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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LES WATERS DIRECTS *HEARTBREAK HOUSE* TO BEGIN BERKELEY REP'S 40TH SEASON
Obie Award-winning director stages comedic masterpiece for theatre's 40th birthday

JULY 24, 2007 – In honor of the zesty classical tradition on which it was founded, Berkeley Repertory Theatre begins its season with a fresh look at a classic text: to celebrate the Theatre's 40th birthday, Associate Artistic Director **Les Waters** stages *Heartbreak House*, the comedic masterpiece from Nobel Prize-winning author **George Bernard Shaw**. *Heartbreak House* begins previews in the Roda Theatre on **August 31**, opens **September 5**, and closes **October 14**. The executive producer is the Strauch Kulhanjian Family, the production sponsor is American Express, and the official season sponsors for Berkeley Rep's 40th birthday are BART and Wells Fargo.

"*Heartbreak House* is the perfect play to begin our birthday season," **Waters remarks**, "because it's a script with particular resonance in our community. Shaw was writing for a sophisticated, educated, bohemian audience – a Berkeley audience. So naturally Berkeley Rep has produced this play in every decade of our history, more than any play in our repertoire. Its timeless themes reverberated during Vietnam, the collapse of the Cold War, the ethnic conflict in the Balkans – and they remain all too relevant today. It's a comedy of manners, a farce, a social satire, and at the same time a lament about how capable people can sleepwalk through their lives as something awful is brewing. It's very funny, and yet – amidst the laughter – truly moving."

Artist, socialist, feminist, anti-war activist... Vegetarian, freethinker, street-corner orator, and all-around raconteur... If there's one playwright who belongs in Berkeley, it's Shaw. Maybe that's why his words have graced our stage more than any author except Shakespeare. In the passages of ***Heartbreak House***, ridiculous aristocrats, eccentric suitors, and iconoclastic women grapple with unlikely romance in a world on the brink of war. Shaw's incisive wit and intellectual pyrotechnics light up the stage as his irascible characters challenge social conventions, sexual mores, moral hypocrisy, and political folly. As with last year's production of *The Glass Menagerie*, Waters' sure touch on a classic text makes the script seem newly inked.

(MORE)

BERKELEY REP CELEBRATES 40TH BIRTHDAY WITH *HEARTBREAK HOUSE* / 2 OF 6

Best known as a playwright, **George Bernard Shaw** was also a prodigiously prolific novelist, critic, essayist, pamphleteer, politician, and public speaker. He penned more than 50 plays, at least a dozen of which are still regularly performed today. “The time seems unusually ripe for *Heartbreak House*, perhaps Shaw’s richest and saddest play about the follies of humanity,” the ***New York Times*** remarked recently. “Shaw’s extravagantly comic but still human characters are men and women with eloquent tongues and ever-ready opinions who also have hearts capable of breaking and souls worth saving... Almost a century after it was written, *Heartbreak House* proves a keen comic rebuke to cynicism, self-indulgence, and detachment, those all too easy responses to the bitterness of the world.”

Les Waters is beginning his fifth 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*, *The Pillowman*, *Suddenly Last Summer*, *To the Lighthouse*, and *Yellowman*. The *New York Times* placed his production of *Eurydice* among the Top 10 Plays of 2006, and *Time Out New York* named his off-Broadway staging of *Apparition* one of the Best 5 Plays of 2005. Waters 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. His other credits in the United States include American Conservatory Theater, the Connelly Theatre, the Guthrie Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse, Manhattan Theatre Club, The Public Theatre/New York Shakespeare Festival, Second Stage Theatre, Signature Theatre Company, and Steppenwolf Theatre Company. In his native England, Waters has staged work with the Bristol Old Vic, Hampstead Theatre Club, Joint Stock Theatre Group, National Theatre, Royal Court Theatre, and Traverse Theatre Club. He has a long history of working collaboratively with prominent playwrights like Caryl Churchill and Charles Mee, and champions important new voices, such as Jordan Harrison, Sarah Ruhl, and Anne Washburn. Waters is an associate artist of The Civilians, a New York-based theatre group, and former head of the MFA directing program at UC San Diego.

Waters has filled his *House* with a **talented cast** of accomplished actors. **Chris Ayles** (Burglar) has appeared on stages throughout the Bay Area, including California Shakespeare Theater, Center Repertory Company, San Jose Repertory Theatre, Marin Theatre Company, Magic Theatre, and TheatreWorks. **Stephen Caffrey** (Hector Hushabye) has performed off Broadway at Classic Stage Company and New York Theatre Workshop and regionally at A.C.T., Hartford Stage, Laguna Playhouse, the Mark Taper Forum, The Old Globe, South Coast Repertory, and

(MORE)

BERKELEY REP CELEBRATES 40TH BIRTHDAY WITH *HEARTBREAK HOUSE* / 3 OF 6

Seattle Repertory Theatre. His television credits include *Buried Alive*, *Columbo*, *CSI Miami*, *The Practice*, *The Profiler*, *Seinfeld*, and *Tour of Duty*. **David Chandler** (Boss Mangan) has been seen on Broadway in *The American Clock*, *Death of a Salesman*, and *Lost in Yonkers* and off Broadway at La MaMa Experimental Theatre Club, Manhattan Class Company Theater, NYSF, NYTW, Playwrights Horizons, Second Stage, Soho Playhouse, and the Vineyard Theatre. He also has numerous credits at regional theatres, on television, and in film. In New York, **Matt Gottlieb** (Mazzini) has worked on Broadway and at Circle Repertory Company, NYSF, and Soho Repertory Theatre. On the West Coast, he has performed at Laguna Playhouse, the Mark Taper, and the Odyssey Theater, as well as directing at Pacific Resident Theatre and the Zephyr Theatre. Local audiences will remember him from Waters' production of *Glengarry Glen Ross* at A.C.T. **Michelle Morain** (Hesione Hushabye) has something extra to celebrate on Berkeley Rep's birthday: 25 years ago, she began her career as a professional actor on Berkeley Rep's Thrust Stage! Since her debut here in *The Way of The World*, her local credits include Berkeley Rep's productions of *The Art of Dining*, *The Beauty Queen of Leenane*, *Homebody/Kabul*, *An Ideal Husband*, *Misalliance*, *Moon for the Misbegotten*, *Season's Greetings*, *Touch of the Poet*, and *Twelfth Night*. **Lynne Soffer** (Nurse Guinness) was last seen at Berkeley Rep in *Slavs!* An experienced acting and speech instructor, Lynne has served as dialect coach or text coach on more than 160 productions nationwide, including 25 shows at Berkeley Rep. Her other local credits include A.C.T., Aurora Theatre Company, Campo Santo, the Magic, San Francisco Opera, San Jose Rep, and TheatreWorks. **Allison Jean White** (Ellie Dunn) just completed a year as a core company member and associate artist at A.C.T., where she appeared in numerous shows. She recently presented her solo piece, *Whitenoise*, at The Marsh and Venue 9, and performed with *Killing My Lobster* in *Gooool!!!* at the Magic. **Susan Wilder** (Ariadne Utterword) has countless stage credits, including three shows at Lincoln Center Theater: *Ivanov* with Kevin Kline, *King Lear* with Christopher Plummer, and *Far East*. She has also appeared on TV in *Equal Justice*, *Hack*, *Perry Mason*, *The Petrified Forest*, and *Spenser: For Hire*, as well as in the films *Big*, *The Silence at Bethany*, *Unbreakable*, and *Universal Signs*. **Michael Winters** (Captain Shotover) performed in Berkeley Rep's productions of *The Life of Galileo* and *Man and Superman*. He was also in the company at A.C.T., and has been seen at ACT/Seattle, Arizona Theatre Company, Denver Center Theatre Company, Intiman Theatre, the Mark Taper, The Matrix Theatre, The Old Globe, the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, San Jose Rep, and Seattle Rep. **Michael Ray Wisely** (Randall Utterword) has appeared on local stages for more than 20 years, including roles with the Aurora, Center Rep, the Magic, Marin Theatre Company, San Francisco Shakespeare Festival, San Jose Rep, and San Jose Stage Company. Among his many television credits, he is the host of *Home Transformations* on the DIY network.

(MORE)

BERKELEY REP CELEBRATES 40TH BIRTHDAY WITH *HEARTBREAK HOUSE* / 4 OF 6

Waters has four **skillful designers** contracted to build this *House*. **Annie Smart** (scenic designer) has created sets and costumes for countless theatres in the United States and her native England. Berkeley Rep audiences will recall her stunning designs for shows such as *Big Love*, *Fêtes de la Nuit*, *Honour*, *Irma Vep*, *Suddenly Last Summer*, *To the Lighthouse*, and *Yellowman*. **Anna R. Oliver** (costume designer) designed dazzling costumes for Berkeley Rep's productions of *Fräulein Else*, *The Magic Fire*, *Missing Persons*, and *The Pillowman*. Her work has also been seen nationwide, including locally at A.C.T., the Aurora, Brava Theater Center, Cal Shakes, Marin Theatre Company, San Francisco Opera, and San Jose Rep. **Alexander V. Nichols** (lighting designer) has designed sets, costumes, lights, and projections for dance and theatre companies across America, including 13 previous shows at Berkeley Rep: *Civil Sex*, *Continental Divide*, *Culture Clash in AmeriCCa*, *Fêtes de la Nuit*, *The Guys*, *Honour*, *The Life of Galileo*, *Menocchio*, *Mother Courage*, *Ravenshead*, *Rhinoceros*, *Surface Transit*, and *Zorro in Hell*. **Obadiah Eaves** (sound designer) collaborated with Waters on *The Pillowman* last season. He also created sound for Berkeley Rep's *9 Parts of Desire*, and won the Lucille Lortel Award for Outstanding Sound Design for that show's New York run. Eaves designed the Broadway productions of *Lieutenant of Inishmore* and *Shining City*, and he also composes music for films, television, and his band, Big Hair. Returning to the West Coast from the extended off-Broadway run of Berkeley Rep's *Eurydice*, the stage manager for this production will be **Michael Suenkel**, the Theatre's resident production stage manager.

Everyone is invited to the birthday bash! This year, Berkeley Rep isn't just presenting new work – it's also introducing **new prices** that let more people experience the best theatre in the Bay Area. Each theatre is now divided into three seating sections with different prices for each section, as is the case at most venues. These new prices make Berkeley Rep more affordable to people in the community who are just starting school, starting careers, and starting families – because lower prices are now available for every performance! **Starting as low as \$27**, individual tickets go on sale on Sunday, August 19.

You can also write your own invitation to the party by subscribing to Berkeley Rep. **Subscriptions are on sale now and start as low as \$84** – a savings of up to 33% on every ticket! The Full Season package includes tickets to all seven shows in the 2007/08 Season, and the five-play package includes all the Main Season productions (*after the quake*, *Argonautika*, *Figaro*, *Heartbreak House*, and *Wishful Drinking*). Full- and Main-Season subscribers receive the best seats and the lowest prices. It's also possible to "choose your own" subscription of three or

(MORE)

BERKELEY REP CELEBRATES 40TH BIRTHDAY WITH *HEARTBREAK HOUSE* / 5 OF 6

more plays: not only do you get to select the shows you want to see, you can pick which performances to attend. With every package, subscribers receive valuable benefits such as discounts when purchasing tickets for guests, the right to reschedule for free, and the opportunity to secure seats before the general public for special events. Berkeley Rep also offers generous discounts for senior citizens, theatregoers under 30, and employees of preschools and K-12 schools. For the best seats, order now!

Theatre-lovers can join the party at Berkeley Rep's *House* with **19 special events** this fall:

- *Opening night* festivities for *Heartbreak House* are held on Wednesday, September 5. To celebrate Berkeley Rep's birthday, donors enjoy a pre-show dinner with Grace Street Catering in the Narsai David Courtyard – and the entire audience is invited to a post-show party featuring wines from Raymond Vineyard & Cellar.
- *night/OUT*, an event for the lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender community, takes place on Thursday, September 6. The post-play party features dance music mixed by a cutting-edge DJ, complimentary drinks from Triple Rock Brewery and Raymond Vineyard & Cellar, and gorgeous blossoms from Darling Flower Shop.
- *Target @ Teen Night* begins at 6:30 PM on Friday, September 7, and includes dinner, a behind-the-scenes discussion with a member of the artistic team, and a performance of *Heartbreak House*. Tickets are \$5 for members of Berkeley Rep's Teen Council, \$20 for all other teens. For details, call 510.647.2978 or e-mail school@berkeleyrep.org.
- Berkeley Rep's new *book club* – led by the Theatre's literary manager, Madeleine Oldham – meets at 6:00 PM on Friday, September 14. Read **John Waller's *The Real Oliver Twist*** and come discuss it with us. Please RSVP by calling 510.647.2916 or e-mailing amansard@berkeleyrep.org.
- *Post-play discussions* moderated by theatre professionals follow the 8:00 PM shows on Thursday, September 20; Tuesday, October 2; and Friday, October 5.
- Free 30-minute *docent presentations* about the show take place every Tuesday and Thursday at 7:00 PM: September 4, September 6, September 11, September 13, September 18, September 20, September 25, September 27, October 2, October 4, October 9, and October 11.

(MORE)

BERKELEY REP CELEBRATES 40TH BIRTHDAY WITH *HEARTBREAK HOUSE* / 6 OF 6

With its striking good looks, Berkeley Rep doesn't look a day over 39. But it's true – the Theatre is turning 40. Come on over, and don't miss the party! **Berkeley Rep's Roda Theatre** is located at 2015 Addison Street, one block from Berkeley's downtown BART station and close to AC Transit bus lines. The box office is next door at 2025 Addison Street. For tickets or information, call **510.647.2949** or toll-free at **888-4-BRT-Tix** – or simply click berkeleyrep.org.

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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, the permanent home for a 22-year 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, nearly four million people have enjoyed 300 shows at Berkeley Rep, including more than 40 world premieres. The Theatre now welcomes an annual audience of 180,000, 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 year, four shows seen at Berkeley Rep have gone on to New York: *Bridge & Tunnel*, *Brundibar*, *Eurydice*, and *Passing Strange*. Now a series of gifted guests arrives with amazing stage presents for Berkeley Rep's 40th birthday.

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berkeley rep

HEARTBREAK HOUSE
FACT SHEET

WHO: Written by George Bernard Shaw
Directed by Les Waters
Designed by Annie Smart (sets), Anna R. Oliver (costumes), Alexander V. Nichols (lights), and Obadiah Eaves (sound)
Featuring Chris Ayles, Stephen Caffrey, David Chandler, Matt Gottlieb, Michelle Morain, Lynne Soffer, Allison Jean White, Susan Wilder, Michael Winters, and Michael Ray Wisely

WHAT: *Heartbreak House* – the comedic masterpiece from George Bernard Shaw receives a fresh new staging by Obie Award-winning director Les Waters

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

WHEN: Previews on 8/31 - 9/4 – Performances on 9/5 – 10/14/2007

- 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 10/12
- No matinees during previews or on 9/6, 9/15, 9/20, 9/29 & 10/4

Heartbreak House AUG 31-OCT 14 · MAIN

SUN	MON	TUE ◆	WED	THU ◆	FRI	SAT
2 7●	3	4 8●	5 8★	6 8■	31 8● AUG 7 8	1 8● SEP 8 2,8
9 2,7	10	11 8	12 7	13 2,8	14 8■	15 8
16 2,7	17	18 8	19 7	20 8▲	21 8	22 2,8
23 2,7	24	25 8	26 7	27 2,8	28 8	29 8
30 2,7	1 OCT	2 8▲	3 7	4 8	5 8▲	6 2,8
7 2,7	8	9 8	10 7	11 2,8	12	13 2,8
14 2,7						

- ◆ DOCENT TALKS
- PREVIEWS
- ★ OPENING NIGHT
- NIGHT/OUT
- BOOK CLUB
- ▲ DISCUSSION

Special Events –
Opening night: Wednesday 9/5 @ 8:00 PM
night/OUT (LGBT party): Thursday 9/6 @ 8:00 PM
Target @ Teen Night: Friday 9/7 @ 6:30 PM
Book club: Friday 9/14 @ 6:00 PM
Post-play discussions: Thursday 9/20, Tuesday 10/2 & Friday 10/5 @ 8:00 PM
Docent presentations: Tuesdays 9/4, 9/11, 9/18, 9/25, 10/2 & 10/9 @ 7:00 PM
& Thursdays 9/6, 9/13, 9/20, 9/27, 10/4 & 10/11 @ 7:00 PM

HOW MUCH:

	Section B	Section A	Premium
Previews.....	\$27	\$33	\$37
Tue 8 PM / Wed 7 PM / Thu 2 PM / Sat 2 PM ...	\$33	\$45	\$50
Thu 8 PM / Sun 2 PM / Sun 7 PM.....	\$37	\$49	\$55
Friday @ 8 PM.....	\$43	\$55	\$61
Saturday @ 8 PM.....	\$49	\$61	\$69

Discounts: • Discount tickets for students and seniors sold one hour before curtain
• ½ price tickets available for those under 30 (some restrictions apply)
• Groups of 15+ may contact 510.647.2918 or groups@berkeleyrep.org

TIX & INFO: 510.647.2949 – toll-free 888-4-BRT-Tix – berkeleyrep.org