HAY FEVER
BY NOËL COWARD
Dear friend of Olney Theatre Center,

Even though this production kicks off our 2015-16 season, it doesn’t mean summertime’s over! Not when you’ve got the refreshing wit and bubbling repartee of Noël Coward’s 1925 comedy Hay Fever to keep you laughing well into the autumn.

Hay Fever is a sparkling diamond in the crown of 20th-century British comedy. The Blisses are what you’d charitably describe as an eccentric family: Judith is a “retired actress” who makes any room a West End stage, her husband David is a distracted novelist of some repute, and their children, high-spirited Simon and Sorel, are as bohemian as bohemians can be. All four are experts at mother’s favorite game: Melodrama. To spice up their already spicy lives, they each — unbeknownst to the others — invite a different guest to their country estate for the same weekend, and a hilarious proto-version of Edward Albee’s “Get the Guests” (from Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?) ensues. Part farce, part comedy of manners, Hay Fever was Noël Coward’s breakout hit at the tender age of 26, and to my mind it exceeds even Private Lives as his greatest work.

I think that’s because Hay Fever is at its heart a play about play, about the importance of using our imaginations, about the need to listen to the unconventional. The Blisses’ guests are the epitome of the conventional, or at least, they’re folks who play by uppercrust society’s rules: a smarmy diplomat, a vampish gossip columnist, a trendy flapper, and a strapping young playboy. The family wins its game of “Get the Guests” by virtue of its sheer absurdity, and their joy in indulging each others’ eccentricities. Sure, you don’t want to live with the Blisses, but visiting once in a while — with an open mind — might just unleash your imagination.

And that’s a fine thing when you visit Olney Theatre Center, because we’ve got an entire season of plays to fire up your imagination, from classic musicals to thrillers to brave new plays, like the upcoming Rolling World Premiere of Jennifer Hoppe-House’s Bad Dog. That’s a family play, too, and they’re pretty eccentric — but in much more contemporary and deeply moving ways. We programmed them close together so you could think about how the family play has evolved over the past 90 years.

So I hope we’ll see you for Bad Dog, and the rest of our 2015-16 season. If you’re not a Member, please consider joining our family: you need only buy three plays in advance to get all the benefits, from free exchanges to free programs to the best discounts available. If you’ve got any questions about membership, or want to let me know your thoughts about Hay Fever, please drop me a line at Jason@olneytheatre.org.

Onward!

Jason Loewith
Artistic Director
HAY FEVER

By Noël Coward

featuring

Audrey Bertaux
Valerie Leonard^ 
Carol Randolph

Chris Dinolfo
Susan Lynskey^ 
Michael Russotto^ 

Beth Hylton
Jon Hudson Odom^ 
Matt Sullivan

Scenic Design
John Coyne

Costume Design
Kendra Rai

Lighting Design
Nancy Schertler

Sound Design
Christopher Baine

Dialect Coach
Nancy Krebs

Production Stage Manager
Josiane M. Lemieux^ 

Director of Production
Dennis A. Blackledge

Associate Artistic Director/
Director of Education
Jason King Jones

Directed By
Eleanor Holdridge^ 

^Olney Theatre Center Artistic Associate

THERE WILL BE ONE 15-MINUTE INTERMISSION.
The use of recording (audio and video) or photographic equipment during the show is strictly prohibited.
Please silence all cellular phones and personal paging devices before the performance begins.
BAD DOG
A ROLLING WORLD PREMIERE
BY JENNIFER HOPPE-HOUSE
DIRECTED BY JEREMY B. COHEN
SEPTEMBER 30 – OCTOBER 25
Mulitz-Gudelsky Theatre Lab
301-924-3400 • www.olneytheatre.org
CAST OF HAY FEVER (in order of appearance)

Sorel Bliss ..................................................................................................................... AUDREY BERTAUX*
Simon Bliss ..................................................................................................................... CHRIS DINOLFO*
Clara ................................................................................................................................... CAROL RANDOLPH*
Judith Bliss .................................................................................................................... VALERIE LEONARD*
David Bliss ...................................................................................................................... MATT SULLIVAN*
Sandy Tyrell .................................................................................................................. JON HUDSON ODOM*
Myra Arundel ................................................................................................................ BETH HYLTON*
Richard Greatham ........................................................................................................ MICHAEL RUSSOTTO*
Jackie Coryton ................................................................................................................ SUSAN LYNSEY*

Production Stage Manager — JOSIANE M. LEMIEUX*
*Member, Actors’ Equity Association  +Equity Membership Candidate

The action takes place at David Bliss’ country house in Cookham, outside of London.

ACT ONE
A Saturday afternoon in June, 1925

ACT TWO
Scene I - That evening after dinner
Scene II - The following morning

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS

HAY FEVER

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and John E. Gibson

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Robert E. Hebda
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Lane and Cheryl Jennings
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HAY FEVER • BAD DOG • GUYS AND DOLLS
CARMEN: AN AFRO-CUBAN JAZZ MUSICAL
MARJORIE PRIME • DIAL ‘M’ FOR MURDER
BAKERSFIELD MIST • EVITA
THE HYPOCRITES: THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE
AND THE MIKADO (IN REP)

2015–2016 SEASON
We have been Olney Theatre Center members for years and always enjoy the variety of shows each season brings. The shows we have seen have made us laugh, cry, and ponder about life. The Olney Theatre Center staff always make us feel welcome and they value the feedback we e-mail after every show (we typically see shows on the Friday evening before Opening Night). Last year, we did our estate planning and decided to include Olney Theatre Center because we value not only the entertainment they provide but also the educational and outreach programs they provide to the community. We wanted to play a part in ensuring that Olney Theatre Center’s legacy continues for many years to come.

Last June, we decided to sponsor an artist, Michael Di Liberto, for Olney Theatre Center’s The Producers. We were delighted to meet Mr. Di Liberto and attend the first rehearsal, where we learned so much about what happens behind the scenes technically and artistically to bring a show to life. A few weeks later when we saw the show, we had an even deeper appreciation for how all the elements come together to make the show so spectacular.

Since Steve is a sign language interpreter, we also decided to make additional donations to help defray the costs of providing sign language interpreting services for Deaf staff and patrons. We are proud that Olney Theatre Center strives to foster an environment in which all individuals are welcome, so this added way of giving makes us feel connected to the Olney Theatre Center family on an even deeper level.

Steve C. Phan and Richard J. Poster
MAKE A GIFT TO
OLNEY THEATRE CENTER!

Patron and community support is vitally important to Olney Theatre Center. Ticket sales cover only 50% of our production and operating expenses. When you make a gift to Olney Theatre you directly help us to:

- produce high-quality theatre
- support local and regional artists
- provide educational opportunities for students
- train the next generation of theater makers

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- Send your donation to us in the envelope provided in your program
- Make your gift online: www.olneytheatre.org/support
- Call 301-924-4485 ext. 103

Every gift makes a difference. Thank you.
WHO’S WHO - CAST

Audrey Bertaux (Sorel Bliss) is delighted to be making her Olney Theatre Center debut. OFF-BROADWAY: Lincoln Center Education: Psittacus’ A Tale Told By An Idiot. REGIONAL: Cincinnati Shakespeare Company: The Grapes of Wrath, Sense and Sensibility; Filament Theatre: Orpheus (Eurydice). DC AREA: Theatre J: G’d’s Honest Truth (Alanna); Folger Theatre: Julius Caesar (Understudy); Hub Theatre: Leto Legend (Maia); Chesapeake Shakespeare Company: A Midsummer Night’s Dream (Helena); Annapolis Shakespeare Company: Hamlet (Ophelia). EDUCATION: MFA in Acting from the Shakespeare Theatre Company’s Academy for Classical Acting. Up next, Promised Land with Mosaic Theatre.

Chris Dinolfo (Simon Bliss) is making his Olney Theatre debut with Hay Fever. Other credits in the DC area include: Constellation Theatre: The Lieutenant of Inishmore; Adventure Theatre-MTC: Stuart Little, Tiny Tim’s Christmas Carol; We Happy Few: Romeo and Juliet; No Rules Theatre: LATE: A Cowboy Song; Arena Stage: The Normal Heart; Round House Theatre: Next Fall; Solas Nua: Swamoodle, Johnny Meister and The Stitch; Synetic Theater: King Lear, The Master and Margarita, Host and Guest; Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company: Clybourne Park; The Shakespeare Theatre: The Alchemist, The Imaginary Invalid; The Folger Theatre: Henry IV, Part 1; Studio Theatre: The History Boys, All That I Will Ever Be.

Beth Hylton (Myra Arundel) is happy to be back at Olney Theatre Center, having previously appeared in The Savannah Disputation (Melissa) and The Heiress (Marian Almond). NEW YORK: Founding ensemble member, Ground Floor Theatre Lab, numerous productions; Vital Theatre Company, Gorilla Rep, Todo Con Nada, NY Fringe. REGIONAL: Maltz Jupiter: The 39 Steps (The Woman); Delaware Theatre Company: Blithe Spirit (Elvira); Weston Playhouse: Death of a Salesman (Miss Forsythe); Public Theatre of Maine: The Cocktail Hour (Nina), On Golden Pond (Chelsea); Pittsburgh Irish and Classical Theatre: House and Garden (JoAnna), Private Lives (Amanda), An Ideal Husband (Lady Chiltern); Gulfshore Playhouse: A Doll’s House (Nora), Life (x) 3 (Sonia); Blithe Spirit (Ruth); Hot Summer Nights at the Kennedy: Skylight (Kyras); PlayMakers Rep: Hay Fever (Sorel), The School For Wives (Georgette), Look Homeward, Angel (Laura); The Hipp: Suddenly Last Summer (Catherine), Up (Helen); DC-AREA: Numerous productions at Baltimore’s Everyman Theatre, where Ms. Hylton is a company member. Favorites include: The Understudy (Roxanne), By the Way, Meet Vera Stark (Gloria), Crimes of the Heart (Lenny), August: Osage County (Ivy Weston), Time Stands Still (Sarah), All My Sons (Ann) and most recently, Blithe Spirit (Elvira); Center Stage: Clybourne Park (Bev/Kathy); Beneatha’s Place (Harriet); Rep Stage: Circle Mirror Transformation (Theresa); Round House Theatre: Rapture, Blister, Burn (Gwen); Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company: Appropriate (Rachael), Martha, Josie and the Chinese Elvis (Josie); Ford’s Theatre: The Heavens Are Hung In Black (Mrs. Winston), Member of the Wedding (Janice); The Kennedy Center: Mister Roberts (Lieutenant Girard). TV/FILM: House of Cards, One Life To Live, As The World Turns, Shrink Rap. TRAINING: MFA Acting, Professional Actor Training Program/UNC-Chapel Hill.

Valerie Leonard (Judith Bliss) was most recently seen by Olney audiences as Esther in The Price. At Olney Theatre, Valerie has performed in over 20 productions including The Elephant Man (Mrs. Kendall), Copenhagen (Margarethe), Anna Karenina (Anna), The Homecoming (Ruth), Private Lives (Amanda), The Night of the Iguana (Hannah), Shadowlands (Joy), and Therese Raquin (Therese) [Helen Hayes Award nomination, Outstanding Lead Actress]. Ms. Leonard is a multiple Helen Hayes Award nominee, her DC area credits include Arena Stage (Fiddler on the Roof, Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner, Theophilus North, A Man’s A Man), Shakespeare Theatre Company (A Midsummer Night’s Dream, Titus Andronicus, Comedy of Errors), Signature Theatre (Sunday In The Park With George [Helen Hayes Award, Outstanding Ensemble], A Fox on the Fairway), Rep Stage (A Lie of the Mind, Hamlet), Catalyst (The Elephant Man [Helen Hayes Award Nominee]), Studio Theatre, Theater J, and Potomac Theatre Project. On Broadway, Valerie appeared in Sir Peter Hall’s An Ideal Husband and in two National Tours as Gwenivryn Pigeon in The Odd Couple (with Tony Randall and Jack Klugman) and as Maggie in Lend Me A Tenor. Off-Broadway, she has performed at Signature Theatre Company, The Pearl Theatre Company, and Mirror Repertory. Some of her regional credits include American Conservatory Theatre, McCarter Theatre, George Street Playhouse, Two River Theatre Company, Fulton Opera House, New Repertory Theatre and Missouri Repertory Theatre. Valerie is a proud member of Actors’ Equity and received her MFA from Rutgers University.
WHO’S WHO - CAST

Susan Lynskey (Jackie Coryton) Olney Theatre Center productions include The 39 Steps [Gala Nomination Best Lead Female], Rancho Mirage (World Premiere), Farragut North, The Laramie Project [Helen Hayes Award nomination, Outstanding Supporting Actress], The Miser, and the world premiere of Coffee With Richelieu. Susan performs regularly at The Kennedy Center, Arena Stage, Theatre J, Round House Theatre, Center Stage, and MetroStage. Committed to new play development, Ms. Lynskey is an integral part of local and national artistic initiatives which foster new work including: The National New Play Network, The Kennedy Center’s New Visions/New Voices, Millenium Stage, KCTFA/MFA, VSA, Center Stage’s ‘First Look Series’, the ‘downstairs series’ at Arena Stage, and Washington Women in Theatre’s New Works Festival to name a few. Ms. Lynskey is an Associate Professor of the Practice on the Faculty of Performing Arts at Georgetown University. Her work has garnered Helen Hayes Award nominations, The Art and New Media Award, The DCTS Audience Choice Award, and several Outstanding Individual Artist Awards from the DC Commission on the Arts. Susan is so delighted to be ‘back in the room’ with Eleanor and this top drawer cast of actors, here at Olney Theatre Center, a favorite artistic home. Ms. Lynskey will next appear at The National Theatre reprising her Helen Hayes nominated reign as Queen Elizabeth in The BFG. She will return to Olney Theatre Center this spring in Dial ‘M’ For Murder.

Jon Hudson Odom (Sandy Tyrell) Olney Theatre Center: Colossal (World Premiere), The Piano Lesson; Forum Theater: Passion Play, Center Stage: Twelfth Night, Goodman Theatre: A Christmas Carol; Rep Stage: Yellowman; Ford’s Theatre: A Christmas Carol, Our Town; Everyman Theatre: You Can’t Take It With You; Studio Theatre: 2-2-Tango, Invisible Man (u/s); Keegan Theatre: A Few Good Men; Theater Alliance: Reals; Imagination Stage/National Children’s Theater: The BFG; Constellation Theatre: The Ramayana; National Gallery of Art: Framed; Ravinia Festival: West Side Story 50th Anniversary. Artistic Associate at Olney Theater Center. Education: University of North Carolina School of the Arts.

Carol Randolph (Clara) is thrilled to make her Olney Theatre Center debut. DC AREA: Shakespeare Theatre Company: King Lear with Stacy Keach (Ensemble) [Helen Hayes Award for Outstanding Production]; 1st Stage: The Cripple of Inishmaan (Eileen), By the Bog of Cats (Mrs. Kilbride); Annapolis Shakespeare Co: Pride & Prejudice (Mrs. Bennet); American Century Theatre: Eccentricities of a Nightingale (Mrs. Winemiller); Chesapeake Shakespeare Company: The Front Page (Mrs. Grant); Adventure Theatre-MTC: Dorothy Meets Alice (Queen of Hearts); Landless Theatre: Flowers for Algernon (Mother); Maryland Ensemble Theatre: The Women of Lockerbie (Madeline). FILM: Haze, Book of Lore. EDUCATION: University of Delaware, BA Dramatic Arts. TRAINING: Oakland Academy of Dramatic Arts, American Academy of Dramatic Arts.

Michael Russotto (Richard Greatham) is delighted to return to Olney Theatre Center, where he was last seen in Rancho Mirage and Neville’s Island. Recent roles include Charlie in The Whale at Rep Stage, and the Director in The Letters at MetroStage. Mr Russotto is a member of the Woolly Mammoth Theatre Acting Company, where he has performed in many, many productions including The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity, A Bright New Boise, She Stoops to Comedy, and Lenny and Lou; Other DC Metro area credits include: Arena Stage: Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner, and The Shoplifters; Signature Theatre: Art; Folger Theatre: Comedy of Errors, and Much Ado About Nothing; The Kennedy Center: The Mostly True Adventures of Homer P. Figg. Mr. Russotto has also worked at The Franklin Stage Company (N.Y.); The Washington Stage Guild; Theatre Alliance; Adventure Theatre; and Studio Theatre. FILM: Playing Through; Death of a Nation. RADIO: L.A. Theatre Works: Seven Days in May. NARRATION: Hundreds of recorded books for Books on Tape and The Library of Congress.

Matt Sullivan (David Bliss) is very happy to be working for the first time at Olney Theater Center. Other credits are The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey: Royal Family, Tovarich, The Devil’s Disciple, I Capture the Castle, Comedy of Errors, The Misanthrope, Noises Off, Twelfth Night, King Lear, Playboy of the Western World, Henry the Eighth. At the Guthrie Theater: Richard Greatham in Hay Fever. New York Shakespeare Festival: Macbeth, Coriolanus; The Minetta Lane Theatre: Standing on Ceremony as Man Number Three; National Actors Theater: The School for Scandal; Baltimore’s Center Stage: Three Sisters. With The Acting Company: Richard the Third, Much Ado About Nothing, Ten by Tennessee, Macbeth, The Two Gentlemen of Verona; The Shakespeare Theatre Company (Washington, DC); Studio Arena Theatre; St. Louis Rep; Hartford Stage; Geva Theatre Center; Dallas Theater Center. Twelfth Night at the LA Shakespeare Festival. EDUCATION: The Juilliard School.
Noël Coward (Playwright) Sir Noël Peirce Coward (1899-1973) was an English playwright, composer, director, actor and singer, known for his wit, flamboyance, and what Time magazine called “a sense of personal style, a combination of cheek and chic, pose and poise.” Born in Teddington, a suburb of London, Mr. Coward attended a dance academy in London as a child, making his professional stage début at the age of eleven. As a teenager he was introduced into the high society in which most of his plays would be set. Mr. Coward achieved enduring success as a playwright, publishing more than 50 plays from his teens onwards. Many of his works, such as Hay Fever, Private Lives, Design for Living, Present Laughter and Blithe Spirit, have remained in the regular theatre repertoire. He composed hundreds of songs, in addition to well over a dozen musical theatre works (including the operetta Bitter Sweet and comic revues), poetry, several volumes of short stories, the novel Pomp and Circumstance, and a three-volume autobiography. Mr. Coward’s stage and film acting and directing career spanned six decades, during which he starred in many of his own works. At the outbreak of World War II, Mr. Coward volunteered for war work, running the British propaganda office in Paris. He also worked with the Secret Service, seeking to use his influence to persuade the American public and government to help Britain. Mr. Coward won an Academy Honorary Award in 1943 for his naval film drama, In Which We Serve, and was knighted in 1969. In the 1950s he achieved fresh success as a cabaret performer, performing his own songs, such as “Mad Dogs and Englishmen”, “London Pride” and “I Went to a Marvelous Party.” His plays and songs achieved new popularity in the 1960s and 1970s, and his work and style continue to influence popular culture. Mr. Coward did not publicly acknowledge his homosexuality, but it was discussed candidly after his death by biographers including Graham Payn, his long-time partner, and in Mr. Coward’s diaries and letters, published posthumously. The former Albery Theatre (originally the New Theatre) in London was renamed the Noël Coward Theatre in his honour in 2006. Website: www.noelcoward.com

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A MARVELOUS PARTY

A Noël Coward Cabaret

Join Associate Artistic Director of Music Theater Christopher Youst ra and company for an evening of songs by Hay Fever playwright Noël Coward (and a few by Cole Porter).

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Thomas Adrian Simpson

John Leslie Wolfe

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Eleanor Holdridge (Director) Off-Broadway productions include world premiers of Selma ’65 (LaMaMa), Steve and Idi (Rattlestick Playwrights Theatre), and Cycling Past the Matterhorn (Clurman Theatre.) Regional credits include the premiere of Lauren Gunderson’s I and You (Olney Theatre Center and Geva Theaters), Zorro (Constellation Stage), which she co-wrote and over thirty productions of Shakespeare’s plays. Eleanor holds an MFA from Yale School of Drama. She has been Founding Artistic Director of Red Heel Theatre and Resident Director at New Dramatists. She is Head of Directing at Catholic University. Upcoming projects include world premiers of Caleen Jennings’ Queens Girl in the World (Theatre J) and Darius & Twig (Kennedy Center) and Lauren Gunderson’s The Revolutionists (Cincinnati Playhouse), and a production of The Who and The What at Round House Theater.

Christopher Baine (Sound Designer) recently composed the music for The BFG with Imagination Stage [Helen Hayes Award Nomination ’15]. Some recent designs include Colossal with Olney Theater Center [Helen Hayes Award Winner ’15], Wonderful World of Dissocia at Theatre Alliance [Helen Hayes Award Winner ’15], Fetch Clay, Make Man at Marin Theater Company, Detroit at Woolly Mammoth Theater Company, Water By the Spoonful at Studio Theat, Yellow Face at Theater J, and Romeo and Juliet at the Folger Theater [Helen Hayes Nomination ’14]. He has also designed for The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity [Helen Hayes Award Nomination ’13], Gruesome Playground Injuries and A Bright New Boise with Woolly Mammoth Theater Company [Helen Hayes Award Winner ’15]. Other credits include: Heir Apparent with The Shakespeare Theater, Taming of the Shrew with Folger Theater [Helen Hayes Award Nomination ’13], and Jason Invisible at The Kennedy Center TYA. He has also designed for many regional theaters including: Everyman Theatre, Forum Theatre, dog and pony, Adventure Theater-MTC, Children’s Theater Charlotte, Synetic Theater, and Theatre Alliance. He has been as a guest artist with The University of Maryland, Catholic University, and American University. He has been the Resident Sound Designer for Imagination Stage for the ’09-’16 seasons. He was a Kenan Fellow at The Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in 2012.

John Coyne (Scenic Designer) REGIONAL: Macbeth (Shakespeare Theatre); Rough Crossing (Old Globe Theatre); You Never Can Tell, First Lady (Yale Rep); Tall Women (Center Stage); Colossal, Les Miserables, Henry IV, Pride & Prejudice, Moonlight & Magnolias, My Fair Lady, The Importance of Being Earnest, The Front Page, Of Mice and Men, The Real Thing, Tartuffe (Dallas Theater Center); Hamlet (The Public Theatre); also Boston Commonwealth Shakespeare, California Shakespeare Festival, Juilliard, Ford’s Theatre, Bard College, Goodspeed Musicals, Barrington Stage, TheatreWorks Hartford, Sante Fe Stages. OPERA: Cavalleria Rusticana / Pagliacci, Simon Boccanegra (San Diego Opera); Die Meistersingers vonNurnburg, Arshak II, The Ballad of Baby Doe, Albert Herring, Calisto (San Francisco Opera); Die Fledermaus (Washington Opera); also, Merola Opera, Western Opera Theatre, The Opera Festival of New Jersey. EDUCATION: Yale School of Drama. TEACHING: Director of Scenic Design, North Carolina School of the Arts.

Nancy Krebs (Dialect/Vocal Coach) is thrilled to return as Dialect/Vocal Coach for this production of Hay Fever. Other productions here have included: Once on This Island, Angel Street, Witness for the Prosecution, Charlie’s Aunt, Blithe Spirit, Carousel, Lend Me a Tenor, Morning’s at Seven, Oliver!, Doubt, Of Mice and Men, The Underpants. She is also the Resident Voice/Dialect Coach for the Annapolis Shakespeare Company, shows include: Tale of Two Cities, Midsummer Night’s Dream, Pride and Prejudice, Cymbeline, The Comedy of Errors, Twelfth Night, Our Town, Hamlet, Romeo Juliet, Macbeth, Sense & Sensibility. Other professional coaching credits: Studio Theatre: The Habit of Art, (American Premiere) The Enda Walsh Festival: The Walworth Farce and The New Electric Ballroom; Rep Stage: I Am My Own Wife, A Young Lady of Property, Boeing, Boeing, Home, Yellowman, Or, Barrymore, Two by Barrie, Everyman Theatre: The Crucible, Red Herring, My Children! My Africa!, Slow Dance on the Killing Ground, Blues for an Alabama Sky, Watch on the Rhine, Cripple of Inishmaan, Candida, Betrayal, Sight Unseen, Turn of the Scew, I Am My Own Wife, and Our Town (choral composer/director). Ms. Krebs is on the theatre faculty of the Baltimore School for the Arts, operates her own voice studio, The Voiceworks, and is an accomplished singer/songwriter and musician, having released seven critically acclaimed meditational CDs since 1998. She belongs to SAG-AFTRA, AEA and VASTA.


Nancy Schertler (Lighting Designer) returns to Olney Theatre Center after creating the lighting designs for *The Price and I and You*. BROADWAY: *Fool Moon* and Bill Irwin’s *Largely New York* (Tony® Award Nomination) Ms. Schertler is the original designer for many productions across the country including: *Tom Walker, Lovers and Executioners, and Before it Hits Home* for the Arena Stage; *Zorro* for Constellation Theatre in Washington DC; *After the War, The Colossus of Rhodes, and The Difficulty of Crossing a Field* for the American Conservatory Theatre in San Francisco; *The Sisters Matsumoto* for Seattle Repertory; *Moby Dick* for Milwaukee Repertory; and, *Reeling* for the Children’s Theatre in Minneapolis. World premiere opera productions include *Shadowboxer, Clara*, and *Later the Same Evening*, all commissioned by the University of Maryland Opera Studio.

Jason Loewith (Artistic Director) recently directed Olney Theatre Center’s critically acclaimed production of *Carousel*. Previous productions include the NNPN Rolling World Premiere of Steven Dietz’s *Rancho Mirage* for Olney Theatre Center as well as last season’s productions of *Avenue Q and How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* [2015 Helen Hayes Award nomination for Outstanding Musical]. Mr. Loewith won Lucille Lortel, Outer Critics Circle, and Jeff Awards for Best New Musical for *Adding Machine: A Musical*, which he co-wrote with composer Joshua Schmidt (off-Broadway, 2008). His latest musical is *Big Nate: The Musical* which premiered in 2013 at Adventure Theatre-MTC, co-written with Olney’s Associate Artistic Director Christopher Youstra. Recent regional work as a director includes the world premiere of *Broke* (Alliance Theatre, Atlanta), *Time Stands Still* (Everyman, Baltimore), *Crime and Punishment, and Working It Out* (Center Stage, Baltimore), *Adding Machine: A Musical* (Studio Theatre, DC), and a dozen plays for Chicago’s Next Theatre Company, where he served as Artistic Director from 2002-08. Those credits include the Chicago area premieres of *Dying City, Defiance, The Long Christmas Ride Home*, and *Fabulation*. He conceived and directed the world premiere of *The American Dream Songbook*, wrote and directed the world premiere of *War with the Newts*, and produced Chicago premieres by Caryl Churchill, Suzan-Lori Parks, Carson Kreitzer, Sam Shepard, Doel Orlandersmith, and many more. He is a three-time grantee from the NEA for Artistic Excellence, a recipient of support from the Rockefeller MAP Fund and MacArthur’s International Connections Fund, and a TCG New Generations Future Leaders grant. Jason joined Olney as Artistic Director in 2013 after serving four years as Executive Director of the National New Play Network.

Debbie Ellinghaus (Managing Director) joined Olney Theatre Center in August 2014. Prior to her appointment at OTC, she was Director of Development for the College of Arts and Humanities at the University of Maryland, College Park, where she closed significant gifts that helped to advance student scholarship and academic programming. From 2005-11, Ms. Ellinghaus was the Senior Associate Director of Development at Yale School of Drama/Yale Repertory Theatre in New Haven, CT. At Yale, she was part of a university-wide campaign that raised more than $3.8 billion and included transformational gifts for Yale Rep from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and the Robina Foundation, which established the Binger Center for New Theatre. Additionally, she raised funds for scholarship, theatrical productions, and facilities. In her role at Yale, Ms. Ellinghaus provided mentorship to MFA candidates, many of whom are now leading major theaters across the country. Previously, Ms. Ellinghaus was the Director of Development at off-Broadway’s Jean Cocteau Repertory Theatre. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Maryland, College Park, and is a graduate of New Actors Workshop, a professional theater training conservatory founded by Mike Nichols, George Morrison and Paul Sills. Ms. Ellinghaus currently chairs the Downtown Arts and Culture Commission in Columbia, MD, an organization that works closely with Merriweather Post Pavilion to preserve it’s cultural significance in Maryland.

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From a young age, Noël Coward immersed himself in the world of theater—and of thoroughly theatrical people. He appeared in his first professional play at 11, wrote his first play at 18, and at 21, he ventured across the pond to New York City. Young, charming, and ambitious, Coward scraped by by selling short stories as he tried to break into the New York theater scene. He was more successful, though, in befriending the highly respected—and highly eccentric—actress Laurette Taylor and her husband, playwright J. Hartley Manners. As he became a regular guest at Manners’ home, the seeds of a “comedy of bad manners” were planted.

In the evenings he spent there, Coward found a world where everything was a game with artificially high stakes: guests were judged on their willingness to commit to embodying adverbs, and the family had heated arguments, then stormed out, leaving their guests baffled and ignored. He had met his Bliss family. He later wrote, “It was inevitable that someone should eventually utilize portions of this eccentricity in a play, and I am only grateful that no guest of the Hartley Manners thought of writing Hay Fever before I did.”

Far from writing Hay Fever, fellow guest Leslie Howard described the atmosphere as one of “Hardly-any-manners,” and said the experience was “not so amusing as it sounds.” Coward’s skill was in transforming that reality into a witty British comedy of manners, in the tradition of Oscar Wilde, allowing audiences to laugh where the family’s guests could not. By transporting it from New York City to the British countryside, Coward also draws on the “weekend in the country” trope of plays like Shaw’s Heartbreak House and the social expectations of such escapes from the city. In 1924, back in London, Coward wrote the first full draft of what would become Hay Fever in three days.

Coward himself described Hay Fever as having “no plot at all, and remarkably little action,” but no one could accuse it of lacking in drama. The world of Hay Fever is one that fights off boredom—the worst possible fate—with constant performance. One guest describes the result as “artificial to the point of lunacy,” with Judith Bliss at the helm. Even though she has retired from the stage, Judith has built a world where everyone—resident or outsider, willing or unwilling—is a player of roles, and of her game. “A game,” as Judith says, “that must be played to the finish.”

Even though he wrote Hay Fever at 25, on the edge of fame, Coward was determined to play to the finish. He would build a lifelong career and an even longer-lasting reputation. During Hay Fever’s run, he had three other plays running in the West End and was on his way to being dubbed “the greatest wit of the 20th century.” Coward’s accomplishments—as a playwright, composer, lyricist, director, actor, and poet—are products not only of talent, but of the sheer energy he devoted to his career. As Kenneth Tynan wrote in his 1964 tribute to Coward, “His triumph has been to unite two things ever dissociated in the English mind: hard work and wit.” It is the Blisses’ wit, bad manners and all, that charms audiences, and Coward’s that built his legacy.

—Susanna Pretzer, Dramaturg

For more insight into the show visit our dramaturgy blog at www.olneyhayfever.wordpress.com.
Guests either took the train or drove from London. Parties at a country house generally lasted from Saturday to Monday. With the rise of car travel, trips to the country became less formal and invitations on short notice became more common.
A woman would bring a trunk with her clothes, including tweed suits, twin sets, and evening gowns. Women often brought eight pairs of shoes, and men extra day clothes, because servants would take these for cleaning at night and not return them by morning.

After World War I, women stopped changing clothes for tea, but everyone would still change for dinner. There would be cocktails first in the drawing room, then typically six or seven courses, including soup, two meat courses, and a pudding (dessert). Sherry, white wine and red wine would accompany the appropriate courses, with coffee afterwards. Then the women would return to the drawing room while the men smoked and drank port.

When the men rejoined the women in the drawing room, games might include backgammon, bridge, or mahjong. Acting games like charades were also popular, as was dancing.

The host’s servants would be tipped for the extra work created by guests. A butler would expect a guest to tip at least five shillings (~$21 in today’s US dollars) for usual tasks and ten for extra jobs done for the guest. Female servants were tipped less; five shillings was typical for a parlormaid and a half-crown (~$10.50) to five shillings for the housemaid. In a “one-maid household,” the expected tip was a half-crown.
Quotes

“Wit ought to be a glorious treat, like caviar. Never spread it about like marmalade.”

“Cocktails and laughter — but what comes after?”

“The most important ingredients of a play are life, death, food, sex, and money — but not necessarily in that order.”

“Acting is an instinct, a gift, and it’s often given to people who are very silly. But the moment they come on stage, up goes the temperature.”

— Noël Coward
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“1776” Photo by Stan Barouh, 2008
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AUDIENCE SERVICES

THEATER POLICIES
Latecomers are seated at the discretion of the house manager. Please do not bring food into the theater (beverages are allowed) and all buildings are smoke-free. The use of recording or photographic equipment during the show is prohibited. Olney Theatre Center is not responsible for any items left on our campus. All children, including babies, require a ticket. We will ask parents to take their children to the lobby if their behavior is disturbing patrons. Please turn off your cell phone in the theaters.

SIGN-INTERPRETED PERFORMANCES
Sign interpretation is available for the third Thursday evening during a show’s run. The service must be requested two weeks in advance and is based on the availability of qualified interpreters. To request this service, please email wmeekins@olneytheatre.org.

POST-SHOW DISCUSSIONS
Join the artistic staff and/or invited guests after select Saturday matinees for AfterWords. Please call the Box Office at 301.924.3400 for more information on these events.

LISTENING ASSISTANCE
We offer devices that amplify sound free of charge in exchange for identification. Please ask the house manager for assistance. (This service is not available on the third Wednesday evening of a show’s run.)

AUDIO-DESCRIBED PERFORMANCES
Audio-described performances are offered on the third Wednesday evening during a show’s run, which include pre-show program notes and descriptions of the action, scenery, and costumes during pauses in the dialogue.
### ARTISTIC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Artistic Director</td>
<td>Jason Loewith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Artistic Director/</td>
<td>Christopher Youstra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of Music Theater</td>
<td>Jason King Jones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Artistic Director/</td>
<td>Leah Wedge, Clare Shaffer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of Education</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Production</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of Production</td>
<td>Dennis A. Blackledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company Manager/Associate Production Manager</td>
<td>Fred T. Paul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Director</td>
<td>Stephen M. Greene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Technical Director</td>
<td>David Ash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpenters</td>
<td>Joseph Caverly, Brad Ziegler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident Scenic Artist</td>
<td>Fred Via</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costume Shop Supervisor</td>
<td>Jeanne Bland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident Costume Designer/Assistant Costume</td>
<td>Seth Gilbert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shop Supervisor</td>
<td>Kelsey Willis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costume Shop Associate</td>
<td>Samantha Campbell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master Electrician</td>
<td>Rachel Erichsen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Properties Master</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident Sound Engineer/Projections Supervisor</td>
<td>Elvin J. Crespo, Brian Chisman</td>
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<tr>
<td>Production Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apprentices</td>
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<tr>
<td>Company Management/Apprentice</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apprentice</td>
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<tr>
<td>Production Apprentices</td>
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### PRODUCTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Managing Director</td>
<td>Debbie Ellinghaus</td>
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<tr>
<td>General Manager</td>
<td>Valerie Campbell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT Manager</td>
<td>Elvin J. Crespo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilities Manager</td>
<td>Michael Platzer</td>
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### DEVELOPMENT

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<tr>
<td>Senior Associate Director of</td>
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<tr>
<td>Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Manager of Institutional Giving</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing and Development Apprentices</td>
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<td>Business Manager</td>
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### FINANCE

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sales Director</td>
<td>Weldon C. Brown</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marketing and Public Relations</td>
<td>Heather Andrews</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relations Manager</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brand Director/Graphic Designer</td>
<td>JJ Kaczynski</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patron and Volunteer Services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Box Office Manager</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Box Office Supervisors</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>House Managers</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Box Office Associates</td>
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### SPECIAL THANKS

Steven and Laura Schertler for the use of their beautiful and exotic set dressing!

Wigs by Wigboys

### ADMINISTRATION

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### COMMUNICATIONS

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<tr>
<td>Meetings Manager</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brand Director/Graphic Designer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Patron and Volunteer Services</td>
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Wigs by Wigboys

### EDUCATION

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education Programs</td>
<td>Kevin Hassler</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dramaturgy Apprentices</td>
<td>Alexandre Ley, Susanna Pretzer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Apprentice</td>
<td>Brittney Biddle</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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Olney Theatre Center for the Arts is a member of Theatre Communications Group, the national service organization representing the not-for-profit American theater; the Cultural Alliance of Greater Washington; the League of Washington Theatres; and the Baltimore Theatre Alliance.

Olney Theatre Center for the Arts is a professional theater employing members of Actors’ Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States. Actors’ Equity Association, founded in 1913, represents more than 45,000 actors and stage managers in the U.S. Equity negotiates wages and working conditions, providing a wide range of benefits, including health and pension plans. Equity seeks to foster the art of live theatre as an essential component of our society.
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