



# Berkeley Rep

## Volunteer Usher Guidebook

2011-12 SEASON

The primary purpose of ushers is to ensure the safety of patrons. The delivery of impeccable service with a smile comes next. We ask for – and appreciate – your adherence to our policies, procedures, and protocols.

They're all designed to serve this agenda. The show only goes on with your support.

THANK YOU!

Katrena Jackson,  
Patron Services Manager

Susie Medak  
Managing Director

All volunteer ushers are required to adhere to the policies and procedures outlined in this guidebook at all times unless otherwise instructed by the house manager on duty. Information in this booklet should be read fully before the start of the season and referred to as needed during the year so that a consistent, professional, and uniform set of expectations and procedures will be followed. A common sense application of the principles contained in this guidebook will ensure that both you and our patrons have the best possible experience during Berkeley Rep's 2011-12 season.

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# About Berkeley Rep

As a volunteer usher, you help make our patrons' experience unique. Your attendance and assistance ensure that patrons have a smooth and enjoyable visit; your customer service and positive attitude can affect how individual patrons view their performance and their experience. You play a crucial role in Berkeley Rep's success. We appreciate your commitment and could not do what we do without your support!

The information below about Berkeley Rep will help you answer patrons' questions and be a more informed representative of the Theatre.

## ABOUT BERKELEY REP

Born in a storefront on College Avenue, Berkeley Rep has moved to the forefront of American theatre—and is still telling unforgettable stories. Founded in 1968 by Michael Leibert, the Theatre quickly earned respect for presenting the finest plays with top-flight actors. In 1980, with the support of the local community, Berkeley Rep built the 400-seat Thrust Stage where its reputation steadily grew over the next two decades. It gained renown for an adventurous combination of work, presenting important new dramatic voices alongside refreshing adaptations of seldom-seen classics. In recognition of its place on the national stage, Berkeley Rep was honored with the Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre in 1997. The company celebrated by unveiling a new 600-seat proscenium stage in 2001, the state-of-the-art Roda Theatre. It also opened the Berkeley Rep School of Theatre, a permanent home for its long tradition of outreach and education programs. The addition of these two buildings transformed a single stage into a vital and versatile performing arts complex, the linchpin of a bustling Downtown Arts District which has helped revitalize Berkeley. In four decades, four million people have enjoyed more than 300 shows at Berkeley Rep, including 50 world premieres. The Theatre now welcomes an annual audience of nearly 200,000, serves 20,000 students, and hosts dozens of community groups, thanks to 1,000 volunteers and more than 400 artists, artisans, and administrators. In the last few years, Berkeley Rep has helped send 14 shows to New York: *Bridge @ Tunnel*, *Brundibar*, *Eurydice*, *Passing Strange*, *American Idiot*, *Wishful Drinking*, *In the Next Room (or the vibrator play)*, *Girlfriend*, *Taking Over*, *In the Wake*, *The Great Game: Afghanistan*, *Compulsion*, *Ghetto Klown* and *The Agony and Ecstasy of Steve Jobs*.

## MISSION STATEMENT

Berkeley Repertory Theatre seeks to set a national standard for ambitious programming, engagement with its audiences, and leadership within the community in which it resides. We endeavor to create a diverse body of work that expresses a rigorous, embracing aesthetic and reflects the highest artistic standards, and seek to maintain an environment in which talented artists can do

their best work. We strive to engage our audiences in an ongoing dialogue of ideas, and encourage lifelong learning as a core community value. Through productions, outreach, and education, Berkeley Rep aspires to use theatre as a means to challenge, thrill, and galvanize what is best in the human spirit.

## AUDIENCE AND SUPPORTERS

Operating on a \$12 million annual budget, Berkeley Rep is one of the Bay Area's largest performing arts organizations and serves a regional audience of nearly 200,000 annually, including a subscriber base of more than 13,000. The School of Theatre's education and outreach programs reach 20,000 students each year. Fifty percent of the Theatre's operating budget comes from earned income (ticket sales, concessions, etc.), with the remainder generated by contributed income. Berkeley Rep is governed by a board of trustees comprising business and community leaders from throughout the Bay Area.

## VENUES AND FACILITIES

The Theatre's facilities include the Roda Theatre, a 600-seat proscenium stage, and the 400-seat Thrust Stage. The gift shop is found in the Roda Theatre. The Narsai David courtyard—located between the two theatres—can be rented for special events. Next door, the Nevo Education Center houses the Berkeley Rep School of Theatre, which offers classes and activities for children, teens, and adults. Berkeley Rep's administrative offices and shops are at 999 Harrison Street in Berkeley.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### How can I buy tickets? When is the box office open?

Patrons can buy tickets in person at our box office, located at 2025 Addison Street, immediately outside the Thrust Stage. Patrons are also welcome to purchase tickets over the phone by calling 510 647-2949, or online at [berkeleyrep.org](http://berkeleyrep.org). The box office is open Tuesday–Sunday, noon to 7pm. It is closed on Monday. The website is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

### How many performances are there each week? What time do they start?

For most productions, Berkeley Rep offers eight performances a week. There are shows at 8pm on Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday; 7pm performances on Wednesday and Sunday; and 2pm matinees on Sunday. Additional matinees occur on alternating Saturdays and Thursdays. However, this schedule is subject to change depending on the production—check [berkeleyrep.org](http://berkeleyrep.org) or call the box office for specific schedules.

**Can I take pictures or record the performance?**

Union regulations and various copyright laws prohibit the use of cameras, video cameras, cellular phones, or any other kind of recording device in our theatres. This includes photos of the set taken before or after the show. During the performance, flash photography is not only prohibited, but could be disorienting and dangerous to the actors' safety.

**Do you offer any special presentations about these shows, or hold any special discussions?**

Berkeley Rep's Free Speech program is a collection of events and opportunities for theatre-lovers to gain an enhanced understanding of the work they see onstage. Thirty-minute docent presentations, offering a look inside each play and its development, take place one hour before each Tuesday and Thursday 8pm performance and after select evening performances. Post-show discussions take place after select Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday evening performances. Other enrichment opportunities include a Page to Stage discussion series with eminent theatre artists, held three times a year. Patrons can stay informed about upcoming enrichment events by joining our email list.

**If I join your email list, will I get a lot of spam?**

The Theatre sends out a monthly newsletter for subscribers and bi-weekly updates to non-subscribers. These often include information about upcoming events or special ticket offers. You will also receive an email with program notes and special information about your show by email the week before each production you attend. We never sell or exchange your email information, and you're welcome to unsubscribe at any time. Email sign-up forms can be found in the lobbies of both theatres. It is easy to unsubscribe.

**How can I work at Berkeley Rep?**

Berkeley Rep has a staff of more than 200 full- and part-time employees that work together to create the productions you see onstage. Job postings are listed at [berkeleyrep.org](http://berkeleyrep.org), under "About Berkeley Rep."

**How can I submit a script?**

Berkeley Rep accepts script submissions only from agents, writers, and theatre artists with whom we have an existing professional relationship. Berkeley Rep is not able to accept any unsolicited scripts. The only exception to this policy is for writers whose permanent address is within the Bay Area. Those scripts will be read and assessed. Please note that Berkeley Rep does not provide any comments or suggestions about work that we do not intend to either develop or produce. Please mail scripts to:

Berkeley Repertory Theatre  
attn: Literary Department  
999 Harrison Street  
Berkeley, CA 94710

**How can I audition for Berkeley Rep?**

Berkeley Rep hires performers who are members of Actors' Equity Association (AEA). Occasionally, local, non-union actors are hired in supporting roles or as extras in large-cast shows. Our understudies are also drawn from the local non-union acting pool. Berkeley Rep holds open auditions annually in the late spring. These auditions are announced on the AEA hotline and through Theatre Bay Area's (TBA) magazine. Berkeley Rep attends the TBA general auditions as well, which are usually held in February.

**Do you offer acting or other theatre classes?****Does Berkeley Rep have an education program?**

The Berkeley Rep School of Theatre offers a wide variety of educational programs designed to enrich your theatre-going experience and appreciation through training for the working professional, the emerging artist, and the theatre enthusiast. Berkeley Rep is also committed to deepening local students' understanding of—and participation in—the arts, and actively responding to the recent cuts in local arts curricula. To learn more, patrons can visit [berkeleyrep.org/school](http://berkeleyrep.org/school).

# Front of House Staff

## **PATRON SERVICES MANAGER**

Katrena S. Jackson

## **HOUSE MANAGER**

Debra Selman

## **ASSISTANT HOUSE MANAGERS**

Cayley Carrol

Ocatvia Driscoll

Aleta George

Kiki Poe

## Contacting the House Manager

**USHER EMAIL:** [ushers@berkeleyrep.org](mailto:ushers@berkeleyrep.org)

**HOUSE MANAGER OFFICE:** 510 647-2992

Use this number to talk to the house manager, leave messages when late, or if you are unable to attend due to an emergency. Please do not call the box office with a message.

## Office Hours

During the season, the house manager is usually available at the number above Tuesdays through Sundays, two hours before curtain. Off-season or between runs, office hours will vary.

## Website

Prospective ushers can find basic information at [berkeleyrep.org/about/ushering.asp](http://berkeleyrep.org/about/ushering.asp)

The usher series date chart is posted at [berkeleyrep.org/about/serieschart.asp](http://berkeleyrep.org/about/serieschart.asp)

The series chart—like all Berkeley Rep programming—is subject to change. The most up-to-date information can always be found on our website.

Or you can use the site map to find answers to your questions at [berkeleyrep.org/sitemap](http://berkeleyrep.org/sitemap)

## Yahoo Groups

[groups.yahoo.com/group/brtushers](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/brtushers)

The Yahoo Group is where season ushers can post for substitutes and where substitute ushers can find available spots during the year. Every usher must register and sign up to access the Yahoo Group. It's free and remarkably easy to use. Important announcements will be posted on the site from time to time, as well as additional volunteer opportunities. This is a private site, accessible only to approved ushers in the Berkeley Rep usher program.

# House Rules and Policies

## FOOD OR DRINK

**New: Patrons may now bring concession beverages with lids (no wine glasses). Cans and beer bottles are admissible.** Guests are welcome to eat and drink in the lobby or courtyard.

## NO CAMERAS OR RECORDING DEVICES OF ANY KIND

This is for a variety of reasons. First, copyright law strictly prohibits the taking of images of copyrighted material (the sets, props, etc.). Even if the guest is taking a picture of the stage before the show, or if they are taking a picture of their friends and the stage is in the background, this is a violation of the rule. Second, camera flashes can be dangerously distracting to performers, who rely on lighting cues. Finally, cameras are just plain annoying to other patrons. If you see a patron using a camera, please notify the house manager.

## AISLES MUST REMAIN CLEAR AT ALL TIMES

Not only is this a safety precaution, it allows guests to move about the Theatre as easily as possible. Wheelchairs, crutches, strollers, baby carriers, bags, etc., must be kept under the seat or in designated storage areas.

## NO PATRONS PERMITTED ONSTAGE OR BACKSTAGE

At times, an usher will be stationed at a “security position” to reinforce this rule. If guests want to meet performers, direct them to the Narsai David Courtyard, and instruct them to wait by the stairs. Rarely, there will be a post-performance reception in the green room, and selected guests will need to get there. If this is the case, the house manager will give you further information to help direct patrons.

## JOHN C. MENDEL ROOM

The John C. Mendel Room, located on the second floor of the Roda, is Berkeley Rep’s donor lounge, reserved for donors who contribute \$1,000 or more to Berkeley Rep annually. They have access to it before a performance or at intermission. There is a restroom they can use that is accessible only from the John C. Mendel Room (or from backstage). We offer donors at this level complimentary coffee, wine, and treats.

## LATE SEATING (is a safety issue)

Late seating is at the discretion of the house manager. Berkeley Rep’s late seating policy is printed on the back of each ticket and posted in the lobby. If the show has started, the house manager can deny entry to late guests. However, we make every effort to seat latecomers.

## NO CHILDREN UNDER SEVEN YEARS OF AGE

Most Berkeley Rep productions are inappropriate for children under the age of seven. This includes babies. House management will advise you if there are additional concerns about age-appropriateness for particular productions.

## NO SMOKING

To protect the health of everyone who uses Berkeley’s public areas, new and expanded smoking restrictions went into effect on May 22, 2008. Smoking is prohibited in all commercial zones (including the Downtown Berkeley Arts District) and within 25 feet of doorways and windows of any building open to the public.

## COAT CHECK

Berkeley Rep usually offers a free coat-check service during cold and rainy months. Patrons with large items may leave them at the Coat Check station in the lobby. We do not accept responsibility for items lost or stolen.

## PARKING VALIDATION

Berkeley Rep has partnered with Allston Way Garage to offer Berkeley Rep patrons \$3 parking after 6pm on weekdays and all day Saturday and Sunday. Allston Way Garage is located at 2061 Allston Way, between Milvia and Shattuck. After 6pm, you’ll need to enter the garage from the entrance on the south side of Center Street, next door to Berkeley City College. Bring your garage ticket to the theatre lobby and self-validate with a garage stamp. After the play, show your ticket to the garage attendant.

We recommend the Promenade Garage to for weekday matinee patrons. Patrons park for only \$5 after 1pm. The garage closes at 7pm. No validation necessary! The garage is located just one block west of the theatre at 1936 Addison Street, between MLK Jr. Way and Milvia.

**Please note:** we do not validate parking for the Center Street Garage, located on the north side of the street. We cannot accept responsibility for any parking mishaps or fees accidentally incurred from parking in the wrong location.

## BLANKETS

Some seats in the Thrust are drafty. Berkeley Rep has blankets available for patrons who desire them. Blankets are stored behind the Assisted Listening Devices at both venues. Patrons may check a blanket out with a photo ID or credit card.

**GENERAL ADMISSION (GA) AND WALK-IN TICKETS**

When we are sold-out of all assigned seats, we sell a limited number of discounted GA tickets. These tickets are handled in the same way as the “walk-in” privilege that Berkeley Rep offers as a professional courtesy to certain arts organizations. So as to not throw off the seat counts, these patrons receive tickets that do not include a seat or row number. Walk-in and GA patrons are seated shortly before curtain by the house manager to fill in any gaps in the best available areas. Ushers should wait until directed to find a seat by the house manager so that the walk-in and GA patrons may be seated with ease and speed.

**STANDING ROOM ONLY (SRO)**

If the Roda Theatre is sold out, SRO ticket holders may position themselves only in the SRO section at the rear of the house. (Should there be available seating, SRO patrons may take available seats after the house manager seats walk-in or GA patrons.)

**FRAGANCES**

Fragrances, if used, must not be so strong as to call attention to you in a closed elevator or from any nearby seat in the house.

# Volunteer Basics

All new ushers—series and substitute—must attend one orientation. You do not need to RSVP. Location is subject to change. Ushers must be 18 years of age or older. Ushers must also be able to respond quickly in case of emergency (see Emergency Procedures below) because the number one priority for ushers is the safety of our patrons.

## DRESS CODE

The purpose of having a dress code is to ensure that our usher staff is both professionally and distinctively dressed. It is important to be easily identifiable as representing the Theatre. **The dress code is solid black dress slacks or a solid black dress skirt, and a solid white blouse or shirt with sleeves.** Please keep accessories such as scarves and large jewelry to a minimum. On cold days, a professional plain black or white jacket or sweater may be worn. Ties are optional, and must be appropriate for work. **All ushers are expected to wear plain black, closed-toe dress shoes. No sneakers, flip-flops, sandals, or boots allowed!** Wear shoes that you can stand in for four hours and do a lot of walking up and down the aisles. All clothing must be clean and ironed. Mini-skirts, T-shirts, and jeans are not appropriate work attire, even if they are the right color. **If you're not in proper dress, you will not be permitted to usher.** Each usher must also bring with them a small flashlight.

## ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

Berkeley Rep depends upon its ushers! It is vital that ushers arrive on time and ready to work. The house manager will lead a pre-show orientation to relay information regarding the performance. You will not be able to meet the expectations of your job if you do not know this information. If you are tardy, you may not be permitted to work, and it will count as a no-show. After two no-shows, you will be asked not to return and your scheduled shift will be given to the next usher on the waiting list.

## CALL TIME

Call time is 6:30pm for an 8pm curtain, 5:30pm for a 7pm curtain, and 12:30pm for a 2pm curtain. The house manager starts orientation 1½ hours before curtain. The house manager assigns usher posts on a first-come, first-served basis. Orientation takes about 15 minutes. Ushers arriving after orientation may still be permitted to sign in but will be marked as tardy. Ushers arriving after that will be sent home. If there is program stuffing or other business, it is done then. The concessions counter opens after orientation, at the house manager's announcement. Any remaining time before the lobby opens one hour prior to curtain is break time for ushers to purchase concessions at a half-price discount, use the facilities, etc.

## STORING AND SECURING YOUR BELONGINGS

**Please turn off cell phones when you enter the building. They must remain off until final curtain. For emergency use only, please give friends and family the HM cell phone numbers: 510 812-8446 (Roda) or 510 812-8447 (Thrust).** Everyone is required to lock up their belongings in the usher lockers located in the Thrust.

## AFTER THE LOBBY OPENS

When the lobby opens, you must be at your post and ready. This is not a time to eat, sit, or read. The house is off-limits until the stage manager gives the okay. This means you may not go in to look at the seats. All volunteers should be familiar with emergency policies; the locations of restrooms, water fountains, etc.; and the information in this handbook. The house manager will visit all volunteers at their posts, give any additional information, and answer questions.

## INTERMISSION AND POST-SHOW REQUIREMENTS

As a Berkeley Rep usher, you are required to return to your post at intermission and see your post through to completion after final curtain.

## FOOD AND BEVERAGE

Ushers may consume food and beverage, including alcohol in moderation, until the lobby opens. All food and drink consumption must cease after the lobby opens to patrons. Savory plates are not for sale to ushers due to large preparation. Ushers receive the staff discount—half-price—at the concessions counter. The concession discount is a perk and not guaranteed. Drinks and snacks are available **IF** there is time before the lobby opens and **IF** the concessionaires are ready early. All at the discretion of the house manager.

## THEATRE STORE DISCOUNT

Ushers receive the staff discount—20% off—in the Berkeley Rep theatre store.

## WORKING WITH THE HOUSE MANAGER

The house manager will tell you when the lobby, concessions counter, and house open, and when you may be seated. At the end of the show, please do not leave without signing out with the house manager.

## ATTITUDE AND CONDUCT

Our volunteer ushers are the only faces of Berkeley Rep that most patrons see. Ushers represent Berkeley Rep's highest ideal of delivering a unique and superior experience to its guests. Ushers are expected to hold themselves to the highest standard of behavior when interacting with each other and patrons. Ushers are

always expected to carry out their duties with courtesy.

**Usher Survey**

All ushers are required to complete our online usher survey annually.

# Volunteer Usher Posts

## DOORS

Door ushers stand at the entry doors to the house and hand out programs, answer questions, keep food out, and guide patrons to their seats. You should be friendly, able to climb stairs, and have good eyesight to read tickets. Please show patrons to their seats; do not just stand and point. If a ticketing conflict arises, get the house manager to resolve the issue. Many times, our subscribers change their dates and may sit in their “usual seats” whether they are actually ticketed in those seats or not. Please always use tact and get the house manager without delay! At intermission, ushers stay at the doors, help with late seating, and keep people from bringing food into the house. At the end of a performance, please help pick up programs and look for lost items. In case of emergency, please return to your post and hold your door open for patrons. (When the fire alarm goes off, the doors shut automatically so that oxygen can't spread the fire.) In the Thrust, the door stops may be used.

## TICKETS

Ticket ushers stand at the front door of the Theatre to tear tickets, greet patrons, and direct them to the proper entry door. Ticket ushers must be friendly and fast! You should have sharp eyesight for reading tickets. Please check date, time, and performance. When tearing tickets, ushers should tear the right-hand, smaller portion of the ticket, giving the patron back the larger, left-hand portion. Think of it as “we get what's right, they get what's left,” or “we get the small, they get the big.” As you tear the ticket, politely direct the patron to the proper door. All tickets have the door printed on them. For example: “Hello, how are you? Let's see... you'll be going to Door Two today. Enjoy the show.” At the end of the performance, please help pick up programs and look for lost items.

## ASSISTED LISTENING STATION

The ALD usher works inside the house manager's office, providing Assisted Listening Devices (ALDs) to hearing-impaired patrons, checking bags, issuing blankets and first-aid medications, and answering questions. You should be patient and friendly. Patrons may be hearing-impaired, so please use tact, face the patron when speaking, and speak clearly when delivering instructions on proper use of the devices. Be polite and patient and explain things as often as necessary. The house manager can give you a handout on ALDs. You must be back in the booth at intermission. At the end of the evening, please clean all returned headsets.

## THEATRE STORE

The theatre store usher sells merchandise and answers questions. You should be friendly, enjoy sales, and be good with math and handling money. A separate orientation is given for this post. The shop is open at intermission as well as post-show.

## PROGRAMS

This volunteer stands behind the ticket takers and (1) hands out programs with a smile, (2) gets the house manager as needed, and (3) replaces the ticket-taker as needed. At intermission, make sure there is no smoking in the courtyard. At the end of the performance, please help pick up programs and look for lost items. This is the first job to be dropped if we are understaffed.

## STAGE GUARDS

At some events, it may be necessary to assign ushers to guard the entrances to the stage, backstage areas, or stage-door stairs. Ushers assigned to this duty should be able to be firmly polite with patrons, and comfortable dealing with the public.

## OTHER POSTS

Sometimes we have other posts open for one night or for the run of one show. Most jobs involve the movement of people, passing out something, sales, or standing near the box office to welcome or direct patrons. Other posts may be assigned by the house manager as needed. All ushers should be prepared to work in any capacity. The house manager may assign posts on a first-come, first-served basis, as need dictates. Usually, you may choose your post on the sign-in sheet when you arrive at the Theatre.

# Emergency Procedures

## In General

Our gathering place after evacuating either theatre is Gecko Gecko at the corner of Addison and Milvia (take a right out the front door and cross Addison at Milvia). Should you hear an announcement asking you to evacuate the Theatre, do so—but assist any patrons with mobility impairments if needed. Should you hear an announcement indicating that we will be having an unexpected intermission or that we will be temporarily holding the performance, return to your posts.

Should any patron need medical assistance or first aid, find the house manager immediately. Should any patron disturb the performance in a manner that requires attention, find the house manager immediately. In all instances, ushers should remain calm and follow the announcements and house manager's instructions, placing your own safety first. If you feel you are in a life-threatening situation, please remove yourself from that situation.

- To reach 911 from Berkeley Rep phones, you must dial 9-911. Landlines are located in the Roda and Thrust house manager's offices. It is preferable to call 911 from a landline, as calling from your cell phone automatically dispatches you to California Highway Patrol rather than the local police.
- Ushers are expected to assist patrons, especially patrons with mobility issues, in exiting the Theatre. Please make sure to return walkers and wheelchairs to patrons.
- Do not leave the Theatre without signing out with the house manager.
- When in doubt, return to your posts for instructions.
- If you have first-aid training, please notify the house manager when you sign in.
- A wheelchair is available on the third floor of the Roda. Press 1-1-1 in the elevator for access to the third floor.
- A folding cot is available on the second-floor hall of the Roda.
- First-aid kits are available at both ALD stations, as well as ordinary medications for heartburn, bandages, ointments, painkillers, and ice packs. Blankets are also available there.

## Emergency Procedures

### Minor accidents and falls

Ushers should stay with the injured person and send another usher—or patron, if necessary—to get the house manager. If the patron insists that he or she does not need assistance but appears injured, simply note the patron's appearance and where the patron is sitting, and report the incident to the house manager immediately. There is an accident report that the house manager must have the patron fill out. Should a patron request pain killers, a bandage, an antacid, diarrhea medication, or cold medication, those items are available at the ALD station. Any requests for these items should be directed to the house manager or, if need be, the ALD usher.

### Medical emergency

In case of heart attack, stroke, seizure, or medical emergency, notify the house manager immediately. If it is during the performance, the stage manager will make the following announcement: "Ladies and Gentlemen, we are experiencing a medical emergency. Would individuals with medical training please identify themselves to the house manager in the (lobby/house)?" If possible the house manager will move the person either to the lobby, or, if the situation warrants, into the theatre store and roll the door down. If there is a trained medical professional in the audience, do exactly as instructed. Return to posts and await instruction from the house manager.

### Earthquake

In the event of an earthquake, the following announcement will be made: "Ladies and gentlemen, we are experiencing an earthquake. For your protection, bend forward and cover your head with your arms until the earthquake passes. Remain in your seats. For your own safety, do not leave the building." Once the quake subsides, this announcement will be made: "Ladies and gentlemen, our backstage crew is making a thorough check of the scenery to be certain there is no risk to patrons or staff. We thank you for your patience." At that point, ushers should return to their posts, await instructions from the house manager, and calm patrons as needed. Theatre store and all ushers should go to Doors 1 or 2. If the show will not continue, the following announcement will be made: "Ladies and gentlemen, due to possible hazards backstage to the cast and crew, Berkeley Repertory Theatre will not continue this performance. Please call the box office within 48 hours to reschedule or receive a refund." In the event of a severe earthquake, the park at Center Street and Martin Luther King, Jr. Way is a designated Red Cross aid station.

## **FIRE**

An alarm with a recorded announcement will sound. The house manager will silence these, and an announcement will be made by the stage manager: "Ladies and gentlemen, we have a problem backstage. For your safety, please calmly stand, exit the Theatre by the (side / rear / all exits), and help those who may need assistance. We will resume the performance if possible. Announcements will be made outside shortly." Ushers should assist patrons in exiting the Theatre. Follow patrons out of the building, assemble at Gecko Gecko, and report to the house manager. Beware of arriving fire trucks. The house manager will use a megaphone to make any announcements as needed, such as making patrons aware the show may resume if the incident is minor. Do not attempt to re-enter the building unless the house manager gives the "all clear."

## **POWER OUTAGE**

In the event of a power outage, the following announcement will be made: "Ladies and gentlemen, we are experiencing a power outage. We will resume the performance when power is restored. Please remain in your seats and see an usher if you need assistance." **Ushers should turn on flashlights (available in the house manager's office, though we encourage you to bring your own), take their posts, and assist patrons as needed.** If the power outage lasts 30 minutes or more, we will likely cancel the performance. Should management cancel the performance, the stage manager will make the following announcement: "Ladies and gentlemen, due to the continued power outage this (evenings / afternoon's) performance is cancelled. Please call the box office within 48 hours to reschedule." Ushers should then be ready to assist patrons in exiting the Theatre. After the patrons have left the building, see the house manager to sign out. Note: the emergency power back-up systems will provide full power for 45 minutes.

## **BOMB THREAT**

In the event of a bomb threat, the house lights will be brought up and the following announcement will be made by the stage manager: "Ladies and gentlemen, we have a problem backstage. For your safety, at this time, could everyone please stand up and exit the Theatre? Please help those who may need assistance as you exit. Thank you." Ushers should prop open doors and follow patrons out of the building. Assemble at Gecko Gecko and report to the house manager. The house manager will use the megaphone to make any announcements, such as making patrons aware the show may resume if the incident is minor. If the show resumes, the ushers will return to posts and begin seating patrons when directed by the house manager.

## **CIVIL DISORDER/RIOTS**

Should the city of Berkeley experience some form of civil unrest, the following announcement will be made: "Your attention please: the City of Berkeley police department has announced a possible civil disturbance. To protect the premises and reduce danger to patrons, staff, and property, all entry doors are locked. For your own protection please remain inside. We will keep you updated as events transpire. Once again, the exterior doors are locked, and we ask that you remain inside." Ushers should return to their posts to assist the house manager. Follow directions and assist as needed. Be ready to call 911 in the event of trouble.

# Yahoo Bulletin Board

## How to Register:

1. Go to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/brtushers/> via your internet browser and click on "join this group" then click on "Sign up now"
2. Yahoo ID: enter your name so that you can be identified on the database
3. Enter a password, and re-type in the next space also; **remember this password!**
4. In the drop-down menu uncheck "activate yahoo mail" if you don't wish to receive every posting. You have several options for receiving e-mails. You can opt to get everything, nothing, summaries, or special notices. I suggest that you check "Special Notices" so that you receive important BRT news and ushering opportunities in other venues. Remember to check the site from time to time for other postings. If you are a sub, you must select "all e-mails."

Note that Yahoo automatically gives you a Yahoo email address. If you do not wish to use this Yahoo account, be sure to type in your preferred email address.

5. Fill out rest of questionnaire. In the "message" section, be sure to indicate that you are an approved BRT usher, since anyone can try to register for this site, but only BRT ushers/subs are approved. If your message is ambiguous, I will not approve you. All approved newcomers must attend an annual orientation meeting, sign a Letter of Agreement, and be signed up for a series, or be specially approved for a limited sub list.
6. Uncheck "Send me special offers" if you're not interested in Yahoo ads.
7. Enter the word as it is shown in the box and submit this form.
8. You are now pending. Approval will come quickly, if your message to the moderator is clear. Include your series number and your name, so you can be identified. You will receive notice of approval, usually within a few hours. You are now a member of brtushers.
9. Now you can log on. When you log on, you can see the site, but you cannot use it. You must SIGN IN; submit your yahoo ID and password EACH TIME you sign in.

## Protocols for Using this Site:

1. You will find a toolbar on the left side. If you wish to read existing messages, click on "messages." You can "reply" to the posted messages to make an arrangement. Enter your message, scroll to bottom, click on "Send." Note: Reply directly to the person who posted the message. **Do not respond to the Yahoo Site.** If you do, your response goes out to 900 people, most of whom don't want to know.
2. If you wish to post a message, click on "post." **Subject headings are important.** Suggested subject heading: "2 subs needed, name of play, date of play." In the message, list details, call time, venue, how to contact you. Click "Send" on the right hand side. Post your message only ONCE. Do not post a message more than 2 months in advance of your date.
3. **When your transaction is completed, or if you made a mistake, or want to make a new posting, please delete your original message.**
4. When you are finished, click on "Sign Out" near top of page.
5. If you wish to change your email address, go to the site, sign in, and click on "edit membership."
6. If you opt out of the BRT usher program, remember to unsubscribe. To unsubscribe from this group, send email to [brtushers-unsubscribe@yahogroups.com](mailto:brtushers-unsubscribe@yahogroups.com)

## Season Ushers

When you need a sub or swap, scan the site before you make a posting. There are usually several postings already made by people who wish to swap, and you can contact them directly. When you complete a transaction, note the name of your sub, in case he/she does not show up. If you're concerned that your sub may not have shown up, it's okay to contact your sub afterward to double-check. You will not be penalized by the house manager as a no-show, if your sub fails to show.

Respond promptly to ALL ushers who reply to your posting, so that they know the need has been filled. **Do not post on the site that you have found a sub. Do not post on the site that you are available to sub.** We need to keep the bulletin board free of extraneous postings; during the season, there are sometimes two productions running simultaneously, and the board can be filled quickly.

### DELETING YOUR MESSAGE

Delete your posting when the transaction is completed or obsolete. Delete your posting from the site by returning to the message board (sign in, click on "messages"). Find your message, click on "delete." You then get a second "are you sure" message, and click on "delete" again. Your message is automatically removed from the board, making room for new ones.

## Substitute Ushers

This site provides you with a method for locating available dates. When you agree to sub for someone, consider that a commitment. When you sign the roster at the time of the performance, be sure to indicate the person for whom you are subbing. Please never post your availability.

There is no need to notify the House Manager of these transactions. The system is designed to be self-maintaining. All substitute ushers must choose from the ranks of the existing usher pool. You must not send a non-Berkeley Rep usher in your place.

### WORD OF CAUTION

Although there are built-in safeguards, occasionally viruses will find their way on the site. **Do not open any attachments.** There is never a need to post a message containing attachments. Do not open any message with a suspicious subject heading. Do not be alarmed by a posting from an usher who is being held hostage---these occur when an usher's address book has been hijacked. Do not respond to any message asking for money, even if it's from me!

If all else fails, contact me at [mar26nel@Lmi.net](mailto:mar26nel@Lmi.net). My Yahoo alias is mandnushers.

# Usher Agreement Letter

I, the undersigned, do hereby acknowledge that I have received, read, agree to and abide by the policies, guidelines, and procedures outlined in my volunteer usher guidebook.

I understand that I have made a commitment to Berkeley Rep, and I will fulfill my commitment to work as a (check one):

- SEASON USHER Usher series: \_\_\_\_\_
- SUBSTITUTE USHER

I agree to follow the policies and guidelines detailed in this handbook when working at Berkeley Rep and willingly accept the consequences of failure to do so, which may include refusal of my services as a volunteer and dismissal from the usher program at Berkeley Rep.

I further acknowledge that I understand how to contact the house manager during the season.

I also willingly disclose my mailing address, email address, phone number, and name to the house manager at Berkeley Rep for the explicit purposes of facilitating my role as a volunteer usher. I sign this form with the understanding that this information will remain confidential and will not be used for any purpose that is not directly related to my involvement with Berkeley Rep.

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NAME

---

ADDRESS APT

---

CITY STATE ZIP

---

HOME PHONE WORK PHONE CELL PHONE

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EMAIL (BE SURE TO NOTIFY THE HOUSE MANAGER IF YOU CHANGE YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS)

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EMERGENCY CONTACT RELATIONSHIP TO YOU

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EMERGENCY CONTACT HOME PHONE WORK PHONE CELL PHONE

What year did you start ushering for Berkeley Rep? \_\_\_\_\_

Can we call you as a last-minute sub?  Yes  No

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SIGNATURE OF VOLUNTEER USHER DATE

**Please sign and return to the front of house staff.  
You will not be permitted to work as an usher if we do not have this form on file**

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR COMMITMENT!**