

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTACT

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**THE LAGUNA PLAYHOUSE NAMES MICHAEL BARKER
AS ASSOCIATE MANAGING DIRECTOR**

LAGUNA BEACH, CA, October 24, 2011 - The Laguna Playhouse has named Michael Barker as Associate Managing Director, a recent addition to the leadership team of the venerable institution. Mr. Barker joined the playhouse staff in July after serving as Managing Director for The Antaeus Company in North Hollywood. He holds an MFA in theater management from Yale School of Drama and an MBA from Yale School of Management.

Executive Director, Karen Wood offers “Michael has a business acumen that one would be hard pressed to duplicate, a passion for the theatre and he is eager to collaborate with the community. His skill set and dedication are a beautiful fit with the mission and goals of the Laguna Playhouse and I am delighted to welcome him.”

Before moving to California, Michael was Associate Managing Director at Yale Repertory Theatre, Managing Director of Yale Summer Cabaret, and produced the third annual Carlotta Festival of New Plays. He was the 2008 Managing Director Fellow at Seattle Repertory Theatre. Prior to graduate school, he was Associate Director of Marketing for Court Theatre, producing classics in residence at the University of Chicago. Also in Chicago, he worked with The Goodman Theatre, American Theater Company, Sansculottes Theater Company, and The Playground Theater. Michael lives in Long Beach with his wife Heidi, a costume designer working in television and film.

ABOUT LAGUNA PLAYHOUSE

949-497-2787 ext. 1 (group tickets ext. 229)
www.lagunaplayhouse.com

Box Office Hours:

Tuesday – Sunday: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
(open until 8 pm on performance days)

Physical Address:

606 Laguna Canyon Rd., Laguna Beach, CA 92651

Founded in 1920 and celebrating its 90th anniversary in 2011-2012, The Laguna Playhouse is

one of the oldest continuously-operating theatres on the West Coast. In January 2011, The Laguna Playhouse was honored at the Laguna Spirit Awards and received The Laguna Beach Chamber of Commerce Premiere Business of the Year award.

More than 100,000 theatergoers annually attend performances at the Laguna Playhouse. Its continued artistic excellence, audience popularity and critical acclaim have helped make The Playhouse one of Southern California's most important nonprofit theatre companies. The Playhouse has produced national tours of *The Belle of Amherst* (with Julie Harris) and *Copenhagen*, and has presented many world, national and regional premieres.

Over the years, the Laguna Playhouse has garnered numerous awards from LA Drama Critics Circle, NAACP, Backstage, OC Weekly, and many more, and was named Best Arts Organization by ArtsOC. Notable performers that have performed at The Laguna Playhouse include Bette Davis, Harrison Ford, Charles Durning, Marlo Thomas, Roddy McDowell, Rita Rudner, Cloris Leachman, and Sally Struthers.

The Laguna Playhouse is noted for its Youth Theater Education and Outreach programs. In 1989, its Youth Theater was recognized as "Outstanding Children's Theatre" by the American Alliance for Theatre and Education. The theater's touring production, TheatreReach, brings books to life on stage for elementary school children throughout southern California.

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