



**AURORA THEATRE COMPANY EXTENDS
BAY AREA PREMIERE OF “LENI”
March 10-May 7, 2017**

BERKELEY, Calif. (February 15, 2017) – Due to popular pre-sale demand, **Aurora Theatre Company** announces that it will **add an additional two weeks of performances** for the Bay Area Premiere of **Sarah Greenman**’s wildly creative biographical play, **LENI. Jon Tracy** (*The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity, Breakfast With Mugabe*) directs this multi-media play, called “a thought-provoking tour through the world of Nazi propagandist Leni Riefenstahl” by *Seattle Weekly*. Featuring **Stacy Ross** (*Gidion’s Knot, Wilder Times*) and **Martha Brigham** (*The How and The Why*). **LENI now plays through May 7th** (*added performances: Tuesday, April 25, 7pm; Wednesday, April 26, 8pm; Thursday, April 27, 8pm; Friday, April 28, 8pm; Saturday, April 29, 8pm; Sunday, April 30, 2pm, 7pm; Tuesday, May 2, 7pm; Wednesday, May 3, 8pm; Thursday, May 4, 8pm; Friday, May 5, 8pm; Saturday, May 6, 8pm; Sunday, May 7, 2pm, 7pm*) at the Aurora Theatre in Berkeley. For tickets and information the public can call **(510) 843-4822** or visit **auroratheatre.org**.

Can an artist ever be truly “apolitical” if their work serves the ends of powerful political forces? In **LENI**, German film director Leni Riefenstahl’s evasive older self and seductive younger self work to edit the perfect film of her life. Riefenstahl’s two most famous films, “Triumph of the Will” and “Olympia,” are still recognized as works of cinematic brilliance even as they are reviled as propaganda for the Nazi regime. With **LENI**, Greenman explores the controversial Riefenstahl, whose work in the 1930’s was comparable to the films of Orson Welles and Alfred Hitchcock, but embodied some of the most troubling contradictions of her time.

Riefenstahl’s influence is deeply embedded in our culture, from our clothing ads to the way sporting events are shot to how the President lands his plane and makes his entrance. But was she Hitler’s puppet? Was she aware she was making such strong pieces of propaganda for Hitler? Was someone who wanted beauty to be the new religion simply blind to the events happening around her? An intelligent brief on artistic responsibility, influence, and narcissism, **LENI** journeys deep inside the mind and media of an artist to discover why art can be a dangerous business.

AURORA THEATRE COMPANY EXTENDS “LENI”

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Bay Area director, playwright, designer, and educator **Jon Tracy** returns to Aurora Theatre Company to direct **LENI**. In addition to helming *Breakfast with Mugabe*, *Gidion’s Knot* and *The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity* at Aurora Theatre Company, Tracy developed Ron Campbell’s play *Sinker* as part of Aurora’s inaugural Global Age Project new works festival. Additional credits include productions at Shotgun Players (*The Salt Plays Pt. 1: In the Wound*, *The Salt Plays Pt. 2: Of the Earth*), San Francisco Playhouse (*Bloody, Bloody Andrew Jackson*, *Bug*, *Slasher*), Magic Theatre (*Terminus*, *Any Given Day*); Willows Theatre (*Evil Dead: The Musical*), Impact Theatre (*See How We Are*), Marin Theatre Company, Berkeley Playhouse, TheatreFIRST, New Conservatory Theatre, and Alter Theatre Ensemble, among others. A former Artistic Associate at the Magic Theatre, Tracy is a Company Member of PlayGround, an Associate Artist at Berkeley Playhouse, an Affiliate Artist with Marin Shakespeare Company, and the Artistic Director of Live Oak Theater.

Aurora Theatre Company has assembled a gifted duo for **LENI**. Stage veteran **Stacy Ross** returns to Aurora Theatre Company as a matured Leni. Ross previously appeared in Aurora Theatre Company’s productions of *Gidion’s Knot*, *Wilder Times*, *The Devil’s Disciple*, *The Man of Destiny*, *Hedda Gabler*, and *A Kind of Alaska*. Additional credits include productions at San Francisco Playhouse, California Shakespeare Theater, TheatreWorks, San Jose Repertory Theatre, Marin Theatre Company, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, and American Conservatory Theater, among others.

Martha Brigham returns to the Aurora stage as a younger version of Leni. She was last seen at Aurora in the company’s hit production of *The How and the Why*. iAdditional credits include productions at San Francisco Playhouse (*Stupid Fucking Bird*), La Jolla Playhouse (*The Tall Girls*), Secret Rose Theatre (*The Man In the Red Suit*), and The Nauset Players (*Othello*, *The Beggar’s Opera*), among others.

Playwright **Sarah Greenman** holds a BA in creative writing from Mills College, where she was awarded the Gertrude Hung Chan Playwriting Prize for her original play, **LENI**. She is also a prolific visual artist, actor, urban homesteader and social justice activist.

Following **LENI**, 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 Damashek, 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,

AURORA THEATRE COMPANY EXTENDS “LENI”

3-3-3-3-3-3

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.”

AURORA THEATRE COMPANY EXTENDS “LENI”

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FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:

Due to popular pre-sale demand, **Aurora Theatre Company** announces that it will **add an additional two weeks of performances** for the Bay Area Premiere of **Sarah Greenman’s** wildly creative biographical play, **LENI. Jon Tracy** (*The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity, Breakfast With Mugabe*) directs this multi-media play, called “a thought-provoking tour through the world of Nazi propagandist Leni Riefenstahl” by *Seattle Weekly*. Featuring **Stacy Ross** (*Gidion’s Knot, Wilder Times*) and **Martha Brigham** (*The How and The Why*).

DATES: Previews: January 27, 28, and February 1 at 8pm; January 29 at 2pm; January 31 at 7pm
Opens: March 16, 2017
Closes: May 7
(added performances: Tuesday, April 25, 7pm; Wednesday, April 26, 8pm; Thursday, April 27, 8pm; Friday, April 28, 8pm; Saturday, April 29, 8pm; Sunday, April 30, 2pm, 7pm; Tuesday, May 2, 7pm; Wednesday, May 3, 8pm; Thursday, May 4, 8pm; Friday, May 5, 8pm; Saturday, May 6, 8pm; Sunday, May 7, 2pm, 7pm)

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

Added performances in bold

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
March					10	11
					8pm	8pm
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
2pm		7pm	8pm	8pm	8pm	8pm
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
2pm 7pm		7pm	8pm	8pm	8pm	8pm
26	27	28	29	30	31	April 1
2pm 7pm		7pm	8pm	8pm	8pm	8pm
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
2pm 7pm		7pm	8pm	8pm	8pm	8pm
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
2pm 7pm		7pm	8pm	8pm	8pm	8pm
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
2pm 7pm		7pm	8pm	8pm	8pm	8pm

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AURORA THEATRE COMPANY EXTENDS “LENI”

5-5-5-5-5-5

23 2pm 7pm	24	25 7pm	26 8pm	27 8pm	28 8pm	29 8pm
30 2pm 7pm	May 1	2 7pm	3 8pm	4 8pm	5 8pm	6 8pm
7 2pm 7pm						

WHERE: **Harry’s UpStage** located in the Nell and Jules Dashow Wing
Aurora Theatre Company, 2081 Addison Street, Berkeley, CA

TICKETS: For tickets (Previews \$36; Regular Performances \$45, 55; Limited Opening Night Seating \$65 – sold out) the public can call **(510) 843-4822** or visit **auroratheatre.org**. Half-off tickets for Under 35; student, and group discounts available.

Aurora Theatre Company gratefully acknowledges Season Restaurant Sponsor Gecko Gecko and Season Floral Sponsor Darling Flowers for their support.

Aurora Theatre Company gratefully acknowledges Associate Sponsors Deborah and Howard Goodman, Candace and George Hisert, and Ellen and Barry Levine for their support.

Aurora Theatre Company gratefully acknowledges the following foundations and government agencies for their support: Actors’ Equity Foundation, Alameda County Arts Commission, Berkeley Civic Arts Program & Civic Arts Commission, The Fleishhacker Foundation, The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, The Sam Mazza Foundation, The Bernard Osher Foundation, Kenneth Rainin Foundation, The Harold and Mimi Steinberg Charitable Trust, The Shubert Foundation, The Tournesol Project, and The Zellerbach Family Foundation.