

For photos, videos, interviews, etc. contact:
Kyle Sircus, Marketing Manager
(510) 647-2939, ksircus@berkeleyrep.org

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AS BERKELEY REP GOES GLOBAL, LOCAL TEENS WIN PLAYWRITING PRIZES

24 youth from nine local communities collaborate to present a pair of winning plays

JANUARY 29, 2013 – As shows from Berkeley Repertory Theatre crisscross the globe – from Hong Kong to London to New York – local teenagers are getting in on the act with Berkeley Rep’s 11th annual Teen One-Acts Festival. This year, two winning teens will premiere their plays at the nonprofit’s new Osher Studio in productions **directed, designed, and performed entirely by local high-school students.**

The winners for 2013 are 17-year-old **Frances Maples of Lafayette**, a senior at Acalanes High School, and 18-year-old **Sophia Cannata-Bowman of San Francisco**, a senior at Sacred Heart Cathedral Preparatory. Relying on the talents of 24 youth from nine local communities, this year’s plays go up at 8:00 PM on **March 22 and 23** and 2:00 PM on **March 24**. Performances take place at Berkeley Rep’s Osher Studio in Downtown Berkeley. **Tickets** are only \$10 for students and \$15 for adults; for more information, visit berkeleyrep.org/teenoneacts.

“Berkeley Rep’s School of Theatre nurtures the kind of refreshing and powerful voices that may one day grace its stages, while providing local teens with the chance to express their creativity and learn important skills,” remarks **Rachel Fink**, director of the School of Theatre. “Every year, the teens put on an incredible show – but the best part is watching them grow through the process to become not only more experienced artists but also more confident and capable individuals.”

Frances Maples, who also had a winning script in 2012, returns with ***Orpheum***, a music-infused tale of love, death, and what happens next. Isa loves Stacey, Stacey isn’t so sure... and things don’t get any easier when the Apocalypse hits and the girls find themselves separated by an incomprehensible bureaucracy. Now Isa must escape from heaven’s waiting-room if she wants to rescue her damsel in distress. But Stacey is sick of being a damsel and won’t wait around to be saved. Seventeen-year-old director **Ivy Olesen of Berkeley**, a senior at Berkeley High School, brings this musical love story to life... and afterlife.

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In *Story by Leonard Watts*, Sophia Cannata-Bowman sketches a stunning portrait of the bitter beauty of small-town life. Who wouldn't want to ditch the danger and drudgery of life in a coal-mining town for the bright lights of Hollywood? Leonard Watts not only made it out, he made it big! Now his screenplay is nominated for an Academy Award – but Hollywood endings are reserved for movies, and running from the past won't prevent it from catching up. Sixteen-year-old **Elia Chuaqui of El Cerrito**, a junior at El Cerrito High School, directs this hilarious and heartbreaking play that skips across the swirl of memory.

The ensemble for each show is comprised of talented local teens:

- *Orpheum* features 15-year-old **Ase' Bakari of Berkeley**, a sophomore at Oakland School of the Arts; 14-year-old **Alexandra Cartharis of Berkeley**, a freshman at Oakland School of the Arts; 17-year-old **Georgia Cartharis of Berkeley**, a senior at Berkeley High; 17-year-old **Jet Harper of Berkeley**, a sophomore at Berkeley High; 17-year-old **Emiko Rogers of Concord**, a senior at Diablo Valley High School; and 17-year-old **Geneva Rust-Orta of Oakland**, a senior at Oakland Technical High School.
- The cast for *Story by Leonard Watts* includes 17-year-old **Gavin Beretvas of Oakland**, a senior at Oakland Tech; 17-year-old **Ryan Burbridge of Hayward**, a senior at Leadership Public Schools – Hayward; 17-year-old **Rocky Kamen-Rubio of Berkeley**, a senior at Berkeley High; 15-year-old **David Kaus of Berkeley**, a sophomore at Berkeley High; 16-year-old **Alexander Panagos of Berkeley**, a sophomore at Berkeley High; and 18-year-old **Zoey Wolinsky of El Cerrito**, a senior at El Cerrito High.

The creative team for this year's Teen One-Acts Festival includes 15-year-old **Eleanor Maples of Lafayette**, a sophomore at Oakland School of the Arts, the scenic designer for *Story by Leonard Watts*; 17-year-old **Tait Adams of Alameda**, a junior at Encinal High School, the stage manager for *Orpheum*; and seven student designers from Berkeley High. For *Story by Leonard Watts*, 17-year-old senior **Georgia Cartharis of Berkeley** designs costumes and 14-year-old freshman **Fernando Serrano of Berkeley** designs sound. *Orpheum* features scenery and video design by 17-year-old senior **Oscar Peña of Berkeley**, costume design by 18-year-old senior **Louisa Pio of Berkeley**, and sound design by 16-year-old sophomore **Kathryn Gordon of Berkeley**. Seventeen-year-old senior **Mariah Johnson of Berkeley** serves as make-up designer and wardrobe supervisor for both shows, and 16-year-old sophomore **Margaret Reager of Berkeley** assists lighting fellow Anthony Jannuzzi with the lighting design.

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To guide them toward a final product that is polished and professional, the teens have been **paired with mentors from the Next Generation Fellowship Program** at Berkeley Rep, which is sponsored by American Express. This year's mentors include Leah Barish, Timothy Bruno, Nora Sørensen Casey, Ashley Cleveland, Ali Dineen, Emily Fassler, Zoe Halley Gopnik-McManus, Mary Kay Hickox, Anthony Jannuzzi, Rachel London, Jacob Marx Rice, Jamie McClave, Amanda Spector, Read Tuddenham, and Ann Vollrath. In addition, two members of Berkeley Rep's staff, **Benjamin Hanna** and **Maureen Towey**, serve as directing mentors.

Mirroring Berkeley Rep's commitment to new work, the nonprofit's School of Theatre presents tomorrow's playwrights today. Since 2003, the **Teen One-Acts Festival** has engaged more than 350 young artists to debut 24 original works, which were entirely produced, written, directed, designed, and performed by local high-school students.

The **Berkeley Rep Teen Council** is a theatre youth group organized by teens for teens. Its goal is to foster the theatre audiences and theatre professionals of tomorrow by opening channels of communication between teens, theatre professionals, and the community at large while building a base for lifelong learning. Through a variety of interactive programs, the Teen Council provides an opportunity for youth to participate in all aspects of the dramatic process: on stage, backstage, and in front of the stage through its affiliation with the Tony Award-winning Berkeley Repertory Theatre. Currently, the Council has more than 500 members including youth from numerous local high schools. For more information, call (510) 647-2974, e-mail teencouncil@berkeleyrep.org, or visit berkeleyrep.org/teenoneacts.

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ATTENTION, CALENDAR EDITORS:

- WHO: Local teens write, direct, perform, and produce their own plays
- WHAT: The 11th annual Teen One-Acts Festival at Berkeley Rep's School of Theatre features two short plays: *Orpheum* by Frances Maples and Sophia Cannata-Bowman's *Story by Leonard Watts*
- WHEN: Friday, March 22 @ 8:00 PM
Saturday, March 23 @ 8:00 PM
Sunday, March 24 @ 2:00 PM
- WHERE: Berkeley Rep's Osher Studio
2055 Center St @ Shattuck, Downtown Berkeley, CA 97404
- HOW MUCH: \$10 for students; \$15 for adults
- INFO: (510) 647-2974 or berkeleyrep.org/teenoneacts

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