

RMC'S "CALIFORNIA SUITE" OPENS MARCH 25

For more information: Gearld Roe, Rocky Mountain College Professor, Theatre Arts,
(406) 657-1111 / Email: roeg@rocky.edu

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BILLINGS – Playwright Neil Simon is at his most humane laugh-a-minute best in Rocky Mountain College's production of "California Suite," a humorous confection divided into four parts: Visitor from New York , Philadelphia, London and Chicago. The RMC presentation opens March 25, 2011, with performances March 26, March 31, April 1 and April 2. All shows start at 8 p.m. in Billings Studio Theatre.

This play has a special place in the repertorie of RMC's Professor Gerry Roe, who directs it.

"While working on my PHD at Wayne State, I took a class that centered on the performance-style incorporated in Neil Simon's plays. Before enrolling in that class, I had always thought how easy his plays were to perform. I discovered that is not so if one is to really get to the core of his plays. His dialogue is so deceptively clever -- it is very funny on the surface and very honest and touching underneath. To play both elements without giving short shrift to either is one major the challenges. I decided earlier this semester to take on the task. The cast is embracing these challenges. I am proud of their growth," Roe said.

The play opened to rave reviews when it first hit Broadway in 1976. "Mr. Simon is writing at his ebullient best . . . his language has the grace of conversation we wish our friends could muster . . . makes us laugh so effortlessly," stated The New York Times The movie version won Maggie Smith an Oscar, ironically for playing the actress is cannot win an Oscar.

The synopsis of the four parts of the play features, first, a magazine writer from New York, who is joined by her ex-husband, the question being with whom should their daughter spend the next six months?; second, in the Philadelphia visitors' scene, a wife who arrives at the suite catches her husband "en flagrante delicto" with a drunken hooker; third, visitors from London are a British star, an Academy Award nominee, and her husband, Sidney, whose closeted homosexuality will be no comfort if she is not the recipient of the Award; and fourth, two affluent couples from Chicago who are best friends, take a much-needed vacation together. Things begin to unravel quickly when one wife is hurt during a tennis match and her husband accuses their friends of having caused the injury by lobbing the ball at her.

The cast includes:

Holeigh Shafer of Puyallup, Wash.

Cody Halverson of Roundup, Mont.

Kiffin Irwin of Rifle, Colo.

Al Lattin of Livingston, Mont.
Mal Tift of Plymouth, Minn.
Shane McClurg of Absarokee, Mont.
Laura Barsotti of Phillipsburg, Mont.
Jeffrey Kuykendall of San Diego, Cali.
Murphy Barrett of Auburn Hills, Mich. (This is also Murphy's Senior Project)
DeLaney Hardy of Red Lodge, Mont.
Cherokee Rawls of Billings, Mont.
EmmaRae King Omaha, Neb.

Technical support students include:
Jennifer Rassley of Belgrade, Mont.
Rebecca Maier of Kirkland, Wash.
Abraham Bosco - Pondicherry, Puducherry, India
Caylee Daem of Billings, Mont.
Melissa justice of Jacksonville, Flor.
Kyoko Nishiyama of Kumamoto, Japan
Cathy Daem of Billings, Mont.

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