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BERKELEY REP ANNOUNCES SPECIAL SCHEDULES FOR DAISEY AND *GREAT GAME*

Selections for 2010-11 Season follow unique pattern of performances

JUNE 10, 2010 – Today, in order to fulfill its commitment to deliver daring and diverse work, the Tony Award-winning Berkeley Repertory Theatre announced special schedules for certain shows in its upcoming season: *The Great Game: Afghanistan*, *The Last Cargo Cult*, and *The Agony and the Ecstasy of Steve Jobs*.

“It’s unusual to present shows in our regular season that don’t follow a predictable pattern of performances,” remarked **Tony Taccone**, artistic director of Berkeley Rep. “But our first priority is always to bring the best theatre to Bay Area audiences, and to do that – to see each of these shows as they were meant to be seen – we’ve designed special schedules to make that experience possible. We’re pleased to present two monologues by Mike Daisey in repertory next January, and truly excited to offer marathons of *The Great Game* this fall.”

Berkeley Rep’s 2010-11 season also features five other exhilarating plays: the world premiere of Rinne Groff’s compelling *Compulsion*, a delightful new look at *The Composer is Dead*, Lynn Nottage’s Pulitzer Prize-winning play *Ruined*, the West Coast premiere of Sarah Ruhl’s fresh translation of *The Three Sisters*, and a tantalizing show written by Artistic Director Tony Taccone for legendary actress Rita Moreno. This ambitious, adventurous, and entertaining line-up is supported by BART and Wells Fargo, the official sponsors of Berkeley Rep’s 2010-11 Season. And, since Berkeley Rep continues to insist that top-notch theatre should be accessible and affordable, some tickets cost less than they did in 1997!

PERFORMANCE SCHEDULES

Presented in three parts – on different days or in one impassioned marathon – *The Great Game: Afghanistan* explores the eternal struggle to control Central Asia. See one part or see them all. See them in any order – or on one incredible day. Produced with the Tricycle Theatre and supported by the British Council, *The Great Game* begins its limited run in the Roda Theatre on October 22 and closes November 7:

- **Special opening marathon for the press on Friday 10/22:**
Part One at 11:30 AM, Part Two at 3:30 PM, and Part Three at 8:00 PM
- Part One: Wednesdays 10/27 and 11/3 at 7:00 PM
- Part Two: Thursdays 10/28 and 11/4 at 8:00 PM
- Part Three: Fridays 10/29 and 11/5 at 8:00 PM
- Saturday and Sunday marathons on 10/23, 10/24, 10/30, 10/31, 11/6, and 11/7:
Part One at 11:30 AM, Part Two at 3:30 PM, and Part Three at 8:00 PM

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Then, in January, Mike Daisey performs two of his audacious monologues in repertory. ***The Last Cargo Cult*** kicks it off on the Thrust Stage with the following schedule:

- Preview performance: Tuesday 1/11 at 8:00 PM
- **Opening night: Wednesday 1/12 at 8:00 PM**
- Additional performances: 1/13-1/16, 2/1-2/6, and 2/15-2/20

Appropriately enough, ***The Agony and the Ecstasy of Steve Jobs*** runs at the same time as Macworld 2010, the annual expo focused on Apple products. Daisey performs this show on Berkeley Rep's intimate Thrust Stage on the following dates:

- Preview performances: Thursday 1/20, Friday 1/21, and Saturday 1/22 at 8:00 PM
- **Opening night: Sunday 1/23 at 7:00 PM**
- Additional performances: 1/25-1/30, 2/9-2/13, and 2/22-2/27

ABOUT THE GREAT GAME: AFGHANISTAN

Whether you know it or not, you're part of *The Great Game*. A sweeping cycle of short scripts by 12 top playwrights, this unprecedented show explores Afghanistan over the last 150 years. Direct from London, where it debuted to rave reviews, *The Great Game* makes its West Coast premiere at Berkeley Rep. It's a captivating collection of stories performed by Britain's finest actors. World powers and warlords, diplomats and activists, opium farmers and ordinary people... all of them tangle with the tribes and traditions of Afghanistan. Staged by Nicolas Kent and Indhu Rubasingham, it's an emotional event that illuminates the complex culture of another land. Get into *The Game*!

- **Part One: *Invasions & Independence (1842-1929)***
The saga begins with *Bugles at the Gate of Jalalabad* by Stephen Jeffreys. After a devastating defeat, four British soldiers struggle with passionate questions about their purpose in a distant land: Are they following God's will? Spreading civilization? Or just following orders? Then, in *Durand's Line* by Ron Hutchinson, a British diplomat and the amir of Afghanistan engage in a stunning duel of wits. Can the simple act of drawing lines on a map impose order on a "lawless" culture? Or is it folly to forge a nation from competing tribes? Finally, *Campaign* by Amit Gupta and *Now is the Time* by Joy Wilkinson examine the legacy of Afghanistan's first president. Can one man with a glorious vision throw off British rule and create a secular democracy? Or will warlords enforce a new agenda? Questions that haunted history in 1842 continue to resonate in ways we can't help but hear today.
- **Part Two: *Communism, the Mujahideen, and the Taliban (1980-1996)***
A pair of provocative plays, David Edgar's *Black Tulips* and Lee Blessing's *Wood for the Fire*, burn up the stage when Soviet troops enter Afghanistan. Are the Russians invited guests or invaders? Who is the actual enemy, and where do they get their weapons? As victory proves elusive, the mission – and the meaning of success – must be redefined. Then, in *Miniskirts of Kabul* by David Greig, a journalist interviews the country's deposed Communist leader. Their hilarious and horrific conversation covers everything from

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hemlines to the Kremlin as the Taliban lay siege to the capital. Finally, in *The Lion of Kabul* by Colin Teevan, two men hired by the United Nations disappear – and only a midnight meeting can reveal their fate. Two decades of turmoil ignite your curiosity and compassion in this thrilling series of shows.

- **Part Three: *Enduring Freedom* (1996-2009)**

America blithely rides an economic boom in Ben Ockrent's *Honey* as an anxious CIA operative tries to buy back missiles that landed in the hands of militants. Next, in *The Night is Darkest before the Dawn* by Abi Morgan, a teacher invites girls to a free school – but fearful families recall all too well the harsh justice of the Taliban. In *On the Side of Angels* by Richard Bean, employees of a British nonprofit struggle to retain their integrity while raising funds at home and brokering deals abroad. Then Simon Stephens' *Canopy of Stars* captures a soldier in two intense encounters: one with a buddy before battle and the other when he returns to his wife. Has anything changed? What have we learned? *The Great Game* goes on in Afghanistan, yet the conclusions are up to you.

"Astonishing," exclaims London's *Evening Standard*. "No former undertaking has boasted anything like the scope or ambition of *The Great Game*." "Fascinating," agrees *Time Out London*. It "leaves you hankering for more. After seven and a half hours, that's some accolade." "Mind-blowing," adds the *London Guardian*. "Afghan history and culture are being made manifest in a uniquely challenging, theatrically exciting way."

ABOUT MIKE DAISEY & HIS MONOLOGUES

In 2011, Berkeley Rep begins the year by dishing up two daring shows in repertory. The *New York Times* heralded Mike Daisey as "the master storyteller" and "one of the finest solo performers of his generation." His monologues, 15 and counting, have been seen across the country and around the globe.

In Berkeley, audiences loved *Great Men of Genius*, *The Ugly American*, and *21 Dog Years: Doing Time @ Amazon.com*. Now Daisey returns to the Bay Area for an incredible doubleheader sponsored by Mechanics Bank: a pair of provocative new monologues that examine America's obsession with commerce. With his wry eye and eccentric intellect, Daisey delivers two adventure stories – presented on different days – that cut deep with hilarious social critique:

- In ***The Agony and the Ecstasy of Steve Jobs***, Daisey dives into the epic story of a real-life Willy Wonka whose personal obsessions profoundly affect our everyday lives – and follows the trail to China where millions toil in factories to create iPhones and iPods. *Jobs* is the latest monologue developed by Daisey with his director and long-time collaborator, Jean-Michele Gregory.
- With ***The Last Cargo Cult***, Daisey travels to a remote island in the South Pacific whose inhabitants actually worship America and its goods. He observes their rituals as the world's financial system collapses, spurring a soul-searching assessment of what money means and who is paying the price. *Cargo Cult* enjoyed an extended off-Broadway run, and the *Washington Post* called it "divine... The finest hour – actually, make that two hours – ever devised by Daisey, a tale-spinner of amusingly footnoted outrage. His brand of bombast is perfectly calibrated for examinations of the colossal follies of our time. In this instance, he gets the meaty topic between his teeth and, like some carnivorous poet, gnaws it down to eloquent bone."

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ABOUT TICKETS

Individual tickets to these shows go on sale on August 29 – but you can get the best seats at the lowest price right now by subscribing to Berkeley Rep. The Full Season ensures tickets to seven shows, and the five-play package includes all the Main Season productions: *Compulsion*, *The Composer is Dead*, *Ruined*, *The Three Sisters*, and either *The Last Cargo Cult* or *The Agony and the Ecstasy of Steve Jobs*. Or simply “choose your own” subscription of three or more plays.

All subscribers enjoy the right to reschedule for free, discounts when buying tickets for friends, and the opportunity to secure seats before the general public for special events like Green Day's *American Idiot* and John Leguizamo's *Klass Klown*. Best of all, they have guaranteed seats to sold-out shows while others are turned away. **Ticket packages begin as low as \$81** – meaning subscribers save up to 26% on every ticket! Berkeley Rep also offers generous discounts for senior citizens, theatregoers under 30, and employees of nursery, elementary, and secondary schools.

In addition to offering steep savings on seats for subscribers, Berkeley Rep organizes **free events nearly every night** to help stretch that budget even further. Arrive at the Theatre early to enjoy gourmet tastings with local culinary artisans, pre-show talks with trained docents, and an exquisite menu of local, organic, and sustainable food at the café. Certain evenings also feature post-show chats with the artists or late-night parties that welcome a new generation of theatregoers such as Teen Night, 30 Below, and night/OUT. These free activities transform a play into an entire evening of entertainment.

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. The Theatre welcomes an annual audience of 180,000, serves 20,000 students, and hosts dozens of community groups, thanks to 1,000 volunteers and more than 400 artists, artisans, and administrators. 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 five years alone, the company has helped send five shows to Broadway: *American Idiot*, *Bridge & Tunnel*, *In the Next Room (or the vibrator play)*, *Passing Strange*, and *Wishful Drinking*.

See tomorrow's shows today at Berkeley Rep. The Roda Theatre and the Thrust Stage are both located on Addison Street in downtown Berkeley, near bus lines, bike routes, and parking lots – and only half a block from BART. **For more information**, call (510) 647-2949 or (888) 4-BRT-Tix (toll-free) – or just click berkeleyrep.org.

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Compulsion

Main Season Play #1 – Thrust Stage

World-premiere production

Written by Rinne Groff

Directed by Oskar Eustis

September 13 – October 31, 2010

Opening night: September 16, 2010

The Great Game: Afghanistan

Limited Season Play #1 – Roda Theatre

West Coast premiere

Written by Richard Bean, Lee Blessing,
David Edgar, David Greig, Amit Gupta,
Ron Hutchinson, Stephen Jeffreys, Abi
Morgan, Ben Ockrent, Simon Stephens,
Colin Teevan, Naomi Wallace, and
Joy Wilkinson

Directed by Nicolas Kent and Indhu
Rubasingham

October 22 – November 7, 2010

Opening marathon: October 22, 2010

The Composer is Dead

Main Season Play #2 – Roda Theatre

World premiere

Written by Lemony Snicket

Music by Nathaniel Stookey

Set, costume, and marionette design by
Phantom Limb

Directed by Tony Taccone

November 26, 2010 – January 15, 2011

Opening night: December 2, 2010

***The Agony and the
Ecstasy of Steve Jobs***

in repertory with

The Last Cargo Cult

Main Season Play #3 – Thrust Stage

Created and performed by Mike Daisey

Directed by Jean-Michele Gregory

January 11 – February 27, 2011

Opening night for *Cult*: January 12, 2011

Opening night for *Jobs*: January 23, 2011

Ruined

Main Season Play #4 – Roda Theatre

Written by Lynn Nottage

Directed by Liesl Tommy

February 25 – April 10, 2011

Opening night: March 2, 2011

The Three Sisters

Main Season Play #5 – Thrust Stage

West Coast premiere

Written by Anton Chekhov

English translation by Sarah Ruhl

Directed by Les Waters

April 8 – May 22, 2011

Opening night: April 13, 2011

A new show for Rita Moreno

Limited Season Play #2 – Roda Theatre

World premiere

Written by Tony Taccone

Directed by David Galligan

May 13 – June 12, 2011

Opening night: May 18, 2011