

**For photos, interviews, etc. contact:**  
Terence Keane, Director of Public Relations  
(510) 647-2917, [tkeane@berkeleyrep.org](mailto:tkeane@berkeleyrep.org)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **AMERICAN IDIOT BEGINS BROADWAY RUN – TAKING OVER EARNS L.A. AWARD**

**Shows born at Berkeley Rep continue to attract acclaim as they travel the nation**

MARCH 23, 2010 – This week, the Tony Award-winning Berkeley Repertory Theatre celebrates another two milestones for its highly praised and widely traveled shows. Today **Danny Hoch's** *Taking Over*, a blistering look at gentrification staged by Artistic Director **Tony Taccone**, receives the Los Angeles Critics Circle Award for Best Solo Performance. Tomorrow, Green Day's *American Idiot* starts previews on Broadway. It's a good week for Berkeley Rep on both coasts.

"We've worked hard to earn a reputation as a theatre that is devoted to developing new plays and committed to providing a place where the nation's top artists can do their best work," **Taccone remarks**. "I'm proud of our role in helping birth *American Idiot* and *Taking Over*, and pleased that our shows continue to attract acclaim as they travel the nation."

Danny Hoch is renowned for the landmark show *Jails, Hospitals & Hip-Hop* – which debuted at Berkeley Rep before touring to 45 cities worldwide and becoming a cult film. He repeated this recipe for success with *Taking Over*, which made its world premiere on the Thrust Stage and extended its run in the winter of 2008. In this incisive new show, Hoch captures the indelible characters of his New York neighborhood, where the melting pot is boiling over with ethnic and economic tensions. He transforms effortlessly across the boundaries of race, age, and gender, masterfully depicting a city in transition with comical and compassionate results. After leaving Berkeley Rep, *Taking Over* played in Montreal and Manhattan, as well as enjoying a free tour of Brooklyn, the Bronx, and Queens. Last year, it took over the Kirk Douglas Theatre in LA, where critics and audiences embraced the show. *Taking Over* features designs from **Annie Smart** (sets and costumes), **Alexander V. Nichols** (lights), and **Asa Taccone** and **Drew Campbell** (original music).

The Broadway engagement of *American Idiot*, produced by **Tom Hulce** and **Ira Pittelman** in association with Berkeley Rep, begins previews this Wednesday and officially opens on April 20. 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 taking up residence at the **St. James Theatre** in Manhattan, which is located at 246 West 44<sup>th</sup> 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. Now the band joins with one of theatre's most

(MORE)

RECIPIENT OF THE TONY AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING REGIONAL THEATRE

acclaimed creative teams – Tony Award-winning director of *Spring Awakening* **Michael Mayer**, two-time Tony Award-winning composer and orchestrator **Tom Kitt**, and Olivier Award-winning choreographer **Steven Hoggett** – to bring this explosive, iconic story to the stage.

The cast also includes **Michael Esper** as Will, **Stark Sands** as Tunny, and **Tony Vincent** as St. Jimmy with **Mary Faber** as Heather, **Rebecca Naomi Jones** as Whatsername, and **Christina Sajous** as the Extraordinary Girl. The show features scenic design by Tony-nominee **Christine Jones**, costume design by Baryshnikov fellow **Andrea Lauer**, lighting design by two-time Tony-winner **Kevin Adams**, sound design by Obie Award-winner **Brian Ronan**, as well as video design by **Darrel Maloney**. For more information on *American Idiot*, visit [AmericanIdiotOnBroadway.com](http://AmericanIdiotOnBroadway.com).

**In the last five years, five shows have moved from Berkeley Rep to Broadway:** Sarah Jones' *Bridge & Tunnel* (2006), Stew's *Passing Strange* (2008), Carrie Fisher's *Wishful Drinking* (2009), Sarah Ruhl's *In the Next Room (or the vibrator play)* (2009), and now *American Idiot* (2010). In fact, the Theatre has helped send **13 shows to New York in the last 13 years**. This list of hits also includes *Taking Over* (2008), Ruhl's *Eurydice* (2007), Tony Kushner and Maurice Sendak's *Brundibar* (2006), Naomi Iizuka's *36 Views* (2002), Mary Zimmerman's *Metamorphoses* (2001), Hoch's *Jails, Hospitals & Hip-Hop* (1998), Anne Galjour's *Alligator Tales* (1997), and Philip Kan Gotanda's *Ballad of Yachiyo* (1997).

**See tomorrow's plays today at Berkeley Rep.** The 2009/10 Season continues with even more daring new shows: the world premiere of *Girlfriend* from **Todd Almond** and **Matthew Sweet**, the world premiere of *In the Wake* from **Lisa Kron** and **Leigh Silverman**, and the world premiere of *Concerning Strange Devices from the Distant West* from **Naomi Iizuka** and **Les Waters**. 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](http://berkeleyrep.org).

#### 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. In the last five years alone, the company has helped send five shows to Broadway: *American Idiot*, *Bridge & Tunnel*, *In the Next Room (or the vibrator play)*, *Passing Strange*, and *Wishful Drinking*. Come see tomorrow's plays today at Berkeley Rep.

###

# **AMERICAN IDIOT ON BROADWAY**

## FACT SHEET

WHO: Music by Green Day  
Lyrics by Billie Joe Armstrong  
Book by Billie Joe Armstrong and Michael Mayer  
Directed by Michael Mayer  
Featuring the work of Steven Hoggett (choreographer), Tom Kitt (orchestrations, arrangements, and musical supervision), Christine Jones (sets), Kevin Adams (lights), Andrea Lauer (costumes), Brian Ronan (sound), and Darrel Maloney (video and projections)  
Starring Declan Bennett, Andrew Call, Gerard Canonico, Miguel Cervantes, Michael Esper, Mary Faber, John Gallagher, Jr, Joshua Henry, Van Hughes, Brian Charles Johnson, Rebecca Naomi Jones, Joshua Kobak, Lorin Latarro, Omar Lopez-Cepero, Chase Peacock, Christina Sajous, Stark Sands, Theo Stockman, Ben Thompson, Alysha Umphress, Aspen Vincent, Tony Vincent, and Libby Winters

WHAT: *American Idiot*, a rocking new show that unites the searing songs of Green Day with the director of *Spring Awakening*

WHERE: St. James Theatre, 246 West 44<sup>th</sup> St @ 8<sup>th</sup> Ave, New York, NY 10019

WHEN: Begins previews on March 24, 2010 / Opens on April 20, 2010

HOW MUCH: \$32 and up

PHOTOS: <http://www.berkeleyrep.org/press/photos-09ai.asp>

TIX & INFO: [AmericanIdiotOnBroadway.com](http://AmericanIdiotOnBroadway.com)

###