

For immediate release
January 29, 2009

Contact: Linda Jacobs
212.609.5900, ext. 255, ljacobs@tcg.org

AMERICAN THEATRE Senior Editor Randy Gener is Awarded Prestigious 2007-2008 Nathan Award

"It is my object and desire to encourage and assist in developing the art of drama criticism and the stimulation of intelligent playgoing." --- George Jean Nathan

"His selection by the Nathan Committee marks the first time that the award has gone specifically for writing in *American Theatre*, and we're particularly proud of that."
---Jim O'Quinn, editor in chief, *American Theatre* magazine

Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national organization for not for profit professional theater, announces today that Randy Gener, senior editor of the organization's premier publication *American Theatre* magazine has been honored with the prestigious Nathan Award, drama criticism's highest accolade.

The prize, one of the most generous and distinguished in the American Theatre, is paid to the American who has written the best piece of drama criticism during the theatrical year (July 1 – June 30), whether it is an article, an essay, treatise or book.

The award committee represents the English departments of Cornell, Princeton and Yale universities, assisted by experts from those universities. The award is administered under the terms of a trust established by George Jean Nathan, author, critic and 1904 Cornell graduate.

"The Nathan Award is a particularly appropriate recognition of Randy's work because he's the kind of journalist who depends upon a critical sensibility as the central impulse of his writing—even when he's doing interviews or features or reportage, there's an implicit recognition that what's important is the artistry behind the information, the play behind the personality, the creative accomplishment behind the PR push," said Jim O'Quinn, editor of *American Theatre*. "The magazine is proud to have showcased his writing in 2007–08, a banner year in terms of the variety and richness of his contributions to the magazine."

The Awards Committee citation for Gener reads, "He has used that venue [*American Theatre Magazine*] and others to draw our attention to largely ignored voices and visions on the international theatrical scene, to the work of Filipino-American playwright Jessica Hagedorn, to a small but lively Tennessee Williams Festival in Provincetown, and to the future of theatrical criticism itself in essays that wed critical intelligence with a beat reporter's love of the telling and unruly fact."

The citation continues, "In one piece, Gener argues that, at its best, criticism is 'a cultural asset, one of the bases on which democracy and community are built.' He fulfills that lofty goal by implicitly reminding us of how much that is excellent in theater here and abroad is

ignored by a critical fraternity which, during this age of globalization, seems more parochial than ever.”

The prize, which has been given annually since 1958, consists of the annual net income of half of Mr. Nathan's estate, which for Gener will amount to \$10,000, making it the richest as well as one of the most distinguished in the American theater.

In addition, the winner receives a trophy symbolic of the award. Ellis Hanson, Chair of the Cornell English Department, will present the award to Gener at a March 9 celebration at the Kalayaan Hall (Freedom Hall) of the Philippine Center near Rockefeller Center in New York City.

Winning the Nathan Award is the most recent accolade in Gener's distinguished career. In addition to being the Senior Editor of *American Theatre*, he is a writer, critic, editor, playwright, and visual artist based in New York City. He is the author of the plays *Love Seats for Virginia Woolf* and *What Remains of a Rembrandt Torn into Four Pieces*, among other plays, as well as scholarly essays, articles and reviews in *The Village Voice*, *The New York Times*, *New York Magazine*, *The Star Ledger*, *Time Out New York*, and other publications.

Additionally, he has worked as an editor of the Arts Institute/Theatre Institute of the Czech Republic's newspaper *Prague Quadrennial Today* and as a freelance dramaturg for the Joseph Papp Public Theater, Roundabout Theatre Company, Pan Asian Repertory Theatre, and Denver Center Theatre Company. His floral installation *In the Garden of One World* (a collaboration with the Romanian scenic designer Nic Ularu) debuted in 2008 at La MaMa La Galleria.

He has been the recipient of a 1995-96 Jerome Foundation *American Theatre*/Affiliated Writers Program fellowship, 2003 *New York Times* critic fellowship at the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center's National Critics Institute; grants from the Foundation of the American Theatre Critics Association, the Ford Foundation, and the Trust for Mutual Understanding; and a *Filipinas Magazine* Arts and Culture Prize. A member of the theater alliances NoPassport and Theater Without Borders, he was inducted in 2008 to *Via Times of Chicago's* Filipino American Hall of Fame.

Past recipients of the Nathan Award have included Harold Clurman, Walter Kerr, Stanley Kauffmann, Jan Kott, Elizabeth Hardwick, Robert Brustein, Eliot Norton, Eric Bentley, Michael Feingold, Alisa Solomon, Daniel Mendelsohn, John Lahr, Hilton Als, Ben Brantley and Charles Isherwood. For a complete description of the Nathan award and its origins, visit <http://www.arts.cornell.edu/english/awards/nathan/>.

###