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**RICK LOMBARDO**

**Director and Artistic Director of San Jose Rep  
Talks about the theatre's 2011-2012 Season**

**By Iride Aparicio**



**SAN JOSÉ**, California – In three seasons as Director and Artistic Director of San José Repertory Theatre (S. J. Rep) **RICK LOMBARDO** has directed productions such as “*Black Pearl Sings*” “*The Weir*” and “*As You Like It*” for which he received nominations for Outstanding Director, and the productions for Outstanding Productions by the Bay Area Critics Circle.

Receiving nominations and awards for his work, however, is not new for the Director who in 2009, when he was still living in Boston and working as Artistic Director at the award-winning New Repertory Theatre, the leading mid-size resident theatre in the Boston Area, he was awarded the **Norton Prize for Sustained Excellence** from the Boston Theatre Critics Association. Lombardo is also the recipient of four individual **Elliot Norton Awards** and a nine- times winner of the “**IRNE**” **Award** for his productions of: “*The Clean House*,” “*Sweeney Todd*”, “*Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*”, “*A Streetcar Named Desire*”, “*Ragtime*” “*Waiting for Godot*” and the “*Weird.*” The Director lives now in San Jose with his wife, actress Rachel Harker and their daughter.

In an exclusive interview with **CULTURAL WORLD BILINGUAL**, **Director RICK LOMBARDO** discusses his plans for the 2011-2012 season of S. J. Rep as follows:

“We will start our season with “*Spring Awakening*” (September 1 -25, 2011) he says “one of (Broadway’s) recent musicals that had won multiple TONY Awards ® including Best Musical and Best Score, is a wonderful modern show using contemporary music and Rock music, that looks at the lives of young people.”.

We interrupt Rick to remind him that “*Spring Awakening*” is also a musical well known for its use of foul language asking him if he considered in his selection that some members of the audience may be offended when listening to that type of language. He laughs. “I think that the writers (of *Spring Awakening*) had the young people speaking the way young people speaks “ he says and then he asks us a question “We are grown ups, aren’t we? We continue the interview.

“The second show, *The Last Romance*,” (October 13-November 6, 2011) is a wonderful new play a romantic play for older people: A women in her seventies and a man about eighty who meet out in the park and their attempts to see if they can kindle a romance. The obstacles come from the history of their lives and from their age, as they try to figure out if they can start again.

It is not only very beautiful, but very sad and very funny and it also has a lot of Opera music in it., because the older man, when he was younger, had the dream to become an opera singer. We (the audience) see him as a young man singing beautiful arias."

“*A Christmas Carol*,” (November 23-December 24, 2011) is my original version. It is an adaptation from the original that I had done it many times before. It ran for seven years, when I was in Boston and this is the first time that I am going to be doing it for our community in San José. It is very true to Dickens but it incorporates a lot of music. There is always music, either being sung or underscore and the music is all arrangements of traditional nineteenth century Christmas Carols. It is really very lovely. The Actors not only play the characters but sing songs and accompany the songs in their instruments, so the actors play some of the traditional instruments from the period. They are going to be very busy,” he adds laughing.

“Next in January of next year we are very excited to present “*Double Indemnity*” (January 12 – February 5, 2012) which is the world premiere of the stage version of the novel (which was made into a movie) It is set in the 1930’s during the Depression. A classic mystery of a certain Asian who fall in love with a woman which may be described as “A Femme fatale” and he inspires her to kill her husband for the insurance money. I think that many people are familiar with the story made famous by the movie from the 1930’s.

“I am also very excited about “*God of Carnage.*” ( March 22, -April 15, 2012) which is probably been one of the most talkable about plays in the last two years. It got a Tony Award ® as the best play in 2009, and we are doing the Bay Area Premier. The premise is very simple: Two married couples who come together at a meeting because one the 10 year old sons hit the other couple’s son with a stick in the playground and chipped his tooth.

The parents come together to talk about how they are going to talk with their kids and then the whole event kind of evolves and we see the parents becoming less and less civilized and it descends into chaos. It is hilariously funny. It is a dark comedy written by the same author, Yasmina Reza, who did “Art” this is her new play.

“*The Understudy* (May 10-June 3, 2012) is one of Theresa Rebeck’s new plays. This is a very funny comedy that takes place in New York during the rehearsal of a Broadway play of a newly- discovered Kafka’s masterpiece with some action movie stars acting in it. The play starts when they bring in a new understudy to learn one of the roles and the stage Manager, who is going to conduct the rehearsal, discovers that the new understudy is his ex-fiancee. From then on, it becomes very very funny and very crazy.”

“*Bill W. and Dr. Bob*” (June 21, 2012-July 15, 2012) is a Quick-witted docu-drama that follows two dynamic and dedicated men who in the midst of their battle with acute and debilitating alcoholism formed a formidable and historic alliance to help others combat the same addiction and through an astonishing series of events and bitter humor comes the true story of the founders of Alcoholics Anonymous. This will be the West Coast premier of the play.

Talking about his new season Director **RICK LOMBARDO** says: “What I like in general about this season is that there is a lot of music. It is a good mix of cutting-edge very new work, but at the same time it has some relation to the past as well. There is also something in this season that will appeal to multiple generations and multiple types of theatre goers.”

Before ending our interview we ask the Director how have three years working at the Rep affected him. Smiling he says:

“The longer I am here, the more I get to know the community that comes to the Rep and the more I understand the kind of work that they appreciate “ About his future plans for the Rep he adds” We constantly want to continue finding ways to appeal to all generations and all the communities in our region. Going forward we need to become more diverse, try to bring more young people to the Rep and continue using new technology to tell the stories.”

**For more information about the S.J. Rep. go to [www.sjrep.com](http://www.sjrep.com)**