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TONY AWARDS HONOR ANOTHER SHOW BORN AT BERKELEY REP: *AMERICAN IDIOT*

Green Day's rock opera wins theatre's top prize for Best Set and Best Lighting

JUNE 13, 2010 – Tonight, in Manhattan, another show born at Berkeley Repertory Theatre was honored with theatre's most prestigious and coveted prize: *American Idiot*, the thrilling musical based on Green Day's Grammy-winning album that made its world premiere in Berkeley before bursting onto Broadway, nabbed two Tony Awards. Following a performance by the show's cast – and a hollered introduction paying tribute to their roots in the Bay Area – **the beloved punk band kicked off the ceremony by rocking Radio City Music Hall with two live songs.**

Viewers of the national television broadcast – as well as artists, staff members, and volunteers from Berkeley Rep who joined the festivities in New York – saw **Christine Jones** from *American Idiot* accept the Tony Award for **Best Scenic Design of a Musical**. To make the evening even sweeter, **Kevin Adams** of *American Idiot* – a two-time Tony winner who was also nominated for Berkeley Rep's *Passing Strange* – won the Tony Award for **Best Lighting Design of a Musical**. This marks the **fifth and sixth Tony Awards associated with Berkeley Rep.**

"We could not be more proud," said Artistic Director **Tony Taccone**, commenting from New York. "It is a tremendous honor to have two shows in the running in the same year – a play and a musical – and an extraordinary experience to see this work recognized by the Tony Awards. All of us at Berkeley Rep send our congratulations to Christine, Kevin, and all of our collaborators on *American Idiot*."

"At Berkeley Rep, we are committed to developing new plays – and we are lucky enough to have an adventurous and very smart audience. While our primary aim is always to create work that engages, entertains, and challenges our local audience, it also makes Berkeley a great place to launch new shows. So we're pleased that the nation's top artists choose to take artistic risks with us, and gratified that our work continues to travel on to wider praise."

In the last eight years, Berkeley Rep has helped develop six Broadway shows: *American Idiot* (2010), *In the Next Room* (2009), *Wishful Drinking* (2009), *Passing Strange* (2008), *Bridge & Tunnel* (2006), and *Metamorphoses* (2002). The Theatre has helped shepherd these successful plays to several significant awards:

- ***American Idiot*** already pulled in the Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Director of a Musical (Michael Mayer), the Outer Critics Circle Award for Outstanding Lighting Design (Kevin Adams), and the 2010 Award for Outstanding New Broadway Musical from the Independent Theater Bloggers Association. *Idiot* netted ten Theatre Fans' Choice Awards from Broadway.com as well, including Best Musical.
- Carrie Fisher won the Outer Critics Circle Award for Outstanding Solo Performance with ***Wishful Drinking***, which was staged in Berkeley by Artistic Director Tony Taccone before becoming a *New York Times* bestseller, a Broadway hit, and a touring sensation. Its extended Broadway run at Studio 54 was produced by Roundabout Theatre Company in association with Jonathan Reinis, Jamie Cesa, Eva Price, and Berkeley Rep.

(MORE)

RECIPIENT OF THE TONY AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING REGIONAL THEATRE

TONY AWARDS HONOR BERKELEY REP'S AMERICAN IDIOT / 2 OF 3

- ***Passing Strange*** – which made its world premiere at Berkeley Rep before reaching Broadway with its original cast intact – won the Tony Award for Best Book, three Drama Desk Awards including Best Musical, four Audelco Awards including Best Musical, two Obie Awards including Best New American Theatre Piece, two Theatre World Awards, and the New York Drama Critics' Circle Award for Best Musical.
- In 2006, Sarah Jones won the Tony Award for Best Special Theatrical Event with ***Bridge & Tunnel***, another solo show directed by Tony Taccone which was workshopped at Berkeley Rep before its Broadway run.
- Mary Zimmerman won the Tony Award for Best Direction of a Play with ***Metamorphoses***, which made its West Coast premiere at Berkeley Rep on its way to New York. The show also earned four Drama Desk Awards including Outstanding New Play, three Lucille Lortel Awards including Outstanding Play, the Drama League Award for Best Play, the Obie Award for Direction, and the Outer Critics Circle Award for Outstanding Direction of a Play.
- And Berkeley Rep received the Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre in 1997.

ABOUT BERKELEY REP

Berkeley Repertory Theatre has grown from a storefront stage to a national leader in innovative theatre. Known for its core values of imagination and excellence, as well as its educated and adventurous audience, the nonprofit has provided a welcoming home for emerging and established artists since 1968. The Theatre 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. With two stages, a school, and a Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre, Berkeley Rep is proud to premiere exhilarating new plays.

All told, the Theatre has helped send **13 shows to New York in the last 13 years**. In addition to six recent Broadway transfers, this list of hits includes Danny Hoch's *Taking Over* (2008), Sarah Ruhl's *Eurydice* (2007), Tony Kushner and Maurice Sendak's *Brundibar* (2006), Naomi Iizuka's *36 Views* (2002), Hoch's *Jails, Hospitals & Hip-Hop* (1998), Anne Galjour's *Alligator Tales* (1997), and Philip Kan Gotanda's *Ballad of Yachiyo* (1997).

Berkeley Rep has also announced its second London transfer. Following in the footsteps of *Continental Divide*, which played at the Barbican in 2004, *Tiny Kushner* is headed to London's Tricycle Theater this fall.

See tomorrow's plays today at Berkeley Rep. The current season concludes with the world premiere of another daring new show: *In the Wake* from Lisa Kron and Leigh Silverman, the Obie Award-winning creative team behind Broadway's *Well*. This summer's Fireworks Festival is already underway with a series of colorful and explosive solo shows from John Leguizamo, David Sedaris, Dan Hoyle, and Wes "Scoop" Nisker. Subscriptions are also on sale for the upcoming season, which features new work from Lemony Snicket, Rita Moreno, Mike Daisey, Rinne Groff, Sarah Ruhl, and other prominent artists. For details, call (510) 647-2949 or toll-free at (888) 4-BRT-tix – or simply click berkeleyrep.org.

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ABOUT AMERICAN IDIOT

The Broadway engagement of *American Idiot* is produced by Tom Hulse and Ira Pittelman in association with Berkeley Rep. The show tells the exhilarating tale of a new generation of young Americans as they search for meaning in a post-9/11 world, borne along by Green Day's electrifying score. With a cast of 19 led by Tony Award-winner John Gallagher, Jr., this high-octane musical follows the journey of three lifelong friends as one takes off for a life in the city, one leaves home to fight for his country, and one stays behind, frozen in the safety of suburbia.

American Idiot made its world premiere in Berkeley Rep's Roda Theatre in September 2009. Its record-breaking run brought in the biggest advance sale in the Theatre's 42-year history, the biggest day at the box office, 18 of the top 20 days ever, and due to demand had to announce its first extension before it played its first performance. Now it's rocking the St. James Theatre in Manhattan, which is located at 246 West 44th Street between Broadway and Eighth Avenue.

Green Day – vocalist/guitarist Billie Joe Armstrong, bassist Mike Dirnt, and drummer Tré Cool – won two Grammy Awards for the groundbreaking rock opera *American Idiot*, which went on to become one of the best selling albums of all time. The band joined with one of theatre's most acclaimed creative teams – Tony Award-winning director of *Spring Awakening* Michael Mayer, Pulitzer Prize-winning composer and orchestrator Tom Kitt, and Olivier Award-winning choreographer Steven Hoggett – to bring this explosive, iconic story to the stage. For more information on *American Idiot*, visit AmericanIdiotOnBroadway.com.

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