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## **BERKELEY REP'S FREE BOOK CLUB BRINGS YOU CLOSER TO THE STAGE**

**Book worms can join the fun once – or seven times – in the next season!**

WHO: Local arts lovers in conversation with Literary Manager Madeleine Oldham  
WHAT: The Berkeley Rep Book Club  
WHERE: Berkeley Rep's rehearsal hall / 2081 Center St @ Shattuck / Berkeley  
WHEN: **Fridays 9/14, 10/26, 11/16, 1/25, 2/1, 4/4 & 5/9 @ 6:00 PM**  
HOW MUCH: The book club is free (the usual ticket prices apply to see the play)  
INFO & RSVP: 510.647.2916 or [bookclub@berkeleyrep.org](mailto:bookclub@berkeleyrep.org)

AUGUST 8, 2007 – As Berkeley Repertory Theatre celebrates its 40<sup>th</sup> birthday, it's resolved to spend more time reading the books it loves. So today the Theatre announced that its new book club will meet seven times in the coming year, ensuring arts enthusiasts can read and discuss a text carefully matched to every show in its season. While the book club is free, participants are encouraged to purchase tickets for that night's performance, so they can share the show as well.

"Come once or come every time," says **Madeleine Oldham**, Berkeley Rep's literary manager. "I'll pick a book. It could be fiction, it could be non-fiction... but it will always offer a unique perspective on our current show. Read the text, join us for a pre-show discussion, and then watch the play armed with new information that will help you better appreciate what you see on stage."

The first meeting of the Berkeley Rep Book Club is at 6:00 PM on Friday, September 14. To complement the Theatre's production of *Heartbreak House*, a comedic masterpiece from **George Bernard Shaw** that considers a complacent society on the brink of war, the group will discuss ***Against All Enemies: Inside America's War on Terror***. This controversial memoir was penned by **Richard A. Clarke**, an expert on national security issues who served as an advisor to the last four presidents. In vivid prose, Clarke examines each administration's actions – and errors – in the fight against terrorism. The publication of this book coincided with his testimony before the 9/11 Commission, and in both cases his words ignited a firestorm in Washington. Join the book club to consider Clarke's analysis of our current political situation, and to discover parallels in Shaw's day and in his play.

The next meeting, to explore **Haruki Murakami's** magical novel ***The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle***, takes place on Friday, October 26 during the run of *after the quake* – a new script based on the work of this celebrated Japanese writer. Then Obie Award-winner **Danny Hoch** takes the stage with the world premiere of a one-man show about his neighborhood in Brooklyn, where the melting pot is boiling over with ethnic and economic tensions. This time the book club meets on January 25 to discuss ***There Goes the 'Hood: Views of Gentrification from the Ground Up*** by **Lance Freeman**. And when Hollywood legend **Carrie Fisher** brings her uproarious new show *Wishful Drinking* to Berkeley Rep the following month, the book club gathers on February 1 to talk about her outrageous bestseller ***Postcards from the Edge***.

The group also meets on November 16 during the West Coast premiere of **Mary Zimmerman's** *Argonautika*; on April 4 during the American premiere of **Will Eno's** *TRAGEDY: a tragedy*, and on

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May 9 during the West Coast premiere of Theatre de la Jeune Lune's *Figaro*. Titles for these meetings will be announced at a later date.

The book club meets in Berkeley Rep's rehearsal hall, around the corner from the Theatre, at 2081 Center Street in downtown Berkeley. **Please RSVP** by calling 510.647.2916 or e-mailing [bookclub@berkeleyrep.org](mailto:bookclub@berkeleyrep.org). To guarantee that you see the show every time the book club gathers, subscribe to all seven plays for as little as \$130. Tickets to individual plays start at \$27 and go on sale August 19. To purchase seats, contact the box office at 510.647.2949, 888-4-BRT-tix (toll-free), or [berkeleyrep.org](http://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 four years, four shows seen at Berkeley Rep have gone on to New York City, two have headed to Los Angeles, and one has traveled to London.

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