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The School for Scandal

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Taylor University Theatre presents

The School for Scandal

Richard Brinsley Sheridan's comedy of wit and manner

Little Theatre

April 25-28, 1979
Richard Brinsley Sheridan was born in Dublin, Ireland in 1751, the son of Thomas and Frances Sheridan. Thomas Sheridan was at different times an actor, a theatre manager, a lecturer on elocution and an author of several works. His mother was also an author and playwright, two of her plays having been produced by Garrick at Drury Lane.

Young Dick received most of his education at Harrow between the years of 1762 and 1769. The family's finances were never very secure and Sheridan was forced to leave Harrow without completing his education. He joined his family in Bath where his father instructed him and had he and his brother tutored.

It was in Bath, while helping his father teach a school of elocution, that Sheridan met the lovely songstress Elizabeth Linley. In 1772 he made a romantic journey with her to France and in 1773 they married. Sheridan refused to leave his new wife continue her public singing and so to provide income began his writing career. His first play, _THE RIVALS_, was given January 17, 1775, but not well received. Later rewritten, and with better actors, it was successful and was followed closely by another comedy, _ST. PATRICK'S DAY_, and a comic opera, _THE DUENNA_, a collaboration with his musically talented wife and father-in-law, Thomas Linley. The opera was a resounding success and was acted 75 times that season, establishing his reputation as a playwright.

Sheridan's next play was _THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL_, produced at Drury Lane May 8, 1777. The play delighted audiences of that day who were particularly fond of scandal and used to reading of intrigues, actual or fictitious, in their newspapers. As a writer of plays, a lecturer on elocution and an amorous and polished work, _THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL_ contains three elements of comedy that served to make it, as Johnson observed, 'the best comedy of his age.' The first is that it belongs to artificial comedy or the comedies of manners, as it was written by the Restoration dramatists. It confines itself to a small section of society, leaving out the general business of life and lends itself naturally to wit while making no attempt to explore the wide range of emotions or to see human nature in the round. The second is sentimental comedy, less apparent than the former in Sheridan's work, but discovered in _Lady Teazle_ who abruptly changes her life style to be reconciled with _Sir Peter_, and in _Charles_ who is transformed from an 'extravagant rogue' to a gentleman by _Maria's_ love and _Sir Oliver's_ plots. In this respect Sheridan's play reflects the 18th century conception of people as being naturally good. People could retain this natural goodness by following their interests but they could also be led astray by following bad examples. Such an individual could be reclaimed from vice by appealing to the natural virtuous human feelings which were momentarily obscured. Thus, Sheridan supports the traditional moral values of his day and punishes immoral behavior in characters such as _Joseph_ and _Lady Sneerwell_. The third basic element is a keen perception of the ludicrous, and of the surprising contrasts in people's characters, as well as of the unexpected circumstances in which they reveal their frailties. Sheridan portrayed these human conditions so that laughter might be accompanied with understanding and sympathy.

In October 1779 Sheridan added _THE CRITIC_, another comedy, to his list of successful plays, and much later, in 1786 contributed his final play, _PIZARRO_, a translation and adaptation of German drama by Kotzebue.

In 1780 he entered Parliament and ceased to write plays. However, he continued as manager and partner of the theatre. He remained in Parliament for 30 years during which time he displayed his oratorical powers and was accepted among the aristocratic Whigs. Political life brought him hardly any material rewards and was a constant source of expense, especially at election times, leaving him notoriously in debt.

In 1792 his first wife died of consumption and two years later he married Esther Ogle, daughter of the Dean of Winchester. By that time he was middle-aged (although she only twenty), drinking heavily and his fortune was beginning to decline. In 1809 the theatre burned down and with it his chief financial prop. In 1812 he was dejected in his seat in Parliament and declined to try for another, although his lifelong friend, the Prince of Wales, offered the necessary funds. He retained his warmth of spirit, essentially generous, gay and challenging, throughout the illness and financial straits that terminated in his death in 1816.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Our special thanks to Barbara Dickey, Yetive Williams, Joy Manda for their help in making this production possible.

The All Campus Student Art Show will be on exhibit downstairs in the Chronicle-Tribune Art Gallery on Friday and Saturday evening.

**THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL**

Directed by Jessie Roussel
Set and Lighting Design by Ollie Hubbard
Costume Design by Jessie Roussel

**THE CAST**

_(in order of their appearance)_

Lady Sneerwell who leads _The School for Scandal_ . Catherine Curtis
Snake, her accomplice . Doug Marlow
Joseph Surface, nephew to Sir Oliver . Harold Blum
Maria, Sir Peter's ward . Barbara Jensen
Mrs. Candour who loves to gossip . Laura Binder
Mr. Crabtree, an English gentleman . Kurt Bullock
Sir Benjamin Backbite, his nephew . Bill Wallace
Sir Peter Teazle, Sir Oliver's friend . Mark Welch
Rowley, servant to Sir Oliver . Terry Haines
Lady Teazle, Sir Peter's wife . Kim Montgomery
Sir Oliver Surface, wealthy English gentleman . Randy Wyatt
Moses, a Jewish broker . Doug Oliver
Trip, servant to Charles . David Murray
Careless, Charles' friend . Mike Burchfield
Sir Harry Bumper, another friend . Tom Albinson
Servants . . . Wendy Branch, Robin Chernenko, Julie Frierson, Pam Kareus, Tammy Lane, Marty Tilton

England 1777

Act I: Scene i Lady Sneerwell's boudoir
Scene ii Sir Peter Teazle's house
Scene iii Sir Peter Teazle's house
Scene iv Lady Sneerwell's drawingroom
Scene v Sir Peter Teazle's house
Scene vi Charles Surface's house

A ten minute intermission

Act II: Scene i Joseph Surface's library
Scene ii Sir Peter Teazle's house
Scene iii Joseph Surface's library

MUSICAL SELECTIONS heard this evening are from the following composers: Beethoven, Giuliani, Haydn, Joplin, Loiliet, Mozart, Scarlatti, Schubert, Scott, Stamitz.

**A Communication & Theatre Arts Department Production**

The School for Scandal will be convening in the downstairs lobby during intermission. If you would like some refreshment, we invite you to purchase their delightful pink lemonade.

As a courtesy to the actors, please do not use cameras during the performance.
PRODUCTION STAFF

Technical Director .................................. Ollie Hubbard
Assistant to the Director ............................ Eileen Woodard
Set Committee ........................................ HAROLD BLUM
                                              BREND A CONWAY
                                              RHONDA JETER
                                              BILL WALLACE
                                              Geoff Ames
                                              Amy Artis
                                              Rod Bare
                                              Doug Crew
                                              Karen Garner
                                              Randy Jones
                                              John Jacobi
                                              Robert May
                                              Jon Miller
                                              Jodan Price
                                              Randy Reneke
                                              Mark Rodell
                                              Rick Schleucher
                                              Beth Thomas
                                              Cindy Zink

Lighting .............................................. COLLEEN COUGHENOUR
                                              RHONDA JETER
                                              Vicki Cruse
                                              Mary Lou Griffith
                                              Mike McGinnis

Make-up .............................................. COLLEEN COUGHENOUR
                                              TERRY HAINES
                                              Lynn Cameron
                                              Katie Cluff
                                              Karen Garner
                                              Dawn Gwin
                                              Elaine Hepler
                                              Janet Lavin
                                              Robert May
                                              Sharon Musto
                                              Edie Rader
                                              Paula Town
                                              Karen Wolff
                                              Kim Wright

Sound ................................................ MARK COLLINS
                                              Kevin Knickerbocker
                                              Bill Neighbor
                                              Alternate: Matt Welty

Properties ........................................... SARA DE PREE
                                              GLENDA GREENWOOD
                                              Teresa Cress
                                              Sue Schuneman

Costumes ............................................. DEBBIE WATSON
                                              Carol Askeland
                                              Laura Binder
                                              Karen Copeland
                                              Sue Chow
                                              Glenda Greenwood
                                              Jill Laird
                                              Bonnie Simpson
                                              Jan Stephenson
                                              Melissa Wills

House ................................................ JOY WILSON
                                              Cathy Breen
                                              Lori Guy
                                              Karen Johnson
                                              Susie King
                                              Lynn Livergood
                                              Laurie Mowery
                                              Becky Norris
                                              Kim Weiler
                                              Priscilla Wilson
                                              Anita Yoder