



Press Release
For immediate release
February 2017

588 Sutter Street #318
San Francisco, CA 94102
415.677.9596 fax 415.677.9597
www.sfplayhouse.org

Press Inquires Contact: Anne Abrams
goanne@comcast.net

Hilarity Ensues Onstage and Behind the Scenes in

NOISES OFF

by Michael Frayn

March 21 through May 13, 2017

Directed by Susi Damilano

Press Opening: Saturday, March 25, 2017, 8pm

Performance Schedule: Tues, Wed, Thurs 7pm / Fri, Sat 8pm / Sat 3pm, Sun 2pm

Preview Performances: March 21, 22, 23 and 24 at 8pm

San Francisco, CA (February 2017) – **San Francisco Playhouse** (Bill English, Artistic Director; Susi Damilano, Producing Director) continues its 14th season of transformation with *Noises Off* by Michael Frayn, a play some have hailed as the greatest farce ever written.

Called the “funniest play written in my lifetime” by former New York Times critic Frank Rich, *Noises Off* is a dexterously-realized comedy about putting on a comedy. A rollicking backstage farce about a second-rate theatrical troupe, the play combines slapstick, a British sex comedy, and non-stop hilarity from a manic menagerie of itinerant actors rehearsing a flop called “Nothing On”. Doors slamming, on- and off-stage intrigue, and an errant herring all figure in the plot of this uproarious and classically-comic play.

In the first act of *Noises Off*, Opening Night is just hours away, and the hapless cast of “Nothing On” struggles to complete a dress rehearsal of their ill-fated play. In the second act, the audience is transported backstage as the set revolves and reveals a cast on the verge of disaster, as trysts and betrayals send the production into chaos. The final act returns to the company for their final performance. With lines being forgotten, love triangles unraveling and sardines flying everywhere, it is complete pandemonium.

Noises Off premiered on Broadway in 1983 and was nominated for the Tony Award for Best Play. The idea for the play came to Frayn after he was inspired by a performance of a farce while watching in the

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Noises Off

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wings. According to Frayn, "What I saw backstage was actually funnier than what was onstage." *Noises Off* was an immediate hit and has been wildly popular ever since.

"In these changing times, nothing seemed more perfect than putting up a show whose sole purpose is to encourage us to laugh at our human foibles," said director and Playhouse co-founder **Susi Damilano**.

"*Noises Off* is a true classic that reaches comedic heights rarely achieved in the thirty-plus years since it was written."

The cast will feature San Francisco favorites **Greg Ayers, Richard Louis James, Monique Hafen*, Monica Ho, Craig Marker*, Johnny Moreno*, Kimberly Richards*, Patrick Russell*, and Nanci Zoppi***.

San Francisco Playhouse's production of *Noises Off* is made possible by Producers David and Colleen Leaf; Associate Producers Muffy Barkocy & John Merlino, Bruce Colman, Karen & David Crommie; and Artistic Underwriters Cynn timer Anderson, Kevin Gahagan, Carol & Duff Kurland, and Ursula Schorn

Susi Damilano (Director) is co-founder and Producing Director of the San Francisco Playhouse. Directing credits include Playhouse productions of *She Loves Me, Stage Kiss***, *Company, Stupid Fucking Bird, Into the Woods, A Behanding in Spokane, Den of Thieves and Wirehead***; the West Coast Premieres of *Honey Brown Eyes***, *Dead Man's Cell Phone, Coronado, The Mystery Plays* and *Roulette* and the world premieres of Steven Dietz' *On Clover Road*, Rhett Rossi's *From Red to Black* and Daniel Heath's *Seven Days* in the Sandbox Series. She is a five-time recipient of the Bay Area Theatre Critic Circle (BATCC) award for Best Female Performance in *Abigail's Party, Harper Regan, Bug, Six Degrees of Separation*, and *Reckless*. At the Playhouse she has performed leading roles in *Tree, Bauer, Abigail's Party, Harper Regan, Coraline, Slasher, One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest, Landscape of the Body, First Person Shooter, Jesus Hopped the 'A' Train, The Crucible, Kimberly Akimbo, Our Town* and *The Smell of the Kill*. (**nominated for BATCC Directing award.)

Michael Frayn (Playwright) has written sixteen plays, and several of them have been produced in New York, including *Noises Off, Copenhagen, Benefactors, and Democracy*. *Noises Off*, first produced on Broadway in 1983, was revived in 2001. *Copenhagen*, in 2000, won a Tony, together with Tony Awards for Best Director (Michael Blakemore) and Best Featured Actress (Blair Brown). He has also translated for the theatre, mostly Chekhov and other plays from the Russian, and adapted Chekhov's first, untitled play as *Wild Honey*. He has written a number of screenplays, including *Clockwise*, starring John Cleese, and *First and Last*, which won an International Emmy. His books are published in New York by Holt Metropolitan. His eleven novels include *The Tin Men, Towards the End of the Morning, Headlong, Spies*, and most recently *Skios*. He has also published two works of philosophy, *Constructions* and *The Human*

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Touch; and a memoir, *My Father's Fortune*.

Founded in 2003, **San Francisco Playhouse** is the only mid-sized professional venue in downtown San Francisco—an intimate alternative to the larger, more traditional Union Square theater fare. Presenting a diverse range of plays and musicals, **San Francisco Playhouse** produces new works as well as re-imagined classics, “making the edgy accessible and the traditional edgy.” And with its bold Sandbox Series, dedicated to nurturing World Premieres, the Playhouse has become a significant player in developing new works as well. **San Francisco Playhouse** is committed to providing a creative home and inspiring environment where actors, directors, writers, designers, and theater lovers converge to create and experience dramatic works that celebrate the human spirit.

**Actors appear courtesy of Actors' Equity Association.*

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FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:

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No matinees 3/25 or 3/26

WHERE: 450 Post Street, San Francisco, 2nd Floor of the Kensington Park Hotel.

TICKETS: For tickets (\$20-\$125) or more information, the public may contact the San Francisco Playhouse box office at 415-677-9596, or <https://sfplayhouse.org/sfph/2016-2017-season/noises-off/>