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BERKELEY REP'S LES WATERS DEBUTS *DORIS TO DARLENE* IN NEW YORK
Obie Award-winner stages world premiere by Jordan Harrison at Playwrights Horizons

NOVEMBER 15, 2007 – Even as Berkeley Repertory Theatre enjoys two hits at home, one of its directors is debuting another high-profile show in New York City. The Theatre's associate artistic director, **Les Waters**, reunites with hot young playwright **Jordan Harrison** for the world premiere of *Doris to Darlene, A Cautionary Valentine*. The show starts previews tomorrow at Playwrights Horizons and officially opens December 11.

"It's a pleasure to work with Jordan again," **Waters remarks**, "and to collaborate in New York with other artists I've known at Berkeley Rep. I'm devoted to the development of new scripts, so I'm thrilled to direct at Playwrights Horizons, which – like Berkeley Rep – is committed to new plays. In Berkeley, we've helped launch new work like *Passing Strange* and young writers like Jordan and Sarah Ruhl. So I'm glad I can be here and be a part of Jordan's off-Broadway debut."

Waters' previous offerings in New York have been particularly well received. He won an Obie Award for his production of **Charles Mee's *Big Love***, which was also seen at Berkeley Rep. *Time Out New York* chose his off-Broadway staging of **Anne Washburn's *Apparition*** as one of the Best 5 Plays of 2005. Then, last summer, he scored another success with **Sarah Ruhl's *Eurydice***. First seen in Berkeley and New Haven, the show was named one of the Best Plays of 2006 by the *New York Times* – and its off-Broadway run at Second Stage Theatre extended three times. In the wake of ***Bridge & Tunnel***, ***Brundibar***, and ***Passing Strange***, *Eurydice* was the fourth play in recent years to hit Manhattan after being developed at Berkeley Rep. *Doris to Darlene* did not originate in Berkeley, but Waters and Harrison teamed up there for the world premiere of ***Finn in the Underworld*** in 2005.

Doris to Darlene, A Cautionary Valentine begins in the candy-colored 1960s, when a biracial schoolgirl named Doris is molded into pop star Darlene by a whiz-kid record producer who culls a top-ten hit out of Richard Wagner's *Liebtestod*. Rewind to the candy-colored 1860s, where Wagner is writing the melody that will become Darlene's hit song. Fast-forward to the not-so-candy-colored present, where a teenager obsesses over Darlene's music – and his music teacher. Three dissonant decades merge into an unlikely harmony in this time-jumping pop fairy tale about the dreams and disasters behind one transcendent song.

The cast features two faces familiar to Berkeley Rep audiences: the title role is portrayed by **de'Adre Aziza**, the award-winning jazz vocalist who appeared in *Passing Strange*, and Richard Wagner is played by **David Chandler**, the versatile Broadway actor recently seen as Boss Mangan in Waters' *Heartbreak House*. The talented ensemble also includes **Michael Crane**, **Laura Heisler**, **Tom Nelis**, and **Tobias Segal**.

The production showcases the work of two nationally renowned artists who have designed for Berkeley Rep. **Christal Weatherly** created the outrageous costumes for Waters' world premiere of Mee's *Fêtes de la Nuit*, as well as *Culture Clash's Zorro in Hell*. **Darron L West** crafted the sound for two other world premieres that Waters staged in Berkeley: *Finn in the Underworld* and *To the Lighthouse*. *Doris to Darlene* also relies on sets by **Takeshi Kata**, lighting by **Jane Cox**, and original music by Obie Award-winner **Kirsten Childs**.

(MORE)

BERKELEY REP'S LES WATERS DEBUTS *DORIS TO DARLENE* IN NYC / 2 OF 2

Les Waters is in 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*, *Heartbreak House*, *The Mystery of Irma Vep*, *The Pillowman*, *Suddenly Last Summer*, *To the Lighthouse*, 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 Theater. His other New York credits include the Connelly Theatre, Manhattan Theatre Club, The Public Theater/New York Shakespeare Festival, Second Stage, and Signature Theatre Company. Elsewhere in America, he has directed for American Conservatory Theater, Guthrie Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse, Steppenwolf Theatre Company, and Yale Repertory Theatre. 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 is an associate artist of The Civilians, and former head of the MFA directing program at UC San Diego. His 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.

Jordan Harrison has written *Act a Lady*, *Finn in the Underworld*, *Kid-Simple*, and *The Museum Play*. His work has been staged at American Theater Company, Berkeley Rep, the Humana Festival at Actors Theatre of Louisville, Portland Center Stage, and the Summer Play Festival – and he's received commissions from Arden Theatre, Cypress Films, the Guthrie/Children's Theatre Company, and South Coast Repertory. Harrison is the recipient of the Heideman Award, two Jerome Fellowships, a McKnight Grant from The Playwrights' Center, and a 2005-2006 playwright-in-residence grant from the National Endowment for the Arts and Theatre Communications Group. A graduate of Brown University's MFA playwriting program, he is a resident playwright at New Dramatists. *Doris to Darlene* is his off-Broadway debut; *Amazons and Their Men*, his second off-Broadway production, opens at Clubbed Thumb in January.

Playwrights Horizons is one of the most prestigious off-Broadway venues. This show appears on its mainstage, located at 416 West 42nd Street at 9th Avenue in Manhattan. To purchase seats, contact Ticket Central at 212.279.4200 or TicketCentral.com.

Or see tomorrow's shows today – here at Berkeley Rep. To celebrate the Theatre's 40th birthday, Waters will direct the American premiere of **Will Eno's** *TRAGEDY: a tragedy* in March. Right now, the season is roaring along with rave reviews, standing ovations, and sold-out houses for the West Coast premiere of **Mary Zimmerman's** *Argonautika* and an extended run of **Frank Galati** and **Haruki Murakami's** *after the quake*. Next, Artistic Director **Tony Taccone** applies his expertise with solo performers to two highly anticipated projects: the world premiere of **Danny Hoch's** *Taking Over* and **Carrie Fisher's** uproarious new show, *Wishful Drinking*. The season concludes in April with the West Coast premiere of **Theatre de la Jeune Lune's** *Figaro*. To ensure that everyone can join the party, Berkeley Rep has introduced inviting new prices. For details, call 510.647.2949 or toll-free at 888-4-BRT-Tix – or simply click berkeleyrep.org.

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WHO: Written by Jordan Harrison / Directed by Les Waters
Designed by Takeshi Kata (sets), Christal Weatherly (costumes), Jane Cox (lights),
Darron L West (sound), and Kirsten Childs (original music)
Starring de'Adre Aziza, David Chandler, Michael Crane, Laura Heisler, Tom Nelis,
and Tobias Segal

WHAT: ***Doris to Darlene, A Cautionary Valentine***
world premiere of a hot new play in New York directed by Berkeley Rep's Les Waters

WHERE: Playwrights Horizons / 416 West 42nd St @ 9th Ave / New York, NY 10036

WHEN: Previews begin November 16 / Opens December 11

TIX & INFO: 212.279.4200 or TicketCentral.com

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