



For Immediate Release: May 4, 2009
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THE OLD GLOBE ANNOUNCES 2009/2010 SEASON

TWO WORLD PREMIERE MUSICALS **A WORLD PREMIERE AND THREE WEST COAST PREMIERE PLAYS**

SAMMY

**A WORLD-PREMIERE MUSICAL WRITTEN BY TWO-TIME ACADEMY AWARD-WINNER LESLIE BRICUSSE
BASED ON THE LIFE OF LEGENDARY ENTERTAINER, SAMMY DAVIS, JR.**

WHISPER HOUSE

**2007 TONY AWARD-WINNER DUNCAN SHEIK'S FIRST MUSICAL SINCE SPRING AWAKENING,
A YOUNG BOY IN WORLD WAR II BEGINS TO THINK HIS LIGHTHOUSE HOME IS HAUNTED**

ALIVE AND WELL

**A WORLD-PREMIERE ROMANTIC COMEDY TELLS THE STORY OF A BIG CITY REPORTER AND A CIVIL WAR
RE-ENACTOR WHO SET OUT TO SOLVE A MYSTERY**

WEST COAST PREMIERES

**BOEING-BOEING, A TONY AWARD WINNER FOR BEST REVIVAL OF A PLAY
THE NEW COMEDY, THE SAVANNAH DISPUTATION, ABOUT TWO SISTERS,
THEIR PRIEST AND AN UNEXPECTED VISITOR**

AND THE MOVING DRAMA,

THE WHIPPING MAN, SET IN THE DAYS FOLLOWING THE CIVIL WAR

THE GLOBE ALSO PRESENTS:

**NEIL SIMON'S PULITZER PRIZE-WINNING LOST IN YONKERS,
WHICH WILL OPEN THE NEW Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre**

**THE TOUR-DE-FORCE, WHAT YOU WILL,
CREATED BY AND STARRING TONY AND OLIVIER AWARD-WINNER, ROGER REES**

**AND THE 12TH YEAR OF SAN DIEGO'S FAVORITE HOLIDAY TRADITION:
DR. SEUSS' HOW THE GRINCH STOLE CHRISTMAS!**

-- more --

San Diego – Lou Spisto, Executive Producer of the Tony Award®-winning Old Globe, is pleased to announce the Theatre’s 2009/2010 Winter Season.

The schedule of productions in the Old Globe Theatre includes the world premiere musical *Sammy* (September 17 – November 1, 2009, *press opening on September 26*), book, music and lyrics by two-time Academy Award and Grammy Award-winner **Leslie Bricusse**, and directed by **Keith Glover**. *Sammy* follows the life of one of the greatest entertainers of all time. Next in the Globe is the world premiere musical *Whisper House* (January 13 – February 21, 2010, *press opening on January 21*) with music by 2007 Tony and Grammy Award-winner **Duncan Sheik**, book and lyrics by **Kyle Jarrow** and directed by **Keith Powell**. *Whisper House* is set in a haunted lighthouse during the height of World War II. Next in the Globe is the West Coast premiere of the Tony Award-winning comedy, *Boeing-Boeing* (March 13 – April 18, 2010, *press opening on March 18*), by **Marc Camoletti** and **Beverly Cross**, which had its adaptation significantly revised for its recent Broadway incarnation. The final production in the Globe is Olivier and Tony Award-winner **Roger Rees’** tour-de-force performance about all things Shakespeare, *What You Will* (May 1 – June 6, 2010, *press opening on May 6*).

In the arena stage, the West Coast premiere of the new comedy, *The Savannah Disputation*, by **Evan Smith** and directed by **Kim Rubinstein**, (September 26 – November 1, 2009, *press opening on October 1*) will be the final production for the Globe at the James S. Copley Auditorium.

The inaugural production in the **Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre** is Neil Simon’s Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award-winning *Lost in Yonkers* (January 23 – February 28, 2010, *press opening on January 28*), directed by **Kent Paul**. The final two shows in the new White Theatre are the romantic comedy, *Alive and Well* (March 20 – April 25, 2010, *press opening on March 25*) by **Kenny Finkle**, a co-world premiere with Virginia Stage Company and the West Coast premiere of the moving drama *The Whipping Man* (May 8 – June 13, 2010, *press opening on May 13*) by **Matthew Lopez**.

Spisto commented, “This is a particularly exciting season with plays and musicals by both emerging voices and established masters representing the Globe’s commitment to the art form and our unique capacity to produce a great range of diverse work. This season we will present playwrights Kenny Finkle, Matthew Lopez and Evan Smith alongside Neil Simon; with musicals that reflect the great variety from Duncan Sheik to Leslie Bricusse and finally a compelling and entertaining tribute to the Bard by one of the great actors of our day. The stories are entertaining and provocative, including three world premieres, which reflects our continued ability to attract some of theatre’s top creative talent.”

For more information or to subscribe to The Old Globe’s 2009/10 Winter Season, please contact Globe Ticket Services at (619) 23-GLOBE or www.TheOldGlobe.org.

Subscriptions are also available for the Globe’s 2009 Summer Season, including the renowned **Shakespeare Festival**, featuring *Cyrano de Bergerac*, *Twelfth Night* and *Coriolanus*, playing in a rotating schedule in the Lowell Davies Festival Theatre June 14 – September 27; The Broadway-bound musical, *The First Wives Club* playing in the Old Globe Theatre July 15 – August 23; and the classic comedy *The Mystery of Irma Vep* playing in the Globe’s arena stage at the San Diego Museum of Art’s James S. Copley Auditorium July 31 – September 6.

The Old Globe's 2009/2010 Winter Season

Old Globe Theatre

Sammy

Book, Music and Lyrics by Leslie Bricusse

additional songs by Leslie Bricusse and Anthony Newley

Directed by Keith Glover

September 17 – November 1, 2009; Press Opening: September 26 at 8pm

World Premiere

One of the greatest entertainers of all time, Sammy Davis, Jr. defined an era. The ultimate triple-threat – singer, actor and dancer – Sammy could do it all. This world premiere musical, written by two-time Academy and Grammy Award-winner Leslie Bricusse, takes us from Sammy's days as a child working in vaudeville through his time with Dean and Frank as a member of the Rat Pack. Featuring the unmistakable classics that helped to make Sammy an American icon, from hits like "The Candy Man," "Mr. Bojangles" and "What Kind of Fool Am I?" to new songs written just for this musical, Sammy shows us the struggles and triumphs of the man who was adored by millions.

Whisper House

Music and Lyrics by Duncan Sheik

Book and Lyrics by Kyle Jarrow

Directed by Keith Powell

January 13 – February 21, 2010; Press Opening: January 21 at 8pm

World Premiere

Tony and Grammy Award-winning songwriter Duncan Sheik follows up his Broadway sensation, *Spring Awakening*, with this haunting new musical. It's 1942 – at the height of World War II – and Christopher, an imaginative young boy, is sent to live with an aunt he's never met: Lilly, a reclusive woman who serves as the keeper of a remote lighthouse. Not yet comfortable in his surroundings, Christopher begins to hear strange music no one else can hear seeping through the walls. It doesn't take long for him to suspect the lighthouse may be haunted, and these ghosts tell him that Yasujiro, a Japanese worker that Lilly has employed, should not be trusted. Is Christopher's imagination getting the best of him? Or are these ghosts warning Christopher about the very real dangers that lie ahead? *Whisper House* is a touching and beautiful story about how we should embrace, rather than fear, the unknown.

Boeing-Boeing

By Marc Camoletti and Beverly Cross

March 13 – April 18, 2010; Press Opening: March 18 at 8pm

Boeing-Boeing, the uproarious jet-propelled comedy that had audiences and critics cheering in London and on Broadway, is coming in for a landing on the Old Globe stage! Bernard, a successful architect living in Paris, thinks he can easily juggle his three flight attendant fiancées. It's all a question of timing and a little help from his trusted housekeeper who reluctantly plays romantic air traffic controller. When an old friend arrives and his three fiancées each change their flight schedules, his life hits some turbulence! Grab your boarding pass for a rollicking good time.

What You Will

Written and performed by Roger Rees

May 1 – June 6, 2010; Press Opening, May 6 at 8pm

Tony and Olivier Award-winner Roger Rees brings his tour-de-force performance about all things Shakespeare for a limited Old Globe engagement. This historical and sometimes hysterical account of Rees' stage experiences - from the Bard's great soliloquies performed by the man who has played "Hamlet" more than any other actor in the history of the Royal Shakespeare Company, to some of the funniest moments ever seen live on stage - will be the theatrical event all of San Diego will be talking about. Whether you know Roger Rees as television's dashing tycoon Robin Colcord on "Cheers," Ambassador Lord John Marbury on "The West Wing," Colin Marlow on "Grey's Anatomy," or from his stage triumph on Broadway in the title role of the acclaimed *Nicholas Nickleby*, you won't want to miss this incomparable show.

Globe's Arena Stage at SD Museum of Art's James S. Copley Auditorium

The Savannah Disputation

By Evan Smith

Directed by Kim Rubinstein

September 26 – November 1, 2009; Press Opening: October 1 at 8pm

West Coast Premiere

A good-natured and sometimes susceptible Margaret and no-nonsense and always spirited Mary are Catholics who receive an unexpected visitor, causing Margaret's faith to waver. Mary hatches a plan to bring Margaret back into the fold by enlisting the aid of their unsuspecting parish priest and throwing a truly devilish dinner party.

The Savannah Disputation is a comedy you can believe in.

The Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre

Lost in Yonkers

By Neil Simon

Directed by Kent Paul

January 23 – February 28, 2010; Press Opening: January 28 at 8pm

Winner of the Pulitzer Prize and the Tony Award[®] for Best Play, *Lost in Yonkers* is about finding one's way through the tangled web of family relationships without losing the sense of self or sense of humor. Set in Yonkers, NY in 1942, the play focuses on two young brothers, Arty and Jay, left in the care of their feuding relatives, Grandma Kurnitz and Aunt Bella. *Lost in Yonkers* epitomizes Neil Simon's trademark mix of comedy and drama. *The New York Post* hailed it, "The best play Simon ever wrote."

Alive and Well

By Kenny Finkle

March 20 – April 25, 2010; Press Opening: March 25 at 8pm

A co-world premiere with the Virginia Stage Company

This romantic comedy, in the spirit of *The African Queen* and *Romancing the Stone*, tells the story of a mismatched pair. Carla, a big city reporter from the North, must reluctantly work with Southern tracker and Civil War re-enactor Zach to research her story. In their quest, they exasperate each other and find much more than either bargained for. *Alive and Well* is an entertaining joyride that will make even skeptics believe in true love. A co-world premiere with Virginia Stage Company.

The Whipping Man

By Matthew Lopez

May 8 – June 13, 2010; Press Opening: May 13 at 8pm

West Coast Premiere

Set in Virginia following the final days of the Civil War, a Jewish Confederate soldier returns to his childhood home, only to find it in ruins and occupied by his former slaves, who are preparing for a Seder feast. Though a new chapter of history is unfolding, dangerous secrets of the past threaten to destroy their family, their connected history, and their shared faith. *The Whipping Man* is a moving and provocative look at a pivotal time in American history.

Holiday Offering

Dr. Seuss' *How the Grinch Stole Christmas!*

Book and Lyrics by Timothy Mason; Music by Mel Marvin

Original Production Conceived and Directed by Jack O'Brien

Old Globe Theatre

November 21 – December 27, 2009; Press Opening: November 27 at 7:00pm

America's favorite holiday fable, back for its 12th joyous year, is a wonderful, whimsical production that will once again jump right off the pages of the classic Dr. Seuss book and onto the Old Globe stage. *How the Grinch Stole Christmas!* has been hailed by critics: "This *Grinch* is a smash," wrote the L.A. Times, while the San Diego Union-Tribune raved, "Jack O'Brien scaled this Globe holiday show to the heartfelt humanity of the season." Come take part in the fun as the Globe is transformed into snow-covered *Who*-ville right down to the last can of *Who*-hash!

Artist Biographies

Louis G. Spisto (Executive Producer) has led The Old Globe since October 2002. During his tenure, Spisto spearheaded the return of the Shakespeare Repertory Season and brought to the Globe several new musicals, including the critically-acclaimed *A Catered Affair*, launched the national tour of the Tony Award-winning *Avenue Q*, and the Broadway transfers of *Chita Rivera: The Dancer's Life* and the Twyla Tharp/Bob Dylan musical, *The Times They Are A-Changin'*. He has produced over 75 plays and musicals, including *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*, the West Coast premiere of the Tony-winning play *Take Me Out* and the annual holiday favorite, *Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas!*. Spisto has managed the Globe's Capital Campaign to raise \$75 million by the Theatre's 75th anniversary in 2010. Launched in March 2006, the campaign has reached 85% of its goal to date. A strong advocate of arts education, Spisto initiated several new programs including an innovative cross-border project and a new play development program and several new initiatives in Southeastern San Diego. He also launched a free matinee series which brings thousands of students to the Globe's productions. He holds a Masters degree from the University of Wisconsin in Arts Administration and a Bachelors of Business Administration from the University of Notre Dame, and acted, directed and produced plays and musicals throughout his early years through college and graduate school. Mr. Spisto has served as chief executive for the Pacific Symphony, Detroit Symphony, and American Ballet Theatre.

Double Oscar and Grammy winner **Leslie Bricusse (Book, Music and Lyrics: *Sammy*)** is a writer-composer-lyricist who has contributed to many musical films and plays during his career. He was born in London, and educated at University College School and Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge. At Cambridge, he was President of the Footlights Revue Club and founded the Musical Comedy Club. There, he co-authored, directed and performed in his first two musical shows, *Out of the Blue* and *Lady at the Wheel*, both of which made their way to London's West End. He also found time in the gaps to acquire a Master of Arts Degree.

The late, great Beatrice Lillie plucked him out of the Footlights Revue at the Phoenix Theatre, and made him her leading man in *An Evening with Beatrice Lillie* at the Globe Theatre, where he spent the first year of his professional life writing another musical, *Boy on the Corner*, and the screenplay and score of his first motion picture, *Charley Moon*, which won his first Ivor Novello Award. That year he decided to drop the possibilities of directing and performing, and concentrate his career on becoming a full-time writer-composer-lyricist.

His subsequent stage musicals include *Stop the World – I Want to Get Off*; *The Roar of the Greasepaint – The Smell of the Crowd*; *Pickwick*; *Harvey*; *The Good Old Bad Old Days*; *Goodbye, Mr. Chips*; *Henry's Wives*; *Scrooge*; *Sherlock Holmes*; *Jekyll and Hyde*; *Noah's Ark*; *Sammy*; *Cyrano de Bergerac*; *Kennedy*; *Victor/Victoria* and *It's a Dog's Life!* He has written songs and/or screenplays for such films as *Doctor Dolittle*; *Scrooge*; *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory*; *Goodbye, Mr. Chips*; *Superman: Victor/Victoria*; *Santa Claus – The Movie*; *Home Alone I & II*; *Hook*; *Tom & Jerry – The Movie*; various *Pink Panthers* and *The Great Music Chase*.

Bricusse has written more than forty musical shows and films, and over the years has had the good fortune to enjoy fruitful collaborations with a wonderful array of musical talents, including Anthony Newley, Henry Mancini, John Williams, John Barry, Jerry Goldsmith, Jule Styne, Quincy Jones, Andre Previn, Frank Wildhorn and Peter Illyich Tchaikovsky (whose *Nutcracker Suite* he adapted into a song score).

His better-known songs include *What Kind of Fool Am I?*; *Once in a Lifetime*; *Gonna Build a Mountain*; *Who Can I Turn To?*; *The Joker*; *If I Ruled the World*; *My Kind of Girl*; *Talk to the Animals*; *You and I*; *Feeling Good*; *When I Look in Your Eyes*; *Goldfinger: Can You Read My Mind?* (the love theme from *Superman*); *You Only Live Twice*; *Le Jazz Hot*; *On a Wonderful Day Like Today*; *Two for the Road*; *The Candy Man*; *This is the Moment*; *Crazy World*; *Pure Imagination* and *Oompa-Loompa-Doompa-Dee-Dee*.

He has been nominated for ten Academy Awards, nine Grammy's and four Tony's, and has won two Oscars, a Grammy and eight Ivor Novello Awards, the premiere British Music Award. Hundreds of Bricusse's songs have been recorded by major artists, including Frank Sinatra, Nat King Cole, Judy Garland, Aretha Franklin, Barbra Streisand, Sammy Davis, Jr. (who recorded 60 Bricusse songs), Tony Bennett, Shirley Bassey, Tom Jones, Petula Clark, Julie Andrews, Liza Minnelli, Andy Williams, Bobby Darin, Rex Harrison, Kate Smith, Elaine Paige, Anthony Newley, Michael Feinstein, Bette Midler, The Moody Blues, Nancy Sinatra, Lena Horne, Sergio Mendes, Nina Simone, Dionne Warwick, Robert Goulet, Matt Monro, Ray Charles, Ethel Merman, Placido Domingo, Jennifer Holliday, Danny Kaye, Robbie Williams, Mariah Carey, Linda Eder, Diana Krall, Maroon 5, Michael Buble and The Black-Eyed Peas.

In 1989 he received the Kennedy Award for consistent excellence in British songwriting, bestowed by the British Academy of Songwriters, Composers and Authors, and was inducted into the American Songwriters' Hall of Fame - only the fourth Englishman to be so honored – after Noel Coward, John Lennon and Paul McCartney.

Bricusse is currently represented internationally by *Jekyll & Hyde*, written with *Frank Wildhorn*, which ran for four years at the Plymouth Theatre in New York, with over a dozen international productions around the world, the most recent in Tokyo, Prague, Madrid and Seoul, and *Victor/Victoria*, written with Blake Edwards and Henry Mancini, which successively starred Julie Andrews, Liza Minnelli and Raquel Welch on Broadway, and is now seen in various other international productions, including Madrid, Mexico City, Moscow, Stockholm and Paris.

Bricusse's children's stage musical version of Roald Dahl's *Willy Wonka* first opened at the Kennedy Center For the Performing Arts in Washington DC in November, 2004. In 2008 it is playing in school, college and amateur productions across America.

Another Bricusse perennial, his musical version of *Scrooge*, in which Anthony Newley starred at the Dominion Theatre in London's West End, is also seen annually in many productions in the U. K., Europe, the U. S. and Japan. Recently, the title role was played by Richard Chamberlain in the U. S. and British superstar Tommy Steele at the famed London Palladium.

For *Doctor Dolittle*, another current stage musical, which played four years in the U. K. starring Phillip Schofield and a host of animatronic animals created by Jim Henson's Creature Shop, Bricusse serves as librettist, composer, lyricist and co-producer. A major U. S. production opened in the summer of 2005, starring nine-time Tony Award winner Tommy Tune, and a brand-new British production, again starring Tommy Steele, started life in September 2007.

His next project is a remarkable musical biography of the world's greatest entertainer, the late Sammy Davis, Jr., entitled *Sammy*. Bricusse has also completed the book and lyrics of his musical adaptation of *Cyrano de Bergerac*, his new collaboration with Frank Wildhorn, which will open internationally in 2009. He is currently writing the score for his next project, a musical adaptation of the hit movie *Sleepless in Seattle*.

Kyle Jarrow (Book and Lyrics: *Whisper House*) is a NYC-based writer and musician who has been called "NYC's hipster playwright" by the New York Times and "an iconoclast" by the Los Angeles Times. He writes for the stage as well as film and television, and he plays in the rock bands The Fabulous Entourage and Super Mirage. His plays include *A Very Merry Unauthorized Children's Scientology Pageant* (OBIE), *Armless* (Overall Excellence Award, NY Fringe), *Love Kills*, *Trigger*, *President Harding is a Rock Star*, *Rip Me Open*, *Hostage Song* (music & lyrics), *Gorilla Man*, and the forthcoming *Big Money*. His work has been presented at New York Theatre Workshop, Performance Space 122, The John Houseman Theatre, American Repertory Theatre, Williamstown Theatre Festival, Abron Arts Center, HERE Arts Center, Boston Theatre Works, New Dramatists, The Flea, The Hangar Theatre, and Dad's Garage in Atlanta among others. Several of his plays have been published by Samuel French. Kyle was a 2005-2006 Dramatists Guild Fellow and has guest-lectured at Juilliard, Pratt, and the Actor's Studio. He's a co-founder of the indie publishing company Awkward Press. His band The Fabulous Entourage was featured in the 2006 Whitney Biennial.

Matthew Lopez (Playwright: *The Whipping Man*) play *The Whipping Man* will receive its West Coast Premiere at the Old Globe in San Diego in May, 2010. The play premiered at Luna Stage in Montclair, NJ and recently completed a run at Penumbra Theatre Company in St. Paul, MN under the direction of founder and artistic director, Lou Bellamy. Another production of the play is scheduled for early 2010 at the Caldwell Theatre in Boca Raton, FL. It is set to be published later this year by Samuel French. His play *Tio Pepe* was presented last summer at the Public Theater as part of Summer Play Festival 2008. Matthew's work has been heard and seen at the McCarter Theatre, The New Group, The Lark Play Development Center, Backhouse Productions, Monarch Theatre Company and Breedingground Productions. Other plays include *Reverberation*, *Noble Street*, *Between Us*, and *Phemmi Klompers: Agent to the Stars*. He is currently developing a web series, *Queen Leah*, based on *King Lear*, about an aging Broadway diva and her three sons. He is a 2009 member of the Ars Nova Writers' Group.

Keith Powell (Director: *Whisper House*) was the Producing Artistic Director of the Barrymore Award-winning Contemporary Stage Company in Wilmington, Delaware for several seasons where he produced, performed in, and/or directed plays starring Lynn Redgrave, Keith David, Jasmine Guy, Sean Patrick Thomas, and Richard Easton. He directed Mr. David and Ms. Guy in CSC's production of *The Fourposter* by Jan De Hartog, which broke box-office records. In addition, he has directed readings and productions at various downtown New York theater companies. As an actor, he has worked at The Shakespeare Theatre, Portland Stage Company, Pittsburgh Public Theater, Hangar Theatre, Delaware Theatre Company, and HB Playwrights Foundation among others. He will be seen in the upcoming feature *Night at the Museum 2: Battle of the Smithsonian*. On television, he has appeared on VH1's "I Love the..." series, *The Guiding Light*, *Law & Order*, *Law & Order: Criminal Intent*, and *Reno 911!*. He is a series regular on NBC's *30 Rock*, where he received a 2009 Screen Actors Guild Award as part of the ensemble. Keith has a degree in directing from New York University's Tisch School of The Arts.

Prior to moving to San Diego to teach acting and directing at UCSD, **Kim Rubinstein (Director: *The Savannah Disputation*)** was Long Wharf Theatre's Associate Artistic Director where she directed *Guys and Dolls*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Private Lives*, *Santaland Diaries* and *The Cocktail Hour*. Other recent directing credits include *The American Plan* for The Old Globe, *The Intelligent Design of Jenny Chow* for Portland Center Stage and San Jose Repertory Theatre, and *Much Ado About Nothing* and *Romeo and Juliet* for Shakespeare Santa Cruz. She was honored with a Falstaff nomination for her directing of *Romeo and Juliet*. Some other directing credits: *Old Times* (Court Theatre), *Romeo and Juliet*, *Macbeth* and *Julius Caesar* (Chicago Shakespeare Theatre), *The American Plan* and *Eloise and Ray* (Roadworks Productions), *Pan and Boone* (Running With Scissors), *Love's Labour's Lost* (Next Theatre), *Not I*, (Bucket O'Beckett Festival), *Act without Words I, Not I, Play, Come and Go*, *Baby With the Bathwater* and *Sarita* (Berkshire Theatre Festival). Kim was the Associate and Tour Director of the national tour of *Angels in America*. Other teaching credits include ten years on the acting faculty at Northwestern University, Brown/Trinity Consortium, Wesleyan University, University of Chicago, Eugene O'Neill Theatre Center, Teatro degli Stracci, and an ongoing gig with the professional School at Steppenwolf. Ms. Rubinstein is a recipient of the TCG/NEA directing fellowship and was nominated for the Alan Schneider Directing Award, among other directing and teaching awards. Active in the development of new plays, she has done readings and workshops at places like New Dramatists and the Long Wharf.

With his new album, ***Whisper House*, Duncan Sheik** combines elements of the gorgeously arranged chamber pop that first brought him critical and commercial acclaim with the narrative approach to songwriting that yielded him both a Tony Award and a Grammy for the Broadway hit *Spring Awakening*. Composed for a forthcoming theatrical piece, *Whisper House* is – quite literally, at times – a haunting song cycle; Sheik relates a World War II-era tale of a child's grief and spinster's longing as seen through the eyes of the ghosts that invisibly occupy the remote Maine lighthouse where they live. Though structured as a melodrama, there's a gentle, dreamy quality to the story; at times more lighthearted than portentous. Figuring out the plot is fun but not a requirement; above all, *Whisper House* serves as Duncan Sheik's compelling new solo album.

The idea for *Whisper House* came about when actor Keith Powell (*30 Rock*) approached Sheik about developing a musical theatre piece with him. Following a trip Powell took to New England, a story began to emerge centered around a lighthouse, and up-and-coming young playwright Kyle Jarrow, already an Obie winner for *A Very Merry Unauthorized Children's Scientology Pageant*, signed on to create the book. During a writing retreat on an island off of Charleston, SC, says Sheik, a native Southerner, "I had Kyle's version of the script, and over ten days I wrote the lion's share of the music. Charleston has this history of ghost stories, a southern tradition that I kind of grew up with. I reconnected with it in some way and used that to write the lyrics to these songs. I hadn't written lyrics for a very long time; it had been almost three years. I had mostly been dealing with the work Stephen Sater [*Spring Awakening* lyricist] and I were doing.

"I wrote these songs in January," he continues, "and recorded them as demos when I returned from the writing retreat. Everyone I played them for said, these aren't demos, this is your next record, you should just put this out. One thing led to another...and, yeah, this became my next record. The idea of being a guy with an acoustic guitar who writes 12 songs and puts out a record of songs about who you dated and who broke up with you was completely uninteresting to me. Having this narrative was so much more rich and vital, and it was so much more fun to write from the persona of these ghosts, these dead people, and the whimsical malevolence I could articulate through their voices. That felt really good and was very inspiring. It wasn't so serious, it was about being playful and telling a story. That really helped the process and made for a better record."

Playing a prominent role alongside Sheik is singer-keyboardist Holly Brook. Sheik explains, "Holly started out opening up for me on the *White Limousine* tour, then moved up into my band as a singer and a pianist. She's 21 now; when we first started touring she was eighteen or nineteen. She just has this incredible voice and incredible musical sensibility. She had listened to my records when she was growing up and starting to write songs, so we really have a short-hand when we communicate with each other."

In the meantime, Sheik and Sater continue to develop two other new musical theatre projects. *Nero (Another Golden Rome)* had a workshop production this summer at Vassar College, featuring *Wicked* star Idina Menzel and *Spring Awakening* ingénue Lea Michelle. Their retelling of the life of the decadent Roman Emperor is, says Sheik with a laugh, "so debauched, the content is so intense." He envisions a premiere in Europe – most likely London – within the next year. Sheik and Sater's other project, *The Nightingale*, is slated for a '09 opening at the American Conservatory Theatre in San Francisco. That piece, says Sheik, "is totally at the other end of the spectrum – it's a fairy tales for kids and adults, based on a Hans Christian Anderson story."

While other singer-songwriters have struggled to find their niche in a fractured marketplace, Broadway has had a revitalizing effect on Sheik's career. And the transformative relationship has been reciprocal. As New York Times theatre critic Charles Isherwood put it in his stellar *Spring Awakening* review, "Broadway, with its often puerile sophistication and its sterile romanticism, may never be the same."

Sheik's second-act triumph has been a unique combination of hard work and happenstance. He'd found receptive ears within the music biz from the moment he graduated Brown University in 1993 and headed to Los Angeles, with vague plans and a cassette full of demos. After he'd released his 1996 self-titled debut album, the handsome, 26 year-old Sheik was cast into the role of swoon-worthy pop star. An unusually erudite and emotionally intimate hit single, "Barely Breathing," spent 55 weeks on Billboard's Hot 100; only three other singles have ever topped that run.

Sheik, a practicing Buddhist since his college days, met Steven Sater in 1999 at Soka Gakkai International, a lay Buddhist organization in New York City. Sater asked Sheik if he'd consider writing a song for a play he'd been working on. "Cut to a month and a half later," Sheik recalls. "There is a stack of 35 lyrics that Steven, prolific workaholic that he is, has been faxing to me. So I would just write these songs with the lyrics he sent." The result was *Phantom Moon*, released on Nonesuch in 2000. *Phantom Moon* remains essential listening for fans of *Spring Awakening*, since it sparked Sheik's and Sater's creative partnership.

Spring Awakening, based on German playwright Frank Wedekind's 1891 story, was developed through years of workshops, from the Sundance Theatre Lab to New York City's Roundabout Theatre. An off-Broadway run at the Atlantic Theatre Company in the spring of '06 garnered good reviews and even better word-of-mouth, leading to sell-out performances. In August of that year, Sheik and Sater learned the show would be moving to Broadway, where it opened, after further revisions and preview performances, on December 10, 2006. The New York Times led the raves. Sheik later won two Tony Awards of his own, as composer and arranger, and *Spring Awakening* was named Best Musical.

American playwright and screenwriter **Neil Simon (Playwright: *Lost in Yonkers*)** is widely regarded as one of the most successful, prolific and performed playwrights in the world. In addition to *Lost in Yonkers*, which won a Tony Award and Pulitzer Prize, his plays and musicals include *Come Blow Your Horn*, *Little Me*, *Barefoot in the Park*, *The Odd Couple*, *Sweet Charity*, *The Star-Spangled Girl*, *Plaza Suite*, *Promises, Promises*, *Last of the Red Hot Lovers*, *The Gingerbread Lady*, *The Prisoner of Second Avenue*, *The Sunshine Boys*, *The Good Doctor*, *God's Favorite*, *California Suite*, *Chapter Two*, *They're Playing Our Song*, *I Ought to be in Pictures*, *Fools*, *Brighton Beach Memoirs*, *Biloxi Blues*, *The Odd Couple* (female version), *Broadway Bound*, *Rumors*, *Jake's Women*, *The Goodbye Girl*, *Laughter on the 23rd Floor*, *London Suite*, *Proposals*, *Hotel Suite*, *The Dinner Party*, *45 Seconds from Broadway*, *Oscar and Felix*, and *Rose's Dilemma*.

In addition to the film adaptations he has written of many of his plays, his screenplay credits include *After the Fox*, *The Out-Of-Towners*, *The Heartbreak Kid* (original 1973 version), *Murder by Death*, *The Cheap Detective*, *Seems Like Old Times*, *Only When I Laugh*, *Max Dugan Returns*, *The Slugger's Wife*, *The Marrying Man* and *The Odd Couple II*. Other motion pictures based on stage plays include *Come Blow Your Horn*, *Sweet Charity* and *The Star-Spangled Girl*.

For television Mr. Simon has written series, teleplays and motion pictures including *The Tallulah Bankhead Show*, *The Sid Caesar Show*, *The Phil Silvers Arrow Show*, *The Phil Silvers Show*, *The Garry Moore Show*, *The Trouble with People*,

ABC's *Broadway Bound* and *Jake's Women*. Books by Neil Simon include *Rewrites, A Memoir, The Play Goes On*, four omnibus collections of Neil Simon's plays *The Comedy of Neil Simon, The Collected Plays of Neil Simon, Vol. II, The Collected Plays of Neil Simon, Vol. 3, The Collected Plays of Neil Simon, Vol. 4* and *Lost In Yonkers* (screenplay).

Mr. Simon has received more Academy and Tony nominations than any other writer. Awards he has received include the Pulitzer Prize for *Lost In Yonkers*, Emmy Awards for *The Sid Caesar Show* and *The Phil Silvers Show*, Tony Awards for *The Odd Couple, Biloxi Blues, Lost In Yonkers* and a special Tony Award for Overall Contribution to the Theatre. His nominations include Tony Award Nominations for *Little Me, Barefoot in the Park, Plaza Suite, Promises, Promises, The Last of the Red Hot Lovers, Brighton Beach Memoirs, Broadway Bound, Lost in Yonkers* and *The Goodbye Girl (musical)*. Other nominations include a Writers Guild Screen Award for *The Odd Couple* and *The Out-Of-Towners*, a Writers Guild Laurel Award, an American Comedy Award for Lifetime Achievement and a Writers Guild Screen Award Nomination for *Barefoot in the Park* as well as an Oscar Nomination for *The Odd Couple*, an Evening Standard award a Sam S. Shubert Foundation award, Kennedy Center Honors, a UCLA Medal, a Peggy V. Helmerich Distinguished Author Award and a William Inge Theater Festival award for Distinguished Achievement in the American Theater.

Evan Smith (Playwright: *The Savannah Disputation*). Mr. Smith's play *Psych* was first produced by Playwrights Horizons (New York City), as was *The Uneasy Chair*. Other plays: *Servicemen* was produced by The New Group (New York City); *Daughters of Genius* was premiered by 1812 Productions (Philadelphia); *The Savannah Disputation* was premiered by The Writers Theatre (Chicago). His one-act play *Remedial English* is available through Dramatists Play Service, as is *The Uneasy Chair*. His TV pilot, *Debs*, was a part of Naked TV, produced by Fox TV/Naked Angels. He is a graduate of the Yale School of Drama and the recipient of a Whiting Award.