

The Bennington Theatre Guild

Presents

THE CONTRAST

A Comedy by Royall Tyler

A Bennington Theatre Studio Production

Bennington College Theatre

December 15, 16, 17, 1937

At 8:30 P. M.

Characters

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| Charlotte | Marcia Ward |
| Letitia | Eleanor Mindling |
| Hannah (Charlotte's servant) | Virginia Lunsford |
| Colonel Henry Manly (Charlotte's brother) | George Ebeling |
| Jonathan (his servant) | David Crowell |
| Maria | Elisabeth Zimmerman |
| Van Rough (her father) | Hal Kirk Sanders |
| Jenny (her servant) | Honora Kammerer |
| Dimple | John Blackburn |
| Jessamy (his servant) | Edward Thommen |
| Native Virtue | Lydia Vaill |

Synopsis of Scenes

ACT I

- 1 Prologue
- 2 Charlotte's Dressing Room
- 3 Van Rough's House
- 4 Interlude (Native Virtue and Dimple and Jessamy)
- 5 Charlotte's Dressing Room
- 6 The Mall
- 7 Interlude (Jessamy, Jenny, Jonathan and Native Virtue)
- 8 Dimple's Room

INTERMISSION OF 10 MINUTES

ACT II

- 9 Interlude (Jonathan and Native Virtue)
- 10 The Mall
- 11 Charlotte's Reception Room
- 12 Interlude (Manly, Jonathan and Native Virtue)
- 13 Van Rough's House
- 14 Front Scene
- 15 Charlotte's Reception Room

Notes on the Play

THE CONTRAST is supposed to be the first American comedy, and was written by the man who was to become the first Chief Justice of the state of Vermont. This gives it a certain interest as a piece of Americana. The central theme of the "contrast" between America and Europe has been treated by Hawthorne, Whitman, Henry James and many other American writers from that day to this. It is also interesting to note the analogies between this paean in praise of our revolutionary patriots, and the current Soviet cinemas, although this is a comedy. For *Europe* read *Bourgeois* (or, nowadays, *Trotskyist*); for *Americans*, read *Workers*. Apologies to the D. A. R. and the New Masses.

Theatrically THE CONTRAST is a country cousin of English Restoration Comedy, but with elements which were to be developed in the 19th Century American Theatre. Jonathan is a first sketch for Uncle Sam, and his scenes with Jessamy foreshadow the gag men of vaudeville and the minstrel shows. Dimple is related to the smooth seducers of melodrama. In this production we have tried to be aware of elements like these without binding ourselves to literal historical accuracy.

The cartoons of the period, two of which are reproduced in the halls, are in the same flamboyant and allegorical style as the play. The message of the allegories is confused. That generation apparently could not decide between the unspoiled savage and the neoclassic Roman as the symbol for American virtue.

Play directed by Francis Fergusson. Regisseur, Barbara Deming.
Settings designed by Arch Lauterer.

Costumes designed by Nancy Elliott under the direction of Helen Lauterer.

Choreography for Dance Interludes by Martha Hill and Mildred Wile.

Musical arrangements by Robert Triest.

Music for Song of Alknomook composed by Henry Leland Clarke.

Books, pictures, cartoons and other background material assembled by Myra Rush.

TECHNICAL STAFF OF THE PRODUCTION

Stage Manager: Emily Sweetser.

Technician: Sally Brownell.

Stage Carpenter: Edward Glass.

Electrician: Peggy Myers.

Building Crew: Phoebe Arnold, Florence Lovell, Betsy Marden, Helen Rotch, Mary-Averett Seelye, Henry Seymour.

Props: Helen Bottomley, Carolyn Gerber, Constance Mather, Barbara Ramsey, Marion Thompson, Virginia Todahl, Ernest Watson.

Bust by Anne Bretzfelder.

Stage Crew: Lucy Glazebrook, Virginia Todahl, Henry Seymour, Ernest Watson.

Lights: Helen Bottomley, Lucy Glazebrook, Henry Seymour.

Curtain: Henry Seymour, Ernest Watson.

Costumes constructed under the direction of Helen Lauterer by the designer, Virginia Todahl, Mrs. Ross, Jane Acheson, Peggy Anderson, Adele Bookman, Carolyn Gerber, Vida Ginsberg, Lucy Glazebrook, Jane Hartington, Edwina Pattison, Doris Spoor, Ruth Thompson, Mary Webber and other volunteers.

Dressers: Vida Ginsberg and Virginia Todahl.

String Quartet: Violins: Henry Johnson and Martha Lavack.
Viola: Jessie Ann Nelson; 'cello: Margaret Aue.