

Irwin Fisher, Artistic Director

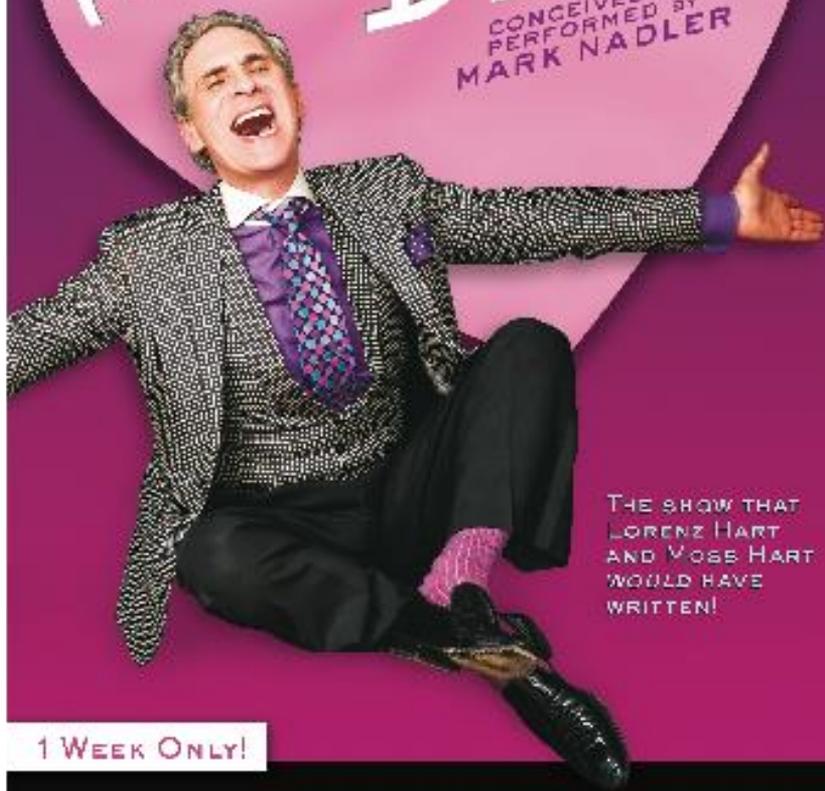
THEATRE RHINOCEROS PRESENTS

"Incomprehensibly brilliant!"

NY Times

HARTS' DESIRE

CONCEIVED AND
PERFORMED BY
MARK NADLER



THE SHOW THAT
LORENZ HART
AND MOSES HART
WOULD HAVE
WRITTEN!

1 WEEK ONLY!

May 12 – 15 • 4 live shows

tickets: theRhino.org or Goldstar.com

Gateway Theatre • 215 Jackson St. (@Battery), San Francisco

Henry Rosenthal, Associate Producer

Production Notes

From the Executive Artistic Director

I have known and worked with Mark for ten years now and have always adored his energy and artistry. He is a man of the theatre and of music, a performing theatre scholar, and an immensely giving and loving soul. It is our great pleasure to welcome him to Theatre Rhinoceros with this delightful show, created especially for the Rhino audience. Thank you Mark, Sean, Joe, Dominic, Daren, Samantha, Christine, Lawrence D., Lawrence H., and the terrific Henry Rosenthal (whose idea this very much was) for making HARTS' DESIRE possible!

Enjoy the show!

John

From the Creator of HARTS' DESIRE

At first glance, the lyricist, Lorenz (Larry) Hart and the playwright Moss Hart had very little in common except their last names, the fact that they were both Jewish, and the fact that they were both titans of Broadway. They only worked together on one show: *I'd Rather Be Right* and one movie, *Hollywood Party*.

Larry Hart, whose family came from Germany, was a short, crass, cigar-chomping little wordsmith who, with Richard Rodgers wrote some of the most enduring songs of the twentieth century.

Moss Hart, whose family came from London, was a tall, elegant member of the Algonquin Roundtable. With and without his partner, George S. Kaufman, Moss Hart wrote some of the wittiest plays, musicals, and revues of the 1930's, 1940's and 1950's; not to mention wildly successful screenplays and one brilliant memoir. He also directed such hits as *My Fair Lady* and *Camelot*.

I've been a fan of both Harts from the moment I encountered their dazzling words.

What I didn't know was that Larry was by all accounts gay, and Moss was at least bisexual. Both men were completely closeted. They certainly never wrote about their sexuality.

In fact, Moss was so worried about anyone suspecting his secret yearnings, that when he wrote a play based on a novel called *The Climate of Eden*, he turned the bisexual hero of the book into a heterosexual.

The more I learned about these two men, the more I saw similarities. They often made the same kinds of jokes and had the same pet peeves. For example, they both scorned

Hollywood! They also used language in the same way — fleshing out characters with distinct usage and with many of the same euphemisms and catch-phrases.

So, I thought to myself: “Wouldn’t it be fun to assemble a musical with gay and bisexual characters that these two guys might have written if they hadn’t been living at a time when being open about one’s sexuality was taboo, and anyone who flew in the face of that taboo paid a hefty price?”

So I did.

I read every play by Moss that I could get my hands on. (I did not include his screenplays or anything from his memoir, *Act One*.)

I then read *The Complete Lyrics of Lorenz Hart* edited by Dorothy Hart and Robert Kimball. From cover to cover. Several times.

It took me about four months to piece together the dialogue from Moss’s plays and weave in Larry’s songs in such a way that I would end up with a cohesive and integrated piece of musical theatre.

Every word of dialogue is exactly, word for word, from Moss Hart’s plays. The only exception is that I sometimes had to replace a name from the original play with the name of the person being addressed in my pastiche.

As for the lyrics, aside from the fact that I sometimes chose to change the order of the verses, they are also precisely, word for word, what Lorenz Hart wrote with one exception. The song “Good Bad Woman” (for which I only had a scratched-out melody by Richard Rodgers and, therefore, had to compose the accompaniment) is in the first person in the original. I’ve changed it to the third person. But to be honest, since no one has ever heard this song before, *ever*, I thought it was okay!

The most interesting thing to me in building this piece was the more I worked with the words of these two geniuses, the more I got to know them. I do think that, ultimately, this show reveals their deepest desire. And it ain’t to nail the good-looking stud at the center of the story, just in case that’s what you were thinking....

I’m very grateful to John Fisher and Theatre Rhinoceros for commissioning this piece. I’ve had a blast working on it and hope you have just as much fun watching it!

Enjoy,

Mark

Theatre Rhinoceros
in Association with Henry S. Rosenthal
presents
HARTS' DESIRE
A Gay Musical Fantasy
Assembled, Arranged and Performed by
Nark Nadler

*Music by**
Richard Rodgers

Lyrics by
Lorenz Hart

Book by
Moss Hart

**Music for "Smart People" by Mark Nadler*
Music for "Good Bad Woman" by Richard Rodgers and Mark Nadler

Stage Manager.....Sean Keehan
Lighting & Sound Design..... Sean Keehan
Brochure/Graphics/Ads..... Christine U'Ren
Promo Video..... Lawrence Dillon
Box Office/Program.....Joe Tally
Web.....Samantha Lomax

Special thanks to Daren Carollo and Daniel Thomas, 42nd Street Moon Theatre.

Extra special thanks to Catherine Brannigan for arranging housing for Mr. Nadler.

And an extremely warm thank you to Henry S. Rosenthal who has made two Mark Nadler visits possible. Henry is a friend of the theatre, a consummate creative artist, and a very good guy. We are blessed to have him in our family. Thanks, Henry!

First Theatre Rhinoceros Performance: Thursday, May 12, 2022.



Theatre Rhinoceros

John Fisher (Executive Artistic Director), Joe Tally (Development Director/Company Manager), Samantha Lomax (Web)

Board of Directors, Theatre Rhinoceros

Cath Brannigan, Laurence Dillon, Josh Dunsby (President), SuzyJane Edwards, Kim Larsen (Vice-President/Development Chair), Jeremy Laurin (Finance Chair), Ely Orquiza, Craig Souza (Secretary)

Cast

In order of appearance

Bert Jefferson	A young author in his early twenties
Carleton Fitzgerald	A theatrical director in his early forties
Frances Black	A star of the Ice Capades; red-head in her early thirties
Owen Turner	A world-renowned, British playwright in his mid-fifties
Stella Riley	A blousy former vaudevillian in her mid-sixties. Mother of Althea Royce.
Peter Sloane	A first-time playwright in his mid-twenties. The perfect specimen of a young god
Sidney Black	A street-tough producer of the Ice Capades. Five-foot-three, in his early fifties.
Althea Royce	A raven-haired femme-fatale and theatrical leading lady of indeterminate age.

SETTING:

A lavish hotel suite in the Ritz-Carlton, Boston, December of 1943.

ACT I

5:30 in the evening.

ACT II

12:30 that same night.

THERE WILL BE A TEN-MINUTE INTERMISSION

MUSICAL NUMBERS

ACT I

“Smart People”	Bert
“I’d Like to Hide It”/“This Must Be Love”	Carleton
“Take and Take and Take”	Frances
“My Funny Valentine”	Owen and Bert
“Good Bad Woman”	Owen and Bert
“The Lady Is a Tramp”	Stella
“Bewitched, Bothered and Bewildered” I	Althea
“Bewitched, Bothered and Bewildered” II	Carleton
“The Girl Friend”/“On Your Toes”	Peter, Bert and Company
Entr’acte.....	Orchestra

ACT II

“Disgustingly Rich”	Frances
“Glad to Be Unhappy”/“Falling In Love With Love”	Carleton and Owen
“Everything I’ve Got Belongs to You”	Frances and Sidney
“This Funny World”	Peter
“Take Him”/“Bewitched, Bothered and Bewildered” III.....	Althea and Carleton
“Smart People” (Reprise).....	Bert
“I’ll Tell the Man In the Street”	Bert
“I Could Write a Book”/“The Girl Friend”/“This Can’t Be Love”	Peter and Bert

Who's Who

Mark Nadler had his first job in show business playing the piano and singing at a saloon in Cedar Falls, Iowa at the age of ten. Since then, he has become an internationally and critically acclaimed cabaret and concert performer. His show *Crazy 1961* was produced by Channel Thirteen (PBS) as a television special for their series *66th and Broadway*. He has been a soloist with major symphony orchestras around the world including the New York Pops at Carnegie Hall and at The Mann Center in Philadelphia. He has performed on Broadway (*The Sheik of Avenue B* and *Dame Edna — the Royal Tour*) as well as many plays and shows off-Broadway and in Regional Theatre. His off-Broadway Gershwin Revue, *American Rhapsody*, which he created and performed with KT Sullivan, received a Drama Desk Award nomination for Outstanding Revue, two Lucille Lortel Award nominations for Outstanding Revue and Best Choreography, and a Manhattan Association of Cabarets (MAC) Award for Outstanding Revue. His off-Broadway show *I'm a Stranger Here Myself* garnered a New York Nightlife Award, as well as a Drama Desk Award nomination for Outstanding One-Man Show, and a Helpman Award (Australia's highest performing arts honor) nomination. For his show *Tchaikovsky (and Other Russians)*, Mark received a New York Nightlife Award, a New York Bistro Award, and a Bay Area Critics' Circle Award for Outstanding Solo Performance. He also received a Bay Area Critics' Circle Award for his Ira Gershwin evening, *His Lovely Wife, Ira*. With Miss Sullivan, Mark created and performed six shows at the famed Oak Room at the Algonquin Hotel. He has also played such famed rooms as the Café Carlyle, Feinstein's at The Regency, and many, many other cabarets and clubs. In all, Mark has won eight MAC Awards, three Bistro Awards, two New York Nightlife Awards, and two Bay Area Critics' Circle Awards. Mark lives in Bronxville, New York with his husband, Dominic Meiman and his dog, Figaro. To read more about Mark Nadler and to purchase recordings and DVD's, go to www.MarkNadler.com

Lorenz (Larry) Hart wrote more than 650 songs from 1911-1943 — most of them in collaboration with Richard Rodgers. His brilliant wit, as well as his heart-baring pathos, dominated the Broadway stage for almost two decades starting with his first hit song, "Manhattan" in 1925 and going right up until his final shows *Pal Joey*, *By Jupiter*, and *A Connecticut Yankee*. His other Broadway shows include landmark hits such as *On Your Toes*, *Jumbo*, *Babes in Arms*, and *The Boys from Syracuse*. The more than forty scores that Rodgers and Hart created for the stage and screen have given the world some of the most beloved standards of all time including (aside from the songs used in *Harts' Desire*) "Blue Moon", "My Heart Stood Still", "It Never Entered My Mind", "Spring Is Here", "I Wish I Were in Love Again", "Mountain Greenery", "Where Or When", "The Most Beautiful Girl in the World", "My Romance", "Isn't It Romantic", "You Took Advantage of Me", "Thou Swell", "Mimi", "Lover", "There's a Small Hotel" and countless others. Regarding Larry Hart's personal life, Stephen Holden of *The New York Times*, wrote "Many of his lyrics were the confessional outpourings of a hopeless romantic who loathed his own body. By all accounts, Hart, who stood just under five feet tall and wreathed himself in cigar smoke, saw himself as an undesirable freak. Homosexual in the era of the closet, he pursued a secretive and tormented erotic life of which only

hints appear in his songs.” Larry Hart died of alcoholism related complications at the age of forty-eight.

Moss Hart, with and without his writing partner George S. Kaufman, wrote some of the wittiest and most sophisticated comedies Broadway has ever known starting with his first Broadway hit, *Once in a Lifetime* in 1930. This was followed by *Merrily We Roll Along* (on which Stephen Sondheim and George Furth’s 1981 Broadway musical was based), *You Can’t Take it With You* (for which Kaufman and Hart received the Pulitzer Prize in 1936), *The Fabulous Invalid*, *The American Way*, *The Man Who Came to Dinner*, and *George Washington Slept Here*. Without Kauffman, Hart’s plays include *Winged Victory*, *Light Up the Sky*, and *The Climate of Eden*. Moss Hart also wrote revues and musicals that include *Face the Music* and *As Thousands Cheer* both with scores by Irving Berlin, *I’d Rather be Right* (co-written with Kaufman) with a score by Rodgers and Hart, *Jubilee* with a score by Cole Porter, and *Lady in the Dark* which has lyrics by Ira Gershwin and music by Kurt Weill. Moss Hart’s screenplays include *Winged Victory*, *Gentleman’s Agreement*, *Hans Christian Andersen* (starring Danny Kaye), and *A Star is Born* (starring Judy Garland and James Mason). His 1959 autobiography, *Act One* remains one of the most beloved show business biographies of all time. As a director, Moss Hart was responsible for bringing to the stage, among others, the original Broadway productions of *My Fair Lady* and *Camelot*. In his personal life, Moss Hart was a tall, elegant member of the Algonquin Roundtable. He was witty and erudite and extremely social. Although he had many love affairs with men, he was determined to have a “normal life”. He underwent daily psychoanalysis. In 1946 he married Kitty Carlisle and they had a son, Christopher, and a daughter, Katherine. Moss Hart died of a heart attack in 1961 at the age of 57.

THEATRE RHINOCEROS (John Fisher, Executive Artistic Director) Founded in 1977, The Rhino is the longest running LGBT theatre in the nation. We develop and produce works of theatre that enlighten, enrich, and explore both the ordinary and the extraordinary aspects of our queer community. Our emphasis is on new works, works about under-represented members of the larger queer community, and revivals of lesser-known queer classics. Over the years Theatre Rhinoceros has received many awards of recognition including: Theatre Rhinoceros Day in the City Proclamation from Mayor Gavin Newsom, State Assembly Certificate of Recognition from Senator Mark Leno, recognitions from Congressperson Nancy Pelosi and Assembly Persons Tom Ammiano and Carole Migden, numerous Cable Car, BATCC and TBA Awards and Nominations, and the GLAAD Media Award for Best LGBT Theatre. Theatre Rhinoceros is unsurpassed in COVID Production, presenting over 100 individual Zoom performances of over 80 plays during 2020-21.

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Andre Vaughn-Bonterre

Virginia Yee

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Presented by *Theatre Rhinoceros*
Artistic Director, John Fisher

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