

PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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26 April 2013

Monterey Peninsula College Theatre Company presents

LIGHT UP THE SKY

Written by Moss Hart

Directed by Gary Bolen

Discount Preview May 9

Opens (Press Night) May 10 through 26, 2013

Tickets on sale now!

MONTEREY, CA – MPC Theatre Company’s 2013 season continues with Moss Hart’s 1948 “laugh-a-minute” comedy, **LIGHT UP THE SKY**. After 22 months on the road, the production team that brought you such favorites as *CABARET*, *RENT*, *THE PRODUCERS*, and *A TAFFETA CHRISTMAS*, is pleased to welcome you back to our newly modernized theatre on the Monterey Peninsula College campus.

We are once again *home*, and our second show of the season is the first on our newly renovated Morgan Stock Stage at MPC. The much anticipated reopening of the Theatre Arts complex will be christened with this production, before the official “Grand Re-Opening” production of *LES MISERABLES* in July.

About the Show:

LIGHT UP THE SKY provides a rare look into the world of actor, director, producer, and playwright as they encounter what they believe to be “a critical disaster.” Based on such real-life Broadway celebrities as actress Gertrude Lawrence, producer Billy Rose, and director Guthrie McClintic, the characters playwright Moss Hart created still make audiences laugh over 60 years later. That is a tribute to playwright Moss Hart’s timeless humor and the work that went into this wonderful evening of theatre. This play is the very definition of a “backstage comedy,” filled with the kind of classic character types and over the top farce associated with those comedies of a bygone era.

While truck-driver-turned-playwright Peter Sloan watches his first play being produced in Boston, the backstage antics steal the show. This behind-the-scenes “play-within-a-play” comedy also features temperamental leading lady Irene Livingston; flamboyant director Carleton Fitzgerald, and lowbrow producer Sidney Black and his wisecracking wife. **LIGHT UP THE SKY** opens with the cast gathered for a pre-show toast to their “guaranteed” mutual success. As the

opening night seems to go awry, everyone believes the show is a flop and they start to turn against each other. When it turns out that the reviews are actually favorable, the tables are suddenly turned!

ABOUT GARY BOLEN

Mr. Bolen joined the MPC faculty in fall 1999, and now serves as the Chairman of the Theatre Arts Department. Previously he had been a theatre instructor at College of the Canyons in Santa Clarita beginning in 1990, and served as that department's coordinator from 1994-98. He received his B.A. and M.A. in Theatre from Cal State University Fullerton and an M.F.A. in Acting from UCLA, where he was the winner of the Jack Nicholson Graduate Award in Acting and a University Grant Award recipient. A working professional actor since 1979, Gary has appeared on stages from L.A. to Houston in addition to dozens of television prime time dramas, movies of the week and sitcoms. He was Dr. Parker in "The Young and the Restless" and Harry Shaw on "General Hospital" along with numerous roles on "Days of Our Lives". He also appeared in the teen-hit "Empire Records." In 1995 he was nominated and elected to the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences and has served as an Emmy Blue Ribbon Peer Panel judge.

ABOUT MOSS HART

Moss Hart was born in New York City. He grew up in the Bronx and Brooklyn and was raised in relative poverty by English-born Jewish immigrant parents. After working several years as a director of amateur theatrical groups and an entertainment director at summer resorts, he scored his first Broadway hit with *Once in a Lifetime* (1930), a farce about the arrival of the sound era in Hollywood, written in collaboration with Broadway veteran George S. Kaufman. During the next decade, Kaufman and Hart teamed on a string of successes that included the Pulitzer Prize-winning *You Can't Take It With You* (1936) and *The Man Who Came to Dinner* (1939). While Kaufman had hits with other collaborators, Hart is generally conceded to be his most important. Working solo, Moss Hart also created the books for celebrated musicals like "Lady in the Dark."

After parting with Kaufman, Hart worked on his own, writing *Christopher Blake* (1946) and *Light Up The Sky* (1948.) He went on to become a celebrated Broadway director, staging hits such as *Junior Miss* (1941), *Dear Ruth* (1944) and *Anniversary Waltz* (1954), and his biggest hit, the musical *My Fair Lady* (1956), which ran for over seven years and won a Tony Award for Best Musical and got Hart the Tony for Best Director.

Hart also wrote screenplays, including *Gentleman's Agreement* (1947) – for which he received an Oscar nomination – *Hans Christian Andersen* (1952) and *A Star Is Born* (1954), as well as a 1959 autobiography that was later adapted to film and starred George Hamilton. He suffered a heart attack during tryouts for the last show he directed, the Lerner and Loewe musical *Camelot* (1960). He continued to direct and rework the show with Lerner after it opened, ensuring its success, and ending his career with one last Broadway hit that was still running when Moss Hart passed away in 1961.

ABOUT THE PRINCIPLES

ALEXANDRA BRISTOW (Nan Lowell) is delighted to be acting with MPC in this dynamic production! Alexandra has performed in *PROOF* at The Magic Circle Theatre in Carmel Valley, *SOME GIRLS* at The Carl Cherry Center in Carmel, and *THE ADDING MACHINE* at The Western Stage of Hartnell College.

KEITH DECKER (Carleton Fitzgerald) is reprising the role of Carleton Fitzgerald, which he first portrayed in MPC's 1985 production of *LIGHT UP THE SKY*, directed by the late Jerry DeBono. He studied acting at ACT, PCPA, the Committee improv group in Francisco, and Lynn Redgraves' Shakespeare Workshop. Keith spent seven years in Hollywood performing in theatre, film and television.

TERESA DEL PIERO (Francis Black) is a graduate of Boston University with a BFA in Acting and a member of SAG/AFTRA. She has performed on many Monterey Peninsula stages since moving here in 1985. Teresa's first role on the main stage at MPC was in *THE PHILADELPHIA STORY* (Tracy Lord) and her last was in *PLAZA SUITE* (Karen). She currently serves as President of the Monterey County Theatre Alliance.

MITCHELL DAVIS (Owen Turner) recently appeared in MPC's *A CHRISTMAS CAROL*, *CABARET* (Herr Shultz), *MUSICAL OF MUSICALS (THE MUSICAL!)*, *ONCE UPON A MATTRESS* (The Wizard), *COMPANY* (Larry), *A YEAR WITH FROG AND TOAD*, *KISS ME KATE*, *GUYS AND DOLLS* (Arvide), *URINETOWN* (Senator Fipp), and *NOISES OFF* (Selsdon). Last year he was in *THE GOAT OR WHO IS SYLVIA* (Martin) at Paper Wing Theater and *101 DALMATIANS* (Roger) with Pac Rep. He is the husband of actress Phyllis Davis.

PHYLLIS DAVIS (Stella Livingston) has performed locally in over 75 productions throughout the years, starting with *MY FAIR LADY* at The Wharf Theater in 1978! She recently appeared in MPC's *A CHRISTMAS CAROL*, *MUSICAL OF MUSICALS (THE MUSICAL!)*, and *ONCE UPON A MATTRESS* (Nightingale). Other roles for MPC include: *NOISES OFF* (Dottie), *URINETOWN* (Josephine Strong), *A TAFFETA CHRISTMAS* (Donna) and *COMPANY* (Joanne). Phyllis is delighted to share the stage once again with her husband Mitch!

ABOUT THE DESIGN TEAM

The creative team includes **Gary Bolen** (*Director*), **D. Thomas Beck** (*Technical Director*), **Glen Olsen** (*Scenic Design*), **Steve Retsky** (*Lighting Design*), **Gloria C. Mattos Hughes** (*Costume Design*), and **Kirsten Clapp** (*Props Design*).

Tickets on sale at the MPC Box Office (646-4213) and online at <https://secure3.TicketGuys.com/mpc>



Preview performance on **Thursday May 9** at 7:30 PM. Regular performances are Thursday, Friday & Saturday at 7:30 PM (**May 10, 11, 17, 18, 24, 25**) and Sunday at 2:00 PM (**May 12, 19, 26**) on the Morgan Stock Stage at MPC, located at 980 Fremont Street, downtown Monterey. Tickets are \$25 Adults, \$22 Seniors, \$15 Young Adults (16-21) & Military, and \$10 Children 15 & under; 24-hr Advance Purchase \$20; Online \$18 for Adults & Seniors.

DINNER / BRUNCH THEATRE PACKAGES

We are pleased to offer Dinner/Theatre or Brunch/Theatre packages for (\$36.00 pp) with a *prix fixe* menu at **Isabella's on the Wharf**. Chef Tené Shake has created a very special prix fixe dinner for our theatre patrons to enjoy. We hope that theatergoers will take advantage of the tremendous savings offered with these packages, which can only be obtained through the MPC Box Office. Thursday/Friday/Saturday we recommend a 5:15 seating on the wharf, so you can make the short 15 minute drive to MPC in time for curtain. On Sunday you may choose to dine at a pre-show brunch beginning at 11:30 before attending the matinee, or choose a twilight dinner after the matinee.

Tickets may be purchased from the MPC Box Office (831-646-4213) Wednesdays 3:00 – 7:00 PM, Thursdays & Fridays from 3:00 to 5:00 PM, or at the Wharf Theatre box office beginning 90 minutes prior to any performance, or online at www.TicketGuys.com or www.mpctheatre.com

Parking is plentiful on the college campus, during performances; however there is a \$2.00 fee to park on campus on **Thursday** evenings. From 5:00 PM Friday, through 7:00 AM there is no charge to park.

Performances are:

Thr., May 9 – 7:30 p.m. – *Preview* - All Seats \$12.50

Fri., May 10 – 7:30 p.m. - *Opening*

Sat., May 11 – 7:30 p.m.

Sun., May 12 – 2:00 p.m.

Fri., May 17 - 7:30 p.m.

Sat., May 18 - 7:30 p.m.

Sun., May 19 - 2:00 p.m.

Fri., May 24 7:30 p.m.

Sat., May 25 7:30 p.m.

Sun., May 26 2:00 p.m. – *Closing*

LIGHT UP THE SKY is recommended for theatergoers 10 years and over. Tickets are available by going to www.mpctheatre.com, calling the MPC Box Office at 831-646-4213, or visit the Box Office in person on the MPC Campus, Wednesday through Friday from 3:00 PM to 7:00 PM.

About The MPC Theatre Company

*** Our 2013 Season continues with **LIGHT UP THE SKY**, the first production on the newly renovated Morgan Stock Stage. This will be followed by the Grand-reopening in July, with the Central Coast Premiere of **LES MISERABLES**. Please note that MPC Outreach Programs fund and support many local performing arts groups, including Junior High & High School Drama Departments, Children's Theatres, Dance Companies, and both Community and Professional Theatres.

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