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KORET FOUNDATION FUNDS BERKELEY REP'S PRESTIGIOUS INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Three-year grant helps Berkeley Rep welcome 15 interns for its 40th birthday

JULY 19, 2007 – Every August, Berkeley Repertory Theatre welcomes new college graduates into what has become one of theatre's most extensive and prestigious internship programs, providing training in more than a dozen different disciplines. Now, on Berkeley Rep's 40th birthday, the Koret Foundation has recognized the importance of this program with a three-year, \$150,000 grant – just in time for the arrival of 15 new interns, including **six natives of Northern California**. As part of Berkeley Rep's yearlong birthday party, these youth will have the opportunity to work with renowned artists such as **Will Eno, Carrie Fisher, Frank Galati, Danny Hoch, Dominique Serrand, Tony Taccone, Les Waters, and Mary Zimmerman**.

"I couldn't think of a better way to celebrate Berkeley Rep's 40th birthday than to look ahead and invest in the future of American theatre," **remarks Susan Medak**, the Theatre's managing director. "So we are truly grateful to the Koret Foundation for its generous support of this program. Since our interns go on to work at stages throughout the country, this grant is helping us train the artists, artisans, and administrators who will influence the next 40 years of theatre history. And, with the stellar line-up we have planned for our 2007/08 Season, I'm thrilled that we can expose them to some of the most talented artists of our time while they're here."

"We're pleased to invest in the future of American regional theatre through support for Berkeley Rep's renowned internship program," adds Koret CEO **Jeffrey A. Farber**. "In many communities, theatre is an economic driver, advancing the quality of life for residents and tourists alike."

In addition to supporting the costs of training and housing interns, the grant will allow Berkeley Rep to devise and realize a more extensive evaluation system to track the impact of the program on individuals' lives and on theatre as a whole. The first team of interns that the three-year grant supports includes the following 15 young people:

- **Brandon Ballog**, an Ohio native and graduate of Ohio University, will work with Art Director Cheshire Dave and the marketing department.
- **Sarah Bordson**, an Illinois native and graduate of Illinois Wesleyan University, will work with Director of Marketing and Communications Robert Sweibel and the marketing team.
- **Darcy Engel**, a native of New York and graduate of the University at Buffalo, will work with Properties Manager Ashley Dawn in the prop shop.
- **Sheri Earnhart**, a native of Memphis and graduate of the Memphis College of Art, will work with Scenic Artist Lisa Lázár.
- **Ariel Engelman**, a native of New York and graduate of Brown University, will work with Production Stage Manager Michael Suenkel in stage management.
- **Kate Gorman**, a native of Kensington and graduate of the University of Southern California, will work with Production Manager Tom Aberger and the production team.
- **Taylor Gramps**, a Connecticut native and graduate of Drew University, will work with Company Manager Christopher Jenkins in company management.

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1997 tony award for outstanding regional theatre / a nonprofit corporation since 1968

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- **Shannon Howard**, an Alabama native and graduate of Presbyterian College, will work with Rachel Fink, director of the Berkeley Rep School of Theatre.
- **Kimberly Jew**, a San Francisco native and graduate of Smith College, will work with Technical Director Jim Smith and the staff of Berkeley Rep's scene shop.
- **Kelly Kunaniec**, a native of Richmond and graduate of UC Santa Cruz, will work with Master Electrician Fred Geffken and the electricians crew.
- **Lila Neugebauer**, a native of New York and graduate of Yale College, will work with Literary Manager Madeleine Oldham in the literary department.
- **Kayt Solso**, a native of San Mateo and graduate of Emerson College, will work with Costume Director Maggi Yule in the costume shop.
- **Daniel Weber**, a native of San Pablo and graduate of the University of Virginia, will work with Sound Supervisor Heather Bradley in the sound department.
- **Lauren Yee**, a San Francisco native and graduate of Yale College, will work with Director of Development Lynn Eve Komaromi and the development department.
- And **Marissa Wolf**, a Connecticut native and graduate of Vassar College, has been invited back for a second year as the Bret C. Harte Directing Intern, mentored by Artistic Director Tony Taccone.

Berkeley Rep's internship program is a groundbreaking career-development program that bridges the gap between academic training in theatre and professional employment in the industry by exposing participants to the daily operations of a major regional theatre. It is a rigorous and highly competitive program that attracts a talented pool of applicants from across the country and around the world. Interns develop and hone their skills by working alongside an accomplished company of artists, administrators, directors, and designers – and by attending monthly seminars taught by Berkeley Rep's staff. The 11-month partnership between Berkeley Rep and the intern provides practical experience and professional connections that help young people launch careers in the arts. Past interns are now employed as theatre professionals in London, New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, and of course right here at Berkeley Rep.

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*.

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Now a series of gifted guests arrives with amazing stage presents for the Theatre's 40th birthday! **Berkeley Rep's 2007/08 Season** includes seven spectacular shows: ***Heartbreak House***, the comedic masterpiece from Nobel Prize-winning author George Bernard Shaw staged by Associate Artistic Director Les Waters; ***after the quake***, a bittersweet tale that measures love on the Richter scale, created by Tony Award-winning director Frank Galati and celebrated author Haruki Murakami; the West Coast premiere of ***Argonautika***, an exhilarating adventure with Jason and the Argonauts staged by Tony Award-winner Mary Zimmerman; the **world premiere** of a spellbinding solo show from Obie Award-winner Danny Hoch, directed by Tony Taccone; ***Wishful Drinking***, the hilarious new show written and performed by Hollywood legend Carrie Fisher, also directed by Mr. Taccone; the American premiere of Will Eno's satirical ***TRAGEDY: a tragedy***, staged by Mr. Waters; and the West Coast premiere of Theatre de la Jeune Lune's magical ***Figaro***, directed by Dominique Serrand.

An entrepreneurial spirit guides the **Koret Foundation** in addressing societal challenges and strengthening Bay Area life. Investing in strategic, local solutions, it helps to inspire a multiplier effect – encouraging collaborative funding and developing model initiatives. In the San Francisco Bay Area, Koret adds to the region's vitality by promoting educational opportunity, contributing to a diverse cultural landscape, and bolstering organizations that are innovative in their approaches to meeting community needs. With its roots in the Jewish community, it embraces the community of Israel, especially through Koret Israel Economic Development Funds (KIEDF). It believes that economic stability and free-market expansion offer the best hope for a prosperous future. Koret understands its responsibility to make an impact – to honor the legacy of its founders, and to find long-lasting solutions that improve people's lives.

For more information about Berkeley Rep's 40th season, call the box office at 510.647.2949 or toll-free at 1.888.4.BRT.Tix – or simply click berkeleyrep.org.

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