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EMBARGOED UNTIL JANUARY 7, 2010

PLAYGROUND PLAYWRIGHTS DEVELOP NEW MUSICALS

JANUARY 18 AT BERKELEY REPERTORY THEATRE

Six 10-Minute Musicals on the Topic: “FISH OUT OF WATER”

In collaboration with composer/musician J. Raoul Brody

BERKELEY, (January 6, 2010) – And they broke out in song. In a special collaboration with composer and accompanist **J. Raoul Brody**, PlayGround announced this evening the topic “**FISH OUT OF WATER**” for a special Musical Theatre round of Monday Night Playground, taking place at 8 pm, Monday, January 18 in residence at Berkeley Repertory Theatre.

Brody, a long-time Bay Area composer, musical collaborator and improviser who has worked with BATS, True Fiction Magazine and others, led a workshop for the PlayGround pool of writers at A.C.T. Studios on Wednesday evening. The topic was announced at the end of the workshop. Writers are required to create plays with at least one song in the piece and are responsible for the lyrics. Once selections are finalized, Brody will come up with the music on the spot and in collaboration with the writers, directors and actors and will perform live at the Monday Night PlayGround presentation. PlayGround Artistic Director Jim Kleinmann commented, “It’s a very exciting next step in the evolution of our writers and program to begin this foray into the creation of new musicals for the American Theatre and we’re looking forward to sharing the results with everyone on January 18th.”

PlayGround, the Bay Area’s incubator for the next generation of playwrights features work from a pool of 36 writers (selected from over 100 applicants). Past writers have gone on to win top playwriting awards locally and nationally – the most recent being Aaron Loeb’s *Abraham Lincoln’s Big Gay Dance Party*, a 2009 Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Award winner and winner of Outstanding Play at the 2009 NY International Fringe Festival.

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The **2009/10 Writers Pool** is comprised of: Sharif Abu-Hamdeh, Crish Barth, Tim Bauer, Cass Brayton, Erin Bregman, Robyn Brooks, Ron Campbell, Adam Chanzit, Sharon Eberhardt, Garret Jon Groenveld, Leah Halper, Daniel Heath, Mandy Hodge Rizvi, Susan Jackson, Sang Kim, Brady Lea, Morgan Ludlow, Katie May, Alex Moggridge, Marisela Orta, Erin Panttaja, Michael Phillis, Evelyn Pine, Kenn Rabin, Carolina Rojas Moretti, Dan Rubin, Diane Sampson, Ken Slattery, Martha Soukup, Tom Swift, Nick Turner, Maya Tussing, Malachy Walsh, Jeffrey Wincek, Sunny Wong, Ignacio Zulueta.

FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:

WHAT: Occurring monthly, October-March, the popular Monday Night PlayGround series presents short works from new and emerging playwrights each month in residence at Berkeley Repertory Theatre, featuring the best of the Bay Area's professional actors and directors in short rehearsed staged readings. The given topic for the January 18 PlayGround evening of Musical Theatre is "**FISH OUT OF WATER**".

WHERE: Berkeley Repertory Theatre
2025 Addison St
Berkeley, CA

WHEN: **Monday, January 18, 2010 at 8pm**

Additional Season Dates:

February 15, 2010 – Collaboration with Mathematical Sciences Research Institute
March 15, 2010

TICKETS: \$15, available online or at the door. Pay-What-You-Can at the door beginning one hour before the performance, subject to availability. For more information about the Monday Night PlayGround series, call **(415) 704-3177** or visit **www.PlayGround-sf.org**.

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