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CYGNET THEATRE KICKS OFF SEASON 15 WITH 'ANIMAL CRACKERS'
An Irresistibly Wacky Marx Brothers Musical Comedy

"Disorder is the order of the evening, and lowbrow humor is its highest calling"
– *The Washington Post*

SAN DIEGO, CA – Cygnet Theatre will launch its 15th season with the musical comedy ***Animal Crackers***, the hallmark of the **Marx Brothers** lunacy, based on the 1928 Broadway hit with book by Broadway masters **George S. Kaufman** and **Morrie Ryskind**. The success of the play was followed by the film version (1930), which launched the brothers into film stardom, never again appearing on Broadway. The Marx Brothers are commonly thought to be among the greatest and most influential comedians of the 20th century. Directed by **Sean Murray**, the production runs **July 5th through August 13th**. Opening night for media is **July 8th**.

Chaos ensues when a celebrated painting goes missing from a fancy house party honoring the return of African explorer Captain Spaulding. Guests set out to find the thief in a series of madcap antics and exploits. The show is filled with chaos, sharp humor, snappy one-liners, and frequent quick changes, at times taking place right on stage.

Rooted in Vaudeville, the Marx Brothers were notorious for improvisation and spinning a script, sometimes to the surprise of their fellow cast mates. "The great thing about the Marx Brothers is that they built their comedy around anarchy," says Murray. "They always upended and blew holes into, quite literally, the prim and proper environment in which they were put. That's the fun!"

Nine talented comedic actors will play multiple roles at breakneck speed. The cast features **Josh Odsess-Rubin** (*Bad Jews, When the Rain Stops Falling*) as Groucho **Samantha Wynn Greenstone** (*On the 20th Century*) as Harpo, **Spencer Rowe** (*Lost in Yonkers; The Old Globe*) as Chico and **Bryan Banville** (*On the 20th Century, The Rocky Horror Show, My Fair Lady*) as Zeppo. Mrs. Rittenhouse will be played by **Melinda Gilb** (*On the 20th Century, Assassins, A Christmas Carol*). Rounding out the cast are **Russell Garrett** (*The Producers; San Diego Musical Theatre*), **Chaz Feuerstine** (*Damn Yankees, 9 to 5; San Diego Musical Theatre*), **Amy Perkins** (*On the 20th Century, The Rocky Horror Show, Spring Awakening*), and **Lauren King Thompson** (*Gypsy, Hay Fever, The Vortex*).

The production team features music direction by **Terry O'Donnell** who will lead the band as they sit on stage. Choreography is by **Russell Garrett**, set design by Sean Fanning, costume design by **Jennifer Brawn Gittings**, lighting design by **Kyle Montgomery**, and sound design by **Dylan Nielsen**. Wigs and makeup will be created by **Peter Herman**. **Maria Mangiavellano** will stage manage rehearsals with **Craig Campbell** taking the helm for performances.

Tickets are on sale now and may be purchased in person at the box office located at **4040 Twigg St.**, by calling **619-337-1525** or by visiting **www.cygnettheatre.com**.

ANIMAL CRACKERS FACT SHEET

WHAT: Cygnet Theatre presents ANIMAL CRACKERS

WHERE: Cygnet Theatre
4040 Twiggs St. in Old Town San Diego State Historic Park

WHO: Book: George S. Kaufman and Morrie Ryskind
Music and Lyrics: Bert Kalmar and Harry Ruby
Director: Sean Murray
Music Director: Terry O'Donnell°
Choreography: Russell Garrett^
Scenic Designer: Sean Fanning°
Costume Designer: Jennifer Brawn Gittings
Lighting Designer: Kyle Montgomery
Sound Designer: Dylan Nielsen
Wigs and Makeup: Peter Herman°
Stage Manager: Maria Mangiavellano* and Craig Campbell*

CAST: Bryan Banville° (*John Parker/Horatio Jamison (Zeppo)/Butler*)
Russell Garrett* (*Hives/Roscoe W. Chandler*)
Melinda Gilb°* (*Mrs. Rittenhouse*)
Chaz Feuerstine (*M.Doucet/Wally Winston/Sgt. Hennessy/Butler*)
Samantha Wynn Greenstone (*The Professor (Harpo)/Girl A*)
Josh Odsess-Rubin* (*Captain Jeffrey T. Spaulding (Groucho)/Butler*)
Amy Perkins° (*Grace Carpenter/Mary Stewart/Girl B*)
Spencer Rowe* (*Emanuel Ravelli (Chico)/Butler/Male A*)
Lauren King Thompson (*Arabella Rittenhouse/Mrs. Whitehead*)

*Member of Actors Equity Association, °Resident Artist, ^Stage Directors and Choreographers Society (SDC)

DATES: Previews begin: Wednesday, July 5
Press Opening: Saturday, July 8, 8:00pm
Closes: Sunday, August 13

Performance Schedule
Wednesday & Thursday at 7:30pm
Friday at 8:00pm
Saturday at 3:00pm and 8:00pm
Sunday at 2:00pm and 7:00pm

CYGNATURE EVENTS:

Out Night (LGBT) - July 12
Theatre on Tap (Beer Tasting) and Friday Forum - July 14
Wine Night (Wine Tasting) - July 20
Pre Show Stage Chats - July 19, July 26
Post Show Stage Chats - July 21, July 28, August 4

PRICES:

Prices start at \$43 - Discounts are available for preview performances, children, seniors, students, active-duty military & groups of 10 or more.

HOW:

By Phone: (619) 337-1525
Online: www.cygnaturetheatre.com
In Person: Old Town Theatre - 4040 Twiggs Street

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ABOUT CYGNATURE THEATRE

Cygnature Theatre Company produces a year-round season of professional Off-Broadway-style theatre as well as thought-provoking and engaging educational programming. Cygnature is committed to maintaining high standards of artistic and fiscal integrity, and serves more than 40,000 patrons annually from San Diego and beyond. Cygnature performs its mainstage productions at the state-of-the-art theatre in Old Town San Diego State Historic Park. An active member of the San Diego community, Cygnature has outreach programs serving tens of thousands of students and community members annually. For more information, visit www.cygnaturetheatre.com.

CYGNATURE THEATRE MISSION STATEMENT

Believing in the power of theatre to startle the soul, stir debate and embrace the wide diversity of the community it serves, Cygnature Theatre Company is fearlessly committed to the dissection, examination and celebration of the human story through the medium of live theatre.