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**CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS THE UNITED STATES PREMIERE OF  
VISIONARY ROBERT LEPAGE'S ADULT FAIRY TALE THE ANDERSEN PROJECT,  
WEDNESDAY – SUNDAY, MAY 28 – JUNE 1 IN ZELLERBACH PLAYHOUSE**

**BERKELEY, April 16, 2008**—Internationally acclaimed director, producer, playwright, actor and Canada's foremost cultural ambassador **Robert Lepage** will return to Cal Performances with the United States premiere of *The Andersen Project Wednesday – Sunday, May 28 – June 1*. Recognized for his dynamic and original approach to pushing the boundaries of stage performance, Lepage is “a theatrical conjurer, whose dazzling shows have captivated audiences around the world with their mixture of storytelling and stunning imagery” (*The Guardian*, London). *The Andersen Project* has been freely inspired by two stories by Hans Christian Andersen (“The Dryad” and “The Shadow”) and anecdotes drawn from the famed Danish author's Parisian travels. The work was produced by Lepage and his multidisciplinary production company, the Québec-based **Ex Machina**, and has been performed throughout Europe and Asia. The solo work reflects one of Lepage's favorite themes: confrontation—past vs. present, Romanticism vs. modernism, and tradition vs. avant-garde. The one man play will be performed by Lepage's longtime collaborator actor **Yves Jacques**. This production has adult content and is meant for mature audiences.

**THE ANDERSEN PROJECT**

*The Andersen Project* has been characterized as a modern fairy tale. The piece follows a Québécois songwriter who travels to Paris at the behest of the Opéra Garnier, which has commissioned him to write the libretto for a children's opera based on a fairy tale by Hans Christian Andersen. During his stay, he meets a number of singular people: one of the Opéra's senior managers (a man with some odd and unusual likings), a young janitor and graffiti artist of North African descent, as well as a dog who could well be guiding the tale along its way. While calling upon many of Lepage's recurring themes, this new solo work also explores more troubling territories, such as questions about sexual identity, unfulfilled fantasies and a thirst for recognition and fame that are drawn from Andersen's life and writings. *The Andersen Project*

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has received numerous international prizes, including the 2007 Europe Theatre Prize and the 2006 Prix Reconnaissance.

### **ROBERT LEPAGE**

Director **Robert Lepage** is credited with some of theater's most imaginative productions, including the internationally celebrated *the far side of the moon*, co-commissioned and presented by Cal Performances in Lepage's 2001 Bay Area debut. Other one-man shows include *Vinci* (about Leonardo da Vinci) and *Elsinore*, his examination of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. Expanded plays include his ethereal ruminations on Hiroshima in *The Seven Streams of the River Ota*, the destructive addictions behind Jean Cocteau and Miles Davis in *Needles and Opium*, the genius of Frank Lloyd Wright in *Geometry of Miracles*, and a modern adaptation of *The Beggar's Opera*, *The Busker's Opera*, which made its Bay Area debut at Cal Performances in 2005.

Robert Lepage was born and raised in Quebec City. Between 1975 and 1978, he studied theater at Quebec City's Conservatoire d'Art Dramatique and later participated in workshops at Alain Knapp's theater school in Paris, France. Upon returning to Quebec City, Lepage wrote, directed and played independent productions and joined Théâtre Repère in 1982. From 1989 to 1993, he was the artistic director of the National Arts Centre's Théâtre Français in Ottawa. In 1993 Robert Lepage founded the group Ex Machina, and continues to serve as its artistic director.

Recently, Lepage oversaw *La Casa Azul's* world tour and revived the cult-classic *Dragons' Trilogy* for the Festival de Théâtre des Amériques' 10th Edition. Lepage has also produced his fifth feature film, adapted for his award-winning play, *the far side of the moon*. In 2004, Lepage collaborated with Cirque du Soleil on their Las Vegas show, titled *KÁ*. Working with maestro Lorin Maazel, Lepage directed an opera based on George Orwell's novel, *1984*; The Royal Opera, London production premiered in 2005. In 2007, Lepage staged Igor Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress*, which was presented in April 2007 in Brussels and San Francisco. Additionally, in 2007, Lepage unveiled a new work titled *Lipsynch*, a multimedia production focusing on human expression through voice. It premiered in a five-hour version at Newcastle-Upon-Tyne's Northern Stage in February 2007; a work in progress, the final length is

expected to reach nine hours. Currently, Lepage is collaborating with Marie Michaud, who co-authored *The Dragon's Trilogy*, on a new work titled *The Blue Dragon* which returns to Pierre Lamontagne, the central figure of *The Dragon's Trilogy*, now placing him in the paradox and turmoil of the contemporary Chinese art scene. *The Blue Dragon* will be presented by Cal Performances during the 2008/09 season.

Lepage's work has been recognized and honored numerous times. In 2007, Lepage received the Europe Theatre Prize, the most prestigious European recognition granted for theatrical work. Lepage received the Hans Christian Andersen Prize in 2004 for his work honoring Hans Christian Andersen. Other notable awards include the 1999 medal of l'Ordre National du Québec and the 2000 SORIQ Award for his enduring international career.

### **YVES JACQUES**

A native of Quebec City, **Yves Jacques'** professional career led him to Montreal and Paris, where he currently resides. Jacques has made his career as a performer both on the stage and in films. Jacques has been recognized with multiple awards in his career, including Montreal's Théâtre du Nouveau Monde's Best Actor Award in 2003 for his performance in Lepage's *The Far Side of the Moon* and the Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres, one of the most prestigious distinctions granted by the cultural ministry of France. Additionally, Jacques has had lead roles in several award-winning movies, including *Jésus de Montreal* (Jury Prize, Cannes, 1989; Oscar Nominated for Best Foreign Language Film 1990); *La Classe de Neige* (Jury Prize, Cannes 1998), *La Chambre des Magiciennes* (International Critics' Award, Berlin, 2000), *Betty Fisher et Autres Histoires* (International Critics' Award, 2001), *La Petite Lily* (Official Selection, Cannes, 2003); and *The Barbarian Invasions* (Academy Award, Oscar for Best Foreign Language Film, 2004).

### **EX MACHINA**

In an ongoing attempt to extend his artistic reach, Lepage founded Québec's Ex Machina group in 1993, a not-for-profit multi-disciplinary production company that brings together actors, writers, set designers, technicians, opera singers, puppeteers, graphic designers, video artists,

film producers, contortionists and musicians. At first devoted to the production of essentially theatrical works—*Seven Streams of the River Ota*, *The Far Side of the Moon* and *La Casa Azul*—the artistically diverse company has branched out into new fields, including publishing, multimedia (the *Anamorphosis* and *Metamorphosis* web sites), music (*The Damnation of Faust* and *The Busker's Opera*), cabaret (*Zulu Time*), and museum installation. Nonetheless, a theatrical dimension permeates all of Ex Machina's work. Along with the directors of Ex Machina, Lepage has also founded another production company specifically for film and television endeavors known as In Extremis Images, Inc. Its principal mandate is the screenplay adaptations of productions initially intended for the theater, in particular, the shows produced by Ex Machina. Ex Machina believes that the performing arts of dance and music should be mixed with the recorded arts of filmmaking and multimedia in the hopes that new artistic forms for the twenty-first century will emerge from these meldings.

### **TICKET INFORMATION**

Tickets for **Robert Lepage's *The Andersen Project* on Wednesday - Sunday, May 28 – June 1** at Zellerbach Playhouse are priced at **\$62.00**. Tickets are available through the Cal Performances Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall; at (510) 642-9988 to charge by phone; at [www.calperformances.org](http://www.calperformances.org); and at the door. Half-price tickets are available for purchase by UC Berkeley students. UC faculty and staff, senior citizens, other students and UC Alumni Association members receive a \$5 discount (Special Events excluded). For more information, call Cal Performances at (510) 642-9988, or visit the Cal Performances web site at [www.calperformances.org](http://www.calperformances.org).

For select performances, Cal Performances offers UCB student, faculty and staff, senior and community Rush Tickets. Rush Tickets are announced two hours prior to a performance and are available in person only at the Ticket Office beginning one hour before the performance; quantities may be limited. Rush Ticket sales are limited to one ticket per person; all sales are cash only. Rush Ticket prices are \$10.00 for UCB students; \$15.00 for UCB faculty and staff (UCB ID required) and seniors age 65 or older; and \$20.00 for all other community members. Information is available at 510-642-9988, press 2 for the Rush Ticket hotline, two hours prior to a performance only.

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Cal Performances 2007/08 season is sponsored by Wells Fargo.

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**CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:**

**CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS**

**Wed. – Sat., May 28 – May 31 at 8:00 p.m.**      **Zellerbach Playhouse, UC Berkeley Campus**  
**Sun., June 1 at 3:00 p.m.**                              **Bancroft Way at Dana Ave., Berkeley**

*Theater*

*The Andersen Project*

**Ex Machina**

**Robert Lepage**, director, writer

**Yves Jaques**, actor

**Program:** Robert Lepage's *The Andersen Project* is inspired by two stories by Hans Christian Andersen ("The Dryad" and "The Shadow") as well as anecdotes drawn from the famed Danish author's Parisian travels. This production has adult content and is meant for mature audiences.

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