

AUDITION NOTICE | SUITE SURRENDER



TIMING & LOCATION

Sunday July 24, 2022

Registration: 12:30 PM

Auditions: 1:00 PM

The Farmington Players Barn Theater 32332 W. 12 Mile Rd, Farmington Hills, MI 48334

Please Note: In accordance with The Farmington Players COVID policy and CDC guidelines, all members of the cast and crew must be fully vaccinated (full original dose plus one booster) from COVID to participate in this production, and auditioners must present proof of vaccination at auditions. Masking is required during auditions when not on stage, and might be required during some rehearsals. Testing might be required just prior to opening.

SYNOPSIS

Setting: The Presidential Suite of the Palm Beach Royale Hotel, Palm Beach, Florida

Time & Place: May 1942

Synopsis: Two of Hollywood's biggest divas have descended upon the luxurious Palm Beach Royale Hotel -- assistants, luggage, and legendary feud with one another in tow. Everything seems to be in order for their wartime benefit performance ... that is, until they are somehow both assigned to the same suite. Mistaken identities, overblown egos, double entendres, and a lap dog named Mr. Boodles round out this hilarious riot of a love note to the classic farces of the 1930s and 1940s.

CHARACTERS

- AGE RANGES ARE APPROXIMATE
 - Speech counts are *all* speeches, whether one word or one paragraph long
 - All male roles and Dora Del Rio require physical comedy
 - Murphy and Francis have kissing scenes
 - Mr. Pippet is primary dog handler and must be comfortable around dogs
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- **BERNARD S. DUNLAP** – The general manager of the Palm Beach Royale Hotel. An austere and dignified gentleman who insists on everything running smoothly – and becomes a screaming hysteric when it doesn't. [Male: 40 – 60; 326 speeches]
- **CLAUDIA McFADDEN** – America's beloved matron of song. An impressive singing star,

every gesture she makes is larger than life. She moves into a room with the force of an elegantly dressed tornado. Singing required (two songs). [Female: 40 – 60; 256 speeches]

- **ATHENA SINCLAIR** – A great star of stage and screen. Stylish and elegant. A one-time screen siren and full-time diva, she exudes the confidence and sexuality of being Hollywood royalty. Singing required (one song). [Female: 40 – 60; 168 speeches]
- **MURPHY STEVENS** – Athena’s personal secretary. Young, pretty, efficient. Former girlfriend to Francis, she dreamed of being a big star herself, before settling on being Athena’s secretary. [Female: 20 – 35; 137 speeches]
- **MR. PIPPET** – Claudia’s personal secretary. Dutiful, browbeaten, and anxious. Panics at any surprises. Is primary dog-handler of Mr. Boodles. [Male: 20 – 40; 146 speeches]
- **DORA DEL RIO** – A gossip columnist and quintessential reporter. Snoopy with a flair for the dramatic, she will try anything to dig up a juicy story. [Female: 20 – 40; 46 speeches]
- **MRS. EVERETT P. OSGOOD** – A society matron and president of the Palm Beach Ladies for Unity. An old money eccentric and a bit daft, she is elegant, stylish, and accustomed to getting her way. Singing required (one song), but see Director’s Notes below [Female: 40 – 70; 87 speeches]
- **FRANCIS** – A bellhop. Former boyfriend of Murphy, he quit show business to join the army but became a bellhop after the army rejected him. He and Otis are a comedic pair. [Male: 20 – 35; 153 speeches]
- **OTIS** – A bellhop. A diligent and happy man who tends to be in the wrong place at the wrong time. He and Francis are a comedic pair. [Male: 20 – 50; 86 speeches]

PRODUCTION TEAM

Director | Tony Targan

Assistant Directors | Laurie Smalis and Michelle Noble

Producers | Laurel Stroud

Stage Manager | David Reinke

RESOURCES

Auditions will be based on cold readings from the script. A perusal copy (which contains about 90% of the script) can be viewed online by registering at <https://www.playscripts.com/>

Audition vocal cuts (for ATHENA, CLAUDIA, and MRS. OSGOOD) will be available at www.Farmingtonplayers.org/auditions

Please feel free to email director Tony Targan at targananthony@gmail.com with questions.

SCHEDULE (MANDATORY DATES of REQUIRED AVAILABILITY)

Performance Schedule: September 23, 24, 25, 30, October 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 2022.

[NOTE: If performances are canceled due to COVID, make-up dates for performances could be added on October 13, 14, 15, so please reserve those dates too.]

Tech Rehearsal: Saturday September 17, 2022.

Dress Rehearsals: September 19, 20, 21, 2022.

Rehearsal Schedule: Rehearsals will begin in early August. The final rehearsal schedule will be planned after casting, but generally 3 nights a week. NOTE: Due to the compressed rehearsal schedule (about 8 weeks), actors with excessive conflicts will not be cast and all actors will be expected to be off book by the end of August.

NOTES FROM THE DIRECTOR

SUITE SURRENDER is a classic farce with plenty of fast-paced dialogue, swinging doors, physical comedy, and escalating stakes. One of my comedy heroes, John Cleese of Monty Python fame, has this advice about doing farce well: “Performing farce properly is much harder than acting ordinary comedy. The difficulty is that absurd situations have to be made believable. So, on one hand, the logic of the plot has to be impeccable; on the other, the actors have to find a way of making very eccentric behaviour credible. When a character makes a choice about what they are going to do – where to hide, which lie to tell, whether to brazen it out – the audience must be able to believe that the choice was a reasonable one. ... So, the perfect farce performer is one who can go ‘over the top’ and take the audience with them.”

So, during auditions, I am looking for actors who can portray larger-than-life characters, while still keeping it real and believable for the audience. The actor isn’t deliberately playing for laughs; the situation and the timing are what supply the humor.

Finally, a note about the music and singing in this show. This is not a musical, but there are two 1940s songs. ATHENA and CLAUDIA must be good singers, as their “showstopper” duet should be one of the highlights of the play. MRS. OSGOOD’s vocal abilities are not as essential to her character – she interrupts CLAUDIA’s rehearsal by singing with her – so her delivery can be more comedic. MR. PIPPET accompanies CLAUDIA on the baby grand piano, so it would be a plus if he can actually play, but it is not mandatory.

-- Tony Targan