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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## TWO LOCAL TEENS WIN BERKELEY REP'S ANNUAL PLAYWRITING PRIZE

**27 youth from 10 local communities participate in Teen One-Acts Festival**

MARCH 15, 2010 – This year, teens are in a murderous mood at Berkeley Repertory Theatre. Today, the nonprofit's School of Theatre announced the winning scripts in its annual Teen One-Acts Festival – and both of them focus on comically preposterous crimes. The winning plays for 2010 are *The Death of a Nut* by 15-year-old **Sierra Schoefer of Pleasanton** and *Off with his Head* by 17-year-old **Kelly Margaret Roderick of San Ramon**. Both plays will be produced this spring by a team of 27 local teens.

“One of the purposes of this annual event is to allow teens to experience how pursuing their creativity, pooling their talents, and focusing on a shared goal can build confidence and camaraderie,” remarks explains **Rachel Fink**, director of the School of Theatre. “I’m pleased to see youth from so many different communities working together on this year’s festival.”

In the annual **Teen One-Acts Festival**, local students select original scripts penned by their peers to be directed, performed, and produced entirely by teens. The winning writers are paired with mentors in the professional theatre community to receive feedback and support in revising their work for the stage, and the whole process is supported by Berkeley Rep’s staff. Performances take place in Berkeley Rep’s School of Theatre at 2071 Addison Street in downtown Berkeley on **April 2, 3, 9, and 10 at 8:00 PM**. Tickets, available only at the door, are **\$8 for students and \$13 for adults**.

*The Death of a Nut* is a wild whodunit– literally. With the help of a no-nonsense chipmunk, audiences dive into the heart of the forest, where murder, motive, and chaos ensue. Playwright Sierra Schoeffer is a sophomore at Amador Valley High School in Pleasanton. Her show is brought to the stage by two students from Berkeley High School: 17-year-old senior **Nkili Birmingham of Berkeley** directs and 15-year-old sophomore **Sierra Baggins of Berkeley** serves as stage manager.

Wash dishes. Do laundry. Murder your husband? *Off with his Head* is a dark comedy about a 1950s housewife whose desire for a perfect life leads to an act of desperation – as well as hilarity, confusion, and perfect casseroles. Written by Kelly Margaret Roderick, a senior at California High School in San Ramon, the play is directed by 15-year-old **Tavi Carpenter of Berkeley**, a sophomore at Oakland School for the Arts. The stage manager is 17-year-old **Claire Andreas of Piedmont**, a junior at Piedmont High School, and her assistant stage manager is 14-year-old **Darcy Davis of Lafayette**, a freshman at Acalanes High School.

Both shows are performed entirely by local teens:

- *The Death of a Nut* features 17-year-old **Destiny Andrews of Berkeley**, a junior at Berkeley High; 15-year-old **Arianna Bloom of Oakland**, a sophomore at Berkeley High; 15-year-old **Gisela Feied of Berkeley**, a freshman at Berkeley High; 18-year-old **Elani Ferri of Nicasio**, a home-schooled senior; 16-year-old **Sarah Madden of Berkeley**, a junior at Berkeley High; 16-year-old **Richard Raya of Berkeley**, a junior at Berkeley High; and 16-year-old **Gareth Tidball of Oakland**, a sophomore at Oakland Technical High School.

(MORE)

RECIPIENT OF THE TONY AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING REGIONAL THEATRE

## BERKELEY REP ANNOUNCES WINNING TEEN PLAYWRIGHTS / 2 OF 2

- The cast of *Off with his Head* includes 15-year-old **Emma Goodfield of Berkeley**, a sophomore at Berkeley High; 15-year-old **Gideon Lazarus of Berkeley**, a sophomore at Berkeley High; 16-year-old **Alexander Michels of Walnut Creek**, a junior at Las Lomas High School; and 17-year-old **Hannah Perko-Engel of Oakland**, a sophomore at Oakland Tech.

The producers of this year's Festival are 15-year-old **Linnaea Weld of Oakland**, a sophomore at Oakland Tech, and 17-year-old **Keisa Reynolds of El Cerrito**, a sophomore at El Cerrito High School. The dramaturg for these plays is 17-year-old **Christina Novakov-Ritchey** of Berkeley, a senior at Miramonte High School.

The set designer is 16-year-old **Tom Miller of Kensington**, a sophomore at El Cerrito High, and the sound designer is 14-year-old **Marissa Leitman of Lafayette**, a freshman at Bentley School. The costume designer is 16-year-old **Rosie Byrne of Walnut Creek**, a sophomore at the College Preparatory School. Rosie is assisted by a costume crew which includes 15-year-old **Lila Elias of Oakland**, a sophomore at St. Mary's College High School; 15-year-old **Clémence Pluche of Berkeley**, a sophomore at Berkeley High; and 16-year-old **Katalina Cabrera of Berkeley**, a sophomore at College Prep.

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 100 members, including youth from numerous local high schools. For more information, call (510) 647-2974, visit [berkeleyrep.org](http://berkeleyrep.org), or e-mail [teencouncil@berkeleyrep.org](mailto:teencouncil@berkeleyrep.org).

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### ATTENTION CALENDAR EDITORS:

- WHO: Local teens write, direct, perform, and produce their own scripts
- WHAT: The eighth annual **Teen One-Acts Festival** featuring two short plays: *The Death of a Nut* by Sierra Schoefer and *Off with his Head* by Kelly Margaret Roderick
- WHEN: Friday, April 2 @ 8:00 PM  
Saturday, April 3 @ 8:00 PM  
Friday, April 9 @ 8:00 PM  
Saturday, April 10 @ 8:00 PM
- WHERE: Berkeley Rep's School of Theatre,  
2071 Addison St @ Shattuck, Downtown Berkeley, CA 97404
- HOW MUCH: \$8 for students, \$13 for general admission
- INFO: (510) 647-2974 or [berkeleyrep.org/school](http://berkeleyrep.org/school)

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