



**CENTER REPERTORY COMPANY CELEBRATES 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY,  
ANNOUNCES 2017–2018 SUBSCRIPTION SEASON  
AT THE LESHER CENTER FOR THE ARTS**

September 1, 2017 . June 30, 2018

*Center REP's 2017-2018 season includes two Broadway hit musicals, a David Ives comedy adaptation, an acclaimed holiday favorite, a sharp and stylish look at Olympic sports, and a heartwarming story of renewal*

WALNUT CREEK, CA (12 May, 2017) -- Chevron, The Diablo Regional Arts Association, The Leshner Foundation, and the City of Walnut Creek are once again proud sponsors of Center REPERTORY Company, the resident professional theatre company of the Leshner Center for the Arts, as it announces the lineup for its celebratory **50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Season**. Running from September 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018, the 2017-2018 season will feature six productions starting with the boys who pioneered rock and roll . Elvis Presley, Jerry Lee Lewis, Carl Perkins, and Johnny Cash - and closing with those irrepressible Dancing Queens from a well-known Broadway musical (*title to be announced in fall 2017*). In between, the company will present David Ives' comedic take on the most lovable liar on the planet, a taut new drama (2016 Obie winner) about the pressures of Olympic swimming trials, a magical holiday production, and a legacy revival of the one and only *Shirley Valentine* starring Kerri Shawn.

"A 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary is an extraordinary achievement for any arts organization," said Artistic Director Michael Butler. "For 50 years, Center REP has been a part of this community, enhancing lives with entertainment and insight, from the very first production of Season 1, *The Skin of Our Teeth*, to our current production of Philip Kan Gotanda's *Sisters Matsumoto*." Center REP has grown exponentially over the past 50 years, from its earliest shows produced in the Civic Arts Theatre & Gallery (known affectionately nicknamed "The Nuthouse" based on its prior history as a walnut warehouse) to its current position as the resident professional theatre of the Leshner Center for the Arts. Says Butler, "The goal has never changed: to produce a vibrant,

enlightening, and entertaining theatre experience for our audience. Center REP's mission is to celebrate the power of the human imagination. We bring people . artists and audience alike - together in this celebration. We are a place where people gather for the shared stories of human experience. I can't wait to see what the REP looks like in another 50 years!+

All shows are presented at the Leshner Center for the Arts, 1601 Civic Drive, Walnut Creek. A variety of subscription packages, ranging from \$150 to \$316, can be purchased by calling 925-943-SHOW. Additional information is available at [www.CenterRep.org](http://www.CenterRep.org).

**Million Dollar Quartet** September 1 . October 6, 2017

Center REP brings Broadway actor/director Hunter Foster to direct the hit musical, **Million Dollar Quartet**, a wild-ride that joyously captures one of the most exciting jam sessions in rock and roll history . the night Elvis, Johnny Cash, Jerry Lee Lewis, and Carl Perkins got together in Sam Phillips' legendary Sun Studios in Memphis. Featuring a score of rock hits including "Blue Suede Shoes," "Fever," "That's All Right," "Sixteen Tons," "Great Balls of Fire," "Walk the Line," "Whole Lotta Shakin' Goin' On," "Who Do You Love?," "Matchbox," "Folsom Prison Blues," "Hound Dog" and more, this high octane celebration of fuel-injected rock and roll was described as %Bouyant. Explosive. Four great musicians express the riotous joy, beauty and sadness of life in songs that shoot straight for the soul+by *The New York Times*. In addition to directing and playwriting, Hunter Foster originated the role of Sam Phillips in *Million Dollar Quartet* on Broadway, where he also starred in hits including *Urinetown* (Tony nomination), *The Producers*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, and *The Bridges of Madison County*.

BOOK BY: Colin Escott and Floyd Mutrux

DIRECTED BY: Hunter Foster

**The Liar** October 20 . November 18, 2017

David Ives' extremely cheeky adaptation of the 17th century French rhyming-couplet-comedy has an irresistible premise: a young man looking for love in Paris who cannot tell the truth and his sidekick, a servant who cannot lie. This very modern retake by the author of *All In The Timing* creates a fast-paced rollicking ride through 17th century Paris, era of the Three Musketeers. Alternative facts have never been so hilarious.

BY: David Ives

DIRECTED BY: Michael Butler

**A Christmas Carol** December 7 . 17, 2017

Center REP heralds the holidays with its signature production, brimming with music and dance, love and laughter, spectacular special effects and scary ghosts. Described as %Magical. The most Scrooge among us would crack a smile at Center REP's **A Christmas Carol**, by *Broadway World*, this theatrical event has become an annual yuletide tradition for thousands.

BY: Charles Dickens

ADAPTED BY: Cynthia Caywood & Richard L. James

DIRECTED BY: Scott Denison

CHOREOGRAPHED BY: Jennifer Perry

**Red Speedo** January 28 . February 24, 2018

This sharp and savvy new play by Lucas Hnath, which captured the 2016 Obie Award for Playwriting, follows an ambitious swimmer on the eve of Olympic trials. Pressure builds as the lure of a deal with mega-sponsor Speedo collides with family ties, and the unforgiving weight of success. A brilliant and compelling play about survival of the fittest, and the American dream of a level playing field or leveling the field, **Red Speedo** was hailed as, %agenious. Taut, incisive. Remarkable,+by *The New York Times* when it premiered last April Off-Broadway.

BY: Lucas Hnath

DIRECTED BY: Markus Potter

**Shirley Valentine** March 30 . April 29, 2018

Kerri Shawn stars as the delightful Shirley Valentine, a housewife from Liverpool who desperately needs a change before she has another conversation with the walls. This West End and Broadway hit was declared, %the funniest and most heartwarming play,+by London's *Daily Mirror*, and %A joyful, captivating piece of theatre,+by the *New York Daily News*. Shawn, known to Center REP audiences for her tour-de-force performance as Eppie Lederer (aka Ann Landers) in *The Lady with All the Answers*, returns to portray the irrepressible Shirley.

BY: Willy Russell

DIRECTED BY: George Maguire

**Center REP (Broadway hit musical)** May 25 . June 30, 2018

%Mmm%+the word on this hit Broadway musical, whose title will be revealed in Fall 2017. It features a zany mother, a daughter determined to discover her parentage, a Greek island, and a wealth of ABBA songs.

DIRECTED BY: Jeff Collister

CHOREOGRAPHY BY: Jennifer Perry

MUSICAL DIRECTOR: Daniel Feyer

**ABOUT CENTER REP**

Center REPeritory Company, the resident professional theatre company of the Leshner Center for the Arts (LCA), will be celebrating its 50th year of high-quality theatrical productions. Center REPeritory Company was launched in February 1968, with Thornton Wilders' *The Skin of Our Teeth*. In 1990 the company moved to the newly-opened Regional Center for the Arts, renamed the Leshner Center for the Arts in 1995. Artistic Director Michael Butler joined Center REP in 2006, and with Managing Director Scott Denison, helms the company in its mission to celebrate the power of the human imagination by producing emotionally engaging, intellectually involving, and visually astonishing live theatre and, through outreach and education programs, enrich and advance the cultural life of the communities it serves. The company self-produces every production it presents, utilizing professional actors, designers, and directors.

**For Calendar Editors:**

**WHAT:** Chevron, The Diablo Regional Arts Association, The Leshner Foundation, and The City of Walnut Creek, are once again proud sponsors of Center REPeritory Company, the resident professional theatre company of the Leshner Center for the Arts, as it announces the line-up for its celebratory **50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Season**.

The 2017-2018 season includes new productions of the high-octane Broadway musical *Million Dollar Quartet*, David Ives' cheeky adaptation of *The Liar*, the annual holiday treat *A Christmas Carol*, the sharp and savvy 2016 Obie. winning Off-Broadway hit *Red Speedo*, the return of Center REP favorite Kerri Shawn in *Shirley Valentine*, and an ABBA-solutely stunning musical extravaganza (title to be announced in fall 2017).

**WHEN:** September 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018

**WHERE:** Leshner Center for the Arts  
1601 Civic Dr, Walnut Creek

**TICKETS:** Subscriptions (\$150 to \$316) available at 925-943-SHOW. Info at [www.centerrep.org](http://www.centerrep.org)

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Photos will be available for download at: <http://cb-pr.com/press/CenterREP2017-18.html>