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Marin Theatre Company announces

THE WINNERS OF THE 2009 MTC PLAYWRIGHT PRIZES
The Sky Cooper New American Play Prize &
The David Calicchio Emerging American Playwright Prize

MILL VALLEY, CA— Marin Theatre Company Artistic Director Jasson Minadakis and Producing Director Ryan Rilette are pleased to announce the winners of MTC’s American Play Prizes. The 2009 Sky Cooper New American Play Prize has been awarded to Sharr White for *Sunlight*. He will receive a \$10,000 award accompanied by the world premiere of *Sunlight* during the MTC 2009–2010 season in the Boyer Theatre. The 2009 David Calicchio Emerging American Playwright Prize has been awarded to Emily Schwend for *Carthage*. Ms. Schwend will receive \$2,500 and *Carthage* will be included in MTC’s Nu Werkz staged reading series during the 2009–2010 season. Play submissions came from all over the country; the winners were selected from 548 eligible submissions for the Sky Cooper prize, and 266 eligible submissions for the David Calicchio prize.

“MTC is delighted to recognize two extraordinary playwrights, Sharr White and Emily Schwend, with our 2009 play prizes. Sharr’s *Sunlight* will be the first Sky Cooper winner to receive its premiere in our Boyer Theatre,” says Artistic Director Jasson Minadakis. “We are thrilled that *Sunlight* has already become a National New Play Network World Premiere and has four scheduled productions in 2010, including MTC’s. The developmental workshop and two public readings of Emily’s *Carthage* will introduce an exciting new voice to the Bay Area and will provide both Emily and the play a springboard onto the national stage. We look forward to long and productive relationships between these artists and MTC starting with these play prizes.”

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Winner of the 2009 Sky Cooper New American Play Prize
Sunlight by Sharr White
 January 21 through February 14, 2010
 Directed by Jasson Minadakis

Matthew Gibbon, liberal lion and university president, may have finally gone too far in his battle against the conservative Dean of the law school—his son-in-law and former protégé. His daughter is caught between them and the entire university community is up in arms. The personal and political collide in this stunning new play about loyalty, power, and torture memos.

Sharr White's plays include *Six Years*, which premiered at Actors Theatre of Louisville's 30th Anniversary Humana Festival of New American Plays, and will be produced this season at Salt Lake Acting Company and Chicago's New Leaf Theatre. Sharr is a recipient of a New York Foundation for the Arts fellowship, a winner of the Dr. Henry and Lillian Nesburn Award as part of the Julie Harris Award in Playwriting, and a two-time finalist for the Princess Grace Award. He is a member of the Playwrights Unit at the Ensemble Studio Theatre and a member of Los Angeles' Apartment A Productions. *Sunlight* was commissioned by South Coast Repertory and workshopped as part of SCR's 2008 Pacific Playwrights Festival.

Winner of the 2009 David Calicchio Emerging American Playwright Prize
Carthage by Emily Schwend
 Dates TBA as part of MTC's 2009–2010 Nu Werkz Series

Complications arise and family secrets emerge when Hal returns to his hometown of Carthage, Missouri for the first time in six years to assist his brother's transition from state institution to private life. Emotionally-stunted Bryan, however, isn't about to make the process quick and painless. He involves everyone around him, particularly Hal's girlfriend Clara, in a complex and emotional journey as the two brothers confront the issues that have kept them apart and brought them together throughout their childhood and adult lives.

Emily Schwend is currently in her second year as a playwriting fellow in the Lila Acheson Wallace American Playwrights Program at the Juilliard School in New York. Her full-length plays include *Carthage*, *Man-Made* (2009 Juilliard Playwrights Projects

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workshop), *Splinters* (2009 finalist in the Alliance Theatre’s Keneda Graduate Playwright competition), and *Callback* (2007 New Works for Young Women competition winner, 2007 John Golden Prize for playwriting). She is a two-time Lecomte du Nouy prize recipient, and she holds a BFA from the Department of Dramatic Writing at New York University’s Tisch School of the Arts.

Norton J. “Sky” Cooper established the **Sky Cooper New American Play Prize** at Marin Theatre Company in 2007 to celebrate the work of the American playwright and to encourage the creation of bold, powerful new voices and plays for the American stage. The Sky Cooper Prize will be awarded annually to either an established or emerging playwright for an outstanding new work. The play selected as the Sky Cooper winner receives a full production at MTC as part of its annual season and will be given regional and national promotion. In addition, the playwright receives a \$10,000 award, as well as travel and accommodations for the MTC rehearsal period.

Norton J. “Sky” Cooper also established the **David Calicchio Emerging American Playwright Prize** award at Marin Theatre Company in 2007 in honor of David Calicchio’s lifelong career as a playwright, and in support of MTC’s commitment to the discovery and development of new and emerging American playwrights. The Calicchio Prize is awarded annually to a professionally unproduced playwright for a new work that shows outstanding promise and a distinctive new voice for the American theater. The play selected for Calicchio Prize will receive two public staged readings at MTC as part of its annual Nu Werkz Series. The playwright will receive a \$2,500 award, as well as travel and accommodations for the MTC rehearsal period.

ABOUT MTC

In its 42nd year, Marin Theatre Company is one of only five LORT theaters in the Bay Area, and is the largest professional regional theater company located in San Francisco’s North Bay. It produces an annual season of more than 200 performances on its two stages. MTC provides a forum for contemporary, classic and emerging playwrights and, through the new Expanded Programs forum, an environment that introduces people of all ages to the transformative power of theater. Through its public performances, school tours, and various educational programs, MTC serves more than 40,000 people annually.

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