**PRESS CONTACT: Nancy Richards – 917-873-6389 (cell)/nancy@northcoastrep.org**

**MEDIA PAGE:** [**www.northcoastrep.org/press**](http://www.northcoastrep.org/press)

**PHOTOS BY: Aaron Rumley**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, PLEASE:**

***CHAPTER TWO,* NEIL SIMON’S MOST PERSONAL PLAY,**

**LIGHTS UP STAGE AT NORTH COAST REP**

**Performances Beginning Wednesday, February 25,**

**With Opening Night, Saturday, February 28, at 8 pm**

**Running Through Sunday, March 22, 2015**

**By Neil Simon**

**Directed by DAVID ELLENSTEIN AND CHRISTOPHER WILLIAMS**

North Coast Rep promises audiences plenty of laughs and a few knowing sighs when the lights come up on ***CHAPTER TWO,*** written by America’s favorite playwright, Neil Simon. Based on events in Simon’s life, this charming comedy revolves around the recently widowed George and his neighbor, the recently divorced Jennie. Neither of these bruised souls is eager to reconnect with the opposite sex. Their journey of meeting, dating and forming a relationship is laced with Neil Simon’s golden touch. Romantic, rueful, touching and funny, this play is certain to delight and entertain. Reserve your seats now for the play The New York Times called “snappy, funny and movingly honest.”

Artistic Director David Ellenstein is wearing two hats for this production – as co-director with Christopher Williams and as the bewildered George. The stellar cast includes Jacqueline Ritz,\* Louis Lotorto,\* and Mhari Sandoval.\* The design staff includes Marty Burnett (Scenic Design), Matt Novotny (Lighting Design), Alina Bokovikova (Costume Design), Matt Novotny (Lighting), Chris Leusmann (Sound Design), Benjamin Cole (Props), and Peter Hermann (Hair and Wigs) comprise the crew. Ryan Ford\* stage manages.

**THIS PRODUCTION IS SPONSORED BY LEE AND FRANK GOLDBERG**

**THIS PRODUCTIONS IS SPONSORED BY LEONARD HIRSCH**

***CHAPTER TWO*** previews begin Wednesday, February 25. Opening Night on Saturday, February 28 at 8pm includes a post-show reception. There will be a special talkback on Friday, March 6, with the cast and artistic director. It will play Wednesdays at 7pm, Thursdays through Saturdays at 8pm, Saturday and Sunday matinees at 2pm with Sundays at 7pm, through September 28, 2014. (See Schedule below.) North Coast Repertory Theatre is located at 987 Lomas Santa Fe Drive, Ste D, Solana Beach, CA 92075. Tickets: Opening Night - $54, Previews- $37; Week Nights - $44; Sat. Eve. & Sun. Mat.- $48; Sat. Mat. & Sun. Night - $41. Seniors, Students, Military - $3 off admission. Call 858-481-1055 or visit [www.northcoastrep.org](http://www.northcoastrep.org) to purchase tickets.

\*The actor or stage manager appears through the courtesy of Actors’ Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States.

For background information and photos, go to [www.northcoastrep.org/press](http://www.northcoastrep.org/press).

Please follow North Coast Repertory Theatre on social media as well on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/pages/North-Coast-Rep/128553240497901>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/NorthCoastRep>

YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/user/NCRTheatre?ob=0>

***Busy directors David Ellenstein and Christopher Williams and their talented cast are available for interviews by phone, in person, and in- studio. For more information and to arrange interviews or press tickets, please contact Nancy Richards at nancy@northcoastrep.org, or 917-873-6389 cell.***

**FACT SHEET**

**WHAT: NORTH COAST REPERTORY THEATRE presents**

***CHAPTER TWO***

by **Neil Simon**

Directed by **David Ellenstein and Christopher Williams**

**CAST**: David Ellenstein,\* Jacquelyn Ritz,\* Louis Lotorto,\* and Mhari Sandoval

**WHERE:** North Coast Repertory Theatre

987 Lomas Santa Fe Drive, Ste. D

Solana Beach, CA 92075

**SCHEDULE\***: Previews: February 25-27, 2015

**Opens: February 28, 2015, at 8 pm**

Closes: March 22,, 2015

**Wed. @ 7pm, Thurs-Sat @ 8PM; Sat & Sun @ 2PM, Sun @7pm**

**Talkback with cast & director: Friday, March 6**

**PRICES:** Previews $37.00

Opening Night $54.00

Week Nights $44.00

Sat. Matinees & Sunday Nights $41.00

Sat. Nights & Sunday Matinees $48.00

**DISCOUNTS:**  Seniors, Students, Military $3.00 off admission

**BOX OFFICE** (858) 481-1055 or www.northcoastrep.org

| **FEBRUARY** | | | | | | |
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|  | | | | | | |
| **SUN** | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
|  |  |  | 25  Preview  8pm | 26  Preview  8pm | 27  Preview  8pm | 28  OPENING  8pm |
| **March** 1  2pm & 7pm | 2 | 3 | 4  7pm | 5  8pm | 6  8pm  Talkback | 7  2pm & 8pm |
| 8  2pm & 7pm | 9 | 10 | 11  7pm | 12  8pm | 13  8pm | 14  2pm & 8pm |
| 15  2pm & 7pm | 16 | 17 | 18  7pm | 19  8pm | 20  8pm | 21  2pm & 8pm |
| 22  2pm |  |  |  | | | |

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**BACKGROUND:**

**North Coast Repertory Theatre’s 2014-2015 -Season 33**  The fourth San Diego premiere of the season, ***Unnecessary Farce (April 15 – May 10),*** presentsthe perfect setup for a laugh-filled evening at the theatre. There’s an embezzling mayor, his female accountant who can’t stay dressed, two undercover cops, nefarious hit men, and of course, videotape. This fast-paced farce promises to leave audiences howling with laughter. June brings master playwright Harold Pinter’s ***Betrayal (June 3 – 28),*** a play that explores the shifting balance of power within a love triangle. Filled with taut drama and deception, the story unfolds in reverse chronology as the audience takes this treacherous journey with characters who are compelling and brimming with human frailty. Passionate, explosive and surprisingly funny, ***Betrayal*** is considered one of Pinter’s most innovative and influential works, one that is certain to provoke lively discussion long after the curtain falls. Season 33 concludes with ***Side By Side With Sondheim (July 15 – August 9).*** Revel in the sophistication, wit, insight, heart and genius of Broadway’s most innovative and influential artist, composer-lyricist **Stephen Sondheim**.  Audiences will hear familiar favorites from such shows as ***Company****,****Follies****,****A Little Night Music****,* ***A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to The Forum, Westside Story, Gypsy***and so many more. An unmatched evening of enchantment for musical theatre fans.

**About the North Coast Repertory Theatre**

North Coast Repertory Theatre is a professional Equity theatre founded in 1982 by Olive and Tom Blakistone. Currently celebrating its 33rd season, North Coast Rep has received critical acclaim from media and audiences alike, and has evolved into one of the area’s leading performing arts organizations. North Coast Rep prides itself on employing the majority of its actors from Actors’ Equity Association for its high quality, award-winning productions, and staging works by established and emerging playwrights. Throughout its history, North Coast Rep has created a platform where artist and audience thrive through the intimacy of live theatre, recognizing the power of theatre to challenge complacency, revitalize the imagination, nurture the unexpected and embrace the variety and diversity in our lives.

**BIOS:**

**NEIL SIMON** (Playwright) Neil Simon began his writing career in television and established himself as our leading writer of comedy by creating a succession of Broadway hits beginning with *Come Blown Your Horn*. During the 1966-67 season*, Barefoot in the Park, The Odd Couple, Sweet Charity,* and *The Star Spangled Girl* were all running simultaneously; in the 1970-71 season, Broadway theatergoers had their choice of *Plaza Suite, Last of the Red Hot Lovers, and Promises, Promises.* Next came *Little Me, The Gingerbread Lady, The Prisoner of Second Avenue, The Sunshine Boys, The Good Doctor, & God’s Favorite, They’re Playing Our Song, I Ought to be in Pictures, Fools,* a revival of *Little Me, Brighton Beach Memoirs*, *Biloxi Blues* (Tony Award), a new version of *The Odd Couple* staring Sally Struthers and Rita Moreno as the title duo, *Broadway Bound, Rumors. Lost in Yonkers* (Tony Award and Pulitzer Prize), *Jake’s Women*, and *London Suite.* Mr. Simon has also written for the screen: the adaptations of *Barefoot in the Park, The Odd Couple, Plaza Suite, The Last of the Red Hot Lovers, The Prisoner of Second Avenue, The Sunshine Boys, California Suite, I Ought to be in Pictures, Chapter Two, Brighton Beach Memoirs, Biloxi Blues the TV* motion pictures of *Broadway Bound* and *Lost in Yonkers*. Other screenplays he has written include *After the Fox, The Out-of-Towners, The Heartbreak Kid, Murder by Death, The Goodbye Girl, The Cheap Detective, Seems Like Old Times, Only When I Laugh, Max Dugan Returns, and The Marrying Man.*

**DAVID ELLENSTEIN\*** (Director/George) Born into a theatrical family, David has worked in theatres across the country. Before joining North Coast Rep, in 2003 he served as Artistic Director for the Los Angeles Repertory Company and the Arizona Jewish Theatre Company (AJTC). A veteran of over 250 theatrical productions, directorial favorites include: North Coast Rep*- Faded Glory* (World Premiere), *Mandate Memories* (World Premiere*), Becoming Cuba* (World Premiere), *Time Stands Still*, *Words By: Ira Gershwin and the Great American Songbook* (World Premiere), *Two by Pinter: The Lover and the Dumb Waiter, HENRY IV Part 1, My Name is Asher Lev, The Drawer Boy, Becky’s New Car, Ghosts, The Tempest ,Talley’s Folly, Over the Tavern, Old Wicked Songs, The Dresser, Jacques Brel is Alive and Well and Living in Paris, Madagascar, A Shayna Maidel, The Honky-Tonk Angels, Rashomon, A Moon for the Misbegotten, Tuesdays with Morrie, Collected Stories, Halpern and Johnson, Romeo and Juliet, Amy’s View, Einstein Comes Through* (also co-author), *The Chosen, A Life in the Theatre, Story Theatre, and Charley’s Aunt.* Coconut Grove Playhouse*- Sonia Flew* starring Lucy Arnaz, *Halpern and Johnson* staring Hal Linden and Brian Murray. Papermill Playhouse- *The Chosen* starring Theodore Bikel and John Lloyd Young. Portland Stage- *Halpern and Johnson*. Renaissance Theatre- *Long Day’s Journey Into Night.* Actor’s Theatre of Phoenix- *Rabbit Hole*. Alabama Shakespeare Festival- *Rocket City* (World Premiere) and *Honky Tonk Angels.* Laguna Playhouse- *Alexandros* (World Premiere). Southwest Shakespeare Company- *Cyrano de Bergerac.* AJTC *Awake and Sing.* Meadow Brook Theatre*- A Christmas Carol*. Portland Rep-*Conversations With My Father*. Gaslamp Quarter Theatre-*A Shayna Maidel.*

Favorite roles as an actor include Matt in *Talley’s Folly*, at North Coast Rep, title roles in *Hamlet* at Los Angeles Theatre Center and Los Angeles Repertory Company; Tevye in *Fiddler on the Roof* at Moonlight Stage, Richard III at California Shakespeare Festival; Einstein in *Picasso at the Lapin Agile* at Laguna Playhouse, Calisto in *The Illusion* and Harker in *Dracula* at the Arizona Theatre Company; Jonathan in Sight Unseen at the North Coast Rep and Portland Repertory Theatre. Film and television credits include over three dozen roles *including Star Trek IV, The Practice, Foul Play, Christine Cromwell, Renegade, Eight is Enough, and General Hospital*. David has also been guest faculty for numerous universities including California State Northridge, Cal Arts, and Shakespeare workshops privately. David lives with his beautiful wife Denise and their amazing sons Jamie and Will.

**CHRISTOPHER WILLIAMS** (Director) Since playing Danny Saunders in *The Chosen*, Christopher has been working as an actor, director and stage manager on various productions with North Coast Repertory Theatre since 2003. He is proud to be working alongside David. Some NCRT credits include: *Visiting Mr. Green, Don't Dress for Dinner, Lend Me a Tenor, Perfect Wedding, Talley's Folly, My Name is Asher Lev, Tuesdays with Morrie, Glorious!*, *The Tempest.* Other theatres: AZ Theatre Company, Idaho Shakespeare Festival, Southwest Shakespeare, Actor's Theatre, Phoenix Theatre, AZ Jewish Theatre, Intrepid Shakespeare, New Village Arts, Oceanside Theatre Company. Christopher is the artistic director of Oceanside Theatre Company and a producer of the recent WWII film, *Walking with the Enemy*, starring Jonas Armstrong and Sir Ben Kingsley.



**JACQUELYN RITZ\*** (Jennie) is delighted to return to North Coast Rep where she played the worldly maid, Jasmine Saunders in this season’s *Fallen Angels* as well as the Lady in last season’s *Man with a Load of Mischief*. Other San Diego credits include Titania at Intrepid Shakespeare’s  *Midsummer Night’s Dream*, and directing for the San Diego Fringe Festival. In Chicago, she performed with the Goodman Theatre, Northlight, Royal George, Barto (Shakepeare) Productions,The Apollo,Drury Lane, Marriott Lincolnshire, and Peninsula Players. Regional credits include Stephen Sondhiem’s *Bounce* at the Kennedy Center (directed by Harold Prince), productions with Milwaukee Repertory, Colorado Shakespeare Festival, Madison Repertory, Asolo Center, and many others. She studied Chekhov (Moscow Art Theatre) and holds an MFA in Acting (Asolo Conservatory). She is a member of SAG/AFTRA. Listen for her as Madame Blueberry, Laura the Carrot, and others in VeggieTales cartoons.

**LOUIS LOTORTO\*** (Leo)is thrilled to return to North Coast Rep for another Neil Simon comedy, having played Felix in *The Odd Couple* two seasons ago*.* A native of Seattle and proud member of Actors' Equity, Louis has worked professionally in regional theatre for 25 years. Credits include A.C.T*.(Seattle),* The Shakespeare Theatre Company *(*Washington,D.C.-Helen Hayes Award Nomination for Ariel in *The Tempest)*, the Oregon and California Shakespeare Festivals, Portland Center Stage, Berkeley, South Coast, San Jose and Artists' Repertory Theatres*(Drama Critic's Circle Award for Ned in The Normal Heart/Destiny of Me)* among others. Los Angeles credits include several productions at A Noise Within *(L.A. Ovation Award Nomination for Camille in A Flea in Her Ear)*, Ensemble Theatre Company, The Odyssey, Rubicon, Colony, International City Theatres and The Ahmanson in *An Enemy of the People**(with Sir Ian McKellen)*. www.louislotorto.com

**MHARI SANDOVAL\*** (Faye) is a native New Yorker, but she briefly lived in Chula Vista after college, and has loved San Diego ever since. She is very happy to be returning to North Coast Rep, having last been seen here as Sarah in *Time Stands Still*. Mhari has worked in dozens of theaters across the country, and spent five seasons in the acting company of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival. Active in the voice-over industry, she’s recorded scores of television and radio ads, animated shows, and is currently narrating her fourth season of "Deadly Sins" on Investigation Discovery. She’s the proud member of two unions, Actors Equity and SAG-AFTRA, where she served on the Wages & Working Conditions Committee.

**RYAN FORD\*** (Stage Manager) is a proud staff member here at North Coast Repertory Theatre as the Associate Production Manager. Previous works at North Coast Rep include: as stage manager: *The School For Lies*, *The Odd Couple, Rothschild and Sons* (workshop reading); as a sound mixer; *Gunmetal Blues*, *This Wonderful Life*, *Man With a Load of Mischief*, *Dames at Sea*, *Honky Tonk Angels*, and *Back to Bacharach and David*; as Assistant Director; *Faded Glory*; as ASM/PA; *Dracula*, *String of Pearls*, *Madagascar*, *A Shayna Maidel*, *Tuesdays with Morri*e, and *Leading Ladies*. With the Theatre School at NCR, Ryan has designed lights and sound for *The Outsiders*, *Suessical Jr.*, the One-Act Festivals, *The Diary of Anne Frank,* and *The Miracle Worker* (also original music composition); and Professional Theatre for Family productions, *Rapunzel*, *A Year With Frog and Toad*, *Sleeping Beauty*, and *You're a Good Man Charlie Brown*. Also a playwright and songwriter, Ryan recently produced and directed his musical, *Purgatory Punk*, at the San Diego Fringe Festival. Ryan holds a B.A. in Theatre Arts from UCSD.

**DESIGN TEAM**

**MARTY BURNETT** (Resident Scenic Designer) Marty begins his 23rd season as Resident Designer/Technical Director at North Coast Rep. He has designed the last 166 shows. Other venues include Laguna Playhouse, Portland Stage Company, Drury Lane (Chicago), Claridge Hotel (Atlantic City), Union Plaza, Sahara Hotel, Hacienda in Las Vegas, Coronado Playhouse, Scripps Ranch Theater, Harrah’s Lake Tahoe. Marty is a proud alumni of Creighton University in Omaha, Nebraska.

**MATT NOVOTNY** (Lighting Design) recently designed the lighting for *Gunmetal Blues, Freud’s Last Session,* *Fallen Angels, Romance Romance, Faded Glory, Mandate Memories, The School For Lies, Who Am I This Time?, Broken Glass, Man with a Load of Mischief, Perfect Wedding, Becoming Cuba, The Odd Couple, Time Stands Still, Educating Rita, The Underpants, Dames at Sea, Two by Pinter: The Lover and The Dumb Waiter, THIS, Visiting Mister Green, Lend Me a Tenor, Five Course Love, My Name Is Asher Lev, King O’ the Moon, Ghosts, Glorious, I Love You Because, Old Wicked Songs, Rabbit Hole, Shipwrecked!, The Dresser, Don’t Dress for Dinner, Mornings at Seven, Baby* and *Rashomon* at North Coast Rep. He’s currently the Director of Production for Lyric Opera San Diego. Lighting designs include: *Iolanthe, The Merry Widow, The King and I, Countess Maritza,* and *The Mikado*. San Diego*: Das Barbecu, The Wiz, West Side Story* and *Rumors.* Regional: *Yankee Doodle Dandy* (Seattle), *Noises Off!* (Boston), *The Game,* (Washington D.C.) and *Primal Twang*, a guitar concert featuring six Grammy-winning artists. Matthew holds a B.A. in Technical Theatre from San Diego State University, and an M.F.A. from Boston University.

**ALINA BOKOVIKOVA** (Costume Design) has designed more than 50 different productions and is proud to be a resident designer at North Coast Repertory Theatre. Her recent credits include *Gunmetal Blues, Freud's Last Session, Fallen Angels, School for Lies, Romance, Romance, Words By, Broken Glass.* Other favorite works are*Bird Lady* (Link Theatre, Chicago) *A Doll's House* (The Old Globe Theatre)*, A Raisin in the Sun*(MOXIE Theatre),*Camino Real* (Patté Award), opera*La Traviata*. Ms. Bokovikova has an M.F.A. in Costume Design from UC San Diego and a Masters Degree in Education from Russia. She is teaching at UC San Diego, Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising and Grossmont College.

**CHRIS LUESSMANN** (Sound Design) North Coast Rep: *Gunmetal Blues, The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee, The Big Bang, Jaques Brel is Alive and Well and Living in Paris, Baby, Dracula* (Patté Award,) and *A Christmas Carol* (Patté Award.) Off Broadway: *The Third Story*. La Jolla Playhouse: *Chasing the Song, Billy Crystal’s 700 Sundays, The Darrell Hammond Project*. San Diego Repertory Theatre: *Long Story Short*. Lambs Players Theatre: *South Pacific.* Moonlight Stage Productions: *Les Misérables, Catch Me If You Can, My Fair Lady, Young Frankenstein, The Wizard of Oz* (Craig Noel Award.)Scripps Ranch Theatre: *Red Herring*. Chris earned his BA from UCLA and his MFA from UCSD.

**BENJAMIN COLE** (Properties Designer/Set Dressing), is proud to be part of the North Coast Rep family as Artistic Associate. Additional Properties Designs/Set Dressing at NCRT include: *Gunmetal Blues,This Wonderful Life, Freud’s Last Session, Fallen Angels*, *Romance/Romance*, *Faded Glory*, *Mandate Memories*.

**PETER HERMAN** (Hair & Wig Design) has previously designed wigs for over 30 North Coast Rep productions including: *Gunmetal Blues, Fallen Angels ,Romance Romance, Faded Glory, Mandate Memories, The School For Lies, Honky-Tonk Angels, Travesties, I Love You Because, Little Women, My Name is Asher Lev* and *Five Course Love*. He has also designed costumes for past North Coast Rep productions *of 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee, The Big Bang, Madagascar*, and *Jacques Brel is Alive and Well and Living in Paris.* Peter teaches wig and makeup design at San Diego State University. He is glad to be part of the creative team on this show.

**JOHN FINKBINER** (Scenic Artist) John has been a member of the North Coast Repertory Theatre staff for more than six years. His favorite shows are *Halpern and Johnson, SHIPWRECKED!, The Dresser and Jacques Brel.* John received his BA degree at UCLA’s School of Theater, Film and Television in 1991. John is also an accomplished singer/songwriter and performs with his band, the Stereotypes. His music has been featured on Showtime’s “Californication,” Fox’s “Bones” and NBC’s “Knight Rider,” among others. John lives with his wife Judi and his son John Gibson in Leucadia.

**# # #**