Syracuse University Department of Drama presents

Lysistrata
The Original Anti-War Comedy

By Aristophanes
Directed by Stephen Cross
Choreographed by Andrea Leigh-Smith

STORCH THEATRE at SYRACUSE STAGE
Opens: February 18   Closes: February 27

(Syracuse, NY)—The Syracuse University Department of Drama will take an ancient turn in the forthcoming production of Lysistrata. Written and set in Ancient Greece during the Peloponnesian War, this bawdy comedy offers a surprisingly progressive view of gender relations and anti-war sentiment.

Lysistrata was first performed in Athens in 411 B.C. and, due to its popularity, has survived more than two millennia and seen countless translations. Aristophanes, the great comic playwright of ancient Athens, authored approximately 40 plays between 425 and 388 B.C., 11 of which survive today.

Behind the hilarity, however, a deeper meaning resides. Director Stephen Cross said, “Our take on the play explores the chronic tension of yearning for something better
that never materializes, and how the human capacity for hope commits us all to a kind of never ending hell—and so, rationalism, pressed, mutates into the grotesque.”

Cross explained that the human creative spirit, embodied in Lysistrata, “is the only quality we hold capable of changing this.” Previously for SU Drama, Cross has directed Arabian Nights.

Lysistrata will mark the SU Drama mainstage debut of junior Milly Millhauser as the titular heroine.

SYNOPSIS

When the women of Athens grow tired of their husbands’ endless war with the Spartans, Lysistrata brings women from both city-states together and offers a solution: withhold sex from the men until they agree to cease fighting. Putting the plan into action, however, proves more difficult and more hilarious than anyone imagined.

PLAYWRIGHT

Aristophanes (c. 448-385 B.C.). The literary activity of the famous Greek comedy writer, Aristophanes, covered a period of forty years. Of the poet's life we know very little. Classical commentators have divided the work of Aristophanes into three periods. The first period ended about 421 B.C. and included two of his lost plays as well as five of the surviving ones. For some reason Aristophanes’ first three plays were brought out under the name of one of his actors. They included the two lost plays, The Banqueters and The Babylonians, and the prize-winning Acharnians. The Knights, which won first prize in 424 B.C., was brought out under the author’s own name. It contained a sharp attack on the demagogue, Cleon, and, because no actor was willing to incur the enmity of so powerful a person, Aristophanes had to play the part of Cleon himself. The Clouds (423 B.C.) contains the famous dialogue scene between the Just and the Unjust argument. The Wasps (422 B.C.) ridiculed the regular courts of justice. The Peace (421 B.C.) was written in the interests of the recently concluded peace between Athens and Sparta. During the seven years that passed before Aristophanes exhibited another play, a law had been passed to check political satire. In the second group, beginning with The Birds (414 B.C.), he turned to social satire and ridiculed the fondness of the Athenians for litigation. Lysistrata (411 B.C.) represents a woman’s efforts to bring about peace, while Thesmophoriazusae of the same year contains an attack on Euripides. The Frogs, which started the third period in 405 B.C., was devoted to literary and dramatic criticism. Ecclesiazusae (Women in Parliament) was a satire on current communistic ideas. The local character of the plays of the first period had by the third period given way to a cosmopolitanism that marks Aristophanes as the transition-link between what is termed “Old Comedy” and the “Middle” and “New Comedy” of Greece.

DIRECTION

Stephen Cross (Director) is an Assistant Professor of Movement and Acting with SU’s Department of Drama. He is an Associate Artistic Director of the Irondale Ensemble Project Canada. He was Irondale’s Artistic Director from 1990 through 2004, leading the development of over thirty original theatre and theatre dance works. He is the
Director of the Irondale School of Ensemble Theatre founded in 2004. Past SU directing credits include Arabian Nights and The Bar Play. As a performer of physical theatre his original work includes Lunch Money, Wood Moves, and Alice, and he is currently creating a new solo work titled Chair.

Andrea Leigh-Smith (Choreographer) recently joined SU Drama’s Musical Theatre program as an Assistant Professor of Dance. Andrea has worked as a professional dancer, choreographer, and teacher for more than 25 years in the U.S. and Canada. Broadway credits include Jerome Robbins Broadway and SMILE. She also has numerous credits with national tours and major regional theatres in both the U.S. and Canada. Andrea is Co-Founder and Resident Choreographer for The Irondale Ensemble Project Canada and has created over 30 choreographic works, inclusive of contemporary concert, jazz, and musical theatre repertoire. She is currently a faculty member of The Ballet and Dance Center and a certified Pilates instructor. SU choreographic credits include Arabian Nights and upcoming choreography for A New Brain.

CAST

Danny Bateman (*Old Man Chorus*) is a junior Acting major from Rutland, VT.
Daniel Burns (*Old Man Chorus*) is a junior Acting major from Fort Lauderdale, FL.
Tara Carbone (*Myrrhine*) is a junior Musical Theatre major from Las Vegas, NV.
Kendall Cooper (*Lampito*) is a junior Acting major from Portland, ME. Sean Coyle (*Old Man Chorus*) is a junior Acting major from Collingswood, NJ. Mara Dale (*Athenian Ambassador #1/Scythian Guard #2*) is a junior Acting major from Chicago, IL. Maclain Dassatti (*Old Man Chorus*) is a sophomore Musical Theatre major from Barrington, IL.
Joseph Fierberg (*Old Men’s Chorus*) is a sophomore Musical Theatre major from West Hartford, CT. Isaura Flores (*Old Woman Chorus*) is a junior Musical Theatre major from Chicago, IL. Maiya Gibson (*Boetian Girl/Old Woman Chorus*) is a transfer Musical Theatre major from Belfast, Northern Ireland. Julie Grant (*Corinthian Woman/Reconciliation*) is a junior Acting major from Durban, South Africa.
Christopher Hutton (*Old Man Chorus*) is a junior from Doylestown, PA. Charlo Kirk (*Cinesias, Athenian Ambassador, Scythian Guard*) is a junior Acting major from Clinton, NJ. Alani Kravitz (*Old Woman Chorus*) is a senior Acting major. Bryn Lagoni (*Calonice*) is a senior Acting major from Fort Collins, CO. Amy Larson McGuirk (*Old Woman Chorus*) is a senior Acting major from Providence, RI. Milly Millhauser (*Lysistrata*) is a junior Acting major from Miami, FL. Andrea Nevil (*Old Woman Chorus*) is a junior Musical Theatre major from Los Angeles. Nick Petrovitch (*Spartan Ambassador#1/Scythian Guard#4/Female Scythian Guard*) is a junior Musical Theatre major from Newtown, CT. Emily Rice (*Spartan Herald/Spartan Ambassador#2/Guard*) is a junior Acting major from Manhattan Beach, CA. Amos VanderPoel (*Councilor*) is a junior Acting major from Highland Park, IL. Caroline Wolfson (*Old Woman Chorus*) is a junior Musical Theatre from Rockville, MD.

DESIGN

Ryan Shaules (*Scenic Design*) is a junior Scenic Design major from Homewood, IL. Previously he designed for Revenge of the Space Pandas in the Black Box. Other credits include Assistant Scenic Design for Jungalbook, I Love You Because, and Oklahoma! He also served as the Paint Charge for Black Box Players during the 09/10 season.
Meggan Camp (Costume Design). MFA, North Carolina School of the Arts. Currently she serves as Costumer and Adjunct Faculty with SU Drama. Recent designs at Lemoyne College include Is He Dead?, Blood Wedding, Emma’s Child, As You Like it, Tales from Hollywood, Translations, Our Town, She Stoops to Conquer, and Real Love. Recent designs at SU Drama include Annabel Drudge and the Second Day of School (Scenic), Steel Pier, My One and Only, Chicago, Jerry’s Girls, Taming of the Shrew, and Sweet Charity.

Katherine Walters (Lighting Design) is a senior Design Tech major from Duluth, GA. Previous design credits include A Kind of Alaska and Mud for Black Box Players, and lighting design for Something More Comfortable in the 936 Black Box.

Kate Foretek (Sound Design) is the Assistant Sound Engineer for Syracuse Stage. Off-Off Broadway credits include Hedwig and the Angry Inch, The Who’s Tommy, and Children of Eden which received a New York Innovative Theatre Award for Best Production of a Musical. Academic credits include productions at the University of Hartford, Temple University, Muhlenberg College, and Lehigh University. Professional highlights include the production Small Talk at the Williamstown Theatre Festival, A Number at Lehigh University, and The Laramie Project at Temple University. Kate holds a B.A. from Muhlenberg College in Music History and Theatrical Design.

TICKETS

Tickets for the Syracuse University Department of Drama’s production of Lysistrata are $18 for adults, and $16 for students and seniors. $8 rush tickets are available at the door, one hour before curtain. Wednesday, Feb. 23 is Pay What You Can Night for students with a valid SUID. For tickets and more information, contact the Department of Drama Box Office at 315-443-3275 or visit http://vpa.syr.edu/drama.

VPA AT SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY

The SU Department of Drama is housed within the College of Visual and Performing Arts (VPA). VPA is committed to the education of cultural leaders who will engage and inspire audiences through performance, visual art, design, scholarship and commentary. It provides the tools for self-discovery and risk-taking in an environment that thrives on critical thought and action.
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Performances:
Feb. 18 – 8 p.m.
Feb. 19 – 8 p.m.
Feb. 20 – 2 p.m.
Feb. 23 – 8 p.m.
Feb. 24 – 8 p.m.
Feb. 25 – 8 p.m.
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