AURORA THEATRE COMPANY CONTINUES 25TH ANNIVERSARY SEASON WITH TOM STOPPARD’S “THE REAL THING” January 27-February 26, 2017

BERKELEY, Calif. (December 15, 2016) – Aurora Theatre Company continues its 25th season with THE REAL THING, Tom Stoppard’s (The Coast of Utopia, Arcadia, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead) timeless comedy about an all-too-witty playwright who succumbs to the emotional ravages he puts his characters through. Timothy Near (“Master Harold”...and the boys) returns to Aurora to helm this Tony Award-winner for Best Play (1984) and Best Revival of a Play (2000), featuring Elijah Alexander, Liz Sklar, Carrie Paff (This Is How It Goes, A Delicate Balance, Collapse), Tommy Gorrebeeck (The Monster-Builder, The Eccentricities of a Nightingale), Seann Gallagher, and Emily Radosevich. THE REAL THING plays January 27 through February 26 at the Aurora Theatre in Berkeley. For tickets and information the public can call (510) 843-4822 or visit auroratheatre.org.

Playwright Henry is not so happily married to Charlotte, the lead actress in his play about a marriage on the verge of collapse. When his affair with their friend, Annie, threatens to destroy his own marriage, he realizes that life has started imitating art. After Annie leaves her husband for Henry, he can’t help but wonder whether their relationship is fiction or the real thing. Delectable and deeply affecting, THE REAL THING, which The New York Times called “Stoppard’s most moving play, but also the most bracing play that anyone has written about love and marriage in years,” and The Independent (UK) declared “Stoppard at his most relatable,” takes a look at the absolute chaos of love and trust, or lack thereof, and the passions that often blur our perceptions.

Timothy Near helms THE REAL THING. She previously directed Aurora’s hit production of Athol Fugard’s “MASTER HAROLD”... and the boys, and has directed plays at California Shakespeare Theater, Berkeley Repertory Theater, Center REPertory Company, Mark Taper Forum, The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, Arizona Theatre Company, Portland Center Stage, Guthrie Theatre, Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park, Atlanta’s Alliance Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse, Ford’s Theatre in Washington D.C., Intiman Theatre, New York Shakespeare Festival, and Opera San Jose. For 22 years, Near was the Artistic Director of San Jose Repertory Theatre where she produced over 120 plays, including 21 World Premieres. She is the recipient of the Woman of Achievement Award in the Arts given by the San Jose Mercury News/Women’s Fund and The Janet Gray Hays Award for Women in Leadership.

Additionally, Stoppard has written a number of radio plays, including In the Native State (1991), which was reworked as the stage play Indian Ink (1995). Screenplays include The Romantic Englishwoman (1975), Despair (1978), The Human Factor (1979), Brazil (1985), Empire of the Sun (1987), The Russia House (1990), Billy Bathgate (1991), Vatel (2000), Enigma (2001), Anna Karenina (2012), and Tulip Fever (2017), as well as a film version of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead (1990), which he also directed. In 1999, the screenplay for Shakespeare in Love (1998), co-written by Stoppard and Marc Norman, won an Academy Award. Stoppard currently lives in London; he was knighted in 1997.

Aurora Theatre Company has assembled a talented ensemble for THE REAL THING. Elijah Alexander makes his Aurora debut as playwright Henry. Credits include Metamorphoses on Broadway and productions at Royal Shakespeare Company, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, California Shakespeare Theater, American Conservatory Theater, Old Globe, Yale Repertory Theatre, South Coast Repertory, and Berkeley Repertory Theater, among others. Also making her Aurora debut is Liz Sklar as Annie. Credits include productions at California Shakespeare Theater (Othello), Marin Theatre Company (The Whale, Anne Boleyn), San Francisco Playhouse (Becky Shaw), Shotgun Players (Care of Trees), and American Conservatory Theater (A Christmas Carol), among others.

Carrie Paff returns to Aurora Theatre Company as Charlotte in THE REAL THING; she was last seen at Aurora in This Is How It Goes, Edward Albee’s A Delicate Balance, the World Premiere of Allison Moore’s Collapse, the West Coast Premiere of Craig Lucas’s Small Tragedy, and Harold Pinter’s Betrayal. Additional credits include The Other Place at Magic Theatre, Tiny Alice and It’s a Wonderful Life at Marin Theatre Company, as well as productions at American Conservatory Theater, San Francisco.
AURORA THEATRE COMPANY PRESENTS “THE REAL THING” 3-3-3-3-3-3

Playhouse, Magic Theater, San Jose Repertory Theatre, Center REPertory Company, and Word for Word, among others. Paff is the co-founder of StageWrite, Building Literacy through Theatre.

Tommy Gorrebeeck returns to the Aurora stage as Billy/Brodie in THE REAL THING; he was last seen at Aurora in Amy Freed’s The Monster-BUILDER and The Eccentricities of a Nightingale. Additional credits include productions at San Francisco Playhouse (Colossal), TheatreWorks (The Chosen, Sense and Sensibility), California Shakespeare Theater (Much Ado About Nothing), City Lights Theater Company (Compleat Female Stage Beauty), Center REPertory Company (Dracula, Sleuth), Marin Theatre Company, Palo Alto Players, Foothill Music Theatre, and Broadway By the Bay, among others.

Rounding out the cast are Sean Gallagher in his Aurora debut as Max and Emily Radosevich in her Aurora debut as Debbie. Gallagher’s credits include productions at Neptune Theatre, Toronto Fringe Festival, Canadian Stage, and Resurgence Theatre Company; television credits include appearances on Hannibal (NBC), Nikita (The CW), and Flashpoint (CBS). Radosevich’s credits include productions at Breadbox Theatre (Miss Julie), Playwrights Foundation, San Francisco Fringe Festival, and Contra Costa Musical Theatre; New York credits include productions at Theatre for a New City and Joe’s Pub.

Following THE REAL THING, Aurora Theatre Company continues its 25th season with the Bay Area Premiere of Sarah Greenman’s LENI in March helmed by Jon Tracy. Steve Waters’ TEMPLE makes its U.S. Premiere at Aurora in April, directed by Aurora Artistic Director Tom Ross. Abi Morgan’s SPLENDOUR, directed by Barbara Damashke, closes the season in June.

Voted Best Theater Company in 2012 by SF Weekly, Aurora Theatre Company continues to offer challenging, literate, intelligent stage works to the Bay Area, each year increasing its reputation for top-notch theater. Located in the heart of the Downtown Berkeley Arts District, Aurora Theatre Company, declared “one of the best regional theaters around” by 7x7 magazine, has been called “one of the most important regional theaters in the area” and “a must-see midsize company” by the San Francisco Chronicle, while The Wall Street Journal has “nothing but praise for the Aurora.” The Contra Costa Times stated “perfection is probably an unattainable ideal in a medium as fluid as live performance, but the Aurora Theatre comes luminously close,” while the San Jose Mercury News affirmed Aurora Theatre Company is “arguably the finest small theater in the Bay Area,” and the Oakland Tribune stated “it’s all about choices, and if you value good theater, choose the Aurora.”
FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:

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DATES: Previews: January 27, 28, and February 1 at 8pm; January 29 at 2pm; January 31 at 7pm
Opens: February 2, 2017
Closes: February 26

SHOWS: Tuesday at 7pm; Wednesday through Saturday at 8pm; Sunday at 2pm and 7pm

WHERE: Aurora Theatre, 2081 Addison Street, Berkeley, CA

TICKETS: For subscriptions and single tickets, the public can call (510) 843-4822 or visit auroratheatre.org. Half-off tickets for Under 35, student, and group discounts available.

PHOTOS: High-resolution photos for THE REAL THING can be found at https://auroratheatre.org/index.php?option=com_theatre&view=press_show&id=131 or can be received as jpegs upon request by emailing elewis@auroratheatre.org

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