

TARUFFE

BY MOLIÈRE

CLASSIC
SATIRIC
COMEDY

PRESENTED BY
THE FINE ARTS
DEPARTMENT

8 PM FRIDAY & SATURDAY
OCTOBER 26 & 27, 2007

8 PM FRIDAY & SATURDAY
NOVEMBER 2 & 3, 2007

JOHNS AUDITORIUM
HAMPDEN-SYDNEY COLLEGE



TARTUFFE

By Molière

TRANSLATION BY RICHARD WILBUR

The play will be performed in two acts with an intermission.

We would appreciate your turning off all electronic devices including those use for texting as the light disturbs other audience members.

CAST

(IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE)



Mme Pernelle
Whitney Ligon



Elmire
Mary Rousis



Dorine
Jennifer Vitale



Damis
Carson Wilson



Mariane
Charity Brogan



Cleante
Mike Dougherty



Orgon
Sam Gibbs



Tartuffe
Kevin Jones



Valere
Justin Smith



M. Loyal
Josh Jarrett



The King's Officer
Andrew MacIntire

PRODUCTION TEAM



*Director, Costume
& Sound Designer*
Shidley Kagan



Production Manager
Benjamin M.
Brown



Assistant Director
Alex Tzavellas



Stage Manager
Edward Giorgi



Stage Manager
William Anthony
Johnson



Stage Manager
Richard Spangler



Set Designer
Brad Stoller



Light Designer
David Sherman



Light Designer
Dominique Ervin

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

WE ARE BLESSED, this time around, to have two excellent dramaturgical notes to accompany this program. These are courtesy of Dr. Joan McRae's seminar on French theatre. Besides producing the notes, over the course of the production, students and teacher in this class have worked collaboratively with the cast and staff as personal dramaturges in order to help us all with all those elements that can be lost in translation. Since we have these excellent notes, I will leave my own (mercifully) brief.

Tartuffe is, of course, a comedy. It is meant to delight, amuse and produce laughter in its audience. But it is a satire, the most vicious, biting, and insightful type of comedy, indeed of any dramatic genre. By definition satire sends up social mores, skewers conventionally held ideas and unmasks hypocrisy. Those who dabble in satire, both by writing it and by performing it, particularly in societies that are closed and non-democratic, often dance with danger, and Molière, as you will read below, is no exception. Yet those writers and performers believe that the message they have to convey is worth the potential price they will have to pay by conveying it.

The message of this play is strikingly apt to our times: beware the dangers of fundamentalism whatever form they may take. Because he is on fire with religious zeal, because he believes in his heart of hearts that what he is doing is right and good, because he is convinced that by following his faith he cannot be led to anything but righteousness, Orgon, the master of the house (and really, it is his play) stops questioning. When he does this, he jeopardizes the happiness, livelihood and even life of every member of his household. Why he does it is the real question, and the play comes closest to an answer in the dialogues between Orgon and his sensible brother-in-law, Cleante. Cleante draws the distinction between belief and blind faith, religious devotion and unreasoning submission. He fails to win Orgon's mind, however, since the latter is powerfully attracted to the idea of religious marching orders: a clear set of guidelines set forth by "those who know better" and are to be neither disputed or even questioned. This, of course, is definitive fundamentalism. With it comes the loss of perhaps the most sacred of human gifts: the capacity to think.

DRAMATURGE NOTES THE LIFE OF THE PLAYWRIGHT

Molière, né Jean-Baptiste Poquelin in 1622 to a bourgeois Parisian family, should have inherited his father's office as the upholsterer to the King. In opposition to his father's wishes, however, Molière decided to become an actor, still a highly controversial occupation in 17th century France. Molière formed his own Parisian acting troupe, the Illustre-Théâtre, in 1643 with the aid of Madeleine Béjart, a young and talented actress who may have been Molière's lover as well as his friend and business partner. Two years later, plagued with heavy financial woes, the troupe dispersed and Molière was sent to debtors' prison. After a brief stint in prison, Molière rejoined his fellow actors Madeleine and the Béjart family to perfect their craft in the less critical ambience of the French countryside. After achieving theatrical success in the southern provinces, the new troupe returned to Paris with the financial backing of King Louis XIV's brother. While in Paris Molière composed *Tartuffe*, what would become his most famous satire, focused on religious hypocrisy.

Controversy surrounded not only Molière's satirical comedies but also his marriage, his death, and his burial. Comedic criticism against the aristocracy, doctors, and the religious community

prompted investigation into Molière's personal life as a means to discredit him. The most damning rumor concerned his marriage to Armande Béjart in 1662. It was alleged that Armande, twenty years his junior, was not the younger sister of his partner Madeleine Béjart but rather her daughter—possibly begotten by the fruit of Molière's loins. Armande's parentage remains unknown to this day.

Molière died on February 17th, 1673, ironically just after performing the role of the imaginary invalid in his latest production *Le Malade Imaginaire*. Having neither received absolution nor renounced his profession, Molière died an excommunicate. Despite this circumstance, Armande persuaded the newly appointed archbishop of Paris to allow Molière's remains to be buried in a church graveyard. Although he was buried in a graveyard, it is unknown whether Molière was placed at the foot of the cross in the highest place of honor, or in the unconsecrated ground by the outer fence. In honor of Molière's death a Parisian crowd rioted all the way to the graveyard.

THE PLAY

Tartuffe was first performed at Versailles for the royal court in 1664 in a three-act version. Although Louis XIV immensely enjoyed Molière's satire on the actions of the false dévot, *Tartuffe*, the play was promptly banned because of the influence of a secret society of Catholic laymen named the Compagnie du Saint-Sacrement. These men feared that spectators could not perceive the satire in the play, and would believe that all dévots were religious hypocrites. Dévots were not unusual figures in the houses of the aristocracy and rich bourgeoisie at this time of counter-reformation in France; their advice on how to lead a pious Catholic life wielded great influence.

Despite the King's interdiction, the play continued to be read and performed in private Salons of the aristocracy, and quickly *Tartuffe* gained an underground fame. In 1667, after many modifications, including the addition of two new acts and a change of title from *Tartuffe* to *L'Imposteur*, Molière convinced Louis XIV to allow a new public performance. After a wildly successful first performance, *Tartuffe* was once again shut down by the Président du Parlement, a member of the Compagnie du Saint-Sacrement who was acting on the King's behalf, if not in his interest, due to the royal absence from Paris. The Archbishop of Paris upheld the President's prohibition, enforcing it with a decree that would excommunicate anyone who heard, read, or performed the play.

Despite this threat, one year later the play was performed without incident at the house of the Prince de Condé, and within months the royal license permitting the staging of *Tartuffe*, now in its third version was issued. The play was performed for 28 consecutive performances; its success made Molière and his troupe wealthy and famous.

Due to its successive modifications, Molière's play presents not the usual comedy of character that we expect from our author, but instead a comedy with a distinct moral aim. The source of laughter is doubled on the credulity of Orgon as well as the hypocrisy of Tartuffe, as Molière emphasizes repeatedly the distinction between false and genuine piety. Although his critics claimed that the theater was no place for the discussion of moral or religious questions, Molière responded that the theater had its origins in the Church. The stage thus provided the best locale for correction of human vices, for men are more likely to be laughed than scolded out of their sins.

CAST

(IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE)

Mme Pernelle	Whitney Ligon
Elmire	Mary Rousis
Dorine	Jennifer Vitale
Damis	Carson Wilson
Mariane	Charity Brogan
Cleante	Mike Dougherty
Orgon	Sam Gibbs
Tartuffe	Kevin Jones
Valere	Justin Smith
M. Loyal	Josh Jarrett
The King's Officer	Andrew MacIntire

PRODUCTION TEAM

Director	Shirley Kagan
Production Manager	Benjamin M. Brown
Assistant Director	Alex Tzavellas
Stage Manager	Edward Giogi
Stage Manager	William Anthony Johnson
Stage Manager	Richard Spangler
Set Designer	Brad Stoller
Light Designer	David Sherman
Light Designer	Dominique Ervin
Costume and Sound Designer	Shirley Kagan

CAST AND STAFF BIOGRAPHIES

(IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER)

Charity Brogan (Mariane) is from Farmville, VA. She graduated from James Madison University in May 2006 with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing. She is currently employed as an RN in the intensive care unit at Southside Community Hospital. She previously acted at Hampden-Sydney in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and two one-act comedies.

Benjamin M. Brown (production manager) is currently a sophomore at H-SC in the process of graduating with a dual degree in biology and fine arts. Following his undergraduate studies, he plans to attend medical school and attain a dual degree in medicine and public health, which he will use to practice medicine internationally. His past experiences in theatre include assistant directing the productions of *Richard III* and *Art*, as well as directing *The Maker of Dreams* for last year's One Act Festival. His other activities include working in the theatre and chemistry department as a lab tech, volunteering at the local hospital, vice president of the International Club, and practicing yoga in his free time.

Mike Dougherty (Cleante) waited 30 years between his first and second plays, three between his

second and third, and just one year between his last play at H-SC (*Richard III*) and *Tartuffe*. At this exponential rate of increase, he will be acting full-time before the end of the spring semester, which might interfere with his biology teaching. He is married and has two cats and a dozen nieces and nephews.

Dominique Ervin (light designer) is a junior at H-SC and is majoring in fine arts with a concentration in visual arts. Dominique was the assistant stage manager for the spring production of *Gagarin Way* in 2005. He has also helped behind the scenes for many different productions here at the college and currently works for Johns Auditorium building sets and placing lights for various productions. This is Dominique's first production as a light designer. He has enjoyed his time watching the productions put on by the H-SC theatre department in the past three years and looks forward to what he will see in the future!

Sam Gibbs (Orgon) came to Hampden-Sydney College after attending Maggie Walker Governor's School in Richmond, VA. He is currently a junior at Hampden-Sydney and is majoring in English. *Tartuffe* marks his seventh production here at Hampden-Sydney College. Sam was previously the assistant director of *Noises Off*, *Richard III*, and *Art*. He also directed two one-acts for the Jongleurs club. *Tartuffe* marks Sam's first acting performance, and he has really enjoyed working with the talented cast and crew.

Edward Giorgi (stage manager) is a sophomore at Hampden-Sydney College from Rochester, NY. He attended the Aquinas Institute of Rochester. Ed is the vice president of the rugby club. He also is an active member in the ski club. *Tartuffe* is Ed's first Hampden-Sydney College production.

Josh Jarrett (M. Loyal) is a sophomore double majoring in fine arts and theatre. He was last seen on stage in the Waterworks' production of *Cotton Patch Gospel*.

William Anthony Johnson (stage manager) is from Williamsburg, VA. He is a sophomore and has declared a major in economics and may possibly dual major in fine arts in the concentration of theatre. In high school Anthony studied drama for two years. This is the first time he has participated in a play and held the title of stage manager.

Kevin Jones (*Tartuffe*) is a sophomore at Hampden-Sydney College. He is double-majoring in economics & commerce and fine arts with a concentration in theatre. He attended Prince George High School in Prince George, VA. This will be Kevin's eighth production and his fifth here at H-SC. Previous productions include *West Side Story*, *Chicago*, *King Richard III*, *Art*, and *No Sex Please, We're British*. Kevin would like to thank the cast and crew as well as Shirley Kagan for all of their hard work on such a great play, and, of course, his parents because without them, I wouldn't be here today!

Shirley Kagan (director) is delighted (if dismayed) to be in her eleventh year of teaching theatre at Hampden-Sydney. This production is the 16th she has directed here. Kagan is also an associate artist of Richmond Shakespeare. She wishes to thank the supportive community in which she feels proud to work.

Whitney Ligon (Mme Parnelle) is currently a sophomore/junior at Longwood University as an elementary education major. This is her first production at Hampden-Sydney, but she has played the part of Ms. E. Muse in *The Skin of Our Teeth* at Longwood in the fall of 2004. Whitney is very grateful to be a part of this extraordinary cast and hopes everyone enjoys the show as much as she has enjoyed working on it!

Andrew MacIntire (The King's Officer) is a freshman. *Tartuffe* is his first involvement with H-SC theatre. Andrew attended Blessed Sacrament Huguenot in Powhatan County for high school and enjoyed three years of participation in its drama department. Though his major remains undeclared officially, he is planning to major in the field of literature.

Mary Rousis (Elmire) is a theatre major at Longwood University. She is starting her junior year and has been performing with Hampden-Sydney since the fall of 2005. Her previous performances include *No Sex Please, We're British*, *Enigma Variations*, *The Vagina Monologues*, *Funeral Parlor*, *The Man Who Couldn't Dance* and *All In The Timing*. She is so happy that she had the opportunity to work with Shirley and her wonderful cast and crew! Thanks!

David Sherman (light designer) is a junior at H-SC and is majoring in history with a minor in rhetoric. This is David's second production as light designer. David has also acted in mainstage productions of *The Life and Death of King Richard the III* and several student one acts. David has directed a one-act and assistant directed the mainstage production of *Gagarin Way*. Special thanks to Shirley, Matt, and Brad Stoller, for all they have taught me in these three years at H-SC. God Bless and enjoy the show!

Justin Smith (Valere) currently attends Hampden-Sydney College; he is a freshman who plans to major in economics. Justin hails from Menchville High School in Newport News, VA. This will be his fourth production. His others include *A Raisin in the Sun* as Asagai, the musical *It's a Wonderful Life* as Mr. Potter, and *Beauty and the Beast* playing various small roles. Justin is currently involved in men's choir, as well as Jiu Jitsu and church choir.

Richard Spangler (stage manager) is making his stage managerial debut at Hampden-Sydney.

Brad Stoller (set designer) is designing this, his seventh set at Hampden-Sydney where he has also taught introduction to theatre and playwriting. In his life in Charlottesville he is a member of two improvisational theatre companies, teaches the Alexander Technique, and has a small practice of drama therapy with autistic spectrum children.

Alex Tzavellas (assistant director) is a sophomore from Norfolk, VA. He attended Norfolk Collegiate High School. He is planning on majoring in history with a minor in economics and commerce. While attending Hampden-Sydney he is currently involved in the Greek life as a member of the Kappa Alpha Order. This is his first experience participating in H-SC theatre.

Jennifer Vitale (Dorine) is an assistant professor of psychology at Hampden-Sydney College. Her previous H-SC roles include witch (*Macbeth*), Dottie (*Noises Off!*), Elizabeth (*Richard III*), and Eleanore (*No Sex Please, We're British*). As always, she is proud and pleased to be sharing the stage with the men and women of Hampden-Sydney theatre and thanks her director for this wonderful opportunity.

Carson Wilson (Damis) graduated from Quaker Valley High School in the spring and is a freshman here at H-SC. His favorite roles include Hugo Peabody in *Bye Bye Birdie* and the Spirit of Christmas in his third grade holiday play. He would like to thank his parents, Madam Kagan, all the cast and crew, and everyone in the financial aid and business offices for getting him to where he is today. Smooches! :-*
