

**For photos, interviews, etc. contact:**  
Terence Keane, Director of Public Relations  
510.647.2917, [tkeane@berkeleyrep.org](mailto:tkeane@berkeleyrep.org)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## BERKELEY REP'S *VIBRATOR PLAY* WINS GLICKMAN AWARD

### Script commissioned from Sarah Ruhl honored as best new play in the Bay Area

JANUARY 29, 2010 – Berkeley Repertory Theatre is pleased to announce another success for its commissioning program: *In the Next Room (or the vibrator play)*, an unconventional comedy by **Sarah Ruhl** which had its world premiere in Berkeley before graduating to Broadway, has been selected as the winner of the annual Will Glickman Award. Chosen by a panel of top Bay Area theatre critics, this honor is bestowed annually on the author of the best play to have its world premiere in the Bay Area.

"I'm very honored," **Ruhl remarked**. "And I'm thrilled to have a home like Berkeley Rep in the Bay Area. I was extremely proud of *In the Next Room's* premiere."

"I'm pleased that Sarah and I had another opportunity to collaborate, and delighted that her scripts continue to receive the recognition they so richly deserve," added Associate Artistic Director **Les Waters**, who staged the show in Berkeley and on Broadway. "I've devoted my career to developing and directing new plays, so I'm particularly proud of *In the Next Room* and the other work coming out of Berkeley Rep's commissioning program."

The **Will Glickman Award** has been given annually since 1984. Created to honor playwright and screenwriter Will Glickman, the goal of the award is to encourage new plays and their production as invaluable investments in American theatre. Theatre Bay Area, the nation's largest regional theatre service organization, has administered the award since 2004.

**Berkeley Rep debuted three previous winners:** *Hurricane / Mauvais Temps* by Anne Galjour; *The People's Temple* by Leigh Fondakowski with Greg Pierotti, Stephen Wangh, and Margo Hall; and *Yankee Dawg You Die* by Philip Kan Gotanda. Before becoming artistic director of Berkeley Rep, Tony Taccone also worked on another winning script at the Eureka Theatre: Tony Kushner's legendary *Angels in America: Millennium Approaches*. Other playwrights who have been honored include Liz Duffy Adams, Adam Bock, John Fisher, Brian Freeman, Doug Holsclaw, Dan Hoyle, Denis Johnson, Cherrie Moraga, Brighde Mullins, Peter Sinn Nachtrieb, Octavio Solis, Charlie Varon, and Erin Cressida Wilson.

The **selection committee** for this year's award included the following prominent local journalists: Robert Avila, *SF Bay Guardian*; Karen D'Souza, *San Jose Mercury News*; Robert Hurwitt, *San Francisco Chronicle*; Sam Hurwitt, *Marin Independent Journal*; and Chloe Veltman, *New York Times*.

In 2007, Sarah Ruhl and Les Waters 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. Development of the script was supported by the Bernard Osher New Play

(MORE)

RECIPIENT OF THE TONY AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING REGIONAL THEATRE

## BERKELEY REP'S *VIBRATOR PLAY* WINS GLICKMAN AWARD / 2 OF 2

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.”

Known for its core values of innovation and excellence, as well as its educated and adventurous audience, Berkeley Rep provides a safe haven for emerging and established artists to explore new ideas. In 1968, during its inaugural season, the Theatre staged its first premiere – and it has presented **53 world premieres, 39 West Coast premieres, and four American premieres** in its history. Writers currently under commission include David Adjmi, Glen Berger, Marcus Gardley, Rinne Groff, Jordan Harrison, Dan LeFranc, Tarell McCraney, Dominic Orlando, and Stew and Heidi Rodewald. Through important new voices such as these, Berkeley Rep will continue to introduce inventive, intelligent, and relevant new material into the repertoire of American theatre.

**In the last five years alone, the company has helped send five shows to Broadway:** *American Idiot*, *Bridge & Tunnel*, *In the Next Room*, *Passing Strange*, and *Wishful Drinking*. Recently, shows developed at Berkeley Rep have also popped up on the bestseller list (*Wishful Drinking*), the silver screen (*Passing Strange*), and national television (*Passing Strange*) – and the cast of *American Idiot* released a single with Green Day and will appear on the Grammy Awards this Sunday!

**See tomorrow’s plays today at Berkeley Rep.** The current season continues with even more daring new shows: the world premiere of *Girlfriend* from Todd Almond and Matthew Sweet, the world premiere of *The Wake* from Lisa Kron and Leigh Silverman, the world premiere of *Concerning Strange Devices from the Distant West* from Naomi Iizuka and Les Waters, and the local debut of *Coming Home* from Athol Fugard and Gordon Edelstein. 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

Born in a storefront, Berkeley Rep has moved to the forefront of American theatre. In four decades, four million people have enjoyed more than 300 shows at Berkeley Rep, including 53 world premieres. Its vital and versatile facility – which includes the 400-seat Thrust Stage, the 600-seat Roda Theatre, and the Berkeley Rep School of Theatre – is the linchpin of a bustling arts district that has helped revitalize downtown Berkeley. In recognition of its place on the national stage, Berkeley Rep was honored with the Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre in 1997. A not-for-profit organization, 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.

###