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Berkeley Playhouse Welcomes New Education Director

Berkeley, CA (April 16, 2015) – **Berkeley Playhouse** is pleased to announce the addition of **Rachel Eisner** to their full time staff. With over 80 extremely qualified individuals applying during the three months-long search, Eisner's proven commitment to Berkeley Playhouse made the decision by Producing Artistic Director **Daren A.C. Carollo** and Founding Artistic Director **Elizabeth McKoy** an easy one. She begins July 6, 2015.

Last year Eisner worked alongside McKoy as Assistant Director for the Imagination Player's production of *Disney's Mulan Jr.*

"The first time I saw Rachel work with kids I thought that she was perfect for the Playhouse. She is one of the most gifted theatre educators I have ever worked with. She exudes intelligence, experience, humor and warmth and is also a fierce advocate for youth in underserved populations," says McKoy; "we could not be happier."

Eisner stated, "I am thrilled to be returning [to Berkeley Playhouse] as the Education Director. I look forward to bringing a new energy and perspective to Berkeley Playhouse while continuing to cultivate the home our Bay Area families have come to know and love. I will help solidify and strengthen our education programming so that each student's experience is tailored to their needs, provide accessible arts education, and continue to foster a creative and safe space for artists and students alike. I cannot wait to collaborate with the phenomenal 'family' at the Playhouse as we continue to transform the lives of our community through theatre."

Eisner has a range of experience within the arts, from acting and stage-managing to choreographing and administration. She recently completed the prestigious Education Fellowship at Berkeley Repertory Theatre and has worked as a Teaching Artist for the past four years in both Los Angeles and the Bay Area.

Eisner will head Berkeley Playhouse's Education department, which consists of our year-round School of Musical Theatre featuring nearly 100 classes and camps each year; and two youth acting companies: Imagination Players for grades 3 through 7, and Teen Stage for grades 7 through 12. This summer Berkeley Playhouse will hold 44 summer camps and productions of *13 The Musical*, and *The Laramie Project*.

"To say that we are overjoyed is an understatement. Her leadership at Berkeley Playhouse will allow us to expand our outreach program to kids that would not otherwise be able to afford theatre training, grow classes and camps, and professionalize our education administrative and communication strategies," stated Carollo.

Carollo continued, “Rachel will complete our new Education Department. She will work alongside our School of Musical Theatre Director, **Brittany Danielle** and our Imagination Players and Teen Stage Producer, **Nayia Kuvetakis**.”

Before Eisner discovered her passion for theatre and education, she worked in various aspects of theatre arts, and was able to direct in Cal Performance’s Zellerbach Hall. In her final year at Cal, Eisner sat on the Board of Directors as the External Affairs Director for BareStage Productions, Cal’s student run theatre group. Some of her favorite stage roles include Lady Macbeth in *Macbeth*, Winnifred in *Once Upon a Mattress*, and Ethel Savage in *The Curious Savage*. Rachel has a Bachelors Degree in Sociology from UC Berkeley with a minor in Education.

About Berkeley Playhouse

Berkeley Playhouse’s mission is to create theatre and programs that engage, ignite, and celebrate diverse Bay Area audiences through a thriving school of musical theatre, a professional main stage season, educational outreach, and a commitment to the development of new family musicals. In support of our mission, we maintain and enhance the historic Julia Morgan Theater. A commitment to community, diversity, inclusion, and empowerment is at the heart of our work.

Berkeley Playhouse was founded in 2007 by actor, director, and teacher **Elizabeth McKoy**. In 2014, McKoy and the Board of Directors hired Producing Artistic Director **Daren A.C. Carollo**, who with Managing Director **Lauren Hewitt** continues to develop Berkeley Playhouse into a professional musical theatre providing people of all ages a unique and sophisticated experience. Additionally, Berkeley Playhouse robust School of Musical Theatre offers a range of skill and performance classes for ages 3–17 through several after-school and school break educational programs. In 2009, Berkeley Playhouse made the historic Julia Morgan Theater its permanent home.

The 328-seat Julia Morgan Theatre is an intimate space for patrons to feel like their “home.” Designed by famed architect Julia Morgan and built in 1910, it became Berkeley Playhouse’s permanent home in 2009.

PHOTO:

A High-resolution photo of **Rachel Eisner** is available at berkeleyplayhouse.org/about/press-room/press-photos/#rachel or upon request by emailing ken@berkeleyplayhouse.org

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