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OSF News Release

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SARAH RASMUSSEN AWARDED PRINCESS GRACE THEATRE APPRENTICESHIP

OSF's co-producer of Black Swan Lab honored for her excellence and promise in theatre

Ashland, Ore. — Sarah Rasmussen, who will co-produce the Oregon Shakespeare Festival's Black Swan Lab in 2012, was among this year's winners of the 2011 Princess Grace Awards. On August 15 the Board of Trustees of the Princess Grace Foundation-USA (PGF-USA) and its Chairman, Hon. John F. Lehman announced the winners of the Awards for theater, dance and choreography, and film. The Awards continue the legacy of Princess Grace (Kelly) of Monaco, who anonymously helped emerging artists pursue their artistic goals during her lifetime.

"I am honored to receive the 2011 Princess Grace Pierre Cardin Award in partnership with the Oregon Shakespeare Festival" said Rasmussen. "My experience as a Phil Killian Fellow and the work I did with Bill, Lue and the incredible OSF company profoundly shaped my career. I'm honored to continue my relationship with OSF. The Black Swan Lab is truly innovative in both the projects it tackles, and the way that it approaches process. The Lab is a haven for artist driven process and living proof that new work can be developed under new models in this country. Personally, I love that the lab can support the development of large cast work for a diverse ensemble of performers."

Rasmussen will work alongside OSF's Artistic Director Bill Rauch and Director of Literary Development and Dramaturgy Lue Morgan Douthit in the Black Swan Lab for the development of new work by major American playwrights as well as early career writers. OSF has commissioned a number of major American playwrights, including David Henry Hwang, Lynn Nottage, Tanya Saracho, Naomi Wallace and Rhiana Yazzie, whose work may be among the scripts developed in the Lab next season. Rasmussen will be in charge of shepherding whatever script work playwrights want to do before, during and after their time in the lab, as well as directing readings and script work by the ten Lab actors who are devoting one of their three OSF repertory assignments to new play development. Other assignments will include casting the readings, discussing

dramaturgical points with playwrights, supporting the playwrights while they are in residence, and facilitating discussions in the room between actors and playwrights. She also has been given the assignment of scouting for new writers and new works.

OSF Artistic Director Bill Rauch said, “Sarah is impressively well-qualified to take on this Lab apprenticeship. Not only does she bring experience at New York’s small experimental houses and several regional and university theaters, as OSF’s 2010 Phil Killian Fellow she directed OSF company actors in a series of one-acts and scenes of plays written by women. She also served as my assistant director for the 2010 production of *The Merchant of Venice* in our largest venue, the 1,200-seat outdoor Elizabethan Stage, and assisted director Liesl Tommy on the 2010 main stage production of *Ruined*. I am delighted Sarah will return to OSF and step into this leadership position.”

Each year, the Foundation presents the Princess Grace Awards to artists who show excellence and promise in the areas of theater, dance, and film. Students are eligible for scholarships; emerging artists working in companies qualify for apprenticeships and fellowships. A playwriting fellowship is available for individual artists through a residency at New Dramatists in New York City, which includes the opportunity to have the winning play be licensed and published by Samuel French, Inc. In addition to these, the Foundation also gives honorable mention grants to applicants through honoraria.

The 2011 Princess Grace Awards winners represent 20 colleges, universities, and not-for-profit theater and dance companies throughout the United States. The Awards winners exemplify both classical and experimental artistic disciplines and, while still considered emerging talent, already show exceptional promise in their areas of expertise. The Foundation's support assists their theater and dance studies, helps pay their artistic fees at non-profit theater and dance companies and helps support their thesis film projects. In addition to the Awards, the Princess Grace Foundation-USA extends general operating monies to companies hosting an Awards winner.

For more information about the Princess Grace Foundation and this year’s winners, go to www.pgfusa.org