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BERKELEY REP PRESENTS THE WEST COAST PREMIERE OF *TINY KUSHNER*

Tony Kushner and Tony Taccone reunite for a sparkling series of short scripts

AUGUST 24, 2009 – This October, it's time for *Tiny Kushner*, a series of short scripts by the singular **Tony Kushner**. The legendary playwright returns to Berkeley Repertory Theatre to team up with Artistic Director **Tony Taccone**, who also staged *Angels in America*, *Brundibar*, *Homebody/Kabul*, and *Slavs!* Performed on Berkeley Rep's intimate Thrust Stage, this West Coast premiere begins previews on **October 16**, opens **October 21**, and closes **November 29**. The show is produced in association with the Guthrie Theater, where it debuted in May. The executive producer of the local run is the Strauch Kulhanjian Family, and the season sponsors for Berkeley Rep's 41st year of fearless theatre are BART and Wells Fargo.

"For people who think I'm an unbearably long-winded playwright, *Tiny Kushner* is proof that I can be unbearable in short plays as well!" **Kushner remarks**. "It's always a great moment for me when I have a play opening at Berkeley Rep. It means I get to spend time among the gorgeous and brilliant people of the Bay Area, torturing myself with questions about why I don't move there. And I get to work again with my great friend Tiny Taccone, oops I mean Tony Taccone – who isn't tiny in the least; his talent is gigantic! Though in fact he is considerably shorter than me."

Taccone comments, "The coolest thing about *Tiny Kushner* is its endless sense of surprise and delight: five little plays that show off the playwright's seemingly endless gifts with an economy that puts no pressure on the bladder. This is a man who can deliver words like food for every part of our starving bodies. And he is funny to boot. Welcome back, Tony Kushner. It's been too long."

In *Tiny Kushner*, the renowned playwright brings his brilliance and humor to bear in a sparkling string of one-act plays. And his gilded language is guided, as always, by an unwavering moral compass. Travel to the moon – and to the afterlife – with Laura Bush, Nixon's analyst, the queen of Albania, and a host of real-life tax evaders, all adrift in an increasingly fragile world. "A slam-bang series of five plays providing kaleidoscopic windows into the recesses of the artist's fertile mind... *Tiny Kushner* exists in its own imaginative realm, engaged in the process of working out the American experience without approval or condemnation," *Variety* avers. Don't miss these gems from a theatrical giant. Don't miss the West Coast premiere of *Tiny Kushner*.

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RECIPIENT OF THE TONY AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING REGIONAL THEATRE

A tale of two Tonys: Kushner and Taccone first collaborated on *A Bright Room Called Day* at the Eureka Theatre in 1987. Then Taccone commissioned the playwright's masterpiece, *Angels in America*, and co-directed its world premiere at the Mark Taper Forum in 1992. Berkeley Rep has presented five previous works by Kushner. Taccone staged *Slavs!* in 1996, *Homebody/Kabul* in 2002, and *Brundibar* in 2005, which featured designs by Maurice Sendak. The Theatre also produced *The Illusion* in 1991 and *Hydriotaphia* in 1998. Now it's time to get *Tiny*.

Tony Kushner is one of the most important and thought-provoking voices in American theatre. His many honors include a Pulitzer Prize, two Tony Awards, three Obie Awards, an Oscar nomination, an Emmy Award, and a Golden Globe. His plays include *Angels in America*, *A Bright Room Called Day*, *Homebody/Kabul*, *Hydriotaphia*, *The Intelligent Homosexual's Guide to Capitalism and Socialism with a Key to the Scriptures*, and *Slavs!* He also wrote the book and lyrics for *Caroline, or Change*, a musical composed by Jeanine Tesori. Kushner has translated and adapted the libretto for the children's opera *Brundibar* by Hans Krása, *The Dybbuk* by S.Y. Ansky, *The Illusion* by Pierre Corneille, and two scripts by Bertolt Brecht: *The Good Person of Sezuam* and *Mother Courage and her Children*. He penned screenplays for Mike Nichols' film of *Angels in America* and Steven Spielberg's *Munich*, and is currently working on a film about Abraham Lincoln. Kushner's books include *Brundibar*, *The Art of Maurice Sendak: 1980 to the Present*, and *Wrestling With Zion: Progressive Jewish-American Responses to the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*, co-edited with Alisa Solomon. He lives in Manhattan with his husband, Mark Harris, and is the subject of *Wrestling with Angels*, a documentary made by Oscar-winning filmmaker Freida Lee Mock.

Tony Taccone is beginning his 13th year as artistic director of Berkeley Rep, where he has staged more than 35 shows – including world premieres by Culture Clash, Rinde Eckert, David Edgar, Danny Hoch, Geoff Hoyle, Quincy Long, and Itamar Moses. Taccone made his Broadway debut with *Bridge & Tunnel*, which was universally lauded by the critics and won a Tony Award for its star, Sarah Jones. This fall he returns to Broadway to direct Carrie Fisher's *Wishful Drinking*, which set box-office records at Berkeley Rep before enjoying a six-city national tour. In 2004, his premiere of *Continental Divide* transferred to the Barbican in London after playing the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Berkeley Rep, La Jolla Playhouse, and England's Birmingham Rep. Taccone often works in Ashland, where he has also directed *Coriolanus*, *Othello*, *Pentecost*, and the American premiere of Seamus Heaney's *The Cure at Troy*. His other regional credits

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include Actors Theatre of Louisville, Arena Stage, Arizona Repertory Theatre, Center Theatre Group, the Guthrie, Hartford Stage, the Huntington Theatre Company, The Public Theater, San Jose Repertory Theatre, and Seattle Repertory Theatre, as well as San Francisco's Eureka Theatre where he served six years as artistic director before coming to Berkeley.

There are no *Tiny* parts in this show: Taccone's **cast** features four actors known for their enormous talent. **J.C. Cutler** has performed in more than 25 productions at the Guthrie. During three seasons with the Children's Theatre Company (CTC), he appeared in *Rembrandt Takes a Walk* in both Minneapolis and Moscow. His other credits include Cricket Theatre, Florida Stage, Illusion Theater, Mixed Blood Theatre Company, Park Square Theatre, The Public, and the Shakespeare Theatre Company. **Kate Eifrig** has worked with Eye of the Storm Theatre, the Fifty Foot Penguin Theater, the Jungle Theater, the Guthrie, Ordway Center, the Outward Spiral Theatre Company, Park Square Theatre, and Ten Thousand Things Theater Company. Her film work includes *Grown Men* and *Twin Cities*. **Jim Lichtscheidl** last appeared at Berkeley Rep with Theatre de la Jeune Lune in *The Miser*. He has also performed with 15 Head, Brave New Workshop, Frank Theatre, the Guthrie, HBO Comedy Showcase, the Jungle Theater, Loring Playhouse, Open Eye Figure Theatre, Park Square Theatre, Ten Thousand Things Theater, Theater Latté Da, and Thirst Theater. **Valeri Mudék** has been seen at the Guthrie in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, with Hudson Valley Shakespeare in *As You Like It* and *Richard III*, with the Minnesota Fringe Festival in *Corleone*, and with Shakespeare on the Cape in *Cloud 9*.

Five accomplished **designers** also made big contributions to *Tiny Kushner*. **Annie Smart** (scenic design) has created sets and costumes for numerous theatres throughout the United States and her native England. Her credits include 13 previous shows at Berkeley Rep: *Big Love*, *Fêtes de la Nuit*, *Finn in the Underworld*, *Heartbreak House*, *Honour*, *In the Next Room (or the vibrator play)*, *Irma Vep*, *Passing Strange*, *Suddenly Last Summer*, *Taking Over*, *To The Lighthouse*, *Yellowjackets*, and *Yellowman*. **Anita Yavich** (costume design) designed Berkeley Rep's productions of *Civil Sex* and *The Oresteia*. She received an Obie Award for Sustained Excellence for her contributions to off-Broadway shows such as *Coraline*, *Coriolanus*, *Iphigenia 2.0*, *Kit Marlowe*, *Measure for Pleasure*, *New Jerusalem*, *The Orphan of Zhao*, *Pericles*, *Svejk*, *The Winter's Tale*, and *Wooden Brecks*. She also designed the Broadway production of *Anna in the Tropics*. **Alexander V. Nichols** (lighting and video design) has designed scenery, costumes,

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lights, and projections for dance and theatre companies across America, including 16 previous shows at Berkeley Rep: *Civil Sex*, *Continental Divide*, *Culture Clash in AmeriCCa*, *Fêtes de la Nuit*, *The Guys*, *Honour*, *The Lieutenant of Inishmore*, *The Life of Galileo*, *Menocchio*, *Mother Courage*, *Ravenshead*, *Rhinoceros*, *Surface Transit*, *Taking Over*, *Yellowjackets*, and *Zorro in Hell*. **Victor Zupanc** (sound design) has worked on more than 250 productions at noted institutions across America such as The Acting Company, the Brooklyn Academy of Music, CTC (where he has served as music director and composer since 1989), the Guthrie, the Jungle Theater, the Kennedy Center, La Jolla Playhouse, Mixed Blood, the New Victory Theater, Playwrights Horizons, and San Diego Repertory Theatre. **Marcela Lorca** (movement director) has worked with BAM, the Goodman Theater, the Guthrie, Grupo del Centro, Jonathan Stone's Dinner, The Juilliard School, Long Wharf Theatre, the Missouri Repertory Theatre, Mixed Blood, National Opera of the Dominican Republic, New York University, OSF, and the Shakespeare Theatre Company. The stage manager for this production is **Kimberly Mark Webb**.

Theatregoers can turn *Tiny Kushner* into massive fun with **31 special events** during the run:

- *Low-cost previews* take place on Friday, October 16; Saturday, October 17; Sunday, October 18; and Tuesday, October 20.
- *Teen Night* begins at 6:30 PM on Friday, October 16 and includes dinner, a behind-the-scenes discussion with a member of the artistic team, and a performance of *Tiny Kushner*. Tickets are only \$10 for high-school students. For details, call (510) 647-2972 or e-mail school@berkeleyrep.org.
- *Opening night* festivities are held on Wednesday, October 21, including a pre-show dinner for donors at the Hotel Shattuck Plaza and a post-show party for the audience catered by Tomatina and Raymond Vineyards.
- Free 30-minute *docent presentations* about the show take place at 7:00 PM on the following Tuesday and Thursday evenings: October 20, October 22, October 27, October 29, November 3, November 5, November 10, November 12, November 17, November 19, and November 24.
- *Post-play discussions* moderated by theatre professionals follow the 8:00 PM shows on Thursday, November 5; Tuesday, November 10; and Friday, November 20.

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- And, on select evenings, patrons can whet their palates for the play with *free tastings* from these culinary artisans one hour before curtain: Pey-Marin Vineyards on Friday, October 23; Waugh Cellars on Saturday, October 24; Dr. Kracker on Sunday, October 25 and Sunday, November 1; Meridian Restaurant on Friday, November 6; Bullion Creek Vineyards on Saturday, November 7; Alderbrook Winery on Sunday, November 8 and Sunday, November 15; Tomatina Restaurant on Friday, November 13; Almare Gelato on Friday, November 20; and Bravante Vineyards on Saturday, November 21.

Tiny Kushner is part of a big, big season that includes six other new shows: the world premiere of *American Idiot* from **Green Day** and **Michael Mayer**, the world premiere of *Girlfriend* from **Todd Almond** and **Matthew Sweet**, the world premiere of *Concerning Strange Devices from the Distant West* from **Naomi Iizuka** and **Les Waters**, the world premiere of a new play from **Lisa Kron** and **Leigh Silverman**, and local debuts for **Athol Fugard's** *Coming Home* and *Aurélia's Oratorio*.

Theatre-lovers can guarantee their seats for these shows by **subscribing to Berkeley Rep**. Choose three or more plays and get the best seats at the tiniest price. In addition to gigantic savings, subscribers receive valuable benefits such as the right to reschedule for free, discounts when purchasing tickets for friends, and the opportunity to secure seats before the general public for special events like *American Idiot*. Berkeley Rep also offers generous discounts for senior citizens, theatregoers under 30, and employees of preschools, elementary schools, and secondary schools. **Subscriptions begin as low as \$84** – and subscribers save up to 29% on every ticket. Because of last season's string of hits, subscriptions to Berkeley Rep are selling fast. For the best seats, order now!

Individual **tickets start at the teeny price of \$27** to ensure 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. These new prices make Berkeley Rep more affordable to people in the community who are just starting school, starting careers, and starting families – because lower prices are now available for every performance.

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So give yourself a *Tiny* treat at Berkeley Rep! The 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.

ABOUT BERKELEY REP

Born in a storefront, Berkeley Rep has moved to the forefront of American theatre – and is still telling unforgettable stories. In four decades, four million people have enjoyed more than 300 shows at Berkeley Rep, including 51 world premieres. In the last four years alone, Berkeley Rep has helped send four shows to Broadway: *Bridge & Tunnel*, *In the Next Room (or the vibrator play)*, *Passing Strange*, and *Wishful Drinking*. Founded in 1968, the Theatre quickly earned respect for presenting the finest plays with top-flight actors. In 1980, with the support of the local community, Berkeley Rep built the 400-seat Thrust Stage where its reputation steadily grew over the next two decades. It gained renown for an adventurous combination of work, presenting important new dramatic voices alongside refreshing adaptations of seldom-seen classics. In recognition of its place on the national stage, Berkeley Rep was honored with the Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre in 1997. The company celebrated by unveiling a 600-seat proscenium stage in 2001, the state-of-the-art Roda Theatre. It also opened the Berkeley Rep School of Theatre, a permanent home for its long tradition of outreach and education programs. The addition of these two buildings transformed a single stage into a vital and versatile performing arts complex, the linchpin of a bustling downtown arts district which has helped revitalize Berkeley. 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.

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TINY KUSHNER
FACT SHEET

WHO: Written by Tony Kushner
 Directed by Tony Taccone
 Designed by Annie Smart (sets), Anita Yavich (costumes), Alexander V. Nichols (lights and video), Victor Zupanc (sound), and Marcela Lorca (movement)
 Starring J.C. Cutler, Kate Eifrig, Jim Lichtscheidl, and Valeri Mudek

WHAT: The West Coast premiere of *Tiny Kushner*, a series of short scripts by Tony Kushner

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

WHEN: **October 16 – November 29, 2009**

- Tuesdays and Fridays @ 8:00 PM
- Wednesdays @ 7:00 PM
- Thursdays and Saturdays @ 2:00 PM & 8:00 PM
- Sundays @ 2:00 PM & 7:00 PM
- No performance on Thanksgiving (Thursday 11/26)
- No matinees during previews or on 10/22, 10/31, 11/5, 11/14, or 11/19
- Bonus matinee at 2 PM on Friday 11/27

SUN	MON	TUE ■	WED	THU ■	FRI	SAT
					16 OCT 8 2/8 12	17 8 2/8
18 7 2/8	19	20 8 2/8	21 8 2/8	22 8	23 8 2/8	24 2/8 12
25 2/7 12	26	27 8	28 7	29 2/8	30 8 2/8	31 8 2/8
1 NOV 2/7 12	2	3 8	4 7	5 8 2/8	6 8 2/8	7 2/8 12
8 2/7 12	9	10 8 2/8	11 7	12 2/8	13 8 2/8	14 8 2/8
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22 2/7 12	23	24 8	25 7	26	27 2/8	28 2/8
29 2/7						

Special Events:

Low-cost previews: Friday 10/16, Saturday 10/17 & Tuesday 10/20 @ 8:00 PM and Sunday 10/18 @ 7:00 PM

Teen night: Friday 10/16 @ 6:30 PM

Opening night: Wednesday 10/21 @ 8:00 PM

Pre-show docent talks: Tuesdays 10/20, 10/27, 11/3, 11/10, 11/17 & 11/24 and Thursdays 10/22, 10/29, 11/5, 11/12 & 11/19 @ 7:00 PM

Post-play discussions: Thursday 11/5, Tuesday 11/10, and Friday 11/20 @ 8:00 PM

Free tastings: Fridays 10/23 (Pey-Marin Vineyards), 11/6 (Meridian Restaurant), 11/13 (Tomatina Restaurant) & 11/20 (Almare Gelato) @ 7:00 PM; Saturdays 10/24 (Vaugh Cellars), 11/7 (Bullion Creek Vineyards) & 11/21 (Bravante Vineyards) @ 7:00 PM; and Sundays 10/25 (Dr. Kracker), 11/1 (Dr. Kracker), 11/8 (Alderbrook Winery) & 11/15 (Alderbrook Winery) @ 6:00 PM

■ PREVIEW
 ■ TEEN NIGHT
 ■ OPENING NIGHT
 ■ POST-SHOW DISCUSSION
 ■ TASTING
 ■ DOCENT PRESENTATIONS EVERY TUE & THU 7PM

HOW MUCH: \$16 - \$86

	Section B	Section A	Premium
Previews	\$27	\$34	\$39
Tue 8 PM / Wed 7 PM / Thu 2 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-09tk.asp>

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