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MEDIA RELEASE

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San Jose Rep Presents the West Coast Premiere of the Critically Acclaimed, *Groundswell*.

***Groundswell* to replace *Landscape with Weapon* in the Rep's second show slot.**

SAN JOSE, CA. (July 2, 2009) — Today, San Jose Repertory Theatre's Artistic Director Rick Lombardo announced that the West Coast premiere of the critically acclaimed, South African masterpiece, ***Groundswell***, will replace *Landscape with Weapon* in the Rep's 2009-10 season. Written by accomplished South African playwright **Ian Bruce**, ***Groundswell*** is an intense political drama about post-apartheid society. ***Groundswell*** will run from **October 10** through **November 8, 2009**.

Season tickets for Artistic Director Rick Lombardo's inaugural season, which also includes *As You Like It*, *A Christmas Story*, *The Weir*, *Ain't Misbehavin'* and *Sonia Flew* are available on-line at www.sjrep.com, by phone at 408.367.7255 or in person at the San Jose Rep Box Office at 101 Paseo de San Antonio. Prices range from \$151.00 - \$325.00 for a six play subscription. Discounted subscriptions for students, seniors and teachers are available.

"*Landscape with Weapon* will certainly be making an appearance on our stage, just in a future season," comments Artistic Director **Rick Lombardo**. "We had to postpone our production due to a newly planned film of the play being made in the U.K. I'm very pleased, however; that I was able to bring another major premiere of an important play with equally international scope to the Rep stage in its place."

Groundswell is a haunting, psychological thriller about dashed dreams, enduring hope and the seductive promises of a transforming society. Set in a guest house on the jagged edge of the South African diamond coast, Johan and Thami, an ex-cop and a gardener from starkly contrasting backgrounds, maintain this beachfront lodge during the off-season while looking for one last chance to better their lives. When Smith, a wealthy businessman, arrives at the lodge on a foggy evening, the two desperate men see Smith as the perfect investor for their "get-rich" scheme to buy a government-run diamond concession. Soon, the three men find themselves in a power struggle fueled by greed, desperation and entitlement. ***Groundswell*** premiered in South Africa in 2005 and off-Broadway at The New Group in 2009. The Rep will be the second theater in America to produce this play.

Groundswell received rave reviews during its off-Broadway run earlier this year. The New York Times hails, "engrossing ... a cross between Mamet and Fugard ... a suspense-stoked tale of desperate men willing to go to dangerous lengths to secure one last chance at a big prize." The Associated Press says ***Groundswell*** is, "skillfully

constructed ... a thriller with a thoughtful examination of the after-effects of apartheid in present-day South Africa." Variety calls it, "a more eloquent argument for justice than any statistic or photograph!"

"When I select plays, I'm excited by work that asks more questions than it answers. This is certainly the case with **Groundswell**," Lombardo continues. "How do we live together after apartheid? Where did all the promise and hope go? Who bears responsibility for the sins of the past, and can we move beyond it? These are wonderfully universal questions - certainly not limited to South Africa. Ian Bruce is an accomplished South African playwright, one who values dramas that probe complex constructs with powerful and relevant plays. I look forward to sharing his work with our community."

Ian Bruce was trained as an actor in Johannesburg and appeared briefly in the early nineteen seventies on the South Africa stage and in early SABC TV productions. During a long political exile in Holland, he co-founded the Tekhwini Theatre Foundation with Anthony Akerman and Joseph Mosikili. He also began writing, and his first play, *Falls The Shadow*, won a Dutch Arts Council best new play award. His only work at the time to evade South Africa's censorship laws, *My Father's House*, was produced by PACT in 1989, and directed by the late Francois Swart. After his return to South Africa in the early nineteen nineties, Bruce won a Radio SA award for his play, *Kept in Mind*. In 1998, he began working with the New Africa Theatre Association for which he and his wife, Ina, have created a host of productions, educational plays and Industrial Theatre works. The writing of **Groundswell** is special to Bruce as it marks a return, after many years, to the kind of probing drama he most values. He is the current executive director of the New Africa Theatre Association.

About the Rep

San Jose Rep is the premier non-profit, professional theatre company in the South Bay, presenting six main stage productions each year. As a major contributor to South Bay's cultural community for 28 years, the Rep's mission is to engage, entertain and inspire people. The Rep produces innovative theatrical performances that offer fresh perspectives into the human condition, educational programs that promote life-long learning, and outreach initiatives that benefit our diverse community. For more information, visit www.SJRep.com

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