

**GREAT
LAKES
THEATER**

TEACHER PREPARATION GUIDE



THE FANTASTICKS

Book and lyrics by TOM JONES, Music by HARVEY SCHMIDT

Directed By VICTORIA BUSSERT

Choreographed by GREGORY DANIELS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Dear Educator	3
A Note to Students: What to Expect at the Theater.....	4
GLT: Our History, Our Future.....	5
Director's Note	6
A Brief History	8
Synopsis	9
"The Fantastic Fantasticks" (Commentary)	10
Musical Numbers	13
Lake Tahoe Shakespeare Festival's Production of <i>The Fantasticks</i>	14
Costume Research & Design.....	16
Scenic Design.....	18
Glossary & References.....	19
Questions for Discussion Prior to Attending the Performance	21
Activities	22
Writing Prompts	24
A Brief Glossary of Theater Terms	25
How to Write a Review	27
A Sample Review Written by a Student	28
Questions for Discussion After Attending the Performance	29
Explore and Learn More!	36
Generous Support	31
About Great Lakes Theater	32

GREAT LAKES THEATER

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Spring 2016

Dear Educator,

Thank you for your student matinee ticket order to Great Lakes Theater's production *The Fantasticks* by Tom Jones and Hervey Schmidt, which will be performed in the beautiful Hanna Theatre at Playhouse Square from May 13—29, 2016.

A charming and romantic musical about one young couple, two "feuding" fathers and an infinite love that transcends over time, *The Fantasticks* whimsically whisks audiences on a journey of imagination into a world of moonlight, magic and memory. Along the way, love is found, lost and rediscovered again after a poignant realization that "without a hurt, the heart is hollow."

This guide is designed – through essays, discussion questions and classroom activities – to give students both an introduction to, and a point of entry for, a personal exploration of *The Fantasticks*.

Great Lakes Theater is proud to provide you with the finest in classic theater and the necessary educational resources to support your work in the classroom. We are thrilled that you will be coming to see us and we welcome your input on how best to support your classroom preparation for our work. Please let us know what you think!

Sincerely,

Kelly Schaffer Florian
Director of Educational Services
Kflorian@greatlakestheater.org

David Hansen
Education Outreach Associate
dhansen@greatlakestheater.org

A NOTE TO STUDENTS: WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE THEATER



You may or may not have attended a live theater performance before. To increase your enjoyment, it might be helpful to look at the unique qualities of this art form — because it is so different from movies or television.

The live theatrical performance not only involves the actors on the stage; it is meant to involve you, the audience, in ways that most visual art forms cannot. In truth, although you are sitting in an auditorium and the actors are on stage, there is very little separating the audience from the performers. How you react to the play *deeply affects* the actors. Something as seemingly trivial as whispering or unwrapping a candy bar can distract them and disrupt the mood and tone of their performance. Due to the important relationship between actors and audience members, there are certain, perhaps obvious, provisions of live theater we wish to call to your attention.

In the Hanna Theatre, it is important to know that the taking of pictures, either with or without a flash, is strictly prohibited. Also, it is essential that all electronic equipment, including cell phones, music players (even with headphones), alarm watches, etc.,

be completely powered off once you have entered the theatre. Even the glow from a silent cell phone (used for text messaging, or posting social network updates, for example) can be very distracting to fellow audience members, even if you try to mask it under your hand or an article of clothing. Our goal is to provide every person in the audience with the best possible theatrical experience, so we appreciate your respectful cooperation during the performance.

Other differences live theater provides: in film or video, the camera and editing define what we will see. In the theater, however, each of us works as a camera and editor, choosing his or her personal points of focus. And in the Hanna Theatre, you should know that often we do not use microphones. As audience members you'll need to actively listen and "tune in" to the sound of the unamplified human voice.

As for our lighting and scenery, it might surprise you to know that these are not necessarily meant to be realistic. In this production, for example, there are design elements that are abstract or metaphorical.

The theater's ability to focus on human experience — distilled through the dialogue and behavior of people on stage and enhanced by the scenery, costumes, lighting, music and dance — is a centuries-old tradition. Being part of the communal magic when performer and audience connect — whether at a baseball game, music concert or theater performance — cannot be duplicated.

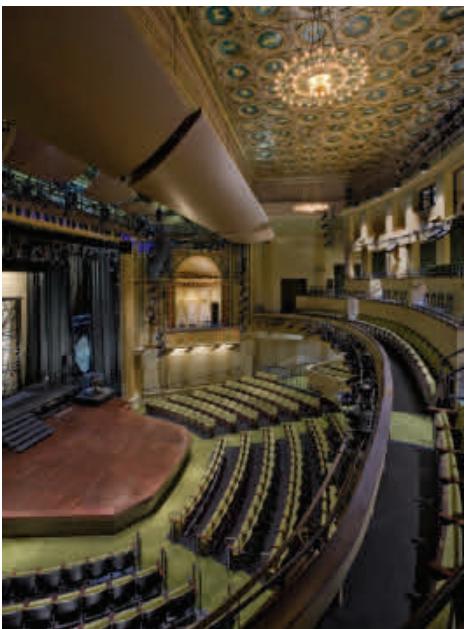
The performance you will see at Great Lakes Theater will happen only once. It is unique and personal. Though this play will be performed more than a dozen times, the performance you see belongs only to you.

We hope you enjoy it, and we'd like you to share your response with us.

GLT: OUR HISTORY, OUR FUTURE



Tom Hanks and fellow company member Bert Goldstein.



The beautifully renovated Hanna Theatre.

Since 1962, Great Lakes Theater (GLT) has brought the world's greatest plays to life for all of Cleveland. In 1961, the Lakewood Board of Education president persuaded a Shakespeare troupe, led by Arthur Lithgow, to make Lakewood Civic Auditorium its home. The theater that opened its doors on July 11, 1962 as Great Lakes Shakespeare Festival presented six Shakespeare plays in rotating repertory. In exchange for free rent, the company provided student matinee productions. The repertory was expanded in 1965 to include non-Shakespearean classics as a result of an exchange of productions with Princeton's McCarter Theater. The Company outgrew its original home at Lakewood Civic Auditorium and, in 1982, made the move to the Ohio Theatre in PlayhouseSquare, launching the revitalization of downtown Cleveland's Theatre District.

In 2001 the Company was searching for a new Producing Artistic Director, and the Board sought a candidate with well-established business skills as well as artistic leadership. Charles Fee was selected for his commitment to Shakespeare and his reputation for building Idaho Shakespeare Festival into a highly successful regional theater. GLT recommitted itself to its founding core values: Shakespeare, rotating repertory and an acting company of the highest caliber. During Fee's tenure, the company has been recognized for its artistic excellence, winning the *Northern Ohio Live Magazine Award* for excellence in Theater in 2005 after three years of being a finalist, as well as *The Free Times Reader's Choice Award* for Best Performing Arts Group in 2006, and for eliminating the inherited accumulated net deficit of over one million dollars.

The Company has also been a revolutionary producing model unlike any other in America to create cost efficiency and enhance our artistic product. We now exchange our repertory productions with Idaho Shakespeare Festival (ISF) in Boise, Idaho and Lake Tahoe Shakespeare Festival (LTSF) in Nevada. This deep collaboration between independent producing organizations is a first in American theater. With this visionary model now fully in place, GLT, ISF, and LTSF are able to deepen the artistic quality of the work on our stages, share our production costs, maximize our resources, and provide nearly year-round employment to our resident company of artists.

Now, GLT has entered into a new phase, making the historic Hanna Theatre in Playhouse Square its home. The renovation of the Hanna Theatre, as well as the creation of GLT's first endowment fund, is part of our *Re-Imagine A Classic* Campaign to ensure GLT's future. Our new home in the Hanna features a hydraulically operated thrust stage, a first for this region, and innovative and intimate seating where no seat is farther than eleven rows from the stage. We believe that this extraordinary theater experience will revolutionize the way Northern Ohio experiences classic theater.

Great Lakes Theater is one of only a handful of American theaters that have stayed the course as a classic theater. With a plucky history of bucking economic trends to strive for and nurture the highest artistic quality, it remains a distinctive and significant cultural resource in an extraordinary American city.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

BY VICTORIA BUSSERT

“ *My work as a teacher has exposed me to the many lessons taught by the fathers, Hucklebee and Bellomy —perhaps most especially, “Make sure you never say, NO.”* ” , ,



Victoria Bussert

Try to remember...

My first memory of *The Fantasticks* was as a 13-year-old student in Munster, Indiana preparing to audition for the role of Louisa in the junior high school musical. I practiced “Much More” over and over again, choreographed every move I would make, assembled the perfect audition outfit—and didn’t get cast. Instead, I became the assistant director of the production, and so began my personal dance with this beautiful show. I’ve directed *The Fantasticks* five times in my career; each time I seem to see it from a new life perspective (maturity will do that to you).

Seven years following my unsuccessful audition, I found myself directing a community theater production with my mother playing one of the fathers (we were short on adult men). At that time, I remember relating most strongly to the character of Matt; I knew I had to get out of my little hometown and held the deep belief that, “Beyond that road lies a shining world.” Shortly after that, I moved my life to New York and predictably found, “a couple of surprises there.”

Over the years I’ve certainly had my share of El Gallo moments of heartbreak, learning the painful but important lesson of choosing real love over romanticized infatuation. My work as a teacher has exposed me to the many lessons taught by the fathers, Hucklebee and Bellomy —perhaps most especially, “Make sure you never say, NO.”

When I first wrote this director’s note in March 2016, the announcement has just been made that after 55 years (with a four-year hiatus from 2002 – 2006), the final curtain was about to fall on what has become the world’s longest-running musical ever. What makes this even more spectacular is the fact that *The Fantasticks* has only played off-Broadway. Yet, it has

been no less a New York institution than any of the biggest hits on the Great White Way. The day before what would have been the final performance two anonymous fans of the show stepped forward and offered the financial resources needed to keep the show running. On February 8, 2016, *The Fantasticks* reached an unsurpassed 21,000 performances and continues to delight audiences to this day.

In his opening-night review, The New York Times' Brooks Atkinson suggested that the show was "the sort of thing that loses magic the longer it endures." The past 55 years has certainly proved that judgement wrong. It is with great joy that we present our very own production of *The Fantasticks* tonight; like any great classic no matter our own age, the tale will remain ageless.

Deep in December, our hearts should remember, and follow.

THE FANTASTICKS

A BRIEF HISTORY

In the early 1950's Harvey Schmidt and Tom Jones were students at the University of Texas. During their senior year in 1955, they became so enchanted with the works of French playwright, Edmond Rostand, that they read and re-read his three most famous plays and then began to search for others. From Rostand's biography, Schmidt and Jones learned of another play - the first ever written by Rostand when he was 26 years old in 1894. Finding no copies anywhere of the mentioned play, they sent to a rare-book dealer in Paris, who unearthed a copy in French. Their one single impulse was to turn this tender little tale into a modern musical.

After graduation, Schmidt and Jones descended upon New York and began writing material for little musical reviews and night club entertainers. They didn't get around to fulfilling their college dream until 1959, when *The Fantasticks* had a tryout at Barnard College to an enthusiastic audience. A few months later the show was produced in New York and the rest is history.

The Fantasticks tells a simple tale of "a boy, girl, two fathers and a wall." Using theatrical techniques from many parts of the world and many periods in history, it urges the audience to use their imagination, to follow the narrator, El Gallo, as he creates for us a world of moonlight and magic, and later of honky-tonk carnivals and burning disillusion.

The Fantasticks, as LIFE magazine once said, is "a sophisticated story about innocence." Since its opening in May of 1960 at the Sullivan Street Playhouse in New York, and its subsequent revival at the Jerry Orbach Theater at The Theater Center, it has become the longest running production of any kind in the history of American Theater.



Jerry Orbach, Rita Gardner, and Kenneth Nelson in the original 1960 production of "The Fantasticks."



Tom Jones and Harvey Schmidt

- *TheFantasticksOnBroadway.com*

SYNOPSIS

In a small town, two houses are separated by a wall (played by a mute actor). The mysterious narrator El Gallo explains that Matt and Luisa live next door to one another and have fallen in love, but their fathers are embattled in a family feud and have ordered them apart. He asks the audience to “Try to Remember” a simpler time in their life when they were first in love.

Luisa wants “Much More” in her life than the humdrum town can offer. Matt confesses his love for Luisa by singing over the wall (“Metaphor”). They both have active imaginations, and Luisa explains her fantasy that Matt will rescue her from abduction. The two fathers then send their respective children inside, and reveal that they have made up their feud to bring their children together, as telling a child “no” makes them want something even more (“Never Say No”). Eager to find a way to end the “feud,” Matt’s father, Mr. Hucklebee, tells Luisa’s father, Mr. Bellomy, that he has hired a professional to kidnap Luisa so that Matt can save her.

El Gallo arrives as the man hired to abduct Luisa. He explains he can enact a variety of different scenarios for them (“It Depends on What You Pay”). The fathers decide they want the best and most expensive option. Two travelling actors arrive and El Gallo enlists them to help him with the kidnapping.

That evening, Matt and Luisa sing of their love together (“Soon It’s Gonna Rain”). El Gallo and the actors put their plan into action and abduct Luisa (“Abduction Ballet”). As planned, Matt manages to rescue her and the fathers can finally end their feud together, but El Gallo wonders how long this “Happy Ending” will last.

El Gallo explains that what seemed lovely by moonlight is not always the same in the glaring light of day. The fathers begin to squabble over their gardens (“This Plum is Too Ripe”), before Hucklebee reveals to the children that the entire abduction was staged. Matt and Luisa are upset and soon the situation evolves into a genuine feud between the fathers. Matt tries to win over Luisa with a real display of strength by challenging El Gallo to a duel. When he loses, Luisa is unimpressed by his boasting and they break up.

Matt decides to leave town in search of something more exciting (“I Can See It”). The fathers are both upset at the situation, and remark that gardening is easier than parenting (“Plant a Radish”). Luisa comes across El Gallo and asks him to take her on an adventure, but we soon see that both Luisa and Matt have realised that the outside world can be a harsh place (“Round and Round”).

El Gallo reveals that he had to hurt both Luisa and Matt so they could learn to value each other. Matt returns home and finds Luisa, and they both discover that the adventure they both wanted is really with each other (“They Were You”). At the sight of their children’s reunion, the fathers end their feud once more as Matt and Luisa embark on their new life together.

- *MusicalHeaven.com*

THE FANTASTIC FANTASTICKS

BY BETSY SHEVEY

“ They say children need to play in order to learn the lessons of life. When it comes to watching plays, we are all children. ”



Betsy Shevey has been Great Lakes Theater's professional development keynote speaker and featured educational scholar for over ten years.

Romeo: *But soft, what light through yonder window breaks?*

It is the east and Juliet is the sun!

Arise fair sun and kill the envious moon

Who is already sick and pale with grief

That thou her maid art far more fair than she ...

Lady, by yonder blessed moon I vow,

That tips with silver all these fruit tree tops—

Juliet: *O swear not by the moon, th'inconstant moon,*

That monthly changes in her circled orb,

Lest that thy love prove likewise variable.

Romeo: *What shall I swear by?*

Juliet: *Do not swear at all.*

Or if thou wilt, swear by thy gracious self,

Which is the god of my idolatry,

And I'll believe thee.

- *Romeo and Juliet* Act 2, Scene 2

The Fantasticks by Tom Jones and Harvey Schmidt was the longest running musical in the world at the time of its thirtieth anniversary in 1990 and the most frequently produced. There were 11,000 productions in the United States in over 3000 cities and towns and it had 693 productions in 68 foreign countries including Sweden, New Zealand, Saudi Arabia, Czechoslovakia, and Israel. *The Fantasticks* relies as much on *Romeo and Juliet* as it does on the play on which it is based, *Les Romanesques* a 19th century French play by Rostand. This play was later adapted and translated into English in 1900 by a woman writing under the pseudonym of George Fleming and called *The Fantasticks*.

The play uses the story of Romeo and Juliet to tell another story. If Romeo and Juliet had lived and if their families had not fought, who would they be? On one hand, Matt and Lucia are more innocent than Romeo and Juliet, when we meet them in the first act. In their first love scene (Act 2, Scene 2 of *Romeo and Juliet*,) Juliet already distrusts Romeo's swearing his love by the moon. Lucia does no such thing. She is immune to betrayal when we first meet her, just as Matt is immune to danger. Little do they know that their fathers have staged both the betrayal and the danger. How lucky to have such



Edmond Rostand (1868-1918) author of *Les Romanesques*, and best known for the play *Cyrano De Bergerac*.



Watercolor by John Massey Wright of the “Balcony Scene” from *Romeo and Juliet*.



Wall (Mark Gates, center) divides Thisbe (Mitchell Fields, left) and Pyramus (Andrew May, right) in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Great Lakes Theater, 2003)

fathers! By staging the “rape” by El Gallo and his two actors, Henry and Mortimer, the fathers guarantee the love of Matt and Lucia as well as the ending of the false feud that made them fall in love in the first place.

The father and El Gallo and his two actors are the work of imagination. Here imagination is linked inextricably to love. Without imagination, love cannot exist. This is the lesson that the fathers are teaching their children. And their children are apt learners. Both of them believe in the power of imagination and the power of love. Just as the imaginary wall is what supposedly divides the two families, it is also what unites them. How much better off we would all be if the leaders of countries believed in this power of imaginary walls!

But we can see just by the belief that world leaders have in walls, how difficult it is to trust the power of imagination, just as it is difficult to believe in the power of love. And indeed when the power of imagination fails, when the false feud between the fathers is discovered and resolved, so too does the power of love; as Matt and Luisa begin to argue.

The second act of *The Fantasticks* is the act of reality. Luisa has her heart broken by reality and Matt has to confront his own mortality. Here we see very clearly that without love, the world can be a hard and cruel place. Without imagination, this time symbolized by the mask Luisa wears, we see only heartache and ruin. It's a bit like watching the nightly news!

The play asks us to consider what is real and what is imaginary? Just as in *Romeo and Juliet*, we may ask: was the parent’s feud real? In *Romeo and Juliet* the feud kills the lovers and it is only through their death that the parents realize that their fight was in fact unreal. What was real was the love and the imagination of *Romeo and Juliet*. Why their imagination? Because they had the courage from their love to imagine a world without the feud; a world of peace and harmony. In honor of their love and their imagination; two statues, two works of the imagination are created at the end of the play. They remind the families of the power of love and imagination and the waste of the pain and violence of the feud.

In *The Fantasticks*, the feud is imaginary from the start. But that is not enough. Because it is not the lovers who test their

imagination against reality, but their parents. Much as our parents would like to protect us from the real world, they cannot do it. Their work is doomed if they try. And we see this happen to Huck and Bell, the fathers. Their best laid plans run horribly awry and create a real feud between them. This has to happen. It is only through their own experiences and their own coping with reality through the world of imagination that Matt and Luisa can find true love.

Too often, we are told to “be realistic” not to live “in fantasy,” but what does that mean? Who is to say what is real and what is fantasy? How can we live without fantasy even in the real world? It is only by means of fantasy and the imagination that we can live in the real world because it is only through these that we find love. This is the lesson of Romeo and Juliet who defy their parents’ idea of what is real and seek out a higher truth. It is also the truth of *The Fantasticks* although the story is told quite differently and includes the parents’ point of view.

El Gallo, the mysterious figure of romance in *The Fantasticks* is the turning point for Matt and Luisa of understanding the difference between childhood fancies and the strength of the imagination. This is also a lesson that Romeo and Juliet learn as their love matures and they become responsible for their own fates.

The childhood fancies of Matt and Luisa, as controlled with all good intentions by their fathers, is not real imagination, which must be tested by reality. That is the true strength of imagination. It comes through reality rather than avoids it. El Gallo serves as the guide for both Matt and Luisa. He makes sure, as a figure of romance for them both, that they understand the difference between their childhood fancies and the fantasy that opposes itself to reality. He does this by testing them both and through this testing of their seeing the world “as it is” he strengthens their love and their imagination.

This is the very best teacher because he teaches through experience rather than “I told you so.” By experiencing the real world, Matt and Luisa are able to decide for themselves and choose for themselves. One of the reasons for the phenomenal popularity of this play is the triumph of the connection between imagination and love. Too often, we are told that we are being foolish, that we need to live in the real world in order to grow up. When in fact, it may be the grown-ups who are being foolish because they have forgotten how to dream or how to believe in their dreams. Matt and Luisa do need to grow up. They are slightly foolish in the first act because their fathers are being over protective, as many parents are. But when with the help of El Gallo, they are wounded by the real world, this makes their love and their imagination stronger. That is the lesson of the play and one which we all need to remember.

“Without a hurt the heart is hollow,” sings El Gallo. It is just as important to remember that hearts that have been hurt become fuller. It is too easy to use the wounds of life as a reason to become bitter and closed. With the uses of the imagination, the wounds of life have lessons to teach us that make us stronger. El Gallo teaches us this lesson as he summons us on his path of the life of play in *The Fantasticks*. They say children need to play in order to learn the lessons of life. When it comes to watching plays, we are all children. As El Gallo reminds us, “Deep in December, it’s nice to remember/The fire of September that made us mellow./Deep in December, our hearts should remember/ And follow.”

As we follow El Gallo, the leader of love and the imagination, we put aside our everyday cares and worries. That is the power of theater and the long lasting power of the fantastic *Fantasticks*.

MUSICAL NUMBERS

Songs, Act I

Overture	
“Try to Remember”	
. . . El Gallo, Luisa, Matt, Hucklebee, Bellomy	
“Much More”	Luisa
“Metaphor”	Matt, Luisa
“Never Say No”	Hucklebee, Bellomy
“It Depends On What You Pay”	
. . . El Gallo, Hucklebee, Bellomy	
“Soon It’s Gonna Rain”	Matt, Luisa
“Abduction Ballet”	Company
“Happy Ending”	Company

Songs, Act II

“This Plum Is Too Ripe”	
. . . Matt, Luisa, Hucklebee, Bellomy	
“I Can See It”	Matt, El Gallo
“Plant a Radish”	Hucklebee, Bellomy
“Round and ’Round”	. . . El Gallo, Luisa, Company
“They Were You”	Matt, Luisa
“Try to Remember” (reprise)	. . . El Gallo

Dramatis Personae

Matt	Pedar Benson Bate*
Luisa	Clare Howes Eisentrout*
Bellomy	Justin Ness*
Hucklebee	Lynn Robert Berg*
Henry	Aled Davies*
Mortimer	Jeffrey C. Hawkins*
The Mute	Meredith Lark*
El Gallo	Michael Padgett*
Orchestra	Matthew Webb, Sara Smith

* Member of Actors' Equity Association

Production Staff

Director	Victoria Bussert
Musical Director	Matthew Webb
Choreographer	Gregory Daniels
Scenic Designer	Gage Williams
Costume Designer	Esther M. Haberlen
Lighting Designer	Jeff Herrmann
Sound Designer	David Gotwald
Fight Choreographer	Ken Merckx
Assistant Musical Director	Nick Wilders
Production Stage Manager	Tim Kinzel*
Assistant Stage Manager	Amy Essick
Dance Captain	Meredith Lark*

LAKE TAHOE SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL'S PRODUCTION OF *THE FANTASTICKS*, NOW PLAYING AT GLT'S HANNA THEATRE



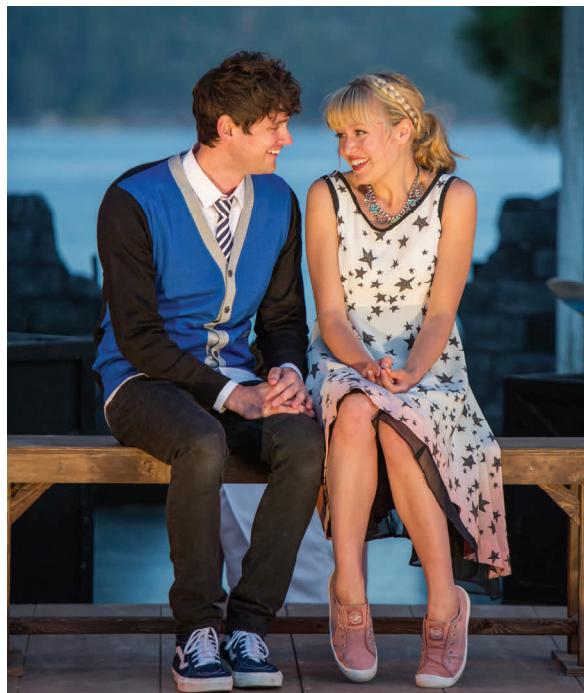
Meredith Lark as The Mute



Justin Ness as Bellomy, Lynn Robert Berg as Hucklebee



M.A. Taylor as Henry, Michael Padgett as El Gallo, Jeffrey C. Hawkins as Mortimer



Pedar Benson Bate as Matt, Clare Howes Eisentrou as Luisa



M.A. Taylor as Henry, Jeffrey C. Hawkins as Mortimer, Clare Howes Eisentrou as Luisa, Pedar Benson Bate as Matt



The Company



Justin Ness as Bellomy, Lynn Robert Berg as Hucklebee



Clare Howes Eisentrou as Luisa, Michael Padgett as El Gallo



Jeffrey C. Hawkins as Mortimer, M.A. Taylor as Henry



Clare Howes Eisentrou as Lusia, Pedar Benson Bate as Matt

Photo Credit: Joy Strotz, Lake Tahoe Shakespeare Festival

COSTUME RESEARCH & DESIGN

BY ESTHER MONTGOMERY HABERLEN



Lake Tahoe Shakespeare Festival/
Idaho Shakespeare Festival/
Great Lakes Theater
Victoria Bussert - Director
Esther M Haberlen 2015



LOUISA/ MATT
E. HABELEN 2015

FANTASTICKS- LTSF/ ISF/ GLT- V. BUSSERT



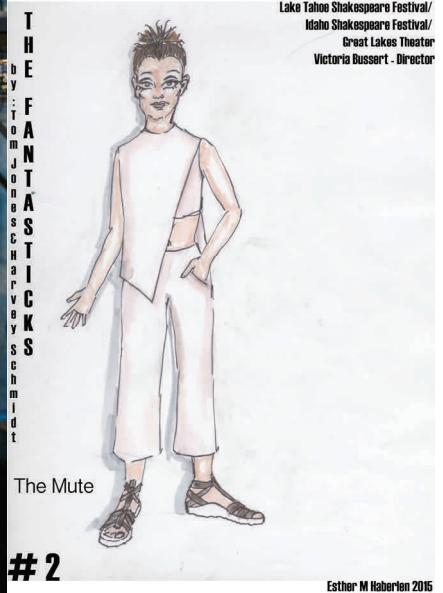
E. HABELEN 2015

Photo Credit: Joy Strotz, Lake Tahoe
Shakespeare Festival



Lake Tahoe Shakespeare Festival/
Idaho Shakespeare Festival/
Great Lakes Theater
Victoria Bussert - Director
Esther M Haberlen 2015

4



The Mute

Esther M Haberlen 2015

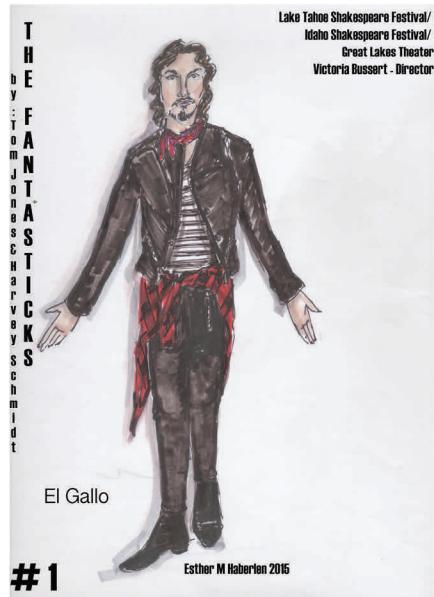
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Clare Howes Eisentrout as Lusia, Pedar Benson Bate as Matt, Meredith Lark as The Mute

FANTASTICKS- LTSF/ ISF/ GLT- V. BUSSERT

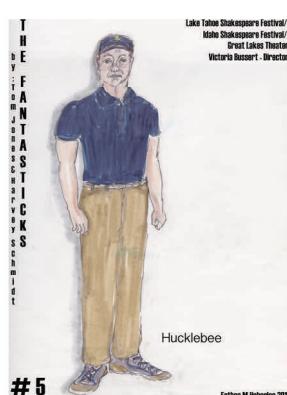


Michael Padgett as El Gallo



Lake Tahoe Shakespeare Festival/
Idaho Shakespeare Festival/
Great Lakes Theater
Victoria Bussert - Director

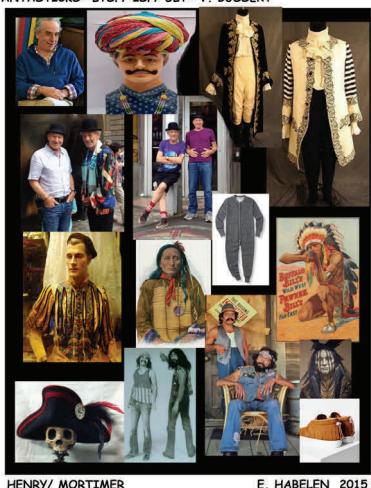
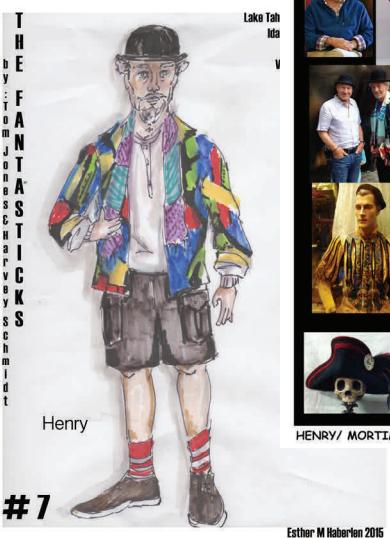
FANTASTICKS- LTSF/ ISF/ GLT- V. BUSSERT



Lake Tahoe Shakespeare Festival/
Idaho Shakespeare Festival/
Great Lakes Theater
Victoria Bussert - Director

Justin Ness as Bellomy, Clare Howes EisentROUT
as Lauisa, Pedar Benson BATE as Matt, Lynn
Robert Berg as Huckabee

FANTASTICKS- LTSF/ ISF/ GLT- V. BUSSERT



FANTASTICKS
by Tom Jones
and Harvey Schmidt



Lake Tahoe Shake
Idaho Shake
Gre
Victoria B



Lake Tahoe Shakespeare Festival/
Idaho Shakespeare Festival/
Great Lakes Theater
Victoria Bussert - Director

SCENIC DESIGN

BY GAGE WILLIAMS

THE FANTASTICKS is presented as though a band of touring performers have set up their show wagon in a town square. In its original production at the Lake Tahoe Shakespeare Festival, THE FANTASTICKS was performed in rotating repertory with *Romeo and Juliet*, and in Gage Williams' model you can see the ruined marble façade that was the set for R&J behind the set for FANTASTICKS.

As produced in the Hanna Theatre, THE FANTASTICKS set includes the scaffolding and visible stage lights, ladders, cases, platform stage and curtain, but not the marble façade at rear.



“THE FANTASTICKS” GLOSSARY

Accelerando con molto: music; gradually accelerating with motion

The Acropolis: the citadel of Athens and the site of the Parthenon.

Adonis: a beautiful youth beloved of Venus (Aphrodite.)

Arrivederci: interjection, *Italian*. until we see each other again; goodbye for the present.

Beatrice: The heroine of Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*.

Bengazi: City in Libya.

Billow: to swell out, puff up, etc., as by the action of wind.

Blench: to shrink; flinch; quail.

Bombay: City in India, now called Mumbai.

Brigands: a bandit, especially one of a band of robbers in mountain or forest regions.

Burnished: to polish (a surface) by friction.

Callow: immature or inexperienced:

Cassandra: a daughter of Priam and Hecuba, a prophet cursed by Apollo so that her prophesies, though true, were fated never to be believed.

Cesspool: a cistern, well, or pit for retaining the sediment of a drain or for receiving the sewage from a house.

Cleopatra: The most powerful force in Egypt and Greece in ancient history as well as a figure in Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*.

Doge: Gothic palace in Venice

Eurasian: Of Europe and Asia, considered together as one continent.

Gout: an acute, recurrent disease characterized by painful inflammation of the joints, chiefly those in the feet and hands, and especially in the great toe.

Guinevere: wife of King Arthur and mistress of Lancelot.

Helena: One of the four lovers from Shakespeare's *A Midsummer's Night Dream*.

Indja: India.

Juliet: the heroine of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*.

Lodevigo and Socrates: Characters in *Pinocchio* who persuade Pinocchio to become an actor.

Minerva: the ancient Roman goddess of wisdom and the arts, identified with the Greek goddess Athena.

Pantaloons: a Venetian character in Italian commedia dell'arte represented as a foolish old man wearing pantaloons (baggy pants.)

Pell-mell: in disorderly, headlong haste; in a recklessly hurried manner.

Pinochle: a popular card game played by two, three, or four persons, with a 48-card deck.

Polaris: The polestar (or North Star) in the constellation Ursa Minor. Polaris is also the “diamond” in a cluster of stars called The Engagement Ring.

Rapier: a small sword, especially of the 18th century, having a narrow blade and used for thrusting.

Romanoff and Tzars: The Romanoff family were the imperial dynasty of Russia that ruled from 1613 to 1917. “Tzar” is a Russian Emperor.

Tableau: a representation of a picture, statue, scene, etc., by one or more persons suitably costumed and posed.

Valkyrie: Reference to the opening song of the third act of Richard Wagner's opera *Die Walkure*.

Venus: an ancient Italian goddess of gardens and spring, identified by the Romans with Aphrodite as the goddess of love and beauty.

Watteau: Jean Antoine French rococo painter

Literary References

"Friends, Romans, Countrymen" Spoken by Marc Antony in *Julius Caesar*, III.ii

"And if he but blench" Spoken by Hamlet in *Hamlet*, II.ii

"God for Harry, England, and Saint George" Spoken by Henry V in *The Life of King Henry the 5th*, III.i

"Good night, Sweet Prince... Why doth the drum come hither?" Spoken by Horatio in *Hamlet*, V.ii

"I am dying, Egypt" Spoken by Antony in *Antony and Cleopatra*, IV.xv

"Cast off thy name. A rose by any other name" Spoken by Juliet in *Romeo and Juliet*, II.ii

"Put up thy sword. The dew will rust it" Spoken by Othello in *Othello*, I.ii

"It is a far better thing that I do now than I have ever done before." Quote from Charles Dickens's *A Tale of Two Cities*.

"The Prodigal Son" “Prodigal” means wasteful or recklessly extravagant, in this case a reference to story found in the Christian Bible, Luke 15:11-32.

"Rape of the Sabine Women" Roman in which the first generation of Roman men abducted women from Sabine.

- Dictionary.com

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

PRIOR TO ATTENDING THE PERFORMANCE

Act one of *The Fantasticks* is called “In the Moonlight”, act two “In the Sun.” The first part is a traditional romance with a happy ending, the second turns this familiar story on its head, with its young protagonists seeing love in the harsh light of day, confronted with the realities of life and being forced to make much more difficult decisions to realize what it is they truly want. In its way, *The Fantasticks* was the precursor to the more complicated musicals of the 1960s, 70s and beyond (see: *Company*, *Into the Woods*, and pretty much everything Stephen Sondheim has ever written.)

1. What place do these challenging questions of life in the real world have in musical theater? Which do you prefer, the simple tale beautifully told, or the troubling story with an ending which does not guarantee happily ever after? In what way do works of art and performance teach hard life lessons successfully, and where do they fail? How do young people best achieve wisdom, through stories and plays and movies, or by being left to make their own mistakes in the real world? What are lessons we must learn by trying and risking failure?
2. What would have become of Luisa and Matt if there had never been the wall between their homes? Would they still have fallen in love? What is maturity? What does it mean to be “callow”? Who is more realistic, Luisa or Matt? Who is more sincere? Explain.
3. Our parental figures often believe they can make the best decisions for their children. In *The Fantasticks* the fathers Bellomy and Hucklebee believe they can manipulate their children’s desires using “reverse psychology” – the belief that whatever they tell their children they can’t have, they will desperately want (“Never Say No.”) Why do we crave the things we are told we cannot have? Which is more satisfying, the wanting or the receiving? Why do parents believe they have the right to mold the decisions of their offspring?
4. The character of El Gallo serves first as narrator, and then as a participant in the action – as a manipulator of the action. Would you call El Gallo good or evil? If he were the symbolic figure sitting on your shoulder, would he be the angel or the devil? Why? Are we defined by our actions, or the result of our actions? How are the lives of Luisa and Matt changed by the machinations of El Gallo, and how would you quantify the results? What does El Gallo say he wants? Do you believe him?

Experiencing a Live Musical Performance

What do you imagine it takes to produce an Off-Broadway musical like *The Fantasticks*? In what ways do you think seeing a musical is different from seeing a play? What does it take for you to personally to lose yourself in the story and journey of the characters? Is this type of transcendence more difficult at a live performance? Why? How does the experience of witnessing live performance differ from going to the movie, streaming television, or watching videos on a handheld device?

ACTIVITIES

PLAYLIST

Have your students create a playlist that reflects the journey of one of the central characters or underscores the full emotional spectrum of the play itself. Have the class share, discuss and defend their choices.

DESIGN YOUR OWN MAGAZINE

Design your own magazine based off of *The Fantasticks*

Include:

- A cover page with teasers for all the articles inside
- Character articles that span the book
- Interviews of characters
- Include new vocabulary words
- Pictures throughout that relate to the book
- A letter from the editor (you)!
- Optional: advertisements

METAPHOR

Matt uses metaphor – with varying success – to describe his feelings for Luisa (“Metaphor”).

For this game, send a volunteer into another room. When they are gone, choose one member of the class to be the “Secret Subject” of the round.

The volunteer returns to the room, and must guess who the Secret Subject is by quizzing all the students in the room – but they may only ask questions in the form of a METAPHOR.

Examples:

If this person (the Secret Subject) were a car, what car would they be?

If this person were a style of music, what style of music would they be?

If this person were a kind of weather, what kind of weather would they be?

The student quizzed, thinking of the Secret Subject must answer as best they can – only the answer “I don’t know” is unacceptable. Make it clear you are looking for metaphor – what IS this person, not what do they LIKE.

After three or four different questions are asked and answered, the volunteer gets three chances to guess who the Secret Subject is.

Debrief. What did the Secret Subject think of their classmates’ answers?

IN A WORLD...

Create a trailer for the musical on an iPad or other device, including original pictures and videos taken by you (not from online.)

EMOTIONAL GREETINGS and EMOTIONAL SCULPTURES

The Fantasticks touches emotions both superficial and also quite deep. The following exercises will help your students get in touch with some of these feelings. The first activity can serve as an ice breaker. As the facilitator you need to push your students to be over the top and give them permission to be fully uninhibited. Have the class stand in a circle. Their objective is to "greet" everyone in the circle with a simple handshake and/or salutation. You will continue this process, but each new "greeting" will be colored by an extreme emotion.

- a) incredible excitement -- you are on a major sugar high
- b) love with a capital "L" -- you are giddy and full of joy!
- c) paranoid -- you feel as if everyone is out to get you
- d) innocent -- you only see the good in everyone you meet
- e) fearful -- you are not sure who is around the corner, but you know you MUST deal with them
- f) loss/grief -- you must go on even after you have lost everything that matte
- g) return to neutral and greet each other without any emotion attached.

How did the emotions shape your actions and or behavior? How did the class dynamic change with the various emotions? What emotions were easiest to tap into? What emotions felt the most 'real'? Why? What did it feel like to be on the receiving end of the various greeting? How did the group energy shape your actions and behavior? Once you have processed the exercise with the class, you will move on to create group sculptures based on the emotional themes of the play. This is a silent exercise. Have the group count off in threes. Each group will collectively shape a living sculpture using their bodies to reflect the following paradoxical images/ themes and ideas: They need to be encouraged to try to capture the essence of the feeling or idea. They should avoid literal representations.

- 1) WEALTH / POVERTY
- 2) FEAR / POSSIBILITY
- 3) JUDGEMENT / REDEMPTION
- 4) ISOLATION / RELATIONSHIP

Give each group adequate time to prepare (about five minutes) and without revealing the source, have each group 'present' their sculpture. Ask the remaining students to comment on what they 'see' and to name the sculpture. Talk about the process of creating as a group. Were you able to effectively communicate the theme or idea. What surprised you by your classmates interpretations?

WRITING PROMPTS

- ⇒ Write a love letter or poem to your ideal partner or dream mate
- ⇒ Write a personal ad in search of your ideal partner
- ⇒ Write a personal ad in search of your ideal mate from the perspective of your mother or father
- ⇒ Interview a couple who you believe exemplify “true love”

JOURNAL ENTRIES

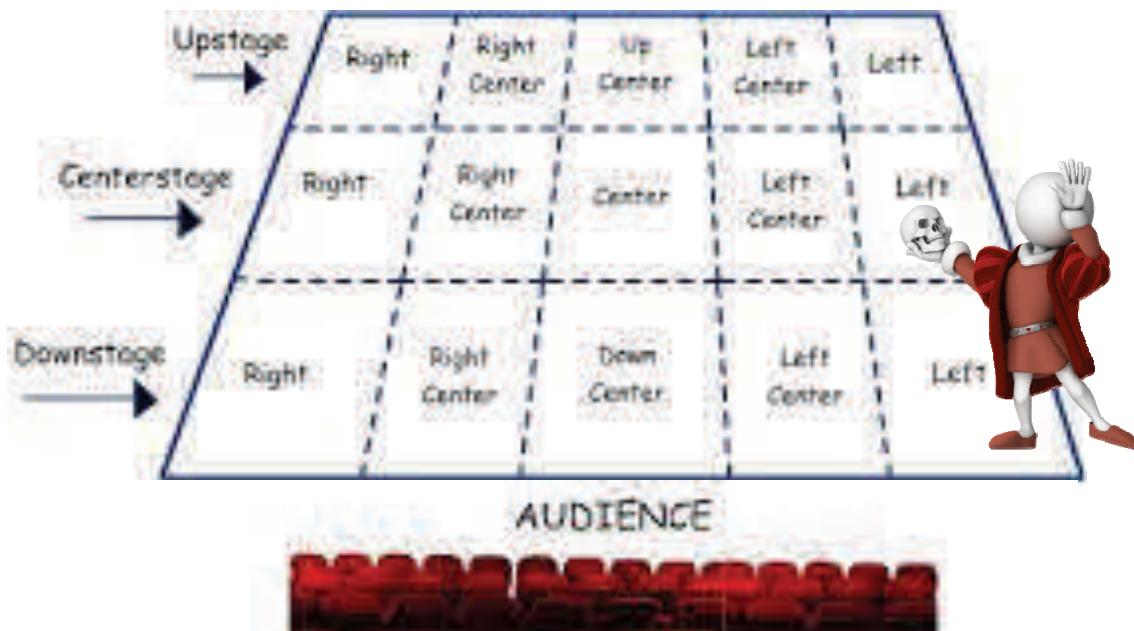
- “When I was young and naive, I used to believe...”
- “Now that I am older I know ...”
- “True love is like...”
- “Lust is like...”
- “In order to form a perfect and just world, we all must...”
- “When you are on the outside looking in, you feel...”
- “I want to leave my children a world where...”
- “Acceptance means..”
- “I wish...”
- “My perfect love will...”
- “Parents need to know that what their kids really need is...”
- “I wish I could tell my parents that...”
- “The best thing about falling in love is...”
- “Salvation comes through...”
- “I know I’ll be ready to get married when...”
- “Saying good-bye to someone you love is like...”
- “Love sounds like...”
- “In order to truly love, you must...”

A BRIEF GLOSSARY OF THEATER TERMS

Apron	The part of the stage in front of the curtain
Auditorium or House	Where the audience sits
Beam Spread	The area a single light covers
Blackout	Turning off all the lights in the theatre at once
Board	The control center for lights, sound, or both
Book (The)	A copy of the script containing all notes and blocking
Box Office	Where the audience buys tickets
Box Set	A set in a proscenium with three walls
Call	The time certain members of the production need to be at the theatre
Cheat	When an actor takes a realistic action and modifies it for the audience to see
Cloth	Scenery painted on fabric
Cue	A line or action that immediately leads to another action by the actor (for them to speak) designer or stage manager (to change the lights or sound)
Curtain Call	The bows at the end of the show
Dimmer	Equipment that controls the brightness of a light
Director	The creative head of a production. They create a vision for the show and work with actors, designers, and crew to bring that vision to life
Flat	A frame covered with canvas, cardboard, or some other light material which is then painted as part of the set
Floodlight	A light that has a wide unfocused beam covering most of the stage
Fly	A system used to raise set backgrounds, set pieces, or potentially actors
Follow-spot	A spotlight that can follow an actor as they move across around the stage
Footlights	Floodlights on the floor at the front of the stage.
Gel	A piece of plastic placed over the light to change its color
Greenroom	A room where the company can relax, eat, or potentially watch the show if a TV and a camera has been rigged
Notes	The director's notes on the performance or rehearsal
Pit	An area between the stage and the audience where an orchestra can sit (typically below audience level)
Producer	The person responsible for all logistical and financial aspects of a production (as opposed to the creative head, the director).

Properties or Props	Items used by actors in a show (such as swords, plates, watches, etc)
Proscenium	A type of stage defined by a proscenium arch. Proscenium theatres typically distinctly separate the audience and stage by a window (defined by the proscenium arch). The stage typically will not go far past the proscenium arch (the Ohio Theatre, for example).
Raked Stage	A stage that is angled (upstage is the top of the hill and downstage the bottom) so that the audience can see the action more clearly
Set	The scenery used in a scene or throughout the play
Set Dressing	Parts of the set that don't serve a practical function but make the set look realistic.
Spotlight	A type of light that is focused so that it can light a very specific area
Strike	Taking apart and removing a set from the theatre
Thrust	A stage that goes beyond the proscenium arch so that the audience is sitting on three sides of the set - in front, and on either side (the Hanna Theatre, for example).
Tracks	The rails on which curtains (tabs) run.
Trap	A hole in the stage covered by a door where actors or set pieces can exit or enter
Understudy	An actor who learns all of the lines and blocking of another actor (typically one of the actors in a lead role) who can perform in case the main actor cannot go on
Upstage	The rear of the stage
Wings	The sides of the stage typically blocked off by curtains where actors and crew can stand and wait for their cues

STAGE DIRECTIONS



HOW TO WRITE A REVIEW

MORE HOW AND LESS WHAT

A theater review is not a book review, you do not need to summarize what happens. Provide the necessary background so the reader knows the name of the play and the basics of what kind of play it is, and then move into your commentary. You do not need to explain **WHAT** the play is, instead write about **HOW** successfully it was presented.

THE ACTOR NOT THE CHARACTER

You can disapprove of the decisions a character makes, but how well did the **ACTOR** perform the role? Was their behavior appropriate to the part as written? Feel free to share your opinions, comparing or contrasting their work with other actors with whom you are familiar.

WHAT IS DIRECTION?

Maybe you have heard of a “director” in theater or film, but do you know what they do? It is not a director’s job to tell the actors how to say every line, but they are the person responsible for creating the general mood and concept for the production. What was your impression of the production as a whole? Was it too funny for a serious play? Or not amusing enough for a comic play? Use words to reflect back to the director how successful the production is as a whole.

DON’T FORGET THE DESIGN

The set you see and the sounds you hear are also unique to this one production of this play. Describe what you see and hear, but also be sure to make clear how successful these designs are in telling the story of the play.

IN CONCLUSION ...

While it is not necessary to give a “thumbs up” or “thumbs down” your concluding sentence should summarize your impression of the production as a whole.

THEATER REVIEWS IN THE NEW MEDIA

Reviews in news websites may be 1000 words, they may be as brief as 300 words. Can you write a one-page review? Can you write a 100 word review, to post on Facebook? Do you think you could create a 140-character review that sums up the production for posting on Twitter?

A sample review written by a student follows this page.

— *David Hansen, Education Outreach Associate*

A SAMPLE REVIEW WRITTEN BY A STUDENT

"Gambit": More Poetry Than History — Mark Wood

If Aristotle was correct when he said that poetry "is a higher thing than history," then "Royal Gambit," which opened Friday night at Pentacle Theater, is, I suppose, on the right track.

For those who were expecting a representational treatment of the life of England's Henry VIII, "Royal Gambit" was a shock, if not a disappointment. Those who sought poetry got it, although of a very dogmatic and simplistic sort.

This unusual, highly presentational play by Hermann Gressieker, directed by Ed Classen, is an indictment of modern man as a ruthless opportunist. The Tudor king is a representative of a rationalizing, shifty society which has become "superior to the highest" while "wallowing in the depths."

As Henry uses the banners of "reason" and "humanism" to obtain then dispose of his six wives, so modern man uses them for his own pleasure and glorification, uses them to wage war in the name of peace, to hate in the name of love.

Such is the grim theme pleasingly presented by a company of seven actors, who performed their roles energetically, if unevenly. The presentational acting style employed here is difficult to perfect. It should be theatrical, yet believable; aimed at the head, yet acceptable to the heart.

Louise Larsen was a standout as Catherine of Aragon, Largely because she utilized this presentational approach and was not afraid of open theatricality. Her flamboyant stage presence, which needed to be toned down in her recent role in "Last of the Red Hot Lovers," found full vent here.

Henry's fourth wife, Anne of Cleves, was portrayed by Gale Rieder, who quickly became an audience favorite. Her thick accent was letter-perfect and her direct humor was a welcome contrast to the bitter satire of the rest of the play.

The other four actresses—Kathy Stratton, Marcia Engblom, Polly Bond and Patricia Sloan—each had their exceptional moments. However, they generally seemed tied to more conventional, representational acting styles.

Ron Fox was superb in the role of Henry. Tuxedoed, leering with the look of a demonic marionette, the vacant stare of a deranged orator, Fox dominated the stage fully, commanding both in voice and stage presence.

The technical elements of the play were more than adequate. Musical accompaniment was appropriately sparse and simple.

At one point the play, King Henry roared, "In my realm I decide what constitutes tragedy!" Ironically, Gressieker strips modern man not only of his possibilities as a tragic figure worthy of any sympathies at all. In the final moments of the play, Catherine of Aragon announces the death of modern man and the birth of a new era. It is a scene of great hope, but it is not as profound as her earlier pronouncement to her husband that "the ways of the world are not so cut and dried!"

For my own part, I wish that "Royal Gambit's" statement were not so cut and dried. By making man out to be such a simple monster the play defeats its own purposes and turns poetry into scathing dogma, which is probably even less interesting than, say, history.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

AFTER ATTENDING THE PERFORMANCE

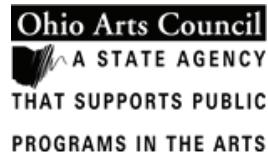
1. What were your favorite aspects of this production? How did the visual elements — the set, costume and lighting design — aid in the telling of this classic work? What actor do you believe had the most fully realized characterization? What was it about his or her performance that drew you in? What moment was the most memorable? Why?
2. Track each character's transformation from the beginning to the end of the play. What discoveries are made by the characters? Which character, if any, do you think grows the most? Why? How is that growth manifested in performance? What moment in Great Lakes' current production affected you most? Why?
3. What character did you most identify with? What was it about their journey or the actor's portrayal that left an imprint or somehow stayed with you?
4. The opening number is *Try To Remember* where we are introduced to the character of El Gallo. What were your first impressions?

NOTES

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ABOUT GREAT LAKES THEATER



Charles Fee, Producing Artistic Director

The mission of Great Lakes Theater, through its main stage productions and its education programs, is to bring the pleasure, power and relevance of classic theater to the widest possible audience.

Since the company's inception in 1962, programming has been rooted in Shakespeare, but the company's commitment to great plays spans the breadth of all cultures, forms of theater and time periods including the 20th century, and provides for the occasional mounting of new works that complement the classical repertoire.

Classic theater holds the capacity to illuminate truth and enduring values, celebrate and challenge human nature and actions, revel in eloquent language, preserve the traditions of diverse cultures and generate communal spirit. On its mainstage and through its education program, the company seeks to create visceral, immediate experiences for participants, asserting theater's historic role as a vehicle for advancing the common good, and helping people make the most joyful and meaningful connections between classic plays and their own lives. This Cleveland theater company wishes to share such vibrant experiences with people across all age groups, creeds, racial and ethnic groups and socio-economic backgrounds.

The company's commitment to classic theater is magnified in the educational programs (for both adults and students) that surround its productions. Great Lakes Theater has a strong presence in area schools, offering an annual series of student matinees and, for over 30 years, an acclaimed school residency program led by teams of specially trained actor-teachers.

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