



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**BERKELEY PLAYHOUSE CONTINUES SIXTH SEASON WITH
THE MUSIC MAN
February 13–March 23, 2014**

Book, Music, and Lyrics by Meredith Willson

Berkeley, CA (January 23, 2014) – **Berkeley Playhouse** continues its sixth season with the Tony Award-winning classic, Meredith Willson’s **THE MUSIC MAN**. Directed by **Marissa Wolf** (Crowded Fire Theater, Magic Theatre, Cutting Ball Theater), Music Direction by **Kevin Roland** (Berkeley Playhouse, Signature Theater) and choreography by **Matthew McCoy**.

THE MUSIC MAN runs from **February 13** to **March 23** at the Julia Morgan Theater. Tickets (\$17-\$60) are now on-sale at www.berkeleyplayhouse.org or by phone at **(510) 845-8542 x351**.

Oh, there’s trouble my friends, right here in River City and Harold Hill has the antidote! Full of heart, wit, and beautiful music **THE MUSIC MAN** opens with the arrival of Hill in River City, Iowa on the 4th of July, 1912. Claiming he can keep small-town ideals alive with an all-boys marching band, Hill charms the townspeople into purchasing instruments and band uniforms. However, Marian the Librarian sees through his schemes, at least until she falls in love with the irrepressible con artist. Overflowing with a parade of classic songs including “Goodnight, My Someone,” “Gary, Indiana,” “Till There Was You,” and “Seventy-Six Trombones,” **THE MUSIC MAN** is a Broadway classic no family should miss!

Marissa Wolf, Artistic Director of Crowded Fire Theatre, helms **THE MUSIC MAN** in her musical theatre-directing debut. Says Wolf, “the heart of **THE MUSIC MAN** lies in the idea that music is transformative. Without music (and the arts!), the little town of River City, Iowa is drab, hollow, and stiff. It is the music itself, the belief in the power of music, which brings vibrancy and warmth to the town. Suddenly an embittered school board finds its harmony, and the banned books in the library are read with zeal. This story of redemption and vitality through music resonates deeply today as we fight to keep arts funding in public schools.”

The cutbacks to music and arts funding for public schools is a concern for Berkeley Playhouse, who has partnered with **51Oakland** for the run of **THE MUSIC MAN**.

51Oakland is dedicated to ensuring that ALL Oakland public school students have equal access to art and music education, by providing instruments, art supplies, and working with teaching artists to volunteer their time to Oakland schools.

“We are extremely excited to partner with Berkeley Playhouse, an organization that produces high-quality performances involving youth in the Bay Area, thereby creating a stronger community and nurturing the amazing youth talent the Bay Area has to offer,” says 51Oakland Co-founder Jason Hoffman. Berkeley Playhouse will give any patron who brings a donation of a used musical instrument or new art supplies a 10% discount off tickets to **THE MUSIC MAN**. At the end of the shows run, all donations will be given to **51Oakland**.

THE MUSIC MAN will feature **Aidan Park** (international tour of *Miss Saigon* (Thuy), *Romeo and Juliet* (Romeo) at the SF Shakespeare Festival, *First Person Shooter* at SF Playhouse, *After The Quake* at Berkeley Rep, and NBC’s *Trauma*) as Harold Hill and **Lexie Papedo** (*Tales of the City* (Swing) at American Conservatory Theater, *Crazy, Just Like Me* (Lauren) at The York Theater, *The Salt Plays* (Penelope) at Shotgun Players) will portray Marian Paroo.

A double-cast ensemble of 25 youth and teens from Berkeley Playhouse’s educational programs will be performing, in addition to lead youth roles featuring alternating performances by **Jonah Broscow** and **Rachel Chin** as Winthrop Paroo, **Bessie Zolno** and **Majesty Smith** as Zaneeta Shinn, and **Eliza Grown** and **Malia Lee** as Amaryllis.

THE MUSIC MAN also features an exceptional adult ensemble including: **Aejay Mitchell** (Ragged Wing Ensemble, Broadway By the Bay) as Mayor Shinn; **Sara Mitchell** (Aurora Theatre, Shotgun Players, SF Playhouse, Cutting Ball Theatre) as Eulalie Shinn; **Michael Uy Kelly** (Cutting Ball Theatre, Aurora Theatre, Impact Theatre) as Charlie Cowell; **Sandi V. Weldon** as Mrs. Paroo; **RJ Castaneda** as Ewart Dunlop; **Tom Curtain** as Olin Britt; **Mary Gibboney** as Maud Dunlop; **Michelle Ianiro** as Ethel Toffelmier; **Bonnie Laffer** as Alma Hix; **Dedrick Weathersby** as Oliver Hix; **Benjamin Nguyen** as Tommy Djilas; **Billy Raphael** as Marcellus Washburn; **Sandi Rubay** as Mrs. Squires; **Aaron Vanderbeek** as Jacey Squires. Also featuring **Sean Libiran**, **Kelvyn Mitchell**, **Betsy Gloria Picart**, and **Ally Reardon**.

FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:

Show Run: February 13–March 23, 2014

Previews: Thursday, February 13 at 7:00pm and Saturday, February 15 at 1:00pm

Opens: Saturday, February 15 at 6:00pm

Press: Saturday, February 15 at 6:00pm; Sunday, February 16 at 12:00pm, or by arrangement

All performances: Friday 7:00pm; Saturday at 1:00pm and 6:00pm; Sunday at 12:00pm and 5:00pm. Additional performance on Thursday, March 20 at 7:00pm

WHERE

Berkeley Playhouse at the Julia Morgan Theater. 2640 College Ave. Berkeley, CA 94704

TICKETS

For tickets (\$17–\$60) or more information, the public may visit www.berkeleyplayhouse.org or call **510-845-8542 x351**. Group rate available.

PHOTOS

High-resolution photos for **THE MUSIC MAN** are available at berkeleyplayhouse.org/about/press-room/ or upon request by emailing ken@berkeleyplayhouse.org