



# CYGNET THEATRE COMPANY

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## CYGNET THEATRE COMPANY ANNOUNCES 2009/2010 SEASON

### ***NEW SEASON TO FOCUS ON OLD TOWN THEATRE.***

SAN DIEGO, CA – Cygnet Theatre Company's Artistic Director Sean Murray and Executive Director Bill Schmidt are excited to announce the slate of plays selected for the 2009/2010 Season. Cygnet's seventh season is a line up of productions celebrating an eclectic range of stories about strong individuals. The entire season will be presented at Cygnet's new home, the recently renovated Old Town Theatre as Cygnet says a sad goodbye to the Rolando Theatre it created in 2003.

Cygnet's final show at the Rolando Theatre will feature the return of the production that started it all, ***Hedwig and the Angry Inch***, with book and lyrics by John Cameron Mitchell and music by Stephen Trask. The story of a wannabe rock headliner and her search for identity, love and her "other half" will be directed by James Vasquez and feature Jenn Grinels as Yitzhak. Filled with comedy, camp and serious rock and roll, Hedwig will touch your heart and ears!

The 09/10 season officially begins with the wildly funny ***Noises Off***, by Michael Frayn (*Copenhagen*). Sean Murray will direct the Tony-Award winning play about a motley and disorganized, though well-meaning, theatre company who attempt, against all odds, to rehearse and perform their own production of a slamming-door farce called *Nothing On*.

In September, Cygnet will present the San Diego Premiere of ***Man from Nebraska*** by Tony-Award and Pulitzer Prize winning author Tracy Letts (*August: Osage County, Bug*). The tale of an ordinary middle-aged man on an extraordinary journey of self-discovery will be helmed by Associate Artistic Director Francis Gercke (*Mauritius, Curse of the Starving Class*).

The holiday season will see the fourth annual production of ***It's A Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play***, adapted by Joe Landry. Cygnet's audience demanded that this show return and Cygnet listened! As one subscriber noted: "There are several Scrooge's in San Diego, but only one George Bailey!" Tom Andrew returns to bring his San Diego Critic's Circle Award winning performance as George Bailey back for the holidays, and the brilliant Scott Paulson reigns over Bedford Falls once again with his live, old-fashioned Foley sound effects 'orchestra'. This year the cast of the fictitious "WCYG Theatre of the Air" will take over the Old Town stage as they recreate the classic story in a "live" 1940's radio broadcast filled with music and the beloved characters from the film. In it's fourth year, *It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play* is quickly becoming a new San Diego tradition.

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Cygnet will kick off 2010 with ***The Piano Lesson*** by August Wilson (*Fences*), directed by Delicia Turner Sonnenberg (San Diego Critic's Circle Award Best Director for *Fences*). The fifth play in August Wilson's "Pittsburgh Cycle" brought him his second Pulitzer Prize. The story of a brother and sister in a war over the fate of a family heirloom, a unique, one-of-a-kind piano carved with the images of the history of their family. It's a spiritual, funny, moving and beautiful story of family, ambition, and tradition. *The Piano Lesson* will star Monique Gaffney (San Diego Critic's Circle Award Lead Actor, *Yellowman*), Antonio TJ Johnson (San Diego Critic's Circle Award Lead Actor, *Fences*), and from NBC's "Chuck", Mark Christopher Lawrence (*Fences*).

*The Piano Lesson* will be followed in the spring by a musical to be named later. Still working on rights and availability, Artistic Director Sean Murray has his sights set on a couple of different shows, either of which will surely delight fans of musical theatre.

The season will close with the classic comedy of style, ***Private Lives*** by Noël Coward, directed by James Vasquez. Considered one of the most flippant plays ever written, Cygnet's production will star Sean Murray as Elyot Chase.

Beginning with the 09/10 Season, Cygnet will introduce Saturday matinees. The performance schedule for all shows except *Hedwig* will be Wednesdays & Thursdays at 7:30 pm, Fridays at 8pm, Saturdays at 3pm and 8pm and Sundays at 2pm and 7pm. *Hedwig* will forgo all matinees, and in addition to the Wednesday through Friday shows, will feature two shows on Saturday nights, 6pm and 10pm and a Sunday show at 7pm.

For more information regarding subscriptions please contact the box office at 619-337-1525 or visit [www.cygnettheatre.com](http://www.cygnettheatre.com).

The 2009/2010 is as follows:

#### *Rolando Stage*

##### ***Hedwig and the Angry Inch***

Text by John Cameron Mitchell.

Music and lyrics by Stephen Trask.

Directed by James Vasquez.

*June 3 through August 9, 2009. Press Opening June 6, 2009 at 8pm.*

The smash hit that started it all returns to the Rolando Stage. The story of Hedwig, the wanna-be rock headliner and her search for identity, love and her "other half." "Sublimely trashy and surprisingly powerful" - (LA Times). Adult language and themes.

##### **Noises Off**

By Michael Frayn.

Directed by Sean Murray.

*July 2 through August 23, 2009. Press Opening July 11, 2009 at 8pm.*

Doors slam, identities are confused and chaos reigns in this hilarious farce that follows a motley and disorganized theatre company as they rehearse, perform and, well, just try to make it through *Nothing On*. This Tony Award-winning play will keep you laughing uproariously as the never-ending mishaps continue to snowball out of control. "The funniest farce ever written. Never before has side-splitting taken on a meaning dangerously close to the non-metaphorically medical" - (New York Post).

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*San Diego Premiere*  
**Man from Nebraska**

By Tracy Letts.

Directed by Francis Gercke.

*September 24 through November 1, 2009. Press Opening October 3, 2009 at 8pm.*

Pulitzer Prize winning author of *August: Osage County*, Tracy Letts creates the tale of a luxury sedan, a church pew and visits to a nursing home that form the comfortable round of Ken Carpenter's daily life. And then one night, he awakens to find that he no longer believes in God. This crisis of faith propels an ordinary middle-aged man into an extraordinary journey of self-discovery. This wickedly funny and spiritually complex play examines the effects of one man's awakening on himself and his family. "...[a] tremendously mature and multifaceted portrait of the American...at the dawn of the 21st century...goes to the very core of this country's identity" - (Chicago Sun-Times). Adult language and themes.

**It's A Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play**

Adapted for the stage by Joe Landry.

Directed by Sean Murray.

*November 27 through December 27, 2009. Press Opening December 5, 2009 at 8pm.*

Back by popular demand, Cygnet's presentation of the annual holiday classic will take over the Old Town Theatre this year. The famous story of George Bailey and Clarence the Angel is brought to life as a 1940's live radio play, filled with music, live sound effects and plenty of heart. Don't miss this opportunity to see the show that has brought joyful, cheering audiences to their feet for three years running!

**The Piano Lesson**

By August Wilson.

Directed by Delicia Turner-Sonnenberg.

*January 21 through February 28, 2010. Press Opening January 30, 2010 at 8pm.*

August Wilson won his second Pulitzer Prize for this haunting drama. It is 1936 and Boy Willie arrives in Pittsburgh from the South in a battered truck loaded with watermelons to sell. He has an opportunity to buy some land down home, but he has to come up with the money right quick. He wants to sell an old piano that has been in his family for generations, but he shares ownership with his sister and it sits in her living room. She has already rejected several offers because the antique piano is covered with incredible carvings detailing the family's rise from slavery. Boy Willie tries to persuade his stubborn sister that the past is past, but she is more formidable than he anticipated. Some adult language.

**TBA**

Directed by Sean Murray

*March 18 through April 25, 2010. Press Opening March 27, 2010 at 8pm.*

We are working to secure the rights on a spring musical and hope to announce shortly.

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## **Private Lives**

By Noël Coward.

Directed by James Vasquez and Sean Murray.

*May 20 through June 27, 2010. **Press Opening May 29, 2010 at 8pm.***

*Private Lives* is one of the most flippant plays ever written. Elyot and Amanda, once married and now honeymooning with new spouses at the same hotel, meet by chance, reignite the old spark and impulsively elope. After days of being reunited, they again find their fiery romance alternating between passions of love and anger. Their aggrieved spouses appear and a roundelay of affiliations ensues as the women first stick together, then apart, and new partnerships are formed. Eventually there is a knock down drag out fight which opens the eyes of Elyot and Amanda, who then steal off together a second time. "Gorgeous, dazzling, fantastically funny" - (N.Y. Times). "A gleaming and gleeful comedy" - (N.Y. Post). "A brilliant comedy. A very funny play" - (Newsweek).

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*Cygnnet Theatre Company is a 501(k) non-profit organization founded in 2002 by Artistic Director Sean Murray and Executive Director Bill Schmidt. In 2003, Cygnnet renovated a storefront at 6663 El Cajon Blvd in the Rolando area into a 161-seat theatre. Cygnnet has received over 40 awards and grown to one of the most highly regarded theatre companies in the San Diego area. In December 2007, Cygnnet was awarded a 10-year lease by State of California Department of Parks and Recreation Concessions and Reservations Division of the Old Town Theatre. Located in Old Town San Diego State Historic Park, the 248-seat venue was renovated during the summer and fall of 2008 and re-opened in November.*