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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **THE ROMANCE CONTINUES: BERKELEY REP EXTENDS *GIRLFRIEND***

**Sweet new musical gets five more dates – now playing through May 16!**

APRIL 23, 2010 – Audiences and critics have a huge crush on *Girlfriend*, so the romance continues. Today even as its production of *American Idiot* rocks Broadway, the Tony Award-winning Berkeley Repertory Theatre announced a one-week extension for its latest musical. Featuring music and lyrics by **Matthew Sweet** and a book by **Todd Almond**, this delightful world premiere continues its run on Berkeley Rep's intimate Thrust Stage. Directed by Obie Award-winner **Les Waters**, *Girlfriend* gets five more dates and goes steady through Sunday, May 16.

The critics are in love with Berkeley Rep's *Girlfriend*:

- **"Beguiling ...** It's a very different, much more intimate musical than the Rep's previous two, Stew's dynamic, art-rock *Passing Strange* and the extra-high-powered *American Idiot*, both of which moved to Broadway. Author, vocal arranger and co-orchestrator Todd Almond uses the melodic rock ballads and mood of Sweet's 1991 album, *Girlfriend*, to craft a gentle, heartfelt, two-character chamber musical that celebrates the pain and joy of first love... The music, two attractive actors, and music director, keyboard player and vocalist Julie Wolf's electrifying four-woman band make it an exhilarating joy." – *San Francisco Chronicle*
- **"Sweet and simple...**This gay teen romance, which is having its world premiere at Berkeley Rep, is quaint in every sense – appealingly old fashioned, unusual in a pleasing way and just plain incongruous, the latter pertaining more to the work's form than subject matter. To call this two-hander a show is almost to misrepresent its uncaffeinated charms... The ultimate impact of *Girlfriend* reminded me of a recent channel surfing experience, in which I happened to catch Justin's first kiss with a boy on the ABC series *Ugly Betty*. Any appraising thoughts about the tenderly handled scene were quickly eclipsed by gratitude that some young person out there watching might understand that he's all right and not alone." – *Los Angeles Times*
- **"Irresistible...** Berkeley Rep is raising the bar on hip new musicals again with the world premiere of *Girlfriend*, which revolves around the '90s power-pop hits of Matthew Sweet. Thoughtfully directed by Les Waters, *Girlfriend* is actually a simple, old-fashioned love story that happens to be about two boys falling for each other in the heartland. It's a delicate gem of a musical that's genuinely, well, sweet... At its most powerful, *Girlfriend* takes you back to the time in your life when your favorite pop songs took on an almost-religious significance. It's as if you turned up the dial on your own redemption." – *San Jose Mercury News / Bay Area News Group*
- **"*Girlfriend*, the world premiere at Berkeley Repertory Theatre, represents an extraordinary feat in modern theater:** This musical based on 1990s pop rocker Matthew Sweet's cult-classic album of the same name is wholeheartedly sweet... Director Les Waters and choreographer-storyteller Joe Goode deftly focus both on touching details and the universal experience of young love, making *Girlfriend* a rare treat – authentic, intimate and romantic, and, as the 'I've Been Waiting' lyric goes, 'perfect in so many ways.'" – *San Francisco Examiner*

(MORE)

RECIPIENT OF THE TONY AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING REGIONAL THEATRE

## BERKELEY REP EXTENDS *GIRLFRIEND* / 2 OF 2

The **new schedule** – including special 5 PM and 9 PM performances on Saturday 5/15 – is as follows:

- Fri 4/23 @ 8 PM
- Sat 4/24 @ 2 PM & 8 PM
- Sun 4/25 @ 2 PM & 7 PM
- Tue 4/27 @ 8 PM
- Wed 4/28 @ 7 PM
- Thu 4/29 @ 8 PM
- Fri 4/30 @ 8 PM
- Sat 5/1 @ 2 PM & 8 PM
- Sun 5/2 @ 2 PM & 7 PM
- Tue 5/4 @ 8 PM
- Wed 5/5 @ 7 PM
- Thu 5/6 @ 8 PM
- Fri 5/7 @ 8 PM
- Sat 5/8 @ 2 PM & 8 PM
- Sun 5/9 @ 2 PM & 7 PM
- Thu 5/13 @ 8 PM
- Fri 5/14 @ 8 PM
- Sat 5/15 @ 5 PM & 9 PM
- Sun 5/16 @ 7 PM

Romance unfolds in a new musical wound around the love songs of the landmark album ***Girlfriend***. Meeting in homeroom. Holding hands. Cheering from the stands. That awkward first kiss. In the world premiere of *Girlfriend* at Berkeley Rep, boy meets boy. It's an eternal story turned upside down, a dual-Romeo duet that's innocent – and Sweet. "*Girlfriend* is the breathless testimony of a fool for love," raves *Rolling Stone*, "a rock 'n' roll valentine that delivers subtle wisdom with an exhilarating kick." Fall in love with the boy next door at *Girlfriend*.

The show stars two talented young actors, **Ryder Bach** and **Jason Hite**, and features a live band of top local musicians: **Shelley Doty** (lead guitar), **Jean DuSablón** (bass), **ieela Grant** (drums), and **Julie Wolf** (music director, rhythm guitar, and keyboards). The design team includes **Joe Goode** (choreography), **David Zinn** (sets and costumes), **Japhy Weideman** (lights), and **Jake Rodriguez** (sound). The executive producer of *Girlfriend* is the Strauch Kulhanjian Family, the production sponsor is the Kenneth Rainin Foundation, and the season sponsors for Berkeley Rep's 41<sup>st</sup> year of fearless theatre are BART and Wells Fargo

Make a date with Berkeley Rep. **Tickets to *Girlfriend* start at only \$33** so that more people can experience the best theatre in the Bay Area. Additional savings are available for groups, seniors, students, and anyone under 30 years of age – meaning **discounted seats** can be obtained for as little as \$13.50. Berkeley Rep's Thrust Stage is located at 2025 Addison Street, near bus lines, bike routes, and parking lots – and only half a block from BART. For tickets or information, 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.

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**GIRLFRIEND**  
FACT SHEET

**WHO:** Book by Todd Almond  
 Music and lyrics by Matthew Sweet  
 Choreography by Joe Goode  
 Directed by Les Waters  
 Designed by David Zinn (sets and costumes), Japhy Weideman (lights), and Jake Rodriguez (sound)  
 Starring Ryder Bach (Will) and Jason Hite (Mike)  
 Featuring a live band with Shelley Doty (lead guitar), Jean DuSablón (bass), iella Grant (drums), and Julie Wolf (music director, rhythm guitar, and keyboards)

**WHAT:** *Girlfriend*, a romantic new musical wound around love songs from the landmark album

**WHERE:** Berkeley Repertory Theatre  
 Thrust Stage, 2025 Addison Street @ Shattuck, Berkeley, CA 94704

**WHEN:** **Now playing through Sunday, May 16!**

- Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays @ 8:00 PM
- Wednesdays @ 7:00 PM
- Saturdays @ 2:00 PM & 8:00 PM
- Sundays @ 2:00 PM & 7:00 PM
- Special schedule for Saturday 5/15 with performances at 5 PM & 9 PM
- No 2 PM show on Saturday 5/15 or Sunday 5/16
- No evening performance on Tuesday 5/11 or Wednesday 5/12

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					9 APR 8:00	10 8:00
11 7:00	12	13 8:00	14 8:00	15 8:00	16 8:00	17 2/8:00
18 2/7:00	19	20 8:00	21 7:00	22 8:00	23 8:00	24 2/8:00
25 2/7:00	26	27 8:00	28 7:00	29 8:00	30 8:00	1 MAY 2/8:00
2 2/7:00	3	4 8:00	5 7:00	6 8:00	7 8:00	8 2/8:00
9 2/7:00	10	11	12	13 8:00	14 8:00	15 5/9
16 7:00						

[P] PREVIEW  
 [TN] TEEN NIGHT  
 [O] OPENING NIGHT  
 [L] LGBT NIGHT/OUT  
 [30] 30 BELOW  
 [D] POST-SHOW DISCUSSION  
 [T] TASTING  
 [DC] DOCENT PRESENTATIONS EVERY TUE & THU 7PM

**Special Events:**

Pre-show docent talks: Tuesdays 4/27 & 5/4 and Thursdays 4/29 & 5/6 @ 7:00 PM  
Post-play discussions: Friday 4/23 and Tuesday 4/27 @ 8:00 PM  
Free tastings: Friday 4/30 (Artesa) @ 7:00 PM and Sunday 5/2 (Artesa) @ 6:00 PM

**HOW MUCH: \$16.50 - \$71**

	Section B	Section A	Premium
Tue 8 PM / Wed 7 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-10gf.asp>

**TIX & INFO:** (510) 647-2949 – [berkeleyrep.org](http://berkeleyrep.org) – (888) 4-BRT-Tix (toll-free)