



MEDIA RELEASE

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SAN JOSE REPERTORY THEATRE ANNOUNCES ARTISTIC DIRECTOR RICK LOMBARDO'S INAUGURAL SEASON

The 2009-2010 Season Begins August 2009

SAN JOSE, Ca. (February 19, 2009) — San Jose Repertory Theatre announces Artistic Director Rick Lombardo's inaugural season, a season that embraces the need to love, to laugh, to celebrate, and to connect. The season is an artful blend of timeless stories — a diverse season balanced with a rich mix of contemporary, classic and daring work, alongside Tony® Award-winning entertainment.

"I am proud to announce a season that reflects the Rep's past, but also focuses on our future," Lombardo comments. "I believe these plays will resonate and connect with our community, and provide stories and experiences that will enrich while they entertain. Our audiences will see diversity, excitement and a wide variety of ideas. Each of these works is comprised of stories that contain ideas and themes that have great capacity to touch and inspire us all — and in these times, that's what I care most about in the plays I select."

The Rep launches the season with one of Shakespeare's most sophisticated and bewitching comedies, ***As You Like It***. Next is the U.S. premiere of ***Landscape with Weapon***, which is a riveting examination of the intersection of morality and technology. Back by popular demand is the holiday classic, ***A Christmas Story***. In the New Year, the Rep presents the 1997-98 recipient of the "Laurence Olivier Best New Play," ***The Weir***, by Conor McPherson. In the spring, the joint will be jumpin' to the musical stylings of "Fats" Waller with the Tony® Award-winning musical revue, ***Ain't Misbehavin'***. The season concludes with a funny and moving family drama, ***Sonia Flew***.

"Rick's inaugural season is the perfect blend of classic, contemporary and cutting edge work," said the Rep's Managing Director, **Nick Nichols**. "This combination of plays showcases great playwrights, great stories and gives us a taste of where Rick will be artistically taking us in the future. These plays reflect the diversity of our community and tell important stories that will engage, entertain and inspire."

The season begins with one of Shakespeare's most enthralling comedies, ***As You Like It***, featuring some of the Bard's most memorable characters, including the sardonic and lustful clown Touchstone, the melancholy philosopher Jacques, the love-besotted Orlando and Shakespeare's most brilliant and provocative heroine, Rosalind. In order to teach the man she desires how to love a woman, Rosalind must first disguise herself, and in the end she changes the entire world around her. Artistic Director **Rick Lombardo's** inaugural production will emphasize the transformative power of romantic love and nature's force to heal the scars of political and technological oppression.

Next, renowned British playwright **Joe Penhall**, the creative mind behind the brilliant comedy *Blue/Orange*, ventures into the murky terrain of military technology with the U.S. premiere of **Landscape with Weapon**. **Kirsten Brandt**, who has directed *This Wonderful Life*, *Rabbit Hole* and *Splitting Infinity* for the Rep, helms this production of **Landscape with Weapon**. Ned is the genius behind an advanced weapons technology system so sophisticated it promises to revolutionize warfare. Working with the British government, he has created a hi-tech platform for self-navigating, flying drones intended for military surveillance. **Landscape with Weapon** provides an explosive exploration of moral conflict and public responsibility arising from the creation of modern warfare, begging the question: do scientists have a moral responsibility for their inventions?

In November, back by popular demand is the modern day holiday tradition, **A Christmas Story**, adapted by **Philip Grecian**, based upon the movie written by **Jean Shepherd**, **Leigh Brown** and **Bob Clark**. Christmas is a time of great expectations, especially through the eyes of a child. For nine-year-old Ralphie Parker that great expectation is a genuine Red Ryder 200 Shot Carbine Action Air Rifle. Hailed by the San Jose Mercury News as "... wacky and wistful and fresh as a fir ... San Jose Rep's version is a charming surprise package." San Francisco Chronicle adds, "...the cast wrap it all up in a nice neat bow of Christmas joy." **A Christmas Story** will delight the whole family and fill everyone with the spirit of the season.

Coming in January, it's the beautiful and haunting play that won Laurence Olivier's Award for Best New Play, **The Weir**, by **Conor McPherson**. Directed by the Rep's Artistic Director **Rick Lombardo**, **The Weir** is a riveting story of love, loss and loneliness. A rural Irish pub is the gathering place for lonely souls, an establishment where locals seek refuge from the bluster of the outside world by telling stories to break the silence of their isolation. Valerie is a newcomer to the area when she is brought to the pub by her real estate agent, Finbar. When the men learn that she has just moved into a house considered "haunted," the tales of the supernatural begin. Small mysteries evolve into eerie astonishments as the ghostly storytelling soars into liberating confessions. Half-hidden wounds are revealed throughout an evening of drink and testosterone-laden rivalry for Valerie's attention, bringing these drinking buddies together in unexpected and deeply felt ways, and finally compelling Valerie to reveal a personal and chilling tale of her own.

In March, the joint will be jumpin' to the music of Thomas "Fats" Waller in this Tony® Award-winning musical revue, **Ain't Misbehavin'**. Five phenomenal artists and a jumpin' jazz band take you through the pain and triumphs of the African-American experience during the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s and 30s. It was the Golden Age with places like the Cotton Club and Savoy Ballroom where snappy swing music, snazzy jazz and the stride piano infused the energy of the country. Life and love are song and dance in this sexy, funny, jazzy musical featuring the seminal Fats Waller tunes: "Honeysuckle Rose," "Ain't Misbehavin'," "Black & Blue," "The Joint is Jumpin'" and "I've Got a Feeling I'm Falling."

The Rep's last play of the season hosts the regional premiere of **Sonia Flew**, penned by Elliot Norton Award winner, **Melinda Lopez**. **Lopez** has been acknowledged by the Kennedy Center Charlotte Woolard Award for "Most Promising New Voice in the American Theatre." **Sonia Flew** questions parental sacrifice, familial responsibility and patriotism in times when worlds collide. Sonia's parents sent her to the United States during the Cuban revolution and she never saw them again. Thirty years later and living in the Midwest, Sonia, a fiercely devoted mother of two, has created a home that embraces her own cultural traditions along with her husband's Jewish religion. Three months after 9/11, their son announces he is quitting college to join the army. Sonia combats grief and terrifying abandonment through political forces that once again threaten to shatter her family. Can she come to terms with her secret past, her parents' decision, her children's choices and her duty to her adopted country?

Subscriptions are now available to renewing subscribers and reservations are being taken for new subscriptions. Prices range from **\$151.00 - \$325.00** for a six play subscription. Discounted subscriptions for students, seniors and teachers are available. For subscription tickets, call **408.367.7255** or buy online at www.SJRep.com.

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About the Rep

San Jose Rep is an award-winning 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 29 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.



2009-2010 SEASON SCHEDULE

AS YOU LIKE IT

Written by William Shakespeare
Directed by Artistic Director Rick Lombardo
August 29 – September 27, 2009
(Opening Night: September 4, 2009)

LANDSCAPE WITH WEAPON – U.S. Premiere

Written by Joe Penhall
Directed by Kirsten Brandt
October 10 - November 8, 2009
(Opening Night: October 16, 2009)

A CHRISTMAS STORY

Adapted by Philip Grecian
Based upon the movie written by Jean Shepherd, Leigh Brown and Bob Clark
November 21 - December 20, 2009
(Opening Night: November 27, 2009)

THE WEIR

Written by Conor McPherson
Laurence Olivier BBC Award as the "Best New Play" of 1997-98
Directed by Artistic Director Rick Lombardo
January 23 - February 21, 2010
(Opening Night: January 29, 2010)

AIN'T MISBEHAVIN'

A co-production with Arizona Theatre Company and Cleveland Playhouse
Music by Thomas "Fats" Waller
Based on an idea by Murray Horwitz and Richard Maltby, Jr.

March 20 - April 18, 2010
(Opening Night: March 26, 2010)

SONIA FLEW – Regional Premiere
Written by Melinda Lopez
May 8 - June 6, 2010
(Opening Night: May 14, 2010)