

OCTOBER 27, 2009

NY TIMES REVIEW OF *TINY KUSHNER* DECLARES “BERKELEY REP IS ON FIRE”

Hello again-

I'm writing to share some good news: for the third time this month, one of our shows has earned a great review in the *New York Times*. On October 5, Ben Brantley wrote a [rave review](#) for the Broadway production of Carrie Fisher's *Wishful Drinking*, which was staged by Artistic Director Tony Taccone. On October 10, Charles Isherwood published a [rocking review](#) for Green Day's *American Idiot*, our world premiere directed by Michael Mayer. Then, this past Sunday, Bruce Weber penned a [big review](#) of *Tiny Kushner* in the new Bay Area section now appearing in West Coast editions of the *Times*.

Here's what he had to say about the show, and about our recent success. In a metaphor appropriate for October, he compares us to a homerun hitter on a hot streak:

“A thinking person's comedy... the West Coast premiere of *Tiny Kushner* took place on Wednesday at **Berkeley Repertory Theatre, where so much of the nation's talked-about dramatic product seems to come from these days**, and the double pedigree – playwright and theater – is attention-getting...”

“Individually and even collectively, the five entries here are snacks in the Kushner canon. However, that doesn't make them nonnourishing or the evening unsatisfying; Mr. Kushner's fierce liberal conscience (he's Arthur Miller's heir, in that regard), colossally fanciful imagination and virtuosic gift for composing verbal arias are too much in evidence for that...”

“They have been directed with wry precision by Mr. Kushner's longtime collaborator, Tony Taccone, the Berkeley Rep's artistic director; the four actors all handle Mr. Kushner's serious humor with engaging aplomb, but you never lose the sense that it's the playwright who is performing...”

“*Tiny Kushner* might well find a wide audience. Given Berkeley Rep's recent history, that wouldn't be a surprise. **Like ballplayers, theaters sometimes get hot, rapping out hits with unlikely regularity, and the Rep, 41 this year, is on fire.** Since 2006, seven shows that originated or were revised there have moved to New York (and elsewhere), including *Wishful Drinking*, Carrie Fisher's solo show now on Broadway, and Sarah Ruhl's *In the Next Room (or the vibrator play)*, which began Broadway previews on Thursday. *American Idiot*, the adaptation of Green Day's wildly popular album, is currently filling Berkeley Rep's larger house, the Roda Theatre, with sudden teenage converts to musical theater, and it seems inevitably bound for other destinations.”

Hmm... This sounds like a trend. Earlier this month, the *San Francisco Chronicle* called us “**one of Broadway's most important farm teams.**” All I can say is thank you to everyone who comes down to our ballpark in Berkeley on a regular basis. Our success is due to your long-term support.

All the best,
Terence

For photos of *Tiny Kushner*: <http://www.berkeleyrep.org/press/photos-09tk.asp>

For a release on the show:
http://www.berkeleyrep.org/press/pr/0910/Berkeley_Rep_Tiny_Kushner.pdf

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