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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

1,009 NIGHTS? BERKELEY REP EXTENDS *THE ARABIAN NIGHTS*

8 performances added due to popular demand – now playing through January 11

DECEMBER 2, 2008 – Berkeley Repertory Theatre is ending the year the way it started: **delighting audiences and impressing critics on both coasts** with two hits here in Berkeley and another show taking New York by storm. Today – even as *Joe Turner's Come and Gone* nears the end of its local run and Artistic Director Tony Taccone is *Taking Over* Manhattan with Danny Hoch – the company announced an extension for its production of *The Arabian Nights*.

Tony Award-winner Mary Zimmerman has done it again: her alluring adaptation of *The Arabian Nights* earned **stellar reviews, standing ovations, and sold-out houses**. As a result, tickets have been harder to come by than water in the Sahara. Most performances in the next three weeks are booked to capacity, so Berkeley Rep just added eight performances to the show's run. **Excellent seats are still available for the holidays** – including a matinee on Christmas Eve and special shows for New Year's Eve and New Year's Day – as well as for performances late in December and early in January.

"Naturally, all of us here at Berkeley Rep are extremely proud," **Taccone remarked**. "It has been quite a year – with the Broadway run of *Passing Strange*, successful tours for *Taking Over* and *Wishful Drinking*, the world premiere of *Yellowjackets*, and the American premiere of *TRAGEDY: a tragedy*. Now – hot on the heels of *Joe Turner*, which also found a large and enthusiastic audience – *The Arabian Nights* will have an opportunity to be seen by many, many more people. It is yet another extraordinary production directed by Mary Zimmerman, who has created a loyal and passionate audience in the Bay Area. We are so very pleased to announce this extension."

The **new schedule** for *The Arabian Nights* is as follows:

- Tuesday 12/2 @ 8 PM – *sold out!*
- Wednesday 12/3 @ 7 PM – *sold out!*
- Thursday 12/4 @ 8 PM
- Friday 12/5 @ 8 PM – *sold out!*
- Saturday 12/6 @ 2 PM – *sold out!*
- Saturday 12/6 @ 8 PM – *sold out!*
- Sunday 12/7 @ 2 PM – *sold out!*
- Sunday 12/7 @ 7 PM – *sold out!*
- Tuesday 12/9 @ 8 PM – *sold out!*
- Wednesday 12/10 @ 7 PM – *sold out!*
- Thursday 12/11 @ 2 PM – *sold out!*
- Thursday 12/11 @ 8 PM – *sold out!*
- Friday 12/12 @ 8 PM – *sold out!*
- Saturday 12/13 @ 8 PM – *sold out!*
- Sunday 12/14 @ 2 PM – *sold out!*
- Sunday 12/14 @ 7 PM – *sold out!*
- Tuesday 12/16 @ 8 PM – *sold out!*
- Wednesday 12/17 @ 7 PM – *sold out!*
- Thursday 12/18 @ 2 PM & 8 PM
- Friday 12/19 @ 8 PM – *sold out!*
- Saturday 12/20 @ 8 PM – *sold out!*
- Sunday 12/21 @ 2PM – *sold out!*
- Sunday 12/21 @ 7 PM
- Tuesday 12/23 @ 8 PM
- Wednesday 12/24 @ 2 PM
- Friday 12/26 @ 8 PM
- Saturday 12/27 @ 2 PM – *sold out!*
- Saturday 12/27 @ 8 PM
- Sunday 12/28 @ 2 PM & 7 PM
- Tuesday 12/30 @ 8 PM
- Wednesday 12/31 @ 7 PM
- Thursday 1/1 @ 8 PM
- Friday 1/2 @ 8 PM
- Saturday 1/3 @ 2 PM & 8 PM
- Sunday 1/4 @ 2 PM & 7 PM
- Tuesday 1/6 @ 8 PM – *just added!*
- Wednesday 1/7 @ 7 PM – *just added!*
- Thursday 1/8 @ 8 PM – *just added!*
- Friday 1/9 @ 8 PM – *just added!*
- Saturday 1/10 @ 2 PM & 8 PM – *just added!*
- Sunday 1/11 @ 2 PM & 7 PM – *just added!*

(MORE)

Mary Zimmerman made her career by reanimating ancient myths like *Argonautika* and *Metamorphoses*... now she breathes new life into the legend of the 1,001 nights. To save her life, a beautiful bride must spin hypnotic tales of genies, jesters, thieves, and kings – winning her freedom by eventually winning her husband’s heart. He falls under Scheherazade’s spell, and Zimmerman enchants the audience as well with her signature style that transforms simplicity into the sublime. Amidst a thousand tales of honor, revenge, and humor, only love emerges victorious. A co-production with Kansas City Repertory Theatre, ***The Arabian Nights*** will travel to Missouri and to Chicago’s Lookingglass Theatre Company in 2009.

This is Zimmerman’s sixth trip to Berkeley Rep, and for the first time she works her magic on the intimate Thrust Stage. As usual, she has assembled a diverse cast to bring her tale to life: Alana Arenas, Barzin Akhavan, Ryan Artzberger, Ari Brand, Noshir Dalal, Allen Gilmore, Sofia Jean Gomez, Melina Kalomas, Ramiz Monsef, Jesse J. Perez, Nicole Shalhoub, Louis Tucci, Pranidhi Varshney, Stacey Yen, and Evan Zes. She has also recruited a team of talented designers to help her create this intricate mosaic: Daniel Ostling (sets), Mara Blumenfeld (costumes), TJ Gerckens (lights), and Andre Pluess and Ben Sussman (sound). The executive producers of *The Arabian Nights* are Betty and Jack Schafer and Jean and Michael Strunsky. The production sponsor is the Ira and Leonore Gershwin Philanthropic Fund, with co-sponsorship from Wealth Management at The Mechanics Bank. BART and Wells Fargo are the season sponsors for Berkeley Rep’s 41st year of fearless theatre.

Tickets to *The Arabian Nights* start at \$33 – or only \$16.50 for anyone under 30 years of age. Berkeley Rep is located at 2025 Addison Street, near bus lines, bike routes, and parking lots, and only half a block from BART. To purchase seats, call 510.647.2949 or 888-4-BRT-Tix (toll-free) – or just click berkeleyrep.org.

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ABOUT 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, 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 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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THE ARABIAN NIGHTS
FACT SHEET

WHO: Written and directed by Mary Zimmerman
 Adapted from *The Book of the Thousand Nights and One Night*
 Designed by Daniel Ostling (sets), Mara Blumenfeld (costumes), TJ Gerckens (lights), and Andre Pluess and Ben Sussman (sound)
 Starring Alana Arenas, Barzin Akhavan, Ryan Artzberger, Ari Brand, Noshir Dalal, Allen Gilmore, Sofia Jean Gomez, Melina Kalomas, Ramiz Monsef, Jesse J. Perez, Nicole Shalhoub, Louis Tucci, Pranidhi Varshney, Stacey Yen, and Evan Zes

WHAT: *The Arabian Nights* – an alluring adaptation of the classic tale from the director of *Argonautika*

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

WHEN: **Now playing through January 11, 2009!**

- 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 matinees on 12/4, 12/13, 12/20 or 1/1
- Special 2:00 PM matinee on 12/24 (Christmas Eve) – no performance that night
- No performance on 12/25 (Christmas Day)

The Arabian Nights

SUN	MON	TUE ■	WED	THU ■	FRI	SAT
	1 DEC	2 8	3 7	4 8■	5 8■	6 2/8■
7 2/7■	8	9 8	10 7	11 2/8■	12 8■	13 8■
14 2/7■	15	16 8■	17 7	18 2/8	19 8■	20 8■
21 2/7■	22	23 8	24 2	25 8	26 8	27 2/8■
28 2/7■	29	30 8	31 7	1 JAN 8	2 8	3 2/8
4	5	6 8	7 7	8 8	9 8	10 2/8
11 2/7						

Special Events:

Docent talks: Tuesdays 11/25, 12/2, 12/9, 12/16, 12/23 & 12/30 and Thursdays 11/20, 12/4, 12/11, 12/18 & 1/1 @ 7:00 PM
Student matinees: Wednesdays 12/3 & 12/17 @ noon
Post-play discussions: Thursday 12/11, Tuesday 12/16 & Friday 12/19 @ 8:00 PM
Free tastings: Fridays 12/5 (Kokomo Wines) & 12/12 (Triple Rock Brewery) @ 7:00 PM; Saturdays 12/6 (Kokomo Wines and Peterson Winery), 12/13 (Craft Distillers and St. Helena Road Winery) & 12/20 (Teance) @ 7:00 PM; and Sundays 12/7 (Kokomo Wines and Peet's Coffee & Tea) & 12/14 (Bravante Vineyards and Domaine Carneros) @ 6:00 PM

HOW MUCH: \$13.50 - \$71

	Section B	Section A	Premium
Tue 8 PM / Wed 7 PM / Thu 2 PM / Sat 2 PM	\$33	\$45	\$52
Thu 8 PM / Sun 2 PM / Sun 7 PM.....	\$37	\$51	\$57
Friday @ 8 PM.....	\$45	\$57	\$63
Saturday @ 8 PM	\$51	\$63	\$71

Discounts: • Half-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

PHOTOS: <http://www.berkeleyrep.org/press/photos-08an.asp>

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