

Coaster sets stage for laughs

'Noises Off' spins comic mayhem in Cannon Beach from March 16 to April 21

By PATRICK WEBB
FOR COAST WEEKEND

No offense to the actors, but the star of the show opening at the Coaster Theatre Playhouse on Friday, March 16, may be the set.

Built by father-son team Jerry and Mick Alderman, the cleverly designed revolving scenery is the centerpiece of "Noises Off."

The comedy by British playwright Michael Frayn takes place backstage at a theater. The actors are trying to stage a sex farce called "Nothing On" — but there's comic mayhem when everything goes wrong and their rivalries and foibles are exposed.

Mick Alderman said he delighted at the chance to direct the show. "I'm always up for a challenge and every show has either creative or technical challenges."

The set demands two levels with eight doors, two staircases and one window. "It's a challenge to do at the Coaster because it's only 14 feet high and each level must be 7 foot maximum," he said. "I came up with the concept, and we figured it out."

His father, Jerry Alderman, is known for his firefighting leadership but has significant construction and design experience. He first sketched the structure — measured to the inch — on multiple pages of penciled drawings. "He has the artistic talent, I have to try to make it happen!" Jerry Alderman said, laughing when asked about working with his son.

Figuring out such things is not new. In 1998, a four-door sedan had to be turned sideways when hauled into Astoria's Performing Arts Center for a Mick Alderman show called "Road to Nowhere."

The set for "Noises Off" is three sturdy wooden pieces, all on wheels. With help from the actors and stage crew, the center pivots, so during the second of the three acts the audience views a theatrical scene as if from "backstage."

The Aldermans began building two months ago during breaks between rehearsals of another Coaster play, "Fit to Kill."



PATRICK WEBB PHOTOS

Jerry Alderman and Mick Alderman, right, discuss the movement of the complex wooden set they have built at the Coaster Theatre. It moves on wheels, assisted by muscle from actors William Ham, Thomas Ryan and David Ridley.

"NOISES OFF"

A farce by Michael Frayn, directed by Mick Alderman

Some adult themes

Coaster Theatre Playhouse, 108 N. Hemlock St., Cannon Beach

7:30 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays:
March 16-17, 23-24, 30-31, April 6-7,
13-14 and 20-21;

3 p.m. Sunday, March 25, and Sunday, April 8

Admission \$20 or \$25

Information at coastertheatre.com



Three actors playing burglars, left to right, Richard Bowman, Thomas Ryan and David Ridley, cause consternation and some surprises in "Noises Off" at the Coaster Theatre.

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