

The J.T. & Margaret Talkington College of Visual & Performing Arts
School of Theatre & Dance
presents

HAY FEVER

by noël coward

director

ronald dean nolen

scene design

shawn ketchum johnson

costume design

emilia richardson[^]

lighting design

taylor alfred

sound design

tom laney III

props designer

meagan pierce

Taking photographs, with or without flash, and using video or audio recording equipment are prohibited during the performance. Eating, drinking, and smoking are not allowed in the event space. Thank you!

cast

judith bliss

sorel bliss

simon bliss

david bliss

sandy tyrell

myra arundel

richard greatham

jackie coryton

clara

male swing

female swing

hillary boyd

delaney o'neal*

daniel dipinto

nick mccord

lucas sanders

birdie stabeno

carlos medina-maldonado

natalie dupre

cara ellison

andrew de la garza

lauren voight

* Member - Alpha Psi Omega, National Theatre Honor Society

^ Member - United States Institute for Theatre Technology

production team

dramaturg

stage manager

assistant director

assistant stage manager

intimacy choreographer

vocal/dialects design

vocal captain

vocal coach assistant

assistant lighting designer

assistant costume designer

assistant technical director

scenic charge artist

prop masters

stage crew

light/sound crew

costume crew

program insert design

season artwork design

sarah johnson

angela aguilera

nina stewart

angela kennedy

hillary boyd

delaney o'neal*

rachel hirshorn-johnston

delaney o'neal

leah white

rafael aviles

katy mitchell

margaret walden

kelly murphey^

rebecca taylor

alex webster

elliott esquivel

joryhebel ginorio

lucas weber

chimdinma udeozoh

abigail cunningham

paris dupre

jacob francisco

gabriel mata

trey tucker

vzael vazquez

christina schoener

surasak namwatsopon

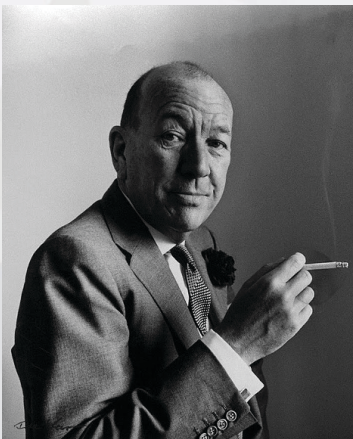
alicia goodman

sarah johnson | dramaturg

Few names in theatre history are as iconic as Noël Coward. His legendary biting wit and flamboyant style made him one of the most successful theatrical savants of the 20th century. A performer, composer, writer, producer, and lover of theatre, Coward rose from humble beginnings to secure a place in the upper class which he often wrote about (and poked fun at). He started his career as a successful child star but gained fame and fortune as a writer in his twenties. Coward used his charm and storytelling skills, developed in the theatre offstage, to great affect: he worked for British intelligence during the second world war with his friend Ian Fleming in espionage. He transitioned into a film and television career, had a successful show in Las Vegas featuring performances of his hit songs, and retired in Jamaica where he died peacefully in 1973.

Hay Fever, written in 1925, contains all the hallmarks of Coward's aesthetic: a fast-paced comedy of manners in which farce takes precedent over plot. The characters are extravagant, the setting decadent, and language distinctly of its time and place. *Hay Fever* contains many specific references to 1920s England, coded references to gay culture (Coward was a well-known but publicly closeted gay man), and meta-theatrical nods to show biz. The core of the comedy, however, requires no knowledge of these references: people behaving badly in shocking ways is funny all on its own. The title of the play, more than any other Coward play, remains a bit obscure. Thought to be a reference to the rural setting of the country home, we might also think of the unpleasant symptoms of hay fever and nearly allergic reactions to the Bliss family.

Making fun of the outlandish behavior of this family living in extreme privilege, Coward taps into a social commentary that feels perhaps even more true and urgent in nearly a century after it was written. In a world of Kardashians, Trumps, and Hiltons, our understanding of exponentially increasing wealth inequality and its intersection with celebrity makes *Hay Fever* feel utterly timely.



"If by any chance a playwright wishes to express a political opinion or a moral opinion or a philosophy, he must be a good enough craftsman to do it with so much spice of entertainment in it that the public get the message without being aware of it." -Noël Coward
