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## **Servant of Two Masters**

*Summary: It's time for another night at the theatre! And what a night it will be when the UMM theatre discipline presents Carlo Goldoni's classic "The Servant of Two Masters," an Italian comedy fashioned in the Commedia dell'Arte tradition.*

(February 5, 2007)-It's time for another night at the theatre! And what a night it will be when the University of Minnesota, Morris theatre discipline presents Carlo Goldoni's classic "The Servant of Two Masters," an Italian comedy fashioned in the Commedia dell'Arte tradition. Grand farcical jokes, distinct physical poses and memorable stock characters distinguish this hilarious theatrical style, whose influence can be seen in Charlie Chaplin movies and such television sitcoms as "The Simpsons" and "I Love Lucy."

The performances run February 14-17 at 7:30 p.m. with a special matinee on Saturday, Feb. 17, at 2 p.m. in the Humanities Fine Arts Black Box Theatre.

"The Servant of Two Masters" is a comic tale of risking everything for the pursuit of love, complete with mistaken identity and slapstick jokes that rival "The Three Stooges." Servant's story revolves around the wily Truffaldino, who thinks he can work for two masters at once. Can he do it without getting caught, or will his love for the servant girl, Smeraldina, make him confess all? Watch this ensemble of characters work together to try and solve this ridiculous puzzle.

Visiting Professor of Theatre Kimberly Glover, a UMM alumna '02, directs this hysterical production. Glover chose to direct a Commedia show because "there was a student interest in Commedia De'll Arte, and I especially like the different physical movements for the different types of characters. You rarely see such stylized characters as you do in Commedia." Philip Burgraff portrays one of the best known characters from Commedia, the miserly old man Pantalone. Burgraff will fulfill his senior theatre project through his role as Pantalone and is "excited to be working on a project so different from anything I've done before." Alyssa Herzog, the production's dramaturg who is also completing her senior theatre project, explains more about the significance of Servant and Commedia. "Servant was written by Carlo Goldoni in 1753 at the very end of Commedia's popularity. Goldoni, in fact, thought that Commedia had become too lewd and silly for cultivated audiences, and Servant exemplifies his attempt to reform his country's famed theatrical tradition. Our production, however, has decided to return to some original principles of Commedia, like the traditional masks and costuming, improvisation, and an earthy spirit." To learn more about the show and Commedia, visit the production Web site at [Servant](#).

Designing Servant required in-depth historical research to provide accurate representations. The elaborate, traditional 18th century costumes, designed by senior Sara Herman, recently won first place at the regional festival at the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival. UMM students Katie Sundquist and Peter Ray designed the masks, originally intended to hide the actors identities in traditional Commedia, while Professor Tap Payne and student Alex Clark will bring Venice to the Black Box Theatre through their set and light designs, respectively. Abby Swafford, sound designer, and Ali Sepnieski, props master, add their creative historical touches to Servant, an experience that promises to be an

absolute delight.

An exuberant cast serves (pun intended) this show with abundant talent and energy. Pantalone gives permission for his daughter, Clarice, played by Selma Petterson, to wed her love interest, Silvio, played by Andy Brown-Thomas. Silvio's father, Dottore, played by Christopher Hay, also approves of the match. Jenna Reiser assists Clarice as her maid, Smeraldina, who also finds a love match of her own—Truffaldino, played by Alex Carlson. The third couple in the play include Beatrice, a cross-dressing woman played by Laurel Orman, and Florindo, the lover desperate to find her, played by Alex Anderson. Eric Aufderhar portrays the inn-keeper, Brighella. Of course, a play about servants needs servants, who include: Waiter 1, played by Will Holmes Waiter 2, played by Anne Feyma Alex Griep as Porter 1 and Steven Gremmels as Porter 2.

For all the people that will grace the stage, twice as many people are needed behind the scenes to ensure that all goes as planned. On top of the numerous designers previously mentioned, Assistant Director Susan Seim and Stage Manager Kelli Tucker call the shots backstage. They are helped by Assistant Stage Managers, Ashley Satre and Sepnieski. Students from the Stagecraft class will also be involved in crew and operator positions.

Tickets will be \$7 for adults and \$5 for students and senior citizens group discounts are available for groups of six or more. Free, convenient parking is available evenings and weekends in all UMM lots. For more information on purchasing tickets or ticket reservations, please call the box office at (320) 589-6249. The Box Office will open for calls beginning Monday, Feb. 5, from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Monday-Friday, through February 16 and is located next the Black Box Theatre in the Humanities Fine Arts building.

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