

NEIL SIMON, A LIFE IN STORIES

By Barret O'Brien for the Montana Repertory Theatre, ©2006

Marvin Neil Simon was born on the fourth of July, 1927, in the Bronx, New York. "I think it's fairly well documented that our characters are shaped in those first four or five formative years of life. I think mine was carved in granite in the first eight months," Simon muses. His father was a traveling salesman prone to disappearing from the family for months at a time. His father's absence would often land the young Simon and his brother living with relatives. Sixty years later Simon would use these experiences as the impetus for his play *Lost in Yonkers*. This ability to transform the difficult events of his life into humorous, heart-felt works is the gift Simon has utilized his entire professional career.

"The way I see things, life is both sad and funny.... I used to ask myself: What is a humorous situation? Now I ask: What is a sad situation and how can I tell it humorously?" Simon grew up in a poor Jewish family during the Great Depression. Simon briefly attended NYU and the University of Denver before joining the Army, where he began his writing career reporting for the army camp newspaper. After being discharged in 1946, Simon moved back to New York and began writing comedy sketches with his older brother. The Simons' breakthrough came when they were hired by producer Goodman Ace of CBS. For a decade the brothers wrote sketches for television comedians such as Phil Silvers and Jackie Gleason. In the 1950s Simon was hired to write for Sid Caesar's program "Your Show of Shows." It was television's Golden Age of Comedy, and Caesar employed some of the most talented writers of the generation: Mel Brooks, Woody Allen, and Carl Reiner. "I knew when I walked in," recalls Simon, "that this was the most talented group of writers that up until that time had ever been assembled together." This time would become the basis for Simon's play *Laughter on the 23rd Floor* some four decades later.

Though he received Emmy awards for his work on television, Simon felt a pull towards the theatre. His first production would not be an easy one, however. After three years and twenty-two drafts, Simon's *Come Blow Your Horn* opened on Broadway in 1961. *Horn* chronicled the time he and his brother spent in their first New York apartment. Though dismissed by critics, it became the first among an unparalleled string of Broadway hits for Simon. During the 1966-1967 season Simon's *Barefoot in the Park*, *The Odd Couple*, *Sweet Charity*, and *The Star Spangled Girl* were all running simultaneously on Broadway. That same year his brother's divorce prompted Simon to pen *The Odd Couple*. It became a smash hit, earning Simon his first Tony Award and becoming a film in 1968. By 1970 Neil Simon was America's most famous playwright.

In 1973 Simon's wife of twenty years died. Conflicting feelings of love and guilt in his second marriage prompted Simon to write the romantic comedy *Chapter Two*. Simon himself said that the play was cathartic in that it helped erase his own guilt of loving again "by sharing it with the world." *Chapter Two* also won over the critics, many of whom had until then seen Simon primarily as a "writer of gags."

Simon followed *Chapter Two* with his autobiographical Brighton Beach Trilogy. In it Simon delved deeper than ever before into his own experiences, following a young Jewish New Yorker from adolescence in the Great Depression to the military and finally back to New York to break into the entertainment business of the 1940s. The second of the trilogy, *Biloxi Blues*, earned Simon his third Tony Award. The third, *Broadway Bound*, though containing Simon's trademark wit and humor, used less camouflage than ever in disguising Simon's personal experiences. Simon called *Broadway Bound* "a play of forgiveness" and "an attempt...to understand my family and my origins." Simon's next play, *Lost in Yonkers*, won the Tony award for Best Play and the Pulitzer Prize for Drama and solidified Simon's works in the eyes of critics who had so long been skeptical of his box office success.

On Independence Day 2007, Neil Simon will turn 80. But far from retiring, Simon remains a prolific author, writing a play, screenplay, or book a year since winning the Pulitzer. He's amassed a cornucopia of awards and is the father of three daughters. "I suppose you could practically trace my life through my plays." A brief look back through his years validates Simon's assertion. From a boy in the Bronx, to a man breaking into the television business, to a father dealing with love and loss, Simon has utilized the events of his life to create a body of work that continues to enrich, entertain, and enlighten audiences all around the globe.

WORKS CITED

- Susan Koprince, *Understanding Neil Simon*. South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 2002.
Neil Simon, *Rewrites*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996.
Neil Simon, *The Play Goes On*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1999.

PUBLICATIONS AND FILMOGRAPHY

Stage Plays:

Come Blow Your Horn (1961)
Little Me [adaptation] (1962)
Barefoot in the Park (1963)
The Odd Couple (1965)
Sweet Charity [adaptation] (1965)
The Star-Spangled Girl (1965)
Plaza Suite (1968)
Promises, Promises [adaptation] (1968)
Last of the Red Hot Lovers (1969)
The Gingerbread Lady (1970)
The Prisoner of Second Avenue (1971)
The Sunshine Boys (1972)
The Good Doctor (1973)
God's Favorite (1974)
California Suite (1976)
Chapter Two (1977)
They're Playing Our Song [libretto] (1979)
I Ought to be in Pictures (1980)
Fools (1981)
Brighton Beach Memoirs (1983)
The Odd Couple [female version] (1985)
Biloxi Blues (1985)
Broadway Bound (1986)
Rumors (1987)
Lost in Yonkers (1991)
Jake's Women (1992)
The Goodbye Girl [libretto] (1992)
Laughter on the 23rd Floor (1993)
London Suite (1994)
Proposals (1997)
The Dinner Party (2000)
45 Seconds from Broadway (2002)
Rose's Dilemma (2003)

Television Series:

"The Phil Silvers Arrow Show" (1948)
"Your Show of Shows" (1950-54)
"The Tallulah Bankhead Show" (1951)
"The Sid Caesar Show" (1956-57)
"The Phil Silvers Show" (1958-59)
"The Garry Moore Show" (1976)

Screenplays:

After the Fox (1966)
Barefoot in the Park (1968)
The Odd Couple (1968)
Sweet Charity (1969)
The Out-of-Towners (1970)
Plaza Suite (1971)
Star-Spangled Girl (1971)
Last of the Red Hot Lovers (1972)
The Heartbreak Kid (1972)
The Prisoner of Second Avenue (1975)
The Sunshine Boys (1975)
Murder by Death (1976)
The Goodbye Girl (1977)
The Cheap Detective (1978)
California Suite (1978)
Chapter Two (1979)
Seems Like Old Times (1980)
Only When I Laugh [co-writer] (1981)
The Lonely Guy [co-writer] (1984)
I Ought to be in Pictures (1985)
Brighton Beach Memoirs (1988)
Biloxi Blues (1988)
The Marrying Man (1991)
Lost in Yonkers (1993)
Max Dugan Returns (1996)
The Odd Couple II (1998)

Books:

Rewrites [a memoir]. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996.
The Play Goes On [a memoir]. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1999.

LOST IN YONKERS

SYNOPSIS

By Barret O'Brien for the Montana Repertory Theatre, ©2006

Set above a candy store in 1940s New York, *Lost in Yonkers* is the story of Jay and Arty, two brothers who come to live with their strict German grandmother while their father travels south in search of work. The play takes place in the six-room apartment of Grandma Kurnitz, owner and proprietor of Kurnitz's Kandy Store, an ice cream parlor/candy shop which occupies the first floor of the same building.

It's August and Jay, 16, and Arty, 13, sit in the heat of their grandmother's living room waiting for their father, Eddie, who is in the adjacent room. Eddie, whose wife recently died of cancer, borrowed nine thousand dollars from a loan shark to pay medical bills. Now he's in trouble because he can't pay. Eddie must travel south in search of work, but can't take his sons with him. As a last resort, he's asking his mother to watch the boys. Eddie is a nervous, acquiescent 41-year-old man unused to asking his hard-as-steel, German immigrant mother for favors.

Eddie's sister Bella comes home to the apartment. Bella is 35 but childlike in that she is easily confused and often loses her way—whether in the busy streets of New York or in a simple conversation. Bella dropped out of high school and has worked in the Kandy Store ever since, waiting on her mother and keeping her own dreams on hold. Bella is thrilled to see her nephews, and when Grandma Kurnitz refuses to take in the boys, it is Bella who stands up to her mother and convinces her to concede. The boys will stay in Yonkers for the next ten months, while Eddie works the booming steel industry of the World War II American South.

The boys settle into life in Yonkers. They try desperately to keep the promise they made to their father of holding their witty tongues and doing all that Grandma Kurnitz demands. They are forced to work in the Kandy Store every day after school for no pay and are shown compassion only by their nervous and forgetful Aunt Bella. Bella confides in the boys that she has fallen in love with Johnny, the usher at the local movie theatre. Bella dreams of marrying him and opening a restaurant. However, Johnny has learning disabilities, can't read or write, and lives at home with his parents. Bella tells Arty and Jay that Grandma keeps thousands of dollars somewhere in the house and she intends to ask her for start-up money for her dream restaurant.

The news of the hidden money prompts the boys to search the ice cream parlor for the stash. If they can find it, they'll mail it to their father and be free of Grandma Kurnitz. That night their uncle arrives to stay for a few days. Uncle Louie is a slick, 36-year-old man who wears a double-breasted suit and carries a black satchel and a gun. Jay and Arty suspect he works for the mob and their suspicion grows when he gives each of them a five dollar bill to "work for him." The boys learn their work will entail keeping quiet should anyone come around looking for Louie.

A few weeks later Arty is sick in bed, reading a letter from his father, when Jay arrives from the Kandy Store with Grandma's cold remedy—her dreaded mustard soup. Louie awakes and Arty tells him of a threatening phone call that was received that morning. Louie is in trouble with the mob and his time is running out. Jay asks Louie if he can leave with him that night. Grandma Kurnitz has pushed the older brother too far by charging him for pretzels stolen while Jay was delivering Arty's soup. Louie declines to participate in Jay's plan. Bella arrives and informs the brothers that this will be the night she tells Grandma of her plans to marry and ask for five thousand dollars.

That night, once they have finished dinner, the family sits in the living room while Louie paces the floor. Aunt Gert has joined them. Gert, in her thirties, speaks with a speech impediment from years of holding her breath while sleeping. She speaks normally for the first half of a sentence; during the second half, she talks while sucking in her breath. Bella has set the chairs in a circle and is preparing to tell the family her news, but doesn't know how to begin. Jay helps, and Bella is able to tell her family about Johnny and her plans. Grandma is not, to say the least, supportive.

After two days with Gert, Bella comes home to confront her mother. She has offered the money to Johnny, who refused it. He has chosen, instead, to stay with his job at the movie theatre and continue living at home with his parents. Bella is heartbroken and confesses to her mother that she has had a secret sexual life with other men. She tells her mother that this was her way to feel love while living in a loveless home; she accuses her mother of causing Louie's life of crime, Gert's speech problem, and her own inability to live like a grown woman.

Nine months later Eddie returns. He's earned the money and has come for his sons. Meanwhile, Louie has joined the Army, gone off to war, and is safe from the mob for the moment. Arty and Jay thank their Grandma and say goodbye. Though the goodbye doesn't involve tears and kisses, it does suggest a lightening of mood—a step closer to understanding between the boys and their grandmother. As the boys leave, they promise to visit, and one can't help believing they mean it—and that, in fact, the family has grown a bit closer. As the story comes to curtain, Bella informs her mother that they'll be having company that week; she has some new friends and plans on entertaining. It's a small step but one that suggests a larger distance. Things have shifted in the Kurnitz household, maybe just an inch or two, but it is an important distance, one that can bridge the space between love and hate, healing and hurt, family and foes.

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, MONTANA REP

Greg Johnson has served as artistic director of the Montana Rep since 1990. He brought with him a commitment to excellence developed during years of experience in the New York theatre, where he worked with the best directors, choreographers, actors, designers, and playwrights in the country. He brings his energy and expertise to every aspect of his involvement with the Montana Rep.

Greg Johnson's Broadway credits include *Biloxi Blues*, *Crimes of the Heart*, *Is There Life After High School?*, *Da*, and *Hide and Seek*. National tours include the Broadway productions of *Steel Magnolias*, *Crimes of the Heart*, and *Biloxi Blues*. Mr. Johnson spent 19 years working in the professional theatre in New York City as an actor, stage manager, and director before coming to Montana to head the Montana Rep.

Since joining the Montana Rep, Greg Johnson has directed *Broadway Bound*; *Nunsense II*; *The Heidi Chronicles*; *Someone Who'll Watch Over Me*; *Lend Me a Tenor*; *Sex, Drugs, Rock & Roll*; *The Real Thing*; *Willi*; *The Voice of the Prairie*; and the national tours of *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *It's a Wonderful Life*, *Death of a Salesman*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, and *The Trip to Bountiful*. In addition, he is responsible for development of *The Colony: A Gathering of Artists in Support of the Writer's Craft* at The University of Montana. Mr. Johnson has been a theatre review panelist for the National Endowment for the Arts and serves on the faculty of The University of Montana School of Fine Arts.

About the 2007 selection, Mr. Johnson says, "With *Lost In Yonkers*, the company continues its tradition of telling the great stories of our time, this year celebrating the comic genius of Neil Simon."

ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

Kara-Lynn Vaeni recently received her M.F.A. in directing from the Yale School of Drama, where she directed *The Skin of Our Teeth*; a musical version of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*; *Henry IV, Part One*; and *Phaedre's Love* and worked with playwrights Rolin Jones, Marcus Gardley, Kate Walat, and A. Rey Pamatmat.

Recent projects include the New York premiere of *Deviant* by A. Rey Pamatmat, which was on *HX* magazine's top ten list of productions to see in 2005; the New York premiere of Molly Rice's *Bunraku* play *Medea Unharnessed* for the Drilling Company; a new translation of *Life is a Dream* at UMass Amherst; and the film *The Good Shepherd* with Robert DeNiro, Matt Damon, and Angelina Jolie. She has directed workshops for the Flea, the Lark, New Georges, and South Coast Rep. Recently Ms. Vaeni directed *Calamity John's Cowboy Musical*, for which she wrote the book and lyrics, and is in pre-production as the associate director for the opera *HELL*, which premieres at PS 122 in April.

THE REP'S COMPANY

SUZY HUNT* (Grandma Kurnitz) Ms. Hunt, seen last year as Carrie Watts in Greg Johnson's production of *The Trip to Bountiful*, has appeared with the Montana Rep in *Broadway Bound* and *To Kill a Mockingbird*. She performed on Broadway in *Execution of Justice* and Off-Broadway in *Steel Magnolias*, *The Rimers of Eldritch*, and *King Lear*. Regionally she has performed at the Seattle Repertory Theatre, Intiman Theatre, Arizona Theatre Company, Spoleto Festival, Guthrie Theatre, Denver Center Theatre, and the Alley Theatre. Plum roles include Stella in *Light Up The Sky*, Carrie Watts in *The Trip to Bountiful*, and Mrs. Graves in *Enchanted April*.

J. R. ROBINSON* (Eddie) This play marks J.R.'s second tour with Montana Rep and he's very pleased to be back. Most recently J.R. was seen in the Montana Rep's national tour of *The Trip to Bountiful* and *Wit* at the Fulton Opera House. Other regional work includes Captain Keller in *The Miracle Worker*, Gabe in *Dinner With Friends*, Oberon, Carl in *Baltimore Waltz*, and productions ranging from *Our Town* to *Romeo and Juliet*. He has appeared in all of the New York daytime dramas (usually briefly and often saying "I now pronounce you..."). J.R. also works as a fight director in both theatre and film. He recently completed work on the soon-to-be-released WWII film *Proud*, in which he played the chief racist and acted as stunt coordinator.

JASON DONOVAN HALL* (Louie) Jason comes to the Montana Rep from New York City, where he has lived and worked for the past two years. He is a graduate of the American Academy of Dramatic Arts and of the M.F.A. program at the prestigious National Theatre Conservatory. Notable television appearances include a recurring role on the daytime drama "Guiding Light," and an appearance on Showtime's original series "Action." Jason has also worked in regional theatres all over the country, including the Idaho Shakespeare Festival and the Tony Award-winning Denver Center Theatre Company. Most recently he has been seen frequenting the questionable joints of New York City's East Village as Cosmo Moody in the popular late-night performance piece, *Cabaret Cucaracha*. Favorite roles include Sir Toby Belch in *Twelfth Night*, Donnie in *American Buffalo*, and Thurio in *Two Gentlemen of Verona*. Jason is very pleased to be working for the first time with the Montana Repertory Theatre.

LORDAN NAPOLI* (Bella) Ms. Napoli is a graduate of Cornell University. Her New York City credits include performances in *The Armageddon Dance Party* (FringeNYC 2006); *Kicker* (Triptych Theatre); *Madeleine & George* (Riant Theatre); and *IX4* (Broken Watch Theatre Company). She has also performed in *The Doctor's Dilemma* (American Repertory Theatre); *Lend Me a Tenor*, *Epic Proportions*, and *Kong's Night Out* (Lyric Stage Co.); *Approaching Moomtaj* (New Repertory Theatre); *The Laramie Project*, *Macbeth*, and *Kringle Kult* (Boston Theatre Works); *Dew Point* and *Jump/Cut* (Gloucester Stage Co.); *As Bees in Honey Drown* (Stoneham Theatre); *The Underpants* (Foothills Theatre); *The Art Room* and *Cuckooland* (Wellfleet Harbor Actors Theatre); *How The Other Half Loves* (New Century Theatre); and *Shear Madness* (Charles Playhouse). Film credits include *The Game Plan*, directed by Andy Fickman and starring Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson.

MARTHA NESLEN (Gert) Ms. Neslen is currently a junior at The University of Montana, where she is pursuing her B.F.A. in acting. She is very excited and grateful for this opportunity to work with the Montana Rep. This is her first experience with professional theatre, but hopefully not her last. She has been in a number of UM productions; her favorites include *Dancing at Lughnasa* and *Still Life with Iris*. Thank you for supporting live theatre and enjoy the show.

MARIE FAHLGREN (Arty) Ms. Fahlgren is honored to be touring with the Montana Repertory Theatre. Originally from Glasgow, Montana, Marie is a sophomore in the B.F.A. acting program at The University of Montana. She grew up acting on the Fort Peck Summer Theatre stage. Past roles include Kim MacAfee in *Bye Bye Birdie*, Crystal in *Little Shop of Horrors*, Rusty in *Footloose*, and Hunyak in *Chicago*. At The University of Montana she appeared in *The Time of Your Life*, playing the roles of the newsboy and Anna. Marie is ecstatic about this opportunity to tour with the Rep, taking her acting career to a new level. Marie would like to give a big thanks to her family and friends for always supporting her and to everyone at Fort Peck for being the reason she fell in love with acting. She hopes that you enjoy watching the show as much as she enjoys being in it!

DANNY LUWE (Jay) Mr. Luwe is currently a senior in The University of Montana Department of Drama/Dance, where he is nearing completion of a B.F.A in acting. He has been involved with numerous productions at the University, including roles in *Present Laughter*, *The Flying Doctor*, *Evita*, *Bat Boy: The Musical*, *Peter Pan*, and most recently, *Richard III*. Danny is thrilled to be a part of the Montana Repertory Theatre's production of *Lost in Yonkers*.

ELIZABETH TORGERSON* (Company Manager) This will be Ms. Torgerson's sixth tour (regional and national) with the Montana Rep. Her relationship with the Rep has included *Swingtime Canteen*, *The Miracle Worker*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *Steel Magnolias*, *The Trip to Bountiful*, the Missoula Colony, and now *Lost in Yonkers*. A few of her favorite character roles have been Jetta in *Angry Housewives*, Ouiser and Clairee in *Steel Magnolias*, Sister Mary Amnesia in *Nunsense I and II* and *Nuncracker*, Bella in *Lost in Yonkers*, Ethel Thayer in *On Golden Pond*, and Topeka Abotelli in *Swingtime Canteen*. Elizabeth's main "role" on this tour will be that of company manager. Originally from Great Falls, Montana, Elizabeth has two wonderful sons and boasts or being married for 34 years.

* Member of Actors' Equity Association

ACTORS' EQUITY ASSOCIATION (AEA), founded in 1913, represents more than 45,000 actors and stage managers in the United States. Equity seeks to advance, promote, and foster the art of live theatre as an essential component of our society. Equity negotiates wages and working conditions, providing a wide range of benefits, including health and pension plans. AEA is a member of the AFL-CIO and is affiliated with FIA, an international organization of performing arts unions. The Equity emblem is our mark of excellence. www.actorsequity.org



THE REP'S DESIGNERS

BRUCE BROCKMAN (Scenic Designer) Mr. Brockman is a professor of theatre and department head at Oklahoma State University and works as a professional freelance scene designer and scenic artist. He has designed scenery and lighting for Colorado Shakespeare Festival, Montana Repertory Theatre, Idaho Theatre for Youth, American Festival Ballet, Idaho Repertory Theatre, KUID Public Television, Ice House Theatre, The University of Montana New Play Festival, and numerous productions for the University of Idaho and Oklahoma State University. He is especially proud of his work as a designer and scenic artist for Music Theatre of Wichita, where he recently designed *Annie Get Your Gun*. His design for *Top Girls* was selected for publication in the 1995 USITT Design Expo Catalog and was included in the Prague Quadrennial International Design Exhibition. Professor Brockman is an active researcher and is working on projects in computer-generated stage projections as well as nineteenth and early twentieth-century scenic art.

ALAN HANSON (Lighting Designer) Mr. Hanson is a graduate of The University of Montana, where he received his B.F.A. in design/technology with an emphasis in lighting design. He has designed productions throughout Montana, including *True West* (Montana Rep Missoula); *My Fair Lady* (Missoula Children's Theatre); *Chicago* (Fort Peck Summer Theatre); and *Big River* (Bigfork Summer Playhouse), as well as designing for the Montana Repertory Theatre's educational outreach tour. He has toured with past Montana Rep productions, including *Steel Magnolias* and *The Trip to Bountiful*, as well as two educational outreach tours across the state of Montana. He has also toured as an electrician with Boston-based Chamber Theatre's production of *Classics!* He would like to thank the patron in Row D, Seat 12, for all their love, support and daily reminders of how it's the random people we don't know who affect our lives so dearly!

LAURA HEDGERS ALVAREZ (Costume Designer) Ms. Alvarez was born and raised in Western Montana, where she spent summers on the Flansburg Ranch, established in the 1950s by her grandparents. When Laura was four years old, her grandmother began teaching her to sew. As an adult, Laura worked as a tailor in Phoenix before returning to Missoula, where she completed her B.A. at The University of Montana. After gaining design experience in university and regional theatres, she moved with her children to Los Angeles, where she worked in opera, theatre, film, and television. She was head tailor and workroom supervisor on such David E. Kelley productions as "Ally McBeal," "The Practice," and "Boston Legal." Laura is pleased to be back in Montana as adjunct professor of costume design and technology at The University of Montana Department of Drama/Dance.

DAN HARTMANN (Sound Designer) Mr. Hartmann is thrilled to be designing his second national tour with the Montana Rep. A native of Sun River, Montana, Dan began his career at The University of Montana in 2002 as a vocal performance major and is now a senior studying sound design, lighting design, and technical direction as part of the B.F.A. design/technology program. He works on campus as part of the scene shop staff and light shop staff and serves as the sound shop manager for the UM Department of Drama/Dance. Dan's recent show credits include sound design for the Rep's 2006 tour of *The Trip To Bountiful*; The University of Montana productions of *Bat Boy: The Musical*; *Evita*; *A Christmas Carol*; and *Picasso at the Lapin Agile*, directed by Roger Hedden, as well as stage managing UM's production of *Peter Pan*.

JAKE ZEIMET (Props Designer) Mr. Zeimet is currently completing his fourth and final year at The University of Montana, working toward his B.F.A. in theatre design. Jake's previous design experience includes working as properties manager for UM productions of *The Shape of Things*, *Peter Pan*, and *The Debutante Ball*. Jake also worked as assistant scene designer on *Evita* at UM and as scene designer on *Two by Two* for Summer Musicale in Great Falls, Montana. *Lost In Yonkers* is Jake's first design for the Montana Rep.

JESSICA OWEN* (Stage Manager) Ms. Owen toured for two years with the Rep as assistant stage manager before assuming the position of stage manager last year, and she's thrilled to be back for more. She also stage managed for the Rep's educational outreach program on its tour of *My Children! My Africa!* in 2003. A military brat with roots in Montana, she is an alum of The University of Montana with a B.F.A. in design/technology with an emphasis in stage management. She has also stage managed for the Post Playhouse in Crawford, Nebraska, and has worked for Montana Shakespeare in the Parks. She has spent the past three years stage managing in northwestern Montana at the Bigfork Summer Playhouse, which performs four musicals in rep and two comedies each summer.

* Member of Actors' Equity Association

THE REP'S STAFF

STEVE WING (Production Manager) Mr. Wing has been with the Montana Rep for over 25 years. He has managed the office; run rehearsals; loaded, driven, and unloaded trucks...he's done it all! Steve toured with the company 11 times as a technician, company manager, stage manager, and managing director. At The University of Montana he is production coordinator for the Department of Drama/Dance and teaches stage management classes. Steve holds degrees from both The University of Montana and Montana State University. A Helena native, he has worked for The Old Brewery Theatre, The Loft Theatre, and Shakespeare in the Parks.

LISA MARIE HYSLOP (Assistant to the Artistic Director) The national tour of *Lost in Yonkers* marks Lisa Marie's second year with the Montana Rep. Previously Ms. Hyslop worked with the Idaho Shakespeare Festival, Boise Contemporary Theater, Seven Devils, and Bruce Willis's Company of Fools in Hailey, Idaho. For the last three years she has been the project coordinator for the Missoula Colony: A Gathering of Artists in Support of the Writers' Craft. Lisa Marie's favorite projects include Bartlett Sher's premieres of *Cymbeline* and *Titus Andronicus* at Idaho Shakes; *Valparaiso* and *Fuddy Meers* at BCT; *Five Women Wearing the Same Dress* for WIT (where she served as interim managing director); and *Antigone* with Montana Rep Missoula. She holds a B.A. in directing from Boise State University and an M.A. in theatre management from The University of Montana.

TERESA WALDORF (Outreach and In-Schools Coordinator) In addition to her work with Montana Rep, Ms. Waldorf serves as publicity coordinator and adjunct professor in the Department of Drama/Dance at The University of Montana. She earned her M.F.A. in acting and directing from UM in 1991 and is an actress, director, wife, and mother. She has acted in Missoula for more than 16 years and was last seen on stage in the title role in *Mrs. Farnsworth* (Montana Rep Missoula). Her directing credits with The University of Montana Department of Drama/Dance include *Bat Boy: The Musical*; *Waiting for Godot*; *The Rocky Horror Show*; and *Still Life With Iris*.

EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH

Contact for workshops and discussion information:

Lisa Marie Hyslop, Assistant to the Artistic Director

Phone: (406) 243-6809, FAX: (406) 243-5726, e-mail: lisa.hyslop@mso.umt.edu

Now in its twenty-third year, our program offers experience, creativity, and flexibility to audiences across the country. Every year, our professional actors and production crew hold workshops and give backstage tours for audiences on our tour. These inspired professionals teach various aspects of the theatre. Special topics are added each year depending on the themes inherent in the current play and the talents of our company.

The educational outreach program acquaints audiences with live theatre and the work of playwrights, making the process of play production fascinating and accessible. In doing so, the program educates audiences, developing their appetite for plays and literature. The Montana Repertory Theatre is strongly committed to nurturing and developing new audiences for the theatre and supporting the classroom experience with theatre arts. With that in mind, we offer educational programs to you on the day that we perform in your community. You may stipulate in your contract which educational outreach activities you prefer and we will arrange for them, schedule permitting, since scheduling depends on our travel time to your city.

Educational outreach available:

- Pre- or post-performance discussions with audiences
- Backstage tour with Montana Rep technicians
- Professional acting and improvisation technique workshops

Cost: Per contract agreement

Let's start early! The most successful experiences are those that are arranged ahead of time. You may wish to consult with the local drama or language arts teachers in your town so they can make plans to include their students. Scheduling the workshop, either at your school or at the theatre, can be arranged through Lisa Marie Hyslop, assistant to the artistic director.

Learn more about our workshops online at <http://montanarep.org/workshops.html>

Thanks to our funders for their generosity: The University of Montana, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Montana Arts Council, and the Montana Cultural Trust.

WHAT OTHERS SAY ABOUT THE REP

“Montana Repertory Theatre's production of *The Trip To Bountiful* appeals to anyone who ever longed to return to the simpler times of childhood.”

The Dickenson Star, Norton, Virginia, 2006

“I drove two hours yesterday to see the Montana Rep in Pittsburg, Kansas, and it was well worth it.”

The Trip to Bountiful
Jim Misenheimer, Overland Park, Kansas, 2006

“The splendid environment, complete with multi-tier staging...fully enhances this production. The direction is excellent and all stage elements (lighting, sound delivery, and costuming) are precise.”

Steel Magnolias
Fred Sokol, *The Republican*
Springfield, Massachusetts, 2005

“This is what theatre is meant to be.”

A Streetcar Named Desire
Bob Schwarz, Staff Writer, *The Charleston Gazette*
Charleston, West Virginia, 2004

“I was completely wrapped up in the play from start to finish. Thank you for such a wonderful performance!”

A Streetcar Named Desire
Larry Bechtel, Blacksburg, Virginia, 2004

“The acting and directing were top-notch and the set design and staging were creative and first-rate.”

A Streetcar Named Desire
Lawrence and Melissa Mencotti
Meadville, Pennsylvania, 2004

“The acting, the revolving set, the interpreters and so much more were incredible...thank you again for a terrific evening of theatre.”

The Miracle Worker
Ginger Hendricks Bulla, Elon University
Elon, North Carolina, 2003

“A wonderful and beautifully executed performance of *The Diary of Anne Frank*. The professionalism of the company was of the highest caliber.”

David P. Thaggard
The University of North Carolina of Pembroke, 2001

“It was an outstanding afternoon, filled with power. The *Diary of Anne Frank* cast from Montana Repertory Theatre was inspired.”

Warren Gerds, *Green Bay Press-Gazette*
Green Bay, Wisconsin, 2001

“The Montana Rep actors deliver the message with ringing clarity. It was a rare evening of Broadway-style theatre in Moses Lake—a moving performance of a first-class production.”

Broadway Bound
Columbia Basin Herald
Moses Lake, Washington, 1995

“Excellent performance by the Montana Rep...from the opening to the closing, standing ovation, *To Kill a Mockingbird* was powerful and gripping...the acting was up to the impressive writing.”

Peter Strescino, *The Chieftain*
Pueblo, Colorado, 1995

“We can always be sure that whatever the Montana Rep does, it will be done extraordinarily well.”

Sophie Pelissier, WYO Theater Inc.
Sheridan, Wyoming, 1994

“I’ve received nothing but glowing and positive feedback about the show and the high level of professionalism by the actors and actresses.”

Lend Me a Tenor
Ronna Kalish, New Mexico Tech
Socorro, New Mexico, 1993

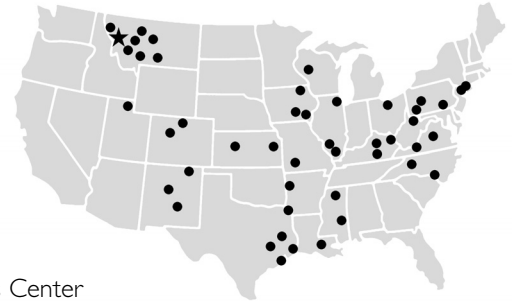
NEIL SIMON'S
LOST IN YONKERS

JANUARY

15	MON	Plains, Montana / Plains High School Gym
16	TUES	Helena, Montana / Myrna Loy Center
17	WED	Lewistown, Montana / Fergus High School Performing Arts Theatre
18	THURS	Bozeman, Montana / Strand Union Theatre
19	FRI	Great Falls, Montana / Civic Center
20	SAT	Missoula, Montana / Montana Theatre
23-27	TUES-SAT	Missoula, Montana / Montana Theatre
29-30	MON-TUES	Logan, Utah / Ellen Eccles Theatre

FEBRUARY

1	THURS	Butte, Montana / Mother Lode Theatre
2	FRI	Missoula, Montana / Montana Theatre
3	SAT	Billings, Montana / Alberta Blair Theater
6	TUES	Avon, Colorado / Vilar Center
7-10	WED-SAT	Ft. Collins, Colorado / Lincoln Center
12	MON	Hays, Kansas / Beach-Schmidt Performing Arts Center
14	WED	Ranton, New Mexico / Shuler Theatre
16	FRI	Alto, New Mexico / Spencer Center
18	SUN	Albuquerque, New Mexico / University of New Mexico
22	THURS	Crockett, Texas / Crockett Civic Center
23	FRI	Galveston, Texas / Grand 1894 Opera House
24	SAT	Orange, Texas / Lutchter Theatre
26	MON	College Station, Texas / Texas A&M
27	TUES	Texarkana, Texas / Perot Theatre



MONTANA REPERTORY THEATRE

The University of Montana
School of Fine Arts
Department of Drama/Dance (MFA004)
Missoula, Montana 59812-8136

(406) 243-6809 / Fax: 243-5726

montanarep@mso.umt.edu

www.montanarep.org

MARCH

1	THURS	University, Mississippi / Ford Center
2	FRI	Meridian, Mississippi / Riley Center Theater
3	SAT	Baton Rouge, Louisiana / Louisiana State University
7	WED	Carbondale, Illinois / Southern Illinois University
8	THURS	Lebanon, Illinois / Hettenhausen Center for the Arts
10	SAT	Oskaloosa, Iowa / George Daily Auditorium
12	MON	Eau Claire, Wisconsin / Gantner Concert Hall
13	TUES	Decorah, Iowa / Luther College
15	THURS	Springfield, Missouri / Juanita K Hammons Hall
16	FRI	Alma, Arkansas / Alma Education and Art Foundation
20	TUES	Baldwin City, Kansas / Rice Auditorium
22	THURS	Mount Pleasant, Iowa / Iowa Wesleyan Chapel Auditorium
23-24	FRI-SAT	Elgin, Illinois / Hemmens Cultural Center
27	TUES	Elyria, Ohio / Stocker Arts Center
29	THURS	Blacksburg, Virginia / Burruss Hall Auditorium
30	FRI	Charlottesville, Virginia / Performing Arts Center
31	SAT	Uniontown, Pennsylvania / State Theatre Center

APRIL

3	TUES	York, Pennsylvania / Strand-Capitol Performing Art Center
5	THURS	Pembroke, North Carolina / Givens Performing Arts Center
7	SAT	Taylorsville, North Carolina / Alexander Center Auditorium
10	TUES	Indiana, Pennsylvania / Indiana University of Pennsylvania
12	THURS	Fairmont, West Virginia / Wallman Hall
14	SAT	Staten Island, New York / St. George Theatre
15	SUN	Brooklyn, New York / Walt Whitman Theatre
17	TUES	Ashland, Kentucky / Paramount Arts Center
19	THURS	Somerset, Kentucky / Center Theatre
20-22	FRI-SUN	Lexington, Kentucky / Lexington Opera House

LONG PRESS RELEASE

Tickets are now on sale for **Lost in Yonkers**.

Montana Repertory Theatre presents Neil Simon's Pulitzer Prize-winning, **Lost in Yonkers**.

Coming to _____ on _____ at _____
CITY DATE LOCATION

When Neil Simon's **Lost in Yonkers** won the Pulitzer Prize for Drama in 1991, it marked a milestone in a career of milestones. With work spanning half a century, highlighted by more Academy Award and Tony nominations than any other writer, and translations of his plays in dozens of languages, Mr. Simon is arguably the world's most successful playwright.

Set above a candy store in 1940s New York, **Yonkers** is the story of two young brothers who come to live with their strict German grandmother during World War II. While awaiting the return of their father, the boys wrestle to contain their fiery wit as a host of eccentric relatives enter their lives. An overbearing grandmother, a childlike aunt, a mobster uncle—the boys find themselves nose to nose with a family as sweet and as brittle as the candy they peddle downstairs.

Lost in Yonkers is Simon at his best, riding the line between comedy and drama. It is a play about family. What holds them together? What pulls them apart? These questions, in Simon's deft hands, become the center of a highly entertaining and moving evening of theatre.

Montana Repertory Theatre presents **Yonkers** as part of their continued mission of bringing to life the great stories of America—stories that explore the core of a nation's experience and help to uncover the heart of the American character. Established in 1977, Montana Rep has become one of the most respected professional touring companies in the country today. Recent productions include *It's a Wonderful Life*, *The Miracle Worker*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *Steel Magnolias*, and last year's national tour of *The Trip to Bountiful*.

Lost in Yonkers is directed by Kara-Lynn Vaeni. Ms. Vaeni is a recipient of both the Kaufmann Prize in Directing and a Presidential Public Service Fellowship. She has served as the artistic director of the Yale Summer Cabaret and resident assistant director at the Eugene O'Neill Summer Playwrights Conference. Ms. Vaeni is a graduate of the Yale School of Drama.

Tickets for **Lost in Yonkers** are available at _____
OUTLET

or by calling _____ . Prices range from \$_____ to \$_____ .
PHONE

Performances are at _____ . The **Montana Rep** performance(s) in
TIME

_____ is/are presented by _____ .
CITY SPONSOR

MONTANA REP is funded in part by a grant from the Montana Arts Council (an agency of state government) and the National Endowment for the Arts, with support from the Montana State Legislature, The University of Montana, and the Montana Cultural Trust.

SHORT PRESS RELEASE

Tickets are now on sale for **Lost in Yonkers**.

Montana Repertory Theatre presents Neil Simon's Pulitzer Prize-winning **Lost in Yonkers**.

Coming to _____ on _____ at _____
CITY DATE LOCATION

Set above a candy store in New York, **Yonkers** is the story of two young brothers who come to live with their strict German grandmother during World War II. While awaiting the return of their father, the boys wrestle to contain their fiery wit as a host of eccentric relatives enter their lives. A mobster uncle, a childlike aunt, an overbearing grandmother; the boys find themselves nose to nose with a family as sweet and as brittle as the candy they peddle downstairs.

With work spanning half a century, highlighted by more Academy Award and Tony nominations than any other writer in history, Neil Simon is arguably the world's most successful playwright. When **Lost in Yonkers** won the Pulitzer Prize for Drama in 1991, it marked a milestone in a career of milestones. Through over 30 Broadway productions and translations of his works in dozens of languages, Simon has presented situations as compelling as they are hilarious and characters as human as they are heroic. **Lost in Yonkers** is Simon at his best, riding the line between comedy and drama. These opposing emotions, in Simon's deft hands, become the center of a highly entertaining and moving evening of theatre.

Tickets for **Lost in Yonkers** are available at _____
OUTLET

or by calling _____ . Prices range from \$ _____ to \$ _____ .
PHONE

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**MONTANA
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THEATRE FROM THE HEART OF THE ROCKIES

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LOST IN YONKERS 15-SECOND PSA

Don't miss the **Montana Repertory Theatre** production of **Lost in Yonkers**.

See this new American masterpiece come to life on stage at _____
LOCATION

on _____ at _____
DATE TIME

Call _____ for local ticket information.
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Montana Rep brings you great theatre from the Heart of the Rockies.

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LOST IN YONKERS 30-SECOND PSA

Lost in Yonkers will be presented live on stage by the **Montana Repertory Theatre**.

See this new American masterpiece brought to life by one of the nation's leading touring ensembles.

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DAY DATE TIME

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LOCATION

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Montana Rep...bringing you great theatre from the Heart of the Rockies.