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For Immediate Release

Ensemble Theatre Company of Santa Barbara Announces 2007-08 Season

(Santa Barbara, CA) **Ensemble Theatre Company (ETC) of Santa Barbara**, under the artistic direction of Jonathan Fox, is pleased to announce its upcoming season of professional theatre. At a time of new growth, Ensemble Theatre is expanding its boundaries with five innovative plays, new talent from throughout the country, and its first international collaboration.

The 2007-08 season opens on September 27, 2007 with Pulitzer Prize finalist, *The Clean House*, by Sarah Ruhl, a recent MacArthur Fellowship “genius grant” recipient and one of America’s hottest new playwrights. This strange and poignant comedy about clean houses and messy lives, about love, loss and dust balls, has taken America by storm. ETC is pleased to welcome back Jenny Sullivan as director who directed last season’s hit *The Memory of Water*. The *New York Times* called *The Clean House* the “one of the funniest new plays you’re likely to see.” The production runs through October 21, 2007.

With a nod and a wink to Charles Dickens, Oscar Wilde, and Jane Austin, *The Uneasy Chair*, by Evan Smith, is a hilarious modern take on mannered comedy. All is fair in love and war when Amelia Pickles, a prim and proper spinster of modest means, agrees to rent out a room in her Victorian London establishment to a retired military man, Josiah Wickett. Through a series of misunderstandings, they find themselves married and ready for battle! *Curtain Up* named Mr. Smith “an original young playwright with a gift for language.” This fun-filled comedy, running from November 29 to December 23, 2007, is a treat for the holiday season.

Causing a scandal when it first appeared in 1873, Emile Zola’s classic drama, *Thérèse Raquin* is no less startling today. In this haunting story of murder, lust, and psychological terror, a woman, trapped in an unhappy marriage with her sickly husband and living under the constant eye of her mother-in-law, is having a secret affair with her husband’s best friend. Consumed by passion and sexual desire, they are driven to an act of desperation, which hurls them into a world more oppressive than they had imagined. ETC’s Executive Artistic Director, Jonathan Fox, directs this compelling tale, which opens on January 31 and runs through February 24, 2008. “150 years after it was written, Emile Zola’s *Thérèse Raquin* is as shocking as ever,” states *The Guardian*.

(more)

914 Santa Barbara St., • Santa Barbara, CA 93101 • Administrative Office & Box Office (805) 965-5400

The Ensemble Theatre is a professional theater employing members of Actor’s Equity Association and maintains a policy to hire, without discrimination regarding race, color, national origin, gender, handicap, or political or sexual persuasion.

Spanning four generations, *The Syringa Tree*, by Pamela Gien, is a stunning tale of sweeping political upheaval as seen through the eyes of a seven year old girl trying to make sense of the chaos of South Africa's age of apartheid. The fates of two families – one black, one white – are eternally intertwined in this story of enduring love. *The New York Times* said, "... there are few theatrical enterprises so uncompromising." Returning to ETC will be Shannon Koob, who acted to great acclaim in ETC's recent production of *This Is How It Goes*. Ms. Koob will portray 24 characters in a performance that is truly a *tour de force*. Visiting guest director Michael Haney, Associate Artistic Director of Cincinnati Playhouse, will direct this awarding-winning drama, opening March 27 and running through April 20, 2008.

The final show of the season, *Old Wicked Songs*, is ETC's first international co-production. Jonathan Fox will direct this production in both Santa Barbara and at the Vienna English Theatre in Austria. This Pulitzer Prize nominee is filled with the gorgeous music of Robert Schumann and centers around a 25 year old piano prodigy, Stephen Hoffman, who has lost his passion for both music and life. In an attempt to reclaim his love of music, he travels to Vienna to study with a master, and comes face to face with the haunting specter of the Holocaust. *The New York Time* called the play a "stirring admixture of joy and sorrow." Profound and profoundly moving, filled with humor, *Old Wicked Songs* closes out what promises to be stellar 2007-08 season at Ensemble Theatre. The show opens on May 29 and runs through June 22, 2008.

The Ensemble Theatre Company of Santa Barbara was founded in 1979 and is housed at the intimate Alhecama Theatre located in the historic Presidio District in downtown Santa Barbara at 914 Santa Barbara Street. ETC is Santa Barbara's longest running, most award winning professional resident theatre company, now in its 28th season.

Performances run Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8:00 pm and Sundays at 2:00 and 7:00 pm. Both four and five play subscription series' are available starting at \$100. A special Youth Series for patrons 26 and under is only \$60 for all five plays. Single tickets will go on sale in September and will range from \$27.00 to \$40.00. ETC offers discounts to students, seniors and groups of 10 or more. Subscriptions, single tickets and group tickets are available through the **Ensemble Theatre Box Office at (805) 965-5400** or online at www.ensembletheatre.com.

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