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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **BERKELEY REP PREMIERES NEW PLAY BY STEINBERG AWARD-WINNER BILL CAIN**

**Kent Nicholson returns to the Bay Area to stage *How to Write a New Book for the Bible***

AUGUST 29, 2011 – This October, the Tony Award-winning Berkeley Repertory Theatre once again introduces a new script for the American theatre with the world premiere of *How to Write a New Book for the Bible*. The latest work from **Bill Cain**, the playwright who won the prestigious Steinberg New Play Award for the last two years with *Equivocation* and *9 Circles*, *Bible* begins previews on **October 7**, opens **October 12**, and runs through **November 20**. Respected director **Kent Nicholson** returns to the Bay Area to stage this show on the intimate Thrust Stage.

“I think the history of both religion and drama is the sins of the parents are visited on the children – as told by the children,” **Cain comments**. “Whether that’s Adam and Eve ruined our lives, or James and Mary Tyrone [in *Long Day’s Journey into Night*] ruined the lives of their children. Yet my experience is the opposite of this: I have a huge sense of the blessing my parents passed to the next generation. They found a way to make their deaths a summation of the goodness they had received – and given – for their whole lives, and I wanted to make a ritual of that kind of passage. That is the ritual I would like people to enter through this play, and I hope they exit feeling less afraid and more joyous.

“Marin Theater Company and TheaterWorks have made San Francisco my artistic home,” he continues, “and I couldn’t be more delighted that Berkeley Rep has opened its doors to me and my director Kent Nicholson, a frequent collaborator and wonderful friend. It takes a team to bring a play to life, and I can’t imagine any group of artists I’d rather work with as we explore the possibility that every family contains a story that deserves its own place in the Bible.”

*How to Write a New Book for the Bible* is a co-production with Seattle Repertory Theatre. The executive producer of the local run is the Strauch Kulhanjian Family, and the show is supported by two production sponsors: the Bernard Osher Foundation New Play Development Fund and the Edgerton Foundation’s New American Plays Award. The script was developed at the Ojai Playwrights Conference and at TheatreWorks as part of its New Works Festival. For the seventh straight year, BART and Wells Fargo serve as official sponsors of Berkeley Rep’s season. The 2010-11 season producer is Marjorie Randolph.

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RECIPIENT OF THE TONY AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING REGIONAL THEATRE

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Every family creates a sacred story out of love. In Bill Cain's poignant new play, a man moves in with his mother when she becomes too frail to care for herself. Their reunion heals old wounds, opening a heartfelt and humorous new chapter in their relationship. This timeless tale from the award-winning author of *Equivocation* and *9 Circles* celebrates a mother's love and a son's devotion. Don't miss the world premiere of ***How to Write a New Book for the Bible***.

Cain "strikes a rare balance between erudition and accessibility, contemplation and gut-check emotion," the ***LA Times*** observes. "Growing up during the civil rights era, attending Jesuit schools, and tutoring in Brooklyn's tough Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood, he gained an awareness of live theater as a community-binding ritual akin to religion." "Nicholson, for those just tuning in, has established himself as one of the Bay Area's most in-demand directors for new plays over the past decade," says the ***San Francisco Chronicle***.

**Bill Cain** is the author of *Equivocation*, which was seen in the Bay Area at Marin Theatre Company. The play debuted at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival and was subsequently seen at the Geffen Playhouse and Manhattan Theatre Club; the OSF production will be presented at Arena Stage later this season. Cain's play *9 Circles*, which received the Sky Cooper Award, had its world premiere at Marin Theatre Company and has gone on to be produced around the country. His play *Stand Up Tragedy* was produced at Arena Stage, Hartford Stage, the Mark Taper Forum, and ultimately on Broadway, a production that earned him the Joe A. Calloway Award. For television, Cain created the ABC series *Nothing Sacred* and wrote the films *Clover*, *Nightjohn*, *Sunder*, and *Thicker than Blood*. He was the founder and artistic director of Boston Shakespeare, which he ran for seven years, directing Shakespeare's entire canon.

**Kent Nicholson** is the director of musical theatre and literary associate at Playwrights Horizons in New York City. His recent directing credits include world premieres for Cain's *9 Circles* at Marin Theater Company, *Long Story Short* at San Diego Repertory Theatre, and *Saint Ex* – which features music by Jenny Giering and book and lyrics by Sean Barry – at the Weston Playhouse. Locally, Nicholson's work has been seen at Aurora Theatre Company, Magic Theatre, San Jose Stage Company, and TheatreWorks, where he served as director of new works from 2001 to 2009. His credits at TheatreWorks include *All My Sons*, *Ambition Facing West*, *Grey Gardens*, and *Vincent in Brixton*. His New York credits include *Five Flights* by Adam Bock at Rattlestick Playwrights Theater and *Wet* by Liz Duffy Adams on Theatre Row.

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*How to Write a New Book for the Bible* features an ensemble of four **accomplished actors**. **Aaron Blakely** (Paul) has been seen on film in *Frayed*, *We Go Way Back*, and the upcoming feature *We Need to Talk about Kevin*. In addition to performing off-off-Broadway, his stage work includes shows with Book-It Repertory Theatre, Idaho Repertory Theatre, Shakespeare Santa Cruz, and Southern Rep. **Linda Gehringer** (Mary) has played leading roles in theatres across America including Arena Stage, Atlantic Theater Company, Centerstage, Dallas Theater Center, the Goodman Theatre, the Huntington Theatre Company, La Jolla Playhouse, the Mark Taper Forum, and South Coast Repertory. She appeared in the film *As Good As It Gets*, and her television work includes *Ally McBeal*, *Cold Case*, *Columbo*, *Evening Shade*, *Frasier*, *Gilmore Girls*, *Justified*, *The Larry Sanders Show*, *Law & Order: Criminal Intent*, *Raising Hope*, *Weeds*, *The West Wing*, and *Without a Trace*. **Leo Marks** (Pete) was a founding member of New York's Elevator Repair Service and won an Obie Award for *Tale of 2 Cities: An American Joyride on Multiple Tracks*. He has performed for respected companies such as Actors Theatre of Louisville, Center Theatre Group, Intiman Theatre, the Old Globe, Pasadena Playhouse, Playwrights Horizons, the Shakespeare Theatre Company, and South Coast Rep. His TV work includes *Frasier*, *Gilmore Girls*, *K-Ville*, *The New Adventures of Old Christine*, *NYPD Blue*, *The Practice*, *Prison Break*, and *Six Feet Under*. **Tyler Pierce** (Bill) last appeared at Berkeley Rep in *Crime and Punishment*. His New York credits include the Atlantic, Circle Rep East, HERE, New Dramatists, New Georges, New York Classical Theatre, and Theatre for a New Audience. His regional credits include ATL, the Guthrie Theater, McCarter Theatre Center, Pasadena Playhouse, and the Studio Theatre. Pierce has appeared in tours of *Barriers* and *Legends*; in the films *Alchera*, *Best Friends*, *The Kiss*, *A Professional*, and *The Rub*; and on TV shows such as *Asteroid*, *Kidnapped*, and *Third Watch*.

Nicholson has recruited four **talented designers** for the premiere of this play. **Scott Bradley** (scenic design) won Drama Desk Awards for the Broadway premieres of *Joe Turner's Come and Gone* and *Seven Guitars*. Berkeley Rep audiences will remember his sets for *Eurydice*, *The Glass Menagerie*, *Joe Turner*, *Journey to the West*, and *The Notebooks of Leonardo da Vinci*. **Callie Floor** (costume design) has designed for many local theatres including American Conservatory Theater, Aurora, Lorraine Hansberry Theatre, the Magic, Marin Theatre Company, and the San Francisco Mime Troupe. She is the resident designer for the California Revels. **Alexander V. Nichols** (lighting design) has created scenery, lights, and projections for 21

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previous shows at Berkeley Rep. His work on *Wishful Drinking* moved to Broadway and *Taking Over* ended up off Broadway. He also has numerous credits at theatre, opera, and dance companies across America. **Matt Starritt** (sound design) has designed for the Alley Theatre, Book-It, Cornerstone Theater Company, Intiman, Seattle Rep, Seattle Shakespeare Company, the Strawberry Theatre Workshop, the University of Washington School of Drama, the Washington Ensemble Theatre, Waxie Moon, and Zoe | Juniper Dance Company. The stage manager for this production is **Kathy Rose**.

During the run of this show, theatre lovers can enjoy dozens of **special events**:

- *Low-cost previews* take place on Friday, October 7; Saturday, October 8; Sunday, October 9; and Tuesday, October 11.
- *Opening-night festivities* are held on Wednesday, October 12 with the generous support of Bistro Liaison, TCHO, and Raymond Vineyards.
- *Teen Night* begins at 6:30 PM on Friday, October 14 and includes a presentation by a member of the artistic team, dinner provided by Phil's Sliders, and a performance of the show. Tickets are only \$10 for high-school students. For details, call (510) 647-2973 or e-mail [teencouncil@berkeleyrep.org](mailto:teencouncil@berkeleyrep.org).
- Free 30-minute *docent presentations* about the show take place at 7:00 PM on the following Tuesday and Thursday evenings: October 11, October 13, October 18, October 20, October 25, October 27, November 1, November 3, November 8, November 10, November 15, and November 17.
- *Post-play discussions* moderated by theatre professionals follow the 8:00 PM shows on Thursday, October 27; Tuesday, November 1; and Friday, November 11.
- And, on most weekend evenings, patrons can whet their palates for the play with *free tastings* from local culinary artisans one hour before curtain. For a full list of upcoming events, click [berkeleyrep.org](http://berkeleyrep.org).

In the last six years, six shows developed at Berkeley Rep have ended up on Broadway. Seven more landed off Broadway, two turned into films, and others have toured the nation. So don't miss the **new season of exhilarating plays** at the Theatre. It begins in September when a legendary actress tells her life story in the premiere of *Rita Moreno: Life Without Makeup*, followed by *How*

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to *Write a New Book for the Bible*. For the holidays, Kneehigh Theatre Company comes back to the Bay Area with *The Wild Bride*, a vivid fairy tale from the creators of *Brief Encounter*. Next Jonathan Moscone directs *Ghost Light*, a fable for San Francisco written by Tony Taccone. Then Steven Epp – the star of *Figaro* and *The Miser* – returns to unleash another Molière masterpiece with *A Doctor in Spite of Himself*. Finally Associate Artistic Director Les Waters takes on John Logan’s Tony Award-winning *Red*, and Dael Orlandersmith delivers a fierce and unforgettable performance in the world premiere of *Black n Blue Boys / Broken Men*. As an added attraction, Berkeley Rep is offering a special presentation of *In Paris* next spring, a beautiful romance starring Mikhail Baryshnikov.

### **Get the best seats for all these shows at the lowest prices by subscribing to Berkeley Rep.**

Choose three or more plays and guarantee your seats for events that are sure to sell out. **Subscribe to five or more plays and get first shot at seats for Baryshnikov.** Ticket packages begin as low as \$81, meaning subscribers can save as much as 26% on every ticket. Berkeley Rep also offers generous discounts for senior citizens, theatregoers under 30, and employees of nursery, elementary, and secondary schools. Subscriptions are selling fast because of last season’s string of hits – so order now for the best seats.

Individual tickets to this and other shows in the new season **start at only \$29**. Additional savings are available for groups, seniors, students, and anyone under 30 years of age – meaning **discounted tickets** can be obtained for as little as \$14.50.

The Thrust Stage is located at 2025 Addison Street, only half a block from BART and near bus lines, bike routes, and parking lots. **For tickets or information**, call (510) 647-2949 or toll-free at (888) 4-BRT-Tix – or simply click [berkeleyrep.org](http://berkeleyrep.org).

### **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. 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 six years, the company has helped send six shows to Broadway. Seven more landed off Broadway, one moved to London, two turned into films, and others have toured the nation. Come see tomorrow’s plays today at Berkeley Rep.

###

# HOW TO WRITE A NEW BOOK FOR THE BIBLE

## FACT SHEET

**WHO:** Written by Bill Cain  
 Directed by Kent Nicholson  
 Designed by Scott Bradley (sets), Callie Floor (costumes), Alexander V. Nichols (lights), and Matt Starritt (sound)  
 Starring Aaron Blakely (Paul), Linda Gehringer (Mary), Leo Marks (Pete), and Tyler Pierce (Bill)

**WHAT:** *How to Write a New Book for the Bible*, the debut of a poignant new play about caregiving from the award-winning author of *Equivocation* and *9 Circles*

**WHERE:** Berkeley Repertory Theatre  
 Thrust Stage, 2025 Addison Street @ Shattuck, Berkeley, CA 94704

**WHEN:** **October 7 – November 20, 2011**

SUN	MON	TUE ■	WED	THU ■	FRI	SAT
					<b>7 OCT</b> 8P	<b>8</b> 8P
<b>9</b> 7P	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> 8P	<b>12</b> 8P	<b>13</b> 8	<b>14</b> 8P TN	<b>15</b> 2/8P
<b>16</b> 2/7P	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> 8	<b>19</b> 7	<b>20</b> 2/8	<b>21</b> 8P	<b>22</b> 8P
<b>23</b> 2/7P	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> 8	<b>26</b> 7	<b>27</b> 8P	<b>28</b> 8P	<b>29</b> 2/8P
<b>30</b> 2/7P	<b>31</b>	<b>1 NOV</b> 8P	<b>2</b> 7	<b>3</b> 8	<b>4</b> 8P	<b>5</b> 2/8P
<b>6</b> 2/7P	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> 8	<b>9</b> 7	<b>10</b> 8	<b>11</b> 8P	<b>12</b> 2/8P
<b>13</b> 2/7P	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> 8	<b>16</b> 7	<b>17</b> 2/8	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> 2/8P
<b>20</b> 2/7P						

P PREVIEW  
 TN TEEN NIGHT  
 ✕ OPENING NIGHT

D POST-SHOW DISCUSSION  
 T TASTING  
 ■ DOCENT PRESENTATIONS  
 EVERY TUE & THU 7PM

- Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays @ 8:00 PM
- Wednesdays @ 7:00 PM
- Saturdays @ 2:00 PM and 8:00 PM
- Sundays @ 2:00 PM and 7:00 PM
- No matinees on 10/8, 10/9, or 10/22
- Special weekday matinees on 10/20 & 11/17
- No performance on 11/18

### Special Events:

Opening night: Wednesday 10/12 @ 8:00 PM

Teen night: Friday 10/14 @ 6:30 PM

Pre-show docent talks: Tuesdays 10/11, 10/18, 10/25, 11/1, 11/8 & 11/15 and Thursdays 10/13, 10/20, 10/27, 11/3, 11/10 & 11/17 @ 7:00 PM

Post-play discussions: Thursday 10/27, Tuesday 11/1, and Friday 11/11 @ 8:00 PM

**HOW MUCH:** **\$14.50 - \$73** (subject to change)

- Discounts:
- Half-price tickets available for anyone under 30 years of age
  - \$10 discount for students and seniors one hour before curtain
  - Groups of 10 or more, contact (510) 647-2918 or groups@berkeleyrep.org

**PHOTOS:** <http://www.berkeleyrep.org/press/photos-11bi.asp>

**TIX & INFO:** (510) 647-2949 – [berkeleyrep.org](http://berkeleyrep.org) – (888) 4-BRT-Tix (toll-free)