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Much Ado About Nothing

by William Shakespeare

Director Barta Lee Heiner

Composer Ric Chitwood

Choreographer Cathy Black

Scenic Designer Rory Scanlon

Costume Designers Janet Swenson

Kimberly Clayton

Ruth Geilman

Lighting Designer Rory Scanlon

Hair & Makeup Designer Andrea Kyriopolous

Production Stage Manager Elneeta Timmons

March 22–April 8, 2000

Pardoe Theatre, Harris Fine Arts Center

Brigham Young University

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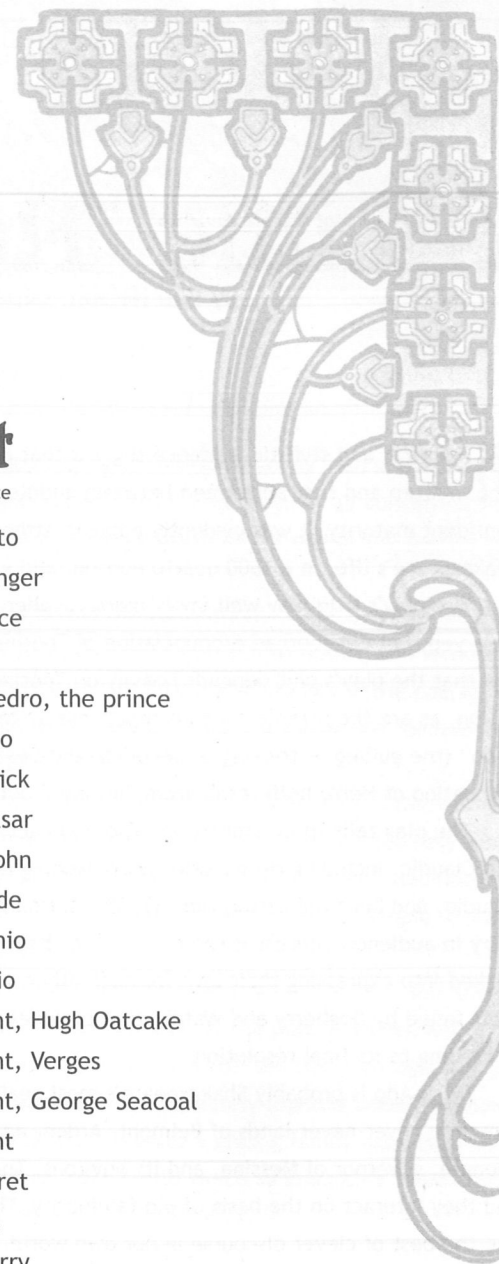


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The Cast

in order of appearance

J. Scott Bronson	Leonato
Collin Smith	Messenger
Melissa Yacktman	Beatrice
Michelle Faraone	Hero
Neal C. Johnson	Don Pedro, the prince
Dustin Condren	Claudio
James Mack	Benedick
Thomas Every	Balthasar
Dax Craven	Don John
Christian Sampson	Conrade
Jonathan Tolman	Borachio
Richard J. Clifford	Antonio
Benjamin A. Sansom	Servant, Hugh Oatcake
Jonas Wetzel	Servant, Verges
Kevin Peterson	Servant, George Seacoal
Emily Ireta Perez	Servant
Sarah Elizabeth Pfeifer	Margaret
Collins Shipley	Ursula
A. Cameron Sevy	Dogberry
Scott A. Goates	Boy, Watch
Peter Biggs	Sexton
Dane Allred	Friar Francis





A Little "Noting"

by Bob Nelson, department chair

Historical and stylistic evidence suggest that *Much Ado About Nothing* was probably written and first performed between middle 1598 and early 1599—in Shakespeare's confident maturity. It was evidently popular, although it was printed only once during Shakespeare's life, in a 1600 quarto edition, and was not reprinted until the 1623 Folio.

The play's title may well imply mere cavalier nonchalance. However, it has also been observed that Elizabethan pronunciation of "nothing" and "noting" were much the same, and that the play's plot depends heavily on "noting" others. Overhearing is central to the action, as are the often erroneous reportings or conclusions. Certainly the main comic "ado" (the gulling or tricking of Benedick and Beatrice) and the main serious "ado" (the accusation of Hero) both result from "noting," but are based finally upon "nothing."

The play tells three stories. (1) The main action of the play is the love affair of Hero and Claudio, including Hero's brief proxy wooing by Don Pedro, Hero's repudiation by Claudio, and her final restoration. (2) The action which is secondary structurally but primary in audience interest is the trap laid for Beatrice and Benedick, wherein they are tricked into expressing their love for each other. (3) Finally, it is Don John's villainous plot, foiled by Dogberry and Watch, that provides the play's major complications, as well as leading to its final resolution.

Much Ado is probably Shakespeare's most realistic love comedy. It abandons the romantic never-never-lands of Belmont, Arden, and Illyria for the elegant home of Leonato, governor of Messina, and its environs. The characters are mostly aristocratic, and they interact on the basis of old familiarity. Their language is spontaneous and lively, like the best of clever discourse in our own world.

The play's major characters present two viewpoints about the basis and the nature of romantic relationships. Claudio, Hero, Don Pedro, and Leonato's view represents the

customary ideal: a match between an attractive, conventional young man and a virtuous, attractive young woman who brings a good dowry and the approval of all concerned. It follows that the only impediment to such a marriage would be for one of the parties to prove either unchaste or impoverished.

Beatrice and Benedick, however, cut across the conventional view, thereby undermining its validity. They chafe against an institutionalized approach to wooing and wedding, and avoid it by both conscious and unconscious role-play. Their journey in the course of the play is to discover how they can shed the safety of roles. They also find themselves testing what romantic love would be like for them.

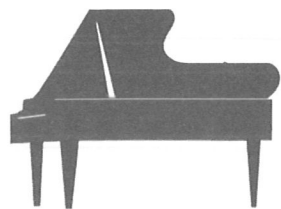
The play's conclusion entails a simultaneous embracing of romance and discarding of masks, while the pairs of lovers still strive to maintain their identities in genuinely sharing relationships. Romantic love is found to be complicated, as is the indeterminate nature of private feeling; love is also found to be of much more substance than the simple, decorous behavior supposed to embody such feeling.

So, we travel with the characters along the rough road from delusion to self-knowledge. Despite the truthful complexity of love dramatized by the play, however, and despite the play's tragic potential, its comic tone prevails. We see two marriages complicated by trickery and even malevolent intrusion, but ultimately founded upon the knowledgeable volition of the characters. The play's celebratory ending finally assures us that, despite the troubling causes of all the "ado," in a world which so graciously values the good head and the good heart, all must be well that ends well. 🐾

References:

- A. R. Humphreys, Introduction, *Much Ado About Nothing*, Arden Edition, London, 1981.
David L. Stevenson. Introduction, *Much Ado About Nothing*, G. B. Harrison, ed. Harcourt, Brace, and World, New York, 1948

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Scene Breakdown

Act I
Front door of Leonato's house

Act II: i, ii
Terrace of Leonato's house

Act II: iii; Act III: i, ii
Orchard

Act III: iii
Front door of Leonato's house

Act III: iv
Orchard

Act III: v
Terrace of Leonato's house

Intermission

Act IV: i
Church

Act IV: ii
Prison

Act V: i
Front door of Leonato's house

Act V: ii
Orchard

Act V: iii
Mausoleum

Act V: iv
Terrace of Leonato's house

TMA NEWS

FINAL CUT is here—our annual festival showcase of student films, including narratives, documentaries, animated and experimental pieces, averaging 10 minutes each. Audiences and specially invited judges determine the winners. Proceeds will fund future Final Cut Grants for student filmmakers. Screenings sell out, so come early.

March 21-24: Program A, 151 Tanner Bldg, 7:30 pm
Program B, 251 Tanner Bldg, 7:30 pm
March 25: Program A, 151 Tanner Bldg, 10:30 am-12:30 pm
Program B, 151 Tanner Bldg, 12:45-2:45 pm
Best of Final Cut, JSB Auditorium, 6:30 and 9:00 pm

KC/ACTF XXXII—Congratulations to the winners at February's Region VIII Kennedy Center/American College Theatre Festival at UNLV:

Irene Ryan Acting Competition Regional Finalist: Melissa Yacktmann
Design Regional Winners: Richard Clifford and Wendy Sanders, prop design for Children of Eden (\$100 cash award)
Kate Drain Lawson Award for Design Excellence Winner: Andrea Kyriopolous, Make-Up Design for The School for Scandal (\$100 cash award)
National Critics Institute Regional Winner: Cameron Deaver
Best of Festival (Best male actor of invited shows): David D'Agostini in The Cherry Orchard
USITT Northern California Section: Design Merit in a Festival Performance: Aaraina Ogzewalla, Costume Design for The Cherry Orchard (\$100 cash award)
Outstanding Student Director Alternate: Char Nelson
The recent BYU production of The Cherry Orchard was performed twice at the festival.



Mucha Do

As Director Barta Heiner sought a unifying approach for our production of *Much Ado About Nothing*, she was particularly intrigued by the passion of many of the characters. They generally try to control their emotions. But when those passions run unchecked, much ado results.

This can be seen, for example, in the actions of Leonato, Beatrice, and Don John. At one point in the play, Leonato, a doting uncle and father, goes so far as to wish the death of his own daughter, Hero, accused of unchastity. The quick-tongued and carefully clever Beatrice rages at Claudio's publicly shaming and falsely accusing Hero, and wants only one thing: for Benedick to kill Claudio in revenge. Don John, held under house arrest for revolt during the recent war, may appear reticent and resolved, but spends much of his time conspiring against others. With such examples in mind, Heiner introduced paradoxes like "controlled passion" and "frozen fire" upon which the design team could build.

Heiner found further inspiration from an art nouveau calendar that hung in her office, featuring paintings of

by Elneeta Timmons, dramaturg

Alphonse Mucha. She presented these paintings to the production team, discussing specific images that seemed particularly relevant to this production. She felt that such elements as long, flowing hair gently held back with rings, and draped gowns secured by metal clasps that could open and allow the dress to part, fit well with her idea of "controlled passion."

So, the sinuous art of Mucha became the unifying design influence on the show. Mucha used strong figures with sensuous curves, refined, decorative elements, foliate forms, and rich natural colors to create his exquisite, romantic art. His juxtaposition of soft and hard, "feminine" and "masculine," light and dark, etc., guided our designers. Flowing dresses and hair, ribbons, rings, links, clasps, flowers, and borders were all incorporated into the costume and scenic designs.

Furthermore, the very appearance of Mucha in photographs helped the team decide on a Russian flavor. Men wear rigid military uniforms with flowing peasant shirts underneath, a circular staircase undulates beside rigid straight-line steps, women's hair is half pulled up and back while some is still

down and flowing freely. Fluid scenic and lighting changes help complement the bringing to life of "frozen fire" on the stage.

Mucha's frank, elaborate artifice is also reflected in the action of the play, much of which relies on deception. Characters overhear conversation either by accident or by design. The set facilitates all of the hiding and eavesdropping, what with foliage to hide in and even a tree and a balcony to conceal an anxious voyeur.

We hope that all production elements combine into a satisfying theatre piece, and perhaps even a piece of art—for as Mucha and his art-nouveau contemporaries believed, "Everything should be art." ♥

Special Thanks:
Utah Shakespearean Festival

The Company

PETER BIGGS (Sexton), from Ipswich, England, is a computer science major. His first theatre appearance was at age seven as a workhouse boy in Oliver! His other credits include Vincentio in The Taming of the Shrew at Durham University.

CATHY BLACK (Choreographer), from Orem, UT, teaches in the BYU Dance Department. She specializes in modern dance, music dance theatre, and dance history, and has choreographed in all three areas. She is a recipient of the Karl G. Maeser Excellence in Teaching Award.

J. SCOTT BRONSON (Leonato), from San Diego, CA, has a BA in liberal arts from the University of the State of New York. He has served on the boards of Actors Repertory Theatre Ensemble and the Association of Mormon Letters. He has appeared in dozens of television and stage roles.

KIMBERLY MORTENSEN CLAYTON (Costume Designer), from Pittsburgh, PA, is a TMA major with a costume design emphasis. She designed costumes for A Midsummer Night's Dream at the Castle Theatre, and Goodbye Marianne and the 1999 Fashion Show at BYU.

RICHARD J. CLIFFORD (Antonio), from Shoshone, ID, is an MFA student in theatre production design and technology. His favorite recent roles include the Ghost of John Barrymore, George Frederic Handel, and Cardinal Wolsey. He thanks Antonia and Ian.

DUSTIN CONDREN (Claudio), from Campbell, CA, is a film directing and Russian double major. His credits include the Attendant in A Man for All Seasons, Waffles in Uncle Vanya, and experience on professional video production and feature film crews.

DAX CRAVEN (Don John), from Arcata, CA, is an English major, planning to go to law school. His credits include A Midsummer Night's Dream and The Cherry Orchard.

THOMAS EVERY (Balthasar), from Seattle, WA, is a music dance theatre major. He has appeared in TV commercials since the age of seven. His other work includes Hello Dolly!, Guys and Dolls, The Music Man, Crazy for You, Brigadoon, and No, No, Nanette.

MICHELLE FARAONE (Hero), from Dublin, OH, is a theatre major with an acting emphasis. Her credits include Wait Until Dark, Red Noses, Servant of Two Masters, Comedy of Errors, Into the Woods, Fiddler on the Roof, To Kill a Mockingbird, and Steel Magnolias.

RUTH GEILMAN (Costume Designer), from Pleasant Grove, UT, is a costume and makeup design major. She designed makeup and hair for The Merry Widow and La Traviata, and is working on Voices from Black Canyon: A Hoover Dam Kaleidoscope.

SCOTT A. GOATES (Boy, Watch) is from Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada. He appeared as Tiny Tim in Scrooge at age eleven and Charlie Bates in Oliver! at age 13. His other credits include Silly Billy in Jack and the Beanstalk, and Prince Humperdink in The Princess Bride.

BARTA HEINER (Director), from Ogden, UT, has a BA from BYU and an MFA in acting from the American Conservatory Theatre. She heads the acting program at BYU and has acted in Fourth Witness, Blind Love, Split Infinity, and Lion in Winter. She recently directed The Cherry Orchard, which was performed last month at the American College Theatre Festival, Region VIII, at UNLV.

CURT R. JENSEN (Assistant Scenic and Light Design), from Salt Lake City, UT, is a TMA major with a design and technology emphasis. He currently works as a technician and spotlight operator for the Young Ambassadors.

NEAL C. JOHNSON (Don Pedro, the Prince), from Orem, UT, graduated in music dance theatre and theatre secondary education in 1996. His credits include performances for Opryland, Norwegian Cruise Lines, the Hale Center Theatre, Lagoon, and more.

ALISHA PADDOCK (Assistant Stage Manager), from Fullerton, CA, is an art directing major. She acted the role of Amanda in The Glass Menagerie, directed You Can't Take It With You, and is currently stage managing and scene designing Electra.

EMILY PEREZ (Servant), from Spokane, WA, is a theatre education and English teaching double major. Her credits include Erasmus Montanus and Uncle Vanya.

KEVIN PETERSON (Servant, George Seacoal) is from Orem, UT. His credits include Barefoot in the Park, The School for Scandal, Toothpick Art, Miracle Bowl, and Silent Frustrations.

SARAH PFEIFER (Margaret), from Yorba Linda, CA, is a music dance theatre major. Her credits include the Storyteller in Children of Eden, Helena in A Midsummer Night's Dream, and Philia in A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum.

AIMEE PIERCE (Assistant Stage Manager), from St. George, UT, is a theatre education major with an English teaching minor. She can be seen in the BYU orientation and financial aid videos. This is her first mainstage production since high school.

CHRISTIAN SAMPSON (Conrade), from Vancouver, WA, is a film directing major. His credits include Comedy of Errors. He wrote, produced, and directed the student films Departure and Exchange.

BENJAMIN SANSOM (Servant, Hugh Oatcake), from Hilbert, WI, is a theatre education major. His credits include Great Gardens, The Dispute, and Broadway, Broadway.

RORY SCANLON (Scenic and Lighting Designer), from Gooding, ID, has a BA from BYU and an MFA in costume design from the University of Illinois. His credits include work for Disney and Nightstar productions in The Velveteen Rabbit, The Steadfast Tin Soldier, and Petronella. He was also on the production design team for The Ark, from Deseret Book Productions.

A. CAMERON SEVY (Dogberry), from Provo, UT, graduated from BYU in 1996 in music dance theatre. His credits include The Merry Wives of Windsor, My Fair Lady, and Legacy II.

COLLINS SHIPLEY (Ursula), from Tulsa, OK, is a music dance theatre major. Her acting credits include Taming of the Shrew, Candide, and Once Upon a Mattress. She also directed Zoo Story, and taught acting and makeup at John Casablanca's Modeling Agency.

COLLIN SMITH (Messenger), from Lakeland, FL, is a music dance theatre major. Credits include Gypsy and Cinderella for Lakeland Theater, and "Kids' Korner," a TV show in Saudi Arabia.

JANET SWENSON (Costume Designer), from Seattle, WA, has an MFA in costume design from the University of Utah. Her credits include design for Romeo and Juliet, Peter Pan, Fiddler on the Roof, and Big River. She has been resident designer at Sundance for 15 years.

ELNEETA TIMMONS (Stage Manager and Dramaturg), from Heber, AZ, is a theatre studies major. Her credits include Children of Eden, The Way We're Wired, and Joyful Noise.

JONATHAN TOLMAN (Borachio), from Aurora, CO, is a communications major. He acted in Brigadoon and played the string bass for La Boheme and La Traviata.

JONAS WETZEL (Servant, Verges), from Montana, is a humanities major. His credits include The School for Scandal and English Made Simple. He works for BYU's International Cinema.

MELISSA YACKTMAN (Beatrice), from Arlington Heights, IL, is an acting major. Her credits include Anya in The Cherry Orchard, Carol in Black Comedy, and Raina in Arms and the Man.

Production Staff

Director	Barta Lee Heiner
Composer	Ric Chitwood
Choreographer	Cathy Black
Dramaturg	Elneeta Timmons
Scenic Designer	Rory Scanlon
Costume Designer	Janet Swenson
Lighting Designer	Rory Scanlon
Makeup & Hair Designer	Andrea Kyriopolous
Production Stage Manager	Elneeta Timmons
Assistant Stage Managers	Alisha Paddock, Aimee Pierce, Elizabeth Ottley
Assistant Scenic Design	Curt Jensen, Wendy Sanders
Assistant Costume Design	Kimberly Clayton, Ruth Geilman
Assistant Light Design	Curt Jensen, Wendy Sanders
Makeup and Hair Running Crews	TMA 267 & 367 students
Dressers	Matt Biedel, Julia Palmer
Light Board Operator	Michael J. Smith

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Stage Management Advisor	Loraine Edwards
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Costumer	Cathie McClellan
Assistant Costumer	Carolyn Smith
Cutters	Deanne Dewitt, Tara DeGrey
First Hands	Jennifer Graff
Stitchers	Priscilla Allen, Kori Cramer, Amy Fisler
Janelle Jensen, Aaraina Ogzewalla, Bryn Tweedy	
Costume Crafts	Emily Hoem, Ruth Geilman
Wardrobe	Chanel Taylor, Elneeta Timmons
Hair and Makeup Supervisor	Wendy Sanders
Hair and Makeup Assistants	Ruth Geilman, Andrea Kyriopolous
B Room	Kimberly Clayton
Stock	Mary Ann Wittwer
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Associate Technical Director	Frank G. Weight
Technical Assistant	Matt Smith
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Jared Stull, Aaron Thompson, Amanda Perrone, Jason Yancey	
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Assistants to Scenic Artist	Dan Benedict, Nathan Hale, Eric Oliphant
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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 representative, and certain students are selected to participate in KC/ACTF programs involving awards, scholarships, and special grants for actors, playwrights, designers, and critics at both the regional and national levels.

Productions entered on the Participating level are eligible 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, D.C., in the spring of 2000.

Last year more than 900 productions and 18,000 students 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.

Before the performance, join us for dinner.

Friday Night Grand Buffet

6:00 p.m.—8:00 p.m.



Located on the sixth floor of the Wilkinson Center 378-9020 for reservations •
www.byu.edu/skyroom