Teen Night is trending
Snapshots from The Ground Floor
An interview with Suzan-Lori Parks

PLUS

Teen Night is trending
Snapshots from The Ground Floor
An interview with Suzan-Lori Parks
Engaging and eclectic in the East Bay.

Oakland is the gateway to the East Bay with a little bit of everything to offer, and St. Paul’s Towers gives you easy access to it all. An artistic, activist, and intellectual Life Plan Community, St. Paul’s Towers is known for convenient services, welcome comforts and security for the future.

With classes, exhibits, lectures, restaurants, shops and public transportation within walking distance, St. Paul’s Towers is urban community living at its best.

Get to know us and learn more about moving to St. Paul’s Towers. For information, or to schedule a visit, call 510.891.8542.

St. Paul’s Towers
A COVIA LIFE PLAN COMMUNITY

100 Bay Place, Oakland, CA 94610
www.covia.org/st-pauls-towers

A not-for-profit community owned and operated by Covia. License No. 011400627 COA# 327
IN THIS ISSUE

From the artistic director · 5
From the managing director · 6
Teen Night is trending · 9
Signals to Noise · 10
Vignettes from The Ground Floor’s 2019 Summer Residency Lab · 12

FEATURES

“I love you, so I’m going to show you”: An interview with Suzan-Lori Parks · 14
Stylistic interplay in Suzan-Lori Parks’ canon · 16
“A subterfuge of naturalism”: Director Jaki Bradley on tone and character in White Noise · 18
Making some noise: Writers of color and the contemporary theatrical landscape · 20

CONNECT WITH BERKELEY REP

Box Office: 510 647-2949
Groups (10+): 510 647-2918
Admin: 510 647-2900
School of Theatre: 510 647-2972
Click berkeleyrep.org
Email info@berkeleyrep.org

We’re mobile!
Download our free iPhone or Google Play app.
Share with us @berkeleyrep

THE BERKELEY REP MAGAZINE

2019–20 · ISSUE 2

The Berkeley Rep Magazine is published at least seven times per season.
For local advertising inquiries, please contact Pamela Webster at 510 590-7091 or pwebster@berkeleyrep.org.

Editor
Karen McKevitt

Graphic Designers
Cheshire Isaacs
Haly Roy

Writers
Katie Craddock
Charlie Dubach-Reinhold
Katherine Gunn
Sarah Rose Leonard
Karen McKevitt
Madeleine Oldham

CONTRIBUTORS

Foundation, corporate, and in-kind sponsors · 30
Individual donors to the Annual Fund · 31
Michael Leibert Society · 32

ABOUT BERKELEY REP

Staff, board of trustees, and sustaining advisors · 33

On the cover Chris Herbie Holland
I WAS LUCKY ENOUGH to see the world premiere of White Noise last spring at The Public Theater in New York. By intermission, I knew this was a play that I wanted to have be part of this season at Berkeley Rep. I think Suzan-Lori Parks is one of our greatest living writers, whose gorgeous, muscular use of language, as evidenced in plays like Topdog/Underdog and Father Comes Home from the Wars (Parts 1, 2 & 3), can evoke poetry and myth while never losing a contemporary urgency and availability. It is an honor to bring her work to Berkeley Rep for the first time.

Suzan-Lori talks about this play coming from a place of love. But love is not always gentle — in fact, the revised draft of the play that she sent for our rehearsal process newly included on the cover page the James Baldwin quote “If I love you, I have to make you conscious of the things you don't see.” Which seems to be an apt metaphor for theatre itself. As an art form, it is uniquely crafted to give audiences access to the experiences and emotions of people who by choice, by birth, by circumstance experience the world differently than any one of us may do. And of course, in creating these empathic relationships between audience and character, it also implicates us in the actions of these fictionalized human beings. The quartet of characters that comprise White Noise are beautifully complicated individuals, and one of the deep pleasures of the play is that Suzan-Lori gives us an opportunity to sympathize with each of them, and to simultaneously find ourselves sitting in a place of judgement. To fall for them, and to be betrayed by them. Love is complicated...

One of the great pleasures of my job is matchmaking — getting to introduce artists to each other, and seeing if there are sparks. What a delight to bring Suzan-Lori Parks and Jaki Bradley together — two powerhouse women of great vision, who didn’t know each other prior to this process. With this play, they get to begin a conversation that brings together each of their unique histories, experiences, and perspectives.

Like all of Suzan-Lori’s plays, White Noise is not for the faint of heart. But it is for the bold, the curious, those willing to engage, to discuss, to debate. To feel, to think. To love.

Sounds like a Berkeley Rep audience to me.
Thank you for joining us.

Warmly,

Johanna Pfaelzer
SUZAN-LORI PARKS IS CLEARLY not shy. She doesn’t run away from hard, difficult, squirm-worthy conversations about race. She writes right into them, with a ferocity that can leave the viewer reeling...in the most wonderful, head-spinning way. That is why I am so thrilled to finally have a play by this amazing national treasure on our stage.

Johanna promised to introduce new voices to our stages and here we are, with a new play by Francis Turnly in the Roda and Suzan-Lori Parks in the Peet’s. The two are going to be followed by Sarah Ruhl, a Berkeley Rep familiar who brings us a new play, *Becky Nurse of Salem*. Johanna included a reading of *Becky Nurse* in her final season as artistic director of New York Stage and Film, and I’m so pleased we’ll be sharing its world premiere with you in December. So our fall lineup of subscription plays is looking very promising!

I did want to draw your attention, though, to a special event that we’re bringing to you in November for the holiday season. PigPen Theatre Co.’s *The Tale of Despereaux* is an utterly delightful adaptation of the much-loved Newbury Medal–winning book. It is Berkeley Rep’s gift to families who are in search of entertainment that is smart enough for the adults while being entirely accessible to younger audiences. Johanna and I first saw this musical at The Old Globe, surrounded by adults, who were transported by it. But what moved me so much about it was that the 10-year-old girl sitting next to me with her parents was completely entranced and on her feet the minute the curtain came down. It is rare to find entertainment of any kind these days that speaks across generational lines.

*The Tale of Despereaux* is a special nonsubscription event. So, subscribers, be aware that it is not part of any subscription package. The only way you will see it is to order tickets – and, as a subscriber, you save $5 on full-price tickets to this show. I encourage you to order now as tickets will move quickly for this one.

If you are not a subscriber, I do hope you join us for *The Tale of Despereaux*. And maybe even consider picking up a few tickets for our subscription season shows. Select just three or more shows to become a Berkeley Rep subscriber and enjoy a savings of up to 50 percent off single ticket prices, the best seats in the house, and a variety of other perks including free ticket exchanges. I bet you’ll be glad you did.

Best regards,

Susie Medak
The healing power of teamwork.

Berkeley Outpatient Center
Near San Pablo & Ashby Ave.

Primary care, specialists, OB/GYN, urgent care, lab and imaging.
OUR STORIES. OUR THEATRE.
YOU HAVE A ROLE TO PLAY.
Text BACKSTAGE to 71777
berkeleyrep.org/give
BE A DONOR. BE A REP.
WHAT IS TEEN NIGHT? It’s our School of Theatre’s most popular event where, for ten dollars, high school students can see a Berkeley Rep show with their peers — and get dinner, hear from an artist involved with the production, and join a post-show discussion.

Why go to Teen Night? Zohar, a current attendee, almost didn’t. “I was like, ‘I don’t know if it’s gonna be that good, I don’t wanna go!’” But after some cajoling, she gave it a try. “The teens who work there are so welcoming. That was really awesome, and the atmosphere was really bright, and we talked, and there are activities. I really enjoy it, and it’s even better getting to be a part of it.”

Now, less than a year later, Zohar is a part of Teen Council, the group of high school students who help organize the event. “We have adults in charge who make sure we don’t burn anything down,” she says reassuringly, “but a lot of the stuff that we’ve done has been just teens. I personally think that I’ve benefitted from this as an individual, it’s helped me grow.”

Isabelle, former Teen Night attendee and Teen Council member, agrees that letting teenagers have a leadership role really makes a difference. “It makes you feel like you’re in charge, you’re in control, and they’re creating portals and ways in for you.” Teens are also the ones who get to interview the artists. “You get to see a fellow teen talking to them so it’s like ‘Oh, I can talk to these people.’ It just opens up theatre, for teens.” Artists who have presented at past Teen Nights include Sergio Trujillo (choreographer for Ain’t Too Proud), Daniel Handler (aka Lemony Snicket), and Jackie Sibblies Drury, now a Pulitzer Prize–winning playwright.

There’s also a chance to discuss the show afterward. “I don’t want to say it’s better than the show, but it’s up there,” Zohar confides. “It’s really helpful because Berkeley Rep is really great at bringing in new works, and works that discuss issues that are currently in our community and our world and our life. I think that, if the plays don’t allow for every side to be seen, that every side gets to be seen when we have these post-show discussions.”

They clearly aren’t the only ones who are excited to come to Teen Night. There are 80 to 100 tickets available for each show, plus a few season passes. Still, the events almost always sell out, so reserve your spot early if you want in on the fun.

For Isabelle, her favorite part of Teen Night is the friends she made. “I know that sounds cheesy,” she laughs, “but I’m still really good friends with people that I met doing Teen Night.”

Zohar summed it up best: “All for ten dollars, you can see a play, get food, have a discussion, meet artists, and meet new people too. All for ten dollars!”

Thank you to the generous supporters of the School of Theatre who make events like Teen Night possible.
As the artistic team and cast began to create this production, director Jaki Bradley, assistant director Nailah Harper-Malveaux, and literary/dramaturgy fellow Charlie Dubach-Reinhold assembled an incredibly rich list of books and other resources that help contextualize the world of the play. Here are some selections if you want to dig more deeply into the thorny issues of *White Noise*.

**Faces at the Bottom of the Well**
by Derrick Bell

This book is full of short allegorical stories that explore the way that racism operates, evolves, and cements itself in our world. Written by Derrick Bell, a founding thinker behind critical race theory, it uses simple, yet incisive myths/fables to re-examine the quest for racial justice and argue that racism is an integral, permanent, and indestructible component of our society.

**White Fragility: Why It’s So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism**
by Robin DiAngelo

Robin DiAngelo, an academic as well as a diversity and inclusion training educator, dissects the ways white people react when challenged about their notions about race that perpetuate systems of exclusion.

**The 1619 Project**

This New York Times interactive site, launched to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the first slaves arriving in America, reexamines the way we think and talk about American history and the legacy of slavery in this country. It’s also an ongoing podcast series that you can listen to for free.
You have dreams. Goals you want to achieve during your lifetime and a legacy you want to leave behind. The Private Bank can help. Our highly specialized and experienced wealth strategists can help you navigate the complexities of estate planning and deliver the customized solutions you need to ensure your wealth is transferred according to your wishes.

Take the first step in ensuring the preservation of your wealth for your lifetime and future generations.

To learn more, please visit unionbank.com/theprivatebank or contact:

Vartan Shahijanian
Private Wealth Advisor
vartan.shahijanian@unionbank.com
415-705-7258
What does it take to make a play? The Ground Floor Summer Residency Lab asks this question summer after summer as artists craft pieces that stretch, subvert, confront, and explode traditions of theatrical form. One answer is: people gathered together, collectively imagining. Some of the holiest moments of the Lab are made up of just that and little else. A playwright who has spent their residency mostly writing alone bravely decides to share material with their fellow artists and staff. We pull folding chairs into a circle, distribute copies of the draft, assign roles to willing readers, and travel. Sanaz Toossi took us to a dingy tennis court in Karaj, Iran, during the blistering summers of 1979 and 1999—we inhaled its dust, heard the crack of ball on racket as her characters fiercely rallied, and felt the years they’d known each other in the weight and wit of their dialogue. Alex Borinsky welcomed us to the New Jerusalem Tavern, a dive where transangelic people (just like us, but they’ve grown, or are growing, wings) gather to share music, poetry, and community; we bowed our heads in prayer, laughed and winced at a campy yet all-too-true skit about a police encounter, and listened to the songs expressing love and rage and staving off despair. Then we were a Berkeley Rep audience at a presentation given by Akira Kurosawa himself, except he was played by writer Julia Izumi…and then by a bunch of other people. Julia helped us imagine an Akira obsessed with yogurt—she even had a real yogurt cup, out of which she ate during her reading despite lacking a spoon.
A multigenerational crowd eagerly gathered in the rehearsal hall—artists, staff, friends, fans—to hear selections from Ohio, the final installment in Abigail and Shaun Bengson’s quasi-autobiographical trilogy. Before the piece began, they created a kinship with the listeners; Abigail maneuvered her way down from the mic stand to lead us in an improvised song thanking the supporters of The Ground Floor, and we laughingly obliged. They were joined by Summer Lab alum Kate Kilbane and Lila Blue on vocals, evoking the Weird Sisters as their voices moved in harmony and discord with Abigail’s. We were hushed as Abigail crowed and Sean crooned about their son Louie’s birth and fraught first days of life. As the sharing came to a rapturous close, book writer Sarah Gancher made a surprise violin cameo, we sang an exuberant round declaring it “time to let the light in,” and Louie himself rushed the “stage” with his toddler compatriot Hazel, Kate Kilbane’s daughter, who made a beeline for her mother’s microphone.

Often, recognizable set pieces, costumes, and props emerge from storage into Summer Lab rooms (four summers in a row, the rolling stoop from Tony Kushner’s The Intelligent Homosexual’s Guide to Capitalism and Socialism with a Key to the Scriptures has proven indispensable). A shiny red tricycle from Sarah Ruhl’s Eurydice rolled its way into the Lab and our hearts this year. Local actors, volunteer ambassadors, staff, and writers alike broke into stupidly wide grins as they cruised around rehearsal and through the halls of our Harrison Street campus. Writer Dave Harris was an especially ardent fan of the trike, so we shouldn’t have been surprised when it made an outrageous appearance, ridden by multiple actors and accompanied by music, during the reading of his piece Watch Me. Dave gleefully cackled from the back as we fell out of our seats, delighted to see our trike making its star turn.

By the time Ezra arrived, the Tony Taccone Rehearsal Hall had met all kinds of dancers. Sam Pinkleton, nicHi douglas, and Pig Iron Theatre Company had thrown open the doors to everyone to help envision their new piece House of Victory—from self-identified dancers, like the April Follies Queer Partner Dance Competition, to Berkeley Rep’s own docents and development department. So nobody was particularly surprised to see our associate technical director, Matt Rohner, carrying his wee, wide-eyed baby Ezra in for a dance. Some of the less experienced dancers entered the space with goodwill and curiosity, but also some nerves and tentativeness; all seemed to exit feeling relaxed, joyful, and connected to those with whom they’d danced. As Matt put it, “Though we can’t know for sure what goes on in the mind at 11 weeks, I believe I can safely say Ezra and I both had a blast.”
TALKING WITH PLAYWRIGHT SUZAN-LORI PARKS is joyous. Her sentences spool out into a large paragraph punctuated with laughs and “ya knows?” Her phrases seem to bounce as she plays out a thought. It’s enough to make you forget that her plays tackle some of the heaviest, darkest realities in our world. Then you remember that’s how she gets away with it: her love for her characters permeates the darkness of every situation they climb into.

Suzan-Lori spoke with Literary Manager Sarah Rose Leonard a month before rehearsals began for White Noise. They discussed what she learned from the first production in New York, and what she’s still thinking about as this second production approaches.
What prompted you to write this play?

It started with a gesture. I was watching my play Father Comes Home from the Wars — Part 2 specifically — and there’s a moment where our hero, the slave, the man of African descent, wonders what it’s gonna be like in the future when he’s coming home from work: will the law officer allow him to go about his business? His friend Smith says, “I don’t know.” I sat there watching the play night after night and I thought, “I could write a play about that moment.” That moment is taking place right now — I was watching Father Comes Home back in 2014, before the election.

Then I thought, who’s in the play? Oh, some friends just like us. Look in the mirror, it’s you, it’s me, it’s the people we used to know in high school, our spouses, our children — it’s us. I followed the people, I don’t follow the money. I keep saying that because a lot of people are thinking about what’s going to be marketable — how can I make a buck off of this mess that we’re in right now? I’m not thinking that; I’m thinking how can I help, how can I help, how can I help?

You’ve said that this is the hardest play you’ve ever written. Do you still feel that?

Yeah I do, because it’s really hard to tell the truth about people you love. It was hard to embody or love Dawn, and yet also totally agree with Misha. Or love Misha, but totally agree with Ralph. You know what I mean? Love Ralph, totally agree with Leo! You know the phrase “drawn and quartered?” I felt quartered! It was like the four parts of myself were being pulled in four different directions at the same time. It’s so difficult to hold four points of view.

Some people have expressed feeling like the play was fueled by rage at what’s happening today. Does that ring true, or not?

It doesn’t come from rage; no, it comes from love. I love you, so I’m going to show you. I was talking to this class the other day and I was saying, “There is no ‘I’ in team, but there is a ‘me’ in enemy.” Like shit, what are we gonna do, people? ‘Cause hate don’t work, okay? I guess we’re too busy or too important or too connected to our device to remember that we’re connected.

Your love for these characters really comes across in their solo moments with the audience.

They are called solos because Misha, Dawn, Ralph, and Leo had a band back in the day when things were good. I have a band, and it’s a beautiful thing when you solo. That is your time when you step out into the light and are supported by the rest of the band. In this case, when the friends had a band it didn’t go very far, they didn’t make any money, but it was joyous. Then the band was replaced by bowling.

Do you write thinking about music?

Yes! The first thing I wrote as an artist was songs. Then I fell in love with libraries and books and theatre. I’m always thinking about rhythm, timing. White Noise has a song that they wrote together which I composed. What’s fun is to write scenes with the rhythm of bowling!

How did you choose bowling?

My parents used to bowl. My dad was in the service, we moved around a lot. Everywhere we moved there was a bowling alley. Imagine you’re an adult, you move, and you don’t know anybody, but there’s a bowling group — you can go and bowl! It was a lovely thing that my parents would do to create community. There were varying levels of skill and you didn’t have to be really good to participate. I would go with my parents, sit in the back, and watch them bowl. It was lovely! Writing scenes to the rhythm of bowling is really fun because the scene’s timed out. I just had the timing way deep in my head from watching my parents in the bowling alley.

What made you decide to not place the friends in a specific city?

The exact coordinates of where they are is not important to me. I’m just trying to include what’s important, and I leave the rest out. It’s a broad, big, thriving urban city. It could be New York or Chicago or San Francisco or Cleveland or Houston or Austin or Boston — it’s a city where people of different ethnic backgrounds would congregate.

The names Leo, Misha, Ralph, and Dawn come from Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles (Leonardo, Michelangelo, Raphael, and Donatello). How did that happen?

’Cause it made me laugh! People read or see the play and they’re filled with feelings — maybe joy, anger, despair, happiness, whatever feelings they have, right? — but what’s weird is that they assume the feelings that they have are the feelings I had writing it. That’s not always true. I write from a very intense and joyous place. A lot of times I include things that are just funny! I was just sitting at my desk going, “Bluhbluhbluh I CONTINUED ON PAGE 21
STYLISTIC INTERPLAY IN SUZAN-LORI PARKS’ CANON

BY CHARLIE DUBACH-REINHOLD

TO CATEGORIZE THE WORK of playwright Suzan-Lori Parks is a nearly impossible task. Parks catapulted into nationwide fame when she won the 2002 Pulitzer Prize for her drama Topdog/Underdog, though she had been steadily rising in the theatre world during the previous decade for her poetic, metaphysical plays. Her professional playwriting career spans over 35 years, and one could write 35 essays to encapsulate the myriad styles, characters, and genres in her work. Luckily, she’s provided a guide: Parks’ 1995 essay “From the Elements of Style” outlines her process and the essential features of her early writing. Critics call the work discussed in her essay “dreamlike,” “hermetically surreal,” and “phantasmagorical;” those descriptors may not automatically fit what you will see in White Noise. Over the years, Parks’ style has transformed significantly. But elements like the musicality of her language and the layering of character as she defines it in her essay still appear even as she explores more linear, realistic genres.

One of Parks’ most well-known stylistic elements is what she called “Repetition and Revision.” “Rep & Rev” is a device inspired by jazz. It requires that as words, ideas, and even plot devices are repeated throughout a play, each is revised as it reappears. In her early work, Parks used Rep & Rev as a principal device. At the top of her 1996 play Venus, many of the characters repeat the words, “I regret to inform you that thuh Venus Hottentot is dead. There won’t be inny show tuh-night.” In the world of the play, this is untrue; Venus is alive and present, there is a show, and the audience will watch it unfold. The effect is musical; the phrase repeats throughout the play, a lyrical reminder of the myriad exploitations of the title character. It punctuates a story following a relatively linear path with jazz-style refrains. By the final scene, the phrase marks the death of the show itself, and has taken on various shades of meaning.

Hints of Parks’ Rep & Rev show up throughout her canon, even as she experiments with form and character. In her 1990 piece The Death of the Last Black Man in the Whole Entire World, Rep & Rev influences more than the language — it permeates the entire plot. A striking repetition is the death of the main character, Black Man With Watermelon. He dies over and over in ways invoking the American history of racial violence, including a lynching. This technique conjures mourning and remembrance and creates a maelstrom that at once shocks and laments. In contrast, the naturalistic characters of her play Topdog/Underdog exist inside a linear, psychologically motivated plot. But they repeat a spoken card game refrain that differentiates their characters and adds a musical, heightened reality to this down-to-earth play. Similarly, the rhythmic interruption of bowling is an echoed refrain in White Noise, and each character repeats a personal mantra throughout their journey. Rep & Rev in Parks’ later works supports the parts of her plays that live in heightened reality rather than defining the entire structure or use of language. The device may go unnoticed in her less overtly symbolic works, but its rhythm still resounds.

A SUZAN-LORI PARKS PRODUCTION TIMELINE

1989
IMPERCEPTIBLE MUTABILITIES IN THE THIRD KINGDOM

1990
THE DEATH OF THE LAST BLACK MAN IN THE WHOLE ENTIRE WORLD
A nonlinear, poetic, jazz-inspired exploration of the various forms of violence enacted against Black male bodies, featuring characters constructed of historical reference, stereotype, and the Christian Bible.

1994
THE AMERICA PLAY
A reckoning with the legacy of Abraham Lincoln and the Great Hole that is the lack of African-American and Black history in the United States, conveyed through a Black gravedigger and Lincoln impersonator, and his wife and son.

1996
VENUS
A Brechtian, fictional chronicling of the real-life story of Saartjie Baartman, a South African Black woman displayed in 19th century London as a freak called the “Hottentot Venus,” set alongside a recitation from her autopsy.

1999
IN THE BLOOD
The first of two “Red Letter Plays” based on Nathaniel Hawthorne’s The Scarlet Letter. Hester, the Medea-like, homeless mother of five children, searches for a leg up in life and struggles with her children’s mostly absent fathers.
THE DEVICE MAY GO UNNOTICED IN HER LESS OVERTLY SYMBOLIC WORKS, BUT ITS RHYTHM STILL RESOUNDS.”

Similarly, Parks’ characters run the gamut from purely symbolic to psychologically realistic. One of her most recent works, *Father Comes Home from the Wars* (2014), follows the slave Hero during the Civil War. Hero’s journey is modeled on *The Odyssey*, and while he speaks in realistic language, the characters around him utilize repetitive language and function allegorically. At the center of Parks’ career are her Red Letter Plays: *In the Blood* (1999) and *Fucking A* (2000). Based on Nathaniel Hawthorne’s novel *The Scarlet Letter: A Romance*, both plays feature a Black female protagonist named Hester, after Hawthorne’s heroine, and grapple with the theme of motherhood. These two works sit at a stylistic and chronological middle ground for Parks. Both plays juxtapose the abstract, symbolist, stereotype-influenced characters of her early career with characters like the more psychologically realistic group of friends you’ll encounter in *White Noise*.

Characters with names like The Mayor, Butcher, and Freedom Fund Lady populate the world of *Fucking A*. Unlike the main character, Hester, they do not function as dynamic characters. Instead, as stand-ins for larger, unchanging social forces, these characters interrogate the audience’s understanding of the relationship between the play’s fictional dystopia and today’s social order. *In the Blood* features similar characters, but they also speak soliloquies that allow psychological insight into their motivations. Much like the card game practice in *Topdog/Underdog* and the monologues in *White Noise*, the soliloquies of *In the Blood* function like solos in jazz. They add moments of individuality to the musical construction of the drama, time to ruminate on one point of view before diving back into the cacophony. Although the characters in *White Noise* can seem like a departure from symbolic characters, each character functions as both a lifelike, relatable human being and analogue for familiar, troubling social beliefs and dynamics.

Parks has an astonishing ability to weave allegoric characters and the music of Rep & Rev into any genre, and she has experimented with many. *Death of the Last Black Man* is a postmodern amalgamation of symbols. *Venus* disrupts and interrogates the audience’s spectatorship in the manner of Brechtian epic theatre. *In the Blood* and *Fucking A* both feature Medea-like figures in classical tragic situations set in dystopian futures. *Topdog/Underdog* is a naturalist drama set in a city somewhere in the United States, and *Father Comes Home from the Wars* combines Homeric epic with Greek drama. Though of a completely different tone, the realistic dramedy about four friends in 2019 that is *White Noise* manifests the same ability to combine the everyday with the fantastic, the lyrical with the colloquial, and the theatrical with the pedestrian.

Parks can hide layers of reference and understanding inside relationships, craft poetry into what sounds like normal speech, and create characters that transcend their immediate realities. The genre of her acclaimed *Topdog/Underdog*, for instance, is naturalism, but its brothers metaphorically (and later, literally) stand in for the historical Abraham Lincoln and his assassin. Parks weaves together a story that allows for the simultaneous realism in their relationship and invocation of social themes such as the legacy of slavery and reenactment of violence as catharsis. The characters in *White Noise* also invite this kind of scrutiny. This group of friends offers us opportunities to connect with each as both individuals and representatives of larger conversations. Suzan-Lori Parks expertly gives to multilayered situations the multilayered characters that they deserve.
BY SARAH ROSE LEONARD

“A SUBTERFUGE OF NATURALISM”
DIRECTOR JAKI BRADLEY ON TONE AND CHARACTER IN WHITE NOISE

BRINGING JAKI BRADLEY IN as the director of *White Noise* is exactly the type of move that thrills us at Berkeley Rep: pairing a gifted up-and-coming director with a legendary playwright sparks a partnership rife with possibility. Johanna Pfaelzer brought Jaki to New York Stage and Film — where Johanna was the artistic director before coming to Berkeley Rep — to direct a number of projects over the years. Now, Johanna brings Jaki to Berkeley to direct her first regional theatre production.
How did the play find you?
Johanna sent me the play and asked if I wanted to get coffee with Suzan-Lori to chat about it. Having coffee with Suzan-Lori Parks is the dream for most theatre-makers, so I was already honored to be considered and to be able to sit down with her. Suzan-Lori and I had a two-plus hour coffee and went really deep talking about the play, the characters, and what she's interested in exploring. It's an incredible honor to work on a play of hers.

What draws you to White Noise?
I tend to be interested in work that has an incredibly specific sense of world, and to writers who are asking big questions in their work — whether or not they are coming up with big answers. I'm drawn to plays that are willing to wrestle with thorny topics, and this play typifies that. It's a play that feels like it has 16 characters because its scope is so big and it talks about so many giant issues. But actually, it's this epic that exists in the space between four people.

Suzan-Lori is a master of blending classical and contemporary references and mixing together individuals and archetype in her character work. How do you plan to build characters that are at once real people and also allegorical?
In the space of the rehearsal room, we are treating these characters as complicated, three dimensional, empathetic humans. If you let too much air out of that balloon and talk about it in the rehearsal room as a parable, then you can end up with flattened characters and miss a lot of Suzan-Lori's nuance. On the other hand, a lot of the conversations I've had with designers are about just what you mentioned: the allegorical nature of the piece, and how it functions like a myth. We've been talking about large theme, large iconography — its vocabulary is heightened in terms of how design manifests. But it serves the actors to treat it like psychological realism, even though you're exactly right: White Noise is a subterfuge of naturalism.

How would you describe the overall tone of the play?
It's very sneaky! It's asking giant, uncomfortable, unsettling questions, but wrapping them up in a package of witty dialogue and friends from college. It's sort of banter-y, and I think it contains comedy in order to access some of those deeper, darker things. If it started in a cynical place it would be hard to get an audience on board. Suzan-Lori excels at making something really fun...until it's not. She lulls you into feeling like you know these people and understand how they behave, and then she has them do something that's really beyond the pale.

How do you approach character work?
It's really about finding out what each of the characters needs and making sure that is thoroughly investigated and deeply felt. With the character of Leo, for instance, I think it's essential we understand that he's operating with this deep agita. On the surface, that agita is caused by lifelong insomnia, and then hearing white noise in his head all the time. But in a lot of ways, these operate as metaphors for anxiety, particularly the anxiety of being a Black man in America. If you understand the anxiety he's dealing with the moment we start the play, it'll help you connect to his need to propose something really radical, something that seems so extreme.

It's four intelligent, self-aware characters, and almost everything filters through their acknowledgement of what is and is not problematic about what they think and say. Which is really rare. Every time Dawn talks about herself as a do-gooder, and every time Misha talks about her show, they're very aware of the things they say that are good or well-intentioned versus the things that are problematic or condescending.

In the personal monologues that punctuate the play, each character gets a chance to make direct eye contact with the audience. Why do you think those moments are meant to distinctly break the fourth wall?
In each of those four solos I find things that I relate to on a deeply personal level, whether or not the character voicing them shares any part of my life experience. Some of the events of the play are heightened enough that you might start to distance yourself from them. You might start to say, “I am different from the people in this world, I would never find myself in these situations, or if I did, I would never behave this way.” I think the direct address in those solos serves to confront that distancing and paint a more complicated portrayal of what's going on.

The play is so much about interracial relationships. Why do you think that is a primary focus of this story?
I've thought a lot about the relationships in the play in terms of how the pairings of the four people get together. Some of the most complicated questions the play asks are, “What are the dynamics between all of these people who think of themselves as really woke, who imagine that they behave exactly the same around all of their friends? Who imagine that between the four of them their race is not an issue?” When of course it is. It's inextricably linked to the way they interact with each other, the privileges they have. I think the friendships and the romantic relationships and the sexual relationships are all asking: Who are we in each other's presences and in each other's absences?
HISTORICALLY, THE AMERICAN THEATRE has largely excluded Black writers from its canon. August Wilson’s work received a rare exception, as did one play by Lorraine Hansberry… and that’s about it. For decades, common parlance posited that production-worthy writing by Black authors didn’t exist. Artistic directors insisted that they just simply “chose the best plays.” We are finally as a field beginning to see this for the bias it is, and recognizing that our culture demands and deserves a more expansive ideology, particularly when it comes to our storytelling.

For so long, western societies have assumed the white male experience as the baseline; and the people holding the power, wealth, and influence drove the choices about what stories got told. This hierarchical structure assumes a tacit agreement among the culture at large, and handily dismisses work that fails to fall in line. Important Black playwrights have written seminal texts for a very long time, and yet plays by Adrienne Kennedy, Alice Childress, Ed Bullins, or Amiri Baraka rarely receive productions on our stages. Literary giants Langston Hughes, Maya Angelou, and James Baldwin all wrote for the theatre. It’s not that Black writers didn’t exist; the mainstream decision-makers just weren’t paying attention.

However, perhaps as a result of this glaring blind spot, generations of people of color and women learned how to see the world through the eyes of characters who didn’t necessarily look like them. From Willy Loman’s everyman struggles to Stanley Kowalski’s tragic brutality, these iconic stories encouraged audiences to ponder big questions about human nature, and their narratives were considered universal. Maybe, ironically, that’s why it took so long to invite a more inclusive conversation: the people with the power rarely had to imagine themselves in the shoes of someone “other.”

This seems to have finally begun to shift: critics, artists, and audiences alike have recognized that we are living through a significant moment in the American Theatre, where artists of color are being embraced. Many large theatres program plays by Black playwrights regularly, and not just in February for Black History Month. Names like Lynn Nottage, Dominique Morisseau, Brandon Jacobs-Jenkins, and Suzan-Lori Parks appear regularly on year-end lists of the most produced playwrights. Another wave of successful writers is following hot on their heels, with Jocelyn Bioh, Jackie Sibblies Drury, Michael R. Jackson, and Ngozi Anyanwu gaining nationwide attention and acclaim for their work. Their...
don’t know what their names are!” And there’s my son playing with his Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles figurines, and I just started laughing. A couple days before, I had made up a little song for him because he couldn’t remember their names — “Donatello, Michelangelo, Leonardo, Raphael.” So I had them in my head and I was like, “Ha, that would be so funny!” One of the keys to my work is to remember there’s a lot of joy in there. If we just reduce it down to a Black woman playwright who’s angry at you and shaking her finger, you miss 98 percent of my work. Just, boom: it’s gone, you miss it because actually I’m going, “Hey let’s all hang out and ruminate on this shit right? Let’s have a few laughs along the way because it’s deeply disturbing!”

One of the constants we’ve noticed about the Peet’s Theatre is that laughter ripples in a distinctive way since we can all see each other in the audience.

It was the same at The Public Theater — we were also in a thrust space and you could never tell who was gonna be laughing. Sometimes when Black people were laughing some of the other Black people were not laughing. Or some of the white people were laughing and looking at other white people like, “Hey should we laugh?” Or they were sitting with Black people who were like, “Yeah yeah let’s laugh!” Sometimes all the young people were not laughing and the older people were totally laughing. It’s generation! It’s racial! It’s income level! It’s very interesting how it all divides and hopefully you’re embracing it.

The jokes open up the body to receive: here we are! Great, now that we got you warmed up we’re gonna talk about some shit. You’re ready. We’re all in this together. We can’t get away with pointing a finger at that one, because that one is just as culpable and just as innocent as you are, and what are we gonna do about it?
A BEGUILING MUSICAL HOLIDAY TREAT FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY!

THE TALE OF DESPEREAUX

BOOK, MUSIC, AND LYRICS BY PIGPEN THEATRE CO.
BASED ON THE NOVEL BY KATE DICAMILLO AND THE UNIVERSAL PICTURES ANIMATED FILM DIRECTED BY MARC BRUNI AND PIGPEN THEATRE CO.

SPECIAL EVENT · RODA THEATRE
NOV 21, 2019–JAN 5, 2020

BOOK, MUSIC, AND LYRICS BY PIGPEN THEATRE CO.
BASED ON THE NOVEL BY KATE DICAMILLO AND THE UNIVERSAL PICTURES ANIMATED FILM DIRECTED BY MARC BRUNI AND PIGPEN THEATRE CO.

SPECIAL EVENT · RODA THEATRE
NOV 21, 2019–JAN 5, 2020

The original cast of The Tale of Despereaux at The Old Globe (photo by Jim Cox)
WHITE NOISE

BY
SUZAN-LORI PARKS

DIRECTED BY
JAKI BRADLEY

SEPTEMBER 26-NOVEMBER 10, 2019
PEET’S THEATRE · MAIN SEASON

This show has a 15-minute intermission.

White Noise is made possible thanks to the generous support of

SEASON SPONSORS
Bruce Golden & Michelle Mercer
Jack & Betty Schafer
Michael & Sue Steinberg
The Strauch Kulhanjian Family

LEAD SPONSORS
Frances Hellman & Warren Breslau

EXECUTIVE SPONSORS
Gail & Arne Wagner

SPONSORS
Leonard X & Arlene B. Rosenberg

ASSOCIATE SPONSOR
Fred Karren

CAST
Dawn Therese Barbato
Ralph Nick Dillenburg
Leo Chris Herbie Holland
Misha Aimé Donna Kelly

PRODUCTION STAFF
Scenic Design Adam Rigg
Costume Design Tilly Grimes
Lighting and Video Design Alexander V. Nichols
Sound Design Mikael Sulaiman
Casting Caparelliotis Casting
Stage Manager Chris Waters

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

World Premiere Production by
The Public Theater
Oskar Eustis, Artistic Director Patrick Willingham, Executive Director

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.
THERESÉ BARBATÓ
DAWN

Therese is delighted to be at Berkeley Rep for the first time. She made her Broadway debut this year in King Lear with Glenda Jackson. Her off-Broadway credits include Prometheaus Bound (Classic Stage Company), Mourning Becomes Electra (The New Group), and numerous productions with Slant Theatre Project. She has worked regionally with Actors Theatre of Louisville, Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey, the Huntington Theatre, Boise Contemporary Theatre, Shakespeare Center of Los Angeles, Geva Theatre Center, and Olney Theatre Center. Film: Prom King, 2010. Therese trained at Boston University and the Juilliard School and is the host of “that’s what she said” podcast: thatswatsheasaidpod.com.

NICk DILLENBURG
RALPH

Nick is thrilled to make his Berkeley Rep debut. Previous credits include The Real Thing (Broadway) with Ewan McGregor and Maggie Gyllenhaal. Off-Broadway credits include Mary Page Marlowe by Tracy Letts (New York premiere at Second Stage), Teenage Dick (The Public Theater), Henry V in Into the Hazard: Henry V (Walkerspace), Hater with Merrill Waver (Ohio Theatre), and Punchdrunk’s Sleep No More. He has been seen at the Guthrie Theater, Shakespeare Theatre Company, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Utah Shakespeare Festival, Berkshire Theatre Group, Portland Stage, and many more. He is perhaps best known for playing CO Ryder Blake on Orange Is the New Black. Other TV credits include: Law & Order: Special Victims Unit, Elementary, Person of Interest, and Blue Bloods. He is a proud alum of the University of Connecticut where he holds an MFA in Acting.

CHRIS HERBIE HOLLAND
LEO

Chris is making his Berkeley Rep debut in White Noise. Regional: The Box (Z Space), 12 Angry Men (Northern Stage), Six Degrees of Separation (Theatre Workshop of Nantucket), Williamstown Theatre Festival: Tempo, Soft, NYU: Zooman and the Sign, Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom, Othello, Hamlet, Animal Farm. BA: Dartmouth College. MFA: NYU Grad Acting.

AIMÉ DONNA KELLY
MISHA

Aimé is thrilled to make her Berkeley Rep debut. She has appeared off Broadway in Exit Strategy (Primary Stages) and Macbeth (Epic Theatre), in major regional productions of Byhalia, Mississippi (The Kennedy Center), Father Comes Home from the Wars (Griffin Theatre), and The White Snake (Baltimore Center Stage), and in the world premieres of James Ijames’ Moon Walk Man, Applied Mechanics’ We Are Bandits, and Jen Silverman’s The Dangerous House of Pretty Mbane. Film: Out of Order. TV: The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel, Marvel’s Iron Fist. Three-time Barrymore nominee.

SUZAN-LORI PARKS
PLAYWRIGHT

Suzan-Lori Parks was named one of TIME magazine’s “100 Innovators for the Next New Wave,” and is the first African American woman to receive the Pulitzer Prize in Drama for her play Topdog/Underdog. She is a MacArthur “Genius Grant” prize recipient and she’s also received The Gish Prize for Excellence in the Arts. Broadway credits include The Gershwin’s Porgy and Bess, which was awarded the Tony Award for Best Revival of a Musical, and Topdog/Underdog, which starred Jeffrey Wright and Mos Def and was directed by George C. Wolfe. The play received a Tony nomination and recently was named by the New York Times as the most important American play within the last 25 years. Other plays include In the Blood (Pulitzer Prize finalist), Fucking A, The Death of the Last Black Man in the Whole Entire World aka The Negro Book of the Dead, and, more recently, Father Comes Home from the Wars (parts 1, 2 & 3) (Pulitzer Prize finalist). In 2009 Parks wrote a play a day culminating in 365 Days/365 Plays; the plays were produced globally in over 700 theaters, which, at the time, was said to be the largest theatrical grassroots undertaking of its kind. More recently, to reflect on the current presidential administration, Parks wrote 100 Plays for the First Hundred Days. Parks has authored a novel: Getting Mother’s Body, which is published by Random House. Her screenplays include Girl6 (directed by Spike Lee), Their Eyes Were Watching God (produced by Oprah Winfrey), Anemone Me (produced by Christine Vachon and Todd Haynes), and an adaptation of Richard Wright’s Native Son (directed by Rashid Johnson), which opened the 2019 Sundance Film Festival. New work includes The United States vs Billie Holiday (directed by Lee Daniels), a stage-musical adaptation of the film The Harder They Come, and she’s currently the show-runner for GENIUS: Aretha Franklin for The National Geographic Channel. A former writing student of James Baldwin, Parks is now The Public Theater’s Master Writer Chair, where she performs Watch Me Work, a weekly writing performance/class free of charge and open to all. She also writes songs and fronts her band: Suzan-Lori Parks & The Band.

JAKI BRADLEY
DIRECTOR

Jaki is a Brooklyn-based director. Recent projects: Radio Island and Good Men Wanted (New York Stage and Film), Playing Hot (Ars Nova/Pipeline, 1969: The Second Man (New York Theatre Workshop), and Breeders (Tony Critic’s Pick). She has developed and presented work with The Public Theater, Williamstown Theatre Festival, Denver Center, Clubbed Thumb, Goodspeed Musicals, Arena Stage, and the O’Neill Theater Center. She has been a member of the Civilians R&D Group, an artist-in-residence at Ars Nova, a Drama League artist-in-residence and TV/Film directing fellow, a member of the Soho Rep Writer/Director Lab, Williamstown Directing Corps, Lincoln Center Director’s Lab, and a U.S. Fulbright Scholar. Her second feature film, Detox, is currently in development with x/vz Films. jakibradley.com

ADAM RIGG
SCENIC DESIGNER

Adam is a New York–based set and costume designer. Credits include Soho Rep, Mark Taper Forum/Center Theatre Group, New York Theatre Workshop, LA Opera, Theater An Der Wien in Austria, Signature Theatre Company, the Guthrie Theater, Seattle Rep, Teatro Municipal in Brazil, Williamstown Theatre Festival, Yale Rep, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Opera Philadelphia, Cincinnati Opera, Manhattan Theatre Club, The Kennedy Center, and Theatre For A New Audience. Adam has been a resident artist with their performance collective I Am A Boys Choir at The Public Theater (Devised Theater Working Group) and Mabou Mines. Adam is a Princess Grace Award winner, a two-time American Theatre Wing Henry Hewes Design Award nominee, a Connecticut Critics Circle Award nominee, and a multiple Ovation Award nominee. They were a recipient of the Donald Oenslager Fellowship in 2012 and the Pierre Cardin Fellowship in 2015. BA, UCLA. MFA, Yale School of Drama.

TILLY GRIMES
COSTUME DESIGNER

CHRIS WATERS  
**STAGE MANAGER**

Chris was the stage manager for Berkeley Rep’s production of *Paradise Square* last season. He has worked internationally at the Shanghai Children’s Art Theatre, off Broadway at The Public Theater, and locally at American Conservatory Theater, Aurora Theatre Company, California Shakespeare Theater, Magic Theatre, Santa Cruz Shakespeare, and Z Space. Favorite past productions include *The Great Leap*, *Office Hour, Ain’t Too Proud: The Life and Times of The Temptations, Hand to God, Orlando*, and *A House Tour of the Infamous Porter Family Mansion with Tour Guide Westen Ludlow Loundonerry*. Chris holds an MA in theatre management from University of California, Santa Cruz.

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, *Hedestown* by Anais 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 Chabon, and *Miss Saigon*, *The Jacksonian* by Beth Henley, and *Green Day’s American Idiot*.

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 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, 8 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; 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
DRAMATURG/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...

BRUCE GOLDEN & MICHELLE MERCER SEASON SPONSORS
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 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 sponsor Berkeley Rep this season.

JACK & BETTY SCHAFFER SEASON SPONSORS
Betty and Jack are proud to support Berkeley Rep. Jack is a sustaining advisor of the Theatre, having served on the board for many years, and is now on the board of San Francisco Opera. He is an emeritus board chair of the San Francisco Art Institute and the Oxbow School. In San Francisco, Betty is involved with Wise Aging, a program for adults addressing the challenges of growing older. They have three daughters and eight grandchildren.

MICHAEL & SUE STEINBERG SEASON SPONSORS
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.

FRANCES HELLMAN & WARREN BRESLAU LEAD SPONSORS
Warren and Frances are avid watchers of live theatre, which includes Berkeley Rep and an annual pilgrimage to London’s West End. Having loved Berkeley Rep for years, they are thrilled to sign on as sponsors of White Noise. They are very proud of the cutting edge, exceptional theatre that Berkeley Rep continuously produces. Frances’ day job is as professor of physics at UC Berkeley and Warren is a machinist and welder at 5th Street Machine Arts.

GAIL & ARNE WAGNER EXECUTIVE SPONSORS
Gail has been a Berkeley Rep trustee for seven years and now serves as board president. She retired from Kaiser in San Leandro where she was a hematologist and oncologist. She is the founder of Tiba Foundation (tibafoundation.org), an organization investing in community healthcare in an underprivileged district of western Kenya, in partnership with Matibabu. Arne is a retired lawyer. In his retirement, he teaches and tutors high school math part time, and serves as treasurer for Tiba Foundation. Gail and Arne have been attending the Theatre since they were students in 1972.

THE STRAUCH KULHANJIAN FAMILY SEASON SPONSORS
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, Inventys (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.
University, and serves on the Alumni Association board of directors. Arlene, a recovering lawyer, serves on the board of Peninsula Temple Sholom in Burlingame and chairs its social justice and social action initiatives. Len and Arlene have two fantastic sons. Len and Arlene have enjoyed deepening their attachment to Berkeley Rep over the years, and are delighted to be sponsoring White Noise.

BART SEASON SPONSOR
Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) is the backbone of the Bay Area transit network and serves more than 100 million passengers annually. BART’s all-electric trains make it one of the greenest and most energy-efficient transit systems in the world. Visit bart.gov/bartable to learn more about great destinations and events that are easy to get to on BART (like Berkeley Rep). At bart.gov/bartable, you can find discounts, enter sweepstakes offering fantastic prizes, and find unique and exciting things to do just a BART ride away. While you’re there, be sure to sign up for bartable This Week, a free, weekly email filled with the latest and greatest BARTable fun!

PEET’S COFFEE SEASON SPONSOR
Peet’s Coffee is proud to be the exclusive coffee of Berkeley Repertory Theatre and the namesake of Berkeley Rep’s state-of-the-art Peet’s Theatre. In 1966, Alfred Peet opened his first store on Vine and Walnut in Berkeley and Peet’s has been committed to the community ever since. Supporting Berkeley Rep’s high artistic standards and diverse programming is an extension of this mission. As the pioneer of the craft coffee movement in America, Peet’s is dedicated to small-batch roasting, superior quality beans, freshness, and a darker roasting style that produces a rich, flavorful cup. Peet’s is locally roasted in the first LEED® Gold certified roaster in the nation.

WELLS FARGO SEASON SPONSOR
Wells Fargo is proud to support the award-winning Berkeley Repertory Theatre as a season sponsor for the last 14 years because of its dedication to artistic excellence and community engagement. Founded in 1852 and headquartered in San Francisco, Wells Fargo provides banking, insurance, investments, mortgage, and consumer and commercial finance. The bank is committed to building better every day to meet our customers’ financial goals. For more information, please visit wellsfargo.com.

Who couldn’t use a little more drama?
Be a Rep. Share the gift of live theatre.
berkeleyrep.org/giftcert
We thank the many institutional partners who enrich our community by championing Berkeley Rep’s artistic and community outreach programs. We gratefully recognize these donors to Berkeley Rep, who made their gifts between May 2018 and August 2019.

**FOUNDATION AND GOVERNMENT SUPPORTERS**

**GIFTS OF $100,000 AND ABOVE**
- The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation
- The Shubert Foundation

**GIFTS OF $50,000–99,999**
- Edgerton Foundation
- Jonathan Logan Family Foundation
- Koret Foundation
- National Endowment for the Arts
- The Bernard Osher Foundation
- The Harold and Mimi Steinberg Charitable Trust
- Woodlawn Foundation

**GIFTS OF $25,000–49,999**
- Anonymous
- The Ira and Leonore S. Gershwin Philanthropic Fund
- Laurents/Hatcher Foundation
- Walter & Elise Haas Fund

**GIFTS OF $10,000–24,999**
- Berkeley Civic Arts Program
- California Arts Council

**GIFTS OF $5,000–9,999**
- Anonymous
- The Reva and David Logan Foundation
- Kenneth Rainin Foundation
- Reinhold Foundation

**GIFTS OF $1,000–4,999**
- Joyce & William Brantman Foundation
- Civic Foundation

**MATCHING GIFTS**

The following companies have matched their employees’ contributions to Berkeley Rep. Please contact your company’s HR office to find out if your company matches gifts.

- Accenture
- Adobe Systems Inc.
- Apple
- Applied Materials
- Autodesk Inc.
- Bank of America
- Chevron Corporation
- Clorox
- Deloitte
- Dolby
- Electronic Arts Outreach
- Farallon Capital Management
- Fremont Group Foundation
- Gap Foundation
- Genentech
- GE Foundation
- Google
- IBM Corporation
- Intel Corporation
- John & Maria Goldman Foundation
- Johnson & Johnson
- Kresge Foundation
- Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory
- Levi Strauss & Co.
- Microsoft
- Morrison & Foerster
- NRCAL Mutual Insurance Company
- Oracle Corporation
- Pixar Animation Studios
- Salesforce
- S.D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation
- Shell Oil
- Sidney Austin LLP
- San Francisco Union Bank
- The Private Bank
- Varian Medical System
- VISA U.S.A., Inc.
- The Walt Disney Company
- Workday

**Hotel Shattuck Plaza is the official hotel of Berkeley Rep.**

**EXECUTIVE SPONSORS**
- American Express
- Bank of America

**PARTNERS**
- Angelina’s Louisiana Kitchen
- Ann’s Catering
- Aurora Catering
- Autumn Press
- Babette at BAMPPA
- César
- Comal
- Donkey & Goat Winery

**EXECUTIVE SPONSORS**
- Farella Braun + Martell LLP
- Hugh Groman Catering
- Latham & Watkins LLP
- Mayer Brown LLP
- Rhodes Planning Group
- Semifreddi’s

**SPONSORS**
- The Andreason Group at Morgan Stanley
- Charles Schwab + Co., Inc.
- Mechanics Bank Wealth Management
- The Morrison & Foerster Foundation

**CORPORATE PARTNERS**
- Armanino LLP
- Deloitte
- HDR Remodeling
- Panoramic Interests
- Schoenberg Family Law Group
- UBS

**SEASON SPONSORS**
- bartable
- Peet’s Coffee
- WELLS FARGO

**EXECUTIVE SPONSORS**
- Hotel Shattuck
- Meyer Sound
- Peet’s Coffee

**CORPORATE SPONSORS**
- The Andreason Group at Morgan Stanley
- Charles Schwab + Co., Inc.
- Mechanics Bank Wealth Management
- The Morrison & Foerster Foundation

**IN-KIND SPONSORS**
- Eureka!
- Fonda
- Gather Restaurant
- Hafner Vineyard
- La Note
- OCHO Candy
- Picante
- Revival Bar + Kitchen
- ZINO

**PERFORMANCE SPONSORS**
- Bayer
- BluesCruise.com
- Gallagher Risk Management Services

**LEGEND**
- Ground Floor donor
- School of Theatre donor
- In-kind gift
- Matching gift

**MATCHING GIFTS**

Is your company a corporate sponsor? Berkeley Rep’s Corporate Partnership program offers excellent opportunities to network, entertain clients, reward employees, increase visibility, and support the arts and education in the community. For details visit berkeleyrep.org/support or call Daria Hepps at 510-647-2904.
We thank the generous individuals in our community who help Berkeley Rep produce adventurous, thought-provoking, and thrilling theatre and bring arts education to thousands of young people every year. We gratefully recognize these donors to Berkeley Rep, who made their gifts between May 2018 and August 2019. To make your gift and join this distinguished group, visit berkeleyrep.org/give or call 510-647-2906.

THANKS TO OUR INDIVIDUAL DONORS
THANKS TO OUR INDIVIDUAL DONORS

9/16/19   3:58 PM

The society welcomes the following new members: Christina Crowley

Sustaining members as of September 2019:

Anonymous (8)
Norman Abramson & David Beery
Sam Ambler
Carroll A. Arnwine & Aurora Pan
Ken & Joni Avery
Nancy Axelrod
Edith Barsch
Neil & Gene Barth
Susan & Barry Baskin
Linda Brandenburger
Brothers Business
Lori Businesses
Bruce Carlton & Richard G. McCall
Stephan K. Cassidy
Paula Champagne & David Watson
Terin Christensen
Sofia Close
Andrew Daly & Jody Taylor
M. Laina Dicker
Thalia Dowick
Ricky & Robin Edwards
Thomas W. Edwards & Rebecca Parlette-Edwards
Bill & Suzanne Edsall
William Espey & Margaret Hart Edwards
Bill Falk & Diana Cohen
Peter & Stephanie Folling
Dr. & Richard A. Waltz
Kerry Francis

We gratefully recognize the following donors whose contributions were received from August 7, 2019 to August 29, 2019.

DR. Harvey & Deana Freedman
Joseph & Antonia Friedman
Paul T. Friedman
Dr. John Frykman
Laura K. Fuji
David Gaskin & Phillip McPherson
Marjorie Ginsburg & Howard Slayer
Mary & Nicholas Graves
Elizabeth Greene
Sheldon & Judy Greene
Don & Becky Grether
Richard & Lois Halliday
Julie & Paul Hankness
Linda & Bob Harris
Fred Hartwick
Ruth Henner
Dania Hepp
Douglas J. Hill
Hoskins/Frame Family Trust
Lynda & Dr. Jerry Hurley
Robin G. Johnson
Janice Kelly & D. Carlos Kaslow
Bonnie McPherson Kilkip
Lynn Ev Komaromi
Michael H. Kossman
Scott & Kathy Laway
Dot Loftis
Helen M. Marcus
Dale & Don Marshall
Summer & Hermine Marshall
Rebecca Martinez
Sarah McArthur LeValley
Suzanne & Charles McCulloch
John G. McGehee
Miles & Mary Ellen McKey
Margaret D. & Winton McKibben
Ruth Medak
Susan Medak & Greg Murphy
Stephanie Mendell
Toni Mester
Shirley & Joe Nedham
Teresa Nelson & Bernard Smits
Pam & Mitch Nichiter
Sheleene G. Osborne
Sharon Ott
Amy Pearl Parodi
Barbara L. Peterson
Regina Phelps
Margaret Phillips
Marjorie Randolph
Greg Richardson
Bonnie King Living Trust
Tom Roberts
David Rovno
Tracy E. Rownson
Deborah Dashow Ruth
Patricia Saki & Richard Shapiro
Brenda Buckhold Shank, M.D., Ph.D.
Kevin Shoemaker
Valerie Sophie Shank, M.D.
Michael & Sue Steinberg
Dr. Douglas & Anne Stewart
Jean Strunk
Mary, Andrew & Duncan Suskind
Henry Timnick
Guy Tiphane
Philip & Melody Trapp
Joni & Ted Turer
Gail & Anne Wagner
Dorothy Walker

Barry & Holly Walter
Weil Family Trust — Weil Family
Susan West
Karen & Henry Work
Anders Yang, JD
Martin & Margaret Zankel

Members of this Society, which is named in honor of Founding Director Michael W. Leibert, have designated Berkeley Rep in their estate plans. Unless the donor specifies otherwise, planned gifts become a part of Berkeley Rep’s board-designated endowment funds, where they will provide the financial stability that enables Berkeley Rep to maintain the highest standards of artistic excellence, support new work, and serve the community with innovative education and outreach programs, year after year.

For more information on becoming a member, visit our website at berkeleyrep.org or contact Daria Hepp at 510-647-2904 or dhepp@berkeleyrep.org.

Special thanks to Marjorie Randolph for establishing The Marjorie Randolph Professional Development Fund, which supports the Berkeley Rep staff.

The society welcomes the following new members: Christina Crowley

Sustaining members as of September 2019:

Anonymous (8)
Norman Abramson & David Beery
Sam Ambler
Carrol A. Arnwine & Aurora Pan
Ken & Joni Avery
Nancy Axelrod
Edith Barsch
Neil & Gene Barth
Susan & Barry Baskin
Linda Brandenburger
Brotinez Business
Bruce Carlton & Richard G. McCall
Stephan K. Cassidy
Paula Champagne & David Watson
Terin Christensen
Sofia Close
Andrew Daly & Jody Taylor
M. Laina Dicker
Thalia Dowick
Ricky & Robin Edwards
Thomas W. Edwards & Rebecca Parlette-Edwards
Bill & Suzanne Edsall
William Espey & Margaret Hart Edwards
Bill Falk & Diana Cohen
Peter & Stephanie Folling
Dr. & Richard A. Waltz
Kerry Francis

Dr. Harvey & Deana Freedman
Joseph & Antonia Friedman
Paul T. Friedman
Dr. John Frykman
Laura K. Fuji
David Gaskin & Phillip McPherson
Marjorie Ginsburg & Howard Slayer
Mary & Nicholas Graves
Elizabeth Greene
Sheldon & Judy Greene
Don & Becky Grether
Richard & Lois Halliday
Julie & Paul Hankness
Linda & Bob Harris
Fred Hartwick
Ruth Henner
Dania Hepp
Douglas J. Hill
Hoskins/Frame Family Trust
Lynda & Dr. Jerry Hurley
Robin G. Johnson
Janice Kelly & D. Carlos Kaslow
Bonnie McPherson Kilkip
Lynn Ev Komaromi
Michael H. Kossman
Scott & Kathy Laway
Dot Loftis
Helen M. Marcus
Dale & Don Marshall
Summer & Hermine Marshall
Rebecca Martinez
Sarah McArthur LeValley
Suzanne & Charles McCulloch
John G. McGehee
Miles & Mary Ellen McKey
Margaret D. & Winton McKibben
Ruth Medak
Susan Medak & Greg Murphy
Stephanie Mendell
Toni Mester
Shirley & Joe Nedham
Teresa Nelson & Bernard Smits
Pam & Mitch Nichiter
Sheleene G. Osborne
Sharon Ott
Amy Pearl Parodi
Barbara L. Peterson
Regina Phelps
Margaret Phillips
Marjorie Randolph
Greg Richardson
Bonnie King Living Trust
Tom Roberts
David Rovno
Tracy E. Rownson
Deborah Dashow Ruth
Patricia Saki & Richard Shapiro
Brenda Buckhold Shank, M.D., Ph.D.
Kevin Shoemaker
Valerie Sophie Shank, M.D.
Michael & Sue Steinberg
Dr. Douglas & Anne Stewart
Jean Strunk
Mary, Andrew & Duncan Suskind
Henry Timnick
Guy Tiphane
Philip & Melody Trapp
Joni & Ted Turer
Gail & Anne Wagner
Dorothy Walker

Barry & Holly Walter
Weil Family Trust — Weil Family
Susan West
Karen & Henry Work
Anders Yang, JD
Martin & Margaret Zankel

Members of this Society, which is named in honor of Founding Director Michael W. Leibert, have designated Berkeley Rep in their estate plans. Unless the donor specifies otherwise, planned gifts become a part of Berkeley Rep’s board-designated endowment funds, where they will provide the financial stability that enables Berkeley Rep to maintain the highest standards of artistic excellence, support new work, and serve the community with innovative education and outreach programs, year after year.

For more information on becoming a member, visit our website at berkeleyrep.org or contact Daria Hepp at 510-647-2904 or dhepp@berkeleyrep.org.
Bowling is a shared pastime for the characters in *White Noise*, so the artistic team took a short trip down San Pablo Avenue to bond over a few games at Albany Bowl, while the cast (playing as their characters, as you can see on the screen) took lessons from Irene Wilson and Tim Cagle II. Fun fact: Like playwright Suzan-Lori Parks, actors Nick Dillenburg and Chris Herbie Holland each spent a lot of their youth at bowling alleys, with parents who were devoted bowlers.
CHANGE THE NARRATIVE
TAKE ON THE STAGE
BE A STUDENT. BE A REP.
REGISTER NOW FOR FALL CLASSES!
BERKELEYREP.ORG/CLASSES
510 647-2972
BE A STUDENT. BE A REP.
SUBSCRIPTION PACKAGES AND SINGLE TICKETS NOW ON SALE!

JOIN US FOR 2019–20

BE A SUBSCRIBER. BE A REP.

SEASON SPONSORS

EXCLUSIVELY FOR YOU

YOUR TICKET TO WHITE NOISE UNLOCKS A TON OF GREAT PERKS!

ADD JUST 2 MORE SHOWS TO BECOME A SUBSCRIBER! YOU’LL GET...
- Discounted prices
- Guaranteed seats
- Free ticket exchanges
- Benefits for friends
- Discounts on classes and so much more

AVAILABLE ONLY BY PHONE CALL 510 647-2949 USE CODE WNSUB

NEXT UP

A world premiere from one of Berkeley Rep’s beloved playwrights!

BECKY NURSE OF SALEM
BY SARAH RUHL
DIRECTED BY ANNE KAUFFMAN
MAIN SEASON · PEET’S THEATRE
FEB 20–APR 5, 2020

Out of work and out of love, Becky Nurse is an ordinary but strong-willed grandmother just trying to get by in post-Obama America. She’s also the great-great-great-great-great-granddaughter of Rebecca Nurse, who was infamously executed for witchcraft in 1692—but things have changed for women since then, haven’t they?

STILL TO COME...

CULTURE CLASH (STILL) IN AMERICA
WRITTEN AND PERFORMED BY CULTURE CLASH RICHARD MONTOYA, RICARDO SALINAS, AND HERBERT SIGUENZA
DIRECTED BY LISA PETERSON
MAIN SEASON · PEET’S THEATRE
FEB 20–APR 5, 2020

SCHOOL GIRLS OR, THE AFRICAN MEAN GIRLS PLAY
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–JUL 5, 2020

SWEPT AWAY
BOOK BY JOHN LOGAN
MUSIC & LYRICS BY THE AVETT BROTHERS
MUSIC ARRANGEMENTS & ORCHESTRATIONS BY CHRIS MILLER & BRIAN USIFER
DIRECTED BY MICHAEL MAYER
LIMITED SEASON · PEET’S THEATRE
JUN 14–JUL 26, 2020

PLUS A SPECIAL NONSUBSCRIPTION EVENT
THE TALE OF DESPEREAUX
BOOK, MUSIC, AND LYRICS BY PIGPEN THEATRE CO.
BASED ON THE NOVEL BY KATE DICAMILLO AND THE UNIVERSAL PICTURES ANIMATED FILM
DIRECTED BY MARC BRUNI
AND PIGPEN THEATRE CO.
SPECIAL PRESENTATION · RODA THEATRE
NOV 21, 2019–JAN 5, 2020

Dianne Wiest in the Yale Repertory Theatre production of Samuel Beckett’s Happy Days
PHOTO BY JOAN MARCUS

BECKY NURSE OF SALEM
BY SARAH RUHL
DIRECTED BY ANNE KAUFFMAN
MAIN SEASON · PEET’S THEATRE
DEC 12, 2019–JAN 26, 2020

A world premiere from one of Berkeley Rep’s beloved playwrights!

OUT OF WORK AND OUT OF LOVE, BECKY NURSE IS AN ORDINARY BUT STRONG-WILLED GRANDMOTHER JUST TRYING TO GET BY IN POST-OBAMA AMERICA. SHE’S ALSO THE GREAT-GREAT-GREAT-GREAT-GREAT-GRANDDAUGHTER OF REBECCA NURSE, WHO WAS INFAMOUSLY EXECUTED FOR WITCHCRAFT IN 1692—but things have changed for women since then, haven’t they?

NEXT UP

A world premiere from one of Berkeley Rep’s beloved playwrights!

BECKY NURSE OF SALEM
BY SARAH RUHL
DIRECTED BY ANNE KAUFFMAN
MAIN SEASON · PEET’S THEATRE
DEC 12, 2019–JAN 26, 2020

OUT OF WORK AND OUT OF LOVE, BECKY NURSE IS AN ORDINARY BUT STRONG-WILLED GRANDMOTHER JUST TRYING TO GET BY IN POST-OBAMA AMERICA. SHE’S ALSO THE GREAT-GREAT-GREAT-GREAT-GREAT-GRANDDAUGHTER OF REBECCA NURSE, WHO WAS INFAMOUSLY EXECUTED FOR WITCHCRAFT IN 1692—but things have changed for women since then, haven’t they?

NEXT UP

A world premiere from one of Berkeley Rep’s beloved playwrights!

BECKY NURSE OF SALEM
BY SARAH RUHL
DIRECTED BY ANNE KAUFFMAN
MAIN SEASON · PEET’S THEATRE
DEC 12, 2019–JAN 26, 2020

OUT OF WORK AND OUT OF LOVE, BECKY NURSE IS AN ORDINARY BUT STRONG-WILLED GRANDMOTHER JUST TRYING TO GET BY IN POST-OBAMA AMERICA. SHE’S ALSO THE GREAT-GREAT-GREAT-GREAT-GREAT-GRANDDAUGHTER OF REBECCA NURSE, WHO WAS INFAMOUSLY EXECUTED FOR WITCHCRAFT IN 1692—but things have changed for women since then, haven’t they?