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## **CYGNET THEATRE ANNOUNCES THE CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM OF NOËL COWARD'S *PRESENT LAUGHTER***

Rosina Reynolds Directs Sean Murray in this Beloved British Farce  
Running March 29 - April 29

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SAN DIEGO, CA - Cygnet Theatre is pleased to announce the cast and creative team of ***Noël Coward's Present Laughter***. This classic comedy is directed by **Rosina Reynolds** and runs **March 29 - April 29** at Cygnet Theatre in Old Town. Opening Night for media is Saturday, **April 1** at 8:00 PM. Tickets and information are available at **CygnetTheatre.org**.

*Present Laughter* is lighthearted farce that celebrates playwright Noël Coward's legendary wit and larger-than-life persona. Based on Coward himself, actor Garry Essendine is the star of the London theatrical scene at the height of his fame and adored by legions of admirers—perhaps a little too much. Fans regularly throw themselves at Garry's feet, drawn in by his charm and charisma, throwing his household into chaos. In the week before Garry is set to embark on an African tour, he is forced to juggle a besotted young woman with stars in her eyes, an unhinged young playwright obsessed with being in Garry's presence, his best friend's wife who is determined to seduce him, his manager, his producer, his secretary, his estranged ex-wife, and an impending mid-life crisis.

"The artistic team turned to Sir Noël Coward when we were looking for a classic comedy to bring to Cygnet. His plays were ahead of their times and are certainly fun and relevant today," states Artistic Director Sean Murray. "I've been a Coward fan and aficionado since I was a teen. Something about his steadfast determination to create himself without apologies was inspiring to me. I find his classics to be sophisticated and deceptively light. They are, in fact, very astute and hilariously clear looks at the expectations set upon us by society and the truth and reality that underlie and challenge those expectations. Coward's characters, especially the

women roles he wrote, are defiant and know what they want."

Reynolds followed with, "Noel Coward's *Present Laughter* is a perfect example of High Comedy, or Comedy of Manners. It's a far cry from bloodless refined wordy plays - their themes are mostly sex and money. The wit is sparkling, the language as often used as a weapon as used for seduction. These are characters who know how to spar verbally, and enjoy every minute of it."

Featuring Cygnet Theatre's Artistic Director **Sean Murray** as Garry Essendine, the cast includes **Drew Bradford** (Fred), **Trevor Cruse** (Roland), **Melissa Fernandes** (Monica), **Steven Lone** (Morris), **Lindsey Young** (Daphne), **Annie Hinton** (Miss Erikson/Lady Saltburn), **James Newcomb** (Henry), **Shana Wride** (Liz), and **Amanda Sitton** (Joanna).

Reversing roles after Sean Murray directed Rosina Reynolds in the rotating rep *Hay Fever* and *The Vortex* (2015), Reynolds will now direct Murray in *Present Laughter*. Murray will also be reunited with former *Private Lives* (2010) cast members Annie Hinton and Shana Wride.

In addition to direction by Reynolds, the creative team for Cygnet's production of *Present Laughter* includes scenic design by **Tony Cucuzzella**, lighting design by **Colby Freel**, sound design by **TJ Fucella**, props design by **Bonnie Durbin**, costume design by **Elisa Benzoni**, wig and makeup design by **Peter Herman**, casting by **Kian Kline-Chilton**, and stage management by **Craig Campbell**.

Tickets for *Present Laughter* are on sale now and may be purchased in person at the box office located at 4040 Twiggs Street in San Diego Old Town Historic State Park, by calling 619-337-1525 or by visiting [cygnettheatre.com](http://cygnettheatre.com). Regular ticket prices start at \$32.

### **About Noël Coward:**

Born in 1899 in Teddington, Middlesex, Noël Coward made his name as a playwright with *The Vortex* (1924), in which he also appeared. His numerous other successful plays included *Fallen Angels* (1925), *Hay Fever* (1925), *Private Lives* (1930), *Design for Living* (1933), and *Blithe Spirit* (1941). During the war he wrote screenplays such as *Brief Encounter* (1944) and *This Happy Breed* (1942). In the fifties he started a new career as a cabaret entertainer. He published volumes of verse and a novel, *Pomp and Circumstance* (1960), two volumes of autobiography, and four volumes of short stories: *To Step Aside* (1939), *Star Quality* (1951), *Pretty Polly Barlow* (1964), and *Bon Voyage* (1967). Coward was knighted in 1970 and died three years later in Jamaica.

### **About Rosina Reynolds:**

**Cygnet Theatre:** *Angels in America*, *When the Rain Stops Falling*, *Hay Fever*,

*Vortex, The Glass Menagerie. San Diego Repertory Theatre: The Humans, Bad Dates. North Coast Repertory Theatre: Blithe Spirit; The Cocktail Hour; Fallen Angels; Broken Glass; Glorious; Don't Dress for Dinner; Relatively Speaking; Importance of Being Earnest; Travesties; An American Daughter; The Sum of Us; Corpse. The Roustabouts Theatre Company: gUnTOPIA; Roosevelt: Charge the Bear; Margin of Error. Backyard Renaissance: Abigail's Party; American Buffalo; Zoo Story. New Village Arts: The Secret Garden. Renaissance Theatre: Caretaker (San Diego Critics Circle Award). Diversionary Theatre: 2.5 Minute Ride; Marriage Bed; Happy Endings are Extra; Twilight of the Golds; Beautiful Thing; Wrinkles; Another American; Asking and Telling; Gross Indecency: The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde; Breaking The Code; Lot's Daughters... Compass Theatre: Three Days of Rain. Fritz Theatre: Vigil. Gaslamp Quarter Theatre: Marvin's Room.* Founding Artistic Director of Chequamegon Children's Theatre in Wisconsin, now in our 36th season.

**Cygnnet Theatre Company** produces a year-round season of professional Off-Broadway-style theatre as well as thought-provoking and engaging educational programming. Cygnnet is committed to maintaining high standards of artistic and fiscal integrity, and serves more than 40,000 patrons annually from San Diego and beyond. Cygnnet 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, Cygnnet has outreach programs serving tens of thousands of students and community members annually. For more information, visit [www.cygnnettheatre.com](http://www.cygnnettheatre.com).

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## **NOËL COWARD'S PRESENT LAUGHTER FACT SHEET**

### **WHAT:**

Cygnnet Theatre presents Noël Coward's Present Laughter

### **WHERE:**

Cygnnet Theatre  
4040 Twiggs St. in Old Town San Diego State Historic Park

### **WHO:**

Directed by: Rosina Reynolds°  
Scenic Designer: Tony Cucuzzella  
Costume Designer: Elisa Benzoni  
Lighting Designer: Colby Freel  
Sound Designer: TJ Fucella  
Wig and Makeup Designer: Peter Herman°  
Props Designer: Bonnie Durban°  
Stage Manager: Craig Campbell\*°  
Casting: Kian Kline-Chilton

### **CAST:**

Drew Bradford: Fred

Trevor Cruse: Roland  
Melissa Fernandes°: Monica  
Steven Lone°: Morris  
Lindsey Young: Daphne  
Annie Hinton\*: Miss Erikson/Lady Saltburn  
James Newcomb\*: Henry  
Shana Wride\*: Liz  
Sean Murray°: Garry  
Amanda Sitton\*°: Joanna

\*Member of Actors Equity Association, °Resident Artist

**DATES:**

Previews begin: Wednesday, March 29, 7:30 PM

Press Opening: Saturday, April 1, 8:00 PM

Closes: Friday, April 29, 2:00 PM

**Performance Schedule:**

Wednesday & Thursday at 7:30 PM

Friday at 8:00 PM

Saturday at 3:00 PM and 8:00 PM

Sunday at 2:00 PM

**PRICE:**

Prices start at \$32 with discounts for preview performances, student and military.

**HOW:**

Phone: (619) 337-1525

Online: [www.cygnettheatre.com](http://www.cygnettheatre.com)

In Person: Cygnet Theatre - 4040 Twiggs St., San Diego, CA 92110

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Cygnet Theatre | 4040 Twiggs St, San Diego, CA 92110

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