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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**MIKE DAISEY RETURNS TO BERKELEY REP WITH *GREAT MEN OF GENIUS***  
**Mike gets maniacal with four monologues about Barnum, Brecht, Hubbard & Tesla**

APRIL 25, 2007 – This June, masterful monologist **Mike Daisey** returns to Berkeley Rep with *Great Men of Genius*, a series of shows that apply his trademark wit and eccentric insight to fascinating historical figures. On consecutive nights, Mike explores the legendary lives of **P.T. Barnum**, **Bertolt Brecht**, **L. Ron Hubbard**, and **Nikola Tesla** – and on Sundays he performs all four monologues in a manic marathon worthy of a mad scientist.

Like his previous hits at Berkeley Rep, *The Ugly American* and *21 Dog Years: Doing Time at Amazon.com*, *Great Men of Genius* is directed by **Jean-Michele Gregory**. Daisey performs from **June 6** through **July 1** on Berkeley Rep's intimate Thrust Stage, the frequent home of stunning solo performers like Danny Hoch, Sarah Jones, and Anna Deavere Smith.

"I couldn't be more thrilled to be working on *Great Men of Genius* at Berkeley Rep," **Daisey remarks**. "They've been a West Coast home for my work, and I can't think of another theatre that would be daring enough to bring *Great Men of Genius* to fruition. This will be the first full run for the monologue series, and only Berkeley Rep could help us realize a performance that is both epic in scale and extremely intimate in scope."

"We are really looking forward to welcoming Mike Daisey's return with his ruthlessly honest storytelling and a comedic sensibility that takes no prisoners," comments **Tony Taccone**, artistic director of Berkeley Rep. "I am shocked by the incident last week in which a man came on stage in the middle of one of Mike's shows and defaced his script by pouring water all over it. We welcome Mike with open arms to a community that celebrates and supports free speech."

In *Great Men of Genius*, Mike Daisey crashes his audacious style of storytelling into the lives of four masterminds: P.T. Barnum, Bertolt Brecht, L. Ron Hubbard, and Nikola Tesla. Daisey explores the nature of genius, wrestling with the pride, insanity, and chauvinism that bind these men together – and revealing what the heights and depths of their gifts can teach us about ourselves. Along the way, of course, he discovers unexpected aspects of himself. Each monologue is unique and can be viewed independently, but the four together form an epic oral account of triumph and folly told with Daisey's dark and hilarious intensity. See the individual stories over the course of four nights – or join the marathon and see all four in one day. If you're ingenious enough to buy a Super-Genius Pass, **the fourth genius is free!**

The *New York Times* calls Daisey "absolutely hilarious," the *Wall Street Journal* says he has "the wry sensibility of David Sedaris," and the *New York Post* calls him "a cross between Robin Williams and Spalding Gray." According to *The New Yorker*, Daisey is "a charismatic performer whose shows have the insightful hostility of the best comedy."

"Like a coked-up History Channel biography, Mike Daisey's new 'bio-logues' ruminate on brilliant men and their piteous pitfalls," writes the *Village Voice*. "Each night explores a new subject, from Bertolt Brecht to L. Ron Hubbard – it's like hearing a lecture by your favorite professor while drinking beer in a comfortable lounge chair. You might even walk away smarter than before."

(MORE)

1997 tony award for outstanding regional theatre / a nonprofit corporation since 1968

## DAISEY RETURNS TO BERKELEY REP WITH *GREAT MEN OF GENIUS* / 2 OF 2

**Bertolt Brecht** was a playwright, poet, lover, and certifiable cad who escaped Nazi Germany, sympathized with the Communists, failed in Hollywood, and was persecuted by McCarthy – redefining world theatre along the way. **P.T. Barnum** was an extraordinary entrepreneur and showman, a raconteur and hoaxster, a freak-show and circus promoter who changed the face of America through blatant, shameless lying. **Nikola Tesla** was a brilliant scientist and visionary who took on Thomas Edison and brought the world electricity as we know it – only to die insane and penniless while writing love poems to pigeons. And **L. Ron Hubbard** was a bigamist, occultist, and charismatic science-fiction author who became a guru, took popular psychiatry by storm, and created the Church of Scientology – the most celebrity-driven and litigious organization on Earth.

Only one man is big enough to take on these four megalomaniacs...

**Mike Daisey** has been called “the master storyteller” and “one of the finest solo performers of his generation” by the *New York Times*. He has performed off Broadway, across the country, and around the world with monologues such as *21 Dog Years*, *Great Men of Genius*, *I Miss the Cold War*, *Invincible Summer*, *Monopoly!*, *Stories From the Atlantic Night Café*, *The Ugly American*, and *Wasting Your Breath*. Daisey has been a guest on the *Late Show with David Letterman*, and his words have been heard on the BBC, NPR, and the *National Lampoon Radio Hour*. Currently, he’s a commentator for NPR’s *Day to Day*, a contributor to *Salon*, *Slate*, and *Wired*; and a web correspondent for *Radar Magazine* and *Vanity Fair*. Daisey’s work can be read in *21 Dog Years: A Cubedweller’s Tale* and *The Best Tech Writing 2006* – or listen to his groundbreaking series *All Stories Are Fiction* at [audible.com](http://audible.com).

*Great Men of Genius* will be performed on the following **schedule**:

- *Brecht on Wednesdays*: June 6, 13, 20, and 27 at 8 PM
- *Barnum on Thursdays*: June 7, 14, 21, and 28 at 8 PM
- *Tesla on Fridays*: June 8, 15, 22, and 29 at 8 PM
- *Hubbard on Saturdays*: June 9, 16, 23, and 30 at 8 PM
- *Marathons on Sundays*:
  - Brecht and Barnum at 2 PM: June 10, 17, and 24 and July 1
  - Tesla and Hubbard at 7 PM: June 10, 17, and 24 and July 1
  - **Journalists** are invited to the first marathon on June 10.

**Tickets** for *Great Men of Genius* are on sale now. See one genius, or see all four. The more you see, the more you save. Call the box office to access these prices...

- Buy one genius: \$30.
- Buy two geniuses: \$50.
- *Eureka!* Buy three geniuses – get the fourth one free: \$75.

Two **discounts** are available:

- Half-price tickets can be purchased by anyone under 30 years of age.
- Berkeley Rep subscribers save \$5 on one genius, \$10 on two geniuses, and \$15 if they see three or more.

**Berkeley Rep’s Thrust Stage** is located at 2025 Addison Street, one block from Berkeley’s downtown BART station and close to AC Transit bus lines. The theatre is accessible to the handicapped, offering wheelchair seating and special services for those with hearing- or vision-impairment. For tickets or information, call **510.647.2949** or toll-free at **888.4.BRT.Tix** – or simply click [berkeleyrep.org](http://berkeleyrep.org). It doesn’t take a genius to know this is the hottest ticket in town!

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# GREAT MEN OF GENIUS

FACT SHEET

**WHO:** Created and performed by Mike Daisey  
 Directed by Jean-Michele Gregory

**WHAT:** *Great Men of Genius*  
 Renowned performer Mike Daisey takes us on a wild ride with a series of monologues about the brilliance and madness of four masterminds: P.T. Barnum, Bertolt Brecht, L. Ron Hubbard, and Nikola Tesla.

**WHERE:** Berkeley Repertory Theatre's Thrust Stage  
 2025 Addison St @ Shattuck, Downtown Berkeley

**WHEN:** June 6 – July 1, 2007

- **Bertolt Brecht:** Wednesdays 6/6, 6/13, 6/20 & 6/27 @ 8:00 PM
- **P.T. Barnum:** Thursdays 6/7, 6/14, 6/21 & 6/28 @ 8:00 PM
- **Nikola Tesla:** Fridays 6/8, 6/15, 6/22 & 6/29 @ 8:00 PM
- **L. Ron Hubbard:** Saturdays 6/9, 6/16, 6/23 & 6/30 @ 8:00 PM
- **Marathons on Sundays:**
  - Brecht & Barnum @ 2 PM on 6/10, 6/17, 6/24 & 7/1
  - Tesla & Hubbard @ 7 PM on 6/10, 6/17, 6/24 & 7/1

sun	mon	tue	wed	thu	fri	sat	
			jun 6	7	8	9	
	10	11	12	13	14	15	
marathons	17	18	19	20	21	22	
	24	25	26	27	28	29	
marathons	1	marathons: brecht & barnum 2pm / tesla & hubbard 7pm					
	individual geniuses: wed-sat 8pm						

**HOW MUCH:** One genius: \$30  
 Two geniuses: \$50  
*Eureka!* Four geniuses for the price of three: \$75

- Discounts:
- ½ price tickets available to those under 30 (some restrictions apply).
  - Berkeley Rep subscribers save \$5 on one genius, \$10 on two geniuses, and \$15 if they see three or more.

**TIX & INFO:** 510.647.2949 – toll-free 888-4-BRT-Tix – [www.berkeleyrep.org](http://www.berkeleyrep.org)

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