

**For photos, interviews, etc. contact:**  
Terence Keane, Director of Public Relations  
510.647.2917, [tkeane@berkeleyrep.org](mailto:tkeane@berkeleyrep.org)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**BERKELEY REP'S LES WATERS PREMIERES *CARDENIO* IN CAMBRIDGE**  
**Obie Award-winning director collaborates with Greenblatt and Mee at A.R.T.**

MAY 1, 2008 – **Les Waters**, the associate artistic director of Berkeley Repertory Theatre, heads east again this week to open the world premiere of *Cardenio* in Cambridge. Inspired by Shakespeare's play of the same name, which was lost after its first performance, this new comedy is penned by Shakespeare scholar **Stephen Greenblatt** and renowned playwright **Charles L. Mee**. *Cardenio* is the fourth world premiere for Waters and Mee, following successful collaborations on *Fêtes de la Nuit*, *Wintertime*, and the Obie Award-winning *Big Love*. It plays at American Repertory Theatre in Harvard Square from May 10 through June 8.

"It's a pleasure as always to collaborate with Chuck and an honor to work with Stephen," **Waters remarks**. "This ingenious play is not only set at a wedding, it is a marriage of their extraordinary talents. I look forward to debuting it in Boston with this gifted team of actors and designers."

*Cardenio* explores the surprising ways that people find love amidst chaos. For their wedding, Anselmo and Camila retreat to a villa in Umbria with their closest friends. Between the ceremony and the celebration, Anselmo foolishly begs his best man to flirt with his bride in a test of her commitment. Meanwhile his parents, both aging actors, crash the party with two surprises – a lost play by Shakespeare and a ravishing woman to star in it. Using the Bard's comedies as inspiration, Greenblatt and Mee weave a contemporary version of the tale brimming with Shakespearean touches. They pitch us into a world where love is easy to find but hard to attain, where maids double as opera divas, and where handymen deliver great soliloquies. Together, this team serves up what Shakespeare might have created if he lived in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The talented cast features four A.R.T. company members who also performed at Berkeley Rep in the West Coast premiere of *Oliver Twist*: **Remo Airdi**, **Thomas Derrah**, **Will LeBow**, and **Karen MacDonald**. They are joined onstage by **Nathan Keepers**, who delighted Berkeley audiences as La Fleche in *The Miser*, and **Maria Elena Ramirez**, who played Nanette in Berkeley Rep's premiere of *Fêtes de la Nuit*. The ensemble also includes **Sarah Baskin**, **Thomas Kelley**, **Rebecca Luttio**, **Leenya Rideout**, **Mickey Solis**, and **Elizabeth Wilson**.

The design team showcases artists familiar to Bay Area audiences as well. **Annie Smart** (scenic design) has designed 11 shows at Berkeley Rep, including *Big Love* and *Fêtes de la Nuit*. **Christal Weatherly** (costume design) collaborated with Mee and Waters on *Fêtes de la Nuit* in Berkeley, as well as *Wintertime* at La Jolla Playhouse and Long Wharf Theatre. **James F. Ingalls** (lighting design) has worked on five shows at Berkeley Rep, including the recent presentation of *after the quake* and Waters' production of *Yellowman*, and **David Remedios** (sound design) created sound for *The Miser* and *Oliver Twist* in Berkeley. Movement for *Cardenio* is by **Doug Elkins**.

Shows directed by **Les Waters** ranked among the Top 10 Plays of 2007 in *Time Magazine*, 2006 in the *New York Times*, and 2005 in *Time Out New York*. He is enjoying his fifth year as associate artistic director of Berkeley Rep, where he has staged *Eurydice*, *Fêtes de la Nuit*,

(MORE)

*Finn in the Underworld, The Glass Menagerie, Heartbreak House, The Mystery of Irma Vep, The Pillowman, Suddenly Last Summer, To the Lighthouse, TRAGEDY: a tragedy, and Yellowman.* 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 Theatre. His other New York credits include the Connelly Theatre, Manhattan Theatre Club, Playwrights Horizons, The Public Theater/New York Shakespeare Festival, and Signature Theatre Company, as well as an acclaimed, extended run of *Eurydice* at Second Stage Theatre. Elsewhere in America, he has directed for American Conservatory Theater, A.R.T., Guthrie Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse, Steppenwolf Theatre Company, and Yale Repertory Theatre. In his native England, Waters has worked 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 collaborating 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.

**Charles L. Mee** has written *Belle Epoque, Fêtes de la Nuit, Gone, Limonade tous les Jours, Mail Order Bride, Paradise Park, A Perfect Wedding, Queens Boulevard, Salome, Snow in June, Summertime, Vienna: Lusthaus, Wintertime*, and a number of other scripts, including many works inspired by Greek plays: *Agamemnon, The Bacchae, Big Love, Iphigenia 2.0, Orestes 2.0, The Trojan Women: A Love Story, and True Love*. He is the only playwright member of the SITI Company, for whom he has written *bobrauschenbergamerica, Hotel Cassiopeia, soot and spit, and Under Construction*. His plays have been performed at A.R.T., the Brooklyn Academy of Music, the Humana Festival, Lincoln Center, New York Theatre Workshop, The Public, Steppenwolf, and other theatres in the United States, as well as in Amsterdam, Berlin, Brussels, Istanbul, Paris, Vienna, and elsewhere. Among his many awards, Mee is the recipient of a lifetime achievement award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. His work, which is made possible by the support of Jeanne Donovan Fisher and Richard B. Fisher, is available to the public at [charlesmee.org](http://charlesmee.org).

**Stephen Greenblatt** is Cogan University Professor of the Humanities at Harvard University. Founder of the “new historicism,” Greenblatt is a specialist in Shakespeare, 16<sup>th</sup>- and 17<sup>th</sup>-century English literature, the literature of travel and exploration, and literary theory. Former president of the Modern Language Association, he is a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, a fellow of the American Philosophical Society, and a permanent fellow of the Institute for Advanced Study in Berlin. Greenblatt is the author and editor of numerous books, including *Hamlet in Purgatory* (2001), *Learning to Curse* (1990), *Marvelous Possessions* (1991), *New World Encounters* (1993), *The Norton Anthology of English Literature* (2006), *Norton Shakespeare* (1997), *Practicing New Historicism* (with Catherine Gallagher, 2000), *Renaissance Self-Fashioning* (1980), *Shakespearean Negotiations* (1988, winner of the MLA’s James Russell Lowell Prize), and *Will in the World* (2004, a *New York Times* bestseller). He is the founding editor of the journal *Representations* and a recipient of the Mellon Distinguished Humanist Award. His research has been supported by the American Council of Learned Societies, the Fulbright and Guggenheim Foundations, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and other agencies.

*Cardenio* plays at the Loeb Drama Center in Harvard Square. **Tickets** begin at \$15 and can be purchased by calling 617.547.8300 or visiting [amrep.org](http://amrep.org). Make this new comedy your entertainment for a midsummer night back east – or pick up a subscription to Berkeley Rep’s 2008/09 Season and see provocative premieres right here in the Bay Area.

###

**CARDENIO**  
FACT SHEET

- WHO:** Written by Stephen Greenblatt and Charles L. Mee  
Directed by Les Waters  
Designed by Annie Smart (sets), Christal Weatherly (costumes), James Ingalls (lights), David Remedios (sound), and Doug Elkins (movement)  
Starring Remo Airaldi, Sarah Baskin, Thomas Derrah, Nathan Keepers, Thomas Kelley, Will LeBow, Rebecca Luttio, Karen MacDonald, Maria Elena Ramirez, Leenya Rideout, Mickey Solis, Elizabeth Wilson
- WHAT:** *Cardenio*, the world premiere of a 21<sup>st</sup>-century comedy inspired by Shakespeare
- WHERE:** American Repertory Theatre / Loeb Drama Center / 64 Brattle St / Cambridge, MA
- WHEN:** May 10 - June 8, 2008
- HOW MUCH:** \$15 - \$79
- TIX & INFO:** 617.547.8300 / [amrep.org](http://amrep.org)

###