



MEDIA RELEASE

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San Jose Repertory Theatre Ushers in the Holidays with A Christmas Story, a Tribute to the Traditional, 100% Red-Blooded, All-American Christmas!

This outrageously popular and endearing holiday tradition is back by popular demand!

SAN JOSE, CA. (November 10, 2009) — The story of Ralphie Parker's quest for the "Holy Grail of Christmas presents" – a genuine Red Ryder 200 Shot Carbine Action Air BB gun – has become a holiday movie tradition, capturing the hearts of millions of families across America. **San Jose Repertory Theatre's** production of this beloved holiday gem has been called, "... wacky and wistful and fresh as a fir ... a charming surprise package" (Mercury News) and "... a nice neat bow of Christmas Joy" (San Francisco Chronicle).

A Christmas Story, written by **Philip Grecian** and directed by **Chris Smith** is based on the touching film written by **Jean Shepherd, Leigh Brown** and **Bob Clark**. This year, the Rep offers **Family Packs** at **\$99**. **A Christmas Story** is ideal family fare for the holidays! This fun-filled family Yuletide tradition runs from **November 21 – December 20, 2009**, at San Jose Repertory Theatre, 101 Paseo de San Antonio in downtown San Jose. Preview performances are November 21, 22, 24 and 25. **Pay What You Will Tuesday is November 24. Press Opening is Friday, November 27 at 8:00 p.m.**

"When the Rep first produced **A Christmas Story**, little did we know it would become the highest selling play in our history. The audience asked us to bring it back during the holidays at some point, and it felt to me that this year, with the struggle we're all confronting, was a great time to revisit what has become one of the timeless American holiday tales," declares Artistic Director **Rick Lombardo**. "Growing up in New York City in the 1960's, I would listen each night to my AM radio as I drifted off to sleep, and most nights it was Jean Shepherd's voice and his stories of Depression Era America that lulled me off to sleep."

A Christmas Story recounts the hilarious tale of the Parker family's Christmas in the 1940's when nine-year-old Ralphie (**Garrett Meyer**) had nothing on his mind but getting a Red Ryder BB gun. No self-respecting cowboy would have been without one. Like the movie, the play is narrated by the adult Ralph Parker (**Dan Hiatt**), as he reminisces about his past and weaves together stories from his family, school and a visit to Santa at the Goldblatt's Department Store. Recounting the reactions from his mom, teacher and even the department store Santa Claus, as they share the same sentiment to his Christmas wish, "You'll shoot your eye out!" **A Christmas Story** is a nostalgic journey to simpler times and a joyous reminder of the delights of family, friendship and the pursuit for the perfect Christmas present.

"It's a joy to visit this American holiday classic with the Rep. Laugh-out-loud scenes woven together with a satiric yet touching look back at childhood, our production serves up this yuletide feast with all the trimmings," adds director **Chris Smith**. "We've got a wonderful company – Dan, Nancy and Howard are familiar favorites who get to create some mayhem with a fresh, talented group of San Jose children actors – and the terrific

production values Rep audiences expect. If you love the movie, come see it magnified by the power of live performance. You'll "ho ho ho" all the way home."

Set in the American mid-west, **A Christmas Story** instantaneously became a Christmas classic when it was released as a major motion picture in 1983. This story is based on Jean Shepherd's book, *In God We Trust, All Others Pay Cash*, and was adapted to the stage by playwright **Philip Grecian** in 2000, with all the elements from the beloved motion picture, including the infamous 'major award' leg lamp, the "wet tongue on a cold lamp post" experiment, and the *Little Orphan Annie* decoder ring. This story will delight the entire family and fill the hearts of both young and old with the spirit of the holiday season.

Philip Grecian, the playwright, is familiar with bringing holiday classics to the stage. His adaptation of *A Christmas Carol* has become an annual tradition in many communities around the United States. The script of his radio adaptation of *Dracula* (produced and syndicated in the 1970's has found new life as a stage production, complete with an onstage sound effects crew). Several of Grecian's plays have been published, including his widely popular *The Velveteen Rabbit* (Dramatic Publishing), *The Dragon of Nitt* (Dramatic Publishing) and *Lion and the Lyre* have been translated and performed in Russia.

Jean Shepherd was a writer, humorist, actor, radio raconteur and television and film personality. He spun his life into tales and told the world of his experience with the obscure and infamous, his childhood in Hammond, Indiana and his adventures in the Army Signal Corps. Shepherd's entertainment career began in Chicago as a performer at the Goodman Theatre. He then moved onto radio and television with live radio broadcasts from the Limelight and PBS' *Jean Shepherd's America* and *Shepherd's Pie*. He passed away on October 16, 1999 at the age of 78.

Director **Chris Smith** has directed world premieres by Edna O'Brien, Charles Grodin, David Ives, Joyce Carol Oates, Romulus Linney, John Belluso and four by Pulitzer Prize-winner Frank D. Gilroy (notably Drama Desk "Best Play" Nominated *Contact with the Enemy*). Recent productions include: *Abraham Lincoln's Big, Gay Dance Party* by Aaron Loeb (NYC Fringe Festival, "Outstanding Production;" SF Playhouse, BACC "Best New Play"). Smith is the former Artistic Director of Magic Theatre (SF) and Youngblood (NYC); the co-author of *The Sparrow and the Birdman* with Raquel Bitton (commissioned by TheatreWorks) and *A Sense of Freedom*, with Domenick Allen. He taught directing at San Jose State. He lives in Marin with wife Sheri Matteo and children Micaela and Anderson.

Reprising their roles in **A Christmas Story** are Bay Area favorites **Dan Hiatt** as the adult Ralph Parker, **Howard Swain** as The Old Man and **Nancy Carlin** as his charming wife. They are joined on the Rep stage by a talented group of San Jose children actors. **Emilio Fuentes** as Randy Parker, **Leah Kolchinsky** as Esther Jane Alberry, **Garrett Meyer** as Ralphie Parker, **Max Mifsud** as Scut Farkas, **Ali Molaei** as Schwartz, **Elara Rivers** as Helen Weathers and **Nicolas Sancen** as Flick.

The creative team for **A Christmas Story** includes scenic designer **Robert Mark Morgan**, costume designer **B Modern**, lighting designer **Lap-Chi Chu**, and sound designer **Jeff Mockus**. The stage manager is **Laxmi Kumaran**.

A Christmas Story is sponsored by **Bally Total Fitness**, **Crowne Plaza**, **Lockheed Martin** and **Silicon Valley Bank** and supported, in part, by a **Cultural Affairs grant from the City of San Jose**.

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 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

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A Christmas Story FACT SHEET

WHO: Written by Philip Grecian

Directed by Chris Smith

Featuring the work of **Robert Mark Morgan** (scenic designer), **B Modern** (costume designer), **Lap-Chi Chu** (lighting designer), and **Jeff Mockus** (sound designer).

Cast: **Nancy Carlin** (*Mother/Miss Shields*), **Emilio Fuentes** (*Randy Parker*), **Dan Hiatt** (*Adult Ralph*), **Leah Kolchinsky** (*Esther Jane Alberry*), **Garrett Meyer** (*Ralphie Parker*), **Max Mifsud** (*Scut Farkas/Black Bart*), **Ali Molaei** (*Schwartz*), **Elara Rivers** (*Helen Weathers*), **Nicolas Sancen** (*Flick*), **Howard Swain** (*The Old Man*)

WHAT: Back by popular demand, ***A Christmas Story*** is a nostalgic journey to simpler times and a joyous reminder of the delights of family, friendship and the pursuit for the perfect Christmas present. The story of Ralphie Parker's quest for the "Holy Grail of Christmas presents" – a genuine Red Ryder 200 Shot Carbine Action Air BB gun – has become a holiday movie tradition, capturing the hearts of millions of families across America.

WHERE: San Jose Repertory Theatre

101 Paseo de San Antonio, San Jose
Between South 2nd & 3rd Streets

WHEN: Previews: November 21-25
Pay What You Will Tuesday: November 24, 2009
Opens: November 27, 2009
Closes: December 20, 2009
Press Opening Night: Friday, November 27, 2009

PERFORMANCES							NOV	DEC
S	M	T	W	T	F			
						21	8pm	
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	8pm	3pm
2pm D		7:30pm	8pm		8pm	8pm	OPENING NIGHT	8pm
29	30	1	2	3	4	5		
2pm D		7:30pm	11am D	8pm	8pm	3pm D		
7pm			8pm			8pm		
6	7	8	9	10	11	12		
2pm D		7:30pm	8pm	8pm	11am D	3pm D		
					8pm	8pm		
13	14	15	16	17	18	19		
2pm D		7:30pm	8pm	8pm	8pm	3pm D		
						8pm		
20								
2pm D								

D = Post-show Discussion
 \$ = Pay What You Will Tuesday
 November 24, 7:30pm
 ASL = American Sign Language Interpreted Performances, Fri., Dec. 11 at 11a.m. AND Sat., Dec. 19 at 3p.m.

HOW MUCH: Prices start at \$35.00 – \$69.00

FAMILY PACKS: \$99.00 for two adults and two youth Tuesday through Friday evening and weekday matinee performances, excluding previews; or \$119.00 for two adults and two youth for weekend matinees, Saturday and Sunday, excluding previews.

Discounts:

- Students (full-time, with valid ID) - 1/2 off tickets for all performances, all seats.
- Seniors (65 yrs +) and Teachers - \$6 off tickets all performances, all seats.
- ADA or ASL discount - \$6 off your ticket and your companion's ticket.
- Subscriber Single Ticket Discounts - \$6
- Rush Ticket Discounts - Balcony price for that performance

PHOTOS: <http://www.sjrep.com/plays/2010/christmasstory/scrapbook.php>

TIX & INFO: 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, 101 Paseo de San Antonio, San Jose

Between South 2nd & 3rd Streets

For group sales: 408.367.7295

SHOW-RELATED EVENTS

WHAT: **Pay What You Will Tuesday** is a new addition to San Jose Rep's extensive community outreach program that supports the company's mission of accessibility and affordability for every member of the community. It is also one more way of broadening our audience and the community conversation that surrounds great theatre. Second Harvest Food Bank partners with the Rep in this outreach initiative. Patrons are encouraged to bring a non-perishable food to donate to the food bank.

WHEN: Tuesday, November 24, at 7:30 pm

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

PRICES: **Pay What You Will Tuesday**

HOW: Call the box office at 408.367.7255. Tickets will go on sale one week prior to designated performance.

WHAT: Come dish about the show, unwind, relax and enjoy LIVE music, premium wine and the opportunity to chat about the performance you've just seen. On Saturday evenings, beginning November 28, you're invited to join us after-hours in the Curtain Call Patron Lounge. Who knows, you may even spot a cast member or two.

WHEN: November 28, December 5, 12, and 19 after the evening performance.

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

PRICES: Included in price of ticket

HOW: Call the box office at 408.367.7255 or boxoffice@SJRep.com

WHAT: **Post Show Discussions:** Join the cast and artistic staff in presentation/panel discussion about the artistic process behind ***A Christmas Story***

WHEN: November 22, 28, 29, December 2, 5, 6, 11, 12, 13, 19 and 20.

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

PRICES: Included in price of ticket

HOW: Call the box office at 408.367.7255 or boxoffice@SJRep.com.

WHAT: **ASL-Interpretation:** Accessible performances for our Deaf and hearing-impaired patrons are offered on the final Saturday for the show and post-show discussion.

WHEN: **Friday, December 11 at 11:00am and Saturday, December 19 at 3:00pm**

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

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