

A DIVINE OPENING NIGHT AT THE GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE

BETTE MIDLER
IN
I'LL EAT YOU LAST:
A CHAT WITH SUE MENGERS

WRITTEN BY JOHN LOGAN AND DIRECTED BY JOE MANTELLO

LOS ANGELES (December 5, 2013) – Bette Midler opens tonight in the West Coast premiere of the Broadway smash **I'll Eat You Last: A Chat With Sue Mengers**, presented by the **Spotlight Entertainment Series at the Geffen Playhouse**. The critically acclaimed show, written by Tony Award winner John Logan (*Red*) and directed by Tony Award winner Joe Mantello (*Take Me Out*, *Wicked*) will appear for a limited three week engagement through December 22, in the Gil Cates Theater at the Geffen Playhouse.

Tony and Grammy Award-winning superstar Bette Midler plays the legendary Hollywood agent **Sue Mengers** (1932-2011) in the new play, her first appearance on Broadway in nearly 40 years. Midler's performance was hailed by The New York Times as "the most lusciously entertaining performance of the Broadway season."

"Bette Midler is Broadway and Hollywood royalty," says Randall Arney, Artistic Director of the Geffen Playhouse. "John Logan has created a tour de force role and with Joe Mantello's artful direction, audiences will have an experience like no other."

Arney adds "The intimacy of the Gil Cates Theater at the Geffen is unmatched by any Broadway house and it will feel like we've all dropped in at Sue's for dinner."

I'll Eat You Last: A Chat with Sue Mengers was produced on Broadway at the Booth Theatre by Graydon Carter, Arielle Tepper Madover, James L. Nederlander, The Shubert Organization, Terry Allen Kramer, Stephanie P. McClelland, Jeffrey Finn, Ruth Hendel, Larry Magid, Jon B. Platt, and Scott & Brian Zeilinger.

Sue Mengers was an American original. She was the first female “superagent” at a time when women talent agents of any kind were almost unheard of. She came from near poverty, a refugee from Hitler's Germany, and worked her way up through pluck, charm, and a legendary wit. In that uniquely American way, she invented herself; and when the career she wanted didn't exist, she invented that as well: “Superagent.” It was a term Hollywood all but coined for her. By the 1970's, she represented almost every major star in Hollywood and went on to become the town's most renowned hostess.

Playwright John Logan, who won a Tony Award for *Red* and wrote the screenplay for the last James Bond movie, *Skyfall*, said, “I met Sue Mengers only once, at a dinner party. The kaftan, constant cigarettes, tinted glasses, and perfect blonde hair were much in evidence; so too the deliciously wicked wit and stevedore language. But something else fascinated me just as much: a sense of sadness, a deep resignation; a woman whose time had passed her by. At one point I asked her what had changed most about Hollywood since she had arrived. She didn't hesitate for a second: ‘Honey, we used to have fun...’ Later in the evening she settled back and lit up a joint. There she was: a joint in one hand and a cigarette in the other. At that moment I knew I had to write the play.”

The creative team includes three-time Tony Award winner **Scott Pask** (scenic design), Academy Award winner **Ann Roth** (costume design), three-time Tony nominee **Hugh Vanstone** (lighting design), and Drama Desk Award winner **Fitz Patton** (sound design).

PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE

Dates:	December 3-22, 2013
Opening night:	Thursday, December 5
Closing night:	Sunday, December 22
Monday	No performances
Tuesday – Friday	8:00pm
Saturday	3:00pm; 8:00pm
Sunday	2:00pm

TICKETING INFORMATION:

Tickets are available online at www.geffenplayhouse.com, by phone at 310.208.5454 and at the Geffen Playhouse Box Office. Prices range from \$89 - \$399.

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High resolution photos available at: <http://geffenplayhouse.com/mediacenter.php>

BIOGRAPHIES

BETTE MIDLER (Sue Mengers) has earned three Grammys, four Golden Globes, three Emmys, a Tony Award, and sold 30 million records worldwide in a career that spans more than four decades. She has played memorable film roles in *The Rose*, *Down and Out in Beverly Hills*, *Ruthless People*, *Beaches*, and *The First Wives Club*, among many others. Miss Midler made her Broadway debut in the chorus of *Fiddler on the Roof*. Other stage performances include Tony Award-winning *Clams on the Half Shell*, *Experience the Divine*, for which she holds the all-time record for a six week engagement at Radio City Music Hall, *The Divine Miss Millennium Tour*, *Kiss My Brass*, and *The Showgirl Must Go On* at The Colosseum in Caesars Palace. Outside the spotlight, she is the proud founder of the New York Restoration Project (www.nyrp.org), a non-profit organization that revitalizes abandoned and neglected public spaces across New York City. Follow her on Twitter and Instagram: @BetteMidler.

JOHN LOGAN (Playwright) received the Tony, Drama Desk, Outer Critic Circle and Drama League awards for his play *Red*, directed by Michael Grandage. This play premiered at the Donmar Warehouse in London and at the Golden Theatre on Broadway. Since then *Red* has had more than 200 productions across the US and has been presented in over 30 countries. He is also the author of more than a dozen other plays including *Never the Sinner* and *Hauptmann*. In 2013, his new play *Peter and Alice* premiered in London and *I'll Eat You Last: A Chat With Sue Mengers* opened on Broadway. He is currently writing the book for the musical *The Last Ship* composed by Sting and directed by Joe Mantello. As a screenwriter, Logan has been three times nominated for the Oscar and has received a Golden Globe, BAFTA and WGA award. His film work includes *Skyfall*, *Hugo*, *The Aviator*, *Gladiator*, *Rango*, *Coriolanus*, *Sweeney Todd*, *The Last Samurai*, *Any Given Sunday*, and *RKO 281*. He is currently writing the next James Bond film and in production for *Penny Dreadful*, a drama series he created and is producing for Showtime.

JOE MANTELLO (Director). Directing credits include: *The Other Place*, *Dogfight*, *Other Desert Cities*, *The Pride*, *Pal Joey*, *9 to 5*, *November*, *The Receptionist*, *The Ritz*, *Blackbird*, *Three Days of Rain*, *The Odd Couple*, *Glengarry Glen Ross* (Tony nomination), *Laugh Whore*, *Assassins* (Tony Award), *Wicked*, *Take Me Out* (Tony Award), *Frankie and Johnny in the Clair de Lune*, *A Man of No Importance*, *Design for Living*, Terrence McNally and Jake Heggie's *Dead Man Walking* for San Francisco Opera, *The Vagina Monologues*, *Bash*, *Another American: Asking and Telling*, *Love! Valour! Compassion!* (Tony nomination), *Proposals*, *The Mineola Twins*, *Corpus Christi*, *Mizlansky/Zilinsky...*, *Blue Window*, *God's Heart*, *The Santaland Diaries*, *Snakebit*, *Three Hotels*, and *Imagining Brad*. As an actor: *The Normal Heart* (Tony nomination), *Angels in America* (Tony nomination), and *The Baltimore Waltz*. He is recipient of Outer

Critics Circle, Drama Desk, Lucille Lortel, Helen Hayes, Clarence Derwent, Obie, and Joe A. Callaway awards. He is a member of Naked Angels and an associate artist at Roundabout Theatre Company.

ABOUT THE SPOTLIGHT ENTERTAINMENT SERIES AT THE GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE

The Spotlight Entertainment Series at the Geffen Playhouse was created in 2011 to provide the Geffen Playhouse with an opportunity to present and produce performances of various disciplines (music, theater, magic, comedy) that are presented or produced outside of artistic mission-driven subscription season.

ABOUT THE GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE

The Geffen Playhouse has been a hub of the Los Angeles theater scene since opening its doors in 1995. Noted for its intimacy and celebrated for its world-renowned mix of classic and contemporary plays, provocative new works and second productions, the Geffen Playhouse continues to present a body of work that has garnered national recognition. Named in honor of entertainment mogul and philanthropist David Geffen, who made the initial donation to the theater, the company was founded by Gilbert Cates, and is currently helmed by Artistic Director Randall Arney, Managing Director Ken Novice, General Manager Behnaz Ataei, Chief Development Officer Regina Miller and Chairman of the Board Frank Mancuso. Proudly associated with UCLA, the Geffen Playhouse welcomes an audience of more than 130,000 each year, and maintains an extensive education and outreach program, designed to engage young people and the community at large in the arts. For more information, please visit www.geffenplayhouse.com.