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The Matchmaker

THEATRE

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American College Theater Festival XXIX

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This production is entered in the Kennedy Center
American College Theater Festival (KC/ACTF). The
aims of this national theater education program are to
identify and promote quality in college-level theater
production. To this end, each production entered is
eligible for a response by a regional KC/ACTF repre-
sentative, and certain students are selected to partici-
pate in KC/ACTF programs involving awards, schol-
arships, and special grants for actors, playwrights,
designers, and critics at both the regional and national
levels.

Productions entered on the participating level are eli-
gible for inclusion at the KC/ACTF regional festival
and can also be considered for invitation to the
KC/ACTF national festival at the John F. Kennedy
Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, DC, in
the spring of 1997.

Last year more than 900 productions and 18,000 stu-
dents participated in the American College Theater
Festival nationwide. By entering this production, our
department is sharing in the KC/ACTF goals to help
college theater grow and to focus attention on the
exemplary work produced in college and university
theaters across the nation.

THE BYU DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE AND FILM
PRESENTS



The Matchmaker

DIRECTOR
Tim Threlfall

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
Hiroko Hatch

SCENIC DESIGNER
Karl T. Pope

COSTUME DESIGNERS
Lara A. Beene
Janet L. Swenson

LIGHTING DESIGNER
Loraine Edwards

SOUND DESIGNER
Trevor Hardy

PRODUCTION STAGE MANAGER
Felina Khong

Cast

in order of appearance

Horace Vandergelder
Chris H. Brower

Ambrose Kemper
Christopher David Fenn-Anstruther

Joe Scanlon
Yeshwant Chitalkar

Gertrude
Hiroko Hatch

Cornelius Hackl
Joshua Brady

Ermengarde
Allison Michelle Thomas

Malachi Stack/Calliope Player
Erik Orton

Dolly Gallagher Levi
Barta Heiner*

Barnaby Tucker
Chris Bentley

Irene Molloy
Stephanie Foster Breinholt

Minnie Fay
Katie Redford

Cabman
Bruce Kelly

Rudolf
Jason Merrell

Miss Flora Van Huysen
Michelle Brady Stone

Cook
Christy Allen

* Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional
Actors and Stage Managers in the United States

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Civilizing Wilder-ness

by Nola Smith

In 1938 Thornton Wilder captured the American imagination and a Pulitzer Prize with his philosophical *Our Town*, a play that quietly urged its audience to notice and wonder at the splendor of ordinary details of everyday, ephemeral life. In 1942 Wilder again won the Pulitzer, this time for *The Skin of Our Teeth*, an outrageous, wildly theatrical picture of mankind's life on the brink of disaster. Between these two grand successes, however, Wilder had one considerable flop—a lighthearted but unappreciated little play named *The Merchant of Yonkers*.

The reason for the work's failure might have been that Americans of 1938 were too economically depressed to appreciate a play about the virtues of squandering money, or that the director, flamboyant Austrian Max Reinhart, was too foreign in his artistic style for American tastes. For whatever reason, less than one year after the premier of *Our Town*, *Merchant* opened in New York and slumped to a close after a mere 28 performances.

Nevertheless, Wilder did not lose faith in his creation. He simply put it away for a sunnier day and, in the mid 1950s, took the play out, dusted it off, and gave it a modifying tweak or two, including a new title for good measure. American director Tyrone Guthrie revved the play's action up to a comedic pitch that had been missing in the first production. Audiences in Philadelphia and New York City were delighted with the results—and *The Matchmaker* has been a hit ever since.

The Matchmaker may seem less impressive than the "message plays" that won Wilder his Pulitzer reputation. The comedy is an airy concoction, a sweet mixing of farcical absurdities and upside-down behavior. The comic stage devices of mistaken identities, cross-dressing, and cowering in hiding have been beloved tricks since ancient Greece, and *The Matchmaker's* overturning of social convention owes much to Oscar Wilde and *The Importance of Being Earnest*. If the play has any overt moral, it is just "Enjoy yourself!"

Examined on a deeper level, though, this straightforward little suggestion becomes subversive. The values that the play overturns are exactly those virtues of the Protestant ethic—sincerity, hard work, thriftiness—that supposedly lead to success in the American business world. But these qualities, if unchecked by a tempering humor or generosity, may, as in Vandergelder's case, lead to selfishness and avaricious materialism.

Wilder protests that too much emphasis on virtue of any sort leads to extremism, to bad temper, and to deadening dreariness. To him, the longing for adventure and excitement is not foolishness but a sign of vitality. In the spirit of Moliere, Wilder seeks to restore our balance by making us laugh at our own solemn-faced antisocial tendencies.

Though the concept sometimes frustrates their teachers, spring term college students instinctively know that all work and no play makes Jack or Jill rather hard to put up with. And no matter what our age, the pressures of the school of life tend to squeeze the merriness out of our souls. May a cheerful interlude with *The Matchmaker* restore you to a more civilized state!

SETTING

Place: New York

Time: 1890s

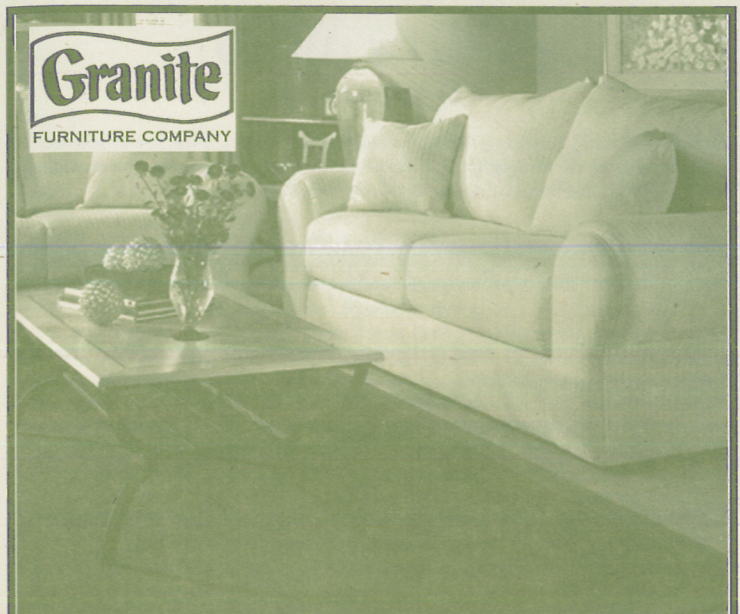
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ACT IV

(a Saturn showroom, Saturday afternoon, customers and salespeople stroll the floor)

ENTER a couple. A salesperson approaches.

MAN: *(to his wife, under his breath)* Just let me do the talking and we'll be fine.

SALESPERSON: Hi there. Can I help you?

MAN: *(tentatively)* Actually...we're just here to look around.

SALESPERSON: Sure. Take your time. I'll be over here if you have any questions.

EXIT salesperson. The man and woman exchange a look.

WOMAN: *(softly)* Wow...that was kinda weird.

The couple now notices a green sedan STAGE LEFT. The woman bops into the driver's seat, grinning. The man takes a look under the hood. A red coupe STAGE RIGHT at this point catches the couple's eye. They move toward it.

SALESPERSON: *(from offstage)* Hey—can I get you two anything to drink?

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Who's Who

in the cast and crew

Christy Allen (Cook) is a theatre major from Provo. She has appeared in *Guys and Dolls*, *Macbeth*, and *Separate Tables*. She would like to thank her wonderful husband and five children for their support.

Lara A. Beene (Costume Codesigner), from St. George, UT, is a senior in theatre costume design. She has designed costumes for *Gadanton* and *Lost in Yonkers*. She also designed makeup for *Hay Fever* and *Dear Stone*.

Chris Bentley (Barnaby Tucker) is a theatre major from Provo. His credits include *Henry V*, *Lost in Yonkers*, *Othello*, and *Philadelphia, Here I Come*.

Joshua Brady (Cornelius Hackl), from Martinez, CA, is studying theatre arts. His favorite roles include Sam Sumpter in *Gadanton* and Verge in *Much Ado About Nothing*. Joshua also wrote *Just One of the Bunch*.

Stephanie Foster Breinholt (Irene Molloy) is an army brat who calls Virginia home. Winner of the Region VIII Irene Ryan Acting Competition this year, she has appeared in *Hay Fever* and *Steel Magnolias*.

Chris H. Brower (Horace Vandergelder), from Springville, UT, has taught drama at Timpview High School for 21 years. Chris has appeared in *She Stoops to Conquer*, *Woman in Mind*, *Peter Pan*, and *Shenandoah*.

Yeshwant Chitalkar (Joe Scanlon) is a doctoral student in clinical psychology from Pune, India. His credits include Mr. Fowler in *Separate Tables* and C. S. Lewis in *Shadowlands*. He would like to thank Vivek Bele for being a major influence in his development as an actor.

Christopher David Fenn-Anstruther (Ambrose Kemper), of Laguna Niguel, CA, is studying broadcast communications and business. He has appeared in films such as *Mountain of the Lord* and *Invasion of Privacy*.

Hiroko Hatch (Assistant Director/Gertrude) is a theatre arts major from Kochi, Japan. Her credits include *Ordinary People*, *The Little Shop of Horrors*, and *My Mom's Dad*. She has also directed *Rashomon* and *The Bamboo Queen*.

Barta Heiner (Dolly Gallagher Levi), from Ogden, UT, is an associate professor in charge of the acting program at BYU. Some of her many credits include Amanda in *The Glass Menagerie*, Mary Whitmer in *Fourth Witness*, and director of *Separate Tables*. Ms. Heiner appears in this production by special arrangement with the Actors' Equity Association.

Karie J. Keebler (Makeup and Hair Designer) is a theatre arts student from Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada. She also codesigned the makeup for *Separate Tables*.

Bruce Kelly (Cabman), from Provo, is studying theatre education. His most recent appearances were as Gower and the Archbishop of Canterbury in *Henry V*.

Felina Khong (Production Stage Manager) is a theatre management student from Singapore. She has been production stage manager for *Gadanton*, assistant stage manager for *Jane Eyre*, and both assistant director and stage manager for *The Sound of Music*.

Jason Merrell (Rudolf), from Cottonwood Heights, UT, is majoring in German. His credits include Doktor in *Woyzeck*, Thomas in *Jane Eyre*, and Zweiter Gott in *Der Gute Mensch von Sezuan*.

Erik Orton (Malachi Stack/Calliope Player) is a media music major from Springfield, VA. He has appeared as Sandy Tyrell in *Hay Fever* and Paul Bratter in *Barefoot in the Park*. He also wrote the music and lyrics for *Esther*, a musical adaptation produced recently at BYU.

Karl T. Pope (Scenic Designer), from Vernal, UT, is a professor of theatre at BYU. He has designed lighting and sets for over 100 stage, television, and motion picture productions. He has also served as technical director for the Hill Cumorah Pageant for 12 years.

Katie Redford (Minnie Fay) is a freshman from Irvine, CA. Her credits include *Into the Woods*, *Rhymers of Eldridge*, *Portrait of Dorian Grey*, and *One of the Bunch*.

Kirsti Lee Rowley (Assistant Stage Manager), from Orem, is studying theatre arts education. Presently Kirsti is the resident stage manager of the Nelke Theatre. She would like to thank her parents for bringing her into the world and supporting her in all she does.

Who's Who

continued...

Andrea Lynette Smith (Assistant Stage Manager) is a theatre arts education major from Chelmsford, MA. She has appeared in *Singin' in the Rain*, *42nd Street*, and *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Andrea recently returned from serving in the Arizona Tucson Mission.

Michelle Brady Stone (Miss Flora Van Huysen), from Salt Lake City, is studying music dance theatre. Her credits include *Jane Eyre*, *Fool for Love*, *Nunsense*, and *Brigadoon*. Michelle has also recently married!

Janet L. Swenson (Costume Codesigner), from Seattle, WA, earned her MFA in costume design from the U of U. Over the past 25 years, she has designed costumes for over 200 productions. In fact, in 1996 Janet won the Maeser Award for Creativity for her outstanding work.

Allison Michelle Thomas (Ermengarde) is a theatre major with a minor in English from Springfield, OR. She has appeared in *Guys and Dolls*, *Cyrano de Bergerac*, *Touched by an Angel*, and *A High and Glorious Place*.

Tim Threlfall (Director), from Seattle, WA, earned his MFA in acting from the University of Washington. Before joining the BYU theatre faculty, Tim was the artistic director for the Seattle Civic Light Opera and on the staff of the Seattle Children's Theatre.

Director's Note

by Tim Threlfall

I remember in the third or fourth grade being given a work sheet on similes and metaphors and thinking they were really quite something. If memory serves me correctly, I was pretty good at coming up with them, too, but I always had a hard time remembering which one used the word *like* and which one didn't. To this day, when I read a play, my mind naturally turns to metaphors—or is it similes? Anyway, I look for a symbol that captures the essence of what I think the play is about.

When I first read Thornton Wilder's classic *The Matchmaker*, I kept seeing the image of an 1890s carousel, its ornately carved horses moving up and down to the accompaniment of a calliope. The carousel really didn't go anywhere, but it was great fun to ride. Slightly dizzy young folks would reluctantly dismount when their turn was over while a new group of adventurers climbed aboard for their fast-paced ride. At the controls of the carousel (and the play) was none other than the matchmaker herself, Mrs. Dolly Levi.

With these images in mind, the artistic team for our production of *The Matchmaker* went to work on designs that would allow us to celebrate the frank theatricality of Wilder's script and highlight its use of nearly every old comedic trick in the book. And, just like a ride on the carousel, in *The Matchmaker* you know what's coming around the next bend—but that doesn't spoil in the least bit the fun you have getting there!

Emergency Exits

Emergency exits are located on either side of the theatre.
Please identify the exit closest to your seat.

Late Patrons

Late patrons will be seated only at the discretion of the house manager.

Recording Prohibited

The use of film, video, or audio recording equipment in the theatre during a performance is expressly prohibited.

Electronic Devices

Thank you for turning off pagers, cellular phones, and wristwatch alarms during the performance.

Restrooms

Restrooms are located on the east side of the first, second, and third floors.

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Full-Time Faculty

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DIVISION OF ARTS PRODUCTION DIRECTOR.....Kenneth V. Crossley
DIRECTOR.....Tim Threfall
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR.....Hiroko Hatch
PRODUCTION MANAGER.....Michael G. Handley
RESIDENT STAGE MANAGER.....Loraine Edwards
FACILITY STAGE MANAGER.....Daniel Weight
PRODUCTION STAGE MANAGER.....Felina Khong
ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGERS.....Kirsti Lee Rowley
Andrea Lynette Smith
COSTUME DESIGNERS.....Lara A. Beene
Janet L. Swenson
COSTUMER.....Cathie McClellan
ASSISTANT COSTUMER.....Carolyn Smith
CUTTERS.....Lara A. Beene, Cathie McClellan
Louella Powell, Carolyn Smith
STITCHERS.....Priscilla Allen, Lara A. Beene
Amy Glaser, Carey Hanson
Candi Nichols, Gloria Pendlebury
MAKEUP AND HAIR DESIGNER.....Karie J. Keebler
MAKEUP EXECUTION AND RUNNING CREW.....Amy Cragun
WARDROBE SUPERVISOR.....Melissa Parker
DRESSER.....Tamitha McGill
TECHNICAL DIRECTOR.....O. Lee Walker
ASSOCIATE TECHNICAL DIRECTOR.....Frank G. Weight
TECHNICAL ASSISTANT.....Matthew Smith
EXPEDITOR.....Nathan Munson
TECHNICAL CREW.....Joyanne Goodfellow
TECHNICAL SECRETARY.....Felina Khong
SCENIC DESIGNER.....Karl T. Pope
MASTER CARPENTER.....Frank G. Weight
ASSISTANTS TO MASTER CARPENTER.....Daniel Erikson
Glenn Kubricky
SCENIC STUDIO CREW.....Joielle Adams, Troy Cadwallader
Burton Holmes, Nate Moses
Russell Mumford, Nathan Munson
Adam Smith, Heather Telford
SCENIC ARTIST.....Richard J. Clifford
ASSISTANT TO SCENIC ARTIST.....Benjamin Hoppe
PROPERTIES ADVISOR.....Loraine Edwards
PROP MASTER.....Loraine Edwards
PROP ASSISTANTS.....Jeremy Hoop, Allison Michelle Thomas
LIGHTING DESIGNER.....Loraine Edwards
MASTER ELECTRICIAN.....Marianne Shindurling Ohran
ELECTRICIANS.....Task Force
LIGHT BOARD OPERATOR.....Shawna Lee Emerson
FOLLOW SPOT OPERATOR.....Tabatha Odom
SOUND DESIGNER.....Trevor Hardy
SCHEDULING MANAGER.....Britt Pearson
EVENT SECRETARY.....Beth Birchfield
PRODUCTION OFFICE ASSISTANTS.....Chris Bentley
Felina Khong
BOX OFFICE MANAGER.....Paul Duerden
BOX OFFICE ACCOUNTANT.....Rhett Zimmerman
HOUSE MANAGER.....Adam Winters
MARKETING MANAGER.....Paul Duerden
PUBLICITY.....Megan Henrie, Lane Hunter
Dawn Weidauer, Charlene Winters
PUBLICITY PHOTOGRAPHER.....Mark Philbrick
PROGRAM.....Melanie Wood
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* Members of the College
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