Director’s Notes:

The play MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING seems to me to be a play about self-sacrifice, particularly in matters of love. Put another way, the characters in the play must get “over themselves” before they can grow out of their self-centeredness and truly love another. This they do but not without suffering. Suffering combined with love teaches them compassion and Shakespeare seems to be saying that compassion is the one human feeling that permits us to put ourselves in another’s shoes and feel as he or she would. Compassion “saves” us from ourselves and makes life a joyous affair.

When Benedict, full of newfound love for Beatrice witnesses her grief over Hero, he sets aside his affection for Claudio and goes to challenge him to a duel. Beatrice is overwhelmed with Hero’s suffering and despite her new love for Benedict, must set aside her heart’s desire to right the grave wrong done her friend. Hero urged to patience by the Friar, waits in fearful hope for Claudio to feel the enormity of the wrong he has done. When Claudio learns of Hero’s innocence and supposed death, he goes to her tomb able to imagine what she has suffered. Out of his dark night of grief, he is ready to submit to marriage—to life—and whatever it may bring.

One by one each character must submit to this rite of passage—through love and suffering to rebirth—through this travail of the spirit—to a new wisdom. Benedict gives up his self-esteem, Beatrice her independence, Hero her self-conscious innocence, Claudio his false pride. Only then is union possible for each of them.

Dogberry and Verges and the Watch clear the way for the reunion of the couples. In their simplicity and directness, they show us and the characters the best way for dealing with each other.

By creating much ado over Hero’s virginity, Claudio misses the point that love is nothing if it is not understanding and forgiveness. It is the compassionate Friar, well schooled in the lessons of Christ’s life and death who devises the plan that rescues the characters from their tragic dilemma, and filled with new understanding and true joy Benedict urges Don Pedro, the remaining bachelor, to “get married!”

Good advice for until we can submit to the needs of another, we remain cut off, pensive, looking at life rather than participating in it.

What is true for human sexual relationships is also true for any creative act. Shakespeare’s genius was born out of this travail of the spirit—from love through suffering, and so we have MUCH ADO as a metaphor for a journey we all must make if we are to touch life at its deepest levels of experience.

The production of a play in the theatre follows this same process. Actors, designers, directors love a play, struggle to bring it to fruition, and share the joy of their labors with an audience. Only in the audience’s willingness to forget itself and participate in the act of self-sacrifice performed by the actors is meaning given to the ritual called theatre.

Pat Cook
MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

by William Shakespeare
Directed by Patricia Cook

Costumes Designed by James W. Swain
Setting Designed by William T. Sherry
Choreography by Ruth M. Belew
Music by William Casey

THE CAST
Don Pedro  Steve White
Don John  John Deaver
Claudio  Stephen Speights
Benedick  Tim Decker
Leonato  Eddie Mitchell
Antonia  Diana Dawson
Borachio  Jeff Stockberger
Conrade  Steve Thomas
Balthazar  Monty Hicks
Friar  Tom West
Dogberry  Del Pentecost
Verges  Joey Berner
Watch #1  Mike Holden
Watch #2  John Land
Sexton  Rodney Sheffield
Hero  Tracy Goodwin
Beatrice  Kathy Keyes
Margaret  Robin Thomas
Ursula  Debbie Davis
Friends of Hero  Diane Box
Liz Burton

MUSICIANS
Jackie Burk  Lisa Falter
Michael Lester  Glen Singleton
Maria Louisa Monteiro

PRODUCTION STAFF
Stage Manager  Carey Upton
Set Master  Del Pentecost
Prop Master  John Dement
Light Mistress  Cindy Caldwell
Sound Master  Mark Gale
Costume Mistress  Meganne George
Makeup Mistress  Janette Lowell
House Manager  Karen Lamb

CREWS
Set—Jennifer Borbely, Diana Dawson, Chad Godfrey, Sherri Lee, Christie Raney, Stephen Speights
Prop—Kristin Foresman, Jeanne Sanders, Laura Stults
Light—Michelle Darrah, Laura Henry, Katrina Thornton, Jennifer Tyler
Sound—Jeff Stockberger
Costume—Kelly Hilliard, Kim Mattox, Jonna McElrath, Kerry Ann McFadden, Sharon Nichols, Tonia Pecina, Melissa Pollard
Makeup—Elizabeth Franklin

There will be one 15 minute intermission.

Refreshments will be available in the Student Lounge.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS
CHI's
Musium Collectum

GRADUATE ASSISTANTS
Mark Gale
Karen Lamb
Carey Upton

UNDERGRADUATE ASSISTANTS
Diana Dawson
John Dement
Janette Lowell
Kim Mattox
Jonna McElrath
Jennifer Mosher
Del Pentecost
Stephen Speights
Jeff Stockberger
Laura Stults

THEATRE PRODUCTION STAFF
Ellie Allen
Marcia Cooper
Faye Heine
Richard Hill
A. Bryan Humphrey

Our next production will be THE MISANTHROPE, directed by Deborah Mogford
April 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 1987 at 7:30 p.m.
also April 11 at 1:30 p.m.

The Art Gallery and Museum will be open one hour before each Baylor Theatre performance of the 1986-87 school year.
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