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PRODUCTION No. 146



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{Comedy}



Room Service

By John Murray and Allen Boretz

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Room Service

by John Murray and Allen Boretz

starring

MATTHEW R. CARLIN • MIKE GRAY
SKYLAR HAWKER • BECCA INGRAM
BENJAMIN KING • DAVID MORRISON
REESE PURSER • BEN SANSOM • NYLE SMITH
ALEXIS WARDLE • MATTHEW WHITE

costume design
MARYANN HILL

costume director
ANNE SWENSON

costume assistant
AMANDA FITT

hair & make-up design
STACEY WILLIAMSON

assistant hair & make-up
BECKY THORPE

production stage manager
HEATHER RIGGS

lighting design
CODY SWENSON

properties
LINDA HALE

assistant production stage manager
BOBBY SWENSON

executive producer
LINDA HALE

directed by
DAVID MORGAN

technical operations manager
JORDAN MCCLUNG

technical direction
CODY SWENSON
CODY HALE

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

CHARACTER	NAME
Harry Binion	MATTHEW R. CARLIN
Gregory Wagner.....	MIKE GRAY
Dr. Glass/Senator.....	SKYLAR HAWKER
Hilda Manney	BECCA INGRAM
Joseph Gribble	BENJAMIN KING
Leo Davis	DAVID MORRISON
Gordon Miller	REESE PURSER
Faker Englund	BEN SANSOM
Simon Jenkins.....	NYLE SMITH
Christine Marlowe	ALEXIS WARDLE
Sasha/Bank/Hogarth.....	MATTHEW WHITE

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SCENES

SETTING

The entire action takes place in Gordon Miller's room
in the White Way Hotel, New York; 1937

ACT I

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ACT II

The following day.

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ACT III

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DIRECTOR'S NOTE

In 1937 during the Great Depression, *Room Service* provided audiences with a sense of hope through its simple entertainment. Much like the main character, Gordon Miller, the entire nation was struggling through the difficulty of making ends meet. For many, through no fault of their own, life was in shambles. It was at times such as these that theater provided simple entertainment and a sort of escape. In approaching the direction of this piece, I found myself with a desire to give the audience a necessary example of hope and

success. The writing lends itself to such a message through some of the most amusing and well-executed comedy of the era.

With its heightened stakes and zany characters, *Room Service* is a rarity in this day and age. It provides a unique flavor in a society that feeds on the comedy of reality television. So, in a day and time when many may need respite from the difficulties of the day, we hope you enjoy *Room Service*!

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

The playwright **John Murray** was born October 12, 1906, in New York City to Morris Pfenferstein, a grocer, and his wife, Kate. He graduated from De Witt Clinton High School in 1924 and attended the City College of New York and Columbia University from 1925 to 1928. During World War II he served as a captain in the Signal Corps, a branch of the US Army which develops, tests, provides, and manages communications and information systems support for the command and control of combined arms forces. He married Joan Loewi on October 20, 1941, and they would have one son together. He is said

to have enjoyed swimming, reading, history, and current events. He died on June 17, 1984, in Connecticut.

Murray loved working in theater and boasted a varied résumé. He worked as a lyricist, composer, and playwright, contributing songs and sketches to such musical revues as *Straw Hat Revue* (1939), *Sing for Your Supper* (1939), and *Ziegfeld Follies* (1946).

He also wrote for radio and television. He was the head writer for the radio shows of Eddie Cantor and Phil Baker, and wrote scripts for television's "Hallmark Hall of Fame" (NBC), "Schlitz Playhouse" (CBS),

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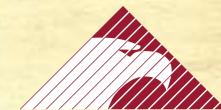
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ABOUT THE AUTHORS (cont.)

“Ford Theater” (CBS), and even adapted *Room Service* for the TV series “Broadway Television Theatre” (1952).

Allen Boretz, the other creative genius behind *Room Service*, was born on August 31, 1900, to Moishe and Hanah Boretz. He also grew up in New York City and attended the City College of New York and New York University. Boretz married and divorced three times throughout his life, and he died on May 21, 1986, in Branford, Connecticut.

Boretz’s résumé was every bit as varied as his co-writer, and he spent his life as a songwriter, playwright, and screenwriter. He wrote for Radio City Music Hall and also wrote musicals, including *Sweet and Low* (1930). As the country shifted its focus from theatre to the silver screen, Boretz began his career in screenplays. His first, and perhaps most popular, is the screenplay for the Marx Brothers’ and Lucille Ball movie adaptation of *Room Service* (1938), followed by the screenplay for “Step Lively,” a musical rendition of *Room Service* starring Frank Sinatra.

His career, however, was cut short when in the early 1950s he was reported to the House Committee on Un-American Activities and subsequently blacklisted. This did not hamper the popularity of *Room Service*, and it has never stopped being produced by professional and amateur companies throughout the world.

— Sean Murphy

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BENJAMIN KING



ALEXIS WARDLE

WHO'S WHO

MATTHEW R. CARLIN

Harry Binion

(n) [math 'iu ar' car 'lin]: 1. An actor, director, and fight choreographer from California; 2. A BFA graduate of Brigham Young University; 3. A twin from a family of ten children; 4. An actor with previous credits in *Pericles*, *Hamlet*, *Arsenic and Old Lace*, and *Smart single Guys*; 5. All of the above.

MIKE GRAY

Gregory Wagner

This is Place holder text until you can send me Mike's real Bio. Matthew has had numerous acting roles, including, Harry the Horse in *Guys and Dolls*, Lyauille in *Damn Yankees*, and Mendel in *Fiddler on the Roof*. He also played the role of an Extra in the Universal Film, *Jarhead*. This is Matt's first production at HCTO.

SKYLAR HAWKER

Dr. Glass/Senator

Skylar is very excited to be performing again at the HCTO. He has been performing at various venues ere in Utah for the last 15 years. Recently you may have seen him in *Sweeney Todd* as Beedle Bamford, and *She Loves Me* as Ladislav Sipos. Other credits include *Lucky Stiff*, *Jekyll & Hyde*, and *Evita*. He would like to thank the HCTO production staff for giving him this opportunity, and for all the hard work they put into each show!

BECCA INGRAM

Hilda Manney

Becca is just thrilled to be making her debut here at HCTO. Born and raised in Connecticut, and more recently from American Fork, she has now found her way to BYU and is a sophomore in pre-acting. She has enjoyed playing pretend as Chris Mundy in *Dancing at Lughnasa*, Hope Caldwell in *Urinetown* and Elizabeth in the *Crucible*. She is most grateful for her dear friends and family who keep her grounded.

BENJAMIN KING

Joseph Gribble

Benjamin is from Provo, Utah and is currently a senior in the Acting Program at Brigham Young University. His recent credits include, The Man in *The Turn of the Screw* at the Covey Center for the Arts, Inspector Hubbard in *Dial "M" For Murder* at BYU, and Sir Bevin in *Berlin* at BYU.

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DAVID MORRISON

Leo Davis

David is a BYU film student, and actor, a playwright, and a few other things. Previous roles include, George Spelvin in *The Actor's Nightmare*, Bottom in *Midsummer Night's Dream*, Seymore in *Little Shop of Horrors*, and Kilroy in *Don't Drink the Water*. He likes Indian food, board games, and Woody Allen movies. Infinite thanks to Dave Morgan, the rockin' cast, Mom, Dad, Steve, Matt, Eliza, Amy, Amanda, the twins, and Blanca! Enjoy the Show!

REESE PURSER

Gordon Miller

Reese's recent credits include, General Clay in *Berlin*, Laertes in *A Winter's Tale*, Chepotikin in *The Three Sisters* and a Ghost in *Hamlet*. He earned an MFA in Acting from the Alabama Shakespeare Festival. His wife and children thank you for taking him off of their hands for a few hours.

BEN SANSOM

Faker Englund

From Hilbert Wisconsin, Ben has appeared as Walter Mitty in the film "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty", Dr. Orison Young in the world premiere' of *March of the Salt Soldiers*, Odysseus in *The Cure at Troy* and The Duke in *Measure for Measure*. He is the father of two wonderful daughters and husband to one wonderful wife. They sometimes think he is funny.

NYLE SMITH

Simon Jenkins

Nyle holds a B.A. in Film and Television Directing from BYU, and a Juris Doctorate in Law from Northwestern School of Law. After moving to Pleasant Grove from Portland, Oregon, Nyle has performed in three productions at HCTO, appearing in *The Miracle Worker*, *A Christmas Carol* (2007), and *Don't Drink the Water*. During his 17 year

absence from Utah, he was a lawyer and law school associate dean. Besides many other stage roles, he may also be seen and heard in many television, film and radio roles. His proudest role is Father to Ardis and Sarah, and Husband to CJ.

ALEXIS WARDLE

Christine Marlowe

Alexis is thrilled to be doing her fourth show at HCTO. Her past Hale credits include, Beth in *Little Women*, Susan Hollander in *Don't Drink the Water*, and Kitty Verdun in *Charley's Aunt*. Other credits include, Rose in *Dancing at Lughnasa* (BYU), Grace/Liz in *Dogville* (BYU), Maria in *Twelfth Night* (BYU) and Hero in *Much do About Nothing* (Provo Theater Company). Alexis will be graduating this April with a BFA in Acting from BYU. She has loved being a part of this wonderful theater and will never forget her experiences here!

MATTHEW WHITE

Sasha/Bank/Hogarth

Matthew has had numerous acting roles, including, Harry the Horse in *Guys and Dolls*, Lyauille in *Damn Yankees*, and Mendel in *Fiddler on the Roof*. He also played the role of an Extra in the Universal Film, "Jarhead." This is Matt's first production at HCTO.



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HISTORY

The fact that you are watching the shenanigans of Gordon Miller and company in room 920 of White Way Hotel in New York while the United States economy is in an economic recession means that you have a great deal in common with the audience that first viewed John Murray and Allen Boretz's *Room Service* when it opened on Broadway. In fact, throughout history, when the times get tough, the playwrights write farces. This tradition stretches clear back to the destructive and bloody Peloponnesian War between Athens and Sparta (431—404 BC), when Aristophanes wrote perhaps the most effective anti-war play ever, the farcical *Lysistrata*. In his play, the women, sick and tired of being forced to remain silent and listen to the stupid decisions of their husbands and others in the male dominated society, decide to band together, and through their own cunning devices bring about the end of the war. Although over-the-top and implausible, the



DAVID MORRISON

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Lita Giddins is from Southern California. She received her BA in Sociocultural Anthropology and earned her master's degree in Social Work with an emphasis in Expressive Arts Therapy.

Kevin Giddins is from New York but was raised in New Jersey. He graduated with a BFA in Fine Arts and Communication and earned his master's degree in Dance. Kevin has worked for many years as an educator at accredited universities, and he also works as a Business Consultant and Corporate Trainer with Franklin Covey.



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play allowed people to escape from the gloom and hard times associated with war, and while thus disarmed by the humor, Aristophanes was able to plant the seeds of social and political change.

Over two millennia later, New York's Broadway was coming into its own as a phenomenon famous worldwide. There was no better venue for the expression of American acting and writing talent, and much European talent even jumped the puddle to experience for themselves the glitz and glamour Times Square and its newly electrified billboards. (Its bright electric glow soon led to the nickname "The Great White Way," which Murray and Boretz borrowed for the name of their fictional hotel.)

In the 1920s, Broadway was in its prime with more shows opening during that decade than ever did before or have in any decade since. From 1924 to 1929, twenty-six new theaters opened, bringing the total in New York's theater district to ninety. And then, just like everywhere else, the Great Depression changed everything. The number of shows



MATTHEW CARLIN

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HISTORY (cont.)

produced went from 233 in the 1929-1930 season to 187 the next season, a downward spiral that would continue until bottoming out at 98 shows in 1939—the only time during the 20th century when fewer than 100 shows were produced on Broadway.

The Thirties was a difficult time for everyone in America, Broadway not excepted. Actors were often not paid for the four-week rehearsal, and during performances many did not see a dime until the show's expenses were paid off—even then, most only received \$25-\$40 a week. Many of the shows produced reflected the sentiment of the nation as well. Clifford Odets and Elmer Rice tackled the tough issues of class struggle and social and political change, often viciously criticizing fascism and Nazis.

But the tough times also created a counter-culture of those wishing to escape their problems, not be reminded of them. Such stars as Fred Astaire (*Gay Divorce*, 1932) and Ethel Merman (*Anything Goes*, 1934) appeared on stage for the first time in lighthearted musicals. Gene Kelly even made his acting debut as a chorus boy in *Leave It To Me* (1939). Creativity reached new heights as lyricists and composers such as George and Ira Gershwin, George S. Kaufman, Rodgers and Hammerstein, and others began to disguise concerns about wars and politics in sly lyrics, witty dialogue, and creative dance numbers.

In that same vein, *Room Service* opened to critical acclaim on May 19, 1937, at the Cort Theatre with its humorous social commentary on the tenuous relationship between art and business. Its main character, Gordon Miller, is struggling to get his new play, *Godspeed*, off the ground and represents the arts. He and his cast are living and rehearsing in the White Way Hotel, managed by Miller's brother-in-law, who represents business. The recurring confrontations between the two systems occurring within the confined space of Miller's hotel room provide the play with the exuberant pace and show-stopping comedy for which it is remembered and loved.

Slapstick comedies with fast-paced dialogue, witty rejoinders, and vigorous physical comedy were all the rage, and Murray and Boretz capitalized on that. Their show ran for a very successful 500 total performances, and was quickly adapted into a Marx Brothers movie by the same name, also starring Lucille Ball. It was the first, and subsequently last time that the Marx Brothers made a movie with material not written specifically for them. It is often deemed their least successful because, as one critic said, "The Marx Brothers were constrained by having to play characters with a passing resemblance to human beings."

Frank Sinatra played the lead in the 1944 musical *Step Lively*, and Alan Arkin directed a 1986 Broadway revival of the play, starring Mark Hamill. It continues to be extremely popular at professional theaters throughout the country, including the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, the Cleveland Playhouse, and the Kansas City Repertory Theatre.

— Sean Murphy



Room Service movie poster, 1938

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3D Workshop *taught by Kevin and Lita Giddons (Star of Aida)*

Who: Ages 13-18 **When:** Every Saturday from 9a.m. to Noon beginning Jan. 31 and continue through Mar. 28, 2009 **Where:** Hale Center Theater Orem **What:** What is "3D"? This one-of-a-kind workshop focuses on exploring the three dimensions of music, dance, and acting. These skills are then applied to help the student find a greater joy through self-expression in the arts as well as in life. **Cost:** \$180

Broadway Tots *taught by Korianne Johnson (Star of Aida)*

Who: Children ages 4-5 **When:** Every Wednesday afternoon from 1:00 — 1:45 PM. Classes begin February 4. **Where:** Hale Center Theater Orem. **What:** This once-a-week class will get all their wiggles out while teaching them stage presence, singing technique, and a love for performing. The children will have the opportunity to perform for parents and friends at a recital in May. Class size is limited, so register early! **Cost:** \$30/month + a \$10.00 recital fee

Spring Acting Class *taught by Ryan Radebaugh*

Who: Ages 8-14 **When:** February 19, 21, 23, 24, 28; March 2, 3, 7. Weekday sessions go from 4-5 PM, Saturday sessions go from 10-11 AM. The final recital will take place on March 7. **Where:** Hale Center Theater Orem. **What:** Students will be taken through the process of being in a theatrical production. Skills will be strengthened in auditioning, blocking, projection, improvisation, character study, and performance. **Cost:** \$100



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HALES' TALES

In the late 1990s, Ruth Hale, my mother, had a room downstairs here at the theater where she lived when she was doing plays. It had a queen bed, a hot plate, a mini-fridge, a TV, and a microwave. Although it was nothing special, it was nicely decorated by her daughters, cozy, and all she needed. At the time, her permanent residence was with my sister Sally and her husband in their Murray home. For Ruth, however, the theater was always home. Often, after doing a play, she would choose sleeping over at the theater over driving home.

On one occasion, after Mom had just arrived at the back entrance to the theater, we heard the most frightening sound of something heavy thump-bumping down the stairs! MaryAnn Hill, our costume designer, rushed to her aid expecting to see "Grandma Hale" (as everyone called her) in a heap at the bottom of the stairs. She was relieved, however, and a bit amused to see Mom safely at the top of the stairs taking preparatory swings to fling her second suitcase down the two flights of stairs. MaryAnn called up to her and exclaimed, "I thought that that was you falling down the stairs! Why didn't you yell? I could have helped you with your bags." Ruth replied with her typical nonchalance, "Oh, nonsense! I didn't want to bother anyone."

Ruth Hale was ninety years-old at the time. I, too, have caught her throwing those suitcases, and it is something to behold! She swung it backward and then forward with a lot of gusto, and then she let it fly! Her argument was that it was much easier to toss them than to carry them down the stairs.

One thing that I will always remember about my parents, Ruth and Nathan Hale, was their lack of interest in material things and their absolute love of theater. You know, they could have lived in a very nice comfortable house during their last years, but instead they chose to live in a theater. How lucky we are that they chose ours.

— Cody Hale

Production Staff for Room Service

Costume Design MARYANN HILL
 Costume Assistant..... AMANDA FITT
 Hair and Make-up Design..... STACEY WILLIAMSON
 Head Dresser KATIE HAWKER
 Dressers KIM HAWKER, STARLA NORDGREN
 JESSICA CRANDALL, ERIN SMITH, EMILY DABCZYNSKI
 Production Stage Manager HEATHER RIGGS
 Assistant Production Stage Mgr BOBBY SWENSON
 Lighting Design CODY SWENSON
 Properties LINDA HALE
 Technical Assistant CHARLES ROSS
 Technical Operations Mgr..... JORDAN McCLUNG
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 Scenic Design BOBBY SWENSON
 Producers..... THE HALES & SWENSONS
 Director DAVID MORGAN

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"All the world's a stage," says Shakespeare, and of all his plays, this one has it all: love, betrayal, forgiveness, earthy clowns, soaring philosophy, captivating music, some of the most beautiful poetry ever written...and perhaps the most famous ever on stage wrestling match.

THEATER POLICIES

- Due to high demand and difficulty in seating latecomers, you must be in your seat five minutes before show time or your seat may be relocated.
- Doors open 30 minutes prior to each performance – all seats are reserved.
- LATE-COMERS will be seated at the house management's discretion. Hale Center Theater Orem accepts no responsibility for inconvenience to late-comers.
- NO CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF FOUR OR BABES-IN-ARMS
- No cell phones, pagers with alarms or other electronic devices
- No photography, video or audio recording
- No outside food or drink
- Free parking in our lot or on the street. *Note:* TESORO will tow your car
- Restrooms are located at the rear of the theater and downstairs
- Exits are located in the front and rear of the theater
- The videotaping or other video or audio recording of this production is strictly prohibited

ADVERTISING & INFORMATION

- For advertising and promotional opportunities, contact Sean Murphy at 801.669.7966.
- For audition schedules, acting and music class schedules and additional theater information visit our website at www.HaleTheater.org.
- For fundraising information for your organization contact Robinne Booth at 801.226.8600.
- For general information and ticket reservations please call the Box Office at 801.226.8600

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