

BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY THEATRE

presents

Molière's

THE MISER

in a new translation by John A. Green,
BYU French Department

directed by Charles Metten

In The Margetts Arena Theatre
Harris Fine Arts Center

Jan. 25-26, 30-31; Feb. 1-2, 6-9 at 8 p.m.

Audience members are cordially invited to
join with the actors, director, technicians
and translator *after* the performance on Feb.
1 and Feb. 7 in the theatre for a discussion
of the evenings performance.

Tickets go on sale January 18 at the Drama Ticket Office (HFAC)
50¢ with activity card; \$1.50 otherwise.

THE MISER

by Molière

translated by John A. Green

Director Charles Metten
 Assistant to the Director Tom Bay
 Assistant Fawn Nordrum

Your Host for the Evening Rodger Sorensen
 Harpagon (the miser) John A. Green
 Elise (his daughter) Heather Hunter and Vickie Pauline Julian
 Cleante (his son) Larkin Le Sueur
 Valere (the steward, in love with Elise) Tom Bay
 Frosine (a matchmaker) Barbara Diane Bollard and Sylvia Spicer
 Mariane (in love with Cleante) Heidi Coppin and Jan Leslie Parker
 Master Jack (coachman and cook) Kerry Ashton
 La Fleche (Cleante's valet) Rodger Sorensen
 Master Simon (Harpagon's broker) Brad G. Maurer
 Policeman Gale Allen
 Clerk Kerry Farmer
 Mistress Claudia (The housekeeper) Tracy Evans
 Brindavoine (a maid) Fawn Nordrum
 La Merluce (a footman) Gregg Wright
 René (The handyman) Paul Nibley
 Mister Anselme Bernard H. York

Place: Harpagon's Home, Paris

Intermission end of Act Three
 Your Host For the Evening Will Remind You

Lighting designer Kerry Farmer
 Sound Technician Allan Kerr
 Electronic Media Doren Bryson
 Costume designer Rachael Manderino
 Properties Fawn Nordrum

House Manager Gary Strasberg
 Tickets Colleen Bird
 Publicity Christine Smith

Molière (1622-1673)

Jean-Baptiste Poquelin—Molière is a pseudonym—ranks unquestionably among the world's foremost comic playwrights of all time. Educated at some of the finest schools of his day, he gave up a law career to write for his own troupe of actors which he directed for twelve years as a traveling company throughout southern France before returning to his native Paris in 1658 to perform before the young king Louis XIV. He and his troupe soon found favor at the royal court and among Paris audiences, although his brilliant talents, the king's protection, and the oftentimes controversial subjects he tackled excited the hatred and jealousy of powerful men.

He authored nearly thirty full-length plays during his last thirteen years in the capital and at Louis XIV's palace at Versailles. Many of these plays are still acclaimed as masterpieces. His final illness seized him during a performance of *The Imaginary Invalid* in 1673—performed at BYU in 1970—but he hid it from the audience and forced himself to finish the performance. He was refused the last rites and it was only by intercession of the king that his body was finally buried—at night—in consecrated ground.

Molière's age was the Golden Age of French literature. Classicism, involving aesthetic attitudes and principles based on the culture, art, and literature of ancient Greece and Rome, dominated the spirit of the time. It emphasized form, simplicity, proportion, and—especially in tragedy, sculpture, painting and music—restrained emotion. But we don't watch a Molière play today out of mere historical interest. Seventeenth century French theater deals with man's basic psychological problems, and in this sense will never be dated. Conventionally, the action begins precisely at a moment of intense crisis in the life of each of the principal characters, and the audience is aware almost immediately that the various "lines of crisis" are about to converge. The entire action of a French classical play therefore represents the passing of only a few hours' time, and the clash is imminent from the opening lines.

Molière borrowed a traditional element from the Italian *commedia dell'arte* (the Italian farce), so popular in his time, that of the young lovers who run into opposition of one kind or another. Molière's genius led him to personify this opposition in the form on some maniac, a miser, a social climber, a hypochondriac, some person whose excessive enthusiasm or desire for something is constantly pushing him to violate common sense and defy nature. This character, a social type, which Molière always acted himself, constitutes the central figure in each of his plays and serves to underscore, in each of us, thoughts, feelings and passions which, if allowed to get out of balance and proportion, threaten the lives of those around us. We all identify and sympathize with the young lovers in tonight's play, but we find just enough of "the Miser" in ourselves as well for the clash of personalities to have a personal impact on each of us.

Louis Jouvet, the great French actor and director, once said of Molière: "We no longer understand him as he should be understood or love him as he should be loved. It is for the actor to recapture this lost heritage, to find once again the springs that gave life and movement to the creations of his genius. To know and love him rightly is to serve him, as the actor serves him, with humility and self-forgetfulness, to be one with him on the stage and in the region of pure poetry in which he moves."

1973-74 DRAMA SEASON

Pardoe Theatre

Blithe Spirit, February 7-23
tickets go on sale January 31

Saturday's Warrior, March 20 — April 5
Midsummer's Night Dream, June 6-15
The Apple Tree, August 1-10

Arena Theatre

The Dove, June 6-15