



MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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The West Coast Premiere of *MITCH ALBOM'S TUESDAYS WITH MORRIE* Lands at San Jose Repertory Theatre October 16 – November 14, 2004

SAN JOSE (September 18, 2004)—Mitch Albom's *New York Times* Bestseller *Tuesdays with Morrie* comes to the stage for its West Coast premiere! *Tuesdays with Morrie* is the heartwarming true story of how sports journalist Mitch Albom reconnected with his college mentor, Morrie Schwartz, with whom he'd lost touch for sixteen years.

After Mitch saw Morrie on the ABC-TV program, "Nightline," discussing his struggle with Lou Gehrig's disease, he called his old teacher and flew to Boston for a reunion. There began a series of weekly visits, rekindling their loving teacher-student relationship while tackling a larger subject in their final "class"—the meaning of life. *Tuesdays with Morrie* details those Tuesday visits, and the shared reflections on love, work, marriage, envy, children, forgiveness, community and aging, all seen through the eyes of a wise old man who is down to his last few days on earth.

Tuesdays With Morrie has been on the *New York Times* best seller list for over seven years, selling more than five million copies worldwide, and has been published in more than 31 languages. Oprah Winfrey bought the rights to the best-selling book and turned it into an Emmy Award-winning made-for-television movie starring the late Jack Lemmon. The stage version, written by the award-winning playwright Jeffrey Hatcher and author Mitch Albom, received its first production in a 2003 summer series at Vassar College and was produced Off-Broadway at the Minetta Lane Theatre November 19, 2003 through February 23, 2004, where it ran for 108 performances and 20 previews.

This production is directed by Richard Stein, executive director of The Laguna Playhouse, and marks the San Jose Repertory Theatre's first co-production with the Southern California theatre. Starring Jack Axelrod as Morrie and Daniel Nathan Spector as Mitch—two of regional theatre's finest actors—this story is sure to delight the student in all of us.

See FACT SHEET for details on dates, times, pricing and ticket information.
See ARTISTIC PROFILES for more information on the creative team.

Under the direction of Artistic Director Timothy Near and Managing Director Alexandra Urbanowski, San Jose Repertory Theatre stimulates, celebrates and enhances understanding of ourselves and others through the shared experience of live theater by producing new plays and classics marked by innovative interpretations and a reflection and inclusion of our community and the world in which we live. See more about the theatre, and this production, at www.sjrep.com.

FACT SHEET (use for calendar listings and PSAs)

WHAT: San Jose Repertory Theatre presents *Mitch Albom's Tuesdays with Morrie*
 A co-production with Laguna Playhouse
 In this hilarious and moving story, a sports journalist reconnects with his ailing mentor, Morrie Schwartz. During a series of weekly visits, the two men rekindle their wholly unique teacher-student relationship while tackling a larger subject in their final "class" – the meaning of life.

WHO: Written by Jeffery Hatcher and Mitch Albom / Directed by Richard Stein
 Scenic and Costume Design by Dwight Richard Odle
 Lighting Design by Tom Ruzika / Sound Design by David Edwards
 Stage Manager: Jenny R. Friend

CAST: Jack Axelrod as Morrie Schwartz; Daniel Nathan Spector as Mitch

DATES, TIMES & PRICES: Previews: Saturday, October 16 @ 8PM
 Opens: Friday, October 22, 2004 @ 8PM
 Closes: Sunday, November 14, 2004 @ 2PM
 Price range: \$11- \$52
 See below chart for days, times, and prices.

Day & Time	Orchestra	Parterre	Balcony
Preview Wednesday - Saturday, 8PM Preview Sunday, 2PM & 7PM Tuesday, 8PM Wednesday, Noon (Oct. 20 & Nov. 10 only)	\$32.00	\$26.00	\$22.00
Wednesday @ Thursday, 8PM Saturday, 3PM Sunday, 2PM & 7PM (2PM only on Nov. 14)	\$42.00	\$36.00	\$32.00
Friday & Saturday, 8PM	\$52.00	\$46.00	\$42.00

DISCOUNTS

Students (full-time, with valid ID) - 1/2 off tickets all performances, all seats
 Seniors (65 yrs +) and Teachers - \$6 off tickets all performances, all seats
 ADA discount - \$6 off your ticket and your companion's ticket.
 ASL discount – \$6 off your ticket and your companion's ticket (Nov. 13 @ 3pm only)
 Subscriber Single Ticket Discounts - \$4 (except seniors and students)
 Rush Ticket Discounts - Balcony price for that night

HOW*: By phone: 408.367.7255 / Online: www.sjrep.com
 By mail: Rep Box Office, 101 Paseo de San Antonio, San Jose, CA 95113
 By fax: 408.367.7236 / In person: Rep Box Office, between South 2nd & 3rd
 *For groups of 10 or more, call Robb Hull at 408.367.7282.

SHOW-RELATED EVENTS (please include in calendar listings)

WHAT: Opening Night Celebration for *Tuesdays with Morrie*

DESCRIPTION: Cocktails and dinner at downtown's chic new restaurant, Paragon, at the newly-renovated Montgomery Hotel, followed by the opening night performance of *Tuesdays with Morrie*

WHEN: Friday, October 22, 2004 @ 5:30pm
5:30: Cocktails
6pm: Dinner
8pm: Performance of *Tuesdays with Morrie*

WHERE: Dinner: Paragon, 211 South First Street, San Jose
Performance: San Jose Repertory Theatre, 101 Paseo de San Antonio, Downtown San Jose

PRICES: Celebration tickets are \$80 per person (event ticket does not include ticket to the performance)

HOW: For info or to RSVP, contact Bouree Nordin at boureen@sjrep.com or 408.367.7259

WHAT: Creative Playshops

DESCRIPTION: Creative Playshops are held during each Saturday matinee for kids ages 6 to 12 in the Rep's upstairs studio theatre. Led by San Jose Rep professionals, these playshops explore the imagination through interactive theatre activities related to the themes of the play. Just drop the kids off before the show, enjoy the performance and pick them up afterward.

WHEN: Saturdays, October 23 – November 13, 2004, 3:00pm

WHERE: San Jose Repertory Theatre, 101 Paseo de San Antonio, San Jose between S. 2nd & 3rd

PRICES: \$10 per child per show

HOW: Call the Box Office 408.367.7255 or email boxoffice@sjrep.com for reservations.

WHAT: ASL Interpreted Theatre

WHEN: Saturday, November 13, 2004
3pm performance plus post-show discussion (signed)

WHERE: San Jose Repertory Theatre, 101 Paseo de San Antonio, San Jose between S. 2nd & 3rd

PRICES: \$30 Parterre / \$36 Orchestra (prices good for companion as well)

HOW: For info or to RSVP, email: asl-sjrep.com or TDD users can use the CA State Relay Service (1-888-877-5378).

WHAT: Barnes & Noble Discussion Night – Free and Open to the Public

DESCRIPTION: Rep Associate Artistic Director John McCluggage leads a spirited insider's discussion on *Mitch Albom's Tuesdays with Morrie*. \$10 Rep Coupons will be offered!

WHEN: Tuesday, October 19, 2004 @ 7:30pm

WHERE: Barnes & Noble Booksellers, 5353 Almaden Expressway

ARTISTIC PROFILES

Jeffrey Hatcher (Playwright) Fast becoming one of the most prolific and frequently produced playwrights in the U.S., Jeffrey Hatcher adapted his acclaimed stage play *Compleat Female Stage Beauty* for the screen. He is currently working on a screenplay of *Casanova* for director Lasse Hallstrom, as well as screenplays for directors Steven Shainberg (*Secretary*) and Kim Pierce (*Boys Don't Cry*). He has also written for the Peter Falk TV series *Columbo* and E! Entertainment Television. His many award-winning original plays have been performed on Broadway, off-Broadway, and regionally across the U.S. and abroad. They include *Three Viewings*, *Scotland Road*, *Neddy*, *Korczak's Children*, *A Picasso*, *Mercy of a Storm*, *Work Song* (with Eric Simonson), and *Lucky Duck* (with Bill Russell and Henry Kreiger). Recently, Hatcher wrote the book for the Broadway musical *Never Gonna Dance*, based on the Fred Astaire/Ginger Rogers film *Swingtime*. His other stage adaptations include: *Henry James' The Turn of the Screw*, Anouilh's *Leocadia: To Fool the Eye*, *Smash*, *Murder by Poe*, *Pierre*, and Kaufman and Hart's *The Fabulous Invalid*. Jeffrey Hatcher is also the author of *The Art and Craft of Playwriting*. He has won grants and awards from the NEA, TCG, Lila-Wallace Fund, Rosenthal New Play Prize, Frankel Award, Barrymore Award and others.

Mitch Albom (Playwright) is the author of the #1 international bestsellers *Tuesdays with Morrie* and *The Five People You Meet in Heaven*. A nationally-syndicated columnist for the *Detroit Free Press* and a nationally syndicated radio host of his own show originating on WJR in Detroit, Mr. Albom has also been named the top sports columnist in the nation thirteen times by the Associated Press Sports Editors of America—the highest honor in his field.

Richard Stein (Director) was appointed executive director of the Laguna Playhouse in March 1990. His directorial credits there include the American Premiere of Michael Weller's *What the Night is For*, Pulitzer Prize-finalist Jon Marans' *Old Wicked Songs*, the world premiere of Marans' *Jumping for Joy*, the West Coast premiere of Neil LaBute's *The Shape of Things*, Arthur Miller's *The Price* (Robby Award, Best Production of a Drama), the Southern California premiere of Richard Dresser's *Gun-Shy*, the Los Angeles area premiere of Giles Havergal's adaptation of Graham Greene's *Travels With My Aunt*, Jeremy Brooks & Adrian Mitchel's adaptation of Dylan Thomas's *A Child's Christmas in Wales* and the world premiere of David Drummond's *The Labors of Hercules*. In Hartford, Connecticut, he directed Isaac Bashevis Singer & Eve Friedman's *Teibele and Her Demon* and Edward Albee's *Seascape*, and produced the U.S. premiere of *Albertine, in Five Times* by Michel Tremblay.

Jack Axelrod (Morrie) began his acting studies while majoring in architecture at UC Berkeley. Mr. Axelrod began working as a designer but followed a dual career, and it was not until his second year in New York City when he landed parts in a Broadway play and a Woody Allen film (*Bananas*), that he focused on theatre. His life changed when he began what became six years of study with Uta Hagen. He has appeared in regional theatres from Maine to San Diego. Most recently he played the title role in *Visiting Mr. Green* at ICT in Long Beach. Among other significant roles are Freud in *Hysteria*, Weller in *The Gin Game*, Nat in *I'm Not Rappaport*, Polonius in *Hamlet*, Al Lewis in *The Sunshine Boys*, Solomon in *The Price*. For the past five years he has toured the country with Kenny Rogers in his *Christmas from the Heart* concerts. He has numerous television credits, including *Frasier*, *Alias*, *Ally McBeal*, *Dharma and Greg*, *It's All Relative*, *Star Trek: Voyager*, etc. A few years ago he was mob-boss Victor Jerome on the soap *General Hospital*. As coincidence would have it, he was teaching at Brandeis University in 1973-74, but sadly, never met Morrie Schwartz there.

Daniel Nathan Spector (Mitch) was previously seen in a lead role at the Laguna Playhouse in *Jumping for Joy*. Prior to that, he appeared in lead roles in two successive seasons at the Pasadena Playhouse performing in *Visiting Mr. Green* and *The Presentment*. Extensive theatre credits include the award-winning production of *Tartuffe* and *True West* at the Odyssey Theatre, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* at Seattle's Intiman Theatre, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* at the Shakespeare Festival both in Los Angeles and New York, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the Hartford Stage. Television credits include a recurring role on *Ally McBeal*, *Boston Public*, *Miracles*, *Leap of Faith*, *JAG* and *American Family*. He is a pianist/composer, and a graduate of the Eastman School of Music, Rochester, New York. He holds an M.F.A. from N.Y.U.'s Tisch School of the Arts.

The artistic team includes Scenic and Costume Designer Dwight Richard Odle, who has spent 10 seasons at the Laguna Playhouse as Resident Designer, creating over 100 Playhouse productions and is the recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award in Scenic Design by the Los Angeles Drama Critics' Circle; Lighting Designer Tom Ruzika, who has created award-winning lighting designs for over 80 productions at South Coast Repertory Theatre as well as the Broadway production of *Six Dance Lessons in Six Weeks* and serves as the head of the Graduate Lighting Design Program at U.C. Irvine; and Sound Designer David Edwards, who has spent 14 seasons as Resident Sound Designer at the Laguna Playhouse where he has created sound designs for over 100 productions.

Cast and crew are available for interview. Contact Jill McIntyre to book.