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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EPICUREANS ENJOY FREE GOURMET TASTINGS AT BERKELEY REP

Culinary artisans offer the audience free samples of champagne, cognac, sushi, and more

SEPTEMBER 2, 2008 – Berkeley is the birthplace of California cuisine, and now Berkeley Repertory Theatre tempts theatregoers to arrive early for its shows with a series of gourmet tastings. On select Friday, Saturday, and Sunday evenings, audience members can whet their palates for the play with free samples from local culinary artisans who bring the same handcrafted care to their products that Berkeley Rep brings to everything seen on its stage.

“From chardonnay to cabernet, cognac to champagne... From sushi to salumi, gelato to green tea... You don’t want to miss these delicious events,” says **Susie Medak**, the Theatre’s managing director. “We want to ensure that your night at the theatre is a complete feast for the senses, so consider these tastings an *amuse bouche* for an epicurean evening of entertainment. It’s just one more way that we promise a premium experience to our patrons.”

Over the course of the season, **15 different vintners** pour complimentary wine in Berkeley Rep’s lobby beginning an hour before the show:

- Alexander Valley Vineyards: Sunday 9/7 at 6 PM
- Balletto Vineyards: Sunday 9/28 at 6 PM
- Bedarra Vineyards: Friday 5/15 at 7 PM, Saturday 5/16 at 7 PM, and Sunday 5/17 at 6 PM
- Blue Danube Wine Company: Saturday 9/27 at 7 PM
- Bravante Vineyards: Sundays 11/23 and 12/14 at 6 PM
- Bullion Creek Vineyards: Saturday 9/6 at 7 PM
- Forth Vineyards: Friday 2/6 at 7 PM and Sunday 3/15 at 6 PM
- Hans Fahden Vineyards: Fridays 9/5 and 9/19 at 7 PM
- Kokomo Wines: Friday 12/5 at 7 PM, Saturday 12/6 at 7 PM, and Sunday 12/7 at 6 PM
- Peterson Winery: Friday 2/13 and Saturday 12/6 at 7 PM
- Raymond Vineyards: Friday 5/29 at 7 PM, Saturdays 2/21 and 3/28 at 7 PM, and Sundays 9/21, 11/16, and 11/23 at 6 PM
- St. Helena Road Winery: Saturdays 9/13, 10/11, and 12/13 at 7 PM
- Ventana Vineyards: Sunday 9/14 at 6 PM
- Via Pacifica Selections: Saturday 9/20 at 7 PM
- Winterhawk Winery: Friday 9/26, Saturday 10/4, and Friday 11/7 at 7 PM

Other nights start with **exquisite aperitifs** courtesy of these local vendors:

- Craft Distillers (handcrafted spirits): Saturday 12/13 at 7 PM
- Domaine Carneros (sparkling wine): Saturdays 11/22 and 11/29 at 7 PM and Sunday 12/14 at 6 PM
- Triple Rock Brewery: Fridays 9/12, 11/21, and 12/12 and Saturdays 3/14, 5/9, and 5/16 at 7 PM

Then three **local restaurants** get in on the act with samples of their cuisine:

- Sushi Ko: Friday 3/6 at 7 PM and Sunday 10/5 at 6 PM
- Tomatina: Saturday 2/7 at 7 PM
- Venus: Friday 6/5 at 7 PM

(MORE)

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Finally, **delicacies and delights** are also served up by these fine firms:

- Almare Gelato: Sunday 10/12 at 6 PM
- Berkeley Farmers' Market (organic produce): Friday 11/14 at 7 PM
- Fra' Mani Handcrafted Salumi: Fridays 11/21, 3/6, and 3/27 at 7 PM; Saturday 11/15 at 7 PM; and Sunday 2/8 at 6 PM
- Peet's Coffee & Tea: Saturday 2/28 at 7 PM and Sundays 11/9 and 12/7 at 6 PM
- Teance (whole-leaf teas): Fridays 2/27, 3/20, 4/24, and 5/22 and Saturdays 11/22, 12/20, and 6/6 at 7 PM

These events are only appetizers for a seven-course banquet of sizzling shows. The 2008/09 Season brings brilliant artists back to Berkeley Rep's stage and provides proof of the Theatre's commitment to commission 50 new plays by 2013. The season takes flight when Artistic Director **Tony Taccone** directs the world premiere of *Yellowjackets*, an incisive new play penned by Berkeley native **Itamar Moses**. The next five shows present a parade of our audience's favorite artists: **Delroy Lindo** stages **August Wilson's** masterpiece *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*; **Mary Zimmerman** presents an alluring adaptation of *The Arabian Nights*; Associate Artistic Director **Les Waters** reunites with **Sarah Ruhl** for the world premiere of *In the Next Room (or the vibrator play)*; former Artistic Director **Sharon Ott** returns to direct **Fyodor Dostoevsky's** *Crime and Punishment*; and Waters tackles **Martin McDonagh** again with *The Lieutenant of Inishmore*. The season concludes with a second show from Ott: the world premiere of *You, Nero* by **Amy Freed**. Come to Berkeley Rep and indulge yourself locally!

Tastings are free with a ticket to that evening's performance, so enjoy a mouth-watering prelude to any of these shows. Seats start at only \$27, and discounts are available for seniors, students, and anyone under 30 years of age. Berkeley Rep is located on Addison Street in downtown Berkeley, close to bike routes, bus lines, and parking lots – and only half a block from BART. To attend a show, contact the box office at 510.647.2949, 888-4-BRT-tix (toll-free), or 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 three years, Berkeley Rep has helped send five hit shows to New York: *Bridge & Tunnel*, *Brundibar*, *Eurydice*, *Passing Strange*, and *Taking Over*.

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ATTENTION, CALENDAR EDITORS:

Below is a complete list of tastings to be held at Berkeley Repertory Theatre in the coming season. Each tasting is associated with a specific show, which begins one hour later. Tastings are free with a ticket to that evening's performance, which range in price from \$13.50 to \$71. For information or tickets, contact 510.647.2949, 888-4-BRT-Tix (toll-free), or berkeleyrep.org.

Yellowjackets:

Berkeley Rep's Thrust Stage / 2025 Addison St @ Shattuck / Downtown Berkeley

- Friday 9/5 at 7 PM: Hans Fahden Vineyards
- Saturday 9/6 at 7 PM: Bullion Creek Vineyards
- Sunday 9/7 at 6 PM: Alexander Valley Vineyards
- Friday 9/12 at 7 PM: Triple Rock Brewery
- Saturday 9/13 at 7 PM: St. Helena Road Winery
- Sunday 9/14 at 6 PM: Ventana Vineyards
- Friday 9/19 at 7 PM: Hans Fahden Vineyards
- Saturday 9/20 at 7 PM: Via Pacifica Selections
- Sunday 9/21 at 6 PM: Raymond Vineyards
- Friday 9/26 at 7 PM: Winterhawk Winery
- Saturday 9/27 at 7 PM: Blue Danube Wine Company
- Sunday 9/28 at 6 PM: Balletto Vineyards
- Saturday 10/4 at 7 PM: Winterhawk Winery
- Sunday 10/5 at 6 PM: Sushi Ko
- Saturday 10/11 at 7 PM: St. Helena Road Winery
- Sunday 10/12 at 6 PM: Almare Gelato

Joe Turner's Come and Gone:

Berkeley Rep's Roda Theatre / 2015 Addison St @ Shattuck / Downtown Berkeley

- Friday 11/7 at 7 PM: Winterhawk Winery
- Sunday 11/9 at 6 PM: Peet's Coffee & Tea
- Friday 11/14 at 7 PM: Berkeley Farmers' Market
- Saturday 11/15 at 7 PM: Fra' Mani Handcrafted Salumi
- Sunday 11/16 at 6 PM: Raymond Vineyards
- Friday 11/21 at 7 PM: Triple Rock Brewery
- Saturday 11/22 at 7 PM: Domaine Carneros
- Sunday 11/23 at 6 PM: Bravante Vineyards
- Saturday 11/29 at 7 PM: Domaine Carneros
- Saturday 12/6 at 7 PM: Kokomo Wines
- Sunday 12/7 at 6 PM: Kokomo Wines
- Saturday 12/13 at 7 PM: Craft Distillers
- Sunday 12/14 at 6 PM: Domaine Carneros

The Arabian Nights:

Berkeley Rep's Thrust Stage / 2025 Addison St @ Shattuck / Downtown Berkeley

- Friday 11/21 at 7 PM: Fra' Mani Handcrafted Salumi
- Saturday 11/22 at 7 PM: Teance
- Sunday 11/23 at 6 PM: Raymond Vineyards
- Friday 12/5 at 7 PM: Kokomo Wines
- Saturday 12/6 at 7 PM: Peterson Winery

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- Sunday 12/7 at 6 PM: Peet's Coffee & Tea
- Friday 12/12 at 7 PM: Triple Rock Brewery
- Saturday 12/13 at 7 PM: St. Helena Road Winery
- Sunday 12/14 at 6 PM: Bravante Vineyards
- Saturday 12/20 at 7 PM: Teance

In the Next Room (or the vibrator play):

Berkeley Rep's Roda Theatre / 2015 Addison St @ Shattuck / Downtown Berkeley

- Friday 2/6 at 7 PM: Forth Vineyards
- Saturday 2/7 at 7 PM: Tomatina
- Sunday 2/8 at 6 PM: Fra' Mani Handcrafted Salumi
- Friday 2/13 at 7 PM: Peterson Winery
- Saturday 2/21 at 7 PM: Raymond Vineyards
- Friday 2/27 at 7 PM: Teance
- Saturday 2/28 at 7 PM: Peet's Coffee & Tea
- Friday 3/6 at 7 PM: Fra' Mani Handcrafted Salumi
- Sunday 3/15 at 6 PM: Forth Vineyards

Crime and Punishment:

Berkeley Rep's Thrust Stage / 2025 Addison St @ Shattuck / Downtown Berkeley

- Friday 3/6 at 7 PM: Sushi Ko
- Saturday 3/14 at 7 PM: Triple Rock Brewery
- Friday 3/20 at 7 PM: Teance
- Friday 3/27 at 7 PM: Fra' Mani Handcrafted Salumi
- Saturday 3/28 at 7 PM: Raymond Vineyards

The Lieutenant of Inishmore:

Berkeley Rep's Roda Theatre / 2015 Addison St @ Shattuck / Downtown Berkeley

- Friday 4/24 at 7 PM: Teance
- Saturday 5/9 at 7 PM: Triple Rock Brewery
- Friday 5/15 at 7 PM: Bedarra Vineyards
- Saturday 5/16 at 7 PM: Bedarra Vineyards
- Sunday 5/17 at 6 PM: Bedarra Vineyards

You, Nero:

Berkeley Rep's Thrust Stage / 2025 Addison St @ Shattuck / Downtown Berkeley

- Saturday 5/16 at 7 PM: Triple Rock Brewery
- Friday 5/22 at 7 PM: Teance
- Friday 5/29 at 7 PM: Raymond Vineyards
- Friday 6/5 at 7 PM: Venus
- Saturday 6/6 at 7 PM: Teance

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