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ROCK 'N' ROLL MUSICAL *MEMPHIS* TO PERFORM AT BERKELEY PLAYHOUSE

Performances begin at the historic Julia Morgan Theater beginning February 14, 2020

BERKELEY (January 14, 2020) – Berkeley Playhouse continues its 12th season of professional theater for family audiences with *Memphis*, the Tony-Award winning story of love, soul, and rock 'n' roll.

Memphis tells the story of Huey Calhoun (loosely based on real-life Memphis disc jockey, Dewey Phillips) and Felicia Farrell as they embark on a journey of love and music while facing prejudice in 1950's Memphis.

SYNOPSIS: In Memphis, Tennessee, Huey Calhoun, a white department store employee, discovers his love of rock 'n' roll. He discovers Felicia Farrell, a black singer who performs in the segregated night club owned by her brother Delray. Upon being fired from his job, Huey gets a job as a disc jockey for a local radio station. He begins to play the black music. His producer is a little skeptical about the music Huey wants to play, until the ratings come in.

Huey, fulfilling a promise he made to Felicia, plays her songs on his radio show, starting the "Golden Era of Rock 'n' Roll". Huey and Felicia fall in love, but they must keep it secret because of the backlash they fear from the public. One night, a group of white men catch Huey and Felicia kissing and assault them.

Huey continues to rise in popularity and Felicia is soon discovered by a New York producer. Felicia is offered an opportunity of a lifetime, but Huey struggles with leaving the only home he's ever known—Memphis.

THE CAST: *Memphis* Features: Sean Okuniewicz As *Huey Calhoun*, Loreigna Sinclair As *Felicia Farrell*, Jourdan Olivier-Verde As *Del Ray Farrell*, Deborah Del Mastro As *Gladys Calhoun*, Cj Smith As *Mr Simmons*, Jon-David Randle As *Gator*, Cadarius Mayberry As *Bobby*, Charles Woodson Parker As *Mr Collins / Dj / Father / Gordon Grant*, Jordan Smith As *Buck Wiley / Martin Holton / Photographer*, Marcel Saunder As *Wailin Joe / Rev Hobson / Dj / Trio / Ensemble*, Jennifer Stark As *Clara / Mother*, Joe Ayers As *Frank Dryer / Ensemble*, Chanel Tilghman As *Ethel / Selma / Ensemble*, Z Hansen As *Perry Como / Ensemble*, Maya Phillips As *Bessie / Ensemble*, Jennifer Frazier As *Laverne / Ensemble*, Hanah Rose Nardone As *Teenager / Ensemble*, Claire Noelle Pearson As *Double Dutch Girl / Ensemble*, Kamaria Mckinney As *Double Dutch Girl / Ensemble*, Montel Anthony Nord As *Trio / Ensemble*, And Jeffrey May Hyche As *Trio / Ensemble*.

PREVIEWS: Friday, February 14 at 7 pm, and Saturday, February 15 at 1 pm

OPENS: February 15 at 7 pm

PRESS: February 15 at 7 pm

CLOSES: Sunday, March 15 at 2 pm

PERFORMANCES: Performances run Friday through Sunday, and select Thursday evenings, beginning February 14, 2020. Press night will be held on Saturday, February 15 at 7pm. Tickets (ranging from \$25—\$44) are available by calling (510) 845-8542 x351 or by visiting online at berkeleyplayhouse.org. Ticket prices are subject to change without notice. Due to the unique performance schedule, please check the website for specific dates and times. All performances at Berkeley Playhouse at The Julia Morgan Theater, 2640 College Ave., Berkeley, CA 94704.

TICKETS: For tickets (\$25 for previews, \$29–\$44 for regular performances) or more information, the public may call (510) 845-8542 x351 or visit berkeleyplayhouse.org. Group rates available for 10 or more people. Ticket prices are subject to change at any time.

PAY WHAT YOU CAN: There will be one “Pay What You Can” performance on Thursday, February 27 at 7 pm. The promotion is cash only at the door one hour prior to performance time. We request a donation of \$20 per ticket but are able to accept a minimum of \$5 per ticket.

ABOUT BERKELEY PLAYHOUSE: Founded in 2007 by professional theater actor, director, and teacher for over 25 years, Elizabeth McKoy, Berkeley Playhouse’s mission is to create theater and programs that engage, ignite, and celebrate diverse Bay Area audiences through a thriving conservatory, a professional mainstage 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 gratefully acknowledges support from Madonna Estates Winery, City of Berkeley Civic Arts Commission, Fleishhacker Foundation, American Eagle Outfitters, Inc., Peet’s Coffee, Extreme Pizza, The Imagination Foundation, and individual donors.