

For Immediate Release

Ensemble Theatre Company Presents
The Uneasy Chair
A Hilarious Comedy for the Holidays

(Santa Barbara CA)— Oscar Wilde meets Monty Python (with a dash of Jane Austin) in Ensemble Theater Company (ETC) of Santa Barbara's newest production. A hilarious modern take on mannered Victorian comedy, *The Uneasy Chair*, by Evan Smith, is the second show of its stellar 2007-08 season. This holiday treat begins performances on Thursday, November 29, and continues through Sunday, December 23, 2007. Opening night is Saturday, December 1.

All is fair is love and war when Amelia Pickles, a prim and proper spinster of modest means, agrees to let out a room in her Victorian London establishment to a retired military man, Josiah Wickett. The arrangement seems to be working just fine until Mr. Wickett decides to play matchmaker with Miss Pickles' niece, Alexandrina, and his dim-witted nephew, Darlington, an officer in the cavalry. Through a series of misunderstandings, Capt. Wickett and Miss Pickles find themselves married and ready for battle. Set somewhere in the nineteenth century, *The Uneasy Chair* is an unusual comedy replete with stiff upper lips and barrister wigs.

Jonathan Fox, Ensemble's Executive Artistic Director, is pleased to welcome guest director **Dennis Lee Delaney**. "*The Uneasy Chair* is stuffed with rich, colorful, contradictory characters, and the playwright's gift for language – particularly his lampooning of the ornate, circumlocutious style of the 19th century novel – enhances our enjoyment of those characters," said Mr. Delaney. "These are richly comic roles, with each performer given his moment to shine." Mr. Delaney is a veteran of the regional theater circuit, having directed more than 100 productions throughout the United States. Currently, he is director of the Professional Director Training Program at Ohio University School of Theater.

"Dennis and I have worked together many times over the last decade," said Mr. Fox, "and I am delighted to introduce him to Santa Barbara audiences. I'm delighted, too, to welcome such an extraordinarily talented group of actors."

Appearing in the role of the formidable landlady, Miss Amelia Pickles, is **Lynne Griffin**. A Toronto actress with an extensive theatre background in both Canada and the U.S., she has performed in eleven productions at The Old Globe Theatre in San Diego and has been a series regular on two popular Canadian television shows. Ms. Griffin's upcoming works include *Mr. Magorium's Wonder Emporium* starring Dustin Hoffman and Natalie Portman, and

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Anne of Green Gables, A New Beginning with Shirley MacLaine. This accomplished cast also includes **Michael Rothhaar** as Captain Josiah Wickett. A professional actor since 1975 whose theatre work has encompassed Broadway, Off-Broadway, San Francisco and most recently Los Angeles with appearances at the Mark Taper Forum and Pacific Resident Theatre, Mr. Rothhaar has appeared in numerous episodic television shows including, *Family Law, Bones, Frasier,* and *NYPD Blue*, to name a few.

Playing several roles, from judge to gossipy next-door neighbor, is **Matt Gottlieb** who has performed at several prestigious Bay Area theatres, including A.C.T, Berkeley Rep., Marin Theater Company and San Jose Rep. Mr. Gottlieb has also worked on Broadway, Off –Broadway and in Los Angeles at the Mark Taper Forum, Odyssey Theatre and Pacific Resident Theater. Rounding out this stellar cast are **Jason Chanos** as Mr. John Darlington and **Kim Swennen** as Miss Alexandrina Crosbie. Mr.Chanos has most recently been seen at A Noise Within Theatre Company in Los Angeles. He has appeared in productions at Denver Center Theatre Company, Utah Shakespeare Festival and Playwrights Horizons in recent years. Ms. Swennen attended Yale University and London’s Central School of Speech and Drama. She has worked at Yale Repertory Theatre, UCLA and A Noise Within, in addition to playing Sofia on *Gilmore Girls* and Luciana in the Hallmark movie *Love and Other Four-Letter Words*.

The creative team includes costume designer Barbara Lackner, scenic designer Martin Bookwalter, and lighting designer Kent Inasy.

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 anniversary season under the stewardship of Executive Artistic Director, Jonathan Fox. The 2007-08 season will continue with *Thérèse Raquin* by Emile Zola , *The Syringa Tree* by Pamela Gien and, finishing out the season, a co-production with the Vienna English Theatre of *Old Wicked Songs* by Jon Marans.

Performances run Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8:00 pm and Sundays at 2:00 and 7:00 pm. Ticket prices for *The Uneasy Chair* range from \$25.00 to \$40.00. ETC offers discounts to students, seniors and groups of 10 or more. Low cost previews are Thursday and Friday, November 29 and 30. Four play subscriptions are now available for the 2007-08 season and range from \$100.00 to \$130.00. Subscriptions, single tickets and group tickets are available through the **Ensemble Theatre Box Office at (805) 962-8606** or online at www.ensembletheatre.com

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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.