

Play directed by Francis Fergusson.

Settings designed by Arch Lauterer.

Regisseur: Lucy Glazebrook.

Stage Manager: Dorothy McWilliams. Assistant: Vida Ginsberg.

Technician: Edward Glass.

Construction Crew: Jane Acheson, Jane Watrous, Vida Ginsberg, Jane Holmes, Janet Zerfing, Marion Thompson, Florence Lovell, Faith Richardson, Sally Brownell, Helen Bottomley, Dorothy McWilliams, Ernest Watson, Henry Seymour.

Costumes designed and constructed under the direction of Helen Bottomley by Virginia Todahl, Sally Brownell, Jane Acheson, Mrs. Ross.

Electricians: Henry Seymour, Peggy Myers. Assistant, Mary-Averett Seelye.

Props: Ernest Watson.

Dressers: Jane Acheson, Helen Bottomley.

Pictures and other background material assembled by Myra Rush.

The Bennington Theatre Guild

Presents

SIX CHARACTERS IN SEARCH OF AN AUTHOR

A Comedy in the Making

by

Luigi Pirandello

A Bennington Theatre Studio Production

Tent Theatre, Bennington College

At 9 P. M.

June 9, 10, 1938

Scene

The stage of a theatre in which a stock company is trying to rehearse. N. B.: The play has no formal acts. The performance is interrupted once for a ten minute intermission without the curtain being lowered, when everyone leaves to arrange the scenario. A second interruption occurs when the stage hands close the curtain by mistake, and here there will be a five minute intermission.

Cast

THE STOCK COMPANY

The Manager	George Ebeling
Leading Lady	Marcia Ward
Leading Man	David Crowell
Second Lady	Lydia Vaill
Juvenile Lead	Ray Malon
Actor	Sherman Conrad
Actresses	Virginia Todahl
	Virginia Lunsford
	Connie Ernst
Prompter	Henry Reynolds
Door Man	Ernest Watson
Machinist	Edward Glass
Property Man	Henry Seymour
Stage Hand	Helen Bottomley

THE SIX CHARACTERS IN SEARCH OF AN AUTHOR

The Father		Edward Thommen
His Son		Hal Kirk Sanders
The Mother		Eleanor Mindling
Step-Daughter	{ Mother's children by her lover }	Elizabeth Zimmerman
Boy		Carolyn Gerber
Child		(a doll is used)
Madame Pace		Honora Kammerer

Notes on the Play

Pirandello describes his play as follows: "A drama which, painfully borne about within them by these six moving, breathing, speaking characters, was bent at any cost on getting itself performed, and a comedy which lay in their vain attempt to get this scenic improvisation. In the first place, we have the astonishment of those poor stock company actors, who are engaged in a daylight rehearsal on a stage encumbered with wings and sets; their surprise and incredulity at the appearance of those six characters, who announce that they are in search of an author and then, shortly afterward, when the black-veiled mother swoons, their instinctive interest in the drama which they have glimpsed in her and in the other members of this strange family."

We can hardly be as scandalized by Pirandello's makebelieve as the audiences were that first saw this play twenty-five years ago. Playwriting has been vastly enriched by its excellent Italian theatricality since then. OUR TOWN, with its frank use of the stage as stage (instead of drawing-room or back yard) and its improvised scenes sketched in at the behest of the stage manager---in short, its makebelieve---is only the most recent play which owes much to SIX CHARACTERS. Pirandello restored the ancient pleasures of mummery to our stage, and at the same time caught our shifting modern perspectives, our conflicting points of view, in a new way. His is almost the spirit of the biologist, who photographs some marvelous creature at a crucial moment in its life cycle.

The pictures on the board are photostats of some Tiepolo wash drawings in the New York Public Library. Tiepolo's speedy sketches of the mummers of the Commedia dell'Arte have certain qualities of line and black-and-white which have been used in the design, and his sense of the "improvisers" and their spectators has helped us in the acting and directing. For Pirandello is in the great line of the Italian theatre which starts with the Commedia.