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BERKELEY REP'S LES WATERS BRINGS *EURYDICE* BACK TO LIFE AT YALE

After making it a local hit, Obie-winning director stages stunning show in New Haven

SEPTEMBER 12, 2006 – Even the legendary Orpheus couldn't do it, but Berkeley Repertory Theatre's associate artistic director, **Les Waters**, is bringing *Eurydice* back to life. This month, the Obie Award-winning director is once again staging **Sarah Ruhl's** stunning script at Yale Repertory Theatre. The show, which was a huge success when it received its West Coast premiere at Berkeley Rep in 2004, features eight other artists celebrated for their work on the local run. Opening Yale Rep's 41st season, *Eurydice* begins previews in New Haven on September 22, opens September 28, and closes October 14.

"There are so many reasons I am honored to direct this play again," **Waters remarks**. "The script is a beautiful meditation on love and mortality, and working on it initiated Berkeley Rep's relationship with one of the country's most important writers. The show's success in Berkeley was a true group effort, so it's a pleasure to work again with four of the actors and four of the designers from that production. And people in the Bay Area continue to comment on how moved they were by *Eurydice*, so I hope we can share that experience with audiences at Yale Rep."

In Berkeley, the show was lauded for its dazzling design. Now Waters reunites his creative team: **Scott Bradley** (scenic designer), **Meg Neville** (costume designer), **Russell H. Champa** (lighting designer), and **Bray Poor** (sound designer), who have extensive experience at theatres on Broadway, off Broadway, regionally, and internationally. Among their credits at Berkeley Rep, Bradley designed *The Glass Menagerie* for Waters, Neville created costumes for his *Suddenly Last Summer*, and Poor performed in Stephen Wadsworth's *Changes of Heart*.

Four cast members also reprise their roles when *Eurydice* is reborn in New Haven: **Maria Dizzia** as the title character, **Charles Shaw Robinson** as her father, **Mark Zeisler** as the Nasty Interesting Man and the Lord of the Underworld, and **Ramiz Monsef** as the Big Stone. Each of them has numerous national credits, and Berkeley Rep audiences will recall their previous collaborations with Waters: Dizzia and Monsef from the world premiere of *Fêtes de la Nuit* and Zeisler from *Big Love*. Robinson appeared at Berkeley Rep in *Homebody/Kabul* and *The Magic Fire*, as well as in American Conservatory Theater's recent presentation of *The Goat, or Who is Sylvia?*

The New Haven production also features three new faces. **Joseph Parks**, who embodies Orpheus, was seen by Bay Area audiences in *The Goat, or Who is Sylvia?* and *Slay the Dragon* at A.C.T. As in the ancient myth, his poignant music moves even the stones to tears, including off-Broadway actors **Gian-Murray Gianino** as the Loud Stone and **Carla Harting** as the Little Stone.

In *Eurydice*, Ruhl reimagines the classic myth of Orpheus through the eyes of its heroine. Tragically dying on her wedding day, Eurydice must journey to the underworld, where she reunites with her father and struggles to remember her lost love. With contemporary characters, ingenious plot twists, and breathtaking visual effects, this award-winning play is truly a fresh look at a timeless love story.

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Les Waters is in his fourth year as associate artistic director of Berkeley Rep, where he has staged *Eurydice*, *Fêtes de la Nuit*, *Finn in the Underworld*, *The Glass Menagerie*, *The Mystery of Irma Vep*, *Suddenly Last Summer*, and *Yellowman*. He won an Obie Award for *Big Love*, directing its premiere at the Humana Festival and subsequent runs at Berkeley Rep, the Brooklyn Academy of Music, the Goodman Theatre, and Long Wharf Theater. Elsewhere in America, he has staged work at A.C.T., the Connelly Theatre, the Guthrie Theater, La Jolla Playhouse, Manhattan Theatre Club, the Public Theater, Signature Theatre, and Steppenwolf Theatre Company. In his native England, Waters has directed for the Bristol Old Vic, Hampstead Theatre Club, Joint Stock Theatre Group, National Theatre, Royal Court Theatre, and Traverse Theatre Club. The former head of the MFA directing program at UC San Diego, Waters' many honors include a Drama-Logue Award, an Edinburgh Fringe First Award, a KPBS Patte, and several awards from critics' circles in the Bay Area, Connecticut, and Tokyo.

In addition to *Eurydice*, **Sarah Ruhl's** plays include *Passion Play: a cycle* (Fourth Forum Freedom Award from The Kennedy Center), *The Clean House* (2004 Susan Smith Blackburn Award, 2005 Pulitzer Prize finalist), *Late: a cowboy song*, *Melancholy Play*, and *Orlando*. In addition to Berkeley Rep and Yale Rep, her scripts have been staged at Actors Theatre of Louisville, the Goodman, Madison Repertory Theatre, Piven Theatre Workshop, South Coast Repertory, the Wilma Theater, and other theatres in Germany, the United Kingdom, and the United States. An anthology of her work is forthcoming from Theatre Communications Group, and upcoming productions of her plays include *The Clean House* at Lincoln Center. Originally from Chicago, Ruhl received her MFA from Brown University. In 2003, she was the recipient of a Helen Merrill Award and a Whiting Writers' Award, and she is a member of 13P and New Dramatists. One of the Theatre's artists under commission, **Ruhl is presently working on a new script for Berkeley Rep.**

Yale Rep is located at 1120 Chapel Street at York Street in New Haven, CT. **Tickets** are priced from \$35 to \$55 and are available at www.yalerep.org or by calling 203.432.1234.

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