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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TACCONE & MOSCONE TEAM UP FOR *GHOST LIGHT* AT BERKELEY REP

World-premiere production delivers fictional tale based on assassination of Mayor Moscone

DECEMBER 1, 2011 – Berkeley Repertory Theatre begins the New Year with the world-premiere production of *Ghost Light*, a new play conceived and developed by Jonathan Moscone and Tony Taccone. **Written by Tony Taccone and directed by Jonathan Moscone**, this haunting show conjures an imaginary world based on the historic assassination of Mayor George Moscone, the director's father. Presented on the intimate Thrust Stage, *Ghost Light* begins previews on **January 6**, opens on **January 11**, and runs through **February 19**.

Ghost Light is a co-production with the Oregon Shakespeare Festival. The executive producers of the local run are Shirley D. and Philip D. Schild and the Strauch Kulhanjian Family; the National Endowment for the Arts serves as production sponsor. For the seventh straight year, BART and Wells Fargo are official sponsors of Berkeley Rep's season. The season producers are Wayne Jordan and Quinn Delaney, Marjorie Randolph, and Jack and Betty Schafer.

Taccone comments: "It's a real thrill and an honor to have collaborated with so many great people on this project, and to have an opportunity as a writer to imagine a fictional tale that is rooted in actual history. Jon has been an inspiration. He was utterly transparent and willing to explore every facet of his experience, yet he allowed me the freedom to write my own play. We look forward to sharing it with audiences in the Bay Area."

"For years I never thought I had the permission to investigate the loss of my dad as both father and political figure through my art," **Moscone remarks**. "Bill Rauch at OSF convinced me otherwise. And through this deep collaboration with Tony, I have brought my history firmly into my work, and used my work to meditate on my story, all of which has articulated a new identity for me as a theatre maker. I am so grateful to Bill, Tony, and our extraordinary company of actors and designers for contributing to a play that I hope resonates with people who miss George, and with people who didn't even know him, but seek a way to remember those whom they have lost in their own lives."

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Ghost Light is a poetic collage of fiction and memory. When Jon was a boy, his father was shot – and suddenly their lives were part of history. Years later, when staging a production of *Hamlet*, the son must confront his buried feelings about a crime that shocked the nation. The ghost of the king stalks the battlements of a boy's mind – and speaks to all of us about love and loss.

“Moscone and Taccone have taken pains to note that **the play is fiction, not docudrama**. Certainly the character of Jon seems to combine Taccone's lacerating wit and Moscone's big-heartedness. But it's the weight of history that gives this play its gravitas, from a son's anger that his father's memory has been eclipsed by the legacy of Harvey Milk to the courage of an artist seeking solace in the Bard... This piece **fuses the intimate and the epic with riveting results**,” remarks Karen D'Souza in the *Mercury News*. “*Ghost Light* may mean most to those of us who called San Francisco home on that dark day in 1978, when Moscone and Milk were killed. But Jon's witty, turbulent and compelling quest to make peace with a lost father **resonates universally**, too,” asserts Misha Berson in the *Seattle Times*. “Taccone's snappy, fierce and sometimes hilariously bitchy dialogue is reminiscent of Tony Kushner's plays.” “Deeply moving,” adds Dan Bacalzo of **TheaterMania**. “There's a good balance between humor and drama, with certain moments packing such a powerful punch that they are likely to reduce audience members to tears.”

Tony Taccone (playwright) is 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, Itamar Moses, and Lemony Snicket. Taccone took two shows from Berkeley Rep to Broadway: Sarah Jones' Tony Award-winning *Bridge & Tunnel* and Carrie Fisher's *Wishful Drinking*. He commissioned Tony Kushner's *Angels in America*, co-directed its world premiere, and has collaborated with Kushner on seven projects including *Brundibar* and *Tiny Kushner*. Two of Taccone's recent shows transferred to London: *Continental Divide* played the Barbican in 2004, and *Tiny Kushner* played the Tricycle Theatre in 2010. Known as a director, Taccone recently turned his hand to playwriting, and this is one of two scripts he penned to see its premiere in the past year.

Jonathan Moscone (director) just completed his 11th season as artistic director of California Shakespeare Theater. In 2010, he directed the world premiere of *John Steinbeck's The Pastures*

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of *Heaven* by Octavio Solis, which was a recipient of the inaugural NEA New Play Development Award. His other Cal Shakes credits include *Candida*, *Happy Days*, *The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby*, *The Seagull*, and *Twelfth Night*. He is the first recipient of the Zelda Fichandler Award from the Stage Directors and Choreographers Foundation for “transforming the American theatre through his unique and creative work.” Moscone’s regional credits include the Alley Theatre, American Conservatory Theater, Dallas Theater Center, Goodspeed Musicals, the Huntington Theatre Company, Intiman Theatre, Magic Theatre, Milwaukee Repertory Theater, OSF, San Jose Repertory Theatre, and two previous productions for Berkeley Rep: *Ghosts* and *Our Town*.

An ensemble of eight **exceptional actors** has been assembled for this show:

- **Danforth Comins** (Loverboy) has performed at OSF for nine seasons and has also been seen at Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Geva Theatre Center, PCPA Theaterfest, and the Utah Shakespeare Festival.
- **Ted Deasy** (Basil) has performed at OSF for five seasons. His other credits include the national tour of *The 39 Steps* and shows at Actors Theatre of Louisville, the Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park, Delaware Theatre Company, Geva, Indiana Repertory Theatre, Milwaukee Rep, the Old Globe, the Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, Syracuse Stage, Utah Shakes, and Yale Repertory Theatre.
- **Peter Frechette** (Film Director) has numerous credits in New York and across the country. He’s earned Drama Desk, LA Drama Critics Circle, *LA Weekly*, Obie, Outer Critics Circle, and Theatre World Awards, as well as two Tony nominations (*Eastern Standard* and *Our Country’s Good*), two Lortel nominations (*The Dazzle* and *Valhalla*), and an Emmy nomination (*Thirtysomething*).
- **Bill Geisslinger** (Prison Guard) previously appeared at Berkeley Rep in *Continental Divide*, *Dinner with Friends*, and *The House of Blue Leaves*. In addition to 20 seasons at OSF, he’s performed at Artists Repertory Theatre, the Denver Center Theatre Company, the Huntington, Intiman, La Jolla Playhouse, the Old Globe, Long Wharf Theatre, Portland Center Stage, South Coast Repertory, and Virginia Stage Company.
- In addition to his work at OSF, **Peter Macon** (Mister) has performed on Broadway, on television, on film, and in *Macbeth* at Berkeley Rep. He was a company member of Cal Shakes for three seasons, and has been seen at ACT, the Guthrie Theater, Shakespeare & Company, and the Shakespeare Theatre Company. He earned an Emmy Award for Outstanding Voiceover Narration.

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- **Christopher Liam Moore** (Jon) is a company member of OSF and a founding member of Cornerstone Theatre Company, where he appeared in more than 40 shows. He has also performed at American Repertory Theatre, Arena Stage, the Guthrie, Long Wharf Theatre, the Mark Taper Forum, the Old Globe, South Coast Rep, and Yale Rep.
- **Tyler James Myers** (Boy) has appeared in plays at Ashland Children's Theatre, the Craterian Ginger Rogers Theater, and Oregon Stage Works. He attends Crater Renaissance Academy in Central Point, Oregon.
- **Robynn Rodriguez** (Louise) has been seen at Berkeley Rep in *Continental Divide* and *The Oresteia*. A member of the resident acting company at OSF, she has appeared in more than 40 of its shows. She has also performed at the Denver Center, the Guthrie, Intiman, the Kennedy Center, and the Shakespeare Theatre.

The cast also includes **Isaac Kosydar** and **Sarita Ocón**, and the stage manager for this show is **Michael Suenkel**, Berkeley Rep's resident production stage manager.

Five **respected designers** are collaborating to bring *Ghost Light* to life. **Todd Rosenthal** (scenic design) has worked with renowned theatres worldwide. His Broadway credits include *The Motherfucker with the Hat*, *Of Mice and Men*, and *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* He earned the 2008 Tony Award for *August: Osage County*, and became the only American to receive the Olivier Award for Best Set Design when that show moved to London. **Meg Neville** (costume design) has created costumes for eight previous shows at Berkeley Rep, including *Eurydice*, which moved to New Haven and New York. She is an associate artist at Cal Shakes, and her other local credits include work at ACT, Joe Goode Performance Group, the Magic, San Francisco Opera Center, and San Jose Rep. **Christopher Akerlind** (lighting design) has designed lighting for more than 600 theatre, opera, and dance productions worldwide, including three previous shows at Berkeley Rep: *Antony and Cleopatra*, *The Life of Galileo*, and *The Triumph of Love*. He has received Drama Desk, Obie, Outer Critics, and Tony Awards for his work. **Andre Pluess** (sound design) previously worked on six shows at Berkeley Rep: *after the quake*, *The Arabian Nights*, *Argonautika*, *Blue Door*, *Honour*, *Metamorphoses*, and *The Secret in the Wings*. He is an artistic associate at Cal Shakes and also has numerous credits on Broadway and at theatres across the country, particularly in Chicago. **Maya Ciarrochi** (video designer) has created projections for artists such as Ping Chong, Merce Cunningham, Bebe Miller, and Donna Uchizono. Her work has also been seen at regional theatres and at exhibitions in New York, California, Virginia, Canada, and the United Kingdom.

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Audiences can enjoy **30 special events** during the run of this show:

- *Low-cost previews* take place on Friday, January 6; Saturday, January 7; Sunday, January 8; and Tuesday, January 10.
- *Teen Night* begins at 6:30 PM on Friday, January 6 and includes a presentation by a member of the artistic team, dinner provided by Phil's Sliders, and a performance of the show. Tickets are only \$10 for high-school students. For details, call (510) 647-2973 or e-mail teencouncil@berkeleyrep.org.
- *Opening-night festivities* are held on Wednesday, January 11 with the generous support of Bistro Liaison, the Hotel Shattuck Plaza, Raymond Vineyards, and TCHO.
- *Page to Stage*, a free conversation with Taccone and Moscone, takes place at 7:00 PM on Monday, January 23.
- Free 30-minute *docent presentations* about the show take place at 7:00 PM on the following Tuesday and Thursday evenings: January 10, January 12, January 17, January 19, January 24, January 26, January 31, February 2, February 7, February 9, February 14, and February 16. Docent talks are also held in three local communities: at the Orinda Library on Tuesday, January 17 at 7:00 PM, at the Moraga Library on Wednesday, January 18 at 2:00 PM, and at the Lafayette Library on Wednesday, January 18 at 7:00 PM.
- *Post-play discussions* moderated by theatre professionals follow the 8:00 PM shows on Thursday, January 26; Tuesday, January 31; and Friday, February 10.
- A *student matinee* for high-school groups is held at noon on Thursday, February 2. Tickets are \$10 each, and a chaperone is admitted free for every 10 students. For details, call (510) 647-2918 or e-mail groups@berkeleyrep.org.
- And, on select evenings, patrons can whet their palates for the play with *free tastings* from these culinary artisans one hour before curtain: the Bread Workshop on Friday, February 3; Calstar Cellars on Saturday, January 14; Cater Too on Saturday, February 4; Cocoa Diva's Chocolate Bar on Sunday, January 22; Dr. Kracker on Sunday, January 15; Peterson Winery on Friday, January 20; Raymond Vineyards on Friday, January 13 and Saturday, February 18; Semifreddi's on Saturday, January 21 and Sunday, February 19; and Speakeasy Ales and Lagers on Friday, January 27.

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In the last six years, six shows developed at Berkeley Rep have ended up on Broadway. Seven more landed off Broadway, two turned into films, and others have toured the nation. So don't miss the **new season of exhilarating plays** at the Theatre. For the holidays, Kneehigh Theatre Company comes back to the Bay Area with *The Wild Bride*, a vivid fairy tale from the creators of *Brief Encounter*. Then Steven Epp – the star of *Figaro* and *The Miser* – returns to unleash another Molière masterpiece with *A Doctor in Spite of Himself*, and Associate Artistic Director Les Waters takes on John Logan's Tony Award-winning *Red*. Finally, Dael Orlandersmith delivers a fierce and unforgettable performance in the world premiere of *Black n Blue Boys / Broken Men*. To top it off, Berkeley Rep is offering a special presentation of *In Paris* next April, a beautiful romance starring Mikhail Baryshnikov, and the world premiere of Eve Ensler's *Emotional Creature* in June.

Get the best seats for all these shows at the lowest prices by subscribing to Berkeley Rep.

Choose three or more plays and guarantee your seats for events that are sure to sell out. Ticket packages begin as low as \$81, meaning subscribers can save as much as 26% on every ticket. Berkeley Rep also offers generous discounts for senior citizens, theatregoers under 30, and employees of nursery, elementary, and secondary schools. Subscriptions are selling fast because of last season's string of hits – so order now for the best seats.

Individual tickets to *Ghost Light* and other shows in the season **start at only \$29**. Additional savings are available for groups, seniors, students, and anyone under 30 years of age – meaning **discounted tickets** can be obtained for as little as \$14.50.

Step into the *Light*. The Thrust Stage is located at 2025 Addison Street, only half a block from BART and near bus lines, bike routes, and parking lots. **For tickets or information**, call (510) 647-2949 or toll-free at (888) 4-BRT-Tix – or simply click 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. 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 six years, the company has helped send six shows to Broadway. Seven more landed off Broadway, one moved to London, two turned into films, and others have toured the nation. Come see tomorrow's plays today at Berkeley Rep.

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GHOST LIGHT

FACT SHEET

WHO: Conceived and developed by Jonathan Moscone and Tony Taccone
 Written by Tony Taccone
 Directed by Jonathan Moscone
 Designed by Todd Rosenthal (sets), Meg Neville (costumes), Christopher Akerlind (lights), Andre Pluess (sound), and Maya Ciarrochi (video)
 Starring Danforth Comins, Ted Deasy, Peter Frechette, Bill Geisslinger, Isaac Kosydar, Peter Macon, Christopher Liam Moore, Tyler James Myers, Sarita Ocón, and Robynn Rodriguez

WHAT: The world-premiere production of *Ghost Light*
 A fable for San Francisco based on the assassination of Mayor George Moscone

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

WHEN: **January 6 – February 19, 2012**

- Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays @ 8:00 PM
- Wednesdays @ 7:00 PM
- Saturdays @ 2:00 PM and 8:00 PM
- Sundays @ 2:00 PM and 7:00 PM

- Extra 2:00 PM performances on Thursdays 1/19 and 2/16
- No matinees on 1/7, 1/8, or 1/21
- No performance on 2/17

SUN	MON	TUE ■	WED	THU ■	FRI	SAT
					6 JAN 8 8:00 PM	7 8 8:00 PM
8 7 7:00 PM	9	10 8 8:00 PM	11 8 8:00 PM	12 8	13 8 8:00 PM	14 2/8 8:00 PM
15 2/7 8:00 PM	16	17 8	18 7	19 2/8	20 8 8:00 PM	21 8 8:00 PM
22 2/7 8:00 PM	23	24 8	25 7	26 8 8:00 PM	27 8 8:00 PM	28 2/8 8:00 PM
29 2/7 8:00 PM	30	31 8 8:00 PM	1 FEB 7	2 8	3 8 8:00 PM	4 2/8 8:00 PM
5 2/7 8:00 PM	6	7 8	8 7	9 8	10 8 8:00 PM	11 2/8 8:00 PM
12 2/7 8:00 PM	13	14 8	15 7	16 2/8	17	18 2/8 8:00 PM
19 2/7 8:00 PM						

Special Events:

Low-cost previews: Friday 1/6, Saturday 1/7 & Tuesday 1/10 @ 8:00 PM and Sunday 1/8 @ 7:00 PM
Teen night: Friday 1/6 @ 6:30 PM
Opening night: Wednesday 1/11 @ 8:00 PM
Page to Stage (free talk w/ Taccone and Moscone): Monday 1/23 @ 7:00 PM
Pre-show docent talks: Tuesdays 1/10, 1/17, 1/24, 1/31, 2/7 & 2/14 and Thursdays 1/12, 1/19, 1/26, 2/2, 2/9 & 2/16 @ 7:00 PM
Post-play discussions: Thursday 1/26, Tuesday 1/31, and Friday 2/10 @ 8:00 PM
Student matinee: Thursday 2/2 @ noon
Tastings: Fridays 1/13 (Raymond Vineyards), 1/20 (Peterson Winery), 1/27 (Speakeasy Ales & Lagers) & 2/3 (Bread Workshop) @ 7:00 PM; Saturdays 1/14 (Calstar Cellars), 1/21 (Semifreddi's), 2/4 (Cater Too) & 2/18 (Raymond Vineyards) @ 7:00 PM; and Sundays 1/15 (Dr. Kracker), 1/22 (Cocoa Diva's Chocolate Bar) & 2/19 (Semifreddi's) @ 6:00 PM

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

HOW MUCH: \$14.50 - \$73 (subject to change)

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-12gl.asp>

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