

N E W S R E L E A S E

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THE THEATRE SCHOOL SHOWCASE PRESENTS ALFRED UHRY'S
THE LAST NIGHT OF BALLYHOO, FEBRUARY 10 - 19, 2006

The Theatre School Showcase at DePaul University presents ***THE LAST NIGHT OF BALLYHOO*** by Alfred Uhry, directed by Trudie Kessler. The play previews February 8 and 9 at 7:30 PM; opens Friday February 10, at 7:30 PM and runs through Sunday, February 19, 2006 at DePaul's Merle Reskin Theatre, 60 E. Balbo Drive, Chicago. Performances are Wednesdays through Saturdays at 7:30 PM and Sundays at 2 PM. For tickets, call the Box Office at **(312) 922-1999**.

This Tony Award-winning play highlights a Jewish family's obsession with Ballyhoo, the cotillion for Southern Jewish society, as tensions rise in Europe and "*Gone with the Wind*" premieres in Atlanta in 1939. Populated with delightful characters and brimming with witty lines, ***THE LAST NIGHT OF BALLYHOO*** is a radiant true-to-life comedy framed by the family's struggle with anti-Semitism and quest for assimilation and identity.

Ticket prices are \$15. Student tickets are \$6. Group rates are available for 15 or more people. Seniors (over 60), Corporate Partners, DePaul employees and alumni, and college students receive a discount (with ID). Preview tickets are \$10 or free to college students (with ID). Tickets are available online at www.ticketweb.com and www.hottix.org. Subscriptions to The Theatre School Showcase season (which also includes David Edgar's *Pentecost* and August Wilson's *Two Trains Running*) are available for \$18 - \$36.

Performances are held at DePaul's Merle Reskin Theatre, 60 E. Balbo Drive (at Michigan), Chicago. Discount parking is available with coupons from the Box Office, and the theatre is accessible via CTA buses (3-King Drive, 29-State Street, 146-Michigan/Museums and others), and CTA El stops (Red, Blue, Brown, Green, Orange and Purple).

SPECIAL EVENTS: A post-show discussion with the cast follows the performances on Sunday, February 12, and Thursday, February 16. The performance on Wednesday, February 15 is "DePaul Night" - tickets are half price for all DePaul faculty, staff and students, as well as any high school and university student (with ID).

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INTERPRETED PERFORMANCE: The performance on Sunday, February 19 will be interpreted in American Sign Language. For further information, call the Box Office or TTY (773) 325-7975.

Production staff includes **Trudie Kessler** (Director), **Ana Hale Prillaman** (Scenic Design), **Elizabeth Shaffer** (Costume Design), **Noah Record** (Lighting Design) and **Jeremy Chalmer** (Sound Design).

Cast includes **Kyle A. Gibson** (Peachy Weil), **Yosh Hayashi** (Adolf Freitag), **Jason Karasev** (Joe Farkas), **Callie A. Munson** (Boo Levy), **Mira Vasiljevic** (Reba Freitag), **Logan Walters** (Sunny Freitag) and **Kate Weinberg** (Lala Levy).

Trudie Kessler (Director) is full-time faculty member of The Theatre School. She is a Designated Linklater Voice Teacher, a specialist in the Lessac Voice method and a teacher of the Meisner Acting Approach. She previously taught acting, directing and voice at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City. Her production credits at The Theatre School include *RAMONA QUIMBY*, *THE FIR TREE*, *THE DIARY OF ANNE FRANK*, *THE MIRACLE WORKER* and *SCRAPBOOKS*, a touring show for young audiences about the difficulties of teen pregnancy. In addition, she has directed more than 30 plays in educational and community theatre settings.

Alfred Uhry (Playwright) has the distinguishing honor of being the only American writer to win a Pulitzer Prize, an Academy Award and a Tony Award. A graduate of Brown University, he first found success in 1976 with *THE ROBBER BRIDEGROOM* - for which he received a Tony Award nomination for Best Book of a Musical. Ten years later he wrote his first play, the Pulitzer Prize-winning *DRIVING MISS DAISY*. He would later win an Oscar for the movie adaptation. Soon after, the Olympic Games' Cultural Olympiad commissioned Uhry to write a play for the Summer 1996 Olympics in his hometown of Atlanta, and the Tony Award-winning ***THE LAST NIGHT OF BALLYHOO*** was born. Known for writing charming, engaging yet somewhat quirky Southern characters, Uhry's *PARADE* is a darker look at the nuances and history of the South. This chilling true-life story of the lynching of Leo Frank won Uhry his second Tony Award, for Best Book of a Musical, in 1999.

The Theatre School at DePaul University, educates, trains and inspires students of theatre in a conservatory setting that is rigorous, disciplined, culturally diverse and that strives for the highest level of professional skill and artistry. A commitment to diversity and equality in education is central to the school's mission. As an integral part of the training, The Theatre School produces public programs and performances from a wide repertoire of classic, contemporary and original plays that challenge, entertain and stimulate the imagination. The school seeks to enhance the intellectual and cultural life of the university community, the city and the profession.

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