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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****BERKELEY REP SCHOOL OF THEATRE HOLDS 15th ANNUAL TEEN ONE-ACTS FESTIVAL  
High school students from across the Bay Area come together to create new works of theatre**

**January 31, 2017** -- Berkeley Rep School of Theatre today announced the 15th Annual Teen One-Acts Festival. Produced by members of Berkeley Rep's Teen Council, the 2017 festival features two world premiere plays written by high school students—***Leap*** by **Chloe Xtina**, a senior at Oakland School of the Arts, and directed by **Fiona Deane-Grundman**, a junior at Campolindo High School, and ***Grapefruit Girls*** by **Penelope Gould**, a junior at Oakland School of the Arts, and directed by **Claire Talbott**, a senior at Lowell High School.

Berkeley Rep School of Theatre's Teen One-Acts Festival allows teenagers to step into the spotlight, learning about the process of producing new works of theatre. The shows are written, performed, directed, designed, and produced by local teenagers. Mentored by Berkeley Rep's fellows and other Berkeley Rep staff members, teens get the unique opportunity to lead in the creation of theatre from the ground up.

"I've been a part of Teen One-Acts for the last four years," says **Bridey Caramagno**, a senior at Berkeley High and a member of Berkeley Rep's Core Teen Council. "The experience has given me access to learning opportunities I wouldn't have been able to get anywhere else."

The 2017 Festival centers on the experiences of modern women. Featuring young female playwrights, directors and actors in leading roles, this festival takes a fresh and energetic look at urgent problems in our current political atmosphere. However, that doesn't mean that men are excluded from these conversations. Male members of Berkeley Rep's Teen Council are involved in the design and performance process, and they can relate to the messages of each show. "It's not just something that teen girls should see, it's something that everyone should see because each play speaks to every human," says **Claire Talbott**, director of ***Grapefruit Girls***. "Everyone has body-image issues, and everyone has a story to tell, a truth they're afraid to tell."

**Chloe Xtina**, playwright of ***Leap***, sees the plays as a means of responding to what is happening in our country. "I feel like these plays can be our own small art revolution to educate through catharsis and empathy," Chloe says. "And I feel like coming to these plays will spark a lot of conversation and a lot of empathetic conversation, which our country has been lacking."

**ABOUT THE PLAYS**

***Leap*** – Hard-hitting college journalist Oouli just broke the latest national news scandal, and her viral article has the students and faculty of Stewart University eager to bring change to their campus. Simultaneously, two film majors attempt a sci-fi opus that aims to be both a tribute and an exposé. Contrasting the portrayal of women in science fiction with the treatment of sexual assault on modern college campuses, ***Leap*** investigates the power of perspective—fact and fiction, and how life often lurks in the gray areas between.

**Grapefruit Girls** – Is a grapefruit juicy, or sour? Full, or large? Curvy, or lumpy? As a grapefruit embodies many conflicting qualities, life as a woman can sometimes feel like a contradiction. Using flowing language and poetic movement, **Grapefruit Girls** serves a new and freshly-squeezed narrative, wrestling with the discomfort and displeasure that many women feel about their bodies and finding nourishment in the most unlikely of places.

Thirteen teens will act in the 2017 Teen One-Acts Festival:

- The cast of **Leap** includes **Neo Barnes** (Commander Zappo/ Eric), **Lucy Curran** (Maria/ Lucy), **Fidela Bisseret-Martinez** (Carmen), **Sumayya Bisseret-Martinez** (Oouli), **Hiwot Dereje** (Lindsay), **Rory Dreyfus** (Drex/ Lord Laser/ Mark), **Devin Elias** (Pedro/ Alien Man), and **Max Green** (Jason/ Alien Man).
- The cast of **Grapefruit Girls** includes **Nah’Jahae Bolds**, **Marina Carlstroem**, **Carmela Catoc**, **Anais Pacheco**, and **America Vasquez**.

In addition, nine students will make up the Festival’s creative team. The creative team includes **Isabelle Smith** (set designer for *Leap*), **Evan Streshinsky** (set designer for *Grapefruit Girls*), **Naseem Alavi** (costume designer), **Abram Blitz** (lighting designer), **Miya Drain** (sound designer), **Adin Gilman-Cohen** (properties master), **Julia Holston** (scenic painter), **Leah Harwood** (stage manager for *Grapefruit Girls*), and **Avery Martin** (stage manager for *Leap*).

#### **TICKET INFORMATION**

The 2017 Teen One-Festival will be held in the **Osher Studio @ Berkeley Central** (2055 Center Street, Berkeley, CA 97404). Performances will be held on Friday, March 17 at 8pm; Saturday, March 18 at 8pm; and Sunday, March 19 at 2pm.

Tickets are available at \$15 for adults and \$10 for students who are 18 or younger. Tickets can be purchased by calling 510 647-2912 or by going online at <http://www.berkeleyrep.org/teenoneacts>. Please contact [lgoldfarb@berkeleyrep.org](mailto:lgoldfarb@berkeleyrep.org) with any questions.

The 2017 Berkeley Rep Teen One-Acts Festival is sponsored by Semifreddi’s, Target, Picante, and the Woodlawn Foundation.

#### **ABOUT BERKELEY REP’S SCHOOL OF THEATRE**

The **School of Theatre** was founded in 2001 and has produced these original works since 2003. In that time 26 original works have been staged, including one short film. Some notable alumni include Lauren Yee (*Ching Chong Chinaman*, *Samsara*, and *The Tiger Among Us*), Katie Henry (winner of Young Playwrights Inc.’s National Playwriting Contest), and Roxie Perkins (recipient of Dr. Floyd Gaffney National Playwriting Award).

The **Berkeley Rep Teen Council** is a theatre youth group organized by teens for teens. Its goal is to foster the next generation of theatre audiences and theatre professionals through a variety of interactive programs. Currently, the Council has more than 300 members, including youth from numerous local high schools. For more information, call 510 647-2984, visit <http://berkeleyrep.org/teencouncil>, or e-mail [teencouncil@berkeleyrep.org](mailto:teencouncil@berkeleyrep.org).

In addition to theatre training for individuals, the **Berkeley Rep School of Theatre** is committed to working with local schools and community members to reinforce arts education as a community value. By providing access and opportunities for participation in the arts, Berkeley Rep uses theatre as a means to challenge, thrill, and galvanize what is best in the human spirit. Major support for the School of Theatre’s education programs is provided by Target and the Woodlawn Foundation.

## **ABOUT BERKELEY REP**

Berkeley Repertory Theatre has grown from a storefront stage to an international 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. In four decades, four million people have enjoyed nearly 400 shows at Berkeley Rep. These shows have gone on to win five Tony Awards, seven Obie Awards, nine Drama Desk Awards, one Grammy Award, and many other honors. In recognition of its place on the national stage, Berkeley Rep received the Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre in 1997. Its bustling facilities – which include the 400-seat Peet's Theatre, the 600-seat Roda Theatre, the Berkeley Rep School of Theatre, the Osher Studio, and a spacious new campus in West Berkeley – are helping revitalize a renowned city. Learn more at [berkeleyrep.org](http://berkeleyrep.org)