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**For Immediate Release****TONY TACCONO TO STEP DOWN AS ARTISTIC DIRECTOR OF  
BERKELEY REPERTORY THEATRE IN 2019****Departure will conclude 22 years in this role, 33 at Berkeley Rep**

**January 31, 2017**—Berkeley Repertory Theatre today announced that long-time Michael Leibert Artistic Director Tony Taccone will depart the company at the end of its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary season, 2018-19. When Taccone leaves he will have been on staff at the company for 33 years, 22 of which he will have served as artistic director.

“It’s been over thirty years, thirty amazing years,” says Taccone. “I’ve never been more excited about Berkeley Rep and the work that we’re doing than I am right now. But I also want to leave the job while I’m still ambulatory and give someone else the opportunity to provide artistic leadership. Announcing my departure this far in advance allows for a smooth transition that will take the theatre boldly into the future.”

“Tony has, without question, secured Berkeley Rep’s reputation as a global leader in theatre,” says Berkeley Rep Board President Stewart Owen. “While this will be an emotional farewell when the time comes in two-and-a-half years, we are very excited to celebrate Tony’s 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary next season and to have him lead us through the organization’s upcoming 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary season in 2018-19.”

During Taccone’s tenure as Berkeley Rep’s artistic director, the Tony® Award–winning nonprofit has earned a reputation as an international leader in innovative theatre. Over those two decades, Berkeley Rep has presented more than 70 world, American, and West Coast premieres and sent 23 shows to New York, two to London, and one to Hong Kong, including Carrie Fisher’s *Wishful Drinking*; Tony Kushner’s *Tiny Kushner*; Sarah Jones’ *Bridge & Tunnel*; Sarah Ruhl’s *In the Next Room (or the vibrator play)*; David Henry Hwang’s *Chinglish*; *The Great Game: Afghanistan*; *No Man’s Land*, starring Ian McKellen and Patrick Stewart; Green Day’s *American Idiot*; and *Amélie, A New Musical*, among others.

To date, Taccone has staged more than 40 plays in Berkeley. Taccone also oversaw the unveiling two new buildings in the new millennium: the state-of-the-art Roda Theatre and the Berkeley Rep School of Theatre. These additions transformed a single stage into a vital and versatile performing arts complex, the linchpin of a bustling Downtown Arts District that helped revitalize Berkeley. Under Taccone’s leadership, Berkeley Rep has earned an international reputation as a place for artists working at the top of their game, and has committed to the future of American theatre by championing new plays and playwrights, a commitment cemented with the founding of The Ground Floor: Berkeley Rep’s Center for the Creation and Development of New Work in 2012. That same year, Taccone received the Margo Jones Award for “demonstrating a significant impact, understanding, and affirmation of playwriting, with a commitment to the living theatre.”

**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 over 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, and a spacious campus in West Berkeley — are helping revitalize a renowned city. Learn more at [berkeleyrep.org](http://berkeleyrep.org)