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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

IN 2009, BERKELEY REP PROVIDES MORE BANG FOR YOUR BUCK

Free parties, tastings, and talks add extra value to audience experience

DECEMBER 22, 2008 – Last year, Berkeley Repertory Theatre introduced lower ticket prices to ensure that everyone could enjoy world-class theatre. Now, as reports about the economy encourage consumers to tighten their belts, its series of free events allows theatre lovers another way to stretch their entertainment dollars.

“As a nonprofit institution, we’re always striving to provide the greatest possible value for our community,” says **Susan Medak**, Berkeley Rep’s managing director. “Our audiences always expect an evening of ambitious, emotional, thoughtful work. But we also offer additional events before or after the show – nearly every night! You can just come for the play, or you can take advantage of complimentary events designed to enrich the body and mind.”

Here are a few ways that Berkeley Rep continues to add little luxuries to a night of theatre:

- **Gourmet tastings:** Theatregoers can take a bite out of life with gourmet events that precede the performances on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday nights. On most weekend evenings, an hour before the curtain goes up, local culinary artisans arrive at the Theatre to discuss their crafts and offer free samples. Get a taste of premium champagne, beer, and wine. Savor fine coffee, tea, or cognac. Or try some gelato, sushi, or salumi! Consider it an *amuse bouche* for an evening of exquisite theatre. A complete list of dates for this year’s tastings – nearly 100 in all – can be found at berkeleyrep.org/tastings.
- **Cheap dates for folks in their twenties.** At Berkeley Rep, tickets for theatre-lovers under 30 are always half-price, but everyone knows that the coolest (and most affordable) party in town is 30 Below. That’s because tickets start at only \$13.50 for anyone under 30 years of age – a better deal than popcorn and a movie! Kick off the evening with a free happy hour hosted by the *San Francisco Bay Guardian*, and move into high gear when the curtain comes down with a post-show party featuring fantastic food, free drinks, and delicious delicacies. Get a jump on a year of edgy theatre by reserving tickets for 30 Below: see *In the Next Room (or the vibrator play)* on January 30 or *The Lieutenant of Inishmore* on April 17.
- **Free parties for the LGBT community!** Berkeley Rep’s popular parties for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered theatre fans continue with *In the Next Room (or the vibrator play)* on February 5 and *The Lieutenant of Inishmore* on April 23. Sponsored by Energy 92.7, night/OUT features an evening of Tony Award-winning theatre and a post-show party with the cast, which includes music, dancing, fine food from Tomatina and Bistro Liaison, and beverages courtesy of Raymond Vineyard and Triple Rock Brewery. Tickets to this event, including entrance to both the show and the party, start at just \$18.50.
- **Teens get dinner, a show, and a talk for only \$10!** High-school students can experience adventurous plays with their peers at Target® Teen Night. The party starts on a Friday night at 6:30 PM, with a friendly dinner at the Berkeley Rep School of Theatre provided by Bowzer’s Pizza. Then the group enjoys a behind-the-scenes chat with a member of the artistic team before going next door to watch the show. All for only \$10!

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In addition to these social opportunities, Berkeley Rep stays true to its roots with several Free Speech programs:

- Free **pre-show talks** led by trained docents take place before evening performances every Tuesday and Thursday. These 30-minute talks, which begin at 7 PM, provide insight into the script, the artists, and the cultural and historical milieu of the show. There's plenty of time for questions during these informative presentations.
- And, at **post-show discussions**, audience members can chat directly with the artists. Moderated by a member of Berkeley Rep's staff, these conversations take place in the Theatre after select Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday night shows and last approximately 30 minutes.

Berkeley Rep greets the new year with its 50th world premiere: *In the Next Room* by **Sarah Ruhl** begins a year of provocative theatre, which also features **Les Waters'** take on *The Lieutenant of Inishmore* and two shows staged by **Sharon Ott**: a gripping production of *Crime and Punishment* and the premiere of *You, Nero* by **Amy Freed**. Plus, there's still time to see **Mary Zimmerman's** alluring adaptation of *The Arabian Nights*.

Individual tickets for each show start at only \$27, thanks to exciting new prices that let more people experience the best theatre in the Bay Area. Additional savings are available for groups, seniors, students, and anyone under 30 years of age – meaning **discounted seats** can be obtained for as little as \$13.50. This change makes Berkeley Rep more affordable to people in the community who are just starting school, starting careers, and starting families – because lower prices are now available for every performance.

Get guaranteed seats for these shows by subscribing to Berkeley Rep. Simply choose three or more plays and get the best seats at the lowest price. **Subscriptions begin as low as \$84** – and subscribers save up to 29% on every ticket! Other benefits include the right to reschedule for free, discounts when purchasing tickets for friends, and the opportunity to secure seats before the general public for special events like *Ennio*. Berkeley Rep also offers discounted subscriptions for senior citizens, theatregoers under 30, and employees of preschools, elementary schools, and secondary schools.

So watch the bottom line, but still have a good time! To purchase seats, or for more information, call (510) 647-2949 or toll-free at (888) 4-BRT-Tix – or simply click berkeleyrep.org.

ABOUT BERKELEY REP

Born in a storefront, 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, a permanent home for its long 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

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revitalize Berkeley. In four decades, four million people have enjoyed more than 300 shows at Berkeley Rep, including 50 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 seven years, Berkeley Rep has helped send seven hit shows to New York: *36 Views*, *Bridge & Tunnel*, *Brundibar*, *Eurydice*, *Metamorphoses*, *Passing Strange*, and *Taking Over*.

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ATTENTION, CALENDAR EDITORS:

WHAT: **30 Below**, the coolest night of theatre for people in their twenties

WHERE: Berkeley Repertory Theatre, 2025 Addison Street, Berkeley, CA 94704

WHEN: Happy hour @ 7 PM, performance @ 8 PM, plus a post-show party – 1/30 for *In the Next Room (or the vibrator play)* and 4/17 for *The Lieutenant of Inishmore*

HOW MUCH: \$13.50 - \$31.50

INFO & TIX: 510.647.2949, (888) 4-BRT-Tix, or berkeleyrep.org

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WHAT: **night/OUT**, wild plays followed by fabulous parties for the LGBT community

WHERE: Berkeley Repertory Theatre, 2025 Addison Street, Berkeley, CA 94704

WHEN: Select Thursdays @ 8 PM – 2/5 for *In the Next Room (or the vibrator play)* and 4/23 for *The Lieutenant of Inishmore*

HOW MUCH: \$18.50 - \$57

INFO & TIX: 510.647.2949, (888) 4-BRT-Tix, or berkeleyrep.org

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WHAT: **Target @ Teen Night**, meet the artists at a pizza party and then watch the show

WHERE: Berkeley Rep's School of Theatre, 2071 Addison Street, Berkeley, CA 94704

WHEN: Starting at 6:30 PM on the following Fridays – 1/30 for *In the Next Room (or the vibrator play)*, 2/27 for *Crime and Punishment*, 4/17 for *The Lieutenant of Inishmore*, and 5/15 for *You, Nero*

HOW MUCH: \$10 for teens

INFO & TIX: 510.647.2978, school@berkeleyrep.org, or berkeleyrep.org

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WHAT: **Post-show discussions** with the creators of Berkeley Rep's provocative plays

WHERE: Berkeley Repertory Theatre, 2025 Addison Street, Berkeley, CA 94704

WHEN: After the following 8 PM performances:
In the Next Room (or the vibrator play) – 2/12, 2/20 & 2/24
Crime and Punishment – 3/5, 3/13 & 3/17
The Lieutenant of Inishmore – 4/23, 5/1 & 5/5
You, Nero – 6/4, 6/16 & 6/19

HOW MUCH: Free with a ticket to that performance (\$16.50 - \$63)

INFO & TIX: 510.647.2949, (888) 4-BRT-Tix, or berkeleyrep.org

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