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**The Great "Barrymore" Starring Gordon Goodman at NoHo's Historic El Portal Theatre, Jan. 9 to 19**

January 9, 2014 • Section: Cover Story

"Barrymore" is a theatrical showcase for exceptional talent. Any actor who takes on the role of arguably one of the greatest thespians of the 20th century has to bring his A-game to the spotlight. He has to be handsome, witty, and charming enough to excuse his excesses. A man who has proven himself to be [...]

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# The Great "Barrymore" Starring Gordon Goodman at NoHo's Historic El Portal Theatre, Jan. 9 to 19

By [Margie Barron](#) on January 9th, 2014 [Printer-Friendly](#)

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"Barrymore" is a theatrical showcase for exceptional talent. Any actor who takes on the role of arguably one of the greatest thespians of the 20th century has to bring his A-game to the spotlight. He has to be handsome, witty, and charming enough to excuse his excesses. A man who has proven himself to be a great performer throughout his career, the handsome, witty, and charming Gordon Goodman fits perfectly into the "Great Profile" of the legendary John Barrymore. His presentation is at the historic El Portal Theatre in North Hollywood, for eight performances only, Jan. 9 to 19.

Goodman is passionate about playing Barrymore. He says, "The thing that thrills me about taking on any role is the challenge of making that person three-dimensional, so it's not just a character that you're seeing on stage, you are actually intrigued by this real person and all the facets of his life."



Gordon Goodman as the dashing and iconic John Barrymore sharing "theater gossip" in BARRYMORE at the El Portal Theatre.

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Taking on the role of Barrymore, Goodman reports he had to do Shakespeare for the first time in his career. "That did not intimidate me, but I learned that Barrymore himself was intimidated by doing Shakespeare, yet his greatest acclaim came from doing Richard III and Hamlet."

Goodman says he "tried to recapture the greatness of Barrymore, because no matter what he did, it seemed like he wasn't acting, he was totally honest with his portrayals. That's my goal."



"Gordon Goodman as John Barrymore is charming, elegant, bawdy, animated, hilarious, bitter, off-color, and captivating throughout!" – Pat Taylor, Tolucan Times

Janet Miller, of the Good People Theatre Company, directs the show that was critically acclaimed when it played in Hollywood last year. It was written by William Luce, and highlights a variety of Barrymore's bittersweet memories about his famous theatrical family, marriages, triumphs, and alcohol-soaked dreams that infused his life from 1882-1942. It is both a humorous and dramatic show set in an empty theater in 1942. Although it is essentially a one man production, there is an offstage "line prompter" Frank, who bares the brunt of the Barrymore's anger at the fading actor's frustrating memory lapses as he rehearses a comeback with Richard III.

When Goodman saw Barrymore in the movie *Grand Hotel* it led to a respect and fascination with the actor. He became interested in studying Barrymore's life and his creative mind. He says, "The satisfaction of playing Barrymore comes from people who tell me they see the soul in him, that they have compassion for him despite his behavior, and they see he was caught up in the whirlwind of his life." That's what gives the show its heart.

Goodman began his profession at age 16 as a baritone soloist and recording artist with orchestras around the world. His career has covered TV, movies, commercials, and stage. Musical theater has taken him across the U.S. with top productions. Plus Dr. Goodman has a Ph.D. in the Psychology of entertainment. He is an expert in the areas of creative environments, certainly a great background to gain insight on the great Barrymore.

*"Barrymore" runs from Jan. 9 to 19, Thursdays and Saturdays at 8 p.m., and Sundays at 3 p.m. Tickets are \$35, students and seniors are \$25. For tickets call (818) 508-4200, or (866) 811-4111, or order online at [elportaltheatre.com](http://elportaltheatre.com).*