



Old Globe Theatre | Cassius Carter Centre Stage | Lowell Davies Festival Theatre

News

Jack O'Brien, *Artistic Director*
Louis G. Spisto, *Executive Director*
Craig Noel, *Artistic Director*

P.O. Box 122171 Tel 619/231-1941
San Diego, CA Fax 619/231-5879
92112-2171 www.theoldglobe.org

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Contact: Becky Biegelsen (619) 231-1941
www.TheOldGlobe.org

GLOBE PRESENTS BROADWAY HIT: *DIRTY BLONDE*

“I made myself platinum, but I was born a dirty blonde.”

San Diego – The Old Globe is pleased to present the Southern California premiere of *Dirty Blonde*, by **Claudia Shear**, directed by **James Lapine** and **Gareth Hendee**, playing in the Old Globe Theatre July 20 through August 30 (press opening: July 26).

When I'm good, I'm very good," Mae West often said with a wink, "but when I'm bad, I'm better." *Dirty Blonde* is a hybrid comedy that is part Mae West docu-drama, part love story and part vaudeville. The play follows Jo, an aspiring actress, who admires West for her determination to beat the odds. On her annual pilgrimage to West's gravesite, Jo bumps into Charlie, a film librarian and West devotee who met his aging idol at her Hollywood apartment as a teenager. These two shy fans end up finding their own self-confidence and even romance in their shared love of this entertainment icon.

Dirty Blonde enjoyed a successful run in New York during the 1999-2000 season, earning five Tony nominations. In his review for *The New York Times*, Ben Brantley hailed *Dirty Blonde* as a "smart, tough, and tender-hearted comedy" and went on to call it "the best new American play of the season." The *Daily News* wrote, "*Dirty Blonde* is a true delight – a vividly original, genuinely funny, and surprisingly moving love story," while *Newsday* dubbed it "deeply entertaining and moving." This Broadway hit offers audiences a tender love story, while presenting re-enactments of the turns of West's showbiz career in a celebration of her independence and bravely bawdy spirit.

Dirty Blonde features stage and screen star **Kathy Najimy** as "Jo," who will play the role from July 20 through August 24. Acclaimed actress and Tony Award nominee **Sally Mayes** will take over the role August 26 – 30. The cast also includes the original members of the Broadway company: **Kevin Chamberlin** and **Bob Stillman**, both of whom were nominated for Tony Awards for their roles in this acclaimed production.

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Claudia Shear originated the role of Jo in the Broadway production of *Dirty Blonde*, for which she received two Tony Award nominations – as actor and playwright. She also won an Obie Award for her acclaimed performance in her one-woman show, *Blown Sideways Through Life*. This solo show was later adapted for the screen by Shear for American Playhouse. Her film credits include *Living Out Loud*, *It Could Happen to You*, and *The Opportunists*. Television appearances include *Friends* and *Earthly Possessions*.

Kathy Najimy has made memorable appearances in such films as *Sister Act*, *Soap Dish*, *Hocus Pocus* and *Hope Floats*. On stage she has not only starred in *Dirty Blonde* on Broadway when she took over the role from Claudia Shear, she has also wowed audiences in the Obie Award-winning *The Kathy & Mo Show*, which she produced, wrote and co-starred in with Maureen “Mo” Gaffney. On television, she’s the voice of “Peggy” on the animated series *King of the Hill*, played “Olive” on *Veronica’s Closet*, and has made guest appearances on *Chicago Hope*, *Ellen* and many others. Of her performance in *Dirty Blonde*, Clive Barnes of the New York Post wrote, “Najimy gives her own slant (or curve) on the inimitable Mae...she provides a triumphant object lesson in how the West was won. With sheer gusto!”

Sally Mayes has appeared on Broadway in *Urban Cowboy*, *She Loves Me* (Tony nomination), and *Welcome to the Club*. Off-Broadway credits include *Das Barbecu*, *Closer than Ever* (Outer Critics Circle nomination), *Bodoni County*, and *Lyrics & Lyricists*. Regionally she has appeared in *The Unsinkable Molly Brown*, *They’re Playing Our Song*, *On the Town*, *Kiss Me Kate*, and *Chicago*, among others. In addition to many television and film credits, Mayes is also featured on several recordings, including *Unsung Musicals*, *Unsung Sondheim*, and the cast recordings of *She Loves Me* and *Closer than Ever*. “Mayes’ comedic tour de force performance touches your heart and soul...” said Talkin’ Broadway of her performance in *Dirty Blonde*. “[She] channels Mae West perfectly.”

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The internationally-acclaimed, Tony® Award-winning Old Globe is one of the most renowned regional theaters in the country and has stood as San Diego’s flagship arts institution for over 68 years. The Old Globe produces a year-round season of 12-14 plays and musicals on its three stages, including the highly-regarded Shakespeare festival. The Old Globe has become a gathering place for leading theater artists from around the world, as exemplified by Tom Stoppard, Daniel Sullivan, Tina Landau, Nora Ephron and John Goodman, among many others. Numerous Broadway-bound premieres and revivals, such as Imaginary Friends, The Full Monty, Pride’s Crossing and Damn Yankees, have been developed at The Old Globe and have gone on to enjoy highly successful runs in New York and at regional theatres across the country. Under the leadership of Artistic Directors Jack O’Brien and Craig Noel and Executive Director Louis G. Spisto, The Old Globe is at the forefront of the nation’s leading performing arts organizations, setting the standard for excellence in American theater.

THE OLD GLOBE
DIRTY BLONDE
FACT SHEET

WHAT: ***Dirty Blonde***
 By Claudia Shear

WHEN: July 20 through August 30; ***Press Opening: Saturday, July 26***
Performances: – Tuesday - Saturday at 8:00 pm; Sunday at 7:00 pm
 – Matinees: Saturday & Sunday at 2:00 pm

WHERE: Old Globe Theatre, Balboa Park

WHO:	Director: James Lapine/ Gareth Hendee Lighting Designer: David Lander Sound Designer: Dan Moses Schreier	Scenic Designer: Douglas Stein Costume Designer: Susan Hilferty Stage Managers: Leila Knox/D. Adams
	Cast: Kathy Najimy Kevin Chamberlin Bob Stillman Sally Mayes	<i>Jo</i> (July 20 through August 24) <i>Charlie</i> <i>Man</i> <i>Jo</i> (August 26 – 30)

BACKGROUND:

Dirty Blonde is a hybrid work that is part Mae West docu-drama, part love story and part vaudeville. The story centers on Jo, an aspiring actress who admires West for her determination to beat the odds. She, along with two male cast members, regale audiences with re-enactments of the turns of West's showbiz career in a celebration of Mae West's independence and bravely bawdy spirit. "I made myself platinum, but I was born a dirty blonde."

TICKETS: \$19 - \$50; Discounts for students, seniors and active military.

BOX OFFICE: **(619) 239-2255**
Hours: --Mondays noon to 6pm
 --Tuesday thru Saturdays: noon to 8:30pm
 --Sundays: noon to 7:30pm
 --Visa, American Express, MasterCard, Discover Card accepted