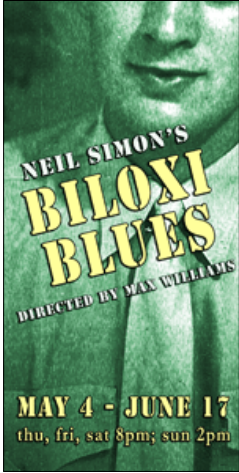


Press Contact: Casey Long (714) 777-3033; email: casey@chancetheater.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

A coming of age story... with lots of pushups!

Neil Simon's hilarious Tony Award-Winning comedy "Biloxi Blues" Opens at The Chance on Friday, May 4th!



IN A NUTSHELL:

WHAT: *Biloxi Blues* by Neil Simon

Directed by Max Williams

WHEN: May 4 – June 17, 2007

Thu/Fri/Sat 8 p.m., Sun. 2 p.m.

HOW MUCH: \$25 General Admission

\$22 Seniors/Students with ID

WHERE: The Chance Theater, 5552 E. La Palma Ave., Anaheim, CA 92807

INFO/RESERVATIONS: PLEASE NOTE: This play contains adult language.
Theater Info Line 714.777.3033
24/7 Tickets online www.chancetheater.com

Turning to his own life for inspiration, Neil Simon produced a trilogy of widely-acclaimed semi-autographical plays - *Brighton Beach Memoirs*, *Biloxi Blues*, and *Broadway Bound*, which have become known as "the Eugene trilogy". In Simon's hilarious WWII boot camp comedy, *Biloxi Blues*, we encounter Eugene as a naïve Army recruit looking for action (but not the battle kind). Expecting the army to be dolls and USO dances, he instead encounters a tough drill sergeant and a platoon of often hostile recruits. Armed with only his journal and a sense of humor, Eugene is determined to leave camp with everything he came in with, except his virginity. Instead, he is forced to confront difficult issues and his reactions to them. It's an awakening journey where the aspiring young writer takes away more than just basic training.

Biloxi Blues is directed by Max Williams, who is making his Chance Theater directorial debut, and will open on Friday, May 4, 2007, and run for a total of 27 performances through June 17, 2007. Show times are Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays at 8:00 p.m., and Sundays at 2:00 p.m. There will be a Post-Performance "Talkback" Discussion with the cast and designers on Friday, May 25 at 8:00 p.m. For all general performances, tickets are \$25 General Admission, and \$22 for Seniors and Students with I.D. A \$20 Preview Performance is scheduled for Thursday, May 3, at 8:00 p.m. The Opening Gala on Friday, May 4, at 8:00 p.m. will include a champagne reception after the performance. Additionally, a special "Show & Dinner with Cast & Crew" event is scheduled for Sunday, May 27. A Dinner and Show package with Yves' Bistro and Café Europe is also available.

(more)

Press Release: *Biloxi Blues* opens at The Chance Theater on May 4th! (pg. 2 of 3)

Neil Simon is one of America's foremost playwrights, humorists and screenwriters. For more than four decades, his plays, featuring poignant stories and zany characters known for their family-based New York settings, have energized stages worldwide. Since 1961, he has authored more than 40 Broadway plays ranging from humorous and lighthearted (*Barefoot in the Park*, *The Odd Couple*) to deeper, semi-autobiographical works (*Chapter Two*, "the Eugene trilogy"). *Biloxi Blues* premiered at The Neil Simon Theatre in 1985, and was an immediate hit garnering three Tony Awards, including Best Play, and widespread critical praise. "A fine comedy, and another step in the process of making Simon neither so simple, nor so simplistic." - *The NY Times*. "A play that rings with a newer, deeper, sweeter truth." - *NY Magazine*.

As the only playwright to have had four Broadway productions running simultaneously, Neil Simon is one of the most honored contemporary playwrights still working. His plays have been produced in dozens of languages, been adapted into major motion pictures (by Simon himself), and he even contributed librettos to such hit musical comedies as *Sweet Charity*, *Promises, Promises* and *They're Playing Our Song*. As a screenwriter, he has had more than a dozen major motion pictures produced, including *The Goodbye Girl* and *Lost in Yonkers*. Simon has received more Academy Award and Tony nominations than any other writer. His achievements include: Tony Awards (*The Odd Couple* - 1965, Best Author; *Biloxi Blues* - 1985, Best Play; and *Lost in Yonkers* - 1991, Best Play); Pulitzer Prize for Drama (*Lost in Yonkers* - 1991), NY Drama Critics' Circle Award (*Brighton Beach Memoirs* - 1983); Drama Desk Award (*Lost in Yonkers* - 1991); American Comedy Award (Creative Achievement - 1989); Golden Globes (*The Goodbye Girl* - 1978); 1995 Kennedy Center Honoree; and 2006 Mark Twain Prize for American Humor.

As described by director Max Williams, "Neil Simon wrote the trilogy of plays, of which *Biloxi Blues* is the centerpiece, as part of an attempt to take stock of his life and self. The events we see onstage are the manifestation of his recollections, sometimes idealized, sometimes almost jarringly stark. On a personal note, my grandfather is a WWII veteran and was a career Naval officer. As he grows into advanced age, his own memories have almost faded entirely. So, Eugene's attempt to air-out the past and come to terms with it resonates for me in that way. By the time the play takes place in 1943, there were nearly 9 million servicemen in uniform and the entire country was largely united in sacrifice for the war effort. To see how the situation contrasts with the intensely divisive wars of today is not difficult. But that the boys who would become the soldiers of WWII have much in common with their modern counterparts is not surprising. They are hopeful, fearful, brave, confused. In the case of *Biloxi Blues*, they also happen to be exceedingly funny."

Director Max Williams most recently served as associate director for the Paper Mill Playhouse production of *Summer and*

(more)

Press Release: *Biloxi Blues* opens at The Chance Theater on May 4th! (pg. 3 of 3)

Smoke. His New York directing credits include the premieres of *Bushwhackin'* (Primary Stages), *Right as Ron* (Bank St. Theatre), *The Kingdom* and *Removing the Head* (both at Manhattan Theatre Source). Regional: *Medea in Jerusalem* (Capital Repertory Theater), *Blithe Spirit*, *Private Lives*, *Educating Rita*, *Moon Over Buffalo* (all for Pioneer Valley Theater), *Ways and Means* (Monomoy Theatre), *Lysistrata* (TheatrEclipse), *Moonchildren* (Bitter Truth Theatre), and work for Hartford Stage, the Cleveland Play House, Pasadena Playhouse, and the Alley Theatre. He has been a Guest Artist/Lecturer at NYU Graduate Music Theatre Program, Ohio University. Mr. Williams has participated in the Lincoln Center Director's Lab and Director's Lab West, and has served as assistant director on Broadway, for Lincoln Center Theater, Manhattan Theatre Club, Philadelphia Theatre Co., and A.R.T.

The cast features Chance Theater Resident Company Members: Bryan Barton, last seen in *Anaheim Home Companion*; Michael Irish, most recently onstage at The Chance in *The Lying Kind*; and Sarah Moreau, who just appeared in *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change*. Joining them is David J. Dalton, fresh off his performance in *Inventing Van Gogh*, and A.J. Gutierrez, also featured in our winning production of *I Love You... Now Change*. Making their Chance Theater debuts with this production are Jonathan Howard, Staci Johnson, Michael Marinaccio, and Justin McCaffrey.

If you would like to arrange an interview with the director, cast, would like more information, reservations or complimentary press passes, please call 714-777-3033.

About The Chance Theater

A recent recipient of the 2007 Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle (LADCC) Special Award for Excellence, The Chance Theater is now in its Ninth Anniversary Season. A vital component of The Chance Theater's mission has always been to intimately present personally meaningful, uniquely engaging stories that promote dialogue within our community and provide a visceral experience for theatergoers. As a constituent member of Theater Communications Group (TCG) and Network of Ensemble Theaters (NET), The Chance continues to bring national attention to Southern California theater through its recent achievement. In addition, The Chance has also received a 2006 GLAAD Media Award nomination for Outstanding Los Angeles Theater; recognition as the 2004 Arts Orange County Outstanding Arts Organization; and participated in the 365 Days/365 Plays National Theater Project.

###