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LOCAL KIDS GET SHAKING IN *after the quake* AT BERKELEY REP
Berkeley and Richmond girls make professional acting debut with Tony-winning director

SEPTEMBER 20, 2007 – Berkeley Repertory Theatre may be celebrating its 40th birthday, but – in the Theatre’s next show – the spotlight is on two local girls. Tony Award-winner **Frank Galati** has cast **six-year-old Gemma Megumi Fa-Kaji of Berkeley** and **nine-year-old Madison Logan V. Phan of Richmond** in *after the quake*, a beautiful play based on the book of the same name by acclaimed author **Haruki Murakami**. The pair alternates playing the role of Sala, a child who lives in Kobe, Japan.

“Sala is the fulcrum in this story,” **Galati remarks**. “The center of the center. She’s this warm, intelligent child with a delightful sense of humor – yet she’s legitimately terrified in the aftermath of the Kobe quake. The adults’ need to protect her and make her feel secure drives everything else in the play – so in a very real way, *after the quake* is launched by the little girl, and it’s landed by the little girl. It’s a wonderful role for a young actor, and I look forward to revisiting it with these two young girls, and continuing to explore this play with the cast for the Berkeley Rep production.”

A Berkeley native, Gemma is enrolled in first grade at **Thousand Oaks Elementary School**. She has staged numerous productions for family and friends – but *after the quake* will be her theatrical debut. In addition to acting and playwriting, she enjoys singing, dancing, swimming, playing soccer, and creating art in any form.

Madison, a fourth-grader at **St. John the Baptist School in El Cerrito**, began training with the Berkeley Ballet Theater when she was three years old, and has appeared annually in the company’s spring showcase and *The Nutcracker*. Over the past two years, she has also participated in the Summer Theatre Camp at California Shakespeare Theater, performing in student productions of *Macbeth* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*.

Frank Galati earned rave reviews for Broadway’s *Ragtime*, and two Tony Awards for *The Grapes of Wrath*. Haruki Murakami won Japan’s equivalent of the Pulitzer for novels such as *Kafka on the Shore* and *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle*. Now the two talents collide in ***after the quake***, which the *New York Times* called “an elegant, economic, gently hypnotic piece of theatre.” A timid man woos an old flame, enchanting her anxious daughter with whimsical stories of a six-foot frog’s fight to save Tokyo. In this poignant new play, we see that a storyteller can’t dispel the world’s woes, but he can teach a child – and himself – how to face fear.

The girls share their slice of Berkeley Rep’s birthday cake with four seasoned actors from film, television, and Broadway: **Paul H. Juhn**, **Keong Sim**, **Jennifer Shin**, and **Hanson Tse**. Two talented musicians – **Jason McDermott** on cello and **Jeff Wichmann**, playing the koto – provide live music for the onstage party. All of them appear on Berkeley Rep’s intimate Thrust Stage, which is located at 2025 Addison Street, one block from Berkeley’s downtown BART station and close to AC Transit bus lines.

after the quake begins previews on **October 12**, opens **October 17**, and closes **November 25**. The show is based on the stories “Honey Pie” and “Superfrog Saves Tokyo” from Murakami’s novel *after the quake*. It comes to Berkeley from Steppenwolf Theatre Company, and is produced in association with La Jolla Playhouse.

In honor of its birthday, Berkeley Rep has introduced **new prices** that invite everyone to celebrate. Tickets to *quake* start as low as \$27 – with discounts available for students, seniors, and anyone under 30 years of age. Seats are even more affordable as part of a multi-play subscription package. For tickets or information, call 510.647.2949 or 888-4-BRT-Tix – or simply click berkeleyrep.org.

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1997 TONY AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING REGIONAL THEATRE · 40TH BIRTHDAY SEASON · 2007-08



WHO: Written by Haruki Murakami
Adapted for the stage and directed by Frank Galati
Designed by James Schuette (sets), Mara Blumenfeld (costumes), James F. Ingalls (lights), and Andre Pluess and Ben Sussman (sound)
Starring Gemma Megumi Fa-Kaji, Paul H. Juhn, Madison Logan V. Phan, Keong Sim, Jennifer Shin, and Hanson Tse
Featuring live accompaniment by Jason McDermott and Jeff Wichmann

WHAT: after the quake
Tony Award-winner Frank Galati offers up a tender and inventive adaptation of the poignant work of Japanese author Haruki Murakami. The show is based on the stories "Honey Pie" and "Superfrog Saves Tokyo" from Murakami's novel after the quake.

WHERE: Berkeley Repertory Theatre's Thrust Stage
2025 Addison Street @ Shattuck, Downtown Berkeley

WHEN: Previews on 10/12 - 10/16 – Performances on 10/17 - 11/25/2007
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 performances on Thanksgiving, Thursday 11/22
No matinees during previews or on 10/18, 10/27, 11/1, 11/10 & 11/15

Calendar table showing dates from Sun to Sat with performance indicators and a legend for symbols like Docent Talks, Previews, Target Teen Night, etc.

Special Events –
Target® Teen Night: Friday 10/12 @ 6:30 PM
Opening night: Wednesday 10/17 @ 8:00 PM
Sushi tasting: 10/19 @ 7:00 PM
Book club: Friday 10/26 @ 6:00 PM
Post-play discussions: Thursday 11/1, Tuesday 11/13 & Friday 11/16 @ 8:00 PM
Docent presentations: Tuesdays 10/16, 10/23, 10/30, 11/6, 11/13 & 11/20 @ 7:00 PM; Thursdays 10/18, 10/25, 11/1, 11/8 & 11/15 @ 7:00 PM; and Friday 11/23 @ 7:00 PM

HOW MUCH: Table with columns for Section B, Section A, and Premium, listing prices for Previews, Tue 8 PM / Wed 7 PM / Thu 2 PM / Sat 2 PM, Thu 8 PM / Sun 2 PM / Sun 7 PM, Friday @ 8 PM, and Saturday @ 8 PM.

Discounts: • 1/2 price tickets available for anyone under 30 years of age
• \$10 discount for students and seniors one hour before curtain
• Groups of 10 or more, contact 510.647.2918 or groups@berkeleyrep.org

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