

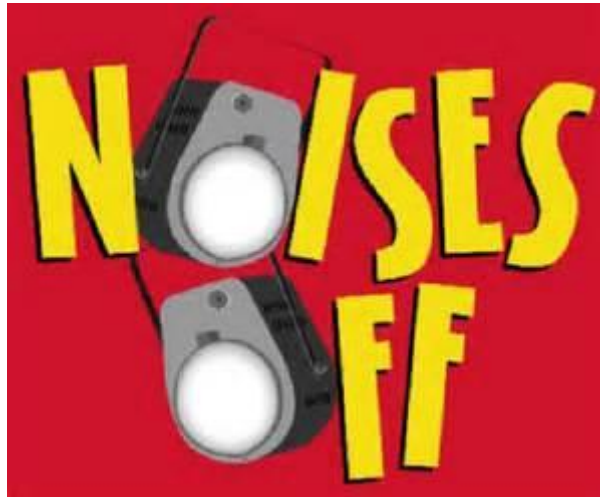


Audition notice

NOISES OFF

By
Michael Frayn

Thursday 15th – Saturday 24th October 2015
Bridewell Theatre



Director: Matt Gould
Producer: Pippa Kyle

Workshops (optional): Sunday 7th June, 2pm & Thursday 11th June, 7pm

Auditions: Thursday 2nd July, 7pm and 8.30pm
Friday 3rd July, 7pm and 8.30pm
Saturday 4th July, 10.30am, 1pm and 3pm

Recalls: Sunday 5th July – Time TBA

To book an audition slot, please go to: <https://sedosnoisesoff.simplybook.me/>

For further information please e-mail: noisesoff@sedos.co.uk

NOISES OFF

Described by legendary New York Times critic Frank Rich as “the funniest play written in my lifetime”, *Noises Off* is a backstage (well, backstage and front-stage) farce.

“If we can just get through the play once tonight for doors and sardines. Getting on – getting off. Getting the sardines on – getting the sardines off. That’s farce. That’s the theatre. That’s life.”

Each of the three acts contains a performance of the first act of a play within a play, a poor farce called *Nothing On* written by a fictional author, Robin Housemonger (in fact written by Frayn solely to be the “Play within a play” of *Noises Off*). Note, we never see or learn anything about the rest of *Nothing On*!

Nothing On is the type of play in which young girls run about in their underwear, old men drop their trousers, and many doors continually bang open and shut. It is set in “a delightful 16th-century posset mill modernised by the current owners and available to let while they are abroad”. (For our production, lovingly designed, built and decorated by Steve King and Clare Harding).

Act One is set at the dress rehearsal at the (fictional) Grand Theatre in Weston-super-Mare; the cast are hopelessly unready, and baffled by entrances and exits, missed cues, missed lines, and bothersome props, including several plates of sardines.

Act Two shows a disastrous Wednesday matinée performance one month later, at the (again fictional) Theatre Royal in Ashton-under-Lyne. However for this act the entire set is revolved so that the audience sees what is going on backstage! Relationships deteriorate which leads to offstage shenanigans and onstage bedlam.

In Act Three, we see a performance of *Nothing On* near the end of its ten-week run, this time being performed at the (still fictional) Municipal Theatre in Stockton-on-Tees. By now, we now have total meltdown. The actors remain determined at all costs to cover up the mounting series of mishaps, but it is not long before the plot has to be abandoned entirely and the more coherent characters are obliged to take a lead in ad-libbing somehow towards some sort of end.....

“Probably the most side-splitting play ever written...” Independent

Production history

Noises Off was first performed in 1982 starring Patricia Routledge and Paul Eddington. It has been performed numerous times since including a 2000 revival at the National Theatre, starring Patricia Hodge and Peter Egan and most recently at the Old Vic in 2011 starring Celia Imrie and Robert Glenister.

Our version

We will be using the most recent published version of the script (2011) which Frayn updated for the National Theatre version and then tidied up again for the most recent Old Vic production. As he states in the Author’s Note, the changes are ones he’s been longing to make – “there’s nothing like having to sit through a play twelve million times to make you itch for the delete key”. Over the years, Frayn has also removed references that have tended to date the original show. As such, our version will be set in “the present”. We will be focussing on making the “real life” scenes as “real” as possible and “*Nothing On*” as a second-rate regional tour!

The team

Director: Matt directed last year's *Into the Woods*. Previous directing credits for Sedos: The musical *A Man of No Importance*; Tom Stoppard's plays – *Hapgood* and *Arcadia* and the epic production of Alan Ayckbourn's linked shows *House/Garden*. He is also an experienced musical director and producer. For Sedos, musical direction credits include *Rent*, *Parade* and *Grand Hotel*. Other musical direction credits include the Sondheim shows: *Assassins*, *Merrily We Roll Along*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Company* and *Into the Woods*; also *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *Pirates of Penzance (Broadway Version)*, *Cabaret* and *Anything Goes*.

Producer: Pippa produced Sedos' productions of: *A Man of No Importance*, *A Little Night Music* and *Taking Steps*. She has also been very actively involved backstage in numerous Sedos productions including *House/Garden (Garden Stage Manager)* and *Into the Woods (Stage Manager)*.

Other key members of the team:

Set Designer:	Steve King
Costume and Production Designer:	Clare Harding
Stage Manager:	Lizzie Drapper
Lighting and Sound Designer:	Ben Hussey
Marketing:	Stephen Beeny

Key dates

Workshops: Sunday 7th June and Thursday 11th June (note, these are optional and both will cover the same material so pick whichever date suits best)

Auditions: Thursday 2nd (eve), Friday 3rd (eve) and Saturday 4th (day) July

Recalls: Sunday 5th July

Rehearsals will take place on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings and Saturday or Sunday daytimes (effectively on a rotation basis – exact dates to be confirmed). The first get-together / read through will take place on Sunday 19th July. Rehearsals proper will start on Tuesday 21st July. There will be a couple of “full weekends” during the rehearsal period – dates also to be confirmed. Rehearsals will generally take place at 1 Brewers' Hall Garden. Evening rehearsals will generally start at 7pm, weekend rehearsals, 10.30 – 4.30pm.

You will be called for final rehearsals on Saturday 10th October. We do not envisage calling the cast during the day on Sunday 11th October – except possibly during the evening. At this stage we envisage calling the cast for the full day on Monday 12th October, so we may ask you to take this day off work. Even if we don't require the whole cast, we will almost certainly require the actors playing Tim Allgood and Poppy Norton-Taylor!

Monday 12th October (evening) will be the technical rehearsal. Tuesday 13th October will be a full dress, but a stagger; Wednesday 14th October will be final dress.

Note: Given the demands of the show, we will be paying special attention at your availability – it is key to the success of the show that we have cast present at rehearsals – and present together!

Performances

Thursday 15th October – Saturday 24th October (7.30pm) *[Note 10 performances]*

No performances on Sunday 18th or Monday 19th

Matinees on Saturday 17th and Saturday 24th October (2.30pm)

Performances will take place at the Bridewell Theatre, Bride Lane, Fleet St, London EC4Y 8EQ, where Sedos is the resident theatre company.

Workshop and Auditions

Workshop

The workshop will be an opportunity to learn more about the play, the roles, the rehearsal process and the audition process. There will be opportunities to read extracts of the script. No preparation is required and attendance is strictly optional. Attendance will not affect your chances of being successfully cast.

If you are planning on attending the workshop, please e-mail noisesoff@sedos.co.uk so that we have an idea of numbers.

The workshop will take place at 1 Brewers' Hall Garden

1 Brewers' Hall Garden
London
EC2V 5BX

Audition format

Each auditionee will be auditioned individually.

Within each time slot, auditionees will be seen on a first-come first-served basis.

Please come prepared with the audition extract(s) for your chosen character(s) as contained on the googledrive. The link to the googledrive will be sent out when you sign up to audition.

Please note that while you are welcome to register an interest in a number of roles, we may only have time to hear you read for one at the initial audition.

Audition Form

When you sign up to audition, you will receive the Audition Form. Please complete that and send back to noisesoff@sedos.co.uk, so that at the auditions, we have full details about you, your experience and what part(s) you are auditioning for. If you are only interested in one particular part, then do indicate this. It will not affect our opinion of you!

Recalls

More details of the recalls will be given if you are recalled.

Booking an audition

To book an audition, please sign-up at <https://sedosnoisesoff.simplybook.me/>

The available slots are: Thursday / Friday, 7pm or 8.30pm; Saturday 10.30am, 1pm and 3pm.

Please return your completed Audition Form to noisesoff@sedos.co.uk.

If you cannot make the auditions, please get in touch and we will do our best to accommodate you.

Notification

We will aim to inform you as quickly as possible after the auditions whether you have been recalled/cast. While we will try to take your preferred method of communication into account, we may have to notify you by another method due to time constraints etc. In the event that you are unsuccessful, we will be very willing to provide feedback when time permits.

Backstage help

If you are not interested in auditioning, but are interested in helping out backstage, in any capacity (from stage crew, to building scenery to sewing costumes to providing front of house assistance) then please let us know by e-mailing noisesoff@sedos.co.uk. We would be delighted to hear from you!

Sedos: audition, participation and membership fees

Sedos is one of London's pre-eminent amateur theatre societies, with the aim of producing quality amateur shows to the best artistic quality possible. Please note that performers are not paid — not even expenses. To perform in *Noises Off* you must be a member of Sedos (membership is currently £30 per year) and pay a participation fee of £30. There is a £5 audition fee for non-Sedos members. If you are cast in the show, your audition fee will be deducted from your participation fee.

For more information about Sedos, please visit our website, sedos.co.uk.

Cast breakdown

Note: Because *Noises Off* contains a play within a play, we will be looking for actors who can create a convincing “real life” character – from whom they can then create the “part” of the *Nothing On* role so versatility is vital. We will also need to be assured that all actors are great at timing and consistency! Without it, Act 2 will be a nightmare....

Lloyd Dallas: The director of *Nothing On*. Temperamental. He is having an affair with Brooke the female juvenile lead, but also, as we learn later, with Poppy, the assistant stage manager.

Dotty Otley: A middle-aged actress. Embittered – used to be a big star, but it is waning and she is reduced to touring the provinces. Has a romantic interest in Garry, but provokes him by showing interest in Freddy.

Garry Lejeune: A young stuttering actor, easily fired up. Has a romantic interest in Dotty, and is driven by jealousy to attack Freddy repeatedly.

Brooke Ashton: A young pretty but inexperienced actress from London. She pays no attention to others, either in performance or backstage. She is having an affair with Lloyd.

Frederick (Freddy) Fellowes: Middle-aged actor (probably used to play the second lead in various sitcoms). Doesn't like confrontation. Lacks confidence and is rather dim-witted and pompous.

Belinda Blair: Cheerful and sensible, a reliable actress. Protective of the others.

Selsdon Mowbray: Elderly actor with rather a penchant for whisky.

Timothy Allgood: The over-worked Stage Manager.

Poppy Norton-Taylor: Assistant Stage Manager (also having an affair with Lloyd).

Cast of *Nothing On*

Mrs Clackett: Dotty Otley
(Housekeeper for the Brents' home in England. Hospitable, though slow.)

Roger Tramplemain: Garry Lejeune
(Estate agent looking to let Flavia's and Philip's house.)

Vicki: Brooke Ashton
(Works for the HMRC and is trying to woo Roger.)

Philip Brent: Frederick Fellowes
(Playwright who lives in Spain with his wife Flavia to avoid UK Tax and is on a secret visit.)

Flavia Brent: Belinda Blair
(Philip Brent's wife. She is dependable, though not one for household duties.)

Burglar: Selsdon Mowbray
(Older man, breaking into the Brents' house.)

Sheikh: Frederick Fellowes
(Interested in renting the Brent's house)

Director: Lloyd Dallas
Company and Stage Manager: Tim Allgood
Assistant Stage Manager: Poppy Norton- Taylor

And finally

If you have any questions regarding the show, rehearsals or the audition process, please contact Pippa via noisesoff@sedos.co.uk.

To sign up for an audition slot, please go to <https://sedosnoisesoff.simplybook.me/>

We look forward to seeing you at the auditions!

Matt & Pippa