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LOCAL KIDS PERFORM WITH THE PROS AT BERKELEY REP

Children from six local communities take the stage in *The Pillowman* and *To the Lighthouse*

FEBRUARY 22, 2007 – This month, talented children from **Alameda, Berkeley, El Cerrito, San Francisco, Sausalito, and Sebastopol** join professional actors on stage at the Tony Award-winning Berkeley Repertory Theatre. Eight local kids step into the spotlight for *The Pillowman* and *To the Lighthouse*. **Les Waters** is staging both plays, providing an exceptional chance for these young actors to work with an Obie Award-winning director.

“These youth are in an outstanding position to learn from more experienced actors at Berkeley Rep,” says Waters, the Theatre’s associate artistic director. “Both shows provide positive and challenging opportunities for them to develop their artistic abilities.”

The four fresh faces in the world premiere of *To the Lighthouse* are making their Berkeley Rep debuts. **Sophie Gabel-Scheinbaum of El Cerrito**, an 11-year-old sixth grader at Albany Middle School, has performed at Masquers Playhouse and the Contra Costa Community Center. Eight-year-old **Jack Indiana of San Francisco** is home schooled and has been seen at American Conservatory Theatre and San Francisco Shakespeare Camp, as well as in commercials and print advertisements. **Amara Radetsky of Sausalito**, a nine-year-old third grader at Mount Tamalpais School, studies at the A.C.T. Young Conservatory and has worked with A.C.T. and Marin Theatre Company. **Gabriel Stephens-Siegler of Sebastopol**, a 12-year-old seventh grader, is also home schooled; he has worked with a variety of theatres in the Wine Country and has performed annually with the California Revels since 2001. In this ambitious adaptation of Virginia Woolf’s landmark novel, the kids perform alongside a cast of Broadway actors and hot local talents including **Whitney Bashor, Noah James Butler, Monique Fowler, Edmond Genest, Lauren Grace, Clifton Guterman, David Mendelsohn, Jarion Monroe, and Rebecca Watson**. The show begins previews in Berkeley Rep’s Roda Theatre on February 23, opens February 28, and closes March 25.

In *The Pillowman*, which is currently showing on the Thrust Stage, four more young actors return to Berkeley Rep after performing in *Brundibar*. **Brigitte Lundy-Paine of Alameda**, a 12-year-old

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seventh grader at Wood Middle School, is currently enrolled in classes at the Berkeley Rep School of Theatre and has been seen at various venues including Altarena Playhouse. **Brendan Reilly of Berkeley**, a 13-year-old seventh grader at St. Theresa School, is also enrolled at the School and frequently performs with Alameda Children's Musical Theatre. **Madeline Silverman of Alameda**, an 11-year-old sixth grader at Lincoln Middle School, has also worked with Alameda Children's Musical Theatre as well as the Willows Theatre Company. **Gabriel Vergez of Berkeley**, an 11-year-old sixth grader at Ecole Bilingue de Berkeley, has also attended the Berkeley Rep School of Theatre and sang with Kairos Youth Choir and the San Francisco Boy's Choir. *The Pillowman*, an edgy thriller about a writer whose macabre tales lead to an investigation of grisly murders, features **Tony Amendola, Nancy Carlin, Erik Lochtefeld, Matthew Maher, Andy Murray, and Howard Swain**. The show opened in January and has been extended through March 11, due to rave reviews and sold-out performances.

Les Waters is in his fourth year as associate artistic director of Berkeley Rep, where he has staged *Big Love, Eurydice, Fêtes de la Nuit, Finn in the Underworld, The Glass Menagerie, The Mystery of Irma Vep, Suddenly Last Summer, and Yellowman*. The *New York Times* placed his production of *Eurydice* at Yale Repertory Theatre among the Top 10 Plays of 2006, and *Time Out New York* named his off-Broadway *Apparition* one of the Best 5 Plays of 2005. Waters won an Obie Award for *Big Love* at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, and his other New York credits include the Manhattan Theatre Club, The Public Theater/New York Shakespeare Festival, Signature Theatre Company, and an upcoming production of *Eurydice* at Second Stage Theatre. He has directed for renowned theatres throughout the United States and the United Kingdom

Berkeley Repertory Theatre is located on Addison Street, one block from Berkeley's downtown BART station and close to AC Transit bus lines. For tickets or information, contact the Theatre at **510.647.2949, 888.4.BRT.Tix** (toll-free), or berkeleyrep.org.

ABOUT BERKELEY REP

Founded in 1968, the Tony Award-winning Berkeley Repertory Theatre has established a national reputation for its ambitious programming and dynamic productions. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Tony Taccone and Managing Director Susan Medak, Berkeley Rep seeks to engage its audience in an ongoing dialogue of ideas. Through its bold choice of material and vivid style of production, Berkeley Rep reflects a commitment to diversity, excitement, and quality. The company is especially well known for its presentations of important new dramatic voices and its fresh adaptations of seldom-seen classics. In 2001, Berkeley Rep opened the Roda Theatre, a 600-seat proscenium theatre that complements the 400-seat Thrust Stage, and the Berkeley Rep School of Theatre, housed in the Nevo Education Center. The addition of these two buildings has transformed what was once a single stage into a vital and versatile performing arts complex.

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