

PROGRAM NOTES

Molière and his Moment

Jean Baptiste Poquelin (who later took the stage name Molière) was born in 1622 to the upper middle class in Paris. He became a writer and performer only after rejecting a career in the law. His father was a prosperous and successful upholsterer, who was eventually granted royal favour and became a courtier with the title *Tapissier du Roi*, upholsterer royal.

Molière began his career by forming his own company, *Illustre-Théâtre*, where he wrote and performed semi-improvised farces in the style of the *commedia dell'arte*. He later went on to write full-length plays but was always deeply influenced by his love for the uproarious style and ribald nature of the Italian tradition.

His first great success in Paris came in 1659 with his one act, *Les Précieuses Ridicules*, (The Precious Ladies Ridiculed) a bawdy farce in which fine ladies are seduced by valets and then humiliated by their suitors. *The Learned Ladies*, the penultimate play of Molière's career, draws strongly from *Les Précieuses Ridicules* with its themes of repressed emotionality and pretentiousness among women of the *haute-bourgeoisie*.

The Learned Ladies was written and performed in 1672 when Molière's company was at its height, supported through the King's official patronage and ensconced in Paris at the *Palais Royal*, in repertory with the Italian *commedia* company of Giuseppe Bianchi.

During the late 17th century, France was in a period of enormous economic and cultural development spurred by Louis XIV and his ministers. Culture and art were seen as important weapons in France's battle for dominance over its European rivals. Great energy was directed towards the cultivation of superior French achievement in the decorative and fine arts, as well as in literature and philosophy.

17th century French intellectuals, politicians and the ruling elite used debates over style, manners and grammar, to define power and class. The great salons of Paris, as well as the court, were tournament grounds where reputations and careers were made or broken. The striving upper-middle class that Molière portrays in *The Learned Ladies* are ridiculed for their pretensions towards intellectuality, but indeed the most powerful of the Parisian salon hostesses and their eminent intellects ushered in the Enlightenment.

In the next century the spirit of Revolution and consciousness of inequities in class and gender would issue forth from the drawing rooms of Paris.

This Production

For this production at the University of Washington we have adapted *Les Précieuses Ridicules* into a *commedia*-style "parade" and present it along with *The Learned Ladies*. In *commedia dell'arte* parades were bawdy comic interludes presented before and sometimes throughout the main program. The *Divertissement* (evenings of entertainment) of the French Court also featured parades, as well as dancing bears and geese. The closest surviving example of the parade form is probably the "ballyhoo" before a circus.

The influence of France and its aristocratic tendencies is still felt today in America, where the American dream often expresses itself as a fantasy of the French aristocratic experience. Los Angeles, as a landscape of those fantasies and my home, insinuates itself into this production.

SCHOOL OF DRAMA

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Sarah Nash Gates

FACULTY

Professors: Robert Dahlstrom, Barry Witham

Associate Professors: Robyn Hunt, Steve Pearson, William Forrester

Assistant Professors: Sarah Bryant-Bertail, M.L. Geiger, Jack Wolcott

Senior Lecturer: Mark Jenkins, Mark Harrison

Lecturers: Tom Burke, Yuko Kurahashi, Shanga Parker, Judith Shahn,
Deborah Trout

PART-TIME FACULTY

David Boushey, Scott Hafso, Catherine Madden,

Karen Omahen, Scott Weldin, Laura Worthen

RETIRED, EMERITUS FACULTY AND FORMER PROGRAM HEADS

John Ashby Conway*, Jack Clay, Betty Comtois, James Crider, Alanson

B. Davis, Gregory Falls*, Vanick Galstaun, Robert Gray, Agnes Haaga,

Donal (Dan) Harrington*, Robert Hobbs,

Paul Hostetler, Glenn Hughes*, Robert Loper, Warren Lounsbury*,

Michael Quinn*, Duncan Ross*, Geraldine Siks, Jack Sydow,

Aurora Valentinetti

STAFF

Kris Bain, *marketing and pr manager*

Bob Boehler, *stage technician*

Nacho Bravo, *master electrician*

Malcolm Brown, *stage technician*

Sue Bruns, *office assistant*

Alex Danilchik, *stage technician*

Josie Gardner, *costume shop manager*

Arlene Hamilton, *administrator*

Kathy Holliday, *advisor*

Dorothy Kerst, *graduate programs*

Laurie L. Kurutz, *costumer*

Cecile Kummerer, *computer technician*

Scott Perkins, *fiscal technician*

Anne Stewart, *production manager*

Joanne Tall, *secretary*

Rebecca Traber, *office assistant*

Alan Weldin, *scene shop manager*

Nanci Vaeth, *costumer*

* Deceased

The Learned Ladies



By Molière



Penthouse Theatre

58th Season

417th Production

April 15th - 26th, 1998

The Learned Ladies

By Molière
Translated By Richard Wilbur
Directed by Corey Madden

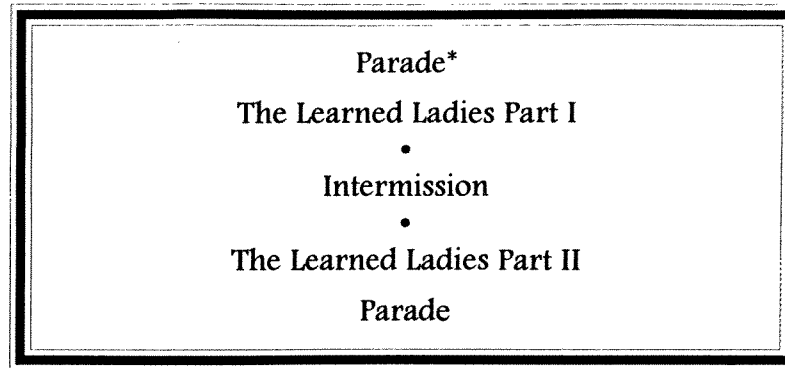
Set Design *Andrew Lieberman* □
Costume Design *Aaron Nather*
Lighting Design *Miki Takahashi*
Stage Manager *B. Jennings Hart*
Assistant Director *Chazz Rose*
Technical Director *Malcolm Brown*

CAST

GRADUATING CLASS OF THE PROFESSIONAL ACTOR TRAINING PROGRAM
(IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE)

HENRIETTE *Melissa Mascara*
ARMANDE *Hedda Sjögren*
CLITANDRE *Giancarlo Gonzalez*
BÉLISE *Wendy Saver*
ARTISTE *Patrick Dizney*
CHRYSALE *David Long*
MARTINE *Krista Hoepner*
PHILAMINTE *Jolene Hjerleid*
TRISSOTIN *Matt Montelongo*
LEPINE *Scott Capehart*
VADIUS *Jocelyn Jackson*
JULIEN *Tony Falotico*
NOTARY *Tony Falotico*

□ In fulfillment of a Masters Thesis in Design



* A parade adaptation of
Les Précieuses Ridicules

By Molière
Directed by Corey Madden
In collaboration with Chazz Rose and the Cast

CAST

GRADUATING CLASS OF THE PROFESSIONAL ACTOR TRAINING PROGRAM
(IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE)

LEPINE *Scott Capehart*
MARTINE *Krista Hoepner*
BOVINE *Tony Falotico*

Presented by special arrangement with
Dramatists Play Service Inc.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Mark Harrison, Kitty Kavanaugh, Jennifer Preisach,
Kristi Hargis, Seattle Children's Theatre,
Seattle Repertory Theatre, Intiman Theatre Company,
A Contemporary Theatre, and Seattle Opera

PRODUCTION CREDITS

Assistant Stage Manager *Angela Ziska*
Assistant Set Designer *Michael Lindgren*
Assistant Costume Designer *Tisha Jahnke, Sharva Maynard*
Assistant Lighting Designer *Sage Bannick*
Prop Master *Andrew Lieberman*
Hair Consultant and Stylist *Dennis Milam*
Faculty Design Advisor *Deb Trout*
Lead Mural Artist *Patty Makatura Kutze*
Mural Artist *Martinn Lopez*
Lead Scenic Artist *Christopher L. Brown*
Scenic Artists *Tisha Jahnke, Andrew Lieberman*
Prop Construction *Alex Danilchik, Robert J. Martin, Ross MacQuarrie*
Set Construction *Bill Carter, Tracy Edmonds, Andrew Lieberman, Tisha Jahnke, Robert Martin, Ross MacQuarrie, Marc Wiseman*
Costume Construction *Tisha Jahnke, Kira Knight, Gary Osborne, Christy Scoggins, Kara Weeks, Cynthia Wheaton, 211 and 291 Students*
Running Crew *Tom Caldwell, Stormy Edwards, Rob Jensen, Steven Jesionowski, Kate Larned, Jason Pendergraft, Daniel Porowski, Stacey Roberts*
House Management *Kit Schultze*
Production Office Staff *Chazz Rose, Kerry Skalsky*
Tickets *UW Arts Tickets*