

Grand Theatre

WESTON-SUPER-MARE

Proprietors: GRAND THEATRE (Weston-super-Mare) LIMITED

General Manager: E. E. A GRADSHAW

The Grand Theatre Weston-super-Mare is a member of the Grand Group

Evenings at 7.45, Matinee: Wednesday at 2.30, Saturday at 5.00 and 8.30
Commencing Wednesday 1st October for One Week Only

Otsar Productions Ltd present

DOTTY OTLEY

BELINDA BLAIR

GARRY LEJEUNE

in

NOTHING ON

By **ROBIN HOUSEMONGER**

with

SELSDON MOWBRAY

BROOKE ASHTON

FREDERICK FELLOWES

Directed by **LLOYD DALLAS**

Designed by **GINA BOXHALL**

Lighting by **ROD WRAY**

Costumes by **PATSY HEMMING**

WORLD PREMIERE PRIOR TO NATIONAL TOUR!

Commencing Wednesday 1st October 2018 for One Week Only

SMOKING IS NOT PERMITTED IN THE AUDITORIUM

The use of cameras and tape recorder is forbidden.

The management reserve the right to refuse admission, also to make any alteration in the cast which may be rendered necessary by illness or other unavoidable causes.

From the theatre rules: 'All exits shall be available for use during all performances',
'The fire curtain shall be lowered during each performance'.

NOTHING ON

By ROBIN HOUSEMONGER

CAST (in order of appearance)

Mrs Clackett: DOTTY OTLEY

Roger Tramplemain: GARRY LEJEUNE

Vicki: BROOKE ASHTON

Philip Brent: FREDERICK FELLOWES

Flavia Brent: BELINDA BLAIR

Burglar: SELSDON MOWBRAY

Sheikh: FREDERICK FELLOWES

The action takes place in the living-room of the Brents' country home, on a Wednesday afternoon.

+++++

Directed by Lloyd Dallas

+++++

Company and Stage Manager - TIM ALLGOOD
Assistant Stage Manager - POPPY NORTON-TAYLOR
Production Photographer - MARTHA NORCHEESIE

+++++

Production credits:

Sardine by Old Salt Sardines. Antique silverware and cardboard boxes by Mrs J. G. H. Norton-Taylor.

Stethoscope and hospital trolley by Severn Surgical Supplies. Straitjacket by Kumfy Restraints Ltd. Coffins by G. Ashforth and Sons.

We gratefully acknowledge the generous support of EUROPEAN BREWERIES in sponsoring this production.

Behind the dressing room doors:

DOTTY OTLEY (Mrs. Clackett) makes a welcome return to the stage to create the role of Mrs. Clackett after playing Mrs. Hackett, Britain's most famous lollipop lady ("Ooh, I can't 'ardly 'old me lolly up!") in over 320 episodes of TV's ON THE ZEBRAS. Her many stage appearances include her critically acclaimed portrayal of Fru Säckett, the comic character in Strindberg's SCENES FROM THE CHARNELHOUSE. Her first appearance ever? In a school production of HENRY IV PART I - as the old bag-lady, Mrs. Duckett.

BELINDA BLAIR (Flavia Brent) has been on the stage since the age of four, when she made her debut in SINBAD THE SAILOR at the old Croydon Hippodrome as one of Miss Toni Tanner's Ten Tapping Tots. She subsequently danced her way round this country, Southern Africa, and the Far East in shows like ZIPPEDY-DOODA! and HERE COME LES GIRLS! More recently she has been seen in such comedy hits as DON'T MR DUDDLE!, WHO'S BEEN SLEEPING IN MY BED?, and TWICE TWO IS SEX. She is married to scriptwriter Terry Wough, who has contributed lead-in material to most of TV's chat shows. They have two sons and three retrievers.

GARRY LEJEUNE (Roger Tramplemain) while still at drama school won the coveted Laetitia Daintyman Medal for Violence. His television work includes POLICE!, CRIME SQUAD, SWAT, FORENSIC, and THE NICK but he is probably best-known as 'Cornetto', the ice-cream salesman who stirs the hearts of all the lollipop ladies on ON THE ZEBRAS.

SELSDON MOWBRAY (Burglar) first 'trod the boards' at the age of 12 - playing Lucius in a touring production of JULIUS CAESAR, with his father, the great Chelmsford Mowbray, in the lead. Since then he has served in various local reps, and claims to have appeared with every company to have toured Shakespeare in the past half-century, working his way up through the Mustardseeds and the various Boys and Sons of, to the Balthazars, Benvolios and Le Beaus; then the Slenders, Lennoxes, Trinculos, Snouts, and Froths; and graduating to the Scroops, Poloniuses and Aguecheeks. His most recent film appearance was as Outraged Pensioner in GREEN WILLIES.

BROOKE ASHTON (Vicki) is probably best known as the girl wearing nothing but 'good, honest, natural froth' in the Hauptbahnhofbrau lager commercial. Her television appearances range from Girl at Infants' School in ON THE ZEBRAS to Girl in Massage Parlour in ON PROBATION. Cinemagoers saw her in THE GIRL IN ROOM 14, where she played the Girl in Room 312.

FREDERICK FELLOWES (Philip Brent) has appeared in many popular television series, including CALLING CASUALTY, CARDIAC ARREST!, OUT-PATIENTS and IN-PATIENTS. On stage he was most recently seen in the controversial all-male version of THE TROJAN WOMEN. He is happily married, and lives near Crawley, where his wife breeds pedigree dogs. 'If she ever leaves me,' he says, 'it will probably be for an Irish wolfhound!'

ROBIN HOUSEMONGER (Author) was born in Worcester Park, Surrey, into a family 'unremarkable in every way except for an aunt with red hair who used to sing all the high twiddly bits from THE MERRY WIDOW over the tea-table.' He claims to have been the world's most unsuccessful gents hosiery wholesaler, and began writing 'to fill the long hours between one hosiery order and the next'. He turned this experience into his very first play, SOCKS BEFORE MARRIAGE, which ran in the West End for nine years. Two of his subsequent plays, BRIEFS ENCOUNTER and HANKY PANKY, broke box office records in Perth, Western Australia. NOTHING ON is his 17th play.

LLOYD DALLAS (Director) 'read English at Cambridge, and stagecraft at the local benefits office.' He has directed plays in most parts of Britain, winning the South of Scotland Critics' Circle Special Award in 1969. In 1972 he directed a highly successful season for the National Theatre of Sri Lanka. In recent years he has probably become best known for his brilliant series of 'Shakespeare in Summer' productions in the parks of the inner London boroughs.

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Please apply to
The Manager,
Grand Theatre

NOISES • OFF •

BY MICHAEL FRAYN
DIRECTED BY BILL ENGLISH



SAN FRANCISCO
PLAYHOUSE

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DUFF, CAROL & MIKAYLA KURLAND

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Janet McAllister
In Memoriam

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We acknowledge that the land on which we gather belongs to the Ohlone people of past, present, and future, whose homelands extend from Big Sur to the San Francisco Bay Area. We recognize that every member of the Bay Area community has, and continues to benefit from, the use and occupation of this land. We recognize that the Ohlone people are alive and flourishing members of the Bay Area communities today. We are grateful for the opportunity to live, work, and learn on their land. Visit sfplayhouse.org/edi for more information.

SAN FRANCISCO PLAYHOUSE

450 Post Street, San Francisco, CA 94102
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Sharon & Samuel Muir

Scenic Designer

Alan Mattacola

Costume Designer

Carolyn Jayne

Lighting Designer

Joan Rost

Properties Designer

Galen Workman & Geoffrey Kulik

Dialect Coach

Karissa Wong

Intimacy, Fight & Stunt Choreographer

Suzanne Cross & John Simpson

WELCOME

At first glance, **Noises Off** is pure farce – slamming doors, dropping trousers, flying sardines, and backstage mayhem. But beneath the perfectly timed chaos lies something deeper: a reflection of the human spirit in all its messy, glorious imperfection.

Michael Frayn's brilliant meta-comedy offers more than laughter. It serves as a mirror. The characters in **Noises Off** are desperately trying to hold their play and their personal lives together. Relationships explode, cues are missed, jealousy burns, and chaos reigns, and yet, they keep going. The show must go on.



There's something profoundly spiritual in that perseverance. We all stumble through our lives trying to keep the curtain up, to be in the right place at the right time, to say the right thing, to keep our scenes intact. Still, things fall apart. When they do, what saves us is often humor, connection, and the courage to carry on.

Noises Off is also a celebration of theatre as sacred ritual. Each rehearsal requires devotion. Each performance, an act of faith in our fellow players, faith in timing, and faith in the belief that the story matters. Even when everything unravels, the characters continue. That persistence is more than comedy, it's profoundly human.

In the midst of chaos, **Noises Off** offers catharsis. The laughter it provokes isn't frivolous, it's healing. It reminds us that disorder is survivable, that perfection is a myth, and that shared laughter can bind us together in unity.

So, while **Noises Off** may masquerade as a wacky comedy, it is, at its heart, a meditation on resilience. On the universality of our daily struggles. On the masks we wear, the truths we hide, and on the sacred, surprising grace of getting through it all together.

In laughter, there is release. In chaos, a kind of hope. In our theatre tonight, a reminder that even when everything goes wrong, we keep going, and somehow, that is enough.

Bill English

Artistic Director

OUR MISSION

Our mission is to share stories that uplift spirits, deepen self-awareness, and nurture compassionate community. Our theater is an Empathy Gym where we come to practice our powers of compassion. Here, safe in the dark, we can risk sharing in the lives of the characters. We feel what they feel, fear what they fear, and love what they love, and as we walk through our doors we take with us greater powers of understanding to make our community a better place, one play at a time.

SAN FRANCISCO PLAYHOUSE

BILL ENGLISH, Artistic Director, **SUSI DAMILANO**, Producing Director, and
WILLIAM & MARSHA ADLER and **DUFF, CAROL & MIKAYLA KURLAND**, Executive Producers,
present

NOISES OFF

By **MICHAEL FRAYN**

Directed by **BILL ENGLISH**

Scenic Designer
HEATHER KENYON^

Costume Designer
ABRA BERMAN

Lighting Designer
ESPEN GARNER

Sound Designer
SARA WITSCH

Properties Designer
AMY BENJAMIN

Dialect Coach
KIMBERLY MOHNE HILL

Intimacy, Fight & Stunt Director
CHELSEA PACE

CAST

Brooke Ashton **SOPHIA ALAWI***
 Garry Lejeune **JOE AYERS***
 Dotty Otley **JULIE ECCLES***
 Selsdon Mowbray **LOUIS PARNELL***
 Frederick Fellowes **NIMA RAKHSHANIFAR***
 Lloyd Dallas **PATRICK RUSSELL***
 Belinda Blair **LIZ SKLAR***
 Tim Allgood **JAMIEL ST. ROSE**
 Poppy Norton-Taylor **VIVIENNE TRUONG**
Fight Captain **PATRICK RUSSELL***

UNDERSTUDIES

Selsdon Mowbray, Lloyd Dallas **JOSEPH ALVARADO**
 Dotty Otley (Second) **LIZZIE CALOGERO***
 Dotty Otley **KIMBERLY MOHNE HILL**
 Garry Lejeune **PATRICK RIVERA**
 Frederick Fellowes **JAMIEL ST. ROSE**
 Belinda Blair, Poppy Norton-Taylor **HEATHER MAE STEFFEN**
 Brooke Ashton **VIVIENNE TRUONG**

*Understudies never substitute for the listed performers unless
a specific announcement is made at the time of the performance.*

STAGE MANAGEMENT

Stage Manager **ADA MAY***
 Assistant Stage Manager **RACHEL BROWNE**
 Deck/Wardrobe Crew **KAYA LEHR-LOVE**
 Properties Coordinator & Production Associate **JUSTIN HAMMER**

PRODUCTION STAFF

Director of Production **ANGELA KNUTSON**
 Production Coordinator **SARAH MARIE SELIG**
 Production Associate **JOEL MOORE**



SOPHIA ALAWI



JOSEPH ALVARADO



JOE AYERS



LIZZIE CALOGERO



JULIE ECCLES



KIMBERLY MOHNE HILL



LOUIS PARNELL



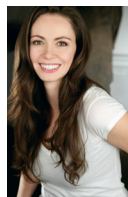
NIMA RAKHSHANIFAR



PATRICK RIVERA



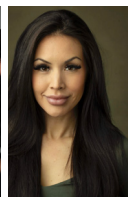
PATRICK RUSSELL



LIZ SKLAR



JAMIEL ST. ROSE



HEATHER MAE STEFFEN



VIVIENNE TRUONG

BIOGRAPHIES

CAST

SOPHIA ALAWI*

Brooke Ashton

Sophia (she, her) is a proud Moroccan-American actress and is thrilled to return to San Francisco Playhouse. She won a San Francisco Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle award for **Groundhog Day The Musical** and was named one of "Five Standout Performances" in 2019 (*Houston Chronicle*) for **Spring Awakening**. Off-Broadway and regional credits include **We Live in Cairo** (New York Theatre Workshop), **Nobody Loves You** (American Conservatory Theater), **The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time**, **Evita**, **As You Like It**, **Twelfth Night**, and **Groundhog Day The Musical** (San Francisco Playhouse), **She Loves Me**, **Merrily We Roll Along**, **Fun Home** (42nd Street Moon), **The Sound of Music** (Hillbarn Theatre & Conservatory), **Spring Awakening** (Theater Under The Stars), and **In the Heights** (Playhouse on Park). Television credits include **Law & Order: SVU**. Sophia is also a singer-songwriter on most streaming platforms and has a short film in development. @lioness.film | @sophiaintronaalawi

JOSEPH ALVARADO

U/S: Seldon Mowbray

Joseph has been performing on stages throughout the Bay Area for just over a decade and is finally getting around to working with San Francisco Playhouse. Most recently, he played Henry Y. Huang (HYH) in **Yellow Face** with Shotgun Players. Among his most cherished experiences are playing Jack in **Aunt Jack** (New Conservatory Theatre Center), Resten in

The Language Archive (Masquers Playhouse), Chin in **Flower Drum Song** (Palo Alto Players), and Bobby in **Company** (City College of San Francisco). Off stage, Joseph enjoys swimming laps, heritage tourism, and quietly pondering the art of Swedish death cleaning. He was born, raised, and still lives in San Francisco, and shares his home with his 19-year old cat, Malcolm.

JOE AYERS*

Garry Lejeune

Joe (he, him) is thrilled to return to San Francisco Playhouse! His past credits here include Max Bennett in **The Play That Goes Wrong** and a swing in **Cabaret**. Other favorite credits include **Torch Song** (Marin Theatre), **The Legend of Georgia McBride** (Center REP), and **Significant Other** (Los Altos Stage Company). Joe has also performed regionally at Asolo Repertory Theatre, American Stage, California Shakespeare Theater, Berkeley Playhouse, and New Canon Theatre Company. He earned three BA degrees – in theater and performance studies, dance and performance studies, and English – from the University of California, Berkeley, as well as an MFA in acting from the Florida State University/Asolo Conservatory for Actor Training. Joe thanks his loved ones who have supported him every step of the way. @joeslayers

LIZZIE CALOGERO*

U/S: Dotty Otley (Second)

Lizzie (she, her) is an English-American actor based in the Bay Area. She played Tiny Tim in the San Francisco Playhouse production of **Mrs. Bob Cratchit's Wild Christmas Binge** by Christopher Durang. She has worked extensively with theatre

companies around the Bay Area, including Marin Theatre, Magic Theatre, San Jose Repertory Theatre, Center REP, San Francisco Shakespeare Company, Woman's Will, and many seasons with the Tony Award-winning San Francisco Mime Troupe, where she is a former collective member. Known for her comedic work, Lizzie is drawn to theatre that creates community, cultivates empathy, and gives audiences a visceral experience of lives that are otherwise inaccessible to them.

JULIE ECCLES*

Dotty Otley

Julie (she, her) is delighted to be making her San Francisco Playhouse debut. Recent roles include Hertha Ayrton in **The Half Life of Marie Curie** (The 222), and Sally in **Under Ben Bulben** (Jewel Theater Company). Her Bay Area theater credits include **Othello**, **Twelfth Night**, **Hamlet**, **Candida**, **An Ideal Husband**, **King Lear**, **As You Like It**, **The Importance of Being Earnest**, and **Much Ado About Nothing** (California Shakespeare Theater), as well as productions at American Conservatory Theater, Berkeley Repertory Theater, Aurora Theatre Company, Marin Theatre, Center REP, TheatreWorks Silicon Valley, San Jose Repertory Theatre, and the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival. Regional credits include Huntington Theatre, Seattle Repertory Theater, Geva Theatre, and Syracuse Stage. Julie attended the University of California, Davis, and the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art. julieeccles.com

KIMBERLY MOHNE HILL

U/S: Dotty Otley

Kimberly earned her MFA in acting from American Conservatory Theater. Simultaneously serving as dialect coach for this production, Kimberly is happy to be returning to more acting. She last was onstage in January as Dotty in **Noises Off** at Palo Alto Players. Before that, she was in two productions of **A Christmas Carol** at San Jose Repertory Theatre. She continues to direct and coach dialects throughout the Bay Area. Last spring, she directed **The Underpants** at San Jose Stage Company.

LOUIS PARNELL*

Selsdon Mowbray

Louis is pleased to return to San Francisco Playhouse, where he last performed as Joe in **Waitress** and was assistant director for **A Chorus Line** and **My Fair Lady**. Louis has acted in or directed over twenty productions at the Playhouse including their inaugural production, **It Had To Be You**. Favorite onstage roles here include **The Nether**, **Cabaret**, and **Follies**. He has also acted and directed for close to fifty years with numerous theatre companies in the

Bay Area including American Conservatory Theater, Marin Theatre, Magic Theatre, Center REP, TheatreWorks Silicon Valley, and many smaller companies here and in New York and Los Angeles. Louis has been nominated for San Francisco Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle awards fifteen times (winning five) and has been honored with other awards for his work. He has played numerous film, commercial and television roles and is a member of SAG/AFTRA and Actors Equity Association.

NIMA RAKHSHANIFAR*

Frederick Fellowes

Nima is an Iranian-American actor, singer, and musician originally from the South Bay. They have performed regionally as Seth in **Bald Sisters** (Steppenwolf Theatre Company), Farhad in **Andy Warhol in Iran** (Barrington Stage Company), Taroon in **Selling Kabul** (Northern Stage), and Sebastian in **Twelfth Night** and Henry in **Sanctuary City** (TheatreSquared). On screen, Nima plays the titular character in the short film **Arman**, currently making the rounds at film festivals. Recent Bay Area work includes **ALAA: A Family Trilogy**, and **Oriental, or 1001 Ways to Tie Yourself in Knots** with Golden Thread Productions. nimarakhshanifar.com

PATRICK RIVERA

U/S: Tim Allgood

U/S: Garry Lejeune

Patrick is a newcomer to the San Francisco Playhouse stage and is thrilled to be a part of the show. He most recently played Bobby and Man in **Motherhood Out Loud** (Montalvo Arts Center) and was part of the ensemble in **Cyrano** (Los Altos Stage Company). A Bay Area native and San José State University graduate, his past credits include Kurt Vogel in **Truce: A Christmas Wish From the Great War** (City Lights Theater Company), Michel in **Murder on the Orient Express** (Palo Alto Players), Tom in **Five Sundays** (More Más Marami Arts), Schultz in **Circle Mirror Transformation**, Alan in **The Grouch**, Clark in **Firebringer** (San José State University), and Russell in **Projector Projector** and John in **God Said This** (Contemporary Asian Theatre Scene). Patrick is grateful to family and friends for all their love and support and hopes you enjoy the show!

PATRICK RUSSELL*

Lloyd Dallas

Patrick is thrilled to return to San Francisco Playhouse following his role in **The Play That Goes Wrong**. Other performances here include **Noises Off** (2017), **Red Velvet**, **Trouble Cometh**, **77%**, **Seminar**, and **reasons to be pretty**. He has also performed at American Conservatory Theater, TheatreWorks Silicon Valley, California Shakespeare Theatre, Aurora Theatre, Magic

Theatre, Marin Theatre, Marin Shakespeare Company, Center REP, and Shotgun Players. Film credits include **Moss Beach, Being Us, Overkill**, and **Rapunzel's Etymology of Zero**. Directing credits include **She Kills Monsters** and **Stupid F***ing Bird** (San Francisco State University), **The Arsonists** (University of California, Berkeley), and **All My Sons** (Role Players Ensemble). Patrick teaches acting and movement at the University of California, Berkeley and is the movement instructor for San Francisco Semester Program for American Conservatory Theater, where he is a graduate of the MFA acting program. Patrick is a proud member of Actors' Equity Association and SAG-AFTRA.

LIZ SKLAR*

Belinda Blair

Liz (she, her) is thrilled to return to San Francisco Playhouse after recently performing here in **The Curious Incident of a Dog in the Night-Time**, and less recently in **Trouble Cometh** and **Becky Shaw**. Other selected credits include Eleanor in the West Coast premiere of **Antipodes** (Actors' Reading Collective), Lady Macbeth in **Macbeth** and Desdemona in **Othello** (California Shakespeare Theatre), Major Powell in **Men on Boats** (American Conservatory Theater), Annie in **The Real Thing** (Aurora Theatre), **Care of Trees** (Shotgun Players), and **Waste, Mother of the Maid, Wink, The Wolves, Anne Boleyn, The Whale, Failure: A Love Story, Lasso of Truth, Othello, Seagull** and **Bellwether** (Marin Theatre). Liz earned a BA in theatre from Brown University and an MFA from American Conservatory Theater.

JAMIEL ST. ROSE

Tim Allgood

U/S: Frederick Fellowes

Jamiel (he, him) is a Vallejo native of Palestinian, Chamoru, and Filipino descent. He earned a BA in film and theatre from California State University, Long Beach, and graduated from Stella Adler Studio of Acting in New York. Jamiel works as an arts in corrections facilitator for Red Ladder Theatre Company. Notable credits include **The Gods of Comedy** (Pear Theatre), **Clue** (San Francisco Playhouse), and **Writing Fragments Home** (Hillbarn Theatre Company & Conservatory). He has a film released on TUBI called **Agent of Solitude**. jamielstrose.com

HEATHER MAE STEFFEN

U/S: Poppy Norton-Taylor

U/S: Belinda Blair

Heather Mae (she, her) is making her San Francisco Playhouse debut. Favorite roles include Cheryl in the HD national tour of **Evil Dead** (Roshi Entertainment), Patsy Cline in **Always... Patsy Cline** (San Jose Musical Theatre),

Bea in **Something Rotten** (West Valley Light Opera), Rocky in **The Rocky Horror Show** (Roshi Entertainment), and Vanessa in **In the Heights** (Western Stage). Heather Mae studied music at Sonoma State and musical theatre at Foothill College. She loves working for Tito's Handmade Vodka and also enjoys spending time with Tessie Marie, her pit mix rescue, lifting weights, and riding horses. She thanks her incredible dad for his endless love and support.

VIVIENNE TRUONG

Poppy Norton-Taylor

U/S: Brooke Ashton

Vivienne (she, her) is happy to return to the role of Poppy Norton-Taylor in **Noises Off** at San Francisco Playhouse after serving as and understudying here for **Exotic Deadly: or the MSG Play**. She most recently played G in **Sanctuary City** (More Más Marami Arts) and Marianne in **Constellations** (Pear Theatre). Other favorite roles include Roxane in **Cyrano** (Los Altos Stage Company), Agnes in **She Kills Monsters** (Plethos Productions), Dromio of China in **The Comedy of Errors** (Silicon Valley Shakespeare), Annie in **The Play That Goes Wrong** (San Jose Stage Company), and the Playwright in **Vietgone** (City Lights Theater Company). Regional credits include **A Strange Library** (Z Space), **Tiger Style!** (TheatreWorks Silicon Valley), **The Great Leap** and **Red Bike** (Center REP), **Tea Party** (One of Our Own Theatre), and **Noises Off** (Pear Theatre). She works at Red Ladder Theatre Company and is a producer for More Más Marami Arts.

CREATIVE TEAM

MICHAEL FRAYN

Playwright

Michael was born in London in 1933. He began his career as a reporter for *The Guardian* and later *The Observer*. After leaving *The Observer*, he continued to write as a columnist as well as publishing novels and plays for television and stage. His plays for stage include **Copenhagen, After Life, The Two of Us, Alphabetical Order, Donkeys' Years, Clouds, Balmoral** (aka *Liberty Hall*), **Noises Off, Benefactors, Alarms and Excursions: More Plays Than One, Look Look, Here and Make and Break**. Other translations include four full-length plays by Anton Chekov (**The Cherry Orchard, Three Sisters, The Seagull** and **Uncle Vanya**) and four one-act plays (**The Evils of Tobacco, Swan Song, The Bear** and **The Proposal**). He is married to the biographer and critic Claire Tomalin.

BILL ENGLISH

Director

A co-founder and the artistic director of San Francisco Playhouse, Bill has served as

director, actor, scenic designer, and sound designer - or various combinations thereof - winning San Francisco Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle nominations or awards in each of those categories.

AMY BENJAMIN

Properties Designer

Amy draws from an extensive background in multidisciplinary art to create theatre magic. She most recently served as properties artisan for *My Fair Lady*, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, and *Fat Ham* (San Francisco Playhouse), *Much Ado About Nothing* (Marin Shakespeare Company), and a theatrical adaptation of *The Strange Library* by Haruki Murakami (Word for Word Performing Arts Company). Amy has been mentored in scenic design by Nina Ball through a fellowship at Shotgun Players.

ABRA BERMAN

Costume Designer

Abra has been collaborating with San Francisco Playhouse for over a decade. Previous projects include *My Fair Lady*, *Evita*, *Follies*, *Cabaret*, *Camelot*, *Red Velvet*, *Into the Woods*, and *The Motherfucker with the Hat*. Other creative partnerships include Alonzo King's Lines Ballet, Magic Theatre, San Jose Stage Company, the De Young Museum, the Legion of Honor, West Bay Opera, and the Museum of Performance and Design. Abra has an MFA in theatre costume design from the University of California, Los Angeles, and is a member of the drama department at Diablo Valley College.

ESPEN GARNER

Lighting Designer

Espen (he, him) is a Bay Area lighting designer who graduated from Stanford University in June. He worked here as the assistant lighting designer on *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, but this is his design debut. Recent lighting design credits include *Spring Rise Up: A Dance Sensorium*, *Assassins*, *Omelas*, and *Snow in Midsummer* (Stanford University). Last fall, Espen interned for Justin Townsend during *Death Becomes Her* on Broadway. He has also worked at Shotgun Players and American Conservatory Theater (Young Conservatory). espengarner.com

KIMBERLY MOHNE HILL

Dialect Coach

Kimberly is a Patsy Rodenburg Associate and a professor of dialects, and of acting, voice and speech at Santa Clara University, where she is the chair of the department of theatre and dance. She coached the Playhouse productions

of *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, *Waitress*, *The Play That Goes Wrong*, *The 39 Steps*, *Indecent*, *Guys and Dolls*, *Cabaret*, and *The Yoga Play*. Additional credits include coaching over 100 productions for American Conservatory Theater, TheatreWorks Silicon Valley, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Arizona Theatre Company, City Lights Theater Company, Aurora Theatre Company, Hillbarn Theatre & Conservatory, San Jose Stage Company, and other companies.

HEATHER KENYON[^]

Scenic Designer

Heather (she, her) is a Bay Area scenic designer. Previous work for San Francisco Playhouse include scenic design for *Exotic Deadly: Or, The MSG Play*, *Evita*, *Guys and Dolls*, *A Chorus Line*, *Clue*, *The 39 Steps*, *As You Like It*, *Follies*, *Twelfth Night*, *Starting Here*, *Starting Now*, *The Fit*, and *Washed Up on the Potomac*, and lighting design for *Heroes of the Fourth Turning*, *Songs for a New World*, *I Was Right Here*, *Art*, and *Hold These Truths*. She also worked with American Conservatory Theater (Young Conservatory and MFA Program), TheatreWorks Silicon Valley, Aurora Theatre Company, Western Stage, Ballet San José, Palo Alto Players, CMT San José, WVLO Musical Theatre Company, San Jose Stage Company, and Custom Made Theatre Co. Heather earned an MFA from San Francisco State University, teaches scenic design at Santa Clara University, and is a proud member of United Scenic Artists, IATSE Local USA 829. heatherkenyon.net

ADA MAY^{*}

Stage Manager

Ada (she, her) is a San Francisco native with a background in immersive site-specific theatre, cabaret, bar, improvisation, and corporate event experience. Previous work at San Francisco Playhouse includes *Exotic Deadly: Or, The MSG Play*, *The Play That Goes Wrong*, *Evita*, *The Glass Menagerie*, *My Home on the Moon*, *Chinglish*, *Clue*, *As You Like It*, *Follies*, *The Paper Dreams of Harry Chin*, *The Song of Summer*, *Hold These Truths*, *Born in East Berlin*, and *Groundhog Day The Musical*. "In loving memory of my big brother, Kuya Keith."

CHELSEA PACE

Intimacy, Fight & Stunt Director

Chelsea (she, her) worked on Broadway with *A Strange Loop*, *Leopoldstadt*, and *K-POP*. Off-Broadway and regional credits include *SUMO* (Public Theater), *HELP* (The Shed) *Bundle of Sticks* (INTAR Theatre), *Big Data* and *A Strange Loop* (American Conservatory Theater), *As You Like It* (La Jolla Playhouse), *POTUS* (Berkeley Repertory Theatre), *1984* and *Born with Teeth*

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SARA WITSCH

Sound Designer

Sara (they, she) is a genderqueer noisemaker, sound artist, production specialist, and lifelong learner who graduated with a BA in theatre arts from San Francisco State University. Sara designs sound for theater, radio plays, immersive art, podcasts, video games, exhibits, and more. She is drawn to work that shares her commitment to thoughtful storytelling, art as a movement of revolution and resistance, and giving every voice an opportunity to be heard. Currently, she is working on *Last West: A Roadsong for Dorthea Lange*, heading to Sonoma Valley Museum of Art this fall and then touring California through 2026-2027. They are co-artistic director and production manager at SoundPlay Media, a sound collective exploring the world of sound specific performance art and theater-focused media, that also produces a podcast on the barewiretheater.com platform.

FOUNDERS

SUSI DAMILANO

Founder & Producing Director

Susi (she, her) is co-founder and producing director of San Francisco Playhouse, with over two decades of professional collaboration with Bill English. She is a five-time recipient of the Excellence in Theatre Award for Principal Actress in a Play from the San Francisco Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle and she has directed over a dozen Playhouse productions. When

absolutely necessary, Susi will admit to being a CPA, and in another life she played the role of a VP of Human Resources. For real.

BILL ENGLISH

Founder & Artistic Director

Bill is the co-founder and artistic director of the San Francisco Playhouse. In twenty-three years, he - with Susi Damilano - has guided its growth from a bare-bones storefront to the second-largest nonprofit theatre company in San Francisco. Milestone accomplishments include bringing Pulitzer Prize-winner Stephen Adly Guirgis to the Bay Area by directing three of his plays, commissioning multiple playwrights including Theresa Rebeck, Aaron Loeb, Lauren Gunderson, Lauren Yee, and Christopher Chen, and developing world premieres from workshops to Sandbox Series to mainstage to Off-Broadway (including the Off-Broadway transfers of *Ideation* and *Bauer*), and presenting the very first production of *Grounded* by George Brant which later played at the Public Theater. He coined the phrase "the empathy gym" and it drives everything at the Playhouse.

PRODUCTION AFFILIATIONS

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Founded in 1913, Actors' Equity Association is the US labor union that represents more than 50,000 actors and stage managers. Equity seeks to foster the art of live theatre as an essential component of society and advances the careers of its members by negotiating wages and working conditions and providing a wide range of benefits, including health and pension plans. Actors' Equity is a member of the AFL-CIO and is affiliated with FIA, an international organization of performing arts unions. actorsequity.org

UNITED SCENIC ARTISTS

United Scenic Artists, Local USA 829, IATSE, is a labor union and professional association of designers, artists, craftspeople, and department coordinators, organized to protect craft standards, working conditions and wages for the entertainment and decorative arts industries. The members of Local USA 829 work in film, theatre, opera, ballet, television, industrial shows, commercials, and exhibitions. usa829.org

Biography content is provided by the artists profiled.
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SAN FRANCISCO PLAYHOUSE

San Francisco Playhouse, the City's "Empathy Gym" as described by Artistic Director and Co-Founder Bill English, is celebrating over 150 productions of award-winning theatre. Every season for 22 years, it has offered a selection of original works mixed with reimagined classic plays and musicals, "making the edgy accessible and the accessible edgy." Commissions and world premières are a regular feature at the Playhouse and include works by esteemed playwrights George Brant, Christopher Chen, Ruben Grijalva, Lauren Gunderson, Claude Jackson Jr., Theresa Rebeck, Michael Gene Sullivan, Steve Yockey, and Aaron Loeb, resident playwright. Three of these transferred directly to New York productions. Gunderson's *Bauer* and Loeb's *Ideation* opened Off-Broadway at 59E59 Theaters, and Loeb's *Abraham Lincoln's Big, Gay Dance Party* won the best of New York International Fringe Festival. This steadfast focus on new works has been honored by grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the American Theatre Wing, and Playhouse commissions have garnered regional acclaim. Grijalva's *Shoot Me When*, presented online during the pandemic, won the Will Glickman Award and Rebeck's *Seared* opened the 2016–2017 season and was nominated for ten San Francisco Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle awards. Works developed by the Playhouse have also gone on to national recognition. Chen's *You Mean to Do Me Harm* won the Lanford Wilson Award from the Dramatists Guild of America in 2016. Yockey's *Pluto*, a Playhouse commission, was named a National New Play Network Rolling World Premiere. Brant's *Grounded*, a Playhouse premiere, was produced at the Public Theater starring Anne Hathaway and directed by Julie Taymor in 2015 and has been adapted by Tony-winner Jeanine Tesori for the Metropolitan Opera this season. Rebeck's *Seared* was produced Off-Broadway at MCC Theater starring Tony-nominee Raúl Esparza in 2019. The Playhouse has also supported emerging voices in its experimental Sandbox Series, running from 2009 to 2020, and including original works and world premieres by Steven Dietz, Dipika Guha, Chelsea Marcantel, Rogelio Martinez, Walt McGough, Carey Perloff, Geetha Reddy, Lynn Rosen, and Lauren Yee. sfplayhouse.org

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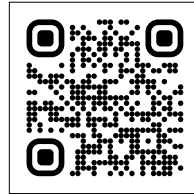
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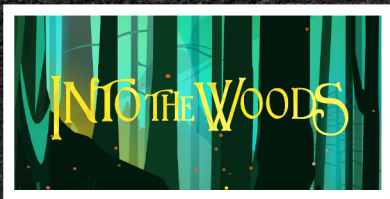
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*"ONE OF SONDHEIM'S MOST CHERISHED MUSICALS
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WONDERFUL TO WATCH" - THE DAILY BEAST*



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DRACULA A FEMINIST REVENGE FANTASY, REALLY

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BOOK BY MARK O'DONNELL & THOMAS
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