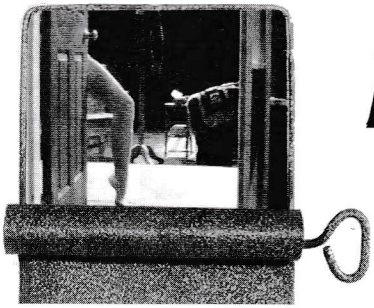
kanata theatre

presents



Noises Off

by Michael Frayn

Directed by Brooke Keneford

THE CAST

DOTTY OTLEY	Jenefer Haynes
LLOYD DALLAS	Rob Johnstone
GARRY LEJEUNE	Gordon Walls
BROOKE ASHTON	Natasha Bourk-Wilson
POPPY NORTON-TAYLOR	Carrie Owen
FREDERICK FELLOWES	Barry Caiger
BELINDA BLAIR	Janet Alkan
TIM ALLGOOD	Mike Hammond
SELSDON MOWBRAY	Chris O'Toole

Act 1 takes place in the living room of the Brents' country home. Wednesday afternoon. (Grand Theatre, Weston-super-Mare. Monday January 14th.)
Act 2 takes place in the living room of the Brents' country home. Wednesday afternoon. (Theatre Royal, Ashton-under-Lyne. Wednesday matinee, February 13th.)
Act 3 takes place in the living room of the Brents' country home. Wednesday afternoon. (Municipal Theatre, Stockton-on-Tees. Saturday April 6th.)

Noises Off by Michael Frayn was first presented, by arrangement with Michael Codron, at Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith, on 23 February 1983.
Noises Off by Michael Frayn is presented by special arrangement with Samuel French, Inc.

There will be two intermissions. Coffee, soft drinks and desserts will be available.
Please be considerate: ensure that all communication devices are turned off.
The use of cameras or tape recorders during the performance is not permitted.

PRODUCTION STAFF

PRODUCTION MANAGER	Dorothy Beak
STAGE MANAGER	Peter Williams
ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGERS	Tabitha Grove, Anne Holland
	Gwendy Tolley
SET DESIGN & DECOR	Susan V. Phillips
TECH DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION	Martin Haynes, Tony Francis
	Earl McLaughlin, Geoff Holland, James Hrkach
	Bill Williams, Les Horne, Pierre Poitras, John Kittle
STAGE CREW	Tony Francis, Geoff Holland, Earl McLaughlin
	Martin Haynes, Bill Williams, Dewi Williams
PAINTING	Susan V. Phillips, Gabriel Grove
	Elsie Campbell, Les Horne, Dan Lacroix
	Gerry Thompson, Ann Williams, Bill Williams
COSTUMES	Helen Weeden
assisted by	Doreen Boss, Nedra Nash
	Melissa Boyd, EmilyClegg
SOUND DESIGN	Rob Fairbairn, Martin Matthews
LIGHTING DESIGN	Doug McMillan
assisted by	Kendrick Abell, Betty Francis, Steven Truelove
PROPERTIES	Beth Atwell, Elsie Bryant
	Joan McLaughlin, Donna Boire
FURNISHINGS	Jim Holmes
CONTINUITY	Rosemary Keneford, John Alkan, Joan Ritchie
MAKE-UP	Martha Johnstone
assisted by	Brittany Adams, Susan Monaghan
GREEN ROOM	Joan Ritchie
PUBLICITY	Jenny Haynes
PROGRAM	Wendy Wagner
BOX OFFICE	Sandra Quirt
REFRESHMENTS	Jane Maslin, Adèle Vickers
HOUSE MANAGER	Julie Clayton

Latecomers will be seated at the discretion of the House Manager.

Kanata Theatre acknowledges with special appreciation the following friends who have provided items or services to the benefit of the play:

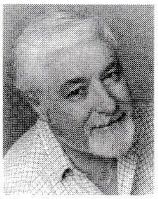
Gord Long and Marise Dube, Bits and Baits Stittsville for the Sardines

Alan Dean Photography

Ron Evans

BIOGRAPHIES

BROOKE KENEFORD (Director) acts and directs for Kanata Theatre. He



appeared on stage last season as John Smith, the bigamist, in *Caught in the Net* and he also played Frank in 2004's award-winning production of *Over the River and Through the Woods*. Some of his other roles include Harry Raymond in *The Stillborn Lover*, Reece in *Communicating Doors*, George Hay in *Moon Over Buffalo*, and Cooper in *A Month of Sundays*. He has played leading roles in many farces such as *It Runs In The Family*, *Key for Two*, *There Goes the Bride* and he was in *On Golden Pond*, *A Chorus of Disapproval*, *Waltz of the Toreadors* and many other plays. He has directed several plays, including *You Can't Take It With You*, *Kindertransport*, *The Cemetery Club* and *Steel Magnolias*.

Director's Note: Welcome to our production of *Noises Off* – and also Robin Housemonger's play *Nothing On*, which is what this evening is really all about. I have never actually met Mr. Housemonger (and, indeed, have no wish to do so) but it has been great fun working with second-rate director, Lloyd Dallas and with the singularly untalented cast of *Nothing On* as they gamely struggle with what is arguably the worst play ever written. Tonight, you will be voyeurs of the dress rehearsal of *Nothing On*, you will see a matinee performance of this truly execrable farce from backstage, and you will be treated to a performance at the Municipal Theatre, Stockton-on-Tees. I invite you to read the enclosed programme notes for *Nothing On*, which will tell you all you need to know and more. Before you stampede to the exits, please be assured that fortunately, tonight, you will also see the work of an exceptionally talented cast and crew in our production of Michael Frayne's wonderful satire of the British theatre, *Noises Off*. I hope you enjoy our production as much as I have enjoyed working on it – however, please take note that any complaints or demands for refund should be made to Dotty Otley of Otstar Productions Ltd., whose only excuse for this sorry mess is that she was "just trying to put a little something by" (presumably, for her old age!).

JANET ALKAN (Belinda Blair/Flavia Brent) last appeared on stage at Kanata



Theatre as Susannah/Ellen in *An Experiment with an Air Pump,* after being away from the stage for 22 years! For the Battleford Community Players, Saskatchewan, Janet had played the role of Elvira in *Blithe Spirit* in 1976 and then appeared *in The Real Inspector Hound* and *The Blackbox* in 1978. She also had a choral role in *The Mikado* in 1980.

NATASHA BOURK-WILSON (Brooke Ashton/Vicki) is a grade ten student at Canterbury High School in the drama program. She previously performed at Kanata Theatre *in Through the Looking Glass, The Dragonslayers*, and *Caught in the Net* and is thrilled by her role in *Noises Off*. Other stage appearances include *Little Shop of Horrors* and *Into the Woods* with New Star Children's Theatre Company, *Is it Christmas or Just Seasons Greetings?* and *The Engagement* with BCCN Youth Drama Group, in addition to *Guys and Dolls* with W.O. Mitchell Elementary School. She would like to thank her beloved cast, Brooke, friends and family (especially her sisters Kaleigh and Brittany) for their loving support towards this teenage Drama Queen.



BARRY CAIGER (Frederick Fellowes/Philip Brent) last appeared onstage at Ron Maslin as Stanley in the farce *Caught in the Net*. This time he keeps most of his clothes ON, thank goodness. Other K.T. appearances include Cogburn in *Out of Sight-Out of Murder* and Inspector Egan, in *Murder by Misadventure*. He directed *Who's Under Where?* and co-directed *No Sex Please, We're British* at Ottawa Little Theatre. Barry appeared in *How to Succeed In Business Without Really Trying* for Orpheus Musical Theatre and as Scrooge in Community Strictly Musical's (C.S.M's) production of *Scrooge*.



MIKE HAMMOND (Tim Allgood) is in his fifth production at Kanata Theatre, having most recently appeared as Sharky in *You'll Get Used to It! – The War Show*. He previously appeared as Ernie in Neil Simon's *Rumors*, in various roles in Carol Shields's *Departures and Arrivals*, and as King Krispin in the 2000 children's play *The Haunted Castle*. He also helped create many of the food props, including cardboard watermelon and Styrofoam meatballs, in *You Can't Take It With You*.



JENEFER HAYNES (Dotty Otley/Mrs. Clackett) Although she has now lived in Canada longer than her native England where she attended a London stage-school as a child, Jenefer still loves British humour. This is reflected in her numerous roles with Kanata Theatre. Theatre credits include *Move Over Mrs. Markham, Not Now Darling, Key For Two, Enter a Free Man, There Goes the Bride, A Nightingale Sang, Communicating Doors , Caught in the Net* and many more. However, Jenny is thrilled to be given the challenge, once again, of appearing as Mrs. Clackett in KT's reprise of *Noises Off.* In 1988 she played Mrs. C. as a cockney, but this time around she's become a northerner with a few more wrinkles. Jenny finds the only draw back to the role is that she sees prolific plates of sardines appearing in her dreams. Jenny very much enjoys her current position as Publicist for KT as well as working in her day-job as a Property Manager. Grateful thanks to Brooke, cast and crew of *Noises Off* - it's been a lot of hard work, a pleasure - and a blast! Sardines, sardines...



ROB JOHNSTONE (Lloyd Dallas) was last seen as the recently deceased brother Martin in *Ethan Claymore*. Other roles include: Kolenkhov in *You Can't take it With You*, Oberon in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Benedict in *Much Ado about Nothing*, Charlie Barnet in *One for the Pot*, Sylvius in *As You Like It* and Charley in *Charley's Aunt*. Directing credits include: *Sinners* and *Pygmalion*. Rob was also an assistant producer for Kanata Theatre's original production of *Noises Off*.



CHRIS O'TOOLE (Selsdon Mowbray/Burglar) is very happy to be making his return to the Kanata Theatre after 24 years away. Chris' last appearance on the Kanata Theatre stage was in 1981's production of *I Never Sang for my Father*. Since then, Chris has enjoyed a number of theatrical experiences both at the professional and at the community level. Most recently, Chris has worked with the Orpheus Musical Theatre Society and with the Valley Players in Almonte. He lives here in Kanata with his wife, Wendy and two children, Ben and Abby. Chris is very grateful for the warm welcome he has received from so many old friends and former schoolmates here at Kanata Theatre.



CARRIE OWEN (Poppy Norton-Taylor) is happy to be back on stage in another comedy. Her role as Cookie, played in *Rumors*, is similar to her present role as Poppy. She had the pleasure of dancing across stage in *The Snow Ball* and acting youthful in *Come Back to the Five and Dime, Jimmy Dean, Jimmy Dean*. Other Kanata Theatre experience includes co-directing *Jungle Book* and choreography for *Rumplestiltskin* and *Rock and Roll*. She is often involved in makeup and cast parties. Many thanks to Brittany for her guidance and encouragement.



GORDON WALLS (Garry Lejeune/Roger Tramplemain) is pleased to make his 7th appearance on the KT stage. A 32 year veteran of the amateur stage (16 in Ottawa), KT patrons will remember him as Michael in last season's *Dancing at Lughnasa* as well as other shows including *The Uninvited*, *Rumors, To Forgive, Divine, The Curious Savage,* and *Dangerous Obsession*. Audiences may also have seen him in the critically acclaimed OLT production of *Da*, as well as *The Musical Comedy Murders of 1940*, *No Sex Please, We're British,* and many others. Gordon has also acted for most west-end theatres including Tara Players and Nepean Little Theatre.

Grand Theatre

WESTON-SUPER-MARE

Proprietors: GRAND THEATRE (Weston-super-Mare) LIMITED
General Manager: E. E. A. GRADSHAW
The Grand Theatre Weston-super-Mare is a Member of the Grand Group
Evenings at 7.45
Matinee: Wednesday at 2.30
Saturday at 5.00 and 8.30

Otstar Productions Ltd present

• DOTTY OTLEY •
BELINDA BLAIR • GARRY LEJEUNE
in

NOTHING ON

by ROBIN HOUSEMONGER
with
SELSDON MOWBRAY
BROOKE ASHTON
FREDERICK FELLOWES

Directed by LLOYD DALLAS

Designed by GINA BOXHALL
Lighting by ROD WRAY
Costumes by PATSY HEMMING

*****WORLD PREMIERE*****
PRIOR TO NATIONAL TOUR!

Commencing Tuesday 15th January 1994 for One Week Only

SMOKING IS NOT PERMITTED IN THE AUDITORIUM
The use of cameras and tape recorders is forbidden.
The management reserve the right to refuse admission, also to make any alteration in the cast which may be rendered necessary by illness or other unavoidable causes.
From the Theatre rules "All exits shall be available for use during all performances".
"The fire curtain shall be lowered during each performance".

NOTHING ON

by

ROBIN HOUSEMONGER

Cast in order of appearance:

Mrs Clackett . . . . . **DOTTY OTLEY**
Roger Tramplemain . . . . . **GARRY LEJEUNE**
Vicki . . . . . **BROOKE ASHTON**
Philip Brent . . . . . **FREDERICK FELLOWES**
Flavia Brent . . . . . **BELINDA BLAIR**
Burglar . . . . . **SELSDON MOWBRAY**
Sheikh . . . . . **FREDERICK FELLOWES**

The action takes place in the living-room of the Brents' country home, on a Wednesday afternoon

for **OTSTAR PRODUCTIONS LTD**
Company & Stage Manager **TIM ALLGOOD**
Assistant Stage Manager **POPPY NORTON-TAYLOR**
Production Photographer **MARTHA NORCHEESIE**

Production credits

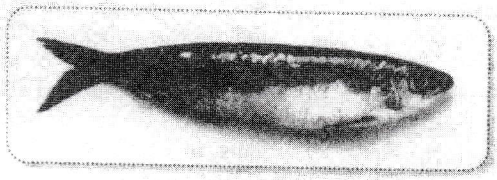
Sardines by Old Salt Sardines. Antique silverware and cardboard boxes by Mrs J. G. H. Norton-Taylor. Stethoscope and hospital trolley by Severn Surgical Supplies. Straitjacket by Kumfy Restraints Ltd. Coffins by G. Ashforth and Sons.

We gratefully acknowledge the generous support of **EUROPEAN BREWERIES** in sponsoring this production.

'A Glimpse of the Noumenal'

(condensed from J G Stillwater: *Eros Untroused - Studies in the Semantics of Bedroom Farce.*)

The cultural importance of the so-called 'bedroom farce,' or 'English sex farce,' has long been recognised, but attention has tended to centre on the metaphysical significance of mistaken identity and upon social criticism implicit in the form's ground-breaking exploration of cross-dressing and trans-gender role-playing. The focus of scholarly interest, however, is now beginning to shift to the recurrence of certain mythic themes in the genre, and to their religious and spiritual implications.



The common sardine. 13.4 million are eaten daily in Great Britain alone. The word is derived from the French, *sardine.*

In a typical bedroom farce, a man and a woman come to some secret or mysterious place (cf Beauty and the Beast, Bluebeard's Castle, etc) to perform certain acts which are supposed to remain concealed from the eyes of the world. This is plainly a variant of the traditional 'search' or 'quest', the goal of which, though presented as being 'sexual' in nature, is to be understood as a metaphor of enlightenment and transcendence. Some partial disrobing may occur, to suggest perhaps a preliminary stripping away of worldly illusions, but total nudity (perfect truth) and complete 'carnal knowledge' (i.e. spiritual understanding) are perpetually forestalled by the intervention of coincidental encounters (often with other seekers engaged in parallel 'quests'), which bear a striking resemblance to the trials undergone by postulants in various esoteric cults (cf *The Magic Flute, Star Wars*, etc).

According to evidence given to the Royal Commission on Procedures and Practice in the Sale of Real Estate, approximately 17% of estate agents admit to having on at least one occasion passed off a property they were selling as their own.

In 63% of these cases the intention was to impress a member of the opposite sex, and/or provide accommodation for illicit sexual activity - though some witnesses had at one time or another used properties to secure a loan or other business advantage from gullible victims. One agent boasted that he had managed to have intercourse in the master bedroom, then sell his partner the property - and help himself to a case of champagne from the cellar and a pound and a half of strawberries from the garden.

A recurring and highly significant feature of the genre is a multiplicity of doors. If we regard the world on this side of the doors as the physical one in which mortal men are condemned to live, then the world or worlds concealed behind them may be thought of as representing both the higher and more spiritual plane into which the postulants hope to escape, and the underworld from which at any moment demons may leap out to tempt or punish. When the doors do open, it is often with great suddeness and unexpectedness, highly suggestive of those epiphanic moments of insight and enlightenment which gives access to the 'other', and offers us a fleeting glimpse of the noumenal.

Another recurring feature is the fall or the loss of trousers. This can be readily recognised as an allusion to the Fall of Man and the loss of primal innocence. The removal of the trousers traditionally reveals a pair of stripped underpants, in which we recognise both the stripes of the tiger, the feral beast that lurks in all of us beneath the civilised exterior suggested by the lost trousers, and perhaps also a premonitory representation of the stripes caused by the whipping which was formerly the traditional punishment for fornication.

Posset (milk curdled with ale or vinegar) was one of the first foods to be processed by industrial methods. In the sixteenth century virtually every village had its posset-mill, though few have survived. Their functioning was based on the common observation that milk tends to curdle more readily on thundery summer days. In a posset-mill production was maintained throughout the year by allowing the milk to run into a heated curdling chamber where the flow of incoming ale or vinegar was ingeniously harnessed to operate a kind of simple theatrical thundersheet. The product was then packed in small 'yoggy pots', made from the scrota of wild yogs.

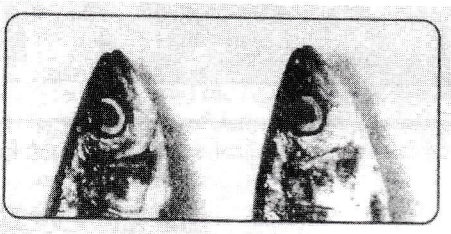
- Janet Thrice: *The Tudor Food Industry*



An early pair of famous doubles - Edward IV and Leofric Leadbetter.

The confusion of identity caused by chance resemblance has always played a significant part in human affairs. Edward IV had a notorious lookalike, Leofric Leadbetter, a tallowboiler from Stony Stratford, who fooled many courtiers and visiting heads of state. Not even their wives could tell them apart. On one occasion Leadbetter gave the royal assent to three statutes and probably fathered the future King Edward V before the imposture was detected. Some historians believe that in the subsequent confusion it was in fact the king, not Leadbetter, who was hanged.

Farce, interestingly, is popularly categorised as 'funny'. It is true that the form often involves 'funny' elements in the sense of the strange or uncanny, such as supposedly supernatural phenomena, and behaviour suggestive of demonic possession. But the meaning of 'funny' here is probably also intended to include its secondary sense, 'provocative laughter'.



Sardines are even more plagued than their human cousins by the problem of doubles and lookalikes.

This is an interesting perception. It scarcely needs to be said that laughter, involving as it does the loss of self-control and the spasmodic release of breath, a vital body fluid, is a metaphorical representation of the sexual act. But it can also occasion the shedding of tears, which suggests that it may in addition be a sublimated form of mourning. Indeed we recognise here a symbolic foretaste of death. If sneez-

British citizens claiming for tax purposes to live abroad cannot spend more than 6 months in the country during a single tax year, or more than 91 days in any one tax year calculated over 4 years. In 1996 a helpline, TaxBreak, was set up to counsel visiting tax exiles suffering anxiety or guilt about their situation. Many of its clients report recurrent nightmares involving sudden chance encounters with officials of Inland Revenue.

ing has been widely feared because it is thought that during a sneeze the soul flies out of the body, and may not be recaptured (whence 'Bless You!' or "Gesundheit!'), then how much more dangerous is laughter. Not once but over and over again the repeated muscular contractions and explusions of breath drive the 'soul' forth from the body. The danger of laughter is recognised in such expressions as 'killingly funny,' and "I almost died.' There is a lurking fear that even more spectacular violence may ensue, and that a farce may end with a bloodletting as gruesome as in *Oedipus* or *Medea*, if people are induced to 'split their sides' or 'laugh their heads off.'

Fear of the darker undertones of bedroom farce has sometimes in the past led to its dismissal as 'mere entertainment'. As the foregoing hopefully makes clear, though, financial support by the Arts Council or a private sponsor for the tour of a bedroom farce would be by no means out of place.

The first item of background information in a theatre programme is believed to have appeared in 1599, for a revival of *Two Gentlemen of Verona*. It provided a brief history of the rise and fall of the North Italian city states, and an inset panel containing a list of useful Italian phrases for travellers.

THIS SPACE TO LET

Please apply to The Manager, Grand Theatre

Behind the Dressing Room Doors

DOTTY OTLEY (Mrs. Clackett) makes a welcome return to the stage to create the role of Mrs. Clackett after playing Mrs. Hackett, Britain's most famous lollipop lady ('Ooh, I can't 'ardly 'old me lolly up!') in over 320 episodes of TV's *On the Zebras.* Her many stage appearances include her critically acclaimed portrayal of Fru Sackett, the comic char in Strindberg's *Scenes from the Charnelhouse.* Her first appearance ever? In a school production of *Henry IV Part I* - as the old bag-lady, Mrs. Duckett.

BELINDA BLAIR (Flavia Brent) has been on the stage since the age of four, when she made her debut in *Sinbad the Sailor* at the old Croydon Hippodrome as one of Miss Toni Tanner's Ten Tapping Tots. She subsequently danced her way round this country, Southern Africa, and the Far East in shows like *Zippedy-Dooda!* and *Here Come les Girls!* More recently she has been seen in such comedy hits as *Don't Mr. Duddle!, Who's Been Sleeping in My Bed?,* and *Twice Two Is Sex.* She is married to scriptwriter Terry Wough, who has contributed lead- in material to most of TV's chat shows. They have two sons and three retrievers.

Dignity is the straitjacket of the soul. Its loss is our first stumbling step towards sanity. - Friedrich Nietzsche

GARRY LEJEUNE (Roger Tramplemain) while still at drama school won the coveted Laetitia Daintyman Medal for Violence. His television work includes *Police!, Crime Squad, Swat, Forensic,* and *The Nick,* but he is probably best-known as 'Cornetto', the ice-cream salesman who stirs the hearts of all the lollipop ladies in *On the Zebra.*

SELSDON MOWBRAY (Burglar) first 'trod the boards' at the age of 12 - playing Lucius in a touring production of *Julius Caesar,* with his father, the great Chelmsford Mowbray, in the lead. Since then he has served in various local reps, and claims to have appeared with every company to have toured Shakespeare in the past half-century, working his way up through the Mustardseeds and the various Boys and Sons of, to the Balthazars, Benvolios, and Le Beaus; then the Slenders, Lennoxes, Trinculos, Snouts, and Froths; and graduating to the Scroops, Poloniuses, and Aguecheeks. His most recent film appearance was as Outraged Pensioner in *Green Willies.*

BROOKE ASHTON (Vicki) is probably best known as the girl wearing nothing but' good, honest, natural froth' in the Hauptbahnhofbrau lager commercial. Her television appearances range from Girl at Infants' School in *On the Zebras* to Girl in Massage Parlour in *On Probation.* Cinemagoers saw her in *The Girl in Room* 14, where she played the Girl in Room 312.

The most important technological advance in history, so far as the maintenance of moral standards is concerned, was the invention of the keyhole. - George Santayana

FREDERICK FELLOWES (Philip Brent) has appeared in many popular television series, including *Calling Casualty, Cardiac Arrest/, Out-Patients,* and *In-Patients.* On stage he was most recently seen in the controversial all-male version of *The Trojan Women.* He is happily married, and lives near Crawley, where his wife breeds pedigree dogs. ' If she ever leaves me,' he says, 'it will probably be for an Irish wolfhound!'

ROBIN HOUSEMONGER (Author) was born in Worcester Park, Surrey, into a family 'unremarkable in every way except for an aunt with red hair who used to sing all the high twiddly bits from *The Meny Widow* over the tea-table.' He claims to have been the world's most unsuccessful gents hosiery wholesaler, and began writing 'to fill the long hours between one hosiery order and the next.' He turned this experience into his very first play, *Socks Before Marriage,* which ran in the West End for nine years. Two of his subsequent plays, *Briefs Encounter* and *Hanky Panky,* broke box office records in Perth, Western Australia. *Nothing On* is his seventeenth play.

LLOYD DALLAS (Director) 'read English at Cambridge, and stagecraft at the local benefits office.' He has directed plays in most parts of Britain, winning the South of Scotland Critics' Circle Special Award in 1969. In 1972 he directed a highly successful season for the National Theatre of Sri Lanka. In recent years he has probably become best known for his brilliant series of 'Shakespeare in Summer' productions in the parks of the inner London boroughs.

Desperation tells a thousand tales - and each of those thousand begets a thousand more. - Moldovian proverb

