



BOEING-BOEING



PRESS HIGHLIGHTS



REVIEWS

March 22, 2010

THEATER REVIEW

This 'Boeing' feels grounded

The Old Globe's take on the farce lacks the energy needed to sustain its premise.

DARYL H. MILLER
REPORTING FROM SAN DIEGO

The downfall of a braggart. Ah, how we love to see it happen.

In the 1960 French play "Boeing-Boeing," the preener is an architect stationed in an apartment near Paris' Orly airport, which he's turned into a private terminal for the arrivals and departures of three stewardess girlfriends, each a secret from the others.

Bernard feels perfectly in control. After all, he has a master list of airline timetables, by which he can plan the women's arrivals.

The advances of the jet age, however, are about to trim travel times and disrupt his carefully ordered world. Therein lies a terrific setup for farce, the realm where nothing is predictable and everyone must fly by the seat of his or her pants.

Yet the terrific setup in "Boeing-Boeing" does not necessarily develop into terrific farce. Or, at least, one that suits American tastes.

A Broadway production lasted just 19 days in 1965, even though the play would linger for 19 years in Paris and seven in London. It took a hotshot British director, able to whip the proceedings to soufflé-like consistency, to improve the play's reputation in the States. That was in 2008, when a staging by Matthew Warchus won the Tony Award for best revival.



CRAIG SCHWARTZ

TURBULENT: Stephanie Fieger and Joseph Urla in "Boeing-Boeing."

'Boeing-Boeing'

Where: The Old Globe, Balboa Park, San Diego

When: 7 p.m. Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 8 p.m. Thursdays and Fridays, 2 and 8 p.m. Saturdays, 2 and 7 p.m. Sundays. Ends April 18.

Price: \$29 to \$77

Contact: (619) 234-5623 or www.theoldglobe.org

Running time: 2 hours, 30 minutes

That staging, re-created by the Broadway production's associate director, Mark Schneider, is now at the Old Globe with a new cast. Yet somehow the soufflé seems to have fallen.

The problem is one of proportion. The 2½-hour "Boeing-Boeing" spends most of its first hour and 10 minutes on exposition, then goes just briefly aloft in the second act before returning to the ground. It doesn't take much imagination to dream up endless complications that would cause the stewardesses to just miss one another, yet too many of these went unconceived by French playwright Marc Camoletti and his English adapter, Beverley Cross.

But let's focus on the funny, shall we?

French-language pop from the '60s establishes the story's setting at the dawn of the sexual revolution. A white-on-white apartment (Rob Howell's original design) is sleekly outfitted in chrome and leather.

As Robert, the bumpkin who drops in on his old school chum, Joseph Urla subjects his receding hair to a lot of worried hand-tugging, but he proves much more adept at split-second chicanery than the supposedly worldly Bernard (Rob Breckenridge), who promptly falls to pieces.

The international assortment of stewardesses and a French maid (Nancy Robinette) are mere stereotypes of their countries, a thumbing of the nose that no doubt played well in Europe. As the American and the Italian stewardesses, Liv Rooth and Stephanie Fieger, respectively, take the hilarity to liftoff, but it is Carolyn Kozlowski, as the German, who keeps it aloft. Towering above the others and delivering most every line in a sonic boom, she is a walking German opera — the closest thing to jet propulsion that this production has.

daryl.miller@latimes.com

Los Angeles Times

Culture Monster

All the Arts, All the Time

Theater review: 'Boeing-Boeing' at the Old Globe

March 21, 2010 | 5:00 pm

SAN DIEGO -- The downfall of a braggart. Ah, how we love to see it happen.

In the 1960 French play "Boeing-Boeing," the preener is an architect stationed in an apartment near Paris' Orly airport, which he's turned into a private terminal for the arrivals and departures of three stewardess girlfriends, each a secret from the others.

Bernard feels perfectly in control. After all, he has a master list of airline timetables, by which he can plan the women's comings and goings.

The advances of the jet age, however, are about to trim travel times and disrupt his carefully ordered world. Therein lies a terrific setup for farce, the realm where nothing is predictable and everyone must fly by the seat of his or her pants.

Yet the terrific setup in "Boeing-Boeing" does not necessarily develop into terrific farce. Or, at least, one that suits American tastes.

A Broadway production lasted just 19 days in [1965](#), even though the play would linger for 19 years in Paris and seven in London. It took a hotshot British director, able to whip the proceedings to soufflé-like consistency, to improve the play's reputation in the States. That was in [2008](#), when a staging by [Matthew Warchus](#) won the Tony Award for best revival of a play. Shortly after, his stagings of Yasmina Reza's "God of Carnage" and the three Alan Ayckbourn "Norman Conquests" comedies also reached Broadway – making him [director of the moment](#).

Warchus' rendition of "Boeing-Boeing," re-created by the Broadway production's associate director, Mark Schneider, is now at the [Old Globe](#), performed by a new cast. Yet somehow the play's flaws are visible again. Comparing what's onstage in San Diego to what was reported in the New York reviews, one can only surmise that the soufflé has fallen.

The problem is one of proportion. The 2½-hour "Boeing-Boeing" spends most of its first hour and 10 minutes on exposition, then goes just briefly aloft in the second act before returning to the ground. It doesn't take much imagination to dream up endless complications that would cause the stewardesses to just miss one another, yet too many of these went unconceived by French playwright [Marc Camoletti](#) (later to deliver another prominent farce, "Don't Dress for Dinner") and his English adapter, Beverley Cross.

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-- [Daryl H. Miller](#)

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As stage farce, Old Globe's 'Boeing-Boeing' flies first class

By James Hebert
THEATER CRITIC

Airline food might be nothing to Skype home about (actually, at this point airline food is nothing, period), but the jet-centric stage farce "Boeing-Boeing" looks good enough to eat.

The frisky (if nutrition-free) Old Globe show's '60s-era stewardesses come off like bonbons from Air Wonka in their candy-hued uniforms (these three are ready for the runway — never mind the airport kind).

The 2008 Broadway hit's entire appearance, in fact, is color-coded to their red, yellow and blue costumes. God was gorging on rainbow sherbet when he created this little universe.

The "air hostess" trio's performances are as outrageously Day-Glo as their outfits, and yet beyond its clever setup, Marc Camoletti's play itself is a little lacking in bite. "Boeing-Boeing" is actually pretty chaste for a French sex farce, and while it has lots of good laughs and some whiz-bang moments, it doesn't quite reach the giddy precision of a door-slammer like "Noises Off."

But director Mark Schneider's production (based on Matthew Warchus' Broadway and London stagings) does squeeze a lot of mileage out of tweaking the 1962 original's gleefully chauvinistic approach, and his six game actors carry the show when the comedy starts to lose altitude.

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Mark Rylance as best actor. (The original 1965 Broadway staging famously flopped, although the same year's movie version starring Jerry Lewis and Tony Curtis still charms.) At the story's center is Bernard (Rob Breckenridge), an expatriate architect in Paris who is engaged to Gloria (Liv Rofth), an American air hostess with TWA. And Gabriella (Stephanie Fieger), an Italian with Alitalia. And Gretchen (Carolyn Kozlowski), a German with Lufthansa.

Bernard is able to string the three along through his own mad-genius mode of air-traffic control: He studies flight timetables religiously, and enlists his long-suffering housekeeper Berthe (Nancy Robinette) to keep bedrooms and meal schedules straight (saltimbocca one night, sauerkraut the next).

But the arrival of his fusty old school chum Robert (Joseph Urla), plus the sudden advent of faster jets, conspire to ice Bernard's wings and, not to mention (given the temperaments of these fiery fly-gals) endanger his life.

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Liv Rooth as Gloria and Joseph Urla as Robert, her three-timing flancé's old chum, in "Boeing-Boeing," at the Old Globe Theatre. *Craig Schwartz*

onto another planet when he first hears of Bernard's scheme. Urla plays him cannily and with a winning warmth as a blank-faced rube who turns out to be a quicker study than anyone would've guessed.

Once "Boeing-Boeing" starts to become his story, there's not as much to do with Bernard's character. Breck-

enridge gives him a good arc from cool confidence to existential panic, although his Bernard can come off as too analytical to be a true playboy, as if his real affair is with the math of deception itself.

Robinette, memorably prickly in "The Savannah Disputation" last year at the Globe, is a master of the slow burn, and

her Berthe hazes the hapless Robert to fine comic effect.

And then there are those high-flying women: Rooth as the brash American who can hardly move without vogueing in model poses; Fieger as the Italian beauty who even gets hotheaded about the weather; and Kozlowski as Gretchen, the Teutonic tornado, so operatically passionate she's like a walking Wagner aria.

All three command the stage (and the men), and paint their characters in almost cartoonishly bold relief. But it's the statuesque Kozlowski's loopy, uber-patriotic Gretchen who really tunes into the spirit of romance gone haywire, and the way she says "Jaaahhh!" might force any man to his knees.

Speaking of which, it's never quite clear why these three women, clearly suspicious that Bernard's up to something, rarely seem to hear the boisterous voices of their romantic rivals when two or more are at his apartment.

Set and costume designer Rob Howell must've soundproofed the place well. He's certainly conceived it well (one nice touch: a swoosh that resembles a jet trail across the back wall). Chris Rynne brings some sultry mood lighting, and Paul Peterson's sound design is crisp and inviting.

James Vasquez choreographed a cute curtain call that brings the whole flight crew together for a final samba. Whether or not the "Boeing-Boeing" mode of throwback farce wets your jet, the show is still a pretty zippy ride.

James Hebert: (619) 293-2040; jim.hebert@uniontrib.com

The San Diego
Union-Tribune.

The smile-high club: "Boeing" lands at the Globe

[James Hebert](#)

Friday, March 19, 2010



As part of our ongoing series "Tomorrow's Reviews Today!" (copyright pending), here's my notice (as our Brit friends like to say) on the Old Globe's "Boeing-Boeing," which opened last night. The piece hits print tomorrow.

By James Hebert, Theater Critic

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THEATER REVIEW

Two fine performances lift unbalanced 'Boeing'

BY PAM KRAGEN

pkragen@nctimes.com

Like a souffle, farce needs to be put together just right to rise to perfection.

Sure enough, the ingredients are all there in the Old Globe's production of the classic French farce "Boeing-Boeing," but the high-flying comedy didn't quite reach its maximum cruising altitude on opening weekend.

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Dancing around his circular living room rug like a planet in orbit, Bernard says he dates only flight attendants (they're "physical, moral and intellectual" and have already been "super-sifted" by the airlines), and he has proposed to all three (because "fiancées are much friendlier than spouses"). But when a storm over the Atlantic causes major flight delays, Bernard's color-coded calendar collapses and it's all he and Robert can do to keep the three women from discovering each other behind the various doors in Bernard's apartment.

Director Mark Schneider, re-creating Matthew Warchus' Tony-winning 2008 revival production, has a good foundation, with Rob Howell's marvelous Broadway set (a multi-doored funhouse with high curved walls that the men seem to stick to when the play's action starts spinning out of control) and smart, sexy period costumes.

And he's got some terrific actors in the



Caralyn Kozlowski and Joseph Urla in the Old Globe's "Boeing-Boeing."

Photo courtesy of Craig Schwartz

cast. The best is Caralyn Kozlowski as the uber-passionate Gretchen. With her explosive vocal ardor and writhing sexual desire, she's eye-poppingly appealing in the part. And her ideal counterpoint is Joseph Urla, who convinces as the namby-pamby visitor Robert.

But at two hours, 40 minutes, with intermission, and a first act that takes entirely too long to shift into gear, "Boeing-Boeing" feels like a long slog for very little substance. And while some of the individual performances are good, they don't fit together into a whole.

As the womanizing Bernard, Rob Breckenridge never seems interested enough in any of the women to keep up the Herculean balancing act. And as Berthe, Nancy Robinette seemed tentative on opening night. Liv Rooth has great fun as Gloria, the loud, materialistic and sexually aggressive American, but her character's cowgirl-style ballsiness gets on your nerves after a while. In the role of the hyper-jealous Italian Gabriella, Stephanie Fieger seems too smart and too modern to miss the obvious clues of other women.

Looked at as a '60s comedy, "Boeing-Boeing" has its charms, and when Schneider plays to the period (like in the amusingly choreographed curtain call), it really works. But like a souffle, there's not much substance in this play — and without the frothy payoff, it's verging on collapse.

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THEATER REVIEW: A few performances lift unbalanced 'Boeing-Boeing'

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By PAM KRAGEN - pkragen@nctimes.com | Posted: March 24, 2010 9:44 am | No Comments Posted | Print

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Craig Schwartz Caralyn Kozlowski as Gretchen and Joseph Urla as Robert in the Old Globe production of "Boeing-Boeing." Photo by Craig Schwartz.

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Dancing around his circular living room rug like a planet in orbit (and the women are other high-flying celestial bodies), Bernard says he dates only flight attendants (they're "physical, moral and intellectual" and have already

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Posted in Theatre on *Wednesday, March 24, 2010 9:44 am* | Tags: Entertainment Preview, Nct, Theater

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Boing Boing Klunk

The trio of stewardesses suggests a steeplechase.

Boing-Boeing at the Old Globe: the title sounds like someone bouncing on a trampoline, which actually describes the French farce, if the bouncers are Boeing jets taking off and landing at Orly Airport and deplaning a steady stream of "air hostesses" at Bernard's door.

Bernard, as the saying goes, "has it all," in triplicate. The American architect's got plush Parisian digs, plus a country home at Saint-Germain-en-Laye, where the Seine makes a tree-lined loop and the wealthy frolic. He's engaged to Gloria, a stewardess for TWA who adores him. And life, as the saying goes, is good.

You'd think. But Bernard doesn't. Stemming from some unnamed need — he's so shallow you'll never know — Bernard has three fiancées: Gloria; Gabriella, an Italian hostess for Alitalia; and Gretchen, a German "stew" for Lufthansa. Like an air traffic controller, he coordinates their visits. A timetable tells who's in town when. Should duplications occur, the country home handles layovers. Bernard gleefully describes the "mathematical precision" needed to keep all three in the air. He sounds, in fact,

more in love with the Euclidean logistics than with any of the women.

Bernard's in control, he boasts to Robert, a long-lost friend (and, as a country bumpkin from Wisconsin, the first of the play's rampantly stereotyped characters). If he isn't a virgin, Robert at least acts like one. His driven-snow innocence ropes

him into a game where he will become — much to his surprise and ours — a key player.

The women are empty-headed stereotypes: Gloria, the American, roars with over-the-top *hoo-rah*; Gabriella, the Italian, is, you guessed it, hot-blooded; and German Gretchen waxes Wagnerian at the slightest cue, sometimes even before.

Three lovers, no waiting. *Boeing-Boeing* runs almost three hours and plods much more than it produces laughs (the 90-minute first act is one long setup; act 2 has more down time than up). Plus, the book never confronts its premise head on. You never see all three women entering or exiting at once. The trio of stewardesses suggests a steeplechase. So do the set's eight doors. But the book only juggles, at best, two at a time, and its resolution's as facile as they come.

**THEATER
REVIEW**
JEFF SMITH

Nonetheless, the 2008 revival won a Tony.

For that staging, Matthew Warchus set the play somewhere in the 1960s (at the Old Globe it's difficult to pinpoint where: the music's late '50s-early '60s; beehive hairdos are early '60s, while the Mod costumes and color schemes are mid- to late). This isn't the '60s of protest and political assassinations and Vietnam; it's a Neverland of pastels and slow jet planes. Most theater looks back at the '50s as a time of innocence. Warchus throws the '60s into that mix.

We may need a new category to account for *Boeing-Boeing*'s appeal. A "period" piece replicates the details, moods, and mindset of an era. A "dated" piece is one that's outmoded. *Boeing-Boeing* combines the two. The sexist, screwball farce is a dated period piece — "cult classics" often fall into this grouping.

The play is intermittently funny. More interesting, at least to me, is how the cast fully commits to roles — and a broad style of acting — that would drive their teachers and PC friends up a wall. Liv Rooth plays Gloria like a Texas cheerleader on ecstasy; Stephanie Fieger's Gabriella and especially Caralyn Kozlowski's frog-throated (and terrific) Gretchen begin scenes, emotionally, where most would fear to end them (as the dour maid, however, Nancy Robinette never found a useful point of attack). Rob Breckenridge's Bernard — he of the *Playboy* foldout mentality, which is *Boeing-Boeing*'s actual '60s "territory" — has an appropriate comeuppance. Joseph Urla's Robert almost steals the show. As scenes progress, the Wisconsin innocent becomes Stan Laurel (even his hair sprouts Laurelesque spikes) doing a crash course in assertiveness training.



Boeing Boeing: Sexist screwball farce

Boeing-Boeing by Marc Camoletti and Beverley Cross, reimagined by Matthew Warchus

Old Globe Theatre, Balboa Park

Directed by Mark Schneider; cast: Liv Rooth, Rob Breckenridge, Nancy Robinette, Joseph Urla, Stephanie Fieger, Carolyn Kozlowski; scenic and costume design, Rob Howell; lighting design, Chris Rynne; sound, Paul Peterson; original music, Claire van Kampen

Playing through April 18; Sunday, Tuesday, and Wednesday at 7:00 p.m., Thursday through Saturday at 8:00 p.m. Matinee Saturday and Sunday at 2:00 p.m. 619-234-5623.

SAN DIEGO Reader

Boing Boing Clunk

By [Jeff Smith](#) | Published Wednesday, March 24, 2010



Boeing-Boeing at the Old Globe: the title sounds like someone bouncing on a trampoline, which actually describes the French farce, if the bouncers are Boeing jets taking off and landing at Orly Airport and deplaning a steady stream of “air hostesses” at Bernard’s door.

Bernard, as the saying goes, “has it all,” in triplicate. The American architect’s got plush Parisian digs, plus a country home at Saint-Germain-en-Laye, where the Seine makes a tree-lined loop and the wealthy frolic. He’s engaged to Gloria, a stewardess for TWA who adores him. And life, as the saying goes, is good.

You’d think. But Bernard doesn’t. Stemming from some unnamed need — he’s so shallow you’ll never know — Bernard has three fiancées: Gloria; Gabriella, an Italian hostess for Alitalia; and Gretchen, a German “stew” for Lufthansa. Like an air-traffic controller, he coordinates their visits. A timetable tells who’s in town when. Should duplications occur, the country home handles layovers. Bernard gleefully describes the “mathematical precision” needed to keep all three in the air. He sounds, in fact, more in love with the Euclidean logistics than with any of the women.

Bernard’s in control, he boasts to Robert, a long-lost friend (and, as a country bumpkin from Wisconsin, the first of the play’s rampantly stereotyped characters). If he isn’t a virgin, Robert at least acts like one. His driven-snow innocence ropes him into a game where he will become — much to his surprise and ours — a key player.

The women are empty-headed stereotypes: Gloria, the American, roars with over-the-top *hoo-rah*; Gabriella, the Italian, is, you guessed it, hot-blooded; and German Gretchen waxes Wagnerian at the slightest cue, sometimes even before.

Three lovers, no waiting. *Boeing-Boeing* runs almost three hours and plods much more than it produces laughs (the 90-minute first act is one long setup; Act 2 has more down time than up).

Plus, the book never confronts its premise head on. You never see all three women entering or exiting at once. The trio of stewardesses suggests a steeplechase. So do the set's eight doors. But the book only juggles, at best, two at a time, and its resolution's as facile as they come. Nonetheless, the 2008 revival won a Tony.

For that staging, Matthew Warchus set the play somewhere in the 1960s (at the Old Globe it's difficult to pinpoint where: the music's late '50s–early '60s; beehive hairdos are early '60s, while the Mod costumes and color schemes are mid to late). This isn't the '60s of protest and political assassinations and Vietnam; it's a Neverland of pastels and slow jet planes. Most theater looks back at the '50s as a time of innocence. Warchus throws the '60s into that mix.

We may need a new category to account for *Boeing-Boeing*'s appeal. A “period” piece replicates the details, moods, and mindset of an era. A “dated” piece is one that's outmoded. *Boeing-Boeing* combines the two. The sexist, screwball farce is a dated period piece — “cult classics” often fall into this grouping.

The play is intermittently funny. More interesting, at least to me, is how the cast fully commits to roles — and a broad style of acting — that would drive their teachers and PC friends up a wall. Liv Rooth plays Gloria like a Texas cheerleader on ecstasy; Stephanie Fieger's Gabriella and especially Caralyn Kozlowski's frog-throated (and terrific) Gretchen begin scenes, emotionally, where most would fear to end them (as the dour maid, however, Nancy Robinette never found a useful point of attack). Rob Breckenridge's Bernard — he of the *Playboy* foldout mentality, which is *Boeing-Boeing*'s actual '60s “territory” — has an appropriate comeuppance. Joseph Urla's Robert almost steals the show. As scenes progress, the Wisconsin innocent becomes Stan Laurel (even his hair sprouts Laurelesque spikes) doing a crash course in assertiveness training.

SAN DIEGO DAILY TRANSCRIPT

March 26, 2010

'Boeing-Boeing' brings funny French farce to the Globe



Drama Desk

By Jenna Long

The implausibility of The Old Globe's new production of "Boeing-Boeing" doesn't fall on the man juggling three flight-attendant fiancées, but on the behavior of his unexpected childhood visitor.

Joseph Urla plays Robert, an old friend of Bernard's (Rob Breckenridge) who shows up at the architect's Paris doorstep after being estranged for perhaps decades. With no evident reason for being there other than a random visit, Robert is graciously asked by his old friend to stay for awhile until he finds his own place.

The audience then watches Robert almost instantly shed his shy, uncomfortable disposition and immerse himself in the quicksand that is Bernard's daily existence — romancing three beautiful "air hostesses" according to a mas-

ter airline timetable relied upon to keep each woman's schedule straight, and to prevent her from ever meeting the other two.

The thing is, Robert hasn't earned what he gets, chaotic and stressful as the arrangement may be. Instead of thanking his old friend for his exceptional hospitality, the houseguest — who, realistically, can't compete with Bernard's looks or charm — proceeds to act like he owns the place throughout day one, interfering in Bernard's conversations, hitting on Bernard's women, and talking down to Bernard's charismatic, strong-willed maid, Berthe (Nancy Robinette).

The frustrating part is that Bernard doesn't really seem to mind or even notice, but he should. Robert's antics and very presence in this story are far more ridiculous than the likelihood of Bernard being engaged to three women, which makes the former's self-indulgent central character often hard to like.

On the other hand, who can really blame the Wisconsin-based friend for his complete 180, when three completely over-the-top, passionate, stunning women are coming and going through the chic apartment like it's a revolving runway. The American (Liv Rooth), the Italian (Stephanie Fieger) and the German (Caralyn Kozlowski), all color-coded in vibrant uniforms and toting international airline bags, are so outlandishly emotional, it's pretty hilarious watching them crawling on the floor to profess their undying love for Bernard in thick accents.

Strong performances all around, though Rooth is par-



Photo: Craig Schwartz

Stephanie Fieger as Italian flight attendant Gabriella and Joseph Urla as Robert in "Boeing-Boeing," at The Old Globe through April 18.

ticularly head-turning as the nasally, bouncy, obnoxious American, a caricature that makes a great deal of sense since "Boeing-Boeing" was originally a huge European hit in the 1960s.

Breckenridge manages to hold his own among the solid

female presence, and it's especially fun to watch his calm, cool, collected exterior crumble with a startling screaming fit at the first sign his well-orchestrated plan is about to unravel.

The coolest aspect of the production, though, would

have to be Rob Howell's stylish scenic design. The structured off-white, spacious and simple apartment accented with three hanging pastel-colored glass globes perfectly contrasts with the frenzied, disorganized mess that's about to play out onstage. Paul Peterson's sound design adds a great touch between the scenes with upbeat covers in foreign languages.

"Boeing-Boeing" is a fantastic farce, full of humor, color and passion, and is sure to entertain even the most discerning theater enthusiasts. And if a few details nag at you along the ride, a surprise ending and curtain call show will leave you smiling.

"Boeing-Boeing" plays at the Old Globe Theatre through April 18.

jenna.long@sddt.com
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'Boeing-Boeing' brings funny French farce to the Globe

By Jenna Long, The Daily Transcript

Thursday, March 25, 2010

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Liv Rooth (as Gloria) and Joseph Urla (as Robert) in the Old Globe production of "Boeing-Boeing." (Photo by Craig Schwartz)

Crash Landing

THE SHOW: "Boeing-Boeing," a 1960 comedy, at the Old Globe

French farce and Jerry Lewis. A perfect pair, right? Well, the goofball comic did appear in the American film version of Marc Camoletti's 1960 comedy, "Boeing-Boeing" (you *know* how the French have always loved the guy). But the stage play was a bust when it premiered in New York in 1965 (translation by Beverley Cross), lasting only 19 days, despite the fact that it ran for 19 years in Paris and seven years in London!

Then, in 2008, along came British director Matthew Warchus, who re-thought the whole thing. The result was a Tony Award for Best Revival of a Play and rapturous reviews in London as well. Now, the set and costumes from that very production, although sadly, not the Tony-winning cast, have landed at the Old Globe. The director's different, too. Mark Schneider was the associate director to Warchus. Something must've been lost in translation.

There is just nothing funny about this farce. The setup may be mildly amusing: An American in Paris has three flight attendant fiancées, deftly keeping them apart by carefully monitoring their flight schedules. But the production is so overblown, overdone, over-exaggerated and over-the-top that for this viewer, there wasn't one laugh. Not one. Okay, full disclosure: I sniggered once in the second act. That's it. Honestly. There wasn't anything to like. Except maybe some of the physical comedy — pratfalls, deadpans and double-takes — of the show's one straight-man, Joseph Urla, who plays the hayseed Robert, an old schoolmate of playboy Bernard. (Note to actor: True Wisconsinites pronounce the name of their state with a "G," rather than a "K" sound.)

As Bernard, Rob Beckenridge doesn't seem hunky, handsome, suave or irresistible enough to attract all these gorgeous women. He's a tad more interesting when he starts panicking in the second act, as the flight schedule changes with the transition to newer jets, and his apartment's rooms start filling up with women, who don't know about each other's existence (and must also be hard of hearing, since the decibel level throughout is near to ear-splitting). The first act is interminable; so much exposition and not enough comedy.

And those women! Whew. Airheads, ditzbrains, haridans and shrews. A hateful array, really. And directed into the stratosphere — to shriek, whine, pose like centerfold models and act moronic, clueless and controlling. The men at least have to think on their feet, in order to manage all the mayhem. These hyper-stereotypical females don't seem capable of thinking at all. What New York audiences saw in this show I cannot begin to fathom. It isn't even a great escape.

The women, admittedly, are stunning: Stephanie Fieger as the fiery Italian, Gabriella; Caralyn Kozlowski as Gretchen, the shrill, Teutonic dominatrix; and Liv Rooth as Gloria, a totally non-New-York-like New Yorker, she of the wide-leg stance and deeply probing tongue (even *that* scene wasn't as funny as it should've been). Nancy Robinette, who was aggressively amusing in "The Savannah Disputation" last year at the Globe, is little more than annoying as the put-upon maid, Berthe, whose French accent comes and goes with the frequency of the short-skirted femmes fatales.

The design is actually the most satisfying part of the whole affair: the spacious, curve-walled, multi-doored apartment, with its Crayola-bright accessories that perfectly match the candy-colored getups on the gals (set and costumes by Rob Howell). The lighting (Chris Rynne) and sound (Paul Peterson) are comparably bright. Same cannot be said of the writing or production.

THE LOCATION: Old Globe Theatre, Balboa Park. (619) 23-GLOBE (234-5623); www.theoldglobe.org (<http://www.theoldglobe.org/>)

THE DETAILS: Tickets: \$29-\$77; Thursday and Saturday at 8 p.m., Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday at 1 p.m., through April 18

[San Diego Arts](#)

BOEING-BOEING at the Old Globe Theatre

Candy corn in a bubble

By Welton Jones

Posted on Fri, Mar 19th, 2010

Last updated Fri, Apr 9th, 2010

Fifty years ago, sexy stories usually came wrapped either in sentimentality or a jolly “just-kidding” safety packages. The unwrapping and decoding was considered part of the fun. The prize – titillation – was exactly then what it is and always has been.



Stephanie Fieger as Gabriella and Joseph Urla as Robert in Boeing-Boeing.

Photo by Craig Schwartz

Nature remains, to paraphrase Tennyson, “Pink of tit and ass.”

The unlikely success of some reborn candy corn called *Boeing-Boeing* in London, on Broadway and now at the Old Globe speaks not to any fresh revisionist sensitivity but rather to the immense skill and taste of Matthew Warchus, the director who has combined clever theatrical archeology with immense stage smarts.

The bright idea that playwright Marc Camoletti had in 1960 was a technological twist for an ancient comic machine, the sex farce. One of the prime male fantasies of the day involved airline stewardesses, the sleek, friendly and contractually unattached cuties whose constant globe-trotting seemed ideal environment for the casual sex opportunities essential to farce.

So Camoletti created Bernard, an opportunistic sex connoisseur armed with an omnibus airline schedule in one printed volume (plausible back then) and a travel agent pal at the international airport. Thus armed, Bernard is able to juggle his schedule carefully enough to maintain three liaisons at a time, as he demonstrates boastfully for his nerdy American visitor.

Of course, schedules can change. And that’s when the farce starts. The only question left is whether two guys, three girls and a set with seven doors will generate enough romp to fill Act II.

The Brits have a taste for such dirty jokes, especially the ones from France that feature toothsome female flesh, so Beverley Cross' adaptation of "Boeing-Boeing" ran in London for a surprising seven years. The Broadway version crashed after just 23 performances, American audiences apparently finding it a bit too sleazy. (There was a Jerry Lewis-Tony Curtis film, thankfully forgotten.)

I must have seen this thing back in the day but I can't remember anything about it except a smile at the title's mixture of the clever, the surreal, the smutty and the potential for product placement.

These days, you don't encounter many such packages and here's why: The three girls don't see themselves as sex toys. They each consider themselves engaged to Bernard. That's a necessary convention of the day, but at least two of the three seem to take it very seriously.

Therefore, despite all the jolly knockabout comedy, this Bernard can only be seen as a contemptible, lying cad, preying on the dreams of women he doesn't deserve. And guilt falls too on his wide-eyed friend from Wisconsin and his grumpy, dumpy maid-of-all-work, not to mention that unseen procurer at the airport. If they don't help Bernard maintain the lies, there's no show.

Not so funny for audiences now used to considering both sides of sexual equations. And that's why, as I say, there aren't many *Boeing-Boeings* anymore.

Enter Warchus, one of London's hottest directors of the moment. (The actual Globe staging has been done by Mark Schneider, a frequent Warchus collaborator, who either delivered the goods in superior fashion or deserves himself all the slavish praise I'm about to heap on Warchus.)

He's installed this soiled bauble inside a 1960s bubble with only passing relevance to reality. There's no night or day, no sense of a world beyond those doors. The locale is allegedly Paris, but really it could be any place at an airline hub. Frankfurt, maybe, or Dallas-Fort Worth. Nobody speaks French, even when answering the telephone. And WE don't see the knockout view that so awes the nerd.

Much of this bubble is the work of designer Rob Howell, whose smashing set is all white, crisscrossed with precisely absurd molding and accented with the uncomfortable furniture and fixtures of the day, including an amazing circular carpet with three non-concentric discs of pastel sherbet colors.

And the costumes, especially the bright, brief uniforms for the three stewardesses, are major stand-alone fantasies in themselves. They are, as a character says, "So...so...Well-tailored." Indeed. The other three cast-members probably wear something too. I don't remember.

So, armed with this play and this bubble, Warchus proceeds with the magic.

The rules of farce require that all eligible couples be paired off at the end. But here we have three girls and two boys. (The housekeeper? Forget it. That was territory ignored in 1960.) So one of the girls is going to be left out at the final curtain.

By careful emphasis and skilled shaping, Warchus makes this question more central to the play than how Bernard is going to keep his juggling act intact. Each of them women become real people worth caring about. The question becomes, do either of the guys deserve any of these girls?

And what glorious women they are, radiating healthy vitality and charm well beyond any professional requirements. Also, they're gorgeous. The show is a lag-man's dream. (Not guys who run errands, but the one with a taste for shapely gams.) These three pairs of pins are so featured in the show that they get the first curtain call by themselves.

The girls they carry are Trans-World Airlines' Gloria, Alitalia's Gabriella and Lufthansa's Gretchen. (Bernard the creep brags that it's useful to pick packs of partners with the same first initial.)

Liv Rooth plays Gloria, the American, like a berserk Humvee seeking further kinky variations and more food for her ketchup, pausing to pose as an art deco hood ornament and generally brandishing her body like a whip.

Stephanie Fieger is cool, poised and nurturing as the so-appealing Gabriella and Caralyn Kozlowski's Gretchen is over the top with Teutonic menace, Wagnerian extravaganza and moist angst.

All three are delightful, accomplished artists at the peak of their powers. And did I mention they're also major babes?

Rob Breckenridge plays Bernard with less frenzy and exhaustion than you might expect while Joseph Urla brings physical comedy poise and a nice childlike bedazzlement to the nebbish friend. As the frumpy, dumpy housekeeper, Nancy Robinette seems out of sync with the rest of the show but it's not important. She's just part of the machinery.

All of them have been given permission to indulge in episodes almost over the top: The scream that plasters others to the wall. The stagger that would break most people's leg. The motley luggage than must be moved about. The loooooonng take. The gay misunderstandings.

The achievement of Warchus (and Schneider) is to deliver all the fun expected from a farce while at the same time finding the humanity of characters designed as caricature stereotypes. And if he hasn't done the same for the others, that's fine. We still get not only our expected fun but also the chance to watch the worms turn.

Dates	7 p.m. Sundays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays; 8 p.m. Thursdays-Saturdays; 2 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays through April 18, 2010.
Organization	Old Globe Theatre
Phone	619 234-5623
Production Type	Play
Region	Balboa Park
Ticket Prices	\$29-\$77
URL	www.theoldglobe.org
Venue	Old Globe Theatre, Balboa Park, San Diego

SAN DIEGO CITY BEAT

March 24, 2010

ON STAGE

CHECK THIS OUT

Plane speaking: The first clue that you're about to see a farce lies in the set, specifically the number of doors for the cast to slam and dart between. The Old Globe Theatre's current *Boeing-Boeing* has eight of the suckers, and they get plenty of use, but they're apparently rigged to close rather gently. By exactly the same token, this show has little impact of its own—it's a tired old saw about Bernard (Rob Breckenridge), an American businessman in Paris who's having trouble juggling affairs with three female flight attendants. Director Mark Schneider's stage pictures grow stale on a dime, and Rob Howell's scene design is way too big for the action that takes place. Joseph Urla's good turn as an unwitting party-crasher is helpful, but it's mostly lost in this bloated Mark Camoletti and Beverly Cross piece, which runs through April 18 at the Globe's mainstage, 1363 Old Globe Way in Balboa Park. \$29-\$59. www.oldglobe.org.

—Martin Jones Westlin

OPENING

Alive and Well: A big-city reporter from the North gets more than she bargained for as she researches a story about a Civil

War freak from the South. Now in previews, it opens March 25 at the Old Globe's Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre, 1363 Old Globe Way in Balboa Park. \$29-\$58. www.oldglobe.org.

Legally Blonde, the Musical: After her boyfriend dumps her, Elle Woods winds up at Harvard law, which proves to be no solution. Produced by Broadway / San Diego, it opens March 30 at the Civic Theatre, 1100 Third Ave., Downtown. \$18-\$79. www.broadwaysd.com.

Speech and Debate: Three teens discover they're linked by a sex scandal that's rocked their sleepy Oregon town. In previews March 25, opens March 27 at Diversionary Theatre, 4545 Park Blvd. in University Heights. \$29-\$33. www.diversionary.org.

Sweeney Todd, the Demon Barber of Fleet Street: Murderous barber Todd and a quirky proprietor combine efforts to prepare some meaty delicacies. Produced by Cygnet Theatre Company, it's currently in previews and opens March 27 at Old Town Theatre, 4040 Twiggs St. in Old Town. \$17-\$27. www.cygnettheatre.com.

NOW PLAYING

An Evening with Pablo Picasso: Culture Clash's Herbert Siguenza takes us on a journey with the first rock-star artist. Through April 11 at The Lyceum Space, 79

Horton Plaza, Downtown. \$29-\$34. www.sdrep.org.

Elliott, a Soldier's Fugue: Three generations of a Puerto Rican family recount the horrors of their U.S. military service. Produced by Ion Theatre Company, it runs in repertory with the thriller *Back of the Throat* through April 10 at BLK BOX @ 6th and Penn, 3704 Sixth Ave. in Hillcrest. \$20-\$24. www.iontheatre.com.

Fighting Words: Blood money, obsession, the disco era and Pablo Picasso color this series of five staged readings. Through March 28 at MOXIE Theatre, 6663 El Cajon Blvd. in the College Area. \$10-\$15. www.moxietheatre.com.

★ **Pump Boys and Dinettes:** Rhett and Prudie serve up family fare and the latest gossip at the Double Cupp Diner. Produced by Lamb's Players Theatre, it runs through April 25 at The Horton Grand Theatre, 444 Fourth Ave., Downtown. \$26-\$48. www.lampsplayers.org.

Romeo and Juliet: Two love-struck Italian kids off themselves amid their families' squabbles. Produced by Poor Players Theatre Company, it runs through April 4 at Swedenborg Hall, 1531 Tyler St. in University Heights. \$20. www.poorplayers.com.



Curtain call

The Old Globe Theatre's *Boeing-Boeing* heads our rundown of plays in local production

By Martin Jones Westlin

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"BOEING-BOEING" TAKES OFF AT OLD GLOBE

March 22, 1:48 PM · [San Diego Theater Examiner](#) · Carol Davis



Ready for takeoff
Craig Schwartz

By Carol Davis

San Diego, Ca.

If spring is in the air, it must be laced with some sort of silly dust. That's the felling I left with after sitting through a very long production of Marc Camoletti's 1960 'Classic', French (read sex) farce with Beverly Cross' English translation of "Boeing-Boeing" now making its regional premiere at the Old Globe Theatre in Balboa Park.

The play (the English adaptation) was first staged in London in 1962 at the Apollo Theatre and was later (1965) transferred to the Duchess Theatre where it ran for seven years making it into the Guinness Book of Records as the most performed French play throughout the world. When it hit Broadway in 1965 it opened in Feb. and closed in Feb. running only about two weeks before it folded. Most definitely, something got lost in translation during its ocean voyage.

Forty-five years is a long time for a play to lie dormant, but fear not. In 2002 and again in 2007 and once again in 2008 the play was adapted, revisited, modernized, revived and set in a new location and finally remounted on Broadway after making a Singapore and London showing. The production lasted for 239 performances and managed to win a Tony for 'Best Revival of a Play' with director Marthlew Warchus nominated for Best Director. It became a movie in 1965 starring Jerry Lewis, Thelma Ritter and Tony Curtis.

The plot or non plot, (for farces seldom need a plot just some ridiculous set ups, several doors, in this case about 7, some slapstick and this is most important, perfect timing) features three airline stewardesses and one bachelor lover who is engaged to all three at the same time. How and when he manages to accommodate each of them without the others finding out his little ruse is at the crux this muddled sex plot.

Add to this mess a chance visit by a hometown friend of our bachelors, who for no apparent reason except self survival on the ground, finds himself in the thick of his friends romances while up in the air about his predicament most of the time. The plodding plot doesn't leave much to the imagination.

The Globe's production has the polished look of a well-oiled machine that's about to knock your socks off as soon as the curtain goes up. Rob Howell's minimalist set design spreads across the large Globe stage showing off three large colorful pink, yellow and blue bulbous lamps suspended from the ceiling with a coordinated, colored coded circular throw rug all to match the women's uniforms and flight bags. (Howell also designed the on target flight attendant costumes)

Across the back of the stage in an arc are about seven doors (the one leading to the kitchen is pink the rest of the background is white) leading to 'other bedrooms', a spa bathroom and one double door for entering and exiting. 60's chrome, glass and leather furniture is strategically but sparsely placed throughout so there is more than enough wiggle room for the actors to go through their antics without getting hurt. Once the action gets into high gear, the play does get pretty physical slinking into slapstick at times.

At the center of all this mishigas is Bernard (Rob Breckenridge) an American in Paris, a successful architect who has the smarts to understand and track flight patterns and timetables. He meticulously records what airlines go where and when so that when the women in his life come to visit (one at a time in the beginning) two are either in the air or sleeping soundly in some other country while one is being romanced or romancing our Bernard.

Helping Bernard with this ploy of arranging meals, tidying up bedrooms, making appropriate adjustments for a glitch or two and changing the flower colors to match the color of the girls' uniforms is his trusting French housekeeper, Berthe (Nancy Robinette). Much to her chagrin, she comes with the apartment so she hangs on amid all the chaos.

Pending any future mid air collisions, Bernard had been and hoped to be flying high for years managing this juggling act. But just when he least expected it, he was confronted with a new set of conditions on the ground and in the air. Between weather instability, a new and faster Boeing Jet and an outside houseguest, his world did a one hundred and eighty. So hang on to your isle seats and keep your safety belts fastened. This is when the long awaited fun kicks in.

The three women in question are TWA Gloria, dressed in vivid red (Liv Roth) the American health nut, or ugly American; Alitalia Gabriella, dressed in gorgeous blues (Stephanie Fieger) the Italian sex kitten and Gretchen, the domineering German dressed in bright yellows (she could have been dressed in leather for all her antics), of Lufthansa (Caralyn Kozlowski). They complete the stereotypical bimbo act-a-likes while the accents, and hair color distinguish one from the other.

One would think that the unexpected arrival of Bernard's nebbish friend Robert (Joseph Urla) might lend a little saneness to the blustering goings on on stage but as fate would have it the plot takes an unusual twist and before we know it, it becomes Robert's party. Without the help of flight patterns, time zones, etc., how he manages to (well) manage all three women at the same time now becomes the new focus of the madness. It gets rather hectic, sometimes even funny before it gets redundant and way before it finally gets resolved.

To the credit of director Mark Schneider he does seem to do wonders with little or no real bite in the material by making the situations out to be more than they actually are. Credit also the very

hard working Joseph Urla who gets the brunt, as well as the action, of the girls' wrath. Smartly, Bernard is nowhere to be found as Robert tries to keep all three women grounded and from finding out that one or the other is just behind door #1.

As for the women Stephanie Fieger is the most genteel, letting her Italian temper show through more often than not. Temper or not Rooth's Gloria is just too annoying as she strikes a pose that almost knocks her body out of alignment when she's on stage and every time she opens her mouth her shrill voice is too piercing. Caralyn Kozlowski's Gretchen held the most interest as the over the top German General in charge of her man. Hers was the most physical and most funny portrayal of a woman gone ape over her man.

Both Nancy Robinette and Rob Breckenridge play well off each other but get left in the aftermath and dust of the flying debris. Robinette especially was out of sync on opening night. By now she should have found the right footing. Breckenridge looks the part. He ended up though, more part of the background than the story.

As farces go, this one leaves much to be desired. However, if you're up for some physical comedy; something that you don't have to think about, and you want to see some great production values, especially Howell's set "Boeing-Boeing" might be your ticket to a flight out into wild blue yonder.

See you at the theatre.

Dates: March 13th –April 18, 2010

Organization: Old Globe Theatre Donald and Darlene Shiley Stage

Phone: (619) 234-5623

Production Type: Farce

Where: Balboa Park, Old Globe Way

Ticket Prices: \$29-\$77.00

Web: TheOldGlobe.org

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REVIEW: Turbulence propels 'Boeing-Boeing'

[Jose A. Lopez](#)

Published 03/24/2010 - 12:01 p.m.

In “Boeing-Boeing,” the Tony-winning French farce playing through April 18 at the Old Globe Theatre, Bernard is an American architect living the charmed life of a playboy in Paris.

He (played by Rob Breckenridge) has an expensive cream-colored home with high ceilings and a killer view, three adoring and stunning fiancées and Berthe (Nancy Robinette), a dutiful if harried French maid who, despite her constant grumbling, spends most of her time helping her “monsieur” keep his love life straight and his lovers well-fed and ignorant of each other.

Bernard is an unapologetic cad. He has no intention of marrying any of his three trophy-fiancées, these well-proportioned “air hostesses,” whether it’s Gloria, the perky New Yorker who flies for TWA; Gabriella, the feisty Italian who tends flights for Alitalia; or Gretchen, the Amazonian German who works Lufthansa.

To keep his ruse going, he depends on a book filled with charts and timetables, listing the arrival and departure times for all of their flights. Emboldened by what he sees as a foolproof method, Bernard feels confident he can schedule conflicting rendezvous in his flat down to the minute without worrying that his girlfriends will find out about each other.

“It’s geometric — so precise as to almost be poetic,” he tells Robert Lambert, a childhood friend visiting from Wisconsin.

But this being a farce, one knows that it’s all about to come crashing down. And oh, does it ever, as Bernard fails to understand that bigger and faster planes have just been put into operation, making his time tables obsolete.

As Lambert (Joseph Urla) who goes from a rube to an unwitting — then witting — accomplice in the madness, puts it: “If your planes are going to go faster and faster, your mathematics aren’t going to add up.”

“Boeing-Boeing” is not cerebral.

It’s a fun diversion for those who are willing to play along and give in to the silliness. Otherwise the comedy could wear a thin and the play may seem a bit long (it’s two and a half hours), especially when one thinks of all of the ways that the comedy of errors can come screeching to a halt well before the curtain call. (How thick must those walls be, for example, that the girlfriends don’t hear each other? or how perfectly timed are the entrances and exits!)

There is no denying, however, that the play is well-crafted, and those who can just sit back and enjoy the ride and trust the pilot, err, director Mark Schneider will be in for a treat. (Schneider was associate director during the play's 2008 Tony Award-winning Broadway revival by Matthew Warchus and directed the show's 2008 tour in the United Kingdom).

Especially noteworthy are the strong comedic performances from Stephanie Fieger as Gabriella, Caralyn Kozlowski as Gretchen and Liv Rooth as Gloria.

Among these, it's Kozlowski, playing a Teutonic steward with mood swings so extreme that Lambert's distaste for sauerkraut makes her lash out, gets the most mileage out of her character.

For more information about the show or to purchase tickets, go to www.TheOldGlobe.org.

SAN DIEGO

Regional Reviews by Bill Eadie

Boeing-Boeing

Old Globe Theatre

French bedroom farce may be easily marked in the cultural landscape of Paris, but, much like the slapstick films of Jerry Lewis (which are beloved by many Parisians), it is a genre that can split American audiences. You can love the sexy but satirical froth of the plots, the speed of the dialogue, the slamming doors and the just-missed-'em timing, or you can find the situations and characterizations to be stereotypical and offensive, the plots implausible, and the humor to be sophomoric.

Both camps will find their preconceptions to be reinforced in the Old Globe's production of *Boeing-Boeing*, now playing through April 18 on the Donald and Darlene Shiley Stage.



Liv Rooth and Nancy Robinette

Written by Marc Camoletti and Beverley Cross, *Boeing-Boeing*'s plot is classic in its design. The story is set in the early 1960s trendy Paris apartment of Bernard (Rob Breckenridge; luscious modernist sets and costumes by Rob Howell). Bernard is bidding farewell to his fiancée, Gloria, (Liv Rooth) an international air hostess from New York. He is anxious to see Gloria depart, and soon we learn why: Bernard has two other air hostess fiancées—Italian Gabriella (Stephanie Fieger) and German Gretchen (Caralyn Kozlowski)—and he is seeing each of them between flights on a carefully timed schedule.

Of course, the carefully timed schedule goes awry, first with the unexpected arrival of Robert (Joseph Urla), a friend of Bernard's from Wisconsin, and then last-minute flight snafus eventually land all of Bernard's fiancées/air hostesses in his apartment at once. Not even the storied organization talents of Bernard's housekeeper, Berthe (Nancy Robinette), can ultimately keep the three fiancées apart.

The Old Globe has called upon the talents of those who made this version of *Boeing-Boeing* a hit in both the West End and on Broadway. They are using British director Matthew Warchus' adaptation, which incorporated more of the original French version than did Mr. Cross' translation. They called upon Mr. Howell to re-create his scenic and costume designs, and hired Mark Schneider, Mr. Warchus' associate, as director. The cast, which includes several Old Globe veterans, was not associated with earlier productions, however, and its lack of experience turns out to be a liability.

Mr. Schneider has re-created much of Mr. Warchus' staging, and many of the visual gags are

delightful. He's also got the timing of the entrances and exits down, though at a slower overall pace than might have been optimal (at just shy of three hours, this show's a long sit). The cast gives professional level performances at every turn (though, accents are thick and not always secure), but the pop and sparkle that usually drives farce was only fitfully present on opening night. Of the group, Ms. Robinette had the most fully developed performance, and even she looked somewhat embarrassed dancing in the long, dragged-out, curtain call.

Can San Diego audiences enjoy a piece of fluff that lightly spoofs the sexist and homophobic attitudes of the period, a la "Mad Men"? Well, audiences so adored Mr. Camoletti's sequel, *Don't Dress for Dinner*, at the North Coast Rep last season that the company brought the production back for a reprise engagement last summer. Had the Globe's production been sharper, I think audiences would embrace it. Because it isn't, however, I imagine that audience opinion will be split. And, despite my admiration for many of *Boeing-Boeing*'s individual elements, my vote is with the nays.

The Old Globe presents *Boeing-Boeing* March 13 – April 18, 2010. Tickets (\$29 - \$77) available by calling (619) 23-GLOBE, or online at [the Old Globe's website](#).

Boeing-Boeing by Marc Camoletti and Beverley Cross. Directed by Mark Schneider from the West End production by Matthew Warchus. Scenic and Costume Design by Rob Howell, Lighting Design by Chris Rynne, Sound Design by Paul Peterson, Original Sound Design by Simon Baker, Original Music by Claire van Kampen, Casting by Samantha Barrie, CSA, Stage Manager: Daniel S. Rosokoff. With Liv Rooth, Rob Breckenridge, Nancy Robinette, Joseph Urla, Stephanie Fieger, and Caralyn Kozlowski.

Photo: Craig Schwartz

See the [current season schedule for the San Diego area](#).

- [Bill Eadie](#)

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Turbulence propels 'Boeing-Boeing'

BY JOSÉ A. LÓPEZ

In "Boeing-Boeing," the Tony-winning French farce playing through April 18 at the Old Globe Theatre, Bernard is an American architect living the charmed life of a playboy in Paris.

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REVIEW

French maid who, despite her constant grumbling, spends most of her time helping her "monsieur" keep his love life straight and his lovers well-fed and ignorant of each other.

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Stephanie Fieger as Gabriella and Joseph Urla as Robert in "Boeing-Boeing," playing at The Old Globe through April 18.

Photo Provided by Craig Schwartz.

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Boeing-Boeing

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If laughter is indeed the best medicine, then there's no better cure for the blues than a rollicking romp of a farce. British farces, like the recently reviewed *See How They Run* and *No Sex Please, We're British*, have become a particular favorite of this reviewer. The word farce does come from the French, however, so it should come as no surprise that English masters of farce like Ray (Move Over, Mrs. Markham) Cooney have their Gallic counterparts, most notably the late Marc Camoletti, author of *Boeing-Boeing* and *Don't Dress For Dinner*.

Surprisingly, despite *Boeing-Boeing*'s amazing seven-year run on London's West End, its 1965 U.K. to U.S. transfer lasted a mere 23 performances on Broadway. A 2008 Broadway revival, directed by Matthew Warchus, was considerably more successful, though, running more than ten times as long and scoring a pair of Tony wins (for Best Revival Of A Play and Best Leading Actor) plus nominations in four additional categories. Clearly, this most recent incarnation was doing something right.

Southland audiences can now see exactly what made *Boeing-Boeing* redux a critical and audience hit simply by driving down to San Diego's Old Globe Theatre where a smashing new production is underway, helmed by the Broadway revival's associate director Mark Schneider. Blessed with the New York production's gorgeous Tony-nominated sets and costumes (by Rob Howell) and a tip-top cast of comic actors to rival the Broadway originals, *Boeing-Boeing* at the Old Globe is an all-around crowd-pleasing hit.

Camoletti's Don Juan-like hero Bernard (Rob Breckenridge), an American architect living in Paris in the early 1960s, has found a most delectable way of having his gâteau and eating it too. Thanks to a book of airline timetables he keeps always at hand, Bernard has managed to juggle a grand total of three international air hostess fiancées, aided and abetted in this romantic deception by his disapproving but loyal French maid Berthe (Nancy Robinette).

Each of Bernard's fiancées shares his luxurious Parisian digs two days a week. Mondays and Tuesdays belong to perky all-American Gloria (Liv Rooth), Wednesdays and Thursdays to Italian bombshell Gabriella (Stephanie Fieger), and Fridays and Saturdays to German dynamo Gretchen (Caralyn Kozlowski). Bernard reserves Sundays for R & R, or perhaps just R, there already having been plenty of R the six previous days.

Boeing-Boeing's frenetic web of a plot unfolds over a single day during which a pair of events rock Bernard's heretofore perfect world. The first is a visit from his naïve, nebbishy, perhaps even virginal Wisconsin school chum Robert (Joseph Urla), who, once informed about Bernard's juggling act, finds himself at first aghast, then green with envy, and ultimately eager to emulate Bernard's lothario ways. The second is news of the introduction of the Super-Boeing, a jet whose greatly increased speed will mean all new schedules for Bernard's three fiancées. Add to that a combination of delayed flights and severe turbulence and you have the perfect setup for a master farce.

Act One prepares us for the frantic mayhem of Act Two when, as we've been eagerly

anticipating all the way up to intermission, all three fiancées find themselves in Bernard's apartment. Bernard of course, must find a way to keep them apart, a task somewhat facilitated by the seven doors leading off from the living room. (As in any farce, at least half a dozen doors are de rigueur. Otherwise, there could be no hiding behind them or emerging from them or slamming them, n'est-ce pas?)

Paramount to the 2008 revival's success, and that of the current Old Globe production, is the pitch-perfect tone set by Warchus and Schneider, the six-member cast's sparkling performances, and the razor-sharp timing that is essential in the land of farce.



As Bernard, the marvelous Breckenridge is a suaver version of Friends' Chandler Bing, suave that is until he finds himself with three different fiancées behind three different doors and no easy way out of the hole he's dug himself into. Robinette is a grumpy delight as the housekeeper whose patience is being sorely tried by her employer's antics, her existentialist "I'm here because I'm here" attitude slowly being replaced with a "What the devil am I doing here?" desire to scream. The sparkly Rooth is the very personification of sunshine and vim as Gloria, a gal with a blonde 60s flip whose every move appears to be a pose she's copied from some airline advertisement or store window mannequin. (Just wait, though, till this cross between Doris Day and Debbie Reynolds starts showing a kinkier side to her nature.) *La fantastica* Fieger takes as inspiration for her sexy turn those sultry Italian beauties who crossed the Atlantic to star opposite the likes of Rock Hudson and Tony Curtis in the 60s—think Sophia Loren, Claudia Cardinale, and Gina Lollobrigida rolled up into one va-a-voom package..

Finally, there are the downright brilliant Urla and Kozlowski as Robert and Gretchen, roles that won Mark Rylance a Tony and Mary McCormack a Tony nomination, and like their Broadway counterparts, the duo steal every scene they're in. (Credit Camoletti and translator-adapters Beverley Cross and Francis Evans for creating the kind of parts that win awards.)

Urla's Robert starts out such a cipher that you almost expect him to fade into the walls. Then, as Bernard comes more and more to depend on his friend to get him out of the mess he's created for himself, and as Robert becomes more and more aware of his own power as a man, pussycat blossoms into tiger to such an extent that it's no wonder at least one of Bernard's honeys starts lusting after her fiancé's Wisconsin pal. Urla is a master of physical comedy whose scenes opposite Kozlowski positively crackle. Speaking of whom... With her blonder-than-platinum bouffant upsweep, mile-long legs, and almost manly stride, Kozlowski's Gretchen is every red-blooded American's Teutonic dream (or nightmare), sexy, appealing, and daunting as all get-out. (Think curvaceous six-foot Weimaraner in spike heels.) When Robert and Gretchen start falling for each other, Urla's and Kozlowski's performances rise to a whole new level of magnifiquie.

Scenic designer Howell's Paris living-room set remains hidden behind a colorfully lit scrim till "scrim-up," the better to surprise and delight the audience with its gorgeous originality—an enormous half-circle of a cream-colored wall, a trio of huge decorative globes hanging suspended from the rafters, each a different hue. There's pink for Gloria's red TWA uniform, pale blue for Gabriella's bright blue Alitalia garb, and pastel yellow for Gretchen's rich yellow Lufthansa duds. The pink (or red), blue, and yellow scheme is carried on in the three air hostesses' tote bags, the roses Berthe changes every other day in the vase by the entry doors, and other assorted paraphernalia. Chris Rynne's lighting enhances the blend of pastels and vivid tones in Howell's set and in the short, tight, sexy uniforms Howell has designed for the ladies. Paul Peterson's impeccable sound design (based on Simon Baker's original) features a mood-setting pre-show medley of French covers of American 60s hits, including "It's My Party" (which becomes "C'est Ma Fête") and "I Only Want To Be With You" (which becomes a quite-the-opposite "À Présent Tu Peux T'En Aller" or "At Present You Can Go Away"). The production also features original music by Claire van Kampen from the Broadway production. Daniel S. Rosokoff serves as stage manager, assisted by Annette Yé.

Finally, it's not over till the curtain calls, which San Diego's James Vasquez has staged to a 60s beat with supreme imagination and flair.

It just so happens that Boeing-Boeing is set to close three days after the dreaded income tax deadline, which brings me back to my original point. If just thinking about April 15 is getting you down, there's no better way to raise your spirits, at least for two and a half hours, than by taking a trip to 1960s Paris via Boeing-Boeing. Trust me. It's a lot more affordable than a transatlantic flight on a 747, and a heck of a lot more fun.

Old Globe Theatre, Balboa Park, San Diego. Through April 18. Tuesdays and Wednesdays at 7:00, Thursdays and Fridays at 8:00, Saturdays at 2:00 and 8:00, Sundays at 2:00 and 7:00. Reservations: 619 234-5623 www.oldglobe.org

--Steven Stanley
March 21, 2010

Photos: Craig Schwartz

RANCHO BERNARDO NEWS JOURNAL

March 25, 2010

Turbulence propels 'Boeing-Boeing'

BY JOSÉ A. LÓPEZ

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Stephanie Fieger as Gabriella and Joseph Urla as Robert in "Boeing-Boeing," playing at The Old Globe through April 18.

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theatre review

Old Globe farce takes off for fun ride

By Charlene Baldridge
SDUN Theatre Critic

The title of Marc Camoletti's 1960 French farce, "Boeing-Boeing" (playing on the Old Globe's Donald and Darlene Shiley Stage through April 18), refers to the air transport manufacturer. Translated by Beverley Cross, the frivolous sex comedy played more than 2,000 performances in London, and though the 1965 Broadway production endured less than a month, it became a 1965 film with Tony Curtis and Jerry Lewis.

As directed by Matthew Warchus in 2008, the revival had a respectable Broadway run, garnering numerous Tony Award nominations and two statuettes, one for best revival of a play and another for British actor Mark Rylance, who played the triple-timing leading man, Bernard. The action takes place in his Paris apartment.

"Boeing-Boeing" might also refer to the sexual escapades of Bernard (Rob Breckenridge), who remains stationary, though he bounces between his three mini-skirted "fiancées." Each is a flight attendant whose schedule he meticulously tracks. Lest one worry about keeping the "girls" straight, they are color-coded. Blonde Gloria (Liv Rooth), who eats ketchup on her pancakes,



Liv Rooth as ketchup-eating Gloria and Joseph Urla as befuddled Robert in "Boeing-Boeing." (Photo by Craig Schwartz)

is an American and wears pink. Dark-haired Gabriella (Stephanie Fieger), her jets spewing sparks, is Italian and wears blue. Bossy Gretchen (Caralyn Koslowski), a Teutonic Valkyrie, wears yellow. Following Warchus' direction of the West End and Broadway revivals, Mark Schneider stages the madcap farce, in which timing is everything.

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BOEING-BOEING

Through April 18

7 p.m. Sundays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays

8 p.m. Thursdays through Saturdays

2 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays

Old Globe Theatre, Balboa Park

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There are better farces and the other actors are fine, though all seem impeded by their several accents. The listener's ear and brain are challenged to keep adapting due to the frantic pace. That having been said, it's a beautiful sight and an enjoyable romp.

Everything about the physical production meets the Globe's high standards. Rob Howell designs both set and costumes, with lighting by Chris Rynne and original sound design by Simon Baker, effected here by Paul Peterson. Claire van Kampen provides original music. ♦

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Old Globe farce takes off for fun ride

Posted by [admin](#) on 4/01/10 • Categorized as [Arts & Entertainment](#), [Theater](#)

By Charlene Baldrige

SDUN Theatre Critic



The title of Marc Camoletti's 1960 French farce, "Boeing-Boeing" (playing on the Old Globe's Donald and Darlene Shiley Stage through April 18), refers to the air transport manufacturer. Translated by Beverley Cross, the frivolous sex comedy played more than 2,000 performances in London, and though the 1965 Broadway production endured less than a month, it became a 1965 film with Tony Curtis and Jerry Lewis.

As directed by Matthew Warchus in 2008, the revival had a respectable Broadway run, garnering numerous Tony Award nominations and two statuettes, one for best revival of a play and another for British actor Mark Rylance, who played the triple-timing leading man, Bernard. The action takes place in his Paris apartment.

"Boeing-Boeing" might also refer to the sexual escapades of Bernard (Rob Breckenridge), who remains stationary, though he bounces between his three mini-skirted "fiancées." Each is a flight attendant whose schedule he meticulously tracks. Lest one worry about keeping the "girls" straight, they are color-coded. Blonde Gloria (Liv Rooth), who eats ketchup on her pancakes, is an American and wears pink. Dark-haired Gabriella (Stephanie Fieger), her jets spewing sparks, is Italian and wears blue. Bossy Gretchen (Caralyn Koslowski), a Teutonic Valkyrie, wears yellow. Following Warchus' direction of the West End and

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There are better farces and the other actors are fine, though all seem impeded by their several accents. The listener's ear and brain are challenged to keep adapting due to the frantic pace. That having been said, it's a beautiful sight and an enjoyable romp.

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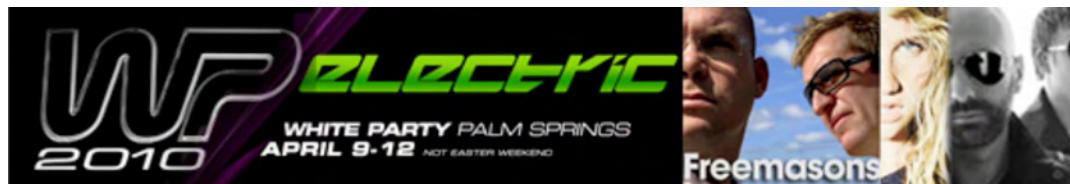
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Entertainment :: Theatre

Boeing-Boeing

 by Steve Heyl
 EDGE Contributor
 Saturday Mar 20, 2010

 (left) Stephanie Fieger as Gabriella and Joseph Urla;
 (center) Caralyn Kozlowski and Urla; (right) Liv
 Rooth in the Old Globe's production of Boeing-
 Boeing, through April 18. (Source: Craig Schwartz)

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sure that two are on other continents at all times. With help of his long-suffering housekeeper Berthe, meals, pictures, and even flowers are changed before each woman arrives. Bernard's old friend Robert comes to Paris for a visit just as Gloria (an American who flies with TWA) is leaving and Gabriella (an Italian who flies with Alitalia) is arriving. Gabriella goes to her next flight right after lunch, while Gretchen (a German who flies with Lufthansa) is scheduled to arrive in time for dinner. New, faster planes and weather problems change all the schedules, resulting in confusion that rivals a Southwest Airlines boarding gate.

For the Tony winning 2008 Broadway revival on which this production is based, Broadway director Matthew Warchus went back to the original 1960 French script, rather than the 1962 translation for the London stage or the 1965 movie. The Associate Director on the Broadway revival and director of this production, Mark Schneider, includes plenty of non-verbal comedic episodes. The resulting show runs nearly as long as a flight from LAX to DFW (in case you don't have the OAG handy, that's about 3 hours with intermission). Although theater seats are more comfortable than coach class, it still feels like being in a holding pattern way too long before the actual landing.

Scenic and costume designer Rob Howell has created a (Tony nominated) stunning, semi-circular, and mostly white set. This is a superb frame for the ever-changing accessories in each woman's signature color (based on their airline of course - red for TWA, blue for Alitalia, and yellow for Lufthansa). Barcelona chairs and other mid century furniture complete the look. Alas the set is a little too spacious for what is essentially an intimate drawing room farce. This forces the actors into some awkward cross stage movement, such as on point when Bernard and Robert are surprised and jump back to the wall; unfortunately the wall is several feet behind them, and they have to run to get there.

There was a time when air travel was glamorous, flight attendants were all twenty-something mini-skirt wearing women, and cool men with bachelor pads chased after them. This is the world of The Old Globe's regional premier **Boeing-Boeing**. The downstage bean bag chair and TWA flight bag set both the mood and time perfectly before the curtain even goes up.

"Fiancés are more friendly than wives" says Bernard, an American architect living in Paris. So he has three of them, all flight attendants ("they've all been tried and tested by the airlines. All the work's been done for me"). Of course, each thinks she is his only girl. Bernard keeps a copy of the OAG (the Official Airline Guide) in his desk so he can keep track of each one's schedule, making




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The small cast is headlined by Rob Breckenridge who seems to alternate between playing Bernard relatively straightforward and playing him over the top; either interpretation can work for material this broad, but the shifting between them doesn't work well. Stephanie Fieger's Gabriella strikes a much better balance, as does Liv Rooth's Gloria, with the possible exception of her over the top kiss in act two. Joseph Urla gives us a little Jerry Lewis (who played the same character in the movie) and a little David Schwimmer with his interpretation of Robert, but it works for the character. Nancy Robinette, fresh from The Old Globe's fall production of The Savannah Disputation, is flawless as Berthe. However, it is Caralyn Kozlowski who steals the show as Gretchen. She can make sauerkraut sound sexy and funny at the same time.

When you put it all together, this is one of those "I know the destination but I'm having fun getting there" shows. It is not the smoothest theatrical flight of the year, but it takes off and lands safely. And according to many pilots that's all that counts.

Boeing, Boeing continues through April 18 at the Old Globe theater in San Diego. For more information visit the [Old Globe theater website](#)

A computer geek by day, one of Steve's evening loves is San Diego theater (the other is his husband of 20 years), which he enjoys sharing with others (theater, not the husband).

COMMENTS

"Boeing-Boeing"

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Boeing Boeing

Marc Camoletti's fluffy French farce is all about the turbulence caused by the burlesquing juxtaposition of estrogen and testosterone inside Bernard's cozy Parisian apartment. Those forces hang palpably--in the air--and allow this almost-anything-goes comedy to strut one-dimensional, stereotypical set-ups that quickly morph into a multi-dimensional, rollicking laugh fest.

The Old Globe's 4+ week production will best the play's earlier 1965 New York run which ran for a mere 23 performances before closing its doors. In 2008 the Broadway revival had a much longer run and picked up a few Tonys. It appears that the play now has a better American fit after they dusted off the original French script for a better translation. Nevertheless, "Boeing Boeing" still holds a record with Guinness for the longest running French play in history.

It seems like an unfair advantage when three air hostesses take turns landing at Bernard's Paris house-pad, all marked with the extended descriptive, "fiancee," tucked in their overnight bag. But a plot that could be defined as most men's fantasy quickly becomes Bernard's crash-landing nightmare. You see, Bernard's air traffic control wizardry has--until most recently--landed him the constant company of three "hot" airline hostesses, with one gal on the runway at any given time, thank you very much.

There's the take-charge Gloria (Liv Rooth), an American who maintains a very wide spread when she makes a crash-landing at Bernard's pad. And then there's Gabriella (Stephanie Fieger), a sentimental Italian who gushes constantly about a future fixed date for the wedding. And finally--my favorite--there's the dominating German, Gretchen (Caralyn Kozlowski), who defends sauerkraut and all things Deutschland. All three are drop-dead gorgeous, with fabulous gams, and could give seminars on the art of French kissing. Oh, the passions--and accents--that are cushioned on Bernard's oh, so modern arrival deck that offers lots of leg and stretch room and little more, the better to focus your attention on the leggy visitors from the skies of Lufthansa, Alitalia, and TWA.

Bernard's American friend, Robert (Joseph Urla), steals the show with a Woody-Allen-esque performance, while Berthe (Nancy Robinette) offers up constantly changing food menus, harsh criticism and some wry humor. Think of her as the baggage claim's whining loudspeaker. Rob Breckenridge, who plays Bernard, has his hands full, what with all of the swinging doors from the friendly skies open at all hours of the night and day, and does a fine job of acting and prancing lightly about the stage when things get awkward.

Although the pace could use a push forward now and then, "Boeing Boeing" is executed with a fine precision by Director Mark Schneider, allowing burlesque to move to a semi-high comedic level.

After lift-off every night at the Old Globe you'll be able to sit back and enjoy love, desire, warmth, impatience, confidence, and voracious sexual appetites, all rolled into a 2-hour theatrical flight.

("Boeing Boeing" plays through April 18 at The Old Globe Theatre)

Diversionsary Theatre will present Stephen Karam's "Speech & Debate" thru April 11. This one is directed by Jason Southerland and includes sex, secrets, performance-art blogs and blackmail, or as they say, a typical day in Salem, Oregon. Ring them up for tickets at 619.220.0097 or visit them at diversionary.org.

THE NATION'S 3RD OLDEST LGBT THEATRE



Temo's Theatre Tips

By Cuauhtemoc Kish

San Diego Opera will present Giuseppe Verdi's "La Traviata" from April 1 poignant story combine for one of opera's greatest hits. Lavish sets, gorgeous costumes, Paris to you, and allow two hearts find true love, only to be separated by their two di sdopera.com or by phone at 619.533.7000.

New Village Arts will offer Wendy Wasserstein's "The Heidi Chronicles" from members Kristianne Kurner and Amanda Morrow. This one won the 1989 Pulitzer prize anniversary celebration has Heidi Holland, an art historian, navigating her way through movement, often with hilarious results. Call for tickets at 760.433.3245 or visit them at newvillagearts.org.

North Coast Rep will produce Henrik Ibsen's "Ghosts" from April 7 thru 1881, and is a gripping tale of secrets and lies. Ibsen saw it as an opportunity to expose Victorian society. It's a scathing commentary on 19th century morality, yet remains that is still relevant. It's all about passion, revelation and reconciling the truth. Call for tickets at northcoastrep.org.

Lamb's Players Theatre will offer up a six-week run of Norman Corwin's "The Lincoln-Douglas Debates" thru May 16. The focus is upon the Lincoln-Douglas debates that have no equal in American history. A close-up portrait of the two larger-than-life personalities. For ticket information call them at lambplayers.org.

The Old Globe will produce two new shows thru late April. First up we have a Cross fun vehicle called "Boeing-Boeing." It runs thru April 18th and promises to be a successful run in London and New York. Bernard lives in Paris and works as an arranger with three flight attendants he's promised to marry. Expect lots of turbulence. Second up is called "Alive & Well" that runs thru April 25. It's Kenny Finkle's romantic comedy in which two individuals, Carlo, a city reporter, and Zach, a Southern tracker. Call for tickets at TheOldGlobe.net.

San Diego Rep will delight audiences with Herbert Siguenza's play called "Picasso." Siguenza is a member of Culture Clash and this play promises to be a or his audience Picasso's proclamations about children, war, creativity, ambition, desire, will sing, clown, paint, dance ballet, and even impersonate a matador. Look for live a

ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE: Pilot balances three wives in new play

By Kari Luu, Staff Writer

Published: Thursday, March 25, 2010

Updated: Thursday, March 25, 2010

Forget the blondes, playboys know how to have all the fun.

In The Old Globe's latest production "Boeing-Boeing," Bernard (played by Rob Breckenridge) seems to have it all: success as an architect, a beautiful apartment in Paris and engagements to three beautiful flight attendants. Each woman doesn't know about the other and each one is just as vivacious and strong-willed as the others.

With the productions' polygamous undertones, Bernard is deeply in love with the trio and keeps the balance using his "times table," which is the flight pattern of every airline. When Bernard's friend Robert, played by Joseph Urla, makes a surprise visit to Paris and takes a backseat in Bernard's lifestyle, he soon has to partake in maintaining the secret as Bernard's attempts to juggle the women go awry when each one decides to change their schedule to be closer to their fiancée.

His first fiancée is American firecracker Gloria, who is loud, liberal and neurotic. Bride-to-be number two is petite Gabriella, who is stubborn and rooted in her Italian and family-centered customs. Finally there is sexy German Gretchen, who speaks with a passionate Arnold Schwarzenegger accent and is the funniest and craziest of the bunch. Bernard doesn't really want to marry all of the women, he just enjoys the possibilities and his range of options.

This hilarious comedy is chock-full of witty banter, snappy one-liners and an outstanding cast. The play takes place only in Bernard's apartment, which provides plenty of action with the women coming and going. Because of this, much time is spent on the shy and timid Robert, as he never leaves Bernard's apartment and is forced to interact with each fiancée, all of whom mesmerize him with their ravishing beauty. Robert starts off as a pushover, but one can see his transition in personality throughout the play as he becomes a stronger individual. He definitely has the most comedic scenes because of his awkward demeanor and his approach to handling the sticky situation.

Bernard's sassy French maid Berthe (played by Nancy Robinette) also reluctantly plays a flight traffic controller for Bernard as she is forced to rearrange the apartment and tailor meals to each woman's liking. Berthe is easily a viewer's favorite as she is exasperated by the way Bernard lives and openly complains with hilarious results. She does nothing to make Robert's stay easier and enjoys taking advantage of his passive personality. The play does take a twist near the end and has surprising results, which leaves the audience very satisfied with what Bernard is forced to do with his life.

The Old Globe production is set in a 1960s time frame, like the 1965 "Boeing Boeing" film starring Tony Curtis. This makes the setting and costumes very chic, serving as retro eye candy. The main colors consist of the bright primary colors red, blue and yellow. The women are treated like party favors, but this is to be expected in a play set in this time period. However, each woman has a defining characteristic that makes her unique.

Overall, "Boeing-Boeing" would not be quite the same if viewed as a film. A movie would take away much of the play's simplicity, delightful awkward moments and comedy that makes it so valuable. It is a worthy production, with its mixture of fun and slapstick humor that any viewer can enjoy.



Courtesy of The Old Globe



Courtesy of Craig Schwartz

THEATER

The horrors of war and an unfunny farce

by Jean Lowerison

'Boeing-Boeing'

Ah, French farce: the perfect antidote for bad economic news, lousy weather or any other unpleasantness that may be weighing you down.

Boeing-Boeing, written in the 1960s by Marc Camoletti and translated by Beverley Cross, ran for seven years in London before crossing the pond to Broadway failure in 1965. But a second production in 2008 was a great success, resulting in six Tony nominations and two wins.

Now the Old Globe gets into the act, presenting the play through April 18. Mark Schneider directs.

It's a handsome production, taking place entirely in the expansive Paris apartment of architect Bernard (Rob Breckenridge). Scenic designer Rob Howell uses the entire width of the stage to get in the six requisite doors (seven, if you count the double front door), three huge hanging globes suspended above a circular rug of the same three colors.

But that's where its charm ends. Let's start with the plot, an impossible-to-care-about saga concerning that scoundrel of an architect Bernard, operating on the "if a little is good, more is better" principle and trying to juggle three airline attendant "fiancees" by making sure their flight schedules don't collide. Breckenridge lacks the charisma and commanding presence that would make this notion even palatable, much less interesting.

Along as catalyst to make sure Bernard's plans go awry is old college buddy Robert (Joseph Urla), a recent transplant to Paris and in search of both housing and wife, who gets dragged into the proceedings when he stays with Bernard for a few days. He's the most human character in the show.

The women's costumes (by Rob Howell, from the 2008 Broadway production) are conveniently color coded for us. Gloria (Liv Rooth, in bright red) is an impossibly upbeat American who loves to stand in A-line position; Gabriella (Stephanie Fieger), in bright blue, the typical hot-blooded Italian mamma; and yellow-clad, domineering Lufthansa stew Gretchen (Carolyn Kozlowski) may as well be wearing leather (you saw that one coming, right?).

Trying to deal with this annoying musical-beds game is French housekeeper Berthe (Nancy Robinette, so good in *The Savannah Disputation*), who unsurprisingly keeps threatening to quit, as does her French accent.

It's not even the misogynist underpinnings of the plot that sink the show, nor that the line between exaggeration and grotesquerie is crossed far too often; it's that the show is just not funny. French farces almost always involve sex with improper strangers, but involving the audience requires either sympathetic characters or funny lines, preferably both. *Boeing-Boeing* has neither. The women don't even come together in this script. I'm sorry to say I didn't laugh once.

But you know what? The audience loved it.

Boeing-Boeing plays through Sunday, April 18, at the Old Globe Theatre's Donald and Darlene Shiley Stage. Shows Tuesday and Wednesday at 7 p.m.; Thursday and Friday at 8 p.m.; Saturday at 2 and 8 p.m.; Sunday at 2 and 7 p.m. For tickets call 619-234-5623 or visit www.theoldglobe.org. ●

theater

The horrors of war and an unfunny farce

BY JEAN LOWERISON

Published Thursday, 08-Apr-2010 in [issue 1163](#)

An American Duet

The cost of war is usually reported in measurable things – dollars, bodies. But those statistics don't take into account war's sinister, difficult-to-quantify effects on the lives and souls of the living.

Two unsettling plays are doing just that: Yussef El Guindi's *Back of the Throat* and Quiara Alegría Hudes' *Elliot, A Soldier's Fugue* play in repertory through Saturday, April 17 at the new Hillcrest digs of the adventurous ion theatre.

'Back of the Throat'

Palestinian-American writer Khaled (the pronunciation of whose Arabic name gives the piece its title) opens his apartment door to two unknown and uninvited American agents. At first they seem cordial, almost friendly, but as older agent Bartlett (Walter Ritter) asks seemingly harmless questions, his partner Carl (Tom Hall) snoops around the apartment, opening drawers, rummaging through books – all without telling Khaled (Brian Abraham) why they're there.

It's unsettling enough if you "look American" – but given the wars the U.S. is now fighting, looking Middle Eastern is doubly risky, because regardless what anyone says, the memory of 9/11 remains in the back of every American's mind.

Khaled mentions that he wants to help in the war on terror and would have volunteered as a translator except that he does not speak Arabic. Carl pulls a girlie magazine from under the bed; this one has a photo of a naked woman draped over a cow. Bartlett registers disapproval while admitting that Khaled "has the right" to read such material. They agree that almost anything could be interpreted negatively (though Bartlett still won't tell Khaled what they're looking for).

As the conversation goes on, Khaled becomes increasingly nervous (which Bartlett is quick to interpret as guilt). Finally Khaled says he wants an attorney and asks them to leave; Bartlett frowns and suggests that is not a good idea.

Sara Beth Morgan's direction keeps the action taut and spare and the tension escalating until it's almost too much for the audience (let alone Khaled) to bear.

This is an outstanding cast. Abraham, whose physical stature suggests he could flatten both Bartlett and Carl with little effort, uses voice inflection, tentative movements and gradually more cautious conversation to convey Khaled's spiraling level of fear.

Ritter's Bartlett is the kind of guy you don't want to cross, not because he presents a physical threat but because each syllable contains veiled menace of another sort.

Hall's young punk-in-a-suit demeanor contrasts with Ritter's older, avuncular approach; you wouldn't want to meet him in a dark alley.

Rhys Greene plays Asfoor, another immigrant who may have had dealings with Khaled and DeNae Steele plays a librarian, Khaled's ex-girlfriend and a stripper in brief but telling scenes.

Back of the Throat presents a sobering, even frightening snapshot of the

unintended consequences of the Patriot Act and other "security" measures enacted since 9/11. Bartlett puts it this way: "What is more important: inconveniencing you with accusations of having broken the law or ensuring the safety of everyone?"

Egypt-born Seattle resident El Guindi may have given us the best post-9/11 play possible, as *Back of the Throat* invites us to consider what we are willing to give up in the name of security.

'Elliot, a Soldier's Fugue'

Nineteen-year-old Elliot (Steven Lone), a wounded warrior just back from Iraq and deciding whether to re-up, represents the third generation of Marines in his Puerto Rican family. Grandpop (Goyo Flores) served in Korea; Pop (John Padilla) in Vietnam, even mom Ginny (Miriam White) was a nurse in 'Nam.

Though no one in the family wants Elliot to return to battle, they don't mention it. War is a fact of life but not a topic of conversation. Nor are war stories shared: Pop has never even told his son about his military experiences.

Playwright Quiara Alegría Hudes' *Elliot, a Soldier's Fugue* is a tone poem about the experience of war and its effects on this family, done mostly in monologues with occasional fugue-like sections in which characters' words call and respond and sometimes tumble over each other like a musical composition.

In fact, it is the musicality of the script as much as the content that is remarkable, as characters talk about the shock of the first kill, a reconnaissance mission for bodies, the lonely horror of being wounded.



Stephanie Fieger as Gabriella and Joseph Urla as Robert in 'Boeing-Boeing,' at The Old Globe through Sunday, April 18.

CREDIT: PHOTO BY CRAIG SCHWARTZ

But there are also gentler reflections: Ginny tells how she tried to make life more comfortable and bearable for the wounded; Grandpop reveals that he took his flute to Korea, where he played Bach “because it’s cold music, it is like math. You can approach it like a calculation.”

And since her return, Ginny has recreated a little bit of Puerto Rico in her Philadelphia garden, noting that “a seed is a contract with the future.”

It is not surprising that Hudes has degrees in both music and playwriting, nor that at 28 she was a Pulitzer Prize finalist for *Elliot*. She was shortlisted again in 2009 for the book of the Tony-winning musical *In The Heights*.

Elliot takes place on an appropriately spare set: two rectangular blocks to serve as beds and chairs, a backlit white curtain at the rear.

Sylvia Enrique directs this splendid cast with a sure hand. Lone deftly portrays the bravado and fear, young man’s excitement and adult soberness of Elliot’s transition from rookie to veteran warrior. This is his best work to date.

Padilla’s poignant portrayal of the war-weary Pop makes a good connection with us and with San Diego newcomer White as Ginny, whose nuanced performance impresses and whose gardening talk brings hope of renewal and redemption.

Flores projects the wisdom and dignity of Grandpop’s age and experience, as well as his underlying sadness.

It isn’t often that war and its aftermath are brought to us on such a human and personal level. These plays need to be seen by all.

Elliot, a Soldier’s Fugue plays Wednesday and Friday (with a 4 p.m. matinee on Saturday, April 17 in repertory with *Back of the Throat* (playing Thursday and Saturday; 4 p.m. matinee on Saturday, April 10) through Saturday, April 17, at ion theatre in Hillcrest. For tickets call 619-600-5020 or visit www.iontheatre.com.

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But that’s where its charm ends. Let’s start with the plot, an impossible-to-care-about saga concerning that scoundrel of an architect Bernard, operating on the “if a little is good, more is better” principle and trying to juggle three airline attendant “fiancees” by making sure their flight schedules don’t collide. Breckenridge lacks the charisma and commanding presence that would make this notion even palatable, much less interesting.

Along as catalyst to make sure Bernard’s plans go awry is old college buddy Robert (Joseph Urla), a recent transplant to Paris and in search of both housing and wife, who gets dragged into the proceedings when he stays with Bernard for a few days. He’s the most human character in the show.

The women’s costumes (by Rob Howell, from the 2008 Broadway production) are conveniently color coded for us. Gloria (Liv Rooth, in bright red) is an impossibly upbeat American who loves to stand in A-line position; Gabriella (Stephanie Fieger), in bright blue, the typical hot-blooded Italian mamma; and yellow-clad, domineering Lufthansa stew Gretchen (Caralyn Kozlowski) may as well be wearing leather (you saw that one coming, right?).

Trying to deal with this annoying musical-beds game is French housekeeper Berthe (Nancy Robinette, so good in *The Savannah Disputation*), who unsurprisingly keeps threatening to quit, as does her French accent.

It’s not even the misogynist underpinnings of the plot that sink the show, nor that the line between exaggeration and grotesquerie is crossed far too often; it’s that the show is just not funny. French farces almost always involve sex with improper strangers, but involving the audience requires either sympathetic characters or funny lines, preferably both. *Boeing-Boeing* has neither. The women don’t even come together in this script. I’m sorry to say I didn’t laugh once.

But you know what? The audience loved it.

Boeing-Boeing plays through Sunday, April 18, at the Old Globe Theatre’s Donald and Darlene Shiley Stage. Shows Tuesday and Wednesday at 7 p.m.; Thursday and Friday at 8 p.m.; Saturday at 2 and 8 p.m.; Sunday at 2 and 7 p.m. For tickets call 619-234-5623 or visit www.theoldglobe.org.

No comments yet

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The Old Globe Theatre Retro's the Swingin' '60s

Thursday, March 18, 2010

The Old Globe Theatre

San Diego, California

Review by *Palm Springs Guides* Theatre & Cinema Critic/Reviewer Jack Lyons

Photos by Craig Schwartz

If you've ever wondered about the rules of social discourse, and the liberated sexual mores of the "swingin' '60s" — which we've all heard were a bit racy — then catch a performance of "Boeing-Boeing," the new production currently on stage at The Old Globe in San Diego, and check-out for yourself the era that your father and grandfather found so exciting and intriguing.



This particular comedy/farce production, directed by Mark Schneider, serves up a deliciously madcap-paced and spicy recipe of a plotline that can claim many fathers over the years. French playwright Marc Camoletti's original 1960 sex-comedy romp debuted in Paris looking suspiciously like the plotline from the 1953 British movie "The Captain's Paradise," starring Alec Guinness, who as a seafaring Captain, has a girl in every port.

Two years later, an English-language translation of "Boeing-Boeing," written by Beverly Cross, hit the West End London stage to great reviews and sold-out audiences for almost seven years. However, the Broadway run that followed three years later, flopped, running only 23 performances.

When the inevitable movie version starring Tony Curtis and Jerry Lewis was released in 1965, it garnered mixed results. The French loved it (Lewis is a national hero in France), but American viewers merely yawned, although Curtis turned in a respectable performance. Broadway, however, rediscovered the play in 2008, producing a refreshed Tony-nominated revival, and

now, the latest iteration of the “story” finds itself on the stage of The Old Globe.

What then, is the “story” that so captivates and warrants productions every now and then? After all, sex is not a spectator sport. However, we humans seem to enjoy observing our fellow players in the “great game,” squirming and obfuscating when it comes to multiple relationships and the care and feeding of same (without getting caught in the process).



Basically Bernard, a successful American architect living in Paris in the 1960s, thinks he can easily juggle his three flight attendant fiancées. As he says, “it all boils down to juggling timetables and a reliable maid who never forgets to change the photographs.” When Robert, an old friend from college days arrives and Bernard’s three fiancées each change their flight schedules, his routine and his plans hit some unexpected turbulence.

What follows is the stuff of classic French farce. It’s slamming doors, frenetic pacing and crazed situations that rule in trying to keep Bernard’s ladies separated from one another. At least he has the good sense to select flight attendants from three different international carriers, each of whom are usually criss-crossing the globe at different times, or so he thinks.



Even if the plotline is a little tired and banal, the cast is definitely up for the challenge. The timing and pacing requires only first-rate actors need apply for work in this show. And that’s exactly who are up on the stage. The story may revolve around Bernard, but it’s Robert, in the form of Joseph Urla, who steals the show. His initial sad-sack portrayal, and his eventual warming to the suggestive and seductive situation, keep the audience in stitches. It’s a case study in understated actor magic.



The three gorgeous ladies in Bernard's life are: Liv Rooth as Gloria, (TWA) Stephanie Fieger as Gabriella, (Al Italia) and Caralyn Kozlowski as Gretchen (Lufthansa). The ladies are not only beautiful, but they have talent and energy to burn. Nancy Robinette as Berthe the maid (she was terrific in "The Savannah Disputation" last season) brings the right amount of frustration to her role in keeping the ladies and her employer happy, without losing her mind — well, almost.

Rob Breckenridge as Bernard, the self-satisfied lothario, has the tough "plot" part. Those roles are usually the least rewarding from the actors point of view. His on-stage colleagues get to have all the fun. They can go over-the-top and get away with it. Breckenridge, however, finds his moments of silliness and fun too.

A great deal of the credit for the success of this show goes to director Mark Schneider, who's personal vision on how to mount this zany farce, is realized on a classy set design by Rob Howell, who also costumes the show. Although for me, the set has too large a stage area. I would have liked to see the characters feel even more physically confined inside the playing area, heightening the absurdity of their situations.

Howell's costumes visually recreate the swinging '60s hot-pants look of London's Carnaby Street and Paris' Left Bank. It also helps that the ladies have the figures to complete the vision of what it was like to live, work and dress in sophisticated Paris during the sexual revolution.

I feel it's incumbent on me to mention that, although, we're in the '60s onstage, director Schneider infuses his play with 21st century sexual mores and stage business when it comes to those reptilian-like, lip-lock scenes. The production is a light-hearted romp with plenty of eye-candy appeal, which should please even the most jaded of the audience.

"Boeing-Boeing" will be performed at The Old Globe Theatre through April 18.

For more [about The Old Globe Theatre](#), click here.

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BEHIND THE SCENES by Jenni Prisk

Email Jenni

Hello! Can you believe it's almost the end of March? More beautiful days ahead.

My 2 Cents

Boeing-Boeing is in full flight on the Old Globe stage, through April 18. This high energy French farce, by Marc Camoletti (who wrote it in French) and Beverley Cross, directed by Mark Schneider is played on a semi-circular set, dressed in candy-colored pinks, blues and yellows. The plot centers round egotist Bernard (dapper Rob Breckenridge) and his three fiancés, gorgeous Gabriela (seductively played by Stephanie Fieger), bold and beautiful, and funny Gretchen (Caralyn Kozlowski) and loud, aggressive Gloria (Liv Rooth). Enter Bernard's old friend Robert (droll and entertaining Joseph Urla) and the mayhem is multiplied. Top it all off with a very funny portrayal of the maid, Berte by Nancy Robinette. The play is dated now, but good acting, fast pace (when it got going on opening night in the second act) and brilliantly colored costumes will keep you in your seat and laughing at this (too) long production.

Managed to catch the closing performance of Euripides' *Orestes*, translated by Dr. Marianne McDonald, directed by Douglas Lay at The Theatre, Inc. Dr. McDonald's translations make the Greek classics very accessible to 21st century audiences, and it's sad to see how little human nature has changed over the centuries, in regard to war and power. The play is about revenge and tragedy and black comedy, and Lay brought it all out in full force. He himself played three roles with adroitness, especially the "game show" host at the end in his coat of many colors! A charming, chorus of young women, singing music composed by Leigh Scarritt, were the conscience of the piece.

Behind the Scenes with the Bard

Our rehearsals are becoming more intense now as we play with more of the intricacies of the plot of *The Taming of the Shrew*. A few of the cast are "off book" (don't need their scripts) now and once this happens, the characters begin to emerge more fully. At a rehearsal this week, when I wasn't required on stage, I watched a couple of the scenes and found myself giggling a lot. It was interesting to learn more about Kate through the lines of the other characters. We have a truly delightful cast and crew, no cross words (yet!!) no "divas" (yet!!) but a family of friends who are working their heads off to make this production successful. And we do become a family. Several of us discussed this recently, how a group of somewhat complete strangers comes together for a couple of months, makes magic, then all disappear and return to other lives or move on to other productions. Here's a link to playing dates and tickets:

http://www.intrepidshakespeare.com/Taming_of_the_Shrew.html

Theatre News

We had a terrific turnout for the All City Auditions at the Theatre in Old Town on Monday. 90 auditioners and 60 auditors! It is always great to see actors who get a lot of work around town showing up to audition. They know the importance of fresh material being seen by casting directors. Kudos to Shauna Ostrom and Shelly Breneman for staging a great theatre experience.

Rhapsody in Bloom, will be presented by Write Out Loud, April 19th, 7:00 p.m. at Old Town Theatre, 4040 Twigg Street, San Diego, CA 92110. Stories about how gardens and nature impact our lives! Tickets are only \$12/\$10 for Seniors, Military and Students, Call 619-297-8953 for reservations. A perfect spring production.

Baldwin New Play Festival: UC San Diego Theatre District/La Jolla Playhouse

April 14 - 24, 2010, in the Mandell Weiss Forum Theatre:

Everything Nice, written by Stephanie Timm, directed by Jeffrey Wienckowski;

Oyster, written by Ronald McCants, directed by Larissa Lury.

In the Theodore and Adele Shank Theatre:

Phantom Band, written by Krista Knight, directed by Tom Dugdale.

In the Arthur Wagner Theatre: Two One-Acts on One Bill: In a Word, written by Lauren Yee, directed by Adam Arian; Muzungu, written by David Myers, directed by Anthony Luciano

A staged reading of: Obamanation, written by Lou-Lou (Ijeabalum) Igbokwe, Dartmouth College, director to be announced.

This festival is exhilarating and interesting, and a terrific opportunity to see the works of young playwrights.

On March 30, Cygnet Theatre and Prayer Dudz present an evening of live comedy at Cygnet's Old Town Theatre. Hosted by Mark Christopher Lawrence (The Piano Lesson, NBC's "Chuck"). Featuring performances by: Vicki Barbolak (from "Whose Minding the Store") Jimmy Burns (as heard on "Live from Here") Scott Wood (as seen on Comedy Central) Tickets: \$20. Visit www.cygnettheatre.com for more information.



And Cygnet opens the delicious Sweeney Todd at the Theatre in Old Town this weekend. Featuring Sean Murray and Deborah Gilmour Smyth in the leading roles, this will be a madcap, bloodthirsty production you can be sure!

Executive Producer Lou Spisto today announced the addition of two new educational programs for children: *Theatre Tots*, a program for young children and the *Middle School Summer Intensive*. These unique programs join the previously announced four-week *Summer Shakespeare Intensive* for High School-aged actors and actresses. For additional information or to enroll in one or more programs, please contact GlobeLearning@TheOldGlobe.org or call Kim Montelibano Heil at (619) 238-0043 ext.

BOUNCING AROUND AT THE GLOBE

THE SHOW: Through April 18, Marc Camoletti's *Boeing-Boeing*, translated by Beverley Cross, directed a la Matthew Warchus' 2008 Tony Award-winning revival by Mark Schneider, at the Donald and Darlene Shiley Stage, Old Globe Theatre's Conrad Prebys Theatre Center, Balboa Park (as yet unnamed for anyone other than the Spanish explorer)

THE STORY: Bernard is a triple-timing American bachelor living in a lush Parisian apartment, in which he entertains three mini-skirted fiancées--all stewardesses--the American Gloria, the Italian Gabriella, and the German Gretchen. So the "girls" won't collide, Bernard keeps scrupulous records of their flight schedules, though he hasn't yet realized the imminent impact caused by the advent of faster jetliners or with uncontrollable, turbulent interference of weather. Berthe manages Bernard's household with aplomb juggling décor, linens, sauerbraten, pancakes and mistresses.



Liv Rooth as Gloria and Joseph Urla as Robert in Boeing-Boeing Photo: Craig Schwartz

Trouble arrives in tandem with an unexpected visit from Bernard's naïve friend Robert, who settled in Wisconsin. Gloria departs on a trip moments before Gabriella arrives, then phones with news of a turnaround due to turbulent weather. She returns, and soon all three mistresses inhabit the apartment simultaneously. Bernard, Robert and Bernard attempt to keep them separated. Many doors lead off the living room. In traditional sex farce style, all slam.

THE PERFORMERS: As Barnard, Rob Breckenridge fails to convince this viewer of his insatiable horn-dog nature and irresistible masculine charms. As Robert, the physically more expressive Joseph Urla is everyone's one's perfect foil. A highlight of the production is his extended sauerkraut dialogue with Caralyn Koslowski's Gretchen. A tall, long-legged beauty, Koslowski has the woman's domineering, Valkyrie-like assurance down pat. Due to their disparity in height, they are a visual hoot.



Caralyn Kozlowski as Gretchen and Rob Breckenridge as Bernard in Boeing-Boeing Photo: Craig Schwartz

Nancy Robinette, who so impressed Globe audiences last year in *The Savannah Disposition*, portrays the long-suffering Berthe. This fail-safe role has a history, having been played by Thelma Ritter in the 1965 film and Christine Baranski in the 2008 Broadway revival. Liv Rooth plays Gloria, who gets off on spoken words, and Stephanie Fieger, Gabriella. Never have I seen such long, attractive legs, over-stated stances and sexual calisthenics. Unfortunately, the company seems to struggle with their accents, presenting an adaptability challenge for the ear and the mind. In my experience Sunday evening, March 21, there were long stretches when I just wanted to sit back and tune out.

Admittedly, better farces abound, and in this one there is more comedy potential than was mined by director Mark Schneider. This revival of the revival is bright, enjoyable, and mindless if a bit inane and dated.

THE PRODUCTION is knockout gorgeous, though one wonders about the scuffmarks on the bottom of the bedroom doors at stage left. Was it a rough rehearsal period? Each mistress is color coded according to airline uniform. The white-on-white apartment décor, prominently accented by a large, circular shag rug and matching lighting fixtures, is coordinated, pink for Gloria, blue for Gabriella, and yellow for Gretchen. Rob Howell designed both set and costumes. Chris Rynne is lighting designer, Paul Peterson, sound designer, with original sound design by Simon Baker and original music by Claire van Kampen.

THE LOCATION: Through April 18, 7 p.m. Sundays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays;

8 p.m. Thursdays through Saturdays; 2 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays

Old Globe Theatre, Balboa Park, www.theoldglobe.org or (619) 239-GLOBE.

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OUR WEEKLY COLUMNISTS - DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES

A NOTE FROM DALE



I'm getting married to a very pretty lady on March 20th so no newsletters for the next two weeks. But the columnists will be uploading their columns - so remember to check in near the end of next week. (click photo for bio)

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TEEN THEATRE PERSPECTIVE by Kristin Perkins

[Email Kristin](#)

Boeing-Boeing Old Globe Theatre Kristin Perkins

When Boeing-Boeing received a standing ovation, press opening I was not surprised. The show keeps one laughing and entertained throughout the entire play, something the audience appreciated.



In the manner of all French farces it starts with liaison of a sexual kind. In Boeing-Boeing main character Bernard juggles three flight attendant fiancées, a fact he reveals to his friend Robert who is at first skeptical. Robert watches though with growing appreciation, as he see's the process with American Gloria, Italian Gabriella and German Gretchen. When the flight timetables that Bernard relies on begin to get shaken up the antics are upped.

With the help of six doors and six cast members the action manages to keep turning with increasing speed. Although some of the first scenes feel like they drag on too long.

Joseph Urla as Robert the awkward Wisconsinian, was able to take a slightly over the top character and make him feel genuine without losing any comedy. In a similar way Nancy Robinette played off Bethe, the sarcastic maid who is always a welcome presence on stage with her biting remarks, and accurate, often hilarious commentary of the goings on. As for the three flight attendants, it is a credit to the script they each have distinctively different personalities but that all three still are funny in different ways, Stephanie Fieger as Gabriella, Caralyn Kozlowski as the Gretchen and Liv Rooth as Gloria. The one sour note Rob Breckenridge, as Bernard, seems to lack conviction and proper comic timing, although technically he presents fine enough for it not to take too much away from the overall effect.

The set, designed by Rob Howell, is clever and necessarily modeled to fit the scripts demands. The set never changes from the living room of Bernard's apartment which is both simplistic in grand design and detailed. In the first few scenes the changing of air hostesses was marked with a changing of the flower on a side table - a clever, if unnecessary detail. Each air hostess dresses in a bright and different color, the same color as the flower, the lights, and the carpet, credit to Rob Howell as both set and costume designer.

Directed by Mark Schneider Boeing-Boeing is a light hearted French farce that definitely pleases the audience and does all it sets forth to do until the very end, by the time it ends though it is very thoroughly ended. As pleased as the audience may be it doesn't leave them wanting more, or leave them thinking, and it doesn't linger in the mind afterwards. But as a play Boeing-Boeing promises a fun and enjoyable night out.

Artwork courtesy of The Old Globe. Photo by Craig Schwartz.





Departure Delayed



"Boeing Boeing" idled in the gate at the Old Globe theatre delayed for take-off. The 1960s French farce (more a comedy of manners) about a swinging American bachelor in Paris juggling three girlfriends roared through long runs in Paris and London and a moderate run in its New York engagement.

Clunky with exposition till forty minutes into Act 1, it is with the entrance of Stephanie Fieger, an *Al Italia* air hostess, that this biplane of a comedy starts to taxi toward the runway.



The evening finally moves down the tarmac with the entrance of Caralyn Kozlowski, *Lufthansa* hostess Gretchin, and “Boeing Boeing” takes flight. Ms. Kozlowski's voracious comic energy rattles boyfriend Bernard's plush towering bachelor pad. Her muscular chaos sets the play aloft with a delightfully maniacal lust for love, always playing against her driving sexual appetite.

Rob Breckenridge as Bernard appears to be in a different play, a sit-com perhaps. As his best friend, Robert, Joseph Urla, serves as the captain of the show's cockpit. Mr. Urla's eventual engagement in Ms. Kozlowski's dare devil diving approach to comedy finally pay's off in the long awaited for hilarity of Act 2.

As Bernard's maid, Berthe, Nancy Robinette's French dialect sounded more German than French and missed numerous comic opportunities. Liv Roth turns in a serviceable performance as the manipulative American sex kitten cum tigress.

Designed by Rob Howell and handsomely painted by Carole Payette, Mr. Howell's design offers up eight doors. The production never achieves the door slamming rhythm *de rigueur* to farce.

Mark Schneider recreated Britt director Matthew Warchus's original direction of the 2008 Broadway revival.

Photos:

Caralyn Kozlowski and Joseph Urla. Production photo: Craig Schwartz.

Caralyn Kozlowski

BOEING-BOEING

By Marc Camoletti and Beverley Cross

Directed by Mark Schneider

March 13 – April 18, 2010, Old Globe Theatre

Production overseen and originally directed by Matthew Warchus.

CREATIVE TEAM: Rob Howell (Scenic Design and Costume Design), Chris Rynne (Lighting Design), Paul Peterson (Sound Design), Simon Baker (Original Sound Design), Claire van Kampen (Original Music), Dan Rosokoff (Stage Manager) and Annette Yé (Assistant Stage Manager).

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FEATURES

SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE

March 14, 2010

'Boeing-Boeing' draws on a surprise source: schoolyard

By James Hebert
THEATER CRITIC

There's a kind of mad math to the comedy of "Boeing-Boeing," says director Mark Schneider. The play's story of a Casanova struggling to juggle three flight-attendant girlfriends — not to mention a pesky friend who threatens to mess up the whole scheme — demands precise timing.

But if it's math that underlies the play's structure, the mood of the piece derives from another educational element entirely: recess.

"There really is so much of that kind of schoolyard drama," Schneider says of the play, which hits the Old Globe Theatre this week in a version slightly revised from the 2008 Broadway hit. (The

DETAILS

"Boeing-Boeing"

The Old Globe Theatre

When: Now in previews. Opens Thursday, runs Tuesdays-Wednesdays, 7 p.m.; Thursdays-Fridays, 8 p.m.; Saturdays, 2 and 8 p.m.; Sundays, 2 and 7 p.m. (no matinee today), through April 18

Where: 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park

Tickets: \$29-\$77

Phone: (619) 234-5623

Online: TheOldGlobe.org

Globe is the first theater to get post-Broadway production rights after a proposed national tour fell

SEE 'Boeing-Boeing,' E6

'BOEING-BOEING'

CONTINUED FROM E1

Director feels that play has a touch of 'Neverland' in it

through.)

Even the music, says Schneider, has a certain "Sesame Street" quality.

"It really is sort of Neverland," he says. "These two boys who don't want to grow up."

Society has managed to grow up at least a bit since the French playwright Marc Camoletti's "Boeing-Boeing" was first produced in 1962, becoming a smash in London's West End. In 1965, it also became a film starring Jerry Lewis and Tony Curtis. (A Broadway production that same year was a major flop.)

You don't see too many modern plays or movies that feature women costumed like bonbons and treated something like pert party favors, although that pre-feminist era is making a comeback (with some sense of irony) in the likes of TV's "Mad Men." But the 21st-century version of "Boeing-Boeing," which won two Tony Awards (including best revival of a play) in 2008, does

come with a wink at the attitudes of the time.

"Whether you like it or not, this is the way it was," Schneider says. "A young woman at this time, in terms of options available to her, she could become a shopgirl.

"Or she could become an air hostess to see the world — and find a husband. The training was all about how to keep a conversation going, to help people feel comfortable. It was training for running a home."

The flip side, though, was that "being an air hostess was like being a movie star, or a rock star (at least on one of the international carriers). It was extremely glamorous. And the airplanes were like fashion runways, with these beautiful women.

"The play even says that they've all been tried and tested in every respect — physical, moral. These are great, great women."

Starring as those women (Schneider calls them "girls" at one point in an interview, then says sheepishly, "See what this play has done to me?"): Stephanie Fieger as Gabriella, Liv Rooth as Gloria and Carolyn Kozlowski as Gretchen. Nancy Robinette, who had a sharp turn in "The Savannah Disputation" at the Globe last year,



Former United Airlines flight attendants (from left) Nancy Brock, Randy Tidmore, Carol Wisham and Suzie Turner together put in about 120 years of flight time during their careers. The San Diego County residents reflect on those days and on "Boeing Boeing," Page E6. Howard Lipin / U-T

plays the long-suffering Berthe, housekeeper to playboy Bernard (Rob Breckenridge).

The Globe staging departs from the West End and Broadway version in some minor ways, Schneider says; it's basically been Americanized, with Bernard's friend Robert (Joseph Urla) now hailing from the Midwest instead of Wales.

To Schneider, who was associate director to Matthew Warchus, the revival's original director, on Broadway, Robert is in some ways the character upon which the whole enterprise turns. He's the blundering wonder who seems hapless at the start but becomes the surprise of the play.

"I think the audience will follow Robert through the journey," Schneider says. "You see him initially and you think, this man's a goner. You laugh at him with Berthe when she says, 'You're not the type — you don't have what it takes, pal.' But it's a classic case of the tortoise and the hare."

The math might say otherwise, but even in the jet age, don't bet against the reptile.

James Hebert: (619) 293-2040; jim.hebert@uniontrib.com; blog, houseseats.uniontrib.com; Twitter, jimhebert

‘Boeing-Boeing’ draws on a surprise source

By [James Hebert](#), UNION-TRIBUNE THEATER CRITIC

Sunday, March 14, 2010 at 12:04 a.m.



Howard Lipin / Union-Tribune

Former [United Airlines](#) flight attendants (from left) Nancy Brock, Randy Tidmore, Carol Wisham and Suzie Turner together put in about 120 years of flight time during their careers. The [San Diego](#) County residents reflect on those days and on “Boeing Boeing.”

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Society has managed to grow up at least a bit since the French playwright Marc Camoletti's "Boeing-Boeing" was first produced in 1962, becoming a smash in London's West End. In 1965, it also became a film starring [Jerry Lewis](#) and [Tony Curtis](#). (A Broadway production that same year was a major flop.)

You don't see too many modern plays or movies that feature women costumed like bonbons and treated something like pert party favors, although that pre-feminist era is making a comeback (with some sense of irony) in the likes of TV's "[Mad Men](#)." But the 21st-century version of "Boeing-Boeing," which won two [Tony Awards](#) (including best revival of a play) in 2008, does come with a wink at the attitudes of the time.

"Whether you like it or not, this is the way it was," Schneider says. "A young woman at this time, in terms of options available to her, she could become a shopgirl.

"Or she could become an air hostess to see the world — and find a husband. The training was all about how to keep a conversation going, to help people feel comfortable. It was training for running a home."

The flip side, though, was that "being an air hostess was like being a movie star, or a rock star (at least on one of the international carriers). It was extremely glamorous. And the airplanes were like fashion runways, with these beautiful women.

"The play even says that they've all been tried and tested in every respect — physical, moral. These are great, great women."

Starring as those women (Schneider calls them “girls” at one point in an interview, then says sheepishly, “See what this play has done to me?”): Stephanie Fieger as Gabriella, Liv Rooth as Gloria and Caralyn Kozlowski as Gretchen. Nancy Robinette, who had a sharp turn in “The Savannah Disputation” at the Globe last year, plays the long-suffering Berthe, housekeeper to playboy Bernard (Rob [Breckenridge](#)).

The Globe staging departs from the West End and Broadway version in some minor ways, Schneider says; it’s basically been Americanized, with Bernard’s friend Robert (Joseph Urla) now hailing from the Midwest instead of [Wales](#).

To Schneider, who was associate director to Matthew Warchus, the revival’s original director, on Broadway, Robert is in some ways the character upon which the whole enterprise turns. He’s the blundering wonder who seems hapless at the start but becomes the surprise of the play.

“I think the audience will follow Robert through the journey,” Schneider says. “You see him initially and you think, this man’s a goner. You laugh at him with Berthe when she says, ‘You’re not the type — you don’t have what it takes, pal.’ But it’s a classic case of the tortoise and the hare.”

The math might say otherwise, but even in the jet age, don’t bet against the reptile.

James Hebert: (619) 293-2040; jim.hebert@uniontrib.com houseseats.uniontrib.com

THEATER

Boeing-Boeing ready to fly

BY PAM KRAGEN
pkragen@nctimes.com

In the classic '60s farce "Boeing-Boeing," there's a flying beanbag chair, a beating by purse and enough door slams to make your head spin. But for director Mark J. Schneider, what makes this zany comedy succeed isn't jokes and pratfalls, but honesty.

If the audience doesn't believe in the characters — in this case Bernard, an American architect in Paris carrying on simultaneous secret affairs with three international flight attendants — they won't find any of their actions or reactions very funny.

"The comedy's not real if you don't believe in the relationships," said Schneider, whose production of Mark J. "Boeing-Boeing" opens in previews

this weekend at the Old Globe. "You have to believe Bernard is in love with all three of these women. He's a serial romantic and his feelings are genuine."

Marc Camoletti's "Boeing-Boeing" was first produced in Paris in 1960, then two years later an English translation by Beverly Cross opened in London, where it ran for seven years (and became the most-performed French play in history). It largely disappeared for the next four decades until director Matthew Warchus revived

"Boeing-Boeing"

WHEN Opens Saturdays and runs through April 18; showtimes, 7 p.m. Sundays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays; 8 p.m. Thursdays-Saturdays; 2 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays

WHERE Old Globe Theatre, Balboa Park, San Diego

TICKETS \$29-\$62

INFO 619-234-5623
www.theoldglobe.org



"Boeing-Boeing" in London's West End in 2007. It transferred to Broadway in 2008 and won a Tony Award for Best Revival.

Schneider, a New Jersey native who served as Warchus' associate director on the New York revival and who directed the play's 2008 U.K. tour, said he still gets a kick out of "Boeing-Boeing," despite seeing it more than 200 times.

"It's just a delight to work on," Schneider said during a rehearsal breakfast week. "I feel like it's such a satisfying evening for an audience that I never tire of it. I can't say that of many plays, but I find it just as funny now as when I first encountered it."

The play is set during the swinging '60s, when professional men could be chauvinists, working women were still a novelty and the profession of "air hostess" was prestigious, Schneider said. Bernard is secretly en-

gaged to three air hostesses, whose flight schedules, habits and dislikes he monitors with mathematical precision.

All goes well until Bernard's friend Robert, a country bumpkin from Wisconsin, arrives for a visit and upsets Bernard's meticulous plot.

"There's this guy with this perfect scheme that he draws his friend into," Schneider said. "Here they are in this swank pad that's like Neverland, and they're boys that never want to grow up."

The Old Globe production will feature the set and costumes from the Broadway revival, where each of the stewardesses' costumes is color-coded to the set accessories and lighting.

"Each one of these women is a force of nature, as represented by the vibrant colors and short skirts of their uniforms," Schneider said. "Back in the '60s, these women were like rock stars or movie stars. It's so much fun for the audience to watch and wait to see if these guys are going to make it through the day alive after these goddesses discover what's going on."

Schneider, who's the resident director for Broadway's "Billy Elliot," has served as an associate to some of the world's top directors, including Warchus and Doug Hughes ("Frozen," "Doubt"). Although Schneider longs to direct

plays of his own, serving as an associate helps him support his family and it has taught him a lot.

"I hear Doug every single day in the rehearsal hall," Schneider said of Hughes. "He has a real keen sense of how to talk to actors and maintain a certain environment in the rehearsal hall. And I've never met anyone with a greater economy of language than Matthew (Warchus). He has such a light touch, but he produces these shows which are so utterly precise."

Schneider said he hopes to be asked to direct another "Boeing-Boeing" production coming up this June at the Alley Theatre in Houston. And if he has the chance, he'd love to be invited back to direct at the Old Globe again.

"This place is paradise," he said. "It really does bring you back down to earth when you walk out of rehearsal into the middle of a beautiful park. And the weather's so nice. You remember to breathe here, and you don't wear your shoulders as earrings. I pinch myself every day a little bit."

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'Boeing-Boeing' ready to take off at the Old Globe

- Story
- Discussion
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By PAM KRAGEN - pkragen@nctimes.com | Posted: March 10, 2010 9:23 am | No Comments Posted | Print

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Mark J. Schneider directs "Boeing-Boeing at the Old Globe.



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Next up, Schneider will return to "Billy Elliot," though he hopes to be asked to direct another "Boeing-Boeing" production coming up this June at the Alley Theatre in Houston. And if he has the chance, he'd love to be invited back to direct at the Old Globe again.

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Where: Old Globe Theatre, Balboa Park, San Diego

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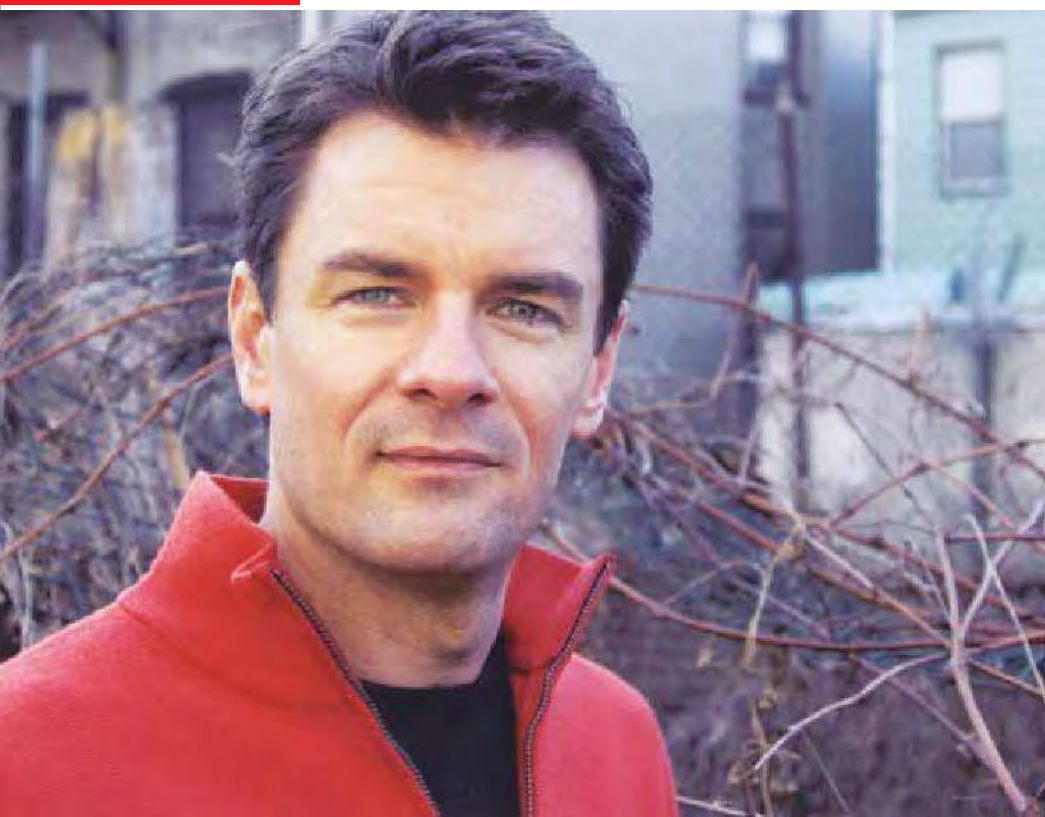
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ROB BRECKENRIDGE OF *BOEING BOEING*

SEATBELTS SECURELY FASTENED FOR FUN by bill biss

Rob Breckenridge portrays the leading character of Bernard in *Boeing Boeing* currently at The Old Globe through April 18. This revival of a French classic created in 1960 is Americanized for this latest incarnation and shows a few hours in a day in the life of one highly amorous man who happens to be juggling three fiancées at the same time.

Each woman is an airline stewardess and with the help of his maid, he manages to create a revolving door atmosphere where each woman is unaware of the others. Until...in this classic bedroom farce, time and scheduling goes haywire with hilarious results. Rob spoke with *The Rage Monthly* just three days before the first invited dress rehearsal for the production. Rob was last seen on Broadway in *The 39 Steps*, and he was aware of the successful Tony Award-winning comedy *Boeing Boeing*. "I did see it. Actually I got to know the cast in a circuitous kind of way. Our paths crossed and I was able to enjoy it on Broadway while I was there. Now that I'm here doing the show I'm very thrilled. It's not bad working in paradise (laughter)."

Boeing Boeing was adapted to a film of the same

name in 1965 starring Tony Curtis and Jerry Lewis. The film and subsequent theatre productions are a time capsule of a more innocent sexuality of the early 1960s. Rob adds, "I'd have to agree with you. I will be honest and tell you that I've never seen the film. I've actually been coaxed away from seeing the film in terms of helping with the work that we're doing. It was originally a play and from my understanding, the longest running...I think it ran for 20 years in France consecutively or some crazy thing. I think the joy of this story is that it takes us back to the early 1960s when technology was the breathtaking marvel. Planes were flying overhead and people were moving from one side of the planet to another. It was a sexy world of fast-paced living. It wasn't if I may say, the jaded society that we live in now where every five seconds there is a new gadget or technology. It's sort of like...blah,blah, blah, we're so used to it now of things flying at us." Continuing, Rob says, "This [*Boeing Boeing*] harkens us back to that innocent time when the toys we were offered were magical! They were brand new. We were sending people into outer space, trying to get on the moon, technology advancing us in ways we'd never seen. I think what people respond to in this play is exactly what you touched on.



Costarring in the production are [Stephanie Fieger (Gabriella), Caralyn Kozlowski (Gretchen), and Liv Rooth (Gloria)] "The three actresses playing these characters number one are phenomenally gorgeous, incredibly talented, smart, funny and showstoppers. I'm in love with all of them. The remarkable thing about this production is that they grabbed a hold of a play that offers archetypes, kind of goddesses... these stewardesses that fall from the sky. They are drawn very boldly to represent the powers from above. My character has the fun of managing or shall I say, mismanaging the ill-fated concept of maintaining three simultaneous relationships in the form of engagements with three different fiancées. Men are always boys at heart and there is an innocent attempt on my part to handle such an exciting time. These are women on the verge, they have the powers of living their own lives. It was kind of a stated fact at that time that airhostesses were looking to get married. The one sort of weak link in my chain of events is that I don't consider that the aftermath of an engagement is to get married. Whoops! You can tell a plan like that is only going to go so far."

Audiences can surely expect a fun time at *Boeing Boeing*. Rob explains, "We have the monumental event of literally a few hours in a day...that's the play. There's no episodic shift. So you can tell all of your readers, they are off the hook! They don't have to think. They don't have to invest. The play is not going to ask anything of them except a willingness to have a good time. We see how this intersection of three women collides as a result of this ill-fated plan."

BOEING BOEING

Now through April 18

The Old Globe Theatre

Theoldglobe.org

'Boeing-Boeing' ready for flight at Old Globe

BY DIANA SAENGER
Contributor

Theater patrons can travel back to the days of classic romantic comedy with the Old Globe's Tony Award-winning farce, "Boeing-Boeing." The hilarious charade involves Bernard (Rob Breckenridge), an airline pilot who has his life planned so well that he's engaged to three women. Will he need a parachute to face his final leap into thin air? Find out when "Boeing-Boeing" runs March 13-April 18 in the Globe Theatre.

The original 1960s farce, written in French by Marc Camoletti, made a 1962 London premiere. While the New York production ran for only days, the London production ran for seven years. Mark Schneider, director of "Boeing-Boeing," thinks the Globe patrons will find the show highly amusing.

"It's the story of the Tortoise and the Hare," Schneider said. "Bernard is a Buster

'Boeing-Boeing'

■ **Where:** The Old Globe Theatre, 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park

■ **When:** Previews: 8 p.m. March 13 and 7 p.m. March 14, 16, 17; performances: 7 p.m. Tuesdays-Wednesdays, 8 p.m. Thursdays-Saturdays, 2 p.m. Saturdays-Sundays; 7 p.m. Sundays, through April 18

■ **Tickets:** \$29-\$77; (619) 23-GLOBE, www.TheOldGlobe.org

Keaton, Stan Laurel, Ralph Kramden-type guy who has a can't-miss scheme, but the audience is ahead of him. He believes he can remain engaged to three women with no problem, but nature intercedes. Schedules change, and the girls show up at different times than expected."

Making a romantic comedy work requires a well-written script with great repartee. Marc Camoletti and Beverly Cross have stepped up to the plate with their amusing adaptation. A believable story must also have a seasoned

cast able to deliver the goods. Schneider is excited by his cast.

Nancy Robinette as Berthe is the maid who works for Bernard but finds herself becoming the reluctant romantic traffic controller. She's at her wits end trying to keep the farce going. The cast also includes Stephanie Fieger (Gabriella), Caralyn Kozlowski (Gretchen), Liv Rooth (Gloria) and Joseph Urla (Robert). Rob Howell's Tony-nominated costumes, and set design, are featured in the Globe production.

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'Boeing-Boeing' ready for flight at Old Globe
4:00 PM

By Diana Saenger

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"It's an excellent group," Schneider said. "Ron has been very active in New York theater and he's from a small town in Michigan, so he's able to draw from the experience. Nancy Robinette, who plays Berthe, was recently seen in the Globe's 'The Savannah Disputation.' She's a go-to actor who works all the time."

Berthe is the maid who works for Bernard but finds herself becoming the reluctant romantic traffic controller. She's at her wits end



Rob Breckenridge plays the swinging bachelor Bernard in 'Boeing-Boeing.'

Fun fact

You may remember the 1965 film-version of 'Boeing Boeing.' It starred Tony Curtis, Jerry Lewis and Thelma Ritter.

trying to keep the farce going. The cast also includes Stephanie Fieger (Gabriella), Caralyn Kozlowski (Gretchen), Liv Rooth (Glo-



The romantic comedy 'Boeing-Boeing' lifts off at the Old Globe Theatre on March 13 and runs through April

18. PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE OLD GLOBE

ria) and Joseph Urla (Robert). Rob Howell's Tony-nominated costumes, and set design, are featured in the Globe production.

Schneider compares the story to "The Honeymooners," where collisions are constantly set up that the characters are unaware of.

"This keeps patrons on the edge of their seats and filled with anxiety all night long," he said. "The audience is actually on the ride with Bernard, and what happens results in continuous laughter and nothing but fun throughout the show."

RANCHO SANTA FE REVIEW

March 11, 2010

Romantic farce 'Boeing-Boeing' ready for flight at Old Globe

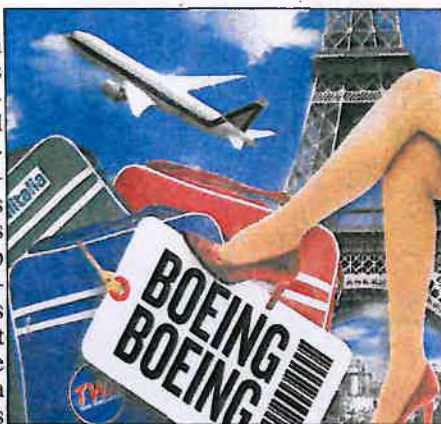
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Bitter Lemons

Bringing the Los Angeles Theatre Community closer together. Whether they like it or not.

Written on March 21, 2010 at 9:14 pm by Colin Mitchell

BOEING-BOEING: 50% Bitter

Filed under [review](#)

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(left) Stephanie Fieger as Gabriella and Joseph Urla; (center) Caralyn Kozlowski and Urla; (right) Liv Rooth in the Old Globe's production of Boeing-Boeing, through April 18. (Source: Craig Schwartz)

SWEET

When you put it all together, this is one of those "I know the destination but I'm having fun getting there" shows. It is not the smoothest theatrical flight of the year, but it takes off and lands safely. And according to many pilots that's all that counts.

[Steve Heyl – EdgeLosAngeles](#)

BITTER

Warchus' rendition of "Boeing-Boeing," re-created by the Broadway production's associate director, Mark Schneider, is now at the Old Globe, performed by a new cast. Yet somehow the play's flaws are visible again. Comparing what's onstage in San Diego to what was reported in the New

York reviews, one can only surmise that the soufflé has fallen. The problem is one of proportion. The 2½-hour "Boeing-Boeing" spends most of its first hour and 10 minutes on exposition, then goes just briefly aloft in the second act before returning to the ground. It doesn't take much imagination to dream up endless complications that would cause the stewardesses to just miss one another, yet too many of these went unconceived by French playwright Marc Camoletti (later to deliver another prominent farce, "Don't Dress for Dinner") and his English adapter, Beverley Cross.

[Daryl H. Miller – LA Times](#)

BITTERSWEET

The "air hostess" trio's performances are as outrageously Day-Glo as their outfits, and yet beyond its clever setup, Marc Camoletti's play itself is a little lacking in bite. "Boeing-Boeing" is actually pretty chaste for a French sex farce, and while it has lots of good laughs and some whiz-bang moments, it doesn't quite reach the giddy precision of a door-slammer like "Noises Off."

[James Hebert – San Diego Union-Tribune](#)

Boeing, Boeing continues through April 18 at the Old Globe theater in San Diego. For more information visit the [Old Globe](#).

Filed under [review](#)

Tags: [daryl h. miller](#), [edgelosangeles](#), [james hebert](#), [la times](#), [san diego union-tribune](#), [steve hey](#)

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["We sat absolutely still in deafening silence, exchanging energy, and just being with each other." →](#)

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Rob Stevens

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MY TOP 15 IN 2010 THEATER

By Rob Stevens

It's that time of year again. All the Christmas presents have been opened (and some returned) and for critics/reviewers it is time to jog the memory and come up with a "Best Of" list for what was seen in the past year. Most keep their list to 10, but after nearly 3 decades of Robby Awards (where the Best Musical Production category alone usually numbered 16 nominees a year and when you added in the Comedy and Drama productions there were usually 30 or more that were deemed Best of the Year), I just couldn't stop at such a low number. Since I am not seeing 250 shows a year, or even 150 anymore, I have kept the number reasonable. So here are the Top 15 productions I saw in Southern California during 2010. Not all of them were seen for review, several I actually paid cash to see just because the theater bug in me is viral. Since I am no longer in the award-giving business, I have not listed them in order of excellence or enjoyment, or even alphabetically. The following productions are listed in the order that they were viewed.



BOEING BOEING

The Old Globe Theatre, San Diego

I'll never forget the two-line review by the eminent critic Viola Heigi-Swisher in AFTER DARK magazine shortly after I began reviewing in the mid 1970s. "There were five doors on stage. It MUST have been a farce." Well there were more than five doors in Rob Howell's set design on the Old Globe's stage, but this really WAS A FARCE. I don't think I laughed louder or longer or more all year than I did watching director Mark Schneider propel his sextet of actors in and out of those doors in this French sex farce by Marc Camoletti and Beverly Cross.



GOLDA'S BALCONY

The Old Globe Theatre, San Diego

William Gibson's one-woman play about Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir was one of the most informative, thrilling and thought-provoking shows of the year. Tovah Feldshuh gave a tour-de-force performance--precisely the kind of performance that deserves a standing ovation. I couldn't wait to jump out of my seat and start applauding and that is something I rarely do, no matter what the crowd around me is doing.



ROBIN AND THE 7 HOODS

The Old Globe Theatre, San Diego

Another jukebox musical but "Ring-a-Ding Ding," this one had such a pedigree. The songs were from the team of Sammy Cahn and Jimmy Van Heusen and most of them were originally hits for Frank Sinatra. Based on the Rat Pack film of the same title, this show had pizzazz and style to spare. The cast was fabulous, giving us a taste of Frank, Dean, Sammy and the gang without pushing it. The chorus energetically performed the show-stopping choreography of Casey Nicholaw. Light and frothy and oh so delightful.

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Rob Breckenridge, Nancy Robinette, Liv Rooth, Joseph Urla et al. Set for Old Globe's *Boeing-Boeing*

By: **Dan Bacalzo** · Feb 4, 2010 · San Diego

Casting has been announced for Old Globe Theatre's production of *Boeing-Boeing*, by Marc Camoletti and Beverly Cross, to be performed March 13-April 18, with an opening on March 18. Overseen and originally directed by Tony Award winner Matthew Warchus, the production will be directed by Mark Schneider.

In the comedy, Bernard, a successful architect living in Paris, thinks he can easily juggle his three flight attendant fiancées. But when an old friend arrives and his three fiancées each change their flight schedules, his life hits some unexpected turbulence.

The cast will feature Rob Breckenridge (Bernard), Stephanie Fieger (Gabiella), Caralyn Kozlowski (Gretchen), Nancy Robinette (Berthe), Liv Rooth (Gloria), and Joseph Urla (Robert). The creative team will feature Rob Howell (scenic and costume design), Chris Rynne (lighting design), and Paul Peterson (sound design).

For more information, visit www.TheOldGlobe.org.



Joseph Urla

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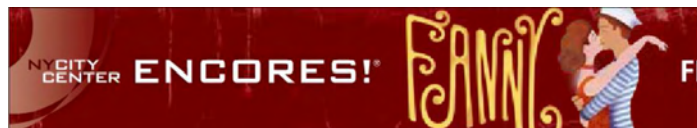
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Cast and Creative Team Announced for Old Globe Theatre's BOEING-BOEING



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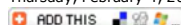


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Thursday, February 4, 2010; Posted: 02:02 PM - by [BWW News Desk](#)



The [Old Globe Theatre's](#) Executive Producer [Lou Spisto](#) today announced the cast and creative team for the Tony Award-winning comedy, BOEING-BOEING. The classic farce is written by [Marc Camoletti](#) and Beverly Cross, and directed by [Mark Schneider](#). Overseen and originally directed by Tony Award winner [Matthew Warchus](#), BOEING-BOEING will run in the [Old Globe Theatre](#) March 13 - April 18. Previews run March 13 - March 17. Opening night is Thursday, March 18 at 8:00 p.m.

BOEING-BOEING is an uproarious jet-propelled comedy that had audiences and critics cheering on Broadway and London's West End. Bernard, a successful architect living in Paris, thinks he can easily juggle his three flight attendant fiancées. It's all a question of timing and a little help from his trusted housekeeper who reluctantly plays romantic air traffic controller. When an old friend arrives and his three fiancées each change their flight schedules, his life hits some unexpected turbulence.

The classic 60's farce was originally written in French by [Marc Camoletti](#) and was translated by Beverly Cross for its 1962 London premiere. The London production ran for an astonishing seven years and became the most performed French play in the world according to Guinness World Records. BOEING-BOEING's most recent Broadway outing received the 2009 Tony Award for Best Revival of a play. [Rob Howell](#)'s Tony nominated costumes, and set design, will be featured in the Globe production.

The cast of BOEING-BOEING features [Rob Breckenridge](#) (Bernard), Stephanie Fieger (Gabriella), [Caralyn Kozlowski](#) (Gretchen), [Nancy Robinette](#) (Berthe), [Liv Rooth](#) (Gloria) and Joseph Urla (Robert).

In addition to [Rob Howell](#) (Scenic Design and Costume Design), the creative team includes Chris Rynne (Lighting Design), [Paul Peterson](#) (Sound Design) Dan Rosokoff (Stage Manager) and Annette Yé (Assistant Stage Manager).

[Mark Schneider](#) was the associate director on [Matthew Warchus](#)' Tony Award-winning revival of BOEING-BOEING and directed its 2008 UK tour. He was also the associate director for Warchus' Tony Award-winning revival of [Alan Ayckbourn](#)'s THE NORMAN CONQUESTS. He has held administrative posts at [Shakespeare Theatre Company](#) in Washington, D.C., The Hangar Theatre in Ithaca, NY and Philadelphia's Wilma Theater, and currently serves as a resident director of BILLY ELLIOT on Broadway.

[Matthew Warchus](#) is a British-born director who has worked extensively on London's West End and Broadway. His career as a theater director encompasses over fifty major productions (thirty award-winning).

Tickets to BOEING-BOEING are currently available by subscription only. Single tickets go on sale on February 14 at noon and can be purchased online at www.TheOldGlobe.org, by phone at (619) 23-GLOBE or by visiting the box office at 1363 Old Globe Way in Balboa Park.

For more information, visit online at www.theoldglobe.org.

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Monday, March 15, 2010; Posted: 08:03 PM - by [BWW News Desk](#)

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Tickets can be purchased online at [www.TheOldGlobe.org](#), by phone at (619) 23-GLOBE or by visiting the box office at 1363 Old Globe Way in Balboa Park.

For more information, visit online at [www.theoldglobe.org](#).

Photo Credit: [Craig Schwartz](#)



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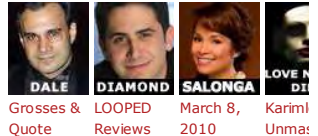
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Boeing-Boeing

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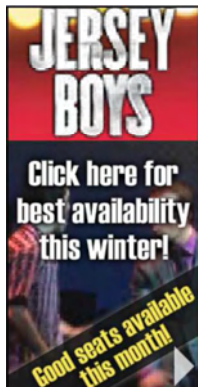


PHOTO CALL: *Boeing-Boeing* Plays at The Old Globe

By Krissie Fullerton
16 Mar 2010

Marc Camoletti and Beverly Cross' classic farce *Boeing-Boeing* plays at The Old Globe.

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Mark Schneider takes the reins as director of this production after being Associate Director on Matthew Warchus' Tony Award-winning revival and directing the 2008 UK Tour.

The Old Globe cast features Rob Breckenridge, Stephanie Fieger, Caralyn Kozlowski, Nancy Robinette, Liv Rooth and Joseph Urla.

According to press notes, "*Boeing-Boeing* is an uproarious jet-propelled comedy that had audiences and critics cheering on Broadway and London's West End. Bernard, a successful architect living in Paris, thinks he can easily juggle his three flight attendant fiancées. It's all a question of timing and a little help from his trusted housekeeper who reluctantly plays romantic air traffic controller. When an old friend arrives and his three fiancées each change their flight

schedules, his life hits some unexpected turbulence."

Here's a look at the production:

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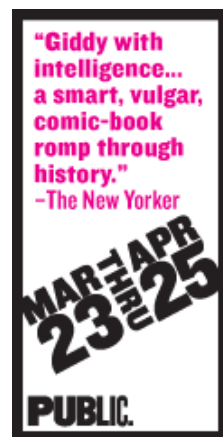
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 -Robert Osborne, *The Hollywood Reporter*

Old Globe *Boeing-Boeing*, Using Broadway Design, Opens in San Diego

By *Kenneth Jones*
 18 Mar 2010

Mark Schneider, the associate director on Matthew Warchus' 2008 Tony Award-winning revival of *Boeing-Boeing*, stages The Old Globe Theatre production of the comedy, opening March 18 in San Diego.

Advertisement



Rob Howell's Tony-nominated costumes, and set design, are featured in the Globe production. Previews began March 13 for a run to April 18.

The California cast of the sex comedy includes Rob Breckenridge (Bernard), Stephanie Fieger (Gabriella), Caralyn Kozlowski (Gretchen), Nancy Robinette (Berthe), Liv Rooth (Gloria) and Joseph Urla (Robert).

The classic farce by Marc Camoletti and Beverly Cross won the 2008 Best Revival Tony Award, following success in London.

*

According to Old Globe notes, "*Boeing-Boeing* is an uproarious jet-propelled comedy that had audiences and critics cheering on Broadway and London's West End. Bernard, a successful architect living in Paris, thinks he can easily juggle his three flight attendant fiancées. It's all a question of timing and a little help from his trusted housekeeper who reluctantly plays romantic air traffic controller. When an old friend arrives and his three fiancées each change their flight schedules, his life hits some unexpected turbulence."

The creative team also includes Chris Rynne (lighting design), Paul Peterson (sound design), Dan Rosokoff (stage manager) and Annette Yé (assistant stage manager).

The classic '60s farce was originally written in French by Camoletti and was translated by Cross for its 1962 London premiere. The London production ran for seven years and became the most performed French play in the world according to Guinness World Records. The original Broadway run was a flop, but the Warchus touch made it a hit in 2008.

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Boeing Boeing is taking off at The Old Globe!

March 15, 8:37 PM [San Diego Theater Examiner](#) · Erin Reiter


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Boeing Boeing
Boeing Boeing at The Old Globe

Boeing-Boeing is taking off at the Old Globe Theatre March 13 – April 18! *Boeing-Boeing* is an uproarious jet-propelled comedy that had audiences and critics cheering on Broadway and London's West End. Bernard, a successful architect living in Paris, thinks he can easily juggle his three flight attendant fiancées. It's all a question of timing and a little help from his trusted housekeeper who reluctantly plays romantic air traffic controller. When an old friend arrives and his three fiancées each change their flight schedules, his life hits some unexpected turbulence.

The classic 60's farce was originally written in French by Marc Camoletti and was translated by Beverly Cross for its 1962 London premiere. The London production ran for

an astonishing seven years and became the most performed French play in the world according to Guinness World Records. *Boeing-Boeing*'s most recent Broadway outing received the 2009 Tony Award for Best Revival of a play. Rob Howell's Tony nominated costumes, and set design, will be featured in the Globe production.

Special Events affiliated with *Boeing-Boeing*:

WINE LOVERS NIGHT

Friday, March 19, 6:30–8:00 p.m. \$19

Pre-show party with hosted wine bar and tasting with a selection of cheeses and fruit. (Show sold separately.)

POST-SHOW FORUMS

Tuesday, March 23 and 30 & Wednesday, April 7

Discuss the play with members of the cast following the performance. FREE

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Thursday, March 25, 6:30–8:00 p.m. \$21

An evening for GLBT theater lovers with a hosted wine and martini bar, appetizers and door prizes. (Show sold separately.)

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Friday, March 26, 6:30–8:00 p.m. \$21

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Arriving Now: "Boeing-Boeing" at The Old Globe

By Enrique Limón | *ModernLuxury.com* | March 9, 2010



Boeing-Boeing is in the Guinness Book of World Records for being the most performed French play in history.

Jet fuel-propelled comedy ***Boeing-Boeing*** is clear to land at the Old Globe tarmac starting March 13 for a five week run. The play—listed in the Guinness Book of World Records as the most performed French play throughout the globe, tells the tale of a 1960's Parisian lothario who juggles not one, but three flight attendant fiancées. Cleared for takeoff, the Globe is set to reprise Rob Howell's Broadway costumes—a mix of historical accurateness and kitch that earned the designer a Tony Award nomination. "I looked at actual stewardesses uniforms of the period, and took the necessary liberties with the colours to fit in with the style of the production," Howell says from his London studio. The most important thing? That's easy, "that the girls look very sexy." Fasten your seatbelts; it's going to be a bumpy ride. Best part is, no pesky TSA pat-down, or full body scan needed.

Tickets available at oldglobe.org (<http://oldglobe.org/tickets/production.aspx?PID=7297>).

Tags: [Travel \(/channels-5\)](#), [Boeing Boeing \(/category/tags/boeing-boeing\)](#), [Old Globe \(/category/tags/old-globe-0\)](#), [theater \(/category/tags/theater\)](#)

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SAN DIEGO INTERNATIONAL TIMES

February 16, 2010 YU YU

"Boeing-Boeing" 「ボーイング ボーイング」

3人のフライトアテンダントと交際するプレイボーイの末路／フランスのクラシックコメディ



Boeing-Boeing / The Old Globe

⑤ 1960年代のパリ。空港に近い市内のアパルトマン。プレイボーイの建築家ベルナールは、3か国の美人フライトアテンダントと交際している。各航空会社のフライトスケジュールを把握して、巧みに鉢合わせを避けながら、まんまと同時進行しているのだ。信頼のおける家政婦ベルタの協力もあって、3人ともベルナールを信じ切っていた。

ある朝、ベルナールがトランスワールド航空のアメリカ人グロリアと朝食を楽しんでいるところへ、田舎の旧友ロベールが訪ねてくる。グロリアを見送った後、ベルナールは3人の恋人の話を自慢気に話して聞かせる。その日の午後、アリタリア航空のイタリア人ガブリエラが現れる。ところがこの日、新しいボーイングのジェット機が目見えし、天候の具合も相まって、各航空会社のスケジュールが大幅に変更する。まず、予定より早めにルフトハンザドイツ航空のドイツ人グレッツェンが姿を見せる。さらに、フライトが中止になったためにガブリエラも戻ってくることに。そして、グロリアもスケジュールの変更でベルナールのもとを訪れるという。ベルナールはロベールとベルタの手を借りて、何とか鉢合わせを回避しようとするのだが、嘘が嘘を呼び、仕舞いには取捨がつかなくなってしまい…。

⑥ フランスのコメディ作家マルク・カモレットティによる戯曲。1960年にパリで初演を迎え、1962年にはロンドンでも上演され、7年間にわたるロングランを記録した。日本でも1968年以降、幾度となく舞台上に上り、2003年には元光GENJIの赤坂晃と佐藤アツヒロの共演で話題を呼んだ。このほか、世界各地の劇場で上演され、1991年には最も多く上演されたフランスの戯曲としてギネスブックに登録されている。2008年にブロードウェイでリバイバルされ、2009年より北米ツアーも行われた。

同作はトニー賞の最優秀演劇リバイバル賞に輝いた。1965年にはジョン・リッチ監督により設定をアメリカ人に変更して映画化されている。主演はトニー・カーティス。

⑦ THE GLOBE THEATRES (Old Globe Theatre), 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park / 619-239-2255 (T)。期間—3/13(土)～4/18(日)。上演—火・水曜: 7pm、木・金曜: 8pm、土曜: 2pm & 8pm、日曜: 2pm & 7pm。チケット—TBA。http://www.oldglobe.org

SAN DIEGO SOCIAL

March 2010

ARTS / THEATER

by JENNA FRAZIER



Photo by JOAN MARCUS

LEGALLY BLONDE

March 30-April 4

San Diego Civic Theatre

Sometimes, being underestimated is truly a gift. Sorority-girl-turned-Harvard Law student Elle Woods proves this yet again, in a hilarious musical adaptation of MGM's smash hit film. After being dumped by her boyfriend for someone more "serious," Elle ditches the ditz and takes law school by storm with her own signature style and flair - and her beloved Chihuahua, Bruiser, of course.

Tickets are \$20-\$87; to purchase, call (619) 570-1100.



Photo by PETER TANGEN (BRAVO)

PATTI STANGER

March 13, 8pm

Balboa Theatre

The feisty star of Bravo's *Millionaire Matchmaker* prepares to sweep San Diego off its feet with her signature brand of unapologetically honest love advice. Though recently engaged, Stanger's still very much in the game. With a vow to focus the show more on practical dating tips and less on scandalous drama and salacious gossip - although a healthy dose of each never hurt anyone - guests are sure to learn a thing or two and have some laughs along the way.

Tickets are \$52-\$102; to purchase call (619) 570-1100.



Photo by KENT MILES/UTAH OPERA

ROMEO AND JULIET

March 13-21

San Diego Opera

Experience a timeless classic in a new light, as two of theater's most famously star-crossed lovers play out their whirlwind affair and tragic demise in a series of luminous arias, lush orchestration and electrifying choruses. Opera's new "golden couple" and real-life paramours, Stephen Costello and Ailyn Perez bring spark to the stage along with Gounod's voluptuous music.

Tickets are \$35-\$210; to purchase call (619) 533-7000 or visit sdopera.com.



BOEING-BOEING

March 13-April 18

Old Globe Theatre

Bernard, a successful architect living in Paris and juggling turbulent relationships with his three flight-attendant fiancés, makes the Mile High Club look like child's play. It's always more hilarious when it's happening to someone else, so chuckle in bemused pity as Bernard is forced to call "mayday" while he navigates a twisted turn of events with the help of his reluctant housekeeper and co-pilot in the game of love.

Tickets are \$29-\$77; to purchase call (619) 234-5623.

THE RAGE

March 2010



Boeing-Boeing

The 2009 Tony Award winner for Best Revival of a play is landing in San Diego this month. Originally a French play, *Boeing-Boeing* debuted in London in 1962 and ran for an astonishing seven years and became the most performed French play in the world according to Guinness World Records. But despite being from France, the show is

a classic British, door-slamming, eye-winking sex farce about an architect in Paris, who thinks he can easily juggle his three flight attendant fiancées. But his life hits some unexpected turbulence when an old friend arrives and his three fiancées each change their flight schedules. Rob Howell's Tony-nominated costumes and set design will be featured in this production at The Old Globe.

***Boeing-Boeing* runs March 13 - April 18 at The Old Globe Theatre. For tickets and more information call 619.234.5623.**

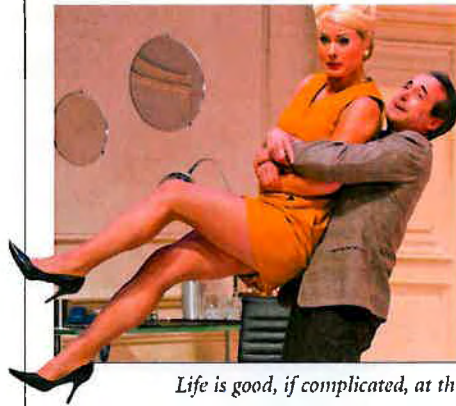
SAN DIEGO READER

March 25, 2010

San Diego Reader

SanDiegoReader.com
619.235.3000

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*Life is good, if complicated, at the
Old Globe — page 110*

G 34 IN FOCUS: ARTS

By: Edwin Rendon



SAN DIEGO OPERA: LA TRAVIATA

The trials and tribulations of love are back in San Diego with the return of Giuseppe Verdi's tragic love opera La Traviata. It is the story of Alfredo, who falls in love with courtesan Violetta, becoming her first love. But Alfredo's father isn't content with this arrangement and sets out to convince Violetta to give up her love setting in motion a series of events that lead to love, humiliation and tragedy. With some of the most beautiful music ever written for the stage it is the perfect end to the San Diego Opera's 45th International Season. April 17, 20, 23 and 25.



OLD GLOBE THEATRE: BOEING-BOEING

This 2009 Tony Award-winning comedy has been jet-setting audiences in high cheer from London to New York City. Parisian Bernard, a successful architect, believes juggling three flight attendant fiancées is as easy as flying a plane. His faithful housekeeper moonlights as his love air-traffic controller but hold on; there is turbulence ahead. An old friend arrives, his three fiancées change flight schedules and Bernard flies into a whirlwind of unexpected twists and turns. Now boarding for this wild 60's revival classic by British-born director Matthew Warchus at the Old Globe. Through April 18



BALBOA THEATRE: MONTEREY JAZZ FESTIVAL

On the heels of their upcoming 53rd anniversary, the Monterey Jazz Festival on Tour will present an amazing concert with an eclectic ensemble of jazz performers. These Grammy winning musicians are not to be missed; they embody the history, spirit, and legacy of the Festival. Creative master pianist Kenny Barron, the audaciously brave violinist Regina Carter, hip vocalist Kurt Elling and soulful guitarist Russell Malone will take the stage at the intimate and acoustically brilliant Balboa Theatre for one night only! April 21



MUSEUM CONTEMPORARY ART, LA JOLLA: ART AUCTION

MCASD's Seventh Benefit Art Auction will feature a vast range of art including photography, painting and sculpture by both internationally recognized artists and emerging contemporary artists including John Baldessari, Christo, Manny Farber, Robert Irwin, Ryan McGinness, Nancy Rubins, Ed Ruscha and more. Sotheby's Senior Vice President August Uribe will preside as auctioneer for the lively night which includes curatorial tours. This is a great way to expand your personal art collection while also benefiting MCASD's education and exhibition programs. April 21



CYGNET THEATRE: SWEENEY TODD

The exploits of Sweeney Todd, the murderous barber who dispatched his customers with a flick of the razor and then had his lover serve up the remains in tasty meat pies are now being served up at Cygnet Theatre. Set in 19th century London, The Demon Barber of Fleet Street has played to critical acclaim on both sides of the Atlantic. Stephen Sondheim's 1979 Broadway musical brings vivid and sharp dark humor to the stage as a straight razor quickly removes straight faces from the crowd. Through April 25



LA JOLLA MUSIC SOCIETY - EDDIE PALMIERI

Nine time Grammy Award winner Eddie Palmieri is known for his charismatic power, bold, innovative drive and a sound that encompasses salsa, funk, soul and jazz. Dubbed "The Latin Thelonius Monk," Mr. Palmieri has collaborated with Tito Puente and other jazz greats in a musical career that spans over 50 years. A true powerhouse of brilliance known for his astute arranging skills and historic compositions, Mr. Palmieri continues to thrill audiences throughout the world with his legendary style. Spanish Harlem comes to San Diego's Birch North Park Theatre, que sabrosol April 30

April / Abril 2010
entertainmenttheatreconcertsgalasculture

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
			 <p>1-4 Legally Blonde the Musical San Diego Civic Theater www.broadwaysd.com</p>	 <p>Allied Artists Opening San Diego Repertory Theater www.aasd.us</p>	 <p>3 Black Eyed Peas San Diego Sports Arena www.aeglive.com</p>	 <p>4</p>
 <p>5</p>		 <p>Viva la Moda! 9 Vista Hill Annual Fashion Show Manchester Grand Hyatt www.vistahill.org</p>	 <p>10 BALBOA THEATRE San Diego's Gaslamp Quarter The Big Band Broadcast Balboa Theater www.sandiegotheatres.org</p>	 <p>Cricket Wireless Amphitheater</p>	 <p>11 Los Tr3s Tour www.livenation.com</p>	
	 <p>13-18 Cirque Dreams Balboa Theater www.broadwaysd.com</p>	 <p>14</p>	 <p>15 Ramon Ayala San Diego House of Blues www.livenation.com</p>		 <p>17 BoConcept urban design Anniversary and Fashion Show Bo Concept www.boconcept.com</p>	 <p>18 Tony Bennett Palo Casino www.palocasino.com</p>
	 <p>20 (17,23,25) Giuseppe Verdi's La Traviata San Diego Civic Theater www.sdogopera.com</p>	 <p>21 Benelli Art Auction MCASD La Jolla www.mcasd.org</p>	 <p>22 La Bella Durmiente Camaleon Tijuana www.camaleon.org</p>	 <p>23</p>	 <p>24 Opening for Tania Alcala Alexander Salazar Fine Art www.alexandersalazarfineart.com</p>	 <p>25 MUSICA MEXICANA Balboa Theater www.sandiegotheatres.org</p>
 <p>26</p>	 <p>28 MAY 30 Javah Feldshuh in Golda's Balcony The Old Globe www.oldglobe.org</p>	 <p>29 Conan O'Brien San Diego Civic Theater www.aeglive.com</p>	 <p>30 Eddie Palmieri Birch North Park Theater www.ljms.org</p>	 <p>29 -MAY 2 Art Alive 2010 San Diego Museum of Art www.sdmart.org</p>		
 <p>27</p>						