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Regional

The Women

(Donald and Darlene Shiley Stage, San Diego; 620 seats; \$66 top)

By BOB VERINI

An Old Globe presentation of a play in two acts by [Clare Boothe Luce](#). Directed by [Darko Tresnjak](#).

Mary Haines - [Kate Baldwin](#)
 Sylvia Fowler - [Heather Ayers](#)
 Edith Potter - [Amy Hohn](#)
 Crystal Allen - [Kathleen McElfresh](#)
 Miriam Aarons/Princess Tamara - [Nancy Anderson](#)
 Countess de Lage - [Ruth Williamson](#)
 Mrs. Morehead - [Linda Gehringer](#)
 Peggy Day - [Amanda Kramer](#)
 Nancy Blake - [Amanda Naughton](#)
 Little Mary - [Kayla Solsbak](#)



Jenn Harris, Blair Ross, Ruth Williamson, Mary Pat Green and Aimee Nelson star in helmer Darko Tresnjak's revival of 'The Women.'

Widely and unjustly dismissed as a self-hating misogynist screed, [Clare Boothe Luce's 1936 "The Women"](#) has found a director who prizes women and appreciates the play's specific satirical aims. [Darko Tresnjak](#), the Old Globe's resident artistic director, has helmed an elegant, emotionally precise revival of a minor gem among American comedies of manners. And the clothes are as dazzling as the banter.

Luce intended not an indictment of her whole sex but "a clinical study of a more or less isolated group" -- the super-idle matrons of Park Avenue (or Rodeo Drive) -- "projected perhaps in bad temper, but in good faith." On this research project Tresnjak is Luce's able lab assistant, pegging all the bitchery and backbiting to recognizable psychology.

Contrary to the current movie remake's conception of "[Sex and the City](#)" best buds, Luce pinpoints the makeshift nature of "friendships" built on society functions and bridge games, with a thin line separating air-kissing BFFs from mortal enemies.

Animating the production is their fundamental flaw: They're perilously inattentive to their own situation while far too attentive to everyone else's. By not minding the chaos in her own house, each of Luce's distinctively conceived principals risks everything that matters -- love, security, fulfillment.

None is more careless than Mary Haines (Kate Baldwin), who's dreamily content in her fool's paradise until financier husband Stephen runs off with scheming salesclerk Crystal (Kathleen McElfresh, with enough va va voom to render Stephen the envy of assembled audience males).

Though Luce called Mary "so stupid you hardly give a hoot," Baldwin's fresh and intelligent reading becomes Tresnjak's anchor in a clear and empathetic progression from despair to Reno to resignation, thence to the climactic play for her ex -- nails painted Jungle Red.

A superb troupe of representative society types drop by, notably Amy Hohn as endlessly fertile Edith, dropping a cigarette ash on her nursing newborn while dishing dirt; Amanda Kramer as tremulous newlywed Peggy; and a hilarious Ruth Williamson as the much-wed Countess who sees every dud hubby through rose-colored glasses: "Ah, l'amour!"

Brief but splendid turns come from the moral compasses: Linda Gehringer, all wry gravity as Mary's mother; Amanda Naughton as a sociologist of female folly; and Nancy Anderson's wisecracking divorcee. (Anderson also excels as a chanteuse of interstitial love songs in the course of the evening.)

But any "Women" will rise or fall on its Sylvia, the waspish confidante who makes her circle a coven while ignoring her own man's roving eye. The peerless Heather Ayers possesses a crackling tongue (with an amusing hint of Katharine Hepburn) and studied grace, equally believable when defending a friend or inserting a stiletto.

Tresnjak's direction isn't impeccable. The minor characters' vulgar caricature and cartoon voices evoke hints of class snobbery. Blair Ross is effective as a nurse telling off the complaining Edith (she of the errant ash), but she'd be stronger still if her reading were simpler and less cluttered.

But who can quibble when a rediscovered play moves along so briskly on point? David P. Gordon's rotating Art Deco palace (transformed into Reno with only Navajo drapes and log furniture) brilliantly sets off Anna R. Oliver's thrilling clothes, so perfectly chosen and worn they can't be called costumes.


And though Matt Richards' lights properly illuminate Luce's public spaces -- a fitting room, powder room, hair salon -- they tighten at each scene's end to a special on a significant character or group, always reminding us of the needy human beings beneath all that fabric and facade.

Sets, David Gordon; costumes, Anna Oliver; lighting, Matt Richards; sound, Paul Peterson; stage manager, Bret Torbek. Opened Sept. 21, 2008. Reviewed Sept. 27. Runs through Oct. 26. Running time: 2 HOURS, 30 MIN.

With: Mary Pat Green, Jenn Harris, Aaryn Kopp, Aimee Nelson, Blair Ross.

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Date in print: Fri., Oct. 3, 2008, Los Angeles

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September 23, 2008

'The Women' at the Old Globe is picture-perfect

By Jennifer Chung Klam

While a star-studded film version of Clare Boothe Luce's "The Women" tanks in the theaters, the Old Globe's sumptuous stage revival of the 1936 play fares far better by sticking to Luce's snarky, cat-fighting, back-biting script set in the '30s.

The social satire skewers Manhattan "ladies who lunch," portraying them as gossiping, self-absorbed, superficial, backstabbing vipers. And those are the friends. It's not a flattering picture. It would be tough to swallow if it didn't have director Darko Tresnjak's assured and very stylish hand to guide it — and if it didn't feel so familiar.

These days, you don't have to go to the highest social strata to find catty women; you could watch any number of reality shows, or dramas such as "Desperate Housewives." Or go to a PTA meeting. Behaving badly is a far more egalitarian pastime than in Luce's day.

It's still apparently funny, though. The audience on opening night howled with knowing laughter.

Though there are no men in the cast, husbands and potential husbands are central to the play's action and themes. Fifteen women portray more than 40 different characters. The play focuses on Mary, a painfully nice, blissfully ignorant wife. Unlike the cynical women in her social circle, she's contented in her 12-year marriage, loves her husband and believes he loves her.

Then she finds out that he's been having an affair with a social-climbing shopgirl. While her mother advises her to look the other way, Mary's traditional views on marriage and meddling from her frenemies com-



From left, Jean Harris, Blair Ross, Ruth Williamson, Mary-Pat Green and Almee Nelson in "The Women." *Craig Schwartz*

DETAILS

"The Women"

When: Tuesdays-Wednesdays, 7 p.m.; Thursdays-Fridays, 8 p.m.; Saturdays, 2 and 8 p.m.; Sundays, 2 and 7 p.m. Through Oct. 26

Where: Old Globe Theatre, Balboa Park

Tickets: \$44 to \$66

Phone: (619) 234-5623

Online: oldglobe.org

pel her unwillingly toward divorce.

After two years of the solitary life, Mary's idealistic view of marriage changes. By play's end, she sharpens her claws — painting them "jungle red" for the toxic game of marital Darwinism — and goes after the woman who stole her husband.

Performances are almost uniformly excellent. Kate Baldwin's Mary is sweet and smart, vulnerable yet strong. Even when the claws finally come out, her Mary retains a sense of self and seems to float above the base antics of the others.

The playwright's acerbic language rolls fast and furious, as the women swipe at each other with witty barbs. Heather Ayers adeptly tackles the language and is perfectly wicked as the

gossipy Sylvia.

Nancy Anderson lends her sultry voice to the period songs that open and close both acts, and Amy Hohn is funny as the perpetually pregnant anti-mom, Edith. Broadway veteran Ruth Williamson plays the ever-in-love Countess de Lage to the hilt. Amanda Naughton delivers prickly commentary as the novelist Nancy, the playwright's stand-in.

Production elements in the Globe show are all tops. Lavish scenic design by David P. Gordon features a rotating set in art deco design that makes scenery changes a whirl. The bathtub and dressing room scenes are cleverly presented.

Anna R. Oliver's gorgeous costumes bring this glamorous era to life with floor-length cocktail dresses, fitted suits and elegant hats. All the bitchery goes down much smoother in such finery. Paul Peterson's sound design, meanwhile, folds in the women's gossipy voices.

The play presents a spectrum of perspectives on love, extramarital affairs, marriage and divorce. Since its initial production (and subsequent 1939 film version), critics and audiences have debated whether

the script is fiercely misogynistic or subversively feminist.

In the world of "The Women," men will always cheat, and women might as well, too. Marriage is portrayed as an economic transaction and a struggle of power and status, rather than a contract based on mutual love and fidelity. It's a negative perspective, but, well, it's satire — best served with a knowing wink and a flourish, which is precisely how Tresnjak presents it.

THEATER

Fem power

The Old Globe's stage production of "The Women" connects, even as the current movie version of the '36 play tanks at the box office. **Page E8**



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Reviews

The Women

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 Reviewed By: [Rob Stevens](#) · Sep 24, 2008 · San Diego

Director Darko Tresnjak has mounted an extremely stylish revival of Clare Boothe Luce's 1936 social satire *The Women*, now at the Old Globe Theater -- so much so that although there are some formidable acting talents on display and Luce's barbs still elicit guffaws, the real stars of the show are Anna R. Oliver's to-die-for period costumes. With their myriad of styles, fabrics, and colors, from breathtakingly stunning evening gowns to outrageous hats and lingerie, *The Women* is a veritable fashion show from start to finish.

If the fashions still elicit oohs and aahs (as well as occasional gasps of disbelief), Luce's cynical social attitudes don't anymore. What was shocking and controversial in 1936 is blasé and old hat in today's tabloid and TMZ-fueled world. Probably the most controversial images are provided by baby factory Edith Potter (Amy Hohn) as she nurses a cigarette as well as her newborn baby, even letting ash fall onto the infant's face. In a later scene, once again pregnant, she's knocking back cocktails like a sailor on 24-hour shore leave.



Kathleen McElfresh and Kate Baldwin
in *The Women*
(© Craig Schwartz)

Fortunately, Kate Baldwin provides a steady and steely balance to the play as Mary Haines, the Park Avenue wife and mother done wrong by the scheming shopgirl Crystal Allen (a shrewish Kathleen McElfresh), who is having an affair with Mary's husband. Dismissing the sage advice of her mother (the always solid Linda Gehringer), Mary falls victim to her friends' backstabbing ways, including chief gossip and troublemaker Sylvia Fowler (an overly cartoonish Heather Ayers), and is soon heading for Reno and a divorce.

Some of the smaller roles are the most pungent. Great support is delivered by Ruth Williamson as the unlucky-in-love multiple divorcee Countess de Lage; Mary-Pat Green shines in a variety of roles including the cornpone Lucy and an Irish cook; while Blair Ross steals quite a few laughs in such roles as Maternity Nurse and One-Eyed Dowager.

Nancy Anderson delivers some wise advice as well as wisecracks as showgirl Miriam, and gets to display her singing prowess at the opening and close of each act. However, the

songs, though from the period and somewhat commenting on the action, don't really add much to the proceedings, and having Anderson make her entrance from the audience to the microphone at center stage is also disconcerting.

David P Gordon's silver and black set is Art Deco perfect; a turntable makes for smooth transitions from scene to scene, with drop-in set pieces adding to the show's tasteful look. But the side banquettes make for awkward staging, as do the wide stairs down to the audience. In fact, it's rather distressing to see these fashionable women squatting on the steps in their chic frocks rather than properly sitting in chairs or sofas.

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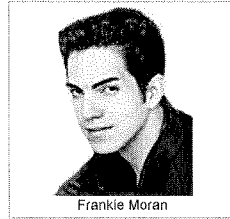
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San Diego Arts

"The Women" at the Old Globe
More clawing and scratching than a road company of "Cats"

By Frankie Moran
 Posted on Oct 09 2008
 Last updated Oct 13 2008



Men behaving badly is nothing new, but what about that other half? There's nary a man in sight in the Old Globe's stellar revival of "The Women," yet there's plenty of misbehaving going on among its exclusively female characters.



Kate Baldwin and Kathleen McElfresh with cast members behind
 Copyright©2008 Craig Schwartz

Clare Boothe Luce's frank depiction of the backstabbing and bitchery among friends of the "fairer sex" caused a stir at its Broadway premiere in 1936. "The Women" is perhaps better known today through George Cukor's 1939 film version and the starchy but poorly received remake by first-time director Diane English currently in movie theatres.

Unlike that latest, updated take, director Darko Tresnjak's staging keeps the action firmly entrenched in its original period. The moneyed Manhattan ladies-who-lunch of Luce's play are showcased exquisitely in Anna R. Oliver's dazzling parade of character-defining costumes. No detail is overlooked, from the eyepatched dowager and monogrammed exercise wear to the severe tilt of a feather in a particularly venomous character's hat.

For a show in which almost every other scene is set in a hair salon, dressmaker's shop, or exercise room, Luce's women of leisure must always look their best, and wig supervisor Molly O'Connor has fashioned a picture -- and period -- perfect set of curled coiffures for the whole lot.



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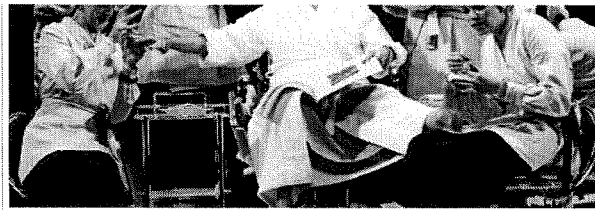
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Jenn Harris, Blair Ross, Ruth Williamson, Mary-Pat Green & Aimee Nelson
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The elegant lighting design of Matthew Richards adds to the look, but it's David P. Gordon's revolving Art Deco set, with its sleek lines and glossy surfaces, that really elevate the show's visual package. Making creative use of a central passageway between the revolve's front and back sides, in which we see characters eavesdropping and idling about, it also includes a mirror or two in just about every one of its twelve scenes, all the better for these women to primp and obsess in -- and for the female portion of the audience to seem themselves in, [surgically removable] warts and all.

Underneath all this visual display, of which there is much, Luce's satire of women behaving badly proves remarkably enduring. True, contemporary women may not feel the same absolute need for a husband that Luce's Park Avenue gals do, but the gossip, the scheming and conniving between "frenemies," all seem fairly commonplace even today.

At the center of Luce's tale is the first Mrs. Stephen Haines, Mary, and her fierce rivalry with the second, a shopgirl named Crystal who steals her husband's affections. Kate Baldwin, with her fresh-scrubbed patrician wholesomeness, easily wins our hearts as the wronged wife, and Kathleen McElfresh gives the crass Crystal a grating nasality that makes her all the more annoying.



Nancy Anderson, Amy Hoen, Ruth Williamson, Amanda Kramer & Kate Baldwin
Copyright©2008 Craig Schwartz

The evening is littered with delicious performances from the rest of the strong company, too. Baring feline nails painted Jungle Red, Heather Ayers has fun with the cattiness of queen bitch Sylvia. Tresnjak has expanded the role of ex-chorine Miriam, Sylvia's nemesis, played here by Broadway musical comedy regular Nancy Anderson, who lends her vocal talents to several period songs that open and close each act.

Amy Hohn gets some juicy bits as perpetually pregnant Edith Potter, chain smoking and spirits-swilling her way through life regardless of what she has growing in her womb or nursing in her arms. As the amour-afflicted Countess de Lage, salty Ruth Williamson works the stage like the old pro she is.



The Cast
Copyright©2008 Craig Schwartz

One wishes the wonderfully acerbic Amanda Naughton had more to do as refreshingly independent writer Nancy, but as the lone single gal of this husband-obsessed circle, there's just not much room. As newlywed Peggy Day, Amanda Kramer similarly stands out as the face of innocence in this vicious bunch.

Linda Gehringer is nicely understated as Mary's advice-giving mother. Mary-Pat Green, Blair Ross, and Jenn Harris do some memorable work with four or five fun character roles each. Rounding out the cast are Aaryn Kopp, Aimee Nelson, and Kayla Solsbak.

As with his recent productions of "Bell, Book, and Candle" and "The Pleasure of His Company," it looks as though Tresnjak has done it again, dusting off an old gem and polishing it up for a production that looks period but still manages to feel contemporary.

As for "The Women," there's not much more pleasure -- albeit a perverse sort -- to be found than in the company of this coterie.

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Dates : Through October 26, 2008
Organization : The Old Globe
Phone : (619) 23-GLOBE
Production Type : Play
Region : Balboa Park
URL : www.theoldglobe.org
Venue : Old Globe Theatre, Balboa Park, San Diego

*About the author: Frankie Moran is a graduate of the 2008 NEA Arts Journalism Institute in Theater and Musical Theater at USC's Annenberg School of Communication. He was also a Phi Theta Kappa valedictorian at San Diego's own Mesa College and graduated from UCLA's School of Theater, Film, and Television. Frankie got his start in theater criticism writing reviews of Broadway shows during a short stint at Columbia University. Since then, he has written for the North County Times and the Las Cruces Bulletin.
 More by this author.*

Girls, girls, girls ... and family violence

by Jean Lowerison

'The Women'

Maybe there's something wrong with me, but it's difficult for me to work up much interest in who's sleeping with whose husband, especially in these days of real problems like economic meltdown and political terrorism.

But it must be me, because Clare Boothe Luce's 1936 play chalked up 657 performances on Broadway and became a classic film in 1939. Its inferior remake has recently been released. The play is on the boards through Oct. 26 at the Old Globe Theatre. Darko Tresnjak directs.

Inspired by a conversation overheard in the ladies' room at the Morocco Club, *The Women* exposes the vapid lives of leisure class women who spend their lives having their nails and hair done, shopping and gossiping about their friends.

The plot, hinging on the philandering of Stephen Haines with shopgirl Crystal Allen (Kathleen McElfresh), is really just an excuse to watch female catfights (mostly verbal) and expose the viciousness of "friendship" among the leisure class. How and when should they tell wife Mary (Kate Baldwin)? My question is, who cares?

Luce has created a collection of interesting characters, from poison-tongued gossip Sylvia Fowler (Heather Ayers) to writer Nancy Blake ("I'd rather face a tiger any day than what the critics said about your last book," snarks Sylvia) to pregnant (again) Edith Potter (Amy

Hohn) and innocent bride-to-be Peggy Day (Amanda Kramer).

All of them are spectacularly dressed (kudos to costume designer Anna Oliver) and coiffed, thanks to Michaels, the salon where dirt is dished while hair is styled and nails polished.

Luce knew what she was talking about. As editor, playwright, social activist, congressmember, journalist and ambassador, and also married to the founder of *Time* magazine, she traveled in those circles.

Social comment is here in the persons of minor working-class characters such as cook Maggie, a Reno maid and two women from Stephen's office ("A lot of independence you have on a woman's wages," one complains), but the commentary gets lost among all those fancy women in gorgeous costumes and their snarky comments.

For my money, *The Women* is merely an upper-class soap opera, though admittedly a lavishly stylish one given a beautiful production. David Gordon's set design is a marvel; Anne Oliver's costumes to die for; the lighting and sound design impeccable.

Most of the large all-female cast is new to the Globe; all are excellent. The addition of a period song at the top of each act (sung by Nancy Anderson) is a nice touch.

This seems to be the year of the woman in theater: *Fat Pig*, *9 to 5*, *The Good Body* and now *The Women*. Go. Enjoy.

The Women plays through Oct. 26 at

the Old Globe Theatre. Shows Sunday, Tuesday and Wednesday at 7 p.m.; Thursday through Saturday at 8 p.m.; matinees Saturday and Sunday at 2 p.m. For more information, visit www.gaylesbiantimes.com/links/1085.



L-r, Kate Baldwin as 'Mary Haines' and Kathleen McElfresh as 'Crystal Allen,' with cast members behind in The Old Globe's production of 'The Women,' by Clare Boothe Luce, directed by Darko Tresnjak, playing in the Old Globe Theatre now through Oct. 26.

SAN DIEGO READER

October 9, 2008

CALENDAR

The Women

The Old Globe's staging of Claire Boothe Luce's misogynistic hair-puller is smashing to look at. A turntable swivels art deco moldings into a beauty salon, a two-story shower/bath, and even Reno, Nevada, where wealthy women getting a divorce become "Renovated." Anna R. Oliver's high-fashion-amidst-the-Depression costumes evoke 1936 with pinpoint accuracy. Wearing curly hairstyles with every rivulet in place, the fine cast speaks in East Coast patrician voices several clicks above snooty. The show has the look down. Luce's ranting, however, gets tempered. An ultra-conservative, Luce approved of the House Un-American Activities Committee and shed no tear after JFK's death (she often called him a "commie"). And she was no feminist, revisionism to the contrary. When Anne Bogart staged *The Women* at the Rep in 1989, she directed it through Luce's eyes, fangs first (in rehearsals, she en-

couraged actors to steal each other's choices). For the Globe, Darko Tresnjak's version's much more balanced. The upper-class Manhattanites still gossip and connive, but Tresnjak prefers farce to fury; no one's really hurt, or hurt for long. And looking glamorous trumps everything (this is, first and foremost, a style show, and the style smooths things over). Tresnjak offers a humane take on an anti-humane comedy. The ensemble cast functions so smoothly it's hard to single out individuals, though red-haired Nancy Anderson (who croons to beat the band before acts 1 and 2) comes closest to Luce's vitriol.

Worth a try.

OLD GLOBE THEATRE, 1363 OLD GLOBE WAY, BALBOA PARK, 619-234-5623. THURSDAYS, 8 P.M. FRIDAYS, 8 P.M. SATURDAYS, 2 AND 8 P.M. SUNDAYS, 2 AND 7 P.M. TUESDAYS, 7 P.M. WEDNESDAYS, 7 P.M. THROUGH OCTOBER 26.



The Women

INSIDE



B5 | A&E

Globe's "The Women" excite audiences

Wit and appeal excite in Globe's 'The Women'

By Diana Saenger

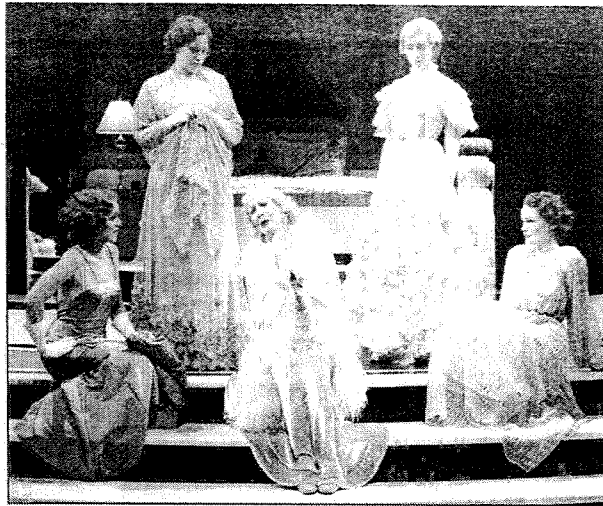
Clare Boothe Luce's saucy and acidic play "The Women" was a brave offering in 1939 and one the critics panned. Audiences, however, loved the story about a group of back-biting, malicious socialite friends who will rise above everything to maintain their personal pride. The Old Globe's production of "The Women" runs through Oct. 26, and the show is grand in every aspect.

The play features a cast of 15 women and is set in the late 1930s in a society where women don't work and their lavish lifestyles afford them every luxury imaginable. Although there are no men in the play, the women's wonderful performances make us believe the men in their lives will pop on stage at any moment.

Mary Haines (Kate Baldwin) is so occupied with her pampered friends and raising her daughter (Kayla Solbak) she hardly notices that her husband Steven is rarely home — until her friends bring it to her attention. When the flamboyant Sylvia Fowler (Heather Ayers) learns from her manicurist at Saks that Steven is dating a clerk in the store, she can't wait to tell all the girls.

Each friend has her own way of dealing with the news once Mary finds out. Sylvia thinks it's no big deal — and why would she? She's living with a husband whom she thinks is impudent but loves spending his money. Peggy (Amanda Kramer) is a sweet innocent who does not have money and truly feels sorry for her friend. Edith (Amy Hohn) is the comedic one in the group. She's a birth machine with lots of kids and finds the women's cattiness trivial.

"The Women" is not so much about a plot as it is about its characters that stand out with their fast-paced witty dialogue,



"The Women" features a cast of 15 women and is set in the late 1930s. © CRAIG SCHWARTZ

some of which fires off so rapidly and low-voiced, it's easy to miss what some of the actors say. Some characters are so bold they're hilarious. Ruth Williamson plays the Countess de Lage, a dowager who shows up in Reno where Mary goes for her divorce. The Countess' take on life is one amusing barb after another, especially when offering advice she's learned from all of her marriages. But it's Williamson's presentation that makes her a favorite in the show.

A good story must have its scoundrels and this play has several. Kathleen McElfresh is quite amusing as Crystal Allen, the sexy and tart femme fatale who stole and married Mary's husband. There's a scene with her in a lavish bathtub that bubbles with excitement and changes the course of her future. Steven's straight-laced secretary (Jenn Harris) is a hoot when she brings divorce papers to Mary and spouts her virtue as a woman "who doesn't whine." Nancy

'The Women'

Through Oct. 26
The Old Globe
1363 Old Globe Way
(619) 234-5623, www.theoldglobe.org

Anderson adds depth to the story through several songs and as the temptress Miriam Aarons.

The Globe's incredible team gets credit for much of the enjoyment of "The Women." Darko Tresnjak has masterfully directed a very complex show both in content and visuals. The set designs by David P. Gordon are extraordinary yet minimal. The art décor style of the 1930s with lots of black glass and sharp angles set the mood perfectly. Costumes by Anna R. Oliver are jaw-dropping. Each beautiful gown overwhelms, and each actress wears her own as if she was born in it.

George Cukor turned Luce's play into a wonderful 1939 comedy starring Norma Shearer, Joan Crawford and Rosalind Russell. It embodies every aspect of this delightful tale. This month, a remake of "The Women" hit the big screen. It stars Meg Ryan, Eva Mendes and Annette Bening, and it's a mess, missing every enjoyable beat of its predecessors.

"The Women" offers a wonderful window through which to observe an opulent lifestyle and bitchy women, but also to laugh at the absurdity of their lives and the extent they will go to maintain their decorum. It's marvelous entertainment for both sexes.

RANCHO SANTA FE REVIEW

October 2, 2008

Old Globe's 'The Women' a fun experience for both genders



Alice Cash

By Alice Cash

This fall season in San Diego — besides the fashionista scarves and trouser-jean pants — the new trend in theatre comes in early 19th century settings and chattering characters to move the plot forward.

"The Women" comes to the Old Globe heightening the drama of the 1930s through what is still considered true of today. From gossip, to backstabbing, to affairs, to love, *The Women* captures the fairer sex's traits in one piece. The

Theater review — from a teen perspective

play tells the story of several pampered Manhattan socialites and the gossip that prods and ruins relationships.

The play, written by Clare Booth Luce is snappy and witty, opened in 1936 on Broadway and ran for 666 performances (does that number tell you something about these women?). Although the revivals did not do quite as well, movies followed of this popular piece. The first film was made in 1939 by George Cukor starring Norma Shearer, Joan Crawford, and Rosalind Russell. The most recent version of "The Women" is currently in theatres and is directed by Diane English. But, of course, why go see the movie when you can see the live version on the stage?

With only women in the cast, of course it would be incredible! Everyone in the show worked so well together and they all had such distinct character traits and personas. Protagonist Mary Haines was played by Kate Baldwin who masterfully balanced the show while her "best friend" Sylvia (Heather Ayers) was turning her world upside down with all her gossip and fabulous comedic timing. Kathleen McElfresh, who changed her demeanor with everyone she met, played "The Other Woman" of Haine's husband's affair. Ruth Williamson graced the stage as the spirited Countess de Lage with her incredible stories and facial expressions. Nancy Anderson played the kind and soft-voiced Miriam Aarons, while Linda Gehringer played the crass Mrs. Morehead finished off the gang of gossipers.

Darko Tresnjak, the new artistic director of the Globe, captures the secret lives, desperation, and wants women have. This show was just fun and keeps the audience engaged. I would recommend this piece as a fun mother-daughter outing, but it would also be interesting to men.



Entertainment :: Theatre

The Women

by Obed Medina
EDGE Contributor
Thursday Sep 25, 2008



The women of "The Women"

Fall is approaching and **The Women** are everywhere this season. One can come up with at least two places right off the bat. For one thing, they're dominating the big screen with an updated modern version of Clare Boothe Luce's scathing 1936 satire about wealthy wives with too much time on their hands. The Hollywood remake is chock full of big name Hollywood stars from today and not so today.

The other place where you can find this play is at The Old Globe Theatre in San Diego. This stage version is being called a revival but happily

there's nothing dusty or antique about the play. Though written more than seventy years ago, Luce's biting commentary on the power struggles of these New York socialites is just as relevant today as it will probably be in another seventy years.

The Old Globe's new production is an all-out feast. The lavish revolving Art Deco set by David Gordon transitions from one scene to the next in a fluid movement that incorporates style, music, and the sound of cackling female gossip (sound design by Paul Peterson), taking us from the home of Mary Haines to Saks Fifth Avenue to a divorcee retreat in Reno, Nevada. From start to finish, "The Women" tantalizes the eye with a decadence that reflects the era in which the play was written. The eye-popping costumes by Anna Oliver are less costumes than works of art!

One of the oddest, yet most rewarding additions to this play are the songs that open and close each act, nicely performed by Nancy Anderson (who also plays Miriam Aarons). I say odd, because, at first glance, the musical interludes appear out of place with the overall tone of the play, but the musical addition pays off in the end. You'll need to see the play to understand what I mean. It's as if director Darko Tresnjak is romancing the audience and preparing it for an unforgettable evening. He succeeds wonderfully. He has assembled a uniquely talented cast and production team to bring one of the "most witty and stylish American comedies of all times" back to its state of lavish grandeur.

The play revolves around Mary Haines (a very engaging Kate Baldwin) and her circle of friends. While she is oblivious to her husband's affair with a perfume counter girl named Crystal Allen (Kathleen McElfresh), her best friend Sylvia Fowler (a very funny Heather Ayers) and company are too well aware of the goings on and can't wait to tell her about it so that she can be in the loop. The rest of the play involves acerbic one-liners, offering a glimpse at the darker side of caddy women at their best, claws drawn and painted jungle red. These helpful friends are setting the stage for a cat fight between the current and future Mrs. Haines. The result is pure delight.

Luce fashioned a play that remains self aware and relevant even today. One interesting and effective device employed in the original and has continued through all adaptations is the lack of men in the play. Sure, they're mentioned, and they are the subject on which "The Women" focus, but the fact that they're never seen only adds to the allure of the play.

The Old Globe Theatre in San Diego through October 26. For info and tickets, visit the [Old Globe website](#).

With friends like these . . .

Gossip and back-stabbing fuel Old Globe's 'The Women'

BY JOSÉ A. LÓPEZ

"The Women," which launches the Old Globe's 2008-2009 season, takes a look of the life of bored and wealthy Manhattan socialites, the kind that don't let friendship get in the way of a piece of juicy gossip.

Written in 1936 by Clare Boothe Luce, the play paints an unflattering picture of these fabulous women, one that's clearly entrenched in the era before Women's Lib ("A woman's compromised the day she's born," one character says, without a hint of irony.)

The characters are catty and frivolous, and their biggest accomplishments in life seem to be landing rich husbands, even if they're somebody else's.

While the outlook here is outdated (a cuckolded wife is told to ignore her husband's affair and go away as to make herself more desirable) credit has to go to director Darko Tresnjak, the Globe's resident artistic director, for keeping the play true to the original.

Any attempt at updating the story and you'd end up with a syrupy re-interpretation, just look at the bland adaptation currently in theaters.

If you can get past the political incorrectness of the 1930s, the play is tremendously funny, and the best thing about it comes from the derisive cut-downs the characters lob at each other at a furious pace and the lengths that the protagonists go to stab each other in the back.

While the repercussions of men's actions are what drives the play, not one man is to be seen in this show. The all-female

cast of 16 take on all 33 female roles.

There are a lot of notable performances here, not surprising for a cast that includes several Broadway veterans such as Ruth Williamson (as the "Countess de Lage"); Nancy Anderson ("Miriam Aarons" and "Princess Tamara"); and Kate Baldwin as "Mary Haines," the show's protagonist.

At the outset of "The Women," Haines has everything a Park Avenue housewife could possibly want. She has style and grace and, to the chagrin of her friends, she seems happy in her marriage.

Her friend Sylvia Fowler (Heather Ayers in a hilarious role) has learned a secret from her new manicurist: Haines' husband is cheating on her with a younger perfume sales girl, Crystal Allen (Kathleen McElfresh), and goes about telling everyone but Mary.

Instead, Fowler sets up her friend, telling her to make an appointment with the loose-mouthed manicurist, who — as anticipated — spills the beans on the affair.

Haines confronts Allen at an upscale lingerie boutique, and word of the showdown hits the tabloids, forcing Haines to divorce her husband and head to

Reno, known at the time as the quickie divorce capital.

But Haines still loves her husband and eventually decides that "Pride's) a luxury a woman in love can't afford" as she sets out for a way to get him back.

Other standouts include the rotating stage (David P. Gordon is the scenic designer), which includes an amusing hall that divides each portion of the stage, and the costumes (by Anna R. Oliver) which add a sense of reality to the women's high-fashion lifestyle.

"The Women" runs through Oct. 26. For more information, go to www.TheOldGlobe.org.



The cast of 'The Women' a 1930's comedy about sophisticated women and their relationships, plays through Oct. 26 at the Old Globe Theatre.

PHOTO PROVIDED BY CRAIG SCHWARTZ

ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE: 'The Women' is the authentic 'Sex and the City'

Tanya Dracolakis, Assistant Copy Chief

Issue date: 9/30/08 **Section:** Tempo

In the heart of Balboa Park, after a short walk through the leafy pathway behind the Casa del Prado Theatre and the San Diego Museum of Art, lies the Old Globe Theatre - a convincing replica of Shakespeare's famous theater. It is here where on Sept. 13, the premier of Clare Boothe Luce's "The Women" took place.



Media Credit: Courtesy of the Old Globe Theater

The cast of "The Women" bring timeless humor to the Old Globe Theatre in a grandiose production of style, men and money.

With the recent screen adaptation of the film - perhaps you've seen previews for it - it may not be quite evident why this play is worth seeing. There's a good chance the 1939 movie and 1956 musical inspired by the play are not something many people talk about. However, there's a good reason why this play has been adapted for the masses three separate times since its premier in 1936.

This biting comedy is set in the 1930s in New York City when Mary Haines (Kate Baldwin) is surrounded by her socialite friends who know a secret about her husband that she is still in the dark about. The world of secrets and gossip becomes its own characters, and they get their just desserts for participating in it or not.

The play is wildly funny with the cast of women playing flawlessly off of each other. Baldwin tugs on your moral heartstrings throughout, while two of her chatty friends Edith Potter (Amy Hohn) and Sylvia Fowler (Heather Ayers) keep you laughing from Act 1 to the closing of the curtain.

The grandiose production has a set befitting of the play's acidic humor. All scenes take place on one of two sides of a rotating set, which is changed to depict the variety of settings that these women gossip in. With a mirrored background, the set always shows a distorted reflection of the audience. Perhaps the director did not want the audience to forget to see a bit of themselves in the set that is as two-faced as some of the characters.

Hilarious and raucous, "The Women" shows the struggle for power between women in a world where they hold no tangible power. While these women are sassy and stylish, like a twentieth century "Sex and the City," this satire does nothing to make these women seem like admirable role models. They talk of nothing but scandals involving men and money, two things that every character's life revolves around in the play, and the audience is allowed to watch while powerful moral dilemmas unravel themselves in the wittiest of fashions.

Broadway regulars bring this honesty to the height of its scathing potential. The aforementioned, along with veteran actors Nancy Anderson and Ruth Williamson, bring a world dazzlingly different from our own to life without any hint of staleness or bygone-ness - the subject matter feels urgent and relevant in a world where divorce (one of the many topics tackled in this play) is as common as the gossip seen on stage. While some references may be lost on younger audiences, the meaning is conveyed through the actors' tone and body language.

Darko Tresnjak's production of "The Women" at the Old Globe is timelessly humorous and fits the content of the play like an elbow-length, scarlet, satin glove. For tickets and show times, visit their Web site at www.oldglobe.org.

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Polar opposites

The Old Globe Theatre's two shows and the rest of this week's theater listings

By Martin Jones Westlin

The Old Globe Theatre is currently running two shows as far apart in subject matter as they are in quality. *The Women*, Claire Booth Luce's satire on New York's Depression-era socialites, features some lively, deft directorial touches by Globe artistic director Darko Tresnjak (and dig that art deco set centerpiece)—sadly, Tresnjak had nothing to do with *Back, Back, Back*, a supposedly hard-hitting piece on steroid use in pro baseball. Davis McCallum's direction is sing-song at best, Itamar Moses' script barely gets to the point and one of the three principals looks more like a jockey than a ballplayer. Both shows run through Oct. 26, *The Women* at the mainstage and *Back* at the Copley Auditorium. www.oldglobe.org.

Opening

In a Dark, Dark House and Bash: These two Neil LaBute plays (one pitting brother against brother) feature dark secrets and ordinary people's capacities for committing unspeakable acts. Produced by Ion Theatre Company, the shows run in repertory beginning Oct. 2 at The Lab, The Academy for the Performing Arts, 4580-B Alvarado Canyon Road in Mission Valley. \$23.50. 619-374-6894 or www.iontheatre.com.

Now playing

* ***Dying City***: A year after her husband's death in Iraq, Kelly confronts his identical twin brother, who arrives at her apartment unannounced. Through Oct. 26 at Cygnet Theatre's Rolando venue, 6663 El Cajon Blvd. in the College Area. \$22-\$48. www.cygnettheatre.com.

* ***Jacques Brel is Alive and Well and Living in Paris***: This is a cabaret show of songs that gained the Belgium-born composer a huge cult following in the U.S. Through Oct. 5 at North Coast Repertory Theatre, 987-B Lomas Santa Fe Drive in Solana Beach. \$30-\$42. www.northcoastrep.org.

* ***No Exit***: Three strangers mercilessly exploit each other's fears and weaknesses in a windowless room. Through Oct. 5 at Diversionary Theatre, 4545 Park Blvd. in University Heights. \$29-\$33. www.diversionary.org.

Globe explores Luce play, a touchstone for so many of today's women's tales

'30s satire still choice material

By James Hebert, THEATER CRITIC

The 1939 movie version of "The Women" — whose star-gilded remake just hit theaters — was a black-and-white film that featured one almost psychedelic fashion-show sequence.

For its own production of the original Clare Boothe Luce play, opening Sunday, the Old Globe Theatre is dumping the fashion show. The play's 15 actresses already have done that bit, anyway — in auditions.

"Honestly, I've never had more enthusiastic auditions for any show I've ever done," says director Darko Tresnjak. "Women came in dressed to the nines and changed outfits in the middle of auditions."

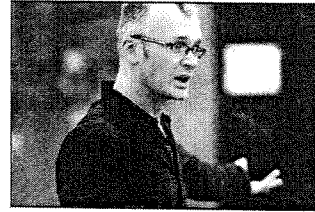
"I will say there is something very empowering for actresses about doing a play with so many roles for them."

And maybe something irresistible about doing a play that has proved to have real legs, culturally speaking.

Luce was both a socialite and a social activist — a playwright and a journalist who eventually became an ambassador and a member of Congress. "The Women," first produced in 1936, is a cutting and funny look at the sometimes-lurid lives of wealthy, social-climbing Manhattan girlfriends — a milieu Luce knew well.

Besides its sense of style, the play's frank, satiric tone — so startling at the time — is in many ways bound up in the DNA of modern-day chronicles of women's lives.

"Undeniably, it's an incredibly influential play," says Tresnjak, who is also the Globe's resident artistic director. "It was controversial when it was written, but



Darko Tresnjak (top) directs Kate Baldwin (center, right) and Ruth Williams (above, in middle) in the Old Globe's production of "The Women." John Gibbins / Union-Tribune photos

SEE 'The Women,' C4

DETAILS

"The Women"

When: Now in previews; opens Sunday.
Schedule: Tuesdays-Wednesdays, 7 p.m.; Thursdays-Fridays, 8 p.m.; Saturdays, 2 and 8 p.m.; Sundays, 2 and 7 p.m. Through Oct. 26.
Where: Old Globe Theatre, Balboa Park.
Tickets: \$44-\$66
Phone: (619) 234-5623
Online: theoldglobe.org

Cast members (seated from left) Nancy Anderson, Kathleen McElfresh, Kate Baldwin, Amanda Kramer and Ruth Williamson. Standing (from left): Heather Ayers and Amanda Naughton. Craig Schwartz



'THE WOMEN'
CONTINUED FROM C1
Camaraderie
also big part
of new staging

whether it's 'Lipstick Jungle,' 'Gossip Girl,' 'Sex in the City,' 'Desperate Housewives' — this is the grandmother of all those.

"A lot of people were outraged that a woman, especially with [Luce's] social standing, would write this way. But something about how it was glamorous, how it was women-only — you couldn't stop it."

The fact the play is being staged in sync with the new movie's opening is not exactly an accident, Tresnjak acknowledges, although the film — which stars Meg Ryan, Annette Bening and Bette Midler, among other big names — originally was going to debut later in the fall.

"Were we conscious of the fact there was a remake coming out? Yes," Tresnjak says. "Was I interested in the play before that? Absolutely. (A movie tie-in) would not be a good reason for a director to direct a play."

Luce's original work also has

a different feel from George Cukor's 1939 movie version, which starred Norma Shearer, Rosalind Russell and Joan Crawford. The play's pace, for one, "is a little more furious, of ten vicious" compared with the film, Tresnjak says.

Kate Baldwin, the Broadway veteran who will play the key role of Mary Haines (the part played by Shearer in the '39 film and Ryan in the new one), is a fan of the Cukor film, but finds Luce's original script perhaps a bit more honest.

"I think the play is a little more elegant, a little more streamlined — at least the way we've treated the text," Baldwin says. "We've made a few cuts to make my character unapologetic."

"I think in the film, especially in the final moments, I felt a little bit let down by Mary."

Baldwin, who was in the original cast of "Thoroughly Modern Millie" that launched at La Jolla Playhouse eight years ago and eventually won six Tonys (including best musical), is joined by fellow Broadway regulars Nancy Anderson and Ruth Williamson. A number of local actresses also have been cast, and several perform multiple roles in the sprawling production.

Though the show is not a musical, Tresnjak made a deliberate effort to seek out actresses with musical-theater experience. Anderson is a particular expert in the music of the play's era; she'll sing in the show (in her role as Miriam, a cabaret star), and Tresnjak is using songs from her album of vintage numbers, "10 Cents a Dance," in the production.

"For a play like this, actresses with that kind of background just understand that discipline," Tresnjak says. "It's theater of rhythm, it's theater that rewards energy, just a real understanding of that '30s clip."

"Musical-theater actresses just understand that."

One thing Tresnjak didn't understand, at least at first, was the intricacy involved in staging details of the characters' daily lives, in places like nail salons, fitting rooms and gyms (settings crafted elaborately by designer David Gordon).

"Those first few days (of rehearsal), I knew it was going to be hard work, but I felt punched in the gut," Tresnjak says. "The first scene, they're playing cards, smoking, drinking, bingeing, gossiping, at a mile a minute."

"Then in the next scene you have to figure out when the nails are being soaked, when they're being filed, when they're being buffed. I don't



Above, cast members Heather Ayers and Kathleen McElfresh. Left, director Darko Tresnjak and McElfresh. U-T photos

Such attention to the sumptuous details of Luce's world is in tune with the sensibility of the play's era, says Baldwin.

"Oh, it's so glamorous," she says. "Those costumes are going to be spectacular. There's something about the 1930s; it's the same sort of indulgent feeling you get from watching a show like (the AMC cable network's) 'Mad Men,' even though that's the early '60s."

"It's that sense of style — what people wore, how they behaved, what they smoked, what they drank."

When the play first hit Broadway in 1936, that glamorous feel might have accentuated the shock audiences felt at Luce's candid dialogue.

Though theatergoers may be a lot harder to shock these days, Baldwin believes "The Women" still has the power to raise eyebrows.

"I think there are different versions of shock," Baldwin says. "I think you can shock people with a witty one-liner. There are witticisms batted around in this play that don't exist in our conversations in 2008, which I find delicious and shocking at the same time."

Though some productions have emphasized the comic, Tresnjak recalls vividly one hard-hitting revival directed by a mentor of his, the theatrical trailblazer Anne Bogart, when Tresnjak was studying with her at Columbia University.

"She said she thinks every woman in the play ought to be capable of playing Medea," the coldly homicidal anti-heroine from Euripides' Greek tragedy, Tresnjak says. "And I think there's some truth to it. You can pitch it many different ways."

"There's bitchiness and viciousness in the play. But there's a great deal of camaraderie. There's both."



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**Reworking
a classic**

The Old Globe Theatre will present its incarnation of "The Women" on Sunday. The frank, satiric tone of the play, first produced in 1936, helped lay the groundwork for such recent works as "Lipstick Jungle," "Desperate Housewives" and, of course, "Sex and the City." C1


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The Clothes Are The Thing

September 11, 2008 | Filed under: Theater
By Angela Carone

The Old Globe is competing with Hollywood this weekend as each launch what I'm assuming are very different versions of *The Women*. Hollywood gives us [the big studio backed version of The Women](#) starring Meg Ryan and her hair (ummm, Shirley Temple anyone?), Annette Benning, Jada Pinkett Smith, Eva Mendes, and Debra Messing. Honestly, it looks awful. But here in our own backyard, The Old Globe offers the stage version of *The Women*, directed by Darko Tresnjak, who has an affinity for comedies of decades past and says this play is the grandmother to contemporary comedies like *Desperate Housewives*, *Sex and the City*, and *Gossip Girl*.

There's also a [classic movie version](#) from 1939, directed by George Cukor, starring Norma Shearer, Rosalind Russell and Joan Crawford. If you haven't seen it, march on over to your computer, fire up the Netflix and add it to your playlist. It's a hilarious satire and catty romp through the lives of well-bred (mostly), but not well-behaved women in Manhattan high society. Now, while you wait for the DVD to arrive, you can march (lots of marching) over to The Old Globe and see the stage version. *The Women* was a play first, written by [Clare Booth Luce](#), a playwright, turned editor, turned congresswoman. She wrote the play as a biting commentary on her own social set in 1936 - it's an all-female cast, so you might say she put a portion of that social set under the microscope. The story revolves around Mary Haines and her female friends, a group of women who gossip, snarl, marry, divorce, have affairs, talk about men and each other, and change their clothes. It was a smash hit on Broadway, but since the popularity of the classic film, it's not staged all that often. The classic film has, however, become a cult favorite with gay men. Next time you go to Rich's, just toss out the term "jungle red" and you'll see what I mean. Jungle red is the nail color worn by many of the women in the play/movie and becomes a code word for the gossip mill that feeds this well-dressed ecosystem.

There are lots of reasons to see this play, not the least of which is the witty dialogue. But one of the draws is undoubtedly the clothes -- the glorious, 1930's skirts, gowns, gloves, hats, jewelry, and shoes! The Globe's costume department has been working like mad to create over 65 costumes for this production - and there are only 15 actresses! That's a lot of costume changes. There are around 25 wigs in the show, along with lots of hats, shoes, jewels, and handbags. I visited the costume shop in the early days of the project, when the costumes were at the sketch stage and just beginning to be assembled. I spoke with Darko and costume designer Anna Oliver about how they approached the costumes for some of the characters. I also snapped some shots inside the costume shop. Here's a behind-the-scenes look... I can't wait to see the finished products. *The Women* goes into previews this Saturday, opens next Sunday, and runs through October 26th.

About

Culture Lust is a blog about the latest ideas stirring in the creative world, hosted by Angela Carone. As arts and culture producer for KPBS Radio's *These Days*, she's constantly reading, watching, hearing and evaluating the books, movies, music, articles, performers, plays, and cultural phenomena that cross her desk.

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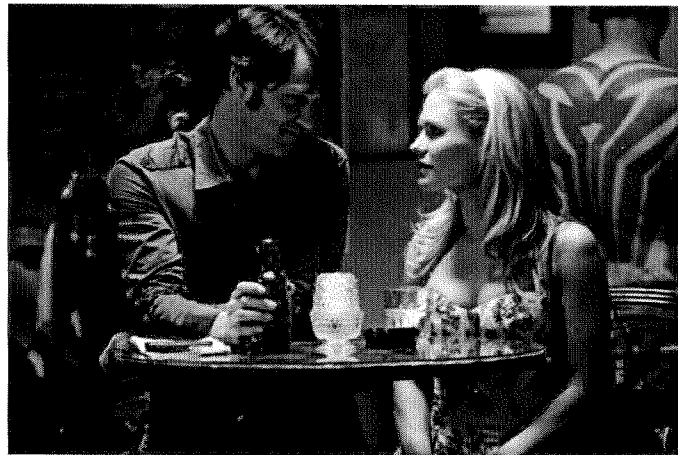


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True Blood Vampires Working to Bring Sexy Back

September 08, 2008 | Filed under: Television
By Angela Carone



Anna Paquin and Stephen Moyer in a scene from True Blood.

Last night, I watched the premiere of Alan Ball's (*Six Feet Under*, *American Beauty*, upcoming *Towelhead*) new HBO drama *True Blood*. If the first episode is any indicator, we're going to see lots and lots of teeth-bearing vampire sex. Ball is clearly interested in vamping up (sorry) the whole dirty-sexy-dangerous aspect of the vampire/mortal dynamic. While erotica has always been a staple surrounding vampires in pop culture, the depiction of graphic sex usually takes a back seat to the spookiness, violence, or (as in the case of *Buffy*), ass-kicking. The sexual aspect is subtext, implicit in the act of vampirism, but rarely materializing because the vampire is often "satisfied" first. The more graphic depictions of vampire sex are the purview of B-movies and adult entertainment.

With *True Blood* and the censor-taunting HBO, vampires in pop culture just got a little freakier.

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American Hot Lixx Hulahan Wins World Air Guitar Championship!



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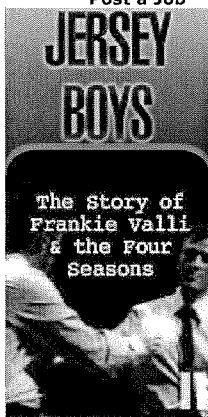
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**Ayers, Baldwin, Anderson and
Williamson Among *The Women* at Old
Globe, Sept. 13-Oct. 26**

Related Information

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By *Kenneth Jones*
13 Sep 2008

The claws come out Sept. 13 at The Old Globe in San Diego with the first preview of Clare Booth Luce's *The Women*, directed by resident artistic director Darko Tresnjak.

The San Diego revival of the large-cast play — a not-flattering portrait of Manhattan femininity — features Nancy Anderson (*A Class Act*, *Wonderful Town*, London's *Kiss Me, Kate*) as Miriam Aarons/Princess Tamara, Heather Ayers (*Ace*) as Sylvia Fowler, Kate Baldwin (*Thoroughly Modern Millie*, Williamstown's *She Loves Me*) as Mary Haines, Linda Gehringer as Mrs. Moorhead, Mary Pat Green as 1st Hairdresser/Head Saleswoman/Maggie/Lucy/Sadie, Jenn Harris as Olga/Miss Trimmerback/2nd Model/1st Cutie, Amy Hohn as Edith Potter, Aaryn Kopp as Jane/1st Model/Debutante, Amanda Kramer as Peggy Day, Kathleen McElfresh as Crystal Allen, Amanda Naughton (*The Constant Wife*) as Nancy Blake, Aimee Nelson as Pedicurist/Fitter/Exercise Instructor/ Helene/2nd Cutie, Blair Ross as 2nd Hairdresser/2nd Saleswoman/Miss Watts/Nurse/Dowager, Kayla Solsbak as Little Mary and Ruth Williamson (Broadway's *The Music Man*, *La Cage aux Folles*) as Countess de Lage.

According to The Globe, "One of the most witty and stylish American comedies of all time, *The Women* offers an acidic commentary on the pampered lives and power struggles of a group of wealthy Manhattan socialites. Mary Haines' society girlfriends know a secret about her husband, and between the beauty parlors, the department stores and the dinner parties, something's sure to slip. Clare Boothe Luce's dishy, decadent 1936 classic comes to vivid life on the Old Globe stage in a major, large-scale production, as these sophisticated ladies use every weapon in their arsenal to fight for love, happiness and personal dignity."

The Tony Award-winning Old Globe presents the play (in The Old Globe Theatre) Sept. 13–Oct. 26; opening is Sept. 21.

"We are thrilled that Darko will be helming *The Women* — a work that he is so passionate about and that features such an incredible cast of Broadway's leading ladies," Old Globe executive producer Lou Spisto said in a statement. "Only an institution like the Globe can bring audiences this kind of spectacular, large-scale production, highlighted by a world-class company of actors, and brought to vivid life by the theatre's renowned costume and scenic departments."

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The production team includes David Gordon (scenic design), Anna Oliver (costume design), Matt Richards (lighting design), Paul Peterson (sound design) and Bret Torbeck (stage manager).

Luce was an editor, playwright, social activist, congresswoman, journalist and ambassador. A prominent figure in New York society circles, Luce was known for her skill with satire and understatement, as well as her charm, which she displayed with such oft-quoted aphorisms as "No good deed goes unpunished." Her first play, *Abide with Me*, a psychological drama about an abusive husband and his terrified wife, opened on Broadway in 1935. *The Women* was a hit, ran for 657 performances and was adapted for the screen by M-G-M in 1939. Her other works include *Kiss the Boys Goodbye*, *Margin of Error*, *Child of the Morning* and *Slam the Door Softly*. In 1949 she wrote the Academy Award-nominated screenplay for "Come to the Stable" and in 1952, she edited the book "Saints for Now," a compilation of essays about various saints written by various well-known authors including Evelyn Waugh, Bruce Marshall and Rebecca West.

For tickets call (619) 23-GLOBE or visit www.TheOldGlobe.org.



The Women: Nancy Anderson, Kathleen McElfresh, Kate Baldwin, Amanda Kramer and Ruth Williamson with (standing) Heather Ayers and Amanda Naughton
photo by Craig Schwartz



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SEASON SAVINGS Save **BIG** on Broadway's **BIGGEST** hits!

The Women, Including Anderson, Ayers, Baldwin, Williamson, Opens Sept. 21

By *Kenneth Jones*
21 Sep 2008

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The Women stars Kathleen McElfresh and Kate Baldwin
photo by Craig Schwartz

The Women, Clare Booth Luce's 1936 group portrait of female personalities on the subject of marriage, opens in a new production at The Old Globe Sept. 21 after previews from Sept. 13.

Directed by resident artistic director Darko Tresnjak, the San Diego revival of the large-cast play — a claws-out look at Manhattan femininity — features Nancy Anderson (*A Class Act*, *Wonderful Town*, London's *Kiss Me, Kate*) as Miriam Aarons/Princess Tamara, Heather Ayers (*Ace*) as Sylvia Fowler, Kate Baldwin (*Thoroughly Modern Millie*, Williamstown's *She Loves Me*) as Mary Haines, Linda Gehringer as Mrs. Moorhead, Mary Pat Green as 1st Hairdresser/Head Saleswoman/Maggie/Lucy/Sadie, Jenn Harris as Olga/Miss Trimmerback/2nd

Model/1st Cutie, Amy Hohn as Edith Potter, Aaryn Kopp as Jane/1st Model/Debutante, Amanda Kramer as Peggy Day, Kathleen McElfresh as Crystal Allen, Amanda Naughton (*The Constant Wife*) as Nancy Blake, Aimee Nelson as Pedicurist/Fitter/Exercise Instructor/ Helene/2nd Cutie, Blair Ross as 2nd Hairdresser/2nd Saleswoman/Miss Watts/Nurse/Dowager, Kayla Solsbak as Little Mary and Ruth Williamson (*Broadway's The Music Man*, *La Cage aux Folles*) as Countess de Lage.

A new, contemporary-set film version of the play is in theatres now. Meg Ryan stars.

According to The Old Globe, "One of the most witty and stylish American comedies of all time, *The Women* offers an acidic commentary on the pampered lives and power struggles of a group of wealthy Manhattan socialites. Mary Haines' society girlfriends know a secret about her husband, and between the beauty parlors, the department stores and the dinner parties, something's sure to slip. Clare Boothe Luce's dishy, decadent 1936 classic comes to vivid life on the Old Globe stage in a major, large-scale production, as these sophisticated ladies use every weapon in their arsenal to fight for love, happiness and personal dignity."

The Tony Award-winning Old Globe presents the play (in The Old Globe

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Theatre) through Oct. 26.

"We are thrilled that Darko will be helping *The Women* — a work that he is so passionate about and that features such an incredible cast of Broadway's leading ladies," Old Globe executive producer Lou Spisto said in a statement. "Only an institution like the Globe can bring audiences this kind of spectacular, large-scale production, highlighted by a world-class company of actors, and brought to vivid life by the theatre's renowned costume and scenic departments."

The production team includes David Gordon (scenic design), Anna Oliver (costume design), Matt Richards (lighting design), Paul Peterson (sound design) and Bret Torbeck (stage manager).

Luce was an editor, playwright, social activist, congresswoman, journalist and ambassador. A prominent figure in New York society circles, Luce was known for her skill with satire and understatement, as well as her charm, which she displayed with such oft-quoted aphorisms as "No good deed goes unpunished." Her first play, *Abide with Me*, a psychological drama about an abusive husband and his terrified wife, opened on Broadway in 1935. *The Women* was a hit, ran for 657 performances and was adapted for the screen by M-G-M in 1939. Her other works include *Kiss the Boys Goodbye*, *Margin of Error*, *Child of the Morning* and *Slam the Door Softly*. In 1949 she wrote the Academy Award-nominated screenplay for "Come to the Stable" and in 1952, she edited the book "Saints for Now," a compilation of essays about various saints written by various well-known authors including Evelyn Waugh, Bruce Marshall and Rebecca West.

For tickets call (619) 23-GLOBE or visit www.TheOldGlobe.org.



Kate Baldwin and Kathleen McElfresh with the cast of *The Women*.
photo by Craig Schwartz

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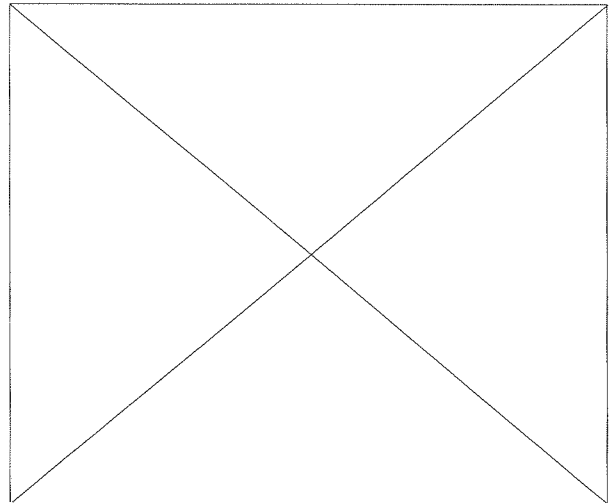


Old Globe's 2008 Winter Season Kicks Off Tonight, 9/13, With Opening of 'The Women'

[Back to the Article](#)

by BWW News Desk

Louis Spisto, Executive Producer of the Tony Award®-winning Old Globe, is pleased to announce the Theatre's 2008-2009 Winter Season. In the Old Globe Theatre, a large-scale revival of Clare Boothe Luce's *The Women* (September 13 – October 26, 2008), directed by Resident Artistic Director [Darko Tresnjak](#) will launch the season. This timely presentation coincides with the new, contemporary film version of the work coming out this fall, and will highlight the work of the Globe's renowned scenic and costume departments in a lavish, grand-scale production.



Next up in the Old Globe will be one of the most important and respected plays of the last two decades: [John Guare's](#) *Six Degrees of Separation* (January 10 – February 15, 2009). Directed by [Trip Cullman](#) (*The Injured Party*), Guare's masterpiece was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize and became a major motion picture starring [Will Smith](#), [Stockard Channing](#) and [Donald Sutherland](#). The Globe stage will also host the world premiere of *Cornelia* (May 16 – June 21, 2009), a new play that takes a fascinating and well-timed look at the rise and fall of one of America's most powerful political couples. *Cornelia* is written by [Mark Olsen](#), creator of HBO's "Big Love," and directed by frequent guest director [Ethan McSweeney](#), who recently helmed the Theatre's critically-acclaimed productions of *In This Corner* and *A Body of Water*. An additional production (March 6 – April 26), expected to be a musical, will be announced. While construction takes place on the Globe's new facilities over the next 18 months, the organization will present its upcoming second stage productions on a newly-created [Arena Stage](#), located next door at the San Diego Museum of Art's James S. Copley Auditorium. The temporary space will retain the similar intimate and engaging theatrical environment of the former Cassius Carter Centre Stage.

On tap for the [Arena Stage](#) will be another world premiere – [Back Back Back](#) (September 19 – October 26, 2008) – by [Itamar Moses](#) (*The Four of Us*), who, at a very young age, has already been established as an important new playwright. Directed by [Davis McCallum](#), this new work deals with three professional baseball players, their relationships, and steroid use in a humorous and thought-provoking manner. Following [Back Back Back](#) comes *Since Africa* (January 24 – March 8, 2009), by [Mia McCullough](#), directed by [Seema Sueko](#) (*The Intelligent Design of Jenny Chow*). Previously mounted by Mo'olelo Theater Company, this poignant play about a young Sudanese man's journey from refugee camp to urban Chicago will have the Globe's full resources behind it in a completely new production. Next will be the west coast premiere of *Opus* (March 21 – April 26, 2009), by [Michael Hollinger](#), directed by [Kyle Donnelly](#) (Orson's

Shadow, A Midsummer Night's Dream), which gives audiences a rare look at the personal lives and loves of four renowned classical musicians, imbued with the famous string quartets of Beethoven, Mozart and others. Rounding out the season will be the Globe's "Classics Up Close" selection: The Price (May 9 – June 14, 2009), Arthur Miller's celebrated work about family legacies, directed by longstanding Director of The Old Globe/USD Master of Fine Arts Program Richard Seer, well known to audiences from his acclaimed production of Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?, Da, All My Sons and Old Wicked Songs).

For more information please visit www.theoldglobe.org

THE BOTTOM LINE

September 12, 2008

arts & entertainment



THE WOMEN

OLD GLOBE MOUNTS LAVISH REVIVAL OF CLASSIC PLAY

The Women, Clare Boothe Luce's wickedly funny 1930s play, is enjoying a major revival at The Old Globe this fall. Directed by Globe Resident Artistic Director Darko Tresnjak, whose production of *Bell, Book and Candle* was a huge hit last season, *The Women* promises to be a delightful evening of theater, featuring 15 actresses and dozens of fabulous costumes, designed and built by the Globe's costume shop. The show runs September 13 - October 26 in the Old Globe Theatre in Balboa Park.

"We are thrilled that Darko will be helming *The Women*—a work that he is so passionate about and that features such an incredible cast of Broadway's leading ladies," said Globe Executive Producer Lou Spisto. "Only an institution like the Globe can bring audiences this kind of spectacular, large-scale production, high-

Pictured above: (L-R, in front) Nancy Anderson, Heather Ayers, Kathleen McElfresh, and Amanda Naughton; (L-R standing in back) Amanda Kramer, Kate Baldwin and Ruth Williamson in The Old Globe's upcoming production of *The Women*, by Clare Boothe Luce.

lighted by a world-class company of actors, and brought to vivid life by the Theatre's renowned costume and scenic departments."

One of the most witty and stylish American comedies of all time, *The Women* offers an acidic commentary on the pampered lives and power struggles of a group of wealthy Manhattan socialites. Mary Haines' society girlfriends know a secret about her husband, and between the beauty parlors, the department stores and the dinner parties, something's sure to slip. Clare

Boothe Luce's dishy, decadent 1936 classic comes to vivid life on the Old Globe stage in a major, large-scale production, as these sophisticated ladies use every weapon in their arsenal to fight for love, happiness and personal dignity. The original play was a huge hit on Broadway and was made into the celebrated film starring Norma Shearer, Joan Crawford, Rosalind Russell, Joan Fontaine and many others.

The Globe production stars a host of stage and film veterans, including Nancy Anderson as "Miriam Aarons/Princess Tamara," Kate Baldwin as "Mary Haines," and Ruth Williamson as "Countess de Lage."

Williamson has appeared in *The Music Man* (Outer Critics Circle nomination), *La Cage aux Folles*, *Epic Proportions*, *Little Me*, *Guys and Dolls*, *Smile* and *Arnie*, as well as City Center Encores' *DuBarry Was a Lady*. On screen Williamson has been seen in *Legally Blonde II*, *Easy Six*, *Family Man*, *Malcolm X*, *The O.C.*, *The Practice*, *ER*, *What I Like About You*, *Enterprise*, *Law & Order* and *Nip/Tuck*. She also recently performed the role of Madame Thénardier in the Hollywood Bowl's star-studded presentation of *Les Misérables: The Ultimate Concert Spectacular*.

Nancy Anderson has made her mark on Broadway, off-Broadway, in the West End, and across the country. In 2001 she received an Olivier Award nomination for her work as "Bianca/Lois" in the West End production of *Kiss Me, Kate*. In New York, she has appeared on Broadway in the Tony-nominated productions of *A Class Act* and *Wonderful Town*. She recently recorded her first solo album, *Ten Cents a Dance*, featuring standards from the 1930s.

Kate Baldwin has been featured on Broadway in *The Full Monty*, *Thoroughly Modern Millie* (original cast) and *Wonderful Town*. She has also received wide acclaim for her roles at numerous regional theaters, including *South Pacific* at Arena Stage (Helen Hayes Award nomination) and *She Loves Me* at the Huntington Theatre Company and Williamstown Theatre Festival.

If You Go — *THE WOMEN* *The Women*, by Clare Boothe Luce, directed by Resident Artistic Director Darko Tresnjak, running September 13 – October 26 in the Old Globe Theatre. Tickets for *The Women* are currently on sale can be purchased by calling 619. 23.GLOBE, online at TheOldGlobe.org, or by visiting The Old Globe Box Office. The Old Globe is located at 1363 Old Globe Way in Balboa Park, San Diego.

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 Theater News

Anderson, Ayers, Baldwin, Naughton, Williamson, et al. Set for Old Globe's *The Women*

 EMAIL THIS

By: **Brian Scott Lipton** · Aug 5, 2008 · San Diego

Full cast and creative team have been announced for the Old Globe's production of Clare Booth Luce's *The Women*, September 13-October 26. The production, which will open officially on September 21, will be directed by Darko Tresnjak.

The cast features Nancy Anderson as Miriam Aarons/Princess Tamara, Heather Ayers as Sylvia Fowler, Kate Baldwin as Mary Haines, Linda Gehringer as Mrs. Moorhead, Mary Pat Green as 1st Hairdresser/ Head Saleswoman/Maggie/Lucy/Sadie, Jenn Harris as Olga/Miss Trimmerback/2nd Model/1st Cutie, Amy Hohn as Edith Potter, Aaryn Kopp as Jane/1st Model/Debutante, Amanda Kramer as Peggy Day, Kathleen McElfresh as Crystal Allen, Amanda Naughton as Nancy Blake, Aimee Nelson as Pedicurist/Fitter/Exercise Instructor/ Helene/2nd Cutie, Blair Ross as 2nd Hairdresser/2nd Saleswoman/Miss Watts/Nurse/Dowager, Kayla Solsbak as Little Mary, and Ruth Williamson as Countess de Lage.



Nancy Anderson
(© Joseph Marzullo/Retna)

The design team includes David Gordon (sets), Anna Oliver (costumes), Matt Richards (lighting), and Paul Peterson (sound).

For tickets and information, call 619-23-GLOBE or visit www.TheOldGlobe.org.

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Westview grad is just one of 'The Women'

BY JOSÉ A. LÓPEZ

Amanda Kramer, a 2005 Westview graduate, began acting at Mesa Verde High School, playing Fiona in "Brigadoon." At 22, she's making her debut at the Old Globe Theatre, playing Peggy Day in "The Women." The following is part of an interview with Kramer.



Q: Tell me a little about "The Women."

AK: The play is about women being vicious toward one another, but there's also a lot of camaraderie. I play Peggy Day. She's the very essence of sweetness and is constantly putting up with the other women. In fact, the costume designer gave themes to all of the costumes, and mine was confections. All my costumes make me look like a dessert because Peggy Day is so sweet.

Q: What was the rehearsal process like?

AK: Our goal was always to achieve honesty and get the rhythm of the play. It moves at a furious pace, driven by a lot of energy and great writing. The script is packed full of every comeback you ever wanted to say, but didn't have the guts.

Q: What does being in an Old Globe production mean to you?

AK: I grew up seeing shows at the Old Globe, so it's all been very surreal. We actually get to share the downstairs dressing room with the actors who are in the Shakespeare Festival.

Go to www.mylocalnews.com for the full interview

SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE

October 9, 2008

NIGHT & DAY



EARS TO THE WALL As Kate Baldwin (left) talks to Kathleen McElfresh, the rest of the cast from "The Women" listens. The Old Globe's production of Clare Boothe Luce's play, directed by Darko Tresnjak, runs through Oct. 26 at the Balboa Park theater. *Craig Schwartz*

THE BOTTOM LINE

September 12, 2008

san diego calendar

September 12-25, 2008

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 12

No Exit Preview at the Diversionary Theater

The classic fantasy by Jean Paul Sartre, adapted from the French by Paul Bowles. Directed by Esther Emery. Hell is other people. Two women and one man are locked up together for eternity in one hideous room in hell. The windows are bricked up, there are no mirrors, the electric lights can never be turned off, and there is no exit. The irony of this hell is that its torture is not of the rack and fire, but of the burning humiliation of each soul as it is stripped of its pretenses by the cruel curiosity of the damned. Times: Thursdays 7:30 pm, Fridays and Saturdays 8 pm, Sundays 2 and 7 pm. For information, call the Diversionary box office at 619.220.0097 or log on to diversionary.org.

The Old Globe Theatre Presents *Romeo and Juliet*

Performance begins at 8 pm. For more information and tickets visit TheOldGlobe.org or phone 619.23.GLOBE.

San Diego Pix Presents *Another Gay Sequel Premier*

Join San Diego Pix at the San Diego premier of *Another Gay Sequel, Gays Gone Wild!* Beginning at 7 pm at the Landmark Hillcrest Cinemas, 3965 5th Ave, San Diego. For more info check out sdpix.com.

Skin Dance Party at Urban Mo's

Show off your tattoos and come start the weekend off with some of the friendliest and hottest men in town! Featuring the music of DJ Taj, from 7 pm until close. Bud Light draft specials all night long. Urban Mo's, 308 University Ave, San Diego. For more info go to urbanmos.com.

The Fabulous Flame Follies at Flame

Come see the Fabulous Flame Follies with your Hostess Ashley O'Day. The show begins at 7:45 pm. Flame, 3780 Park Blvd., San Diego. For more info check out flamesd.com.

Half-Priced Happy Hour at Hawthorn's

New Happy Hour includes half-priced wine, beer and specialty drinks. Monday through Friday 5 until 7 pm at Hawthorn's, 2895



(L-R, seated) Nancy Anderson, Kathleen McElfresh, Kate Baldwin, Amanda Kramer and Ruth Williamson; (L-R standing) Heather Ayers and Amanda Naughton in The Old Globe's upcoming production of *The Women*, by Clare Boothe Luce.

University Ave, San Diego. For more information go to sdpix.com.

Nostalgia Fridays at Flick's

New for Fridays is \$3 pints of well drinks all night with free pool, free darts and free pizza from 6 pm. Also enjoy their popular '80s videos. Flicks, 1017 University Ave, San Diego. For more info go to sdpix.com.

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 13

San Diego Front Runners

Front Runners provides running and walking activities for the LGBT community. Meet every Monday and/or Wednesday by the southeast corner of Sixth and Laurel under the big tree in Balboa Park at 6 pm or every Saturday at 8 am. For more information contact frwstf.org.

Saturday Brunch at Lei Lounge

Lei Lounge is now open Saturdays for brunch, the same award-winning menu

and the same delicious drink special \$3 champagne cocktails and bloodydys beginning at 11 am. Lei Lounge, 4622 Park Boulevard, San Diego. For more info check out leilounge.com.

No Exit Opening Night at the Diversionary Theater

This classic fantasy by Jean Paul Sartre, adapted from the French by Paul Bowles is directed by Esther Emery. Two women and one man are locked up together for eternity in one hideous room in hell. The windows are bricked up, there are no mirrors, the electric lights can never be turned off, and there is no exit. The irony of this hell is that its torture is not of the rack and fire, but of the burning humiliation of each soul as it is stripped of its pretenses by the cruel curiosity of the damned. Special cast party with food by Bamboo Lounge. Times: Thursdays 7:30 pm, Fridays and Saturdays 8 pm, Sundays 2 and 7 pm. For information, call the Diversionary box office at 619.220.0097 or log on to diversionary.org.

The Women Opening Night at the Old Globe Theatre

One of the sauciest, most stylish American comedies of all time was also a play ahead of its time. Mary Haines' society girlfriends know a secret about her husband—and between the beauty parlors, the department stores, the hours in psychoanalysis and the dinner parties—something's sure to slip. Clare Boothe Luce's dishy, decadent 1936 classic comes to drop-dead-gorgeous life in a stunning large-scale production, as these cunning, sexy sophisticates use every weapon in their arsenal to fight for love, happiness and their personal dignity. Spend an evening with this viciously entertaining group of women and you may discover that while times have changed, people haven't. Performance begins at 8 pm. For more information and tickets visit TheOldGlobe.org or phone 619.23.GLOBE. (See related article on page 62.)

The Old Globe Theatre Presents *Romeo and Juliet*

LARGE-SCALE REVIVAL OF "THE WOMEN"



The Tony Award®-winning Old Globe presents *The Women*, by Clare Boothe Luce, directed by Resident Artistic Director Darko Tresnjak, running September 13 – October 26. Tickets for *The Women* go on sale August 24 (currently available by subscription) at noon and can be purchased by calling (619) 23-GLOBE, online at www.TheOldGlobe.org, or by visiting The Old Globe Box Office in Balboa Park.

The cast for *The Women* features Nancy Anderson as "Miriam Aarons/Princess Tamara," Heather Ayers (Ace) as "Sylvia Fowler," Kate Baldwin as "Mary Haines," Linda Gehringer as "Mrs. Morehead,"

The design team includes Globe Resident Artistic Director Darko Tresnjak, director; David Gordon, scenic design; Anna Oliver, costume design; Matt Richards, lighting design; Paul Peterson, sound design, and Bret Torbeck, stage manager.

One of the most witty and stylish American comedies of all time, *The Women* offers an acidic commentary on the pampered lives and power struggles of a group of wealthy Manhattan socialites. Mary Haines' society girlfriends know a secret about her husband, and between the beauty parlors, the department stores and the dinner parties, something's sure to slip. Clare Boothe Luce's dishy, decadent 1936 classic comes to vivid life on the Old Globe stage in a major, large-scale production, as these sophisticated ladies use every weapon in their arsenal to fight for love, happiness and personal dignity. September 13 – October 26; Press Opening: Sunday, September 21 at 7:00pm Tickets: \$44 – \$66

LOS ANGELES TIMES

September 21, 2008

THEATER

Capsule reviews are by PHILIP BRANDES (P.B.), F. KATHLEEN FOLEY (F.K.F.), CHARLES McNULTY (C.M.), DARYL H. MILLER (D.H.M.), DAVID NG (D.N.), DAVID C. NICHOLS (D.C.N.) and CHARLOTTE STOUDE (C.S.). *Compiled by* SHAYNA SOBEL.

Openings

It's Magic! A Tribute to Sammy Cahn Sam Harris, Karen Morrow, Harry Shearer, Steve Tyrell and many others join a concert celebration of the songs and life of the late Academy Award-winning lyricist ("Three Coins in the Fountain," "Come Dance With Me," "High Hopes"). Leonard Malin narrates. Corky Hale directs. Proceeds benefit the Wilshire Theatre's \$30-million revitalization project. Wilshire Theatre, 8440 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills. Today, 5 p.m. \$35. (323) 855-0111.

The Women Clare Boothe Luce's 1936 satire depicts a group of gossipy, backbiting Manhattan socialites. The Old Globe, 1363 Old Globe Way, San Diego. Today, 7 p.m. Tue.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Thu.-Fri., 8 p.m.; Sat., 2 and 8 p.m.; next Sun., 2 and 7 p.m.; ends Oct. 26. \$44-\$65. (619) 234-5623.

The Drowsy Chaperone Broadway/San Diego presents the comic valentine to 1920s musicals. San Diego Civic Theatre, 3rd Avenue and B Street, San Diego. Tue.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Thu., 7:30 p.m.; Fri., 8 p.m.; Sat., 2 and 8 p.m.; next Sun., 1 and 6 p.m.; ends next Sun. \$18-\$79. (619) 570-1100.

Back Back Back Three professional baseball players square off over the use of steroids in their sport in a new play by Itamar Moses ("The Four of Us," "Bach at Leipzig"). The Old Globe at the San Diego Museum of Art's Copley Auditorium, 1363 Old Globe Way, San Diego. Thu.-Fri., 8 p.m.; Sat., 2 and 8 p.m.; next Sun., 2 and 7 p.m.; ends Oct. 26. \$43-\$58. (619) 234-5623.

MUSEUMS

Reviews by CHRISTOPHER KNIGHT (C.K.), HOLLY MYERS (H.M.) and LEAH OLLMAN (L.O.). *Compiled by* GRACE KRILANOVICH.

Continuing

Bernini and the Birth of Baroque Portrait Sculpture There has never been a major Bernini sculpture show in the United States. Gian Lorenzo Bernini (1598-1680), the brilliant and prolific sculptor, architect and painter, more or less invented Italian Baroque art. Along the way he also transformed the dreary portrait bust, a tradition largely inert since ancient Rome. He made it into something dynamic and, on occasion, even spellbinding. The subtle animation of his portrait busts, plus the verisimilitude of the encounter between a viewer and another person, who is actually carved from stone, together breathe mysterious life into the sculpture (C.K.). Getty Center, 1200 Getty Center Drive, L.A. Tue.-Thu. and Sun., 10 a.m.-6 p.m.; Fri.-Sat., 10 a.m.-9 p.m.; closed Mon.; ends Oct. 26. (310) 440-7300.

Mungo Thomson Thomson is adept at the clean, clever conceptual gesture. The economy of such an approach is admirable but delicate: at best, the works strike a clear, incisive, even poetic chord; at worst, they risk appearing light, insubstantial, or flippant. This installation strikes a fruitful balance between conceptual economy and visual presence (H.M.). Hammer Museum, 10899 Wilshire Blvd., Westwood. Tue.-Wed., Fri.-Sat., 11 a.m.-7 p.m.; Thu., 11 a.m.-9 p.m.; Sun., 11 a.m.-5 p.m.; closed Mon.; ends Dec. 4. (310) 443-7000.

Georgia O'Keeffe and the Women of the Stieglitz Circle Long before Hillary, there was Georgia, another woman of formidable talents whose charismatic husband afforded her substantial opportunities; even as he influenced the shaping of her public identity, Georgia's other half, Alfred Stieglitz, envisioned her as the ideal "woman-child," sexually mature but tuned in to her intuitive inner child. This show traces that theme through more than 25 gorgeous works by O'Keeffe, portraits of her by Stieglitz, and paintings and photographs by five other women he championed (L.O.). San Diego Museum of Art, 1450 El Prado, San Diego. Tue.-Wed., Fri.-Sun., 10 a.m.-6 p.m.; Thu., 10 a.m.-9 p.m.; closed Mon.; ends next Sun. (619) 232-7631.

NORTH COUNTY TIMES

September 4, 2008 PREVIEW SECTION

"The Women" — The Old Globe presents a large-scale revival of Clare Booth Luce's wicked commentary on 1930s New York socialites, directed by Darko Tresnjak and starring Broadway actresses Ruth Williamson, Nancy Anderson and Kate Baldwin; opens Sept. 13 and runs through Oct. 26; showtimes, 7 p.m. Sundays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays; 8 p.m. Thursdays-Saturdays; 2 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays; *Old Globe Theatre, Balboa Park, San Diego*; \$44-\$66; (619) 234-5623

"The Merry Wives of Windsor" — The Old Globe's fifth annual Summer Shakespeare Festival presents this comedy about a fat, jolly knight whose plans to woo two married women for their fortunes goes awry; runs in repertory with "Romeo and Juliet" and "All's Well That Ends Well"; "Merry Wives" playing dates are at 8 p.m. Saturday, Wednesday and Sept. 11, 14, 16, 18 and 27; *Lowell Davies Festival Theatre, Old Globe complex, Balboa Park, San Diego*; \$29-\$64; (619) 234-5623.

"Sight Unseen" — The Old Globe presents Donald Margulies' drama about a Jewish artist who faces a crisis of identity during a surprising visit to Europe; 8 p.m. Thursday through Saturday; 2 p.m. Saturday and Sunday; 7 p.m. Sunday; *James S. Copley Auditorium, San Diego Museum of Art, Balboa Park, San Diego*; \$42-\$64; (619) 234-5623.

"All's Well That Ends Well" — The Old Globe's fifth annual Summer Shakespeare Festival presents this bittersweet comedy about a doctor's daughter who tricks a nobleman into honoring their planned marriage; runs in repertory with "Romeo and Juliet" and "The Merry Wives of Windsor"; "All's Well" playing dates are at 8 p.m. Thursday, Tuesday and Sept. 17, 21 and 26; *Lowell Davies Festival Theatre, Old Globe complex, Balboa Park, San Diego*; \$29-\$64; (619) 234-5623.

"Romeo and Juliet" — The Old Globe's fifth annual Summer Shakespeare Festival presents Shakespeare's tragic tale of star-crossed lovers in 14th-century Verona; runs in repertory with "The Merry Wives of Windsor" and "All's Well That Ends Well"; "Romeo" playing dates are at 8 p.m. Friday, Sunday and Sept. 12, 13, 19, 23, 24, 25 and 28; *Lowell Davies Festival Theatre, Old Globe complex, Balboa Park, San Diego*; \$29-\$64; (619) 234-5623.

SAN DIEGO CITY BEAT

September 17, 2008

ON STAGE

CHECK THIS OUT

That's showbiz: I must admit that I went into San Diego Musical Theatre's *Dreamgirls* without much expectation beyond reason—after all, the group is relatively untested, and *Dreamgirls*, a six-time Tony winner from 1982, is an



Dreamgirls

extremely ambitious piece. I was wrong. This Ron Kellum-directed entry, loosely based on The Supremes' rise to stardom, is as tight and as earnest as it gets. Tonex raises the roof as James Thunder Early, a James Brown send-up, and Stacey Francis is perfect as Effie White, who comes of age in the rough-and-tumble world of show business. The piece, awash in some of the best vocals you'll find, runs through Sept. 28 at The Lyceum, 79 Horton Plaza, Downtown. \$32-\$50. 858-560-5740 or www.sdmt.org.

—Martin Jones Westlin

OPENING

Dying City: A year after her husband's death in Iraq, Kelly confronts his identical twin brother, who arrives at her apartment unannounced. Opens in previews Sept. 18 at Cygnet Theatre's Rolando venue, 6663 El Cajon Blvd. in the College Area. \$22-\$48. 619-337-1525 or www.cygnettheatre.com.

The Drowsy Chaperone: A die-hard musical theater fan plays his favorite cast album, only to find that the show has come to life in his living room. Produced by Broadway / San Diego, the

show opens in previews Sept. 23 at the Civic Theatre, 1100 Third Ave., Downtown. \$15.50-\$71.50. 619-564-3000 or www.broadwaysd.com.

The Light in the Piazza: A secret two women carry may prevent young love from blossoming, and both will soon make a series of life-changing discoveries. Produced by Lamb's Players Theatre, the show opens in previews Sept. 19 at the Lone and Paul Harter Stage, 1142 Orange Ave. in Coronado. \$20-\$56. 619-437-0600 or www.lampsplayers.org.

The Women: Mary Haines' society girlfriends know a secret about her husband—and between the beauty parlors, the department stores, the hours in psychoanalysis and the dinner parties, something's sure to slip. Now in previews, it opens Sept. 21 at The Old Globe Theatre mainstage, 1363 Old Globe Way in Balboa Park. \$44-\$56. 619-23-GLOBE or www.oldglobe.org.

CARMEL VALLEY LEADER

September 12, 2008



“Night Sky” Mo’olelo Performing Arts Company’s inaugural production in residence at La Jolla Playhouse is a story of an astronomer who becomes aphasic after a car accident. *Closes Sept. 21. The Studio Theatre, 2910 La Jolla Village Drive, La Jolla. \$18-\$35. (619) 342-7395, www.moolelo.net.*

“The Third Story” Three interconnected stories weave together a tale of a mother and son screenwriting team in the 1940s, a B-movie about an uneasy alliance between a mob queen and a scientist and a Russian fairy tale in which a princess makes a pact with a witch. *Opens Sept. 16, closes Oct. 19. Sheila and Hughes Potiker Theatre at La Jolla Playhouse, 9500 Gilman Drive, La Jolla. \$29-\$62. (858) 550-1010, www.lajollaplayhouse.org.*

“The Women” A comedy about the pam-

pered lives and power struggles of a group of wealthy Manhattan socialites. *Opens Sept. 13, closes Oct. 26. The Old Globe, 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park. \$44-\$66. (619) 234-5623, www.theoldglobe.org.*

THEATER

“The Good Body” Inspired by the award winning “The Vagina Monologues.” *Closes Sept. 28. Lyceum Theatre, 79 Horton Plaza, San Diego. \$18-\$47. (619) 544-1000, www.sdrep.org.*

“Hairdresser on Fire” A new play based on gay and lesbian themes. *Closes Oct. 8. Compass Theatre, 3704 Sixth Ave., San Diego. \$15-\$18. (619) 688-9210, www.compass-theatre.com.*

“The Joy Luck Club” Presented by the Asian American Repertory Theatre. *Closes Sept. 14. Ion Theatre, 4580-B Alvarado Canyon Road, San Diego. \$42-\$75. (858) 568-2278, www.asianamericanrep.org.*

“Memphis” A musical, set in 1950s Memphis, that tells the story about the birth of rock ‘n’ roll. *Closes Sept. 28. Mandell Weiss Theatre, 9500 Gilman Drive, La Jolla. \$42-\$75. (858) 550-1010, www.lajollaplayhouse.org.*



PAMPERED, POWERFUL “The Women” opens at The Old Globe Sept. 13. COURTESY OF THE OLD GLOBE

NEWS JOURNAL

September 4, 2008



CATCH A LOCAL STAR — Amanda Kramer a Westview grad shown seated in purple with her hand to her head at far right, will make her professional theatre debut in "The Women," which launches The Old Globe's 2008-2009 season. The show runs Sept. 13 to Oct. 26. Tickets are now on sale by calling 619-23-GLOBE or at www.theoldglobe.org.

PHOTO PROVIDED BY CRAIG SCHWARTZ

The Old Globe presents "**Sight Unseen**" through Sept. 7 on the Arena Stage in the San Diego Museum of Art in Balboa Park. Biting dialogue ensues when an American artist in England for his first exhibition is visited by a former lover and her husband. Tickets are \$42-\$59. Call 619-23-GLOBE or visit www.TheOldGlobe.org.

NAVY DISPATCH

September 11, 2008



Old Globe Theatre presents 'The Women'

Old Globe Theatre presents "The Women" by Clare Boothe Luce, Directed by Darko Tresnjak Sept. 13 - Oct. 26 *Opening Night Sept. 21. One of the most witty and stylish American comedies of all time, "The Women" offers an acidic commentary on the pampered lives and power struggles of a group of wealthy Manhattan socialites. Mary Haines' society girlfriends know a secret about her husband, and between the beauty parlors, the department stores and the dinner parties, something's sure to slip. Clare Boothe Luce's dishy, decadent 1936 classic comes to vivid life on the Old Globe stage in a major, large-scale production, as these sophisticated ladies use every weapon in their arsenal to fight for love, happiness and personal dignity.

Tickets: \$44-\$65; (619) 23-GLOBE or www.TheOldGlobe.org **Performances:** - Sun/Tue/Wed at 7 p.m. - Thu/Fri/Sat at 8 p.m. - Matinees: Sat/Sun at 2 p.m.

Rancho Santa Fe
REVIEW

August 14, 2008

Tickets for Old Globe's 'The Women' on sale Aug. 24

The Tony Award®-winning Old Globe presents "The Women," by Clare Booth Luce, directed by Resident Artistic Director Darko Tresnjak, running Sept. 13 – Oct. 26 in the Old Globe Theatre. Tickets for The Women go on sale Aug. 24 (currently available by subscription) at noon and can be purchased by calling (619) 23-GLOBE, online at www.TheOldGlobe.org, or by visiting The Old Globe Box Office in Balboa Park.

SAN DIEGO INTERNATIONAL TIMES

October 1, 2008 YU YU

"The Women" 『ザ ウィメン』

スキャンダルとゴシップに溺れるニューヨーク上流社会の女性たち

⑤ ニューヨーク・マンハッタン。マリー・ハインズは裕福な夫ステイヴンと幼い娘と暮らす社交界の名士。ある日、マリーの友人で従姉のシルヴィアは、高級サロンのネイルアーティストからステイヴンがクリスタルという名の女性と浮気している



The Women / Photo by Craig Schwartz

と聞かされる。この醜聞に浮かれたシルヴィアは、他の友達にも耳打ちし、夫の不貞を知らせるべく、マリーを同じネイルアーティストの元へ向かわせる。

⑥ 編集者、劇作家、社会運動家、連邦議会議員、大使、ジャーナリストと幅広く活躍したクレラ・ブース・ルースによる1936年に発表された風俗喜劇。ゴシップやスキャンダルが飛び交うニューヨークの社交界を舞台に、女性たちのロマンスと人間模様を描く。『ザ・ウィメン』は『フィラデルフィア物語』『ボーン・イエステイ』『マイ・フェア・レディ』などで知られるアカデミー賞監督ジョージ・キューカーが1939年に映画化しており、現在はダイアン・イングリッシュ監督によるリメイク作品が公開中。

① THE GLOBE THEATRES (Old Globe Theatre), 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park / 619-239-2255 (T)。期間—10/26(日)迄。上演—火・水曜：7pm、木・金曜：8pm、土曜：2pm & 8pm、日曜：2pm & 7pm。チケット—\$44 ~ \$65。

<http://www.oldglobe.org>

LIVING IN STYLE

Fall 2008

out on the town

SHOW

With the exception of falling leaves and plunging temperatures, San Diego's autumns aren't much different from other major cities across America as curtains rise for new, must-see stage productions. Theater in San Diego walks a lively road these days, attracting both fresh and established talent to a sundry mix of venues that might seat you among thousands or merely a few dozen fellow patrons. Our love affair with the live stage is steadfast and duly reflects this year's playbill of hot picks.

The Women
September 13 through October 28
The Old Globe Theatre

Resident artistic director Darko Tresnjak directs an elaborate revival of Clare Boothe Luce's stylish comedy classic that peers into the pampered lives and power struggles of a group of wealthy Manhattan socialites. The satiric show originally opened on Broadway in 1935, and after more than 650 performances it was adapted for the screen in 1939 by MGM. Call for ticket prices.

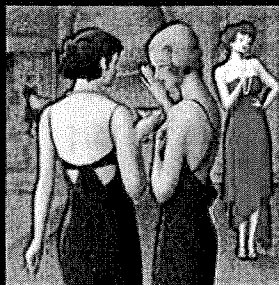


Illustration by Tracy Sabin

NAVY DISPATCH

September 25, 2008

THE WOMEN



(l-r) Jenn Harris as "Olga," Blair Ross as "2nd Hairdresser," Ruth Williamson as "Countess de Lage," Mary-Pat Green as "1st Hairdresser" and Aimee Nelson as "Pedicurist" in The Old Globe's production of *THE WOMEN*, by Clare Boothe Luce, directed by Darko Tresnjak, playing in the Old Globe Theatre now - Oct. 26; photo by Craig Schwartz.