throughout the years. Jamie attended Stanford, but she would still visit Berkeley to see plays with her family. In fact, Sandy says that “when she got into Stanford, one of the first things she said was ‘I get to still come to Berkeley Rep!’ I was kind of caught off guard. Obviously it’s important to me, but it wouldn’t have been the first thing I thought. Obviously it meant a lot to her too.”

Jamie eventually became Berkeley Rep’s education fellow in the 2015–16 season, the same season that featured one of Sandy’s favorite Berkeley Rep shows, *Aubergine* by Julia Cho. “I saw it three times, and I cried each time,” she says. They also saw *Treasure Island*, adapted and directed by Mary Zimmerman, an artist both Sandy and Jamie love. Now Jamie is a teacher, but she is still involved in theatre in her spare time and during summers. According to Sandy, “We’ve always done theatre, but at Berkeley Rep we feel like we’re home... I think that’s why we were so comfortable bringing Jamie.”

Jamie isn’t the only one who was introduced to theatre through their parents. Phyra McCandless is a current subscriber and supporter who first attended shows with her family. Her mother, Sandra McCandless, a Berkeley Rep trustee, started bringing Phyra to the theatre when she was 7. Now, Phyra and her husband, Angelos Kottas, bring their own daughter to shows, making three generations of their family who regularly attend plays at Berkeley Rep. At first Phyra and Angelos just took their daughter to select shows, mostly musicals and shows that seemed more appealing to a younger audience, like *Amélie*, *Treasure Island*, and *946: The Amazing Story of Adolphus Tips*.

Now Phyra’s 7-year-old daughter is part of their full subscription. “There are things she really enjoys that I wouldn’t have thought to take her to,” Phyra says. “I don’t just have to take her to musicals. I like taking her to things we can talk about, shows that make her think.” For example, *Fairview* was one she found a little confusing at first, but when Phyra reassured her that she wasn’t the only one,
it led to some interesting conversations. Phyra admits that different shows can present certain challenges or take some explanation, but overall “You might assume that she’d miss out because she doesn’t have the same context for some of this stuff, but actually she’s a very discerning critic!” Phyra has also enjoyed seeing shows through her daughter’s eyes. “Actually, her favorite show is HOME. Her dad got pulled up onstage, which she loved. And I enjoyed it even more because of seeing her enjoy it.” Sandy and Larry also feel like they got a lot out of bringing Jamie to shows. They kept an extra ticket so that Jamie’s older brother or a friend could go with them. For Sandy, “It was like being a fly on the wall, getting to listen to them talk about the shows. That was fascinating. They came to all the shows we went to, so we got the benefit and richness of their reactions as well as our own.” As Jamie got older, she brought even more of her own perspective to the conversations they would have about the shows. “There’s something different about talking about it multi-generationally. They think about life differently than we do.” Now Jamie is 28, and she and her mom still go to Berkeley Rep shows together when they can. And when their schedules conflict and they have to miss shows or see them separately, Sandy says, “I really miss [seeing shows together]. I do really feel like our theatregoing experience is enriched by being together and by being with her.”

The Tale of Despereaux is a show for all ages, and a great introduction to the theatre for younger audiences. Both Sandy and Phyra say they would highly recommend going to the theatre with multiple generations, for family-friendly shows but also any other events that might catch the interest of audiences of different ages. For Sandy, “It’s always nice to have a more heterogeneous audience, in terms of race, background, age, and so on...because it’s more like the real world.” Phyra shares, “I would encourage it. It’s a nice outing and it’s something that’s a good commitment to have planned in advance to go with family to the show. I would hope more people do it!”
A WORLD PREMIERE FROM ONE OF BERKELEY REP'S BELOVED PLAYWRIGHTS

REBECCA NURSE
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BY SARAH RUHL
DIRECTED BY ANNE KAUFFMAN
PEET'S THEATRE · STARTS DEC 12

Berkeley Rep
THE ORIGIN STORY

THE SEVEN MEMBERS of PigPen Theatre Co. — Alex Falberg, Arya Shahi, Ben Ferguson, Curtis Gillen, Dan Weschler, Matt Nuernberger, and Ryan Melia — began making art together as freshmen at the Carnegie Mellon School of Drama in 2007. The group explored resourceful ways of storytelling during the Playground student festival, limiting themselves to their own budgets (i.e., “things lying around our dorm rooms”). After graduating, they made two shows that toured the fringe festival scene, and their breakout show became The Old Man and The Old Moon. That inventive, delightful production won prizes wherever it landed and became a bona fide hit in Chicago and New York. Confronted with the possibility of using more resources now that they found acclaim, PigPen instead dedicated themselves to their minimalist, handmade aesthetic. Their folkly brand of music would stay live onstage, and their plays would remain rife with puppets, flashlights, crates, and sheets. This commitment stems from a core belief for their company: to invite the audience to bring their imagination into the room.

Since The Old Man and The Old Moon, the group has toured exclusively as a band (they shared a bill with Mumford & Sons), made their feature film debut, and created three more shows. During this time, Chris Herzberger, the senior vice president of Universal Theatrical Group, saw a production of PigPen’s and thought they would be the perfect group to adapt Kate DiCamillo’s book The Tale of Despereaux. He proposed the idea, the group said yes with zeal, and they were off to create their first-ever adaptation.

Berkeley Rep has admired PigPen’s zany brand of theatricality from afar, so when we heard that Despereaux was in the works we thought this could finally be our chance to work together. We received script drafts and videos of workshops, and, in the winter of last year, committed to a production. After Despereaux’s summer run at The Old Globe in San Diego, we could not be more excited to bring PigPen’s latest creation to Berkeley.

WE’RE CATCHING THE TALE OF DESPEREAUX at an exciting creative juncture. After its world premiere at The Old Globe, PigPen was eager to dive back into the Kingdom of Dor in rehearsals, further refining the piece based on discoveries made in its first incarnation. Artistic Associate Katie Craddock spoke with PigPen shortly before they arrived in Berkeley about their unique collaboration style and what’s most joyous and resonant in this Tale for them. (Yes, they answered as a collective!) Parts of this interview are excerpted from an earlier piece for The Old Globe by Danielle Mages Amato.
What compelled you to adapt The Tale of Despereaux?
We cherished the story when we read it as children, and it revealed an incredible depth of wisdom when we reread it as adults. We were thrilled that a few of the more iconic plot elements would fit our style of storytelling beautifully. Despereaux’s search for “the honey-sweet sound” and Roscuro’s love of the light inspired us to reexamine our music and shadow puppetry through their respective lenses.

We also share Kate DiCamillo’s love of repurposing and redefining storytelling tropes. Despereaux learns of knights, dragons, villains, and heroes early in his journey, but by the time we’ve reached our conclusion, all those simple ideas have revealed their complexities. What is the most heroic thing Despereaux can do when no one is happy with the law of the land and people seem to be retreating into isolated and fragmented communities? It’s a question that has grown even more relevant in the short time we’ve spent with the tale.

Are there things you learned at The Old Globe that inspired you to make changes for the Berkeley run?
Absolutely! The Old Globe run was the first time we actualized all the ideas that were in our heads for the past five years onto a real live stage with real live actors and, most importantly, an audience! It was also the first time we assembled a team of designers and asked them to help us build this world and define its rules. There are about a million things we learned about those rules and the way an audience engages with them that will work their way into the show eventually. Of those million, we’re hoping to get two or three of the big ones and 200 to 300 of the small ones into the show for the Berkeley production. That’s what’s beautiful about this art form — each night the cast and creatives are learning the tempos, rhythms, peaks, and valleys of the piece, then making adjustments. You’ll never see the same show twice.
You perform as both a theatre company and a band. Does your collaboration style change from one medium to the other? What do you love about each?

The collaborative method is essentially the same. Someone brings in an idea, usually after spending some time crafting it alone, and then the group earns ownership by reshaping and rethinking the execution of the idea. We like the analogy of one person bringing in a “seed idea” that is watered and cared for by the company as it grows. We have learned that creating a play and creating a song ask for an understanding of two different sets of rules and a different level of scrutiny when applying those rules. Song creation is more impulsive; theatre creation is more iterative. Not as a rule, but in general. We love both entirely. That being said, after spending the past couple of years working hard on our upcoming theatre projects (*The Tale of Despereaux*, *Water for Elephants*, and *The Phantom Folktales* for Virgin Voyages) we are nostalgic for the days when we’d tour 45 cities in six weeks as a band. There is a flexibility, freedom, and irreverence that comes with being a band that you don’t often find in the theatre. The major benefit of a piece of theatre is that you really get to take your time to build a world and fully explore a series of complex ideas without stopping for audience feedback or applause every few minutes, as is common in a concert.

For audiences who have seen your previous work, what will they see that’s familiar, and what’s new?

That’s actually a question we’d love to ask our audience! It’s very hard to tell from the inside, after spending years with this story and script, what will feel new or familiar to a hardened PigPen adventurer. We’ve certainly retained many elements of storytelling we’ve always loved — things like puppetry, shadow play, quick lighting shifts, folk music, Foley sound effects, onstage musicians, and ensemble work.

But we’ve also tried plenty of new things! First and foremost, inviting incredible new performers to play in this magical world with us. We’ve been writing for ourselves for so long, we got used to the strengths and limitations of the same seven people. With new talent and energy onstage, we have a whole new range of possibilities to explore. We also wanted to double down on some of the synchronized movement work we started exploring in our earlier shows, so we brought on an incredible choreographer, Jennifer Jancuska, to help us elaborate upon that language. Our years on the road as a band spoiled us when it came to the full sound of PigPen the band, so we tried to employ those lush orchestrations as often as we could. In the end, we’re hoping *The Tale of Despereaux* will follow in the footsteps of our previous work, feeling old and new at the same time.

How do you think about gender in your casting and creative processes when it’s a cast that’s more than just your ensemble, as in *The Tale of Despereaux*?

A primary principle of our storytelling is simply this: *anything can be anything*. It’s a direct result of our time together in college, when we had no “team” and no real “resources” beyond seven friends and our combined imaginations. The fact that PigPen was made up of seven guys was not necessarily intended and it didn’t stop us from writing characters of other genders into our stories. Characters who we would then portray as honestly as we could. Gender-swapping or gender-neutral casting has always been central to story theatre and we strive to continue that tradition as responsibly as we can when the opportunity presents itself. It’s a real pleasure to be building shows that are bigger and broader in scope, which allow us to work with a team of artists full of people of all genders, and then asking those brilliant artists to live in a world where anything can be anything.

**WE LOVE FLASH AND SPECTACLE AS MUCH AS THE NEXT THEATRE COMPANY — WE JUST HAPPEN TO THINK THE HUMAN IMAGINATION IS CAPABLE OF GREATER SPECTACLE THAN MONEY CAN BUY.**
The book *The Tale of Despereaux* is usually seen as geared toward children, but it seems this adaptation has qualities that can appeal to both children and adults—as do many of your pieces. How do you toe that line?

Each of our stories deals with life, love, and loss. We've never classified any of them as children's shows or adults' shows. We have always wanted to create shows that might inspire friends our own age to see the world a little differently, shows that they would be eager to invite their families to see. We've always had an enormous amount of respect for stories that can resonate with children and adults alike. If a story doesn't connect with an adult, why would they want to share it with their child? And if a story doesn't connect with a child—well, where's the fun in that?

What have been the challenges of dealing with the interactions of so many types (and sizes!) of characters: mice, rats, people? How have you tackled that issue?

The first five years of development were spent training live mice for the production, but ultimately we chose to go back to puppets. The smaller the actor, the bigger the ego, you know? Jokes aside, the scale shifts were some of the first visual challenges we worked on. We staged and explored multiple methods with the intention of finding the best one, but we ended up sprinkling most of them in throughout the show. Each scene or circumstance in the story where an animal interacts with a human is emotionally different, so why would we portray them the same way? In the end, theatre is a vehicle that relies on the imagination and the suspension of disbelief. Anytime we can trigger the former, the latter follows gladly.

Forgiveness is a major theme in *Despereaux*—specifically, that forgiveness is possible when we revise our own “story” or version of an event by empathetically listening to someone else's. How does that resonate with you?

There’s a reason forgiveness is a major theme in stories from all eras and ages—it’s always relevant and it’s always resonant. There are always people who need to hear that it is okay to forgive. For us, it’s not uncommon to view many of the major motifs and themes in our stories through the lens of a 12-year-long collaboration we started as college freshmen. Forgiveness, the asking for and the granting of, is crucial to a healthy long-term relationship of any kind. Being able to revise your own story is key; it prevents old slights or misunderstandings from your past hardening and cementing themselves in your future. It also helps when you show up late to rehearsal for the third time that week and can’t keep blaming it on “the train.”

A stereotype about musical theatre is that it can be garishly overstuffed with flashy technical elements—but there seems to be a growing movement of late toward simpler, suggestive design. You talk about your storytelling style as boiling things down to their essence and giving the impression of a whole. What are some of your favorite suggestive elements in this production?

We love flash and spectacle as much as the next theatre company! We just happen to think the human imagination is capable of greater spectacle than money can buy. All of our designers share that love of the evocative, the engaging, the resourceful. We are more interested in evoking a giant instead of building a giant. We are more interested in a wall made of bowls than a wall made of marble. We are more interested in suggesting certain actors are mice rather than giving them big ears and long tails. We are most interested in showing you what’s essential...and giving your imagination the room it needs to play with us.

Despereaux at one point declares, “A knight needs no one,” forsaking his family, but comes to realize there’s value and necessity in collective efforts. What are some of the challenges and advantages of making theatre collectively?

Collaboration is everything to us. It’s the reason we get to do what we love to do. It’s the reason you’re reading these words right now. Of course it’s difficult and requires an immense amount of compromise. It requires you to constantly reevaluate yourself as an artist and as a collaborator. It requires the consistent pummeling of the ego. It has been a totally new and exciting challenge to work with Marc. He comes from a very different background than the seven of us; working with him teaches us something new every day. That’s what’s incredible about collaboration: it inevitably leads to growth. It makes a hat where there never was a hat. In the end, anything we build together is better than anything we could have built by ourselves.
THE BRILLIANCE OF THE TALE OF DESPEREAUX

THE TALE OF DESPEREAUX SPEAKS to its readers. Literally—it is narrated by a jaunty second-person voice that alternately explains the plot and imparts bits of wisdom; and figuratively—its story captivated the world of children's literature 15 years ago and continues to delight.

BY CHARLIE DUBACH-REINHOLD
The novel *The Tale of Despereaux* came into being in 2003 when author Kate DiCamillo set out to write a tale to please her friend’s young son. He had begged her for the story of an “unlikely hero” with “exceptionally large ears.” Over the course of a year, she wove this hero—a shy yet brave mouse called Despereaux Tilling—a fantastical world to inhabit. Young and old readers alike root for this ultimate underdog (undermouse?), a tiny, sweet rodent with giant ears, who would restore happiness to the human kingdom armed only with a needle. And like the best children’s fantasy stories, *The Tale of Despereaux* contains both the light and dark that are present in the real world. This begins with the title: the eponymous mouse’s name means “despair” in French. But Despereaux does anything but despair. He hopes. He dreams. He imagines. Despereaux is shunned by the other mice for his love of stories and reading, heroes and humans. What should send him to despair—rejection, terror, loneliness—instead inspires him to continue his quest, to bring his fantasies of knighthood and honor to life. The adversity that Despereaux faces supports the fairytale ending of the story.

*Despereaux* offers a more morally complex tale than many children’s stories. Every character contains real flaws. Every character is also afforded the chance to encounter the reader on their own terms. DiCamillo gives the rat Roscuro—often described superficially as evil and dark—an entire quarter of the novel, an entire life story, so that by the time he appears in Despereaux’s quest the reader knows Roscuro is not what he may seem. Many children reading *The Tale of Despereaux* will not recognize the significance of his full name: Chiaroscuro. This word describes the interplay between light and dark, as popularized in Baroque painting by Italian masters like Caravaggio. Chiaroscuro in visual art such as painting creates not only contrast, but depth. It is used to reveal form and create a sense of volume. Roscuro is then such an apt name for a rat who loves the light though he is meant to revel in the darkness of the dungeon. As DiCamillo writes in *Despereaux*, “Do you think rats do not have hearts? Wrong. All living things have a heart.” And so, the reader must consider that a heart can turn to evildoing.

The distinction between evil people (or rats) and evil actions in *Despereaux* is an important one, particularly given its emphasis on empathy and forgiveness. When characters are cast as antitheses, good and evil, they have no chance at redemption. But *Despereaux* offers characters whose regrettable actions are framed to be understood and forgiven. The evildoers are revealed as just that—evildoers, not evil beings—and the mouse with the courage to fight them finds the courage to forgive them. This nuance may not be spelled out within the book, but as DiCamillo notes, *Despereaux* is a story both “tragic and wonderful, light and dark,” made for children to grapple with complex relationships.

Readers recognized the brilliance of the novel straight away. In 2004, *The Tale of Despereaux: Being the Story of a Mouse, a Princess, Some Soup, and a Spool of Thread* won the Newbery Medal, the award for the year’s “most distinguished contribution to American literature for children.” Despereaux may be a tiny mouse, but his knightly aspiration is larger than life. So is his story, and so must be efforts to retell it. *Despereaux* was adapted into a movie in 2008, and the title character gained a greater sense of adventure. No longer did he faint or second-guess himself. Despereaux’s curiosity became recklessness, his timid ventures into the human world became bold, surefooted undertakings. He became the perfect hero to counter Roscuro’s villainy. But critics noted this collapsed the shades of gray—the middle grounds between good and evil—within the characters.

*Despereaux’s* singular imagination makes it especially suitable for adaptation. DiCamillo describes that for her, a book “is like having a kid. I have to let it go out in the world, and great things will happen.” Enter PigPen—a raucous collection of college friends known for their musicianship, puppetry, and intricately crafted stories beloved by children and adults alike. PigPen describes their aesthetic as, “stories on the grand scale, epic journeys, vast landscapes, unlikely heroes.” Sound familiar? Universal Studios thought that PigPen’s artistry would be perfect to continue the evolution of *Despereaux*, and this new adaptation was born. The shadow puppets of PigPen manifest the contrasting dark and light of *Despereaux* onstage, and they ask the audience to suspend all disbelief of size and shape as a full-size actor plays the pint-size mouse as both shadow and handheld puppet. The chiaroscuro of the original novel remains, as the audience comes to know the characters through multiple mediums.

DiCamillo claims that “it’s a disservice to think that kids don’t know that the world is full of all kinds of dangers and dark things,” and her *Tale of Despereaux* reflects her interest in showcasing such themes within the familiar, kid-friendly structure of a fairytale. But the characters of *Despereaux* contain more depth than those of many fairytales, they reflect more fully the hardships and joys of the real world of its young readers. Kids can see themselves in DiCamillo’s mouse Despereaux—too small to see up to the faces of the humans but with a fierce desire to affect change in the world. Despereaux transforms from shy mouse to brave knight when he reads a human fairytale in the castle library. By the power of the written word, Despereaux realizes his calling. Today, you will experience the magic that happens when that word is lifted off the page.
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JOHANNA PFAELZER, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR · SUSAN MEDAK, MANAGING DIRECTOR
IN ASSOCIATION WITH UNIVERSAL THEATRICAL GROUP
PRESENTS

PigPen Theatre Co.’s
The tale of
DESPEREAUX
A NEW MUSICAL

BOOK, MUSIC, AND LYRICS BY
PigPen Theatre Co.
BASED ON THE NOVEL BY KATE DICAMILLO AND THE UNIVERSAL PICTURES FILM

JASON SHERWOOD
ANITA YAVICH
DONALD HOLDER
NEVIN STEINBERG
LYDIA FINE AND NICK LEHANE
SCENIC DESIGN
COSTUME DESIGN
LIGHTING DESIGN
SOUND DESIGN
SHADOW SEQUENCES AND PUPPETRY DESIGN

JENNIFER JANCUSKA
CHRISTOPHER JAHNKE
CHOREOGRAPHY
MUSIC DIRECTOR AND ADDITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

TARA RUBIN CASTING/
MERRI SUGARMAN, CSA
LIBBY UNSWORTH
CASTING
PRODUCTION STAGE MANAGER

DIRECTED BY
Marc Bruni and PigPen Theatre Co.
NOVEMBER 21, 2019–JANUARY 5, 2020 · RODA THEATRE · SPECIAL PRESENTATION
This show has no intermission.
The cast and stage managers are members of Actors' Equity association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

CAST

Lester  Alex Falberg
Furlough  Ben Ferguson
Louise, Most High Head Mouse  Curtis Gillen
Despereaux  Dorcas Leung
Librarian, Prisoner  Ryan Melia
Miggery Sow, Antoinette, Queen Rosemary  Betsy Morgan

Botticelli  Matt Nuernberger
Roscuro  John Rapson
King Phillip  Arya Shahi
Princess Pea, Merlot  Yasmeen Sulieman
Stained-Glass Knight  Dan Weschler

Swings
Ben Euphrat
Logan Foster
Natasha Harris

Assistant Stage Manager  Hsiu-I Chiquita Lu

The cast and stage managers 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.

World Premiere at The Old Globe, San Diego, CA
Barry Edelstein, Erna Finci Viterbi Artistic Director
Timothy J. Shields, Managing Director

PigPen Theatre Co.’s The Tale of Despereaux: A New Musical was made possible thanks to the generous support of

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Helen M. Marcus
WHO'S WHO
BEN EUPHRAT
SWING
Ben is an actor, musician, and musical director. Recent credits include Once with 42nd Street Moon, The Siegel at City Lights, Shakespeare in Love at Marin Theatre Company, the SF and off-Broadway productions of Ideation with SF Playhouse, Project Ahab at Central Works (nominated for Outstanding Music Direction), Mirandolina at Center Rep, Twelfth Night at Shotgun Players, and HIR at the Magic Theatre. Ben has worked extensively in film and commercial, and has studied improv in LA with the Groundlings and IO West. His debut solo album is out now. beneuphrat.com

LOGAN FOSTER
SWING/DANCE CAPTAIN
Logan is so excited to be a part of this wonderful production. Berkeley Rep debut! His favorite credits include One Man, Two Guns (Francis) and All Shook Up (Chad) both at Wagon Wheel Center for the Arts. BFA Elon ’19. Insta: lofo_1

CURTIS GILLEN
LOUISE, MOST HIGH HEAD MOUSE
Originally from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Curtis has appeared off Broadway in The Old Man and The Old Moon and in Pericles directed by Trevor Nunn. His other PigPen credits include The Mountain Song, The Nightmare Story, and most recently The Hunter and The Bear at Writers Theatre in Chicago. His film credits include Ricki and the Flash and HairBrained. He graduated with a BFA in Acting from Carnegie Mellon University, where he was destined to find these lifelong collaborators. (For more information, please see the bio for PigPen Theatre Co. on the next page.)

NATASHA HARRIS
SWING
Natasha is grateful to be working with PigPen Theatre Co. on this brand new production. Her regional credits include The Cocoanuts, The Taming of the Shrew, Measure for Measure, and Into the Woods (Utah Shakespeare Festival); Three Sisters, Peter Pan, Hairspray, and West Side Story (Pacific Conservatory Theatre); Seven Brides for Seven Brothers (McCoy Rigby Entertainment); and The All Night Strut! (Oregon Cabaret Theatre). She received her BA in Drama at UC Irvine. natasha-harris.com @lilnutos

DORCAS LEUNG
DESPEREAUX
Dorcas is making her Berkeley Rep debut. She was recently seen as Gigi Van Trinh in the Broadway revival of Miss Saigon. Soon after, she toured the country in the 1st National Tour of Hamilton as Schuyler Sister Standby performing Eliza, Angelica, and/or Peggy/Maria at select shows. Regional favorites include St. Louis MUNY (Les Misérables), Casa Mañana (Gigi in Miss Saigon), Dallas Theater Center (Cosette in Les Misérables, Christmas Present in A Christmas Carol), Goodspeed Opera House (Ursula in Bye Bye Birdie), Barrington Stage Company (Little Red in Into the Woods). TV/film: Bull, Madam Secretary. @dorcas

RYAN MELIA
LIBRARIAN, PRISONER
Ryan’s other shows created by PigPen include The Old Man and The Old Moon, The Nightmare Story, The Mountain Song, and The Hunter and The Bear. He also performed with PigPen in Pericles at Theatre for a New Audience, directed by Sir Trevor Nunn. (For more information, please see the bio for PigPen Theatre Co. on the next page.)

BETSY MORGAN
MIGGERY SOW, ANTOINETTE, QUEEN ROSEMARY
Betsy is returning to The Tale of Despereaux after appearing in the world premiere at The Old Globe. She earned a Lucille Lortel Award nomination for her portrayal of Pirelli and Beggar Woman in Barrow Street Theatre’s Sweeney Todd. Betsy was in the original Broadway companies of The King and I (revival), Les Misérables (revival), A Little Night Music (revival), The Little Mermaid, and High Fidelity, and the original off-Broadway companies of First Daughter Suite (The Public Theater), Found (Atlantic Theatre), The Fantasticks (revival), and Bernardo Alba (Lincoln Center). Regionally, she’s been seen in Who’s Tommy (Denver Center), Carousel (Arena Stage), Rain (The Old Globe), and Giant (Signature Theatre). Betsy re-created the role of Fantine in the 25th anniversary tour of Les Misérables. She was seen on television in Flight of the Conchords.

MATT NUERNBERGER
BOTTICELLI
Matt is a Chicago native, graduated from Carnegie Mellon University. His previous credits include The Tale of Despereaux (The Old Globe); Pericles directed by Trevor Nunn (Theatre for a New Audience); A Little More Alive, Pocatello, and Tape (Will- liamstown Theatre Festival); The Old Man...
and The Old Moon (The New Victory Theater, The Old Globe, Writers Theatre, Williamstown Theatre Festival, ArtsEmerson, Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts, City Theatre, The Gym at Judson); and The Hunter and The Bear (Writers Theatre). His film credits include Ricki and the Flash, and his voiceover credits include commercial work for Raid. (For more information, please see the bio for PigPen Theatre Co. on this page.)

JOHN RAPSON
ROSCURO

John is thrilled to be making his Berkley Rep debut with this extraordinary show and team. John was last seen in the Bay Area as the D’Ysquith Family in A Gentleman’s Guide to Love & Murder, a role he originated on the first national tour. Broadway/off-Broadway credits include Sweeney Todd (Beadle Bamford), Les Misérables (Grantaire/Baratabois), and Nassim. Regional credits include Oklahoma! (Jud Fry, Sacramento Music Circus), The Play That Goes Wrong (Robert, regional premiere at the Repertory Theatre of St. Louis), The Drowsy Chaperone (Aldolpho, Goodspeed Musicals), Disney on Classic (with the Orchestra Japan). John is a graduate of the University of Michigan.

ARYA SHAHI
KING PHILLIP/FIGHT CAPTAIN

Arya was raised in Tucson, Arizona. He is a member of the #BARS Workshop at The Public Theater in New York, and he co-created the poetry visual-art project @boxart on Instagram. Alongside his dearest friends, he co-created PigPen’s The Hunter and The Bear, The Old Man and The Old Moon, The Mountain Song, and The Nightmare Story. His additional credits include the film Ricki and the Flash directed by Jonathan Demme, off Broadway’s Pericles directed by Sir Trevor Nunn, off Broadway’s Exile directed by Lisa Peterson, and the video game 1979 Revolution directed by Navid Khonsari. He received his BFA in Acting from Carnegie Mellon University. aryahashi.com, @aryahashi (For more information, please see the bio for PigPen Theatre Co. on this page.)

YASMEEN SULEMAN
PRINCESS PEA, MERLOT

Broadway: Beautiful. National Tour: Little Shop of Horrors. Off Broadway: JUNIE B. JONES. Lincoln Center: The Scarlet Pimpernel. TV: Marvelous Mrs. Maisel, Hi-5 (TLC). Yasmeen is a singer/songwriter who has written and performed overseas, with releases on MCA, Defected, Nervous Records, and Strictly Rhythm, among a few others.

DAN WESCHLER
STAINED-GLASS KNIGHT

Dan grew up in Hershey, Pennsylvania before studying acting at Carnegie Mellon University. After receiving his BFA, he moved to New York. His theatre credits include The Hunter and The Bear (Writers Theatre), The Old Man and The Old Moon (Williamstown Theatre Festival, The New Victory Theater, Writers Theatre, The Gym at Judson), The Mountain Song and The Nightmare Story (PigPen Theatre Co.), Pericles (Theatre for a New Audience), and American Realism (The Invisible Dog, San Diego Museum of Art). (For more information, please see the bio for PigPen Theatre Co. below.)

PIGPEN THEATRE CO.
BOOK, MUSIC, LYRICS, CO-DIRECTORS

PigPen Theatre Co. began creating their unique brand of theatre, music, and film as freshmen at Carnegie Mellon University’s School of Drama in 2007. They have since produced their original plays in New York City and toured the country, earning them Critics’ Picks from The New York Times, Time Out New York, Chicago Tribune, Chicago Sun-Times, The Boston Globe, and many more, ranking them in the top 10 theatrical events of 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2016. They were the first group to win the New York International Fringe Festival’s top honor for a play two years in a row (2010 and 2011), and they have since gone on to win IRNE (2012, 2015) and Joseph Jefferson Awards (2014) for their theatrical productions. In 2016, Sir Trevor Nunn invited PigPen to be a part of his first American acting company for a production of Shakespeare’s Pericles. PigPen’s debut album, Bremen, was named No. 10 album of the year in The Huffington Post’s 2012 Grammy Awards preview, sending PigPen on tour playing to sold-out crowds across the country. American Songwriter previewed their follow-up EP, The Way I’m Running, in 2013 while the band was playing a series of concerts that became one of the most popular residencies of the past decade at the legendary Schubas Tavern in Chicago. In 2015, PigPen released their sophomore album, Whole Sun; performed at Mumford & Sons’s return to the Gentlemen of the Road festival; and made their feature film debut in Jonathan Demme’s Ricki and the Flash starring Meryl Streep. In addition to The Tale of Despereaux, they are creating a musical based on Sara Gruen’s beloved novel Water for Elephants (in collaboration with Rick Elice). In 2020, they will premiere their first interactive theatrical experience, The Phantom Folktales, for Richard Branson’s groundbreaking cruise line Virgin Voyages.

CHRISTOPHER JAHNKE
MUSIC DIRECTOR AND ADDITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

Christopher orchestrated the Broadway and/or London productions of King Kong, Legally Blonde, Cry-Baby, Grease (2007 revival), Dessa Rose, A Man of No Importance, Dear Evan Hansen (additional orchestrations, with Alex Lacamoire), Stiles and Dreeve’s The Wind in the Willows, The Gershwins’ Porgy and Bess (Tony Award nomination for Best Orchestration), and Les Miserables (new orchestrations, performed worldwide since 2006). His other orchestrations include Do You Hear the People Sing?, a symphonic tour of Boublil and Schonberg’s work; Stiles and Leigh’s Tom Jones; Stiles and Dreeve’s Just So; Bartram and Hill’s Not Wanted on the Voyage; Lady Gaga’s tribute to The Sound of Music at the 2015 Oscars (with Stephen Oremus); The Wiz Live!; Radio City Music Hall’s New York Spectacular and Christmas Spectacular; and work with Rufus Wainwright, Emily Bear, Adam Schlesinger, and Jägermeister Blaskapelle. On Broadway, Christopher also served as conductor for Aida and music supervisor for Escape to Margaritaville and Memphis. He was apprentice and assistant to orchestrator William David Brohn on Sweet Smell of Success, Ragtime, The Secret Garden, The Three Musketeers, The Witches of Eastwick, Mary Poppins, and Wicked.

His other credits include Paint Your Wagon, Pipe Dream, Fanny, and Hey, Look Me Over! (City Center Encores!), The Music Man and How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying (The Kennedy Center), Old Jews Telling Jokes (New York and Chicago; Joseph Jefferson Award nomination), Roman Holiday (Golden Gate Theatre), Trevor (Writers Theatre; Jeff Award nomination), The Explorers Club (Manhattan Theatre Club), The Sound of Music (Lyric Opera of Chicago), Other People’s Money (Long Wharf Theatre; Connecticut Critics Circle Award nomination), and Ordinary Days (Roundabout Theatre Company). He has directed nine musicals for The Muny in St. Louis, most recently My Fair Lady and Singin’ in the Rain, and he has twice been nominated for Kevin Kline Awards. He is a proud member of Stage Directors and Choreographers Society and a graduate of Dartmouth College.

JENNIFER JANCUSKA
CHOREOGRAPHER

Jennifer is a choreographer and founding artistic director of the Brooklyn-based company The BringAbout, whose development work has been engaged by award-winning writers, directors, and producers and seen on stages from New York to California. Jennifer is known for producing BC Beat, described by The New York Times as a platform to “reimagine the possibilities for dance in musical theater.” Jennifer is currently working on Broadway as resident choreographer/dance supervisor of Hamilton. As choreographer, she is thrilled to be developing three new musicals with upcoming productions. They include Hood (Asolo Rep), Anne of Green Gables (Goodspeed), Johnny and the Devil’s Box (Goodspeed), and Desperaux. Cornell University graduate. Member of SDC. Jenniferjancuska.com

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JASON SHERWOOD
SCENIC DESIGNER
Jason is a Drama Desk Award, Lucille Lortel Award, and Henry Hewes Design Award nominee. He recently designed Rent: Live (for which he won an Emmy Award); Sam Smith’s arena world tour and campaign television appearances (including The Grammy Awards, Saturday Night Live, and Ellen: The Ellen DeGeneres Show); the Spice Girls world tour; and The People’s Choice Awards on E! He has also designed for New York Theatre Workshop, The Playwright’s Realm, Rattlestick Playwrights Theater, American Repertory Theater, and Guthrie Theater, among many others. @JasonSherwoodDesign

ANITA YAVICH
COSTUME DESIGNER
Anita returns to Berkeley Rep having designed Brian Freeman’s Civil Sex, The O’Harras, Tiny Theatre, Dael Orlendersmith’s Black N Blue Boys/Broken Men, and Chin-glish. Anita designed the Broadway productions of Fool for Love, Venus in Fur, Chinglish, and Anna in the Tropics. Her other New York credits include The Mother (Atlantic Theater Company); Apologia (Roundabout Theatre Company); Soft Power and Oedipus El Rey (The Public Theater’s New York Shakespeare Festival); The View Upstairs (Lynn Redgrave Theater); The Legend of Georgia McBride, Coraline, and The Wooden Breeks (MCC Theater); Nathan the Wise, The Caucasian Chalk Circle, Orlando, New Jerusalem, and Texts for Nothing (Classic Stage Company); Thom Pain (based on nothing), Big Love, Kung Fu, Golden Child, and Iphigenia 2.0 (Signature Theatre Company); The Oldest Boy (Lincoln Center Theater); The Moors (The Playwrights Realm); The Explorers Club (Manhattan Theatre Club); and Macbeth, Coriolanus, and Sweeney Todd (Theatre for a New Audience). Her opera credits include Aida (San Francisco Opera, Washington National Opera, Seattle Opera), Cyrano de Bergerac (La Scala, The Metropolitan Opera, Royal Opera House), and Les Troyens (The Met). Anita was also the puppet and costume designer for The Sound of Music (Salzburger Marionettentheater). She has received Obie, Lucille Lortel, Drama Desk, and Ovation Awards. Upcoming she will design Der Ring des Nibelungen for Opera Australia in Brisbane.

DONALD HOLDER
LIGHTING DESIGNER
Donald previously designed Zora Neale Hurston’s Spark, Maurice Sendak’s Brundibar, and the world premières of Paradise Square and Monsoon Wedding at Berkeley Rep. His recent work on Broadway includes Anastasia, Oslo, In Transit, She Loves Me, Fiddler on the Roof, The Father, The King and I, On the Twentieth Century, The Bridges of Madison County, Golden Boy, Spider-Man: Turn Off the Dark, Ragtime, Movin’ Out, The Boy From Oz, Thoroughly Modern Millie, and many others. He has designed over 50 Broadway productions, received two Tony Awards (The Lion King and South Pacific) and 15 Tony nominations. Opera credits include Samson et Delilah, Otello, Two Boys, and The Magic Flute (New York Metropolitan Opera), and Porgy and Bess for the English National Opera and the Dutch National Opera. He designed the theatrical lighting for seasons one and two of smash (NBC DreamWorks) and for the Warner Bros. film Ocean’s 8. Donald is a graduate of the Yale School of Drama and is a Professor of Lighting Design at Rutgers University.

NEVIN STEINBERG
SOUND DESIGNER
Nevin’s Broadway credits include Hamilton, Dear Evan Hansen, Hadestown (Tony Award), The Cher Show, Bandstand, Bright Star, It Shoulda Been You, Mothers and Sons, Rodgers + Hammerstein’s Cinderella (Tony nomination), The Performers, and Magic/ Bird. His off-Broadway credits include Dear Evan Hansen, Hamilton, Landing, and Far from Heaven. He designed over 30 Broadway productions with Acme Sound Partners, receiving five additional Tony nominations, for The Gershwin’s Porgy and Bess, Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo, Fences, Hair, and In the Heights.

LYDIA FINE
SHADOW SEQUENCES AND PUPPETRY CO-DESIGNER
Lydia is a Brooklyn-based designer and award-winning creative director. She has been working with PigPen Theatre Co. since their days together at Carnegie Mellon University. Her past productions with them include the critically acclaimed The Old Man and The Old Moon, The Nightmare Story, and The Hunter and The Bear. She is also the creative director for The Phantom Folktales, a unique theatrical experience taking place on the soon-to-be-launched Virgin Voyages. When she is not playing with shadow puppets, she is working in various media, creating worlds and characters for films, music videos, photo shoots, and immersive events. lydianfine.com

MICK LEHANE
SHADOW SEQUENCES AND PUPPETRY CO-DESIGNER
Nick worked previously with PigPen Theatre Co. as the puppet designer for The Phantom Folktales and the understudy for The Old Man and The Old Moon. His puppet play Chinaman premiered earlier this year at HERE Arts Center. His original puppet work has shown at St. Ann’s Warehouse, Puppet Block at Dixon Place, The Jim Henson Carriage House, Special Effects Festival at wild project, and Pillsbury House Theatre. Nick’s select puppet performance credits include Robin Frohardt’s The Plastic Bag Store and The Pigeon (HERE Arts Center, international tour), Petrushka (Giants Are Small, New York Philharmonic, Barbican Centre), Islamic Solidarity Games Opening Ceremonies (Baku, Azerbaijan), Doug Fitch’s El Retablo de Maese Pedro (American Symphony Orchestra, Bard SummerScape), James Ortiz’s The Little Mermaid (Glass Bandits Theater Company, Strange Men Theatre Company), and Lore (Amazon). He also provided puppet and movement direction for SeaWife (Naked Angels). Nick received his BFA in Drama from Carnegie Mellon University.

TARA RUBIN CASTING
CASTING

LIBBY UNSWORTH
PRODUCTION STAGE MANAGER
Broadway: Prince of Broadway, Les Misérables, The Visit, and Scandalous. Off-Broadway: Bat Out of Hell (New York City Center), The Niceties and Sell/Buy/Date (Manhattan Theatre Club), The Beast in the Jungle (Vineyard Theatre), At Home at the Zoo (Signature Theatre Company), Fire and Air (Classic Stage Company), Murder for Two (New World Stages), Bunnicula (DR2 Theatre), Next Fall (Naked Angels), and Speech & Debate (Roundabout Theatre Company). Regional: The Old Globe, The 5th Avenue, George Street, Two River, Williamstown Theatre Festival (eight seasons), Geffen Playhouse, Goodspeed, and Huntington Theatre Company. She received her BFA in Stage Management from Boston University.

HSU-I CHIQUITA LU
ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER
HSU-I Chiquita Lu is delighted to return to Berkeley Rep after serving as assistant stage manager on The Great Wave. Originally from Taiwan — on the other side of the Pacific Ocean—HSU-I is a freelance stage manager who works internationally. Favorite past productions include Men on Boats at Playwrights Horizons, Hollywood at La Jolla Playhouse, Taiwan Season: 098 in Edinburgh Festival Fringe, and Cikawaya with Kuo Shin Chuang Pancan Dance Theatre. She earned her MFA from University of California, San Diego.
UNIVERSAL THEATRICAL GROUP

Universal Theatrical Group is the live-theatre division of the world-famous motion picture studio. Universal’s record-breaking phenomenon *Wicked* is currently celebrating its 17th hit year on Broadway. With a national tour and multiple international productions, *Wicked* has been seen by over 60 million people worldwide, making it one of the most successful theatrical ventures of all time. Additional credits include *Billy Elliot the Musical*, *Bring It On: The Musical*, and *Irving Berlin’s Holiday Inn* with Roundabout Theatre Company. Upcoming under UTG’s DreamWorks Theatricals banner is the West End premiere of *The Prince of Egypt*, opening in February 2020.

JOHANNA PFAELZER
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 (NYSF), a New York City-based organization dedicated to the development of new works for theatre, film, and television. NYSF 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, *Hedestown* 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 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

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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.

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 a 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 and the 8th Year of the Emergency by Maureen Tovey; Haiku Tunnel and Love 42 Taxes, both by Josh Kornbluth; and Beyond Redemption by Britta Sigpren. 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 dramaturges 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, Endgame, The Beaux’ Stratagem, and Mad Forest.

BRUCE GOLDEN & MICHELLE MERCER
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Michelle and Bruce have been ardent supporters of Berkeley Rep since 1993, when they hosted the 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 Bay Area in promoting courageous new works and nurturing innovative, diverse playwrights. According to Michelle and Bruce, “There’s never been a more vital time in our lives when the power of theatre to transform, compel, inspire and energize has been more necessary. We are honored to be Season Sponsors, and especially proud to do so during Johanna Pfaelzer’s first year as artistic director.”

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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.

THE STRAUCH KULHANJIAN FAMILY
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Roger Strauch has served on the Berkeley Rep board of trustees for the last 22 years and as an executive officer, including president. He is chair of The Roda Group (rodagroup.com), a high technology venture development company based in Berkeley. Roda incubated the search engine Ask.com, now located in Oakland and Cool systems (gameready.com), a medical technology company recently acquired by Avanos Medical. He is currently on the board of three cleantech companies, including a carbon capture company, Invenxls (inventysinc.com), in which Roda is a major investor. Roger has served on the board of the Mathematical Sciences Research Institute for 20 years and as an executive officer, including chair. He leads the Mosse Art Restitution Project which searches for family art illegally confiscated during Germany’s Third Reich. He is a board member of the Northside Center, a mental health services agency based in Harlem, NY and a member of UC
Berkeley Engineering Dean's college advisory board. His wife, Julie Kulhanjian, is an attending physician at Benioff UCSF Children's Hospital, Oakland. They have three adult children.

**DAVID & VICKI COX SPONSORS**

Dave and Vicki have been active in the theatre world for nearly 30 years, first with the Guthrie Theater, where Dave was at one-time chair of the board, and now with Berkeley Rep, where he is a board member. Vicki, a women's rights activist, is a past national board member of Americans for the UN Population Fund and Planned Parenthood. The retired CEO of Cowles Media, Dave pursues interests in media and environmental causes. Previously, he was the board chair of Earthjustice and Link Media. The Coxes love Berkeley Rep's dedication to risk-taking and its emphasis on contemporary plays, as well as its commitment to developing theatre works and artists.

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### Additional Staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assistant director</td>
<td>Tyrone Phillips</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assistant choreographer</td>
<td>Taylor Tucker</td>
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<tr>
<td>Associate scenic designer</td>
<td>Connor Munion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Associate costume designer</td>
<td>Cole McCarty</td>
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<tr>
<td>Associate lighting designer</td>
<td>Coby Chasman-Beck</td>
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<tr>
<td>Associate sound design</td>
<td>Jason Crystal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant sound design</td>
<td>Connor Wang</td>
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<tr>
<td>Automated lighting programmer</td>
<td>Jeff Englander</td>
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<td>Nelly Flores</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deck crew</td>
<td>Julia Formanek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fight consultant</td>
<td>Dave Maier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interim associate sound/video supervisor</td>
<td>Annemarie Scerra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local music supervisor</td>
<td>Sean Kana</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Production assistant**

James McGregor

**Props**

Kate Fitt
Erin Gallagher
Garner Takahashi Morris

**Scene shop**

Jennifer Costley
Isaac Jacobs
Carl Martin
Sean Miller
Henry Perkins

**Scenic artists**

Chrissey Curl
Lassen Hines
Serena Yau

**Sound consultant**

Jeremy Nelson

**Wardrobe**

Claire Griffith
Kaylee Pereyra

**Co-Producer for Universal Theatrical Group**

Allison Thomas

Special thanks to Bryan Matheson and Miles Lassi of Skyline Studios, Oakland.

Medical consultation for Berkeley Rep provided by Agi E. Ban DC, John Carrigg MD, Cindy J. Chang MD, Christina Corey MD, Neil Claveria PT, Patricia I. Commer DPT, Brenton Dowdy DPT, Kathy Fang MD PhD, Steven Fugaro MD, Whitney R. Johnson DDS, Olivia Lang MD, Allen Ling PT, and Christina S. Wilmer OD.
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TRAVELING TALES

When PigPen Theatre Co.’s *The Tale of Despereaux* arrived in Berkeley, it came with a few new cast members, including Dorcas Leung as Despereaux and Yasmeen Sulieman as Princess Pea and Merlot. Immediately embraced by the other artists, Dorcas and Yasmeen jumped into and perfected their roles in rehearsals at our Harrison Street campus.

(Not pictured: our third terrific new cast member, John Rapson as Roscuro.)
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BECKY NURSE OF SALEM
BY SARAH RUHL
DIRECTED BY ANNE KAUFFMAN
MAIN SEASON · PEET’S THEATRE
DEC 12, 2019–JAN 26, 2020

Becky Nurse is an outspoken, sharp-witted tour guide at the Salem Museum of Witchcraft who’s just trying to get by in post-Obama America. She’s also the descendant of Rebecca Nurse, who was infamously executed for witchcraft in 1692—but things have changed for women since then…haven’t they? After losing her job for calling out The Crucible in front of schoolkids, Becky visits a local witch for help. One spell leads to another, and then everything really goes o/uniFB00   the rails.

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WRITTEN AND PERFORMED BY CULTURE CLASH
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FEB 20–APR 5, 2020

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BY JOCelyn BIOH
DIRECTED BY AWOYE TIMPO
MAIN SEASON · RODA THEATRE
MAR 19–MAY 3, 2020

HAPPY DAYS
BY SAMUEL BECKETT
DIRECTED BY JAMES BUNDY
LIMITED SEASON · RODA THEATRE
MAY 26–JULY 5, 2020

SWEPT AWAY
BOOK BY JOHN LOGAN
MUSIC & LYRICS BY THE AVETT BROTHERS
MUSIC ARRANGEMENTS & ORCHESTRATIONS
BY CHRIS MILLER & BRIAN USIFER
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