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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**BERKELEY REP'S *TWIST* WINS OBIE AWARD FOR DESIGNER RAE SMITH**

MAY 24, 2007 – Berkeley Repertory Theatre is proud to announce yet another honor on the eve of its 40<sup>th</sup> birthday: **Rae Smith**, the artful designer for its current production of *Charles Dickens' Oliver Twist*, has just won an **Obie Award for outstanding set and costume designs**. *Twist* is now making its West Coast premiere at Berkeley Rep, the final stop on its American tour, with performances continuing through June 24. Like the title character, this show has become a runaway success, leaving audiences in London, Boston, and New York clamoring for more.

"This is truly an honor well earned," remarks **Tony Taccone**, artistic director of Berkeley Rep. "Rae's designs for this show are extraordinary. The unforgettable scenery is straight out of a Victorian sideshow – using ropes, levers, and trapdoors as they would've been employed in scenery at the time – and the entire story can be summed up in her rags-to-riches costumes. I admire how Rae, Neil, and their collaborators have animated Dickens' prose with stunning theatricality, and I'm pleased to share this every night with enthusiastic audiences in Berkeley."

"The first visual and physical inspiration for our set was a visit to the Chamber of Horrors at Madame Tussaud's," explains **Neil Bartlett**, the show's director and adapter. "This not only renewed my interest in the *unheimlich* appeal of waxworks, especially those depicting extreme violence, but also triggered in Rae's imagination a connection between the sensationalist mechanics of Dickens' plot – its combination of creaky contrivance with uncanny power – and the mechanical toys which we now know as 'Penny Dreadful' machines. These are the sinister glass-fronted boxes which, in response to a child inserting the required coin, bring to life miniature tableaux of haunted houses, historic crimes, or mildly erotic misdemeanors."

This twisted set is Smith's 11<sup>th</sup> collaboration with Bartlett. **A celebrated scenic artist**, Smith has designed classical, modern, and experimental work at theatres throughout Europe, including the Royal Court and Royal Shakespeare Company. In the U.S., her design credits include *The Weir* on Broadway, *The Street of Crocodiles* at Lincoln Center, *Juno and the Paycock* at Roundabout, and two works for the Spoleto Festival: *Dinner with Jacob's Pillow* and *The Visit with Complicité*.

Inspired by the vivid world of the Victorian music hall, this dark and delightful new adaptation of ***Oliver Twist*** uses language from the novel to dramatize one of the most deeply felt stories ever written about childhood. A cast of unforgettable characters brings the underworld of London to thrilling life – a 19<sup>th</sup>-century city teeming with danger and fear – all seen through the eyes of a bewildered child. By turns comic and tragic, musical and dramatic, this astonishing new *Twist* has stolen the hearts of critics and theatregoers on two continents.

The *Village Voice* instituted the **Obie Awards** soon after the publication's debut in 1955 to acknowledge and encourage the off-Broadway theatre movement. In 1964, the awards began recognizing off-off-Broadway productions as well. The Obies have become a theatrical tradition, honoring the many incredible shows seen on non-Broadway stages every year in New York. The list of artists who have been honored is a who's who of theatre – including Berkeley Rep's own **Les Waters**, the recipient of an Obie in 2002 for his production of *Big Love*.

**For tickets** to *Oliver Twist*, contact Berkeley Rep's box office at 510.647.2949, 888.4BRTix (toll-free), or [berkeleyrep.org](http://berkeleyrep.org).

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



**berkeley rep**

# Charles Dickens' OLIVER TWIST

FACT SHEET

**WHO:** Adapted and directed by Neil Bartlett  
 Music by Gerard McBurney  
 Designed by Rae Smith (sets and costumes), Scott Zielinski (lights), and David Remedios (sound)  
 Featuring Remo Airdi, Steven Boyer, Gregory Derelian, Thomas Derrah, Ned Eisenberg, Carson Elrod, Jennifer Ikeda, Elizabeth Jasicki, Will LeBow, Karen MacDonald, Craig Pattison, Lucas Steele, and Michael Wartella

**WHAT:** *Charles Dickens' Oliver Twist* – a dark and delightful new adaptation of the classic novel

**WHERE:** Berkeley Repertory Theatre's Roda Theatre  
2015 Addison Street @ Shattuck, Downtown Berkeley

**WHEN:** Through June 24

- Tuesdays & Fridays @ 8:00 PM
- Wednesdays @ 7:00 PM
- Thursdays & Saturdays @ 2:00 PM & 8:00 PM
- Sundays @ 2:00 PM & 7:00 PM
- No performance on Friday 6/22
- No matinee on 5/26, 5/31, 6/9, or 6/14

sun	mon	tue	wed	thu	fri	sat
may 11–jun 24					may 11	12
					8pm ●	8pm ●
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
7pm ●		8pm ●	8pm ■	8pm	8pm	2/8pm
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
2/7pm		8pm	7pm	2/8pm	8pm	8pm
27	28	29	30	31	jun 1	2
2/7pm		8pm	7pm	8pm ◆	8pm	2/8pm
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
2/7pm		8pm *	7pm	2/8pm	8pm	8pm
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
2/7pm		8pm ◆	7pm	8pm	8pm ◆	2/8pm
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
2/7pm		8pm	7pm	2/8pm		2/8pm
24						
2/7pm						

- docent talks
- previews
- opening night
- ◆ discussion
- \* book club

**Special Events –**  
*Post-play discussions:* Thursday 5/31, Tuesday 6/12 & Friday 6/15 @ 8:00 PM  
**NEW!** - *Book club:* Tuesday 6/5 @ 6:00 PM  
*Docent presentations:* Tuesdays 5/29, 6/5, 6/12 & 6/19 @ 7:00 PM  
 & Thursdays 5/24, 5/31, 6/7, 6/14 & 6/21 @ 7:00 PM

**HOW MUCH:** Tues (8 PM) / Wednesdays (7 PM) ..\$45    Sundays (2 PM & 7 PM) ..... \$49  
 Thursdays (2 PM & 8 PM) ..... \$47    Friday evenings (8 PM)..... \$55  
 Saturday matinees (2 PM)..... \$47    Saturday evenings (8 PM) ..... \$61

**Discounts:**

- ½ price tickets available for those under 30 (some restrictions apply)
- ½ price rush tickets for students and seniors sold ½ hour before curtain
- 20 half-price HotTix go on sale Tuesday through Friday at noon
- Groups of 15+ may contact 510.647.2918 or groups@berkeleyrep.org

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

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