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For Immediate Release

Contact: Janice Muirhead
Director of Institutional Development
860-443-5378, x213
jmuirhead@theoneill.org

NEWS FROM THE O'NEILL

**NEIL SIMON TO RECEIVE
THE O'NEILL'S 8TH ANNUAL MONTE CRISTO AWARD
MONDAY, APRIL 21, 2008
AT THE RAINBOW ROOM**

The Eugene O'Neill Theater Center will present its annual **Monte Cristo Award** to Pulitzer Prize and triple Tony Award-winning playwright **Neil Simon**, in recognition of his distinguished accomplishments and contributions to the American theater, exemplifying Eugene O'Neill's standard of excellence. The Award will be presented to Mr. Simon at a gala dinner in the Rainbow Room's Pegasus Suite on Monday, April 21st at 6:30 p.m.

Neil Simon is among the world's most successful playwrights. He has had countless plays and screenplays produced, and has received more Academy and Tony award nominations than any other writer. He is the only playwright to have had four Broadway productions running simultaneously. *The Odd Couple* (1965), *Biloxi Blues* (1985) and *Lost in Yonkers* (1991) garnered him Tony Awards for Best Play. *Lost in Yonkers* also received the Pulitzer Prize for Drama. America's stages continue to be invigorated by his stories and iconic characters, and by his ability to create humor from the lives and troubles of everyday people.

The Honorary Committee for the event includes co-chairman **Matthew Broderick** and **Nathan Lane**; and members **Lucie Arnaz**, **Emanuel Azenberg**, **Penny Fuller**, **Marvin Hamlisch**, **Laurence Luckinbill**, **Dina Merrill & Ted Hartley**, **Ruth & Steve Hendel**, **Pat Daily & Tom Viertel**, and **Betsy & George C. White**.

The evening's program will feature presentations by **Lucie Arnaz**, **Penny Fuller**, **Marvin Hamlisch**, **Robert Klein**, **Laurence Luckinbill** and others.

The Monte Cristo Award is given in recognition of distinguished careers exemplifying Eugene O'Neill's standard of excellence and pioneering spirit. Past recipients of the Award include Jason

Robards, Jr., Edward Albee, August Wilson, Zoe Caldwell, Brian Dennehy, Karl Malden, Arthur Gelb & Barbara Gelb and Wendy Wasserstein.

For table and ticket reservations or more information about the O'Neill's Monte Cristo Award dinner, please contact Suzanne Hendrix at the O'Neill: 860-443-5378 x 217 or shendrix@theoneill.org.

The Eugene O'Neill Theater Center, founded in 1964 in honor of Eugene O'Neill, America's only Nobel Prize-winning playwright and four-time Pulitzer Prize winner, is America's pre-eminent organization dedicated to the development of new works and new voices for the American theater. It has been home to more than 1,000 new works for the stage and 2,500 emerging artists. Scores of projects developed at the O'Neill have gone on to full productions at other theaters around the world, including Broadway, off-Broadway and major regional theaters. The O'Neill is itself the winner of a special Tony Award, the National Opera Award, the Jujamcyn Award for Theater Excellence and the Arts and Business Council Encore Award.

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EUGENE O'NEILL MEMORIAL THEATER CENTER, INC. • 305 GREAT NECK ROAD • WATERFORD, CT 06385
PH (860) 443-5378 • FAX (860) 443-9653 • www.theoneill.org