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TWO SHOWS BORN AT BERKELEY REP NAB SIX TONY NOMINATIONS

***American Idiot* and *In the Next Room (or the vibrator play)* each grab three nominations**

15 other nominations for Drama Desk, Drama League, Outer Critics, and Astaire Awards

MAY 4, 2010 – Today, two shows born at Berkeley Repertory Theatre nabbed six nominations for theatre’s most prestigious and coveted prize: the Tony Award. Green Day’s *American Idiot*, the thrilling rock opera that made its world premiere in Berkeley before bursting onto Broadway, netted nominations for three Tony Awards **including Best Musical**. *In the Next Room (or the vibrator play)*, the comedy Berkeley Rep commissioned from Sarah Ruhl that became a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize and marked the Broadway debut of Associate Artistic Director Les Waters, also received three nominations **including Best Play**. The winners of this year’s Tony Awards will be announced in a national television broadcast on June 13.

Combined with Carrie Fisher’s *Wishful Drinking* – another show developed at Berkeley Rep which found its way to Broadway – these popular productions have also received nominations for **five Drama Desk Awards, five Drama League Awards, four Outer Critics Circle Awards, and the Astaire Award**.

“Local folks have long known that Berkeley Rep is devoted to developing adventurous new work,” remarks **Tony Taccone**, the Theatre’s artistic director. “We are pleased that a much wider audience has had an opportunity to see and appreciate our work in the last several years, and naturally we’re honored to see these shows nominated for so many prestigious awards. We are grateful for the trust placed in us by the many partners who helped bring *American Idiot*, *In the Next Room*, and *Wishful Drinking* to Broadway.”

Shows that began at Berkeley Rep earned six nods from the Tony nominating committee:

- **Best Musical:** *American Idiot*
- **Best Play:** *In the Next Room (or the vibrator play)*
- **Best Performance by a Featured Actress in a Play:** **Maria Dizzia** for *In the Next Room (or the vibrator play)*
- **Best Scenic Design of a Musical:** **Christine Jones** for *American Idiot*
- **Best Lighting Design of a Musical:** **Kevin Adams** for *American Idiot*
- **Best Costume Design of a Play:** **David Zinn** for *In the Next Room (or the vibrator play)*

American Idiot has also received the following recent honors:

- **Three nominations for Drama Desk Awards:** The show is nominated for Outstanding Musical, Michael Mayer for Outstanding Director of a Musical, and Tom Kitt for Outstanding Orchestrations. Winners will be announced on May 23.
- **Three nominations for Drama League Awards:** The show is nominated for Distinguished Production of a Musical, while John Gallagher, Jr. and Tony Vincent are in the running for the Distinguished Performance Award. Winners will be announced on May 21.

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RECIPIENT OF THE TONY AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING REGIONAL THEATRE

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- **Two nominations for Outer Critics Circle Awards:** *Idiot* is competing for Outstanding New Broadway Musical, and Kevin Adams earned a nomination for Outstanding Lighting Design. Winners will be announced on May 17.
- **Choreographer Steven Hoggett was nominated for the Astaire Award**, which recognizes excellence in dance on both stage and film. The winner will be announced on June 7.

In the Next Room has garnered its share of attention during awards season as well:

- Its star **Laura Benanti received nominations for two notable awards:** Outstanding Actress in a Play from the Outer Critics Circle and the Drama League's Distinguished Performance Award.
- **David Zinn was also nominated for a Drama Desk Award** for Outstanding Costume Design.
- **Ruhl received this year's Glickman Award**, which is bestowed annually on the author of the best play to have its world premiere in the Bay Area.
- The show was a **finalist for the Pulitzer Prize**.

Finally, **Carrie Fisher received three nominations for *Wishful Drinking*:**

- Outer Critics Circle Award for Outstanding Solo Performance
- Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Solo Performance
- Distinguished Performance Award from the Drama League

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 prominent awards:

- ***Passing Strange*** – which made its world premiere at Berkeley Rep – went on to win the Tony Award for Best Book, three Drama Desk Awards including Best Musical, four ADELCO 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***, which was staged by Artistic Director Tony Taccone and 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

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Play, three Lucile 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), 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 also recently 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 another pair of new shows: the world premiere of *Girlfriend* from Todd Almond and Matthew Sweet and the world premiere of *In the Wake* from Lisa Kron and Leigh Silverman. Subscriptions are on sale for the upcoming season as well, 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.

ABOUT AMERICAN IDIOT

The Broadway engagement of *American Idiot* is produced by Tom Hulse and Ira Pitzelman 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 ticket 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.

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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.

ABOUT IN THE NEXT ROOM (OR THE VIBRATOR PLAY)

In 2007, Sarah Ruhl and Les Waters made a splash when they brought *Eurydice* from Berkeley Rep to an extended off-Broadway run. Then the Theatre commissioned a fresh script from the young writer, a comedy about marriage, intimacy, and electricity called *In the Next Room (or the vibrator play)*. The Obie Award-winning director staged its world premiere in the Roda Theatre in February of 2009; then both artists enjoyed their Broadway debuts when Lincoln Center Theater presented the show at the Lyceum. It ran on Broadway from October 22, 2009 through January 10, 2010. Development of the script was supported by the Bernard Osher New Play Development Fund, the Edgerton Foundation, and the Mosse Foundation Artistic Development Fund.

Audiences and critics embraced the show on both coasts. In *USA Today*, Elysa Gardner named it Best Play of the Year. Charles Isherwood of the *New York Times* declared it one of “the four best new plays to be produced in New York this year.” And John Lahr of *The New Yorker* proclaimed it the Top Moment in Theater for 2009, raving that “Ruhl’s benign detachment, her astute mind, and her capacity for wonder turn this evening into an indelible pleasure. In Les Waters, who directed her exciting *Eurydice* a few seasons back, she has found an expert collaborator... If *In the Next Room* doesn’t win the Tony for best play – it’s Ruhl’s first Broadway show – I’ll eat my shorts.”

ABOUT WISHFUL DRINKING

During its extended run at Berkeley Rep in 2008, Carrie Fisher’s *Wishful Drinking* won critical acclaim, set box office records, and delighted theatregoers night after night. Then it became a *New York Times* bestseller and played for sold-out crowds on a seven-city national tour. Onstage, she recounted a true and intoxicating story with the same strong, wry wit that she poured into bestsellers like *Postcards from the Edge*. After staging two completely different solo shows – the world premiere of Danny Hoch’s *Taking Over* and Sarah Jones’ Tony Award-winning *Bridge & Tunnel* – Artistic Director Tony Taccone took audiences on another wild ride with *Wishful Drinking*.

The show enjoyed a limited Broadway run at Studio 54, produced by Roundabout Theatre Company in association with Jonathan Reinis, Jamie Cesa, Eva Price, and Berkeley Rep. The production featured scenery, lighting, and projections by local designer Alexander V. Nichols. It started previews on September 22, 2009, extended its run for two weeks, and closed on January 17, 2010.

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