Direction of the Play: The Imaginary Invalid

Dawn Schoepflin
Central Washington University

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Direction of the Play/Musical: *The Imaginary Invalid*

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A Project Report

Presented to

the Graduate Faculty

Central Washington University

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In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

Theatre Production

---

by

Dawn Gordon Schoepflin

January, 2005
CENTRAL WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
Graduate Studies

We hereby approve the project report of

Dawn Gordon Schoepflin

Candidate for the degree of Master of Arts:

Theatre Production

APPROVED FOR THE GRADUATE FACULTY

Date of Signature

Professor Wesley Van Tassell
Committee Chair

Date of Signature

Professor Michael Smith

Date of Signature

Professor Brenda Hubbard
ABSTRACT

PROJECT REPORT

The Imaginary Invalid
RICHLAND HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM

Directed by
Dawn Gordon Schoepflin
November 2004

This project entailed the selection, background research and documentation, casting, direction, and post-production analysis of Richland High School’s production of Molière’s The Imaginary Invalid. Documentation includes research and analysis of the play, its music, and an evaluation of the play as a production vehicle for the department of Richland High School.
CENTRAL WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
Graduate Studies

Final Examination of
Dawn Gordon Schoepflin
B.A. Gonzaga University, 1997
for the Degree of
Master of Arts
Theatre Production

Committee in Charge
Professor Wesley Van Tassel
Professor Michael Smith
Professor Brenda Hubbard

McConnell Hall
Room 113
January 31, 2005
3:15 PM
Dawn Gordon Schoepflin

Courses presented for the Master's degree

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Total Credit Requirements - 53
Dawn Gordon Schoepflin

Undergraduate Study:
  Gonzaga University, 1993-1997
  Washington State Teaching Credential awarded 1998 from Eastern Washington University

Graduate Study:
  Central Washington University, 2002-2005

Professional Experience:
  High School Teacher: 1998-present
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(Submit in Quadruplicate)

**GRADUATE COMMITTEE AND OPTION APPROVAL FORM**

**CENTRAL WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY**

**Note:** This form is to be completed as soon as the student has formed a committee and selected an option from the list below. The form should be submitted in quadruplicate to the Office of Graduate Studies in Barge 305.

Name: Dawn Schoeplin

Address: 

Student ID #: 

Date: May 27, 2004

---

### Check option:

<table>
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<th>Written Exam*</th>
<th>NonThesis Project</th>
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### Indicate credits to be received for the thesis or option:

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*Students taking written exam option may omit items 1-5 below.

1. **Proposed Title:** The Imaginary Invalid by Molière
   mildred marmur translation

2. **Purpose of Study:** To research, analyze and create a production for high school students
   at Richland High School, Richland, Washington

3. **Scope of Study:** Script analysis + research, rehearsing, building + preparing + performing.

4. **Procedure to be used:** Research + analysis, script, audition + cast, rehearse + prepare, perform.

5. **Does the procedure involve collection of data obtained from**
   - Human Subjects (including use of surveys)? Yes** No
   - Use of Animals? Yes** No

**If yes, your procedures must be approved in writing by the Human Subjects Committee or the Animal Care and Use Committee before you initiate your research.**

---

**Wessley VanTassel**

Committee Chair (typed or printed)

**Michael J. Smith**

Committee Member (typed or printed)

**Brenda Hubbard**

Committee Member (typed or printed)

Approved by:

**George Bellah**

Dept Chair/Designee (signature) Date

Approved by:

**W. S. Quirk**

Associate VP of Graduate Studies Date

---

Students will be required to submit two copies of all motion picture film, film strips, sound film strips, slides, tapes, cassettes, pictures, etc. produced as part of the thesis. These are to be submitted at the time the thesis (three copies) is submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies and Research.

---

Please note:

The signatures have been redacted due to security reasons.
MASTER'S THESIS PROJECT
PLAYSCRIPT APPROVAL FORM

(PLEASE MAKE SURE THAT YOU HAVE READ THE PLAY SELECTION CRITERIA SECTION IN YOUR GRADUATE HANDBOOK)

SCRIPT TITLE  Moliere's The Imaginary Invalid

PLAYWRIGHT(S) [If musical, list lyricist/composer] Jean-Pierre Moliere, translated by Mildred Marmur

NUMBER OF ACTS  3  APPROXIMATE TOTAL PLAYING TIME  2 HOURS 0 MIN.

CAST (fill in with the appropriate numbers)

MEN  19  WOMEN  9  CHILDREN  1  OVER 40  4

ROLES REQUIRING PEOPLE OF COLOR  0  ROLES COULD DOUBLE  16

TOTAL NUMBER OF CAST  12-15

OTHER CASTING CONCERNS:
A small girl could play the child. All over 40 roles will be played by students. The parts in the musical interludes need to be able to sing. Minimal dancing required of some roles.

ARTISTIC STAFF (check those needed for this play or production idea)

MUSICAL DIRECTOR  X  DANCE CHOREOGRAPHER  X

FIGHT CHOREOGRAPHER  DIALECT COACH

SPECIALTY HIRE  X (specify what kind) Composer

ORCHESTRA/BAND (specify what size)  3-5 Musicians

Will you be fulfilling any of the above? If so, which? Music Director, Possibly Dance Choreographer.

Will a guest artist be fulfilling any of the above? If so, which? Guest artist will compose the music for the musical interludes.

SCENERY/PROPS (check those needed for this play or your concept of the play)

UNIT SET?  YES  NO  (CIRCLE ONE) NUMBER OF SETTINGS  2

HISTORICAL PERIOD  Late 1600's  GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION  France

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF SET CONCERNS OR SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:
Doors. A place for a piano.
Due to constraints on the performance space, the set needs to be able to be stored in the wings, or put up just one week before production.

APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF PROPS  30  PERIOD  Late 1600's

DIFFICULT OR UNUSUAL PROPS?  YES  NO (CIRCLE ONE) DESCRIBE:
An assortment of bottles and other medicine containers.
WEAPONS OR FIREARMS? HOW MANY  N/A  DESCRIBE:

COSTUMES (CHECK THOSE NEEDED FOR THIS PLAY OR YOUR CONCEPT OF THE PLAY)

APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF COSTUMES PER CHARACTER  1

HISTORICAL PERIOD  Late 1600's  SEASON  Spring
SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:
Period costumes will be borrowed or rented.
Multiple robes for doctors in the Finale. Bedclothes for Argan. Theatrical costuming for characters in the musical interludes.

JUSTIFICATION FOR CHOICE OF SCRIPT
HAVE YOU SEEN THIS SCRIPT PRODUCED? YES [ ] NO [ ] CIRCLE ONE)

HAVE YOU DONE THIS PLAY BEFORE? BRIEPLY DESCRIBE YOUR INVOLVEMENT IN THE PRODUCTION:
I have never been involved with this production before. My first connection with it was reading it for my Analysis and Criticism class in the summer of 2003.

WHY SHOULD YOUR ORGANIZATION PRODUCE THIS SCRIPT?
In the four years that I have supervised the drama program, Richland High has not done a classical play as a main-stage production. I feel this will be a needed challenge for my students, and it will provide a valuable learning experience.

WHAT ARE THE DRAWBACKS (IF ANY) TO DOING THIS PRODUCTION AT YOUR SCHOOL?
Until 2003, there was no drama class solely devoted to actor/performance training. Due to scheduling constraints in the auditorium, a set cannot remain on stage for an extended period of time. Parent help is very limited. I am usually the only adult working with these kids.

PLEASE GIVE A BRIEF SYNOPSIS OF THE SCRIPT ON A SEPARATE SHEET OF PAPER AND ATTACH.

PLEASE INCLUDE A COPY OF THE SCRIPT FOR THE THESIS COMMITTEE TO REVIEW.
SUBMITTED BY: Dawn Schoepflin
DATE SUBMITTED: May 27, 2004

Please note:
This signature has been redacted due to security reasons.

Wesley Van Tassel 6/11/04
Performance Dates and Parameters

Richland High School Drama department will produce Molière’s *The Imaginary Invalid* on November 11, 12 and 13, 2004 in the Richland High School auditorium. The production will be entirely funded by the Drama Club. The budget has been set at $2,000, subject to change by the approval of club members.

Unlike the school’s musicals, which provide for three paid positions, the fall production only staffs one director and the auditorium technical staff. The auditorium technicians are responsible for the lighting design, hanging and focusing instruments, running lights and sound during the production and dress rehearsal, and hanging any scenery and curtains. I have had very little success in recruiting parents to do any substantial amount of work on shows. The good ones are few and far between, so I’ve learned not to count on them.

The Richland High School auditorium is an 1800 seat facility on the Richland High campus. The stage is very large, measuring 56 feet across the proscenium and 44 feet deep. Despite its large stage, it does not have a flyloft. Scenery can be hung on battens above the stage, but they can not be flown out. The light board and electrical system in the facility has recently been updated, but the sound system is over 20 years old.

Because of the size of the auditorium, it is in great demand for use by community and school groups. Generally, set pieces cannot remain on stage for longer than two weeks. They must be put together late in the production schedule, or be able to be moved and stored in the wings. The drama department must share the stage with Richland High’s music department. There is a concert already scheduled in the auditorium the
week prior to dress rehearsal, on October 28. School events get priority on the schedule, and the community can schedule events beginning May 31st. As long as the facility is open, anyone can reserve it up to a week before the event. This often causes “surprises” and conflicts with drama rehearsals.

The student body of Richland High School offers a wide range of casting possibilities. Many actors in shows come back to audition again and again, giving the drama department the advantage of many experienced veteran actors. The music program is also very strong. RHS buses in students from the high school across town for its string program. The choral program is very large, and the Musical Theater Production class, in its second year, is extremely popular. However, until 2003, Richland High did not have a formal class for training actors. The drama class was offered for an English credit, and time in the class was divided between academic work, and performance time. As a result, our current actors have had very little training other than being in the school plays.
May 12, 2004

To Whom It May Concern:

As part of her Master's Thesis Project, Dawn Schoepflin is producing Moliere's *The Imaginary Invalid* at the Richland High School in the fall of 2004. The auditorium has been reserved for November 11, 12 and 13. She will be using Richland High School students and drama club budget. As the principal and supervising authority of Richland High, I am aware of this situation, and I am giving Mrs. Schoepflin permission to produce this show.

Sincerely,

Steve Neill
Principal, Richland High School

Please note:
This signature has been redacted due to security reasons.
Evaluation of the play as a production vehicle at Richland High School

Every school producing drama has its limitations. Richland High School is no exception. I have become adept at troubleshooting problems and finding creative solutions. Solving some of these problems will provide a unique experience for my students. For instance, in order to accommodate scheduling of the facility, this show (like most of our other shows) will be performed for only one weekend. Because of the schedule and the fact that this is a period piece, most of the costumes will be rented. A backdrop for the set will also be rented. This will cut down on space issues when outside groups or the music department uses the stage, and since this is a single interior unit set, it can remain up throughout the play. A large backdrop helps to visually fill the large stage without taking up a lot of space on the stage itself. To give all the actors a good foundation in this style of theater, there will be an extra week of rehearsal added to the schedule. This first week of rehearsal will be spent on vocal and physical work.

Appropriateness for the audience, actors, and venue

Given the high student interest in the Musical Theater Production class and the high audience attendance at our school’s musicals, it seems only natural to produce the translation of this play that kept the musical interludes. These interludes will also utilize singers and musicians from the school’s strong music program. Since this translation is not written in verse, it is more accessible for actors who have not had the benefit of a formal drama class devoted to actor training.

Justification

Producing a play from a particular historical period gives actors and audiences alike a unique opportunity to get a glimpse into the past. Actors learn to move in period
clothing, and to adopt a style of speaking that is more formal than modern speech. It requires them to be specific, both vocally and physically. They must create the strong, exaggerated physical life for the characters that this type of farce relies on. Being able to explore *commedia dell'arte*, an art form of the past, gives actors an understanding of the roots of modern day comedy. In short, performing this type of period play is essential for an actor’s training; the entire process becomes a learning experience. Audiences don’t get to enjoy the process, but the product should be a rich theatrical experience for them as well. Farce relies on stereotypes, which are easily recognizable to any generation. Because they are easily recognized, they are also readily enjoyed. Allowing audiences to see the problems of the past thematically ties up the production package into a neat, universally recognized bow.
Concept Statement

Molière’s *Imaginary Invalid* uses stock characters influenced by Italian renaissance comedy to portray the story of a hypochondriac seeking to control not only his own health and recovery, but also the lives of his family. Even though the play largely pokes fun at the medical profession, at the heart of the play there is a sense of desperation, partially masked, but at the same time enhanced by the farcical comedy. At the time of its performance, Molière was gravely ill with tuberculosis. Seventeenth century medicine could only offer superficial, ineffectual treatments for his condition. The play, which would be his last, seems to be his final attempt to come to grips with his frustration with the doctors who could not cure him, and his own inevitable death. Molière himself played the lead, the invalid who, the more he seeks to maintain control, the more he finds it slipping away. It was during the final scene of this play that Molière began hemorrhaging and coughing up blood. He finished the show, but died several hours later in his home (Lester 1).

The production of the last play of a great playwright, especially one with autobiographical undertones, takes on a sense of greater importance. It seems fitting, therefore, to produce the play as a snapshot of history, not necessarily of the real world at the time, but rather the world of the theater. In particular, it will pay homage to the theater career of Molière, from good times to bad. The target year will be Paris, 1673, the date of the final production and Molière’s death. Molière and his troupe were heavily influenced by the Italian theatrical form called commedia dell’arte. Therefore, the characters will be derived from commedia stock characters. Because of the absurdity of
the characters and situations, the set and costumes will not be historically perfect, but rather theatrically representational.

Molière’s original script contained two distinctly different elements. The first is the stage play, which tells the story of Argan and his family. This is as close as we get to “reality”. Interspersed through the stage play are three musical interludes which provide a diversion from the main story. These musical interludes mix dialogue and singing for a comedic effect that borders on the ridiculous. The ending of the play culminates in a Finale, where the stage play and musical interludes seem to collide. Thus “reality” becomes ridiculous, and vice versa.

When Molière declined to follow in his father’s footsteps to become the upholsterer to the king, he decided to become an actor instead. In the early years, his troupe struggled to make ends meet, and had to travel constantly to earn their keep, performing improvised plays in the style of commedia dell’arte (Jacobus 431). The musical interludes will reflect these years of hardship, using more theatrical, piecemeal costumes, and minimal scenery. At the time of Molière’s death in 1673, the troupe had earned the respect and patronage of Louis XIV. The troupe was performing Molière’s plays, they had a permanent stage, and costumes and scenery were much more elaborate. The stage play portion of this show will reflect the “better times” for the players, under the auspices of the Sun King. The costumes will look more like the standard dress for that period, and the props and scenery will be more elaborate.

There is only one interior location in the stage play, which is Argan’s sitting room. A large backdrop hung upstage will depict the gaudy finery of an upper-class home at the time of Louis XIV. The two most important set pieces will be centrally located, and
serve to focus the audience’s attention on the condition of the invalid. These are the oversized daybed where Argan spends most of the play, and the large medicine cabinet, or collection of bottles of all imaginable shapes and sizes, presumably containing potions and remedies for the patient. In contrast to the “reality” of the stage play, the musical interludes will have virtually no scenery, after the fashion of commedia performances in the early 17th century (Commedia 1). The main curtain will be drawn, and the action will take place on the apron.

The costumes for the main story stage play are to be close to the fashion of the 1670’s in France, but with hints of the commedia dell’arte characters from which they came. Argan will wear a lavish robe, or bedclothes of the period. Because his character is derived from the commedia character, Pantalone, he may wear the red stocking cap or red undergarments that were traditional of the role (Commedia 1). His character should look well-positioned in society, but at the same time he should seem pathetic, wearing his sleeping garments while everyone else is formally dressed. As the character based on the primo amoroso, or female inamorata, Angelique should be the most beautifully and modestly dressed. Doctor Diaphorus should resemble the character Il Dottore, wearing a dark colored costume with a scholarly robe. As the zanni, or mischievous servant character, Toinette should be dressed several classes below her masters. Her hair and costume should look more saucy and loose than her modest mistress, Angelique.

At the end of the play, when the story of Argan in a sense becomes a ridiculous musical interlude, there will be no attempt made to disguise the fact that these are all actors previously seen in the stage play or interludes, who have merely put on black academic robes to facilitate Argan’s illusions. Rather than curing Argan’s illness, or his
hypochondria, the characters are carrying out the charade of a ceremony that will allow Argan to perpetuate his fantasy. Rather than ending the insanity, it goes on. There will be one interesting addition to the drama, however. At a certain point in the finale (perhaps the very same moment Molière had the coughing fit that started the hemorrhage that later resulted in his death) the actor playing Molière will have a similar fit. The dancing and singing will stop, as all the characters react as though perhaps they were wrong, perhaps Argan really is a very sick man. But a moment later, Argan shrugs off the coughing fit, and the music and dancing resume. Up until that moment, all the characters, including Argan himself, have behaved in such a way that makes Argan’s illness seem as though it is entirely in his head. This one moment casts doubt on that assumption, and brings out what Molière wanted people to know all along—that he was sick, and the medicine of the time could not help him. It emphasizes that the genre is not merely farce, but subtle satire.
### September 2004

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<td>Prod. Staff Meeting Costume, set, props, make-up designs and renderings due</td>
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- **November 2004**
- **2004**: The year is specified, indicating the month's date.
Given Circumstances

In the stage directions, Molière states that *The Imaginary Invalid* takes place in Paris. Other than that, he does not make specific reference to the time, date, or season. Appropriate costumes for winter or spring are not specified by the characters or the playwright. The only reference to the weather is made in the first act, when Beline tells Argan to cover up his ears, because if his ears get cold, he will become even more sick (52). Because of the underlying satire of seventeenth century medicine, it seems reasonable to assume that Molière intended the play for his contemporary audience. Molière wrote the play in 1673, and had completed the fourth performance of it on the day of his death on February 17th. I have chosen this date and time period for my production.

Economic Environment

The play takes place in Argan’s sitting room. He is attended by his servant, Toinette. His daughter, Angelique, has a private music teacher. Argan keeps large amount of gold coins and bank notes at his house. These circumstances, which are given through the dialogue and action of the play, portray Argan as a fairly well-to-do man for his time. Argan’s ability to balance his doctor bills was a specialized skill for this era, leading some scholars to surmise that he might be a financier (Gaines, Social 215-217). However, he is not a member of the nobility, because Monseur Diafoirus states in Act II that he does not want to secure a court appointment for his son since he is uneasy about practicing on the nobility “because they always insist on being cured” (68). Since Argan is being treated by Diaphoirus (among others), and he does not insist on being cured, it
follows that he is not nobility. It is commonly assumed that he is a member of the bourgeois class.

Under the reign of Louis XIV, the socio-economic structure of France had changed, especially for the nobility. Most noblemen lived at court year round, and rarely held administrative offices. Life at court was lavish, but it was also very dull. The nobility was not allowed to participate in trade or finance. The only thing nobles had to look forward to was a war, when they could rush home and organize their human resources for battle. Most of these resources consisted of sharecroppers or métayers who farmed the nobles’ lands and gave them a portion of the profit, as well as “feudal services and dues.” King Louis relied on the middle class for the day-to-day operation of government. Because the middle class earned its position by social climbing, they completely supported the absolute rule of the King. Assured of their loyalty, Louis could take the local government control “out of the hands of irresponsible nobles” and place it in the hands of his supporters. In this way, “municipal elections were manipulated to produce mayors satisfactory to the King.” The peasant class was left at the mercy of seigneurs, officials who managed the estates of the nobility by maintaining order, justice, and charity (Durant 15-17).

Political environment

Very little is stated about the political environment in which these characters find themselves. The only time the outside political world seems to influence the lives of our characters is when Beline brings in her notary to help create Argan’s new will, in which she would be the sole beneficiary. The notary explains that it is against Common Law, and since written law does not prevail in Paris, Argan can only give a gift to his spouse
while he is alive, unless he has surviving children, which he does. Then, his only recourse is to leave all his money to a friend of his wife, and the friend would pass it on to her. This appears to be not a true interpretation of the law, but rather a political device designed to gull Argan into giving away his money to his wife’s lover.

The Catholic church, which was a major political force in France at this time, disapproved of the theater, and condemned it as “an enemy to public morals.” Actors were considered second-class citizens, and could not be married or buried in the church unless they recanted their profession. This did not stop people from going to the theater, however. Cardinal Richelieu and Pope Leo X, believed that the best way of keeping theater within acceptable standards was to “patronize the best rather than condemn all.” In this way, the church, through the king, would have an influence over which plays could be performed (104).

Indeed, the court of King Louis XIV did have a great deal of influence over the theater at the time. The king was an avid fan of theater in any form. Dressed in lavish costumes, he often participated in ballets at court. Impressed with his own importance, he used theater as a means to make an impact on his subjects, since “art gave a visual reality to grand concepts.” King Louis staged a display in which he and his nobles paraded on horseback as Roman, Persian, and Indian troops. The purpose of the display was to “create awe and delight by the massing of gorgeously dressed riders and soldiers in skillful evolutions on the field.” It was Louis’ court that embraced Molière and his troupe, “whose trade was to create superior theater” (Walker 19-20).

Social environment
By the seventeenth century, class structure in France had changed from the medieval system of *société d’ordres*, which consisted of three categories: the clergy, the nobility, and the common people. A system of *société d’états*, which divided the nobility and upper classes, or bourgeois, into several categories of offices based on their closeness to the king and the ability to buy their way into higher positions. Royal officers were at the top, followed by merchants, and then artisans. James F. Gaines (in his book, *Social Structures in Molière’s Theater*) explains how Argan could get away with not working:

>The bourgeois officiers . . . which included magistrates of the sovereign courts and parliaments, was paralleled by another body of “bourgeois living nobly”—that is, those who had retired from active commerce to live off income from investments in anticipation of furthering their families’ social ascension through advantageous marriages or the acquisition of offices. (6)

It would appear that Argan and his family best fits into this category of the bourgeoisie.

Along with the bourgeois class, the lower class was also stratified into categories. These divisions included laborers, apprentices, and servants. For men, lackeys were at the bottom of the socioeconomic ladder, followed by valets, and then coachmen. For women, the maids, or servants, were at the bottom, doing the household drudgery work such as emptying chamber pots and scrubbing floors. The *suivante* took care of a single mistress and was responsible for her dress and hygiene. Because the *suivante* was in contact with her mistress’ higher-class friends, she was expected to be well-versed in matters of fashion and etiquette, and she was allowed to have better clothes and living conditions (30-33). Toinette fits into this category of the serving class.
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The doctors in seventeenth century France held their own rung in the ladder of the bourgeois offices. They were instantly recognizable by their use of jargons, along with other “liberal professions” such as lawyers and scholars: “These groups were set apart by their uniforms and by their association with the taboo areas of death, courts, and schools, which were shrouded in the mysteries of Latin. This fact suggests that Molière may have been tapping an unseen but powerful reservoir of primitive, superstitious resentment in his culture” (41). It is important to remember that medical science had not advanced very far. Doctors relied on treatments such as enemas and bleedings to treat patients. An ‘emetic wine’ was a popular purgative used since the sixteenth century. It was made from antimony, which is known today to be extremely toxic (Howarth 186). Even when important discoveries were made, such as the circulation of the blood, some members of the faculty of medicine refused to believe it, and they would not use the new knowledge to benefit their patients (Bermel, Genius 67).

The bourgeois class to which Argan and his family apparently belong had strict expectations about their behavior placed upon them by society. Outward appearances were all-important in this society. Each social stratum needed to know how to interact with the other. If someone stepped outside the bounds of their expected behavior, it was almost as though society itself were in peril. By withdrawing into the selfish indulgence of constant doctor visits, and treatments primarily in the form of enemas, Argan is neglecting his role as père de famille, or “father of the family” (Gaines, Social 214). The bourgeois class was expected to be social climbers, advancing in office, and planning and scheming to ascend to nobility. Gaines asserts:
Money alone was not enough to fulfill such a program of betterment, for the changes required several generations, with great attention to marriages that would consolidate capital in dowries, match daughters with superior families that could be powerful allies, and produce heirs capable of carrying on the ascent through the hierarchy. (Social 7)

Argan is disregarding everyone’s interests but his own when he tries to make a match between the bumbling oaf doctor, Thomas Diafoirus, and his daughter, Angelique. This match offered the family no path to nobility. Doctors were not held in high favor at court. They were aware that the ruling body could realize their fraudulent practices, and bring them to justice (222). Monsieur Diafoirus makes reference to this danger in Act II. By denying his daughter a suitable match and dowry, Argan is neglecting his basic duty as a father according to the socioeconomic codes of the time.

The relationship between servant and master is addressed in the play through the interaction between Argan and Toinette. According to social code of the time, servants were entirely vulnerable to the whims of their masters and mistresses. They could be beaten with fists or sticks for any reason. Fortunately, it was not honorable to draw a sword against a servant. Occasionally, impertinent servants would not be punished, but there were several cases of servants being maimed or killed by their masters. A suivante like Toinette was slightly elevated in status and had some protection from physical abuse by her master or mistress. But all servants were still viewed as part of the estate, and entirely at the mercy of their employers (32-33). Despite this tradition, it is established immediately in the first act that Argan has no real control over Toinette, even though he
verbally abuses her. When he tries to run after her to beat her, he can't catch her. Unlike the social convention of the time, Toinette seems to have the real power.

Religious Environment

Conventional religion does not seem to play a part at all in this play. Argan seems to have created his own religion in the worship of his doctors, and he faithfully follows their orders to the letter. As in Tartuffe, where Orgon felt that money would be the key to his spiritual salvation, Argan seems to think that if he receives more treatments, he will be physically saved (Gaines, Encyclopedia 220).

The dominant religion in France at the time was Catholicism. In fact, the Church "still rivaled the state as a pillar of society and power, for it was through hope [for salvation] that men submitted patiently to labor, law, and war" (Durant 46). The influence of the church did not allow for dissenting religious views. Public policy prevented discrimination against the Protestant Huguenots in France, but their persecution was widespread nonetheless. The time of Louis XIV was "an age of strict manners and loose morals" (27). As the Jesuits gained more authority in France, they brought with them the science of casuistry, which supported a more lax interpretation of moral law. Casuists argued that, "allowances should be made for human nature, for environmental influences, for ignorance of the law, for extreme hardship of literal compliance, for the semi-insanity of transports of passion, and for any circumstances that hindered the freedom of the will" (47). In other words, the interpretation of sin ceased to be black and white, and was left up to the confessor to interpret the moral implications. A sin wasn't truly a sin unless there was a "conscious and voluntary departure from the moral law" (48).
Previous Action

- Argan has taken many enemas and treatments from M. Purgon and M. Fleurant.
- Angelique met Cleante six days ago, and they have fallen in love.
- Toinette has had to listen to Angelique talk about her new love for six days.
- Cleante said he loved Angelique, and wrote to her saying that he was planning to ask her father for her hand in marriage.
- Argan has made arrangements with M. Purgon for his nephew to marry Angelique.
- Beline wants to send Louison and Angelique to a convent.
- Argan has asked Beline to send Toinette out of the house.
- Angelique’s parents keep her locked up and unable to leave or speak to anyone.
- Angelique met Cleante at the theater only because her old aunt invited her out.
- Presumably, Argan’s first wife, the mother of Louison and Angelique, died. He married Beline.
- Purgon makes 8,000 pounds a year and has chosen Thomas Diaforus as his heir if he marries Angelique.
- Argan has promised to make a will to show his appreciation for Beline.
- Argan has asked Beline to talk to her notary about the will.
- Bonnefoy was told about the will and Argan’s plans.
- Argan is keeping 20,000 gold pieces and two notes for large sums of money behind a panel in the wall.
- Angelique’s music teacher allowed Cleante to come to the house in his name.
• Thomas Diaforus has memorized speeches to give to his fiancée and future in-laws.

• Thomas Diaforus has written papers denouncing the theory of blood circulation.

• Argan has told his younger daughter to spy on her older sister and report back to him.
Analysis of Dialogue

The Imaginary Invalid, Molière’s final work, is a three act play written in prose. In his later years, Molière often departed from his usual style of writing five act plays in Alexandrine verse. Hallam Walker writes:

The comedy is in prose, but by now we perceive that the true poetry of his theater is not dependent upon the use of Alexandrine verses but rather upon the poetic expressiveness with which the various parts are used in relation to each other and to the whole effect. The production of symbolic sense by all means at the command of the dramatist is the touchstone for judgment of the poetic worth. (169)

Despite not using heightened language, Molière carefully constructs his play to support the comedic intent and copy the Italian style of comedy. But while Italian actors carried the burden of using improvisation to set the brisk tempo for the action and gestures, Molière wrote these patterns into his dialogues. According to Walker:

The speeches composed by the playwright govern the physical business to be carried out by the actors, nor does the action depend upon stage directions, as is the common practice in modern theater. Molière’s innovation was to develop a total integration of word and gesture, embodying the latter unmistakeably in the sense of the speeches. (23)

Much of what Molière learned about comedy in his early years came from the Italian theater form commedia dell’arte. He took the tone and tempo from this improvised art form, and set it into the language. His “comedies are full of patter, give-and take dialogue, and repetition. The cumulative effect is a delightful impression of
gratuitousness; the action bounces along on its own momentum, pulsating in harmony with the internal rhythms of each scene, bringing together in poetic coherence word, song, and sight” (Knutson 104).

Molière also pays close attention to the choice of his words in this play. When Argan tries to postpone his enema, the outraged Monsieur Fleurant references the “ordonnances de la médecine”. The word “ordonnance” means more than just “prescription.” It has connotations of being a commandment. Fleurant essentially accuses Argan of committing treason against the Faculty of Medicine (Mander 196). One scholar uncovered another interesting word choice in the form of an obscenity in Beralde’s insult of Monsieur Fleurant. Translated, Beralde’s original words were: “Come, sir, come, we can well see that you are accustomed to speak only to arses. (I beg pardon, my lord, if I allow the word to escape my lips: I say this only the better to have it condemned)” (McCarthy 178). Molière’s audiences of the time valued utmost civility and refinement, and to avoid further criticism, Molière changed the line.

One peculiar characteristic that is found in the original French occurs during Argan’s and Monsieur Diafoirus’ greeting of one another. Even though they are speaking separate thoughts, when spoken in turn, they appear to be completing each other’s sentences. “The compliments of Diafoirus are ‘completed’ by Argan with the appearances of verbal coherence—yet we see words being stretched out to form a seemingly unending spiral of linguistic absurdity and empty sounds” (McBride 13).

The Mildred Marmur translation does attempt to retain the same “verve and pace of the Italian style comedy” (Walker 18) as the original. The exchange between Toinette
and Argan about Angelique’s arranged marriage contains repetition, and is intended to be
delivered by the actors at a rapid pace, as in these lines from Act I:

TOINETTE. I tell you she won’t!

ARGAN. She will, or I’ll put her into a convent.

TOINETTE. You will?

ARGAN. Yes, I will.

TOINETTE. Ha!

ARGAN. What do you mean “Ha!”?

TOINETTE. You won’t put her into a convent.

ARGAN. I won’t put her into a convent?

TOINETTE. No.

ARGAN. No?

TOINETTE. No. (50)

Marmur also structures the rehearsed speeches by Thomas Diafoirus in Act II using
multi-syllable, uncommon words that make Diafoirus sound pretentious:

THOMAS DIAFOIRUS . . . so do I now feel myself suffused with
euphony at the sunshine of your beauty. . . . the flower known as the
heliotrope turns unceasingly toward the diurnal orb. (66)

Marmur uses the blunt and common word “enema” to describe Argan’s most
common treatments. Other translators have disguised the word’s base meaning by calling
them “treatments” (Malleson 6). She also does not shy away from having Argan use
words like “slut” and “hussy” to fling as insults at Toinette.
Marmur also does her best to preserve the chaotic nature of the first exchange between Argan and Monsieur Diafoirus in Act II. Although when read one at a time, they do not complete each other’s thoughts, the idea of overstepping and jumbled language is still present:

ARGAN. Sir I accept. . .

DIAFOIRUS. Sir, my son Thomas and I. . .

ARGAN. With great pleasure . . .

DIAFOIRUS. Have come. . .

ARGAN. The honor of receiving you. . .

DIAFOIRUS. In order to express. . .

ARGAN. I wish I were able. . . (etc.) (65)

The attraction of the Marmur translation over others is really the musical interludes. In the Miles Malleson translation, neither of the first two musical interludes are included. The Malleson translation does expand the dialogue and stage directions, and it has a very fluid and modern quality to the speeches, but the final convocation ceremony is written in a pseudo-Latin, very similar to the original. The Donald M. Frame translation is virtually identical to the Marmur, but he does not include the first two interludes. His finale is also written using the original Latin/jargon language. Marmur has taken the three interludes and translated them from the original French, Italian, and Latin, respectively. She has preserved the charming rhyme of the Moorish gypsies, and made the Latin jargon of the convocation ceremony accessible to English-speaking audiences.
"Keeping accounts"

Act I

Argan (sitting at a table in his room, adding up his bills with small round counters): Three and two make five and five make ten, and ten make twenty. Three and two make five.

"Plus, on the twenty-fourth day of the month, one small enema, soothing and softening, to moisten, liquefy, and refresh the gentleman's intestines." What I like about Monsieur Fleurant, my apothecary, is that his bills are always so politely phrased. "The gentleman's intestines, thirty pieces." All very good, Monsieur Fleurant, but it is not enough to be polite. You should also be reasonable and not try to swindle a poor invalid. Thirty pieces for one enema! You only charged me twenty last time. And twenty in apothecary language means ten... So there we are, ten. "Plus, on the aforementioned day, one cleansing enema consisting of a double dose of rhubarb, rose-honey, and other ingredients according to prescription, to sweep, cleanse, and polish the gentleman's lower stomach. Thirty pieces." Allow me to adjust, ten. "Plus, on the evening of the aforementioned day, one hepatic, soporific, and somniferous tonic to encourage Monsieur's sleep. Thirty-five." I will not argue that one. It did help me to sleep. Ten, fifteen, sixteen, and seventeen pieces, six shillings. "Plus, on the twenty-fifth day of the month, one fine purgative and fortifying medicine consisting of fresh cassia, Levantine sena, and other ingredients prescribed by Monsieur Purgon, to expel and evacuate the gentleman's bile. Four pounds." Ah, Monsieur Fleurant, you're not serious. You must learn to live with sick people. Monsieur Purgon did not instruct you to ask four pounds. There, let us try three, if you please. Twenty and thirty pieces. "Plus, on the aforementioned day, one astringent potion to relax Monsieur. Thirty pieces." Let us add ten and fifteen. "Plus, on the twenty-sixth day of the month, one enema to chase the gas from Monsieur's intestines, thirty pieces." Ten, Monsieur Fleurant, "Plus, one enema as above, the evening of the same day, thirty pieces." Ten, Monsieur Fleurant. "Plus,
on the twenty-seventh day of the month, one excellent medicine designed to aid in speeding away the ill humors of Monsieur, three pounds.” Good, twenty and thirty pieces. Far pleased to see that you can be reasonable. “Plus, on the twenty-eight day of the month, one dose of clarified and swelled butternuts, to soften, temper, and refresh Monsieur’s blood. Twenty pieces.” Why don’t we say ten? “Plus, one soothing and fortifying potion consisting of twelve grains of bezoar, syrup of lemon, syrup of pomegranate, and other ingredients, according to prescription. Five pounds.” Easy, easy, Monsieur Fleurant. If you go on like this, I shall refuse to be sick any more. Be satisfied with four. Twenty and forty pieces. Three and two make five, and five make ten, and ten make twenty. Sixty-three pounds, four pieces; six farthings. So, during this month I have taken one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight medicines; and one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve ememas. But last month I had twelve medicines and twenty ememas. No wonder I feel worse this month. I shall tell Monsieur Fleurant to look into the matter. Now let me get rid of all this! Where is everyone? They take no notice of me. They’re never here when I want them! (Rings bell to summon the servants.) They never listen. And my bell isn’t loud enough. (Rings again.) It’s no use! (Rings more.) They’re all deaf. Toinette! (Rings bell with all his might.) Toinette! I am growing angry! (Stops ringing and shouts at top of his lungs.) You busy, come here immediately! How can they leave a poor invalid all alone like this? (Rings.) What shall I do? (Rings again.) Oh, God! They will leave me here to die. (Keeps ringing.)

TOINETTE (running into bedroom): Coming!

ARGAN: Oh, you witch! You vixen!

TOINETTE (preventing her head): The devil take your impatience! You rush me around so much that I hung my head against the shutter.

ARGAN (furious): Quiet, you . . . you creature!

TOINETTE (in order to interrupt him and keep him from shouting, keeps clutching her head and saying): Oh!

ARGAN: About . . .

TOINETTE: Oh!

ARGAN: About an hour ago . . .

TOINETTE: Oh!

ARGAN: You left me . . .

TOINETTE: Oh!

ARGAN: Shut up and let me shout at you.

TOINETTE: Shut up! I can’t speak a word the way my head is hurting.
ARGAN: You've made me scream myself hoarse.
Toinette: And you made me crack my skull, which is just as bad. So we're even, thank you.
ARGAN: How dare you!
Toinette: If you shout at me, I will cry.
ARGAN: To leave me...
Toinette (still interrupting): Oh!
ARGAN: You want to...
Toinette: Oh!
ARGAN: Quiet! At least let me have the pleasure of shouting at you.
Toinette: Shout all you want, I'm perfectly willing.
ARGAN: But you keep interrupting me.
Toinette: If you enjoy shouting, I have the right to enjoy complaining. It's only fair. Oh!
ARGAN: All right, all right. Here, take this away. (Rises and gives her the counters and the bills.) How did my enema come out this morning?
Toinette: Your enema?
ARGAN: Yes. Did I pass enough bile?
Toinette: I beg your pardon! Do you expect me to mess about with those things? Monsieur Fleuran can stick his nose into them. He's the one who makes the profit.
ARGAN: See that my next one is prepared. I'm supposed to have it in a little while.
Toinette: Those two gentlemen—Monsieur Fleuran and Monsieur Purdon—are having a fine time with your body. They know they've latched on to a good thing in you. I'd love to ask them just what's wrong with you to make them keep prescribing so many different medicines.
ARGAN: Quiet, ignorant! You have no right to interfere with my medical advisers. Call my daughter, Angelique. I have something to tell her.
Toinette: Here she comes. She must be reading your mind.

(Enter Angelique.)

ANGELIQUE: Ah, Angelique. You've come at the right time. I wanted to talk to you.
ARGAN: Yes, Father?
ANGELIQUE: (running to his bedpan) Wait. (To Toinette.) Give me my walking stick. I'll be back in a minute.
Toinette (in mock encouragement): Hurry, Monsieur, hurry.

(Exit Argan, running.)
"Love Struck"

**AN**: Initiates
**T**: Teases

**AN**: Requests
**T**: Teases

**AN**: Pleads
**T**: Accedes

**AN**: Justifies
**T**: Defends

**AN**: Questions
**T**: Avoids

**AN**: Pleads
**T**: Sidesteps

**AN**: Reminisces
**T**: Agrees

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MOLIERE

**ANGELIQUE** (looking wistfully at her): Toinette...

**TOINETTE**: What?

**ANGELIQUE**: Look at me.

**TOINETTE**: I'm looking.

**ANGELIQUE**: Toinette!

**TOINETTE**: "Toinette" what?

**ANGELIQUE**: Can't you guess what I want to talk to you about?

**TOINETTE**: I have a good enough idea. About our young lover. For six days now he's been the sole topic of our conversation and you're miserable the moment we stop talking about him.

**ANGELIQUE**: If you know it, why don't you mention him first and spare me the embarrassment?

**TOINETTE**: You don't give me enough time. Besides, it's impossible to talk about him enough to suit you.

**ANGELIQUE**: Oh, I know! And it makes me so happy that I can discuss him with you, Toinette. Tell me, do you think I'm wrong to feel this way about him?

**TOINETTE**: I really don't know.

**ANGELIQUE**: Am I a fool to give in to my feelings?

**TOINETTE**: I wouldn't say that.

**ANGELIQUE**: And do you think I should be cold when he's so tender about his love for me?

**TOINETTE**: Heaven forbid!

**ANGELIQUE**: Don't you agree that Fate arranged our meeting?

**TOINETTE**: Yes.

**ANGELIQUE**: And don't you think that the way he defended me without knowing who I was shows what a good person he is?

**TOINETTE**: Yes.

**ANGELIQUE**: That no one could have acted more generously?

**TOINETTE**: I agree.

**ANGELIQUE**: And that he did it with the greatest charm in the whole world?

**TOINETTE**: Oh yes.

**ANGELIQUE**: And Toinette, don't you think he's very handsome?

**TOINETTE**: Definitely.

**ANGELIQUE**: That he's the handsomest young man who ever lived?

**TOINETTE**: No question about it.

**ANGELIQUE**: That there's something noble about him even...
ANGELIQUE: That no girl could wish to hear anything more romantic than what he says to me.
TOINETTE: Without a doubt.
ANGELIQUE: And that there's not a thing worse than the way they keep me locked up and prevent me from seeing him?
TOINETTE: Oh yes.
ANGELIQUE: But Toinette dear, do you think he loves me as much as he says he does?
TOINETTE: It's always hard to distinguish between sincerity and good acting. And I've seen some very convincing actors in my day.
ANGELIQUE: Toinette, what do you mean? Oh dear, the way he speaks, could it be possible that he's lying to me?
TOINETTE: You'll know soon enough. He wrote you yesterday that he was going to ask your father for your hand in marriage. If he does, you can be sure of him.
ANGELIQUE: Toinette, if he deceives me, I'll never believe another man in my life.
TOINETTE: Hush, your father's coming back.

(Re-enter ARGAN, who sits down in his chair.)

ARGAN: Ah yes, my dear. I have some news for you that you probably don't expect. I've been asked for your hand in marriage. What's that? You're laughing. Well, marriage is a pleasant word. There's nothing more amusing for a girl. Ah, nature, nature! To look at you, I don't think I have to ask if you're willing.
ANGELIQUE: I'm bound to do whatever you command, Father.
ARGAN: I am delighted to have such an obedient daughter. The matter is settled then. I have consented.
ANGELIQUE: It's my duty to obey you blindly, Father.
ARGAN: Your stepmother wanted me to send you to a convent, and your little sister Louison with you. She's been talking about it for a long time now.
TOINETTE (aside): The dear lady knows what she's doing.
ARGAN: She was very reluctant to consent to this marriage, but I convinced her and gave my word.
ANGELIQUE: Oh, Father, I'm so grateful to you for your kindness.
TOINETTE (to ARGAN): I must say, Monsieur, that I am also grateful to you. This is the most sensible thing you've done in your life.
ANGELIQUE: Oh yes, Father.
ARGAN: And tall. Charming.
ANGELIQUE: Very kind.
ARGAN: Intelligent and well born.
ANGELIQUE: Yes. Very much so.
ARGAN: Smart.
ANGELIQUE: The most trustworthy person in the world!
ARGAN: Speaks Latin and Greek very well.
ANGELIQUE: I didn't know that.
ARGAN: And he'll be a doctor of medicine in three days.
ANGELIQUE: He will?
ARGAN: Yes. Hasn't he told you?
ANGELIQUE: No, not a word. Who told you?
ARGAN: Monsieur Purgon.
ANGELIQUE: Does Monsieur Purgon know him?
ARGAN: What a question! Of course he knows him. He's his nephew.
ANGELIQUE: Cleante is Monsieur Purgon's nephew?
ARGAN: Cleante? We are talking about the young man you're going to marry.
ANGELIQUE: Of course.
ARGAN: Of course. He is Monsieur Purgon's nephew and the son of his brother-in-law, Doctor Diafoirus. And his name is Thomas Diafoirus and not Cleante, and this morning we contrived for the marriage, Monsieur Purgon, Monsieur Fleurtant, and I. And tomorrow your fiancé is coming here with his father. What's the matter? Why have you turned so pale?
ANGELIQUE: I'm afraid, Father, that you were talking about one person and I thought you meant someone else.
TOINETTE: What's all this about? A joke? A farce? A wealthy man like you marrying his girl off to a doctor?
ARGAN: Yes, I am, insolent wench. What's it to you?
TOINETTE: Please, Monsieur, not so loud and not so insulting. Can't we discuss something without being carried away? Let's speak calmly. Let's hear your reason for such a marriage.

ARGAN: My reason is simple. I am feeble and ailing and I would like to have a doctor as my son-in-law so that I can have all the treatments and prescriptions and free consultations I need without going outside the family.

TOINETTE: That's better. Now you're talking sense and you do have a reason. But, sir, put your hand on your heart—are you really sick?

ARGAN: The impudence of you! Am I really sick, really sick?

TOINETTE: Very well, sir, very well. You're sick, let's not fight about it. Very sick, I agree. Even sicker than you think. But your daughter should marry a husband for her reasons, and since she's not sick there's no reason for her to marry a doctor.

ARGAN: I am giving her this doctor for my benefit. A dutiful daughter should be delighted to marry someone who will be useful for her father's health.

TOINETTE: May I make a suggestion, Monsieur?

ARGAN: What?

TOINETTE: Stop thinking about this marriage.

ARGAN: Why?

TOINETTE: Why? Because your daughter will never agree to it.

ARGAN: She won't agree?

TOINETTE: No.

ARGAN: My daughter won't agree?

TOINETTE: Your daughter won't agree. She'll tell you that she doesn't want anything to do with Monsieur Diafoirus, nor with his son Thomas Diafoirus, nor with any member of the Diafoirus family anywhere in the world.

ARGAN: But I want something to do with them. Besides, the match is even better than it seems. This son is the sole heir of Monsieur Diafoirus, and that's not all; Monsieur Purgon, who has no wife or child, is bequeathing everything he owns to him because of this marriage and Monsieur Purgon is a man with an income of eight thousand pounds a year.

TOINETTE: He must have killed a lot of people to get that rich.

ARGAN: Eight thousand pounds a year is good in itself, but besides that there's also the father's wealth.

TOINETTE: That's all very well, sir, but let's come back to
the point. I advise you, between you and me, to find her another husband. She wasn't destined to be Madame Diafoiris.

**ARGAN:** But I want her to be.
**TOINETTE:** Don't say that.
**ARGAN:** Why not?
**TOINETTE:** Just don't.
**ARGAN:** Why shouldn't I say it?
**TOINETTE:** People will say you don't think before you speak.
**ARGAN:** People can say anything they want. I tell you she's going to honor the agreement I've made.

**TOINETTE:** I'm sure she won't do it.
**ARGAN:** I will force her to.
**TOINETTE:** I tell you she won't.
**ARGAN:** She does, or I put her into a convent.
**TOINETTE:** You will?
**ARGAN:** Yes, I will.
**TOINETTE:** Ha!
**ARGAN:** What do you mean, "Ha"?
**TOINETTE:** You won't put her into a convent.
**ARGAN:** I won't put her into a convent?
**TOINETTE:** No.
**ARGAN:** No?
**TOINETTE:** No.
**ARGAN:** Just listen to her! I won't put my daughter into a convent if I want to?
**TOINETTE:** No, I tell you.
**ARGAN:** Who will stop me?
**TOINETTE:** You yourself.
**ARGAN:** Me?
**TOINETTE:** Yes. You won't have the heart.
**ARGAN:** Oh yes I will.
**TOINETTE:** You're fooling yourself.
**ARGAN:** No, I'm not.
**TOINETTE:** Your fatherly affection won't fit you.
**ARGAN:** Affection won't sway me:

**TOINETTE:** A little tear or two, her arms around your neck, a "papa darling" said with the right note of sadness, will be enough.

**ARGAN:** It won't do a thing.
**TOINETTE:** "Oh yes it will.
**ARGAN:** I tell you I won't give in.
**TOINETTE:** Nonsense.
**ARGAN:** There's no use saying "nonsense."
**TOINETTE:** I know you very well. You're naturally kind-hearted.
"Mama makes her boy all better."

"Simpers, placates, supports, confides."

"Mr. Dodges. He assuages. He is not kindhearted; I can be mean when I want to."

"Mr. Anchors. Nods. He counts attacks."

"Mr. Bemoans. Declares. He inspects."

"Mr. Agitates. He, titters."

"T. Pegs. She laughs."

"A. B.: I'm not kindhearted, I can be mean when I want to."

"Careful, sir, you forget how sick you are."

"A. C.: He's more important than that."

"Enter BELLE."

"This is painful?"

"Bel. She means, my love, what's the matter?"
ARGAN: She argued with me for an hour about every-thing I want to do.
BELINE: There, there, my poppet.
ARGAN: And she had the gall to tell me that I'm not sick.
BELINE: That is impertinent!
ARGAN: Darling, you know how sick I am.
BELINE: Yes, my turlledove. She's wrong.
ARGAN: That girl will put me into an early grave!
BELINE: I'm here to protect you, my sweet.
ARGAN: She's the cause of all my bile.
BELINE: Don't listen to her, my angel.
ARGAN: How long now have I been asking you to get her out of the house?
BELINE: Dearest, there are no servants without faults and we must put up with their bad qualities because of the good ones. Toinette is careful and clever and above all faithful, and you know how difficult it is to find servants we can trust these days. Toinette!
TOINETTE: Yes, Madame?
BELINE: Why do you make my husband angry?
TOINETTE (sweetly): Me, Madame? I don't know what you mean. I try to please Monsieur in every way.
ARGAN: The liar!
TOINETTE: He told us that he wanted to marry his daughter off to the son of Monsieur Diafoirus and I said I though it was a good marriage for her, but that it seemed more sensible to put her into a convent.
BELINE: There's nothing wrong with that, I agree with her.
ARGAN: Don't believe her, my pigeon. She tried to pro-voke me in hundreds of ways.
BELINE: I believe you, dear. There now, sit back. Listen, Toinette. If you make my husband angry again, I will dis-miss you. Now, give me the fur-wrap and some pillows so that I can settle him into his chair. Poor dear, you're all out of sorts. Pull your nightcap down to your ears. The fastest way to catch cold is to let the air touch your ears.
ARGAN: My dove, how good you are to me.
BELINE (tucking the pillows in around him): Lift yourself so that I can put this one under you. Let's put this one here and this one on the other side. And this one behind your back and this one under your head.
TOINETTE (drops a pillow over his head and runs away): And this one to protect you from the night air?
ARGAN (furious, throws all the pillows at her): Devill You want to smother me?
"The Wife's False Face"

Ar: Laments
B: Babies
Ar: Idolizes
B: Pretends

"Setting the Trap"

Ar: Requests
N: Confuses

Ar: Concedes
N: Defrauds

THE IMAGINARY INVALID [ACT 1]

Bel: Tonette, running, followed by Angelique.

Bel: What happened?
Argan (breathless): I can't bear any more.
Bel: What's wrong? She only wanted to help.
Argan: You don't know how vicious she can be, my treasure. She upset me completely and I'll need more than eight medicines and twelve enemas to recover.
Bel: My little angel, calm yourself.
Argan: My precious, you're my only consolation.
Bel: Poor little one!
Argan: Sweetheart, as I told you, I'm going to make my will so that I can show you how I appreciate your love.
Bel: Darling, please don't talk about it. The very mention of the word "will" makes me shiver.
Argan: I asked you to talk to your notary about it.
Bel: He's in the parlor. I brought him with me.
Argan: Call him in, dearest. (Exit Beline and re-enter immediately, followed by Notary.) Come in, Monsieur de Bonnefoy, come in. Please sit down. My wife tells me that you're a very honest man, sir, and a good friend of hers. I've asked her to speak to you about a will I want to draw up.
Bel: No, I can't bring myself to talk about such things.
Notary: She has told me of your intentions, and of the plans you've made for her. I must tell you that you won't be able to give her anything in your will.
Argan: Why?
Notary: Common Law is against it. It might be possible if you were in a land where written law prevailed. But it can't be done in Paris or in most of the other common law domains. The only settlement which may be made by a husband and wife is a gift between them during the lifetime of both, and even this requires that there be no surviving children, either of both parents or of one, on the expiration of the first partner.
Argan: What an outrageous state of affairs when a husband can leave nothing to a wife who loves him dearly and takes such good care of him! I'd like to ask my lawyer what I can do about this.
Notary: It's a waste of time to go to the lawyers. They're usually very strict about these matters. They think it's a crime to arrange one's affairs outside the law. They're difficult people and they refuse to acknowledge the necessity
for subterfuge. But there are people you can consult who are much more accommodating, who can adjust certain forbidden matters, who know how to eliminate legal difficulties and circumvent common law by various subtle methods. We're forced to be adaptable in our work, sir, or we could do nothing and my whole profession would not be worth one farthing.

ARGAN: My wife was right when she told me that you were an honest and a clever man. How can I arrange to leave my fortune to her and disinherit my children?

NOTARY: How? You quietly select a close friend of your wife and leave everything in your will to him; and he can pass it over to her later on. You can also pretend to contract a great number of debts with various creditors, who will lend their names to your wife and provide her with documents attesting the validity of her claims. And during your lifetime you're free to give her money or any note payable to the bearer which you may have.

BELINE: My dearest, don't torment yourself with all this. If anything happens to you, I don't want to live.

ARGAN: My turtledove!

BELINE: Yes, my love. If I am unfortunate enough to lose you . . .

ARGAN: My devoted wife!

BELINE: Life would mean nothing to me.

ARGAN: My treasure!

BELINE: And I'd follow you to the grave to show you how much I love you.

ARGAN: My dearest, you're breaking my heart. Please stop crying, I beg of you.

NOTARY (to BELINE): Your tears are premature. We'll come to that style later.

BELINE: Oh, Monsieur, you don't know what it is to have a husband you love dearly.

ARGAN: If I die, my love, my one regret would be that we haven't had a child. But Monsieur Purgon has promised to let me have one.

NOTARY: It's still possible.

ARGAN: I must make my will out, dearest; the way Monsieur recommends. But to be safe, I'm going to give you 20,000 gold pieces which I've been keeping behind a panel in my bedroom, and two notes which are owed to me by Monsieur Damon and Monsieur Gerante. They're both payable to the bearer.

BELINE: No! no! I don't want any part of them. How much did you say there was behind the panel?
Call for reinforcements

Am: Pledges
B: Shops
T: Requests, Plots

Am: Reaffirms, Protests
Shaw: One is for four thousand, dearie, and the other
T: Ah! Twenty thousand, my love.
Am: Please don't mention money to me. Can't bear it.
Shaw: You don't know the notes worth? One is for four thousand, dearie, and the other
Am: All the wealth in the world, my beloved, is
Shaw: twenty thousand. Help me there, my sweet, if you please.
T: Come, my poor darling.

Tornetta: (from next room) Tullia! Tullia! I must go. Good night and don't worry. I'll take care of everything only as possible. We'll be delighted to...
Character Analysis

When analyzing the characters in the play by looking for what other characters say about them, or what they say about themselves, it is important to keep in mind which characters are putting on an act, or saying misleading things about another character to achieve their own ends. Argan is operating under the condition of an imagined malady. What he says about himself may not be the literal truth, but rather a projection about what he wants others to believe. His delusion, coupled with his gullibility, make anything he says suspect. Beline is putting on an act in order to deceive Argan and take his money. Toinette shows her real self in the beginning when she verbally tussles with Argan, but assumes a different attitude at the end of the first act in order to help Angelique avoid an ill-conceived marriage:

TOINETTE. I’ll manage to help you somehow, but I must change my tactics. I’ll have to hide my affection for you and pretend to agree with your father and stepmother. (55)

She further stretches the truth by adopting the disguise of a doctor in the third act.

Another example of characters intentionally being misleading occurs when Cleante enters the house under the pretense of being Angelique’s music teacher. He can’t speak his true thoughts about Thomas Diafoirus in that situation. Also, Monsieurs Purgon and Fleurant will tell Argan anything to keep him “sick” and under their control. Bonnefoy, the notary, is scheming with Beline in order deceive Argan. He, too, can not be trusted. Angelique and Beralde are the only characters who are not adopting a disguise or pretense, and they can speak what they truly believe.

Argan
As the title of the play states, Argan is the "imaginary invalid." The most important element of this character is the nature of his illness. Besides the title, the playwright gives us many clues that this is not a real sickness, but rather an imagined one. In his opening monologue, he is reviewing the bills from his doctor and apothecary. When he feels the charges are too great, he states that he’ll stop being sick, which implies that he does have a choice in the matter (44). He has “flashes of strength” when he forgets to walk with his cane, and speaks forcefully to his servant and family, even though he claims to be too weak to even speak (Walker 170). His brother, Beralde, the voice of reason and truth in the play, says that he is in the peak of health, because he has not yet been killed by the doctor’s many invasive treatments (81). The real question is whether or not Argan’s obsession with his health is a true mental illness, or a cover for something else. Knutson suggests that Argan’s imagined illness serves to keep him in the spotlight:

His hypochondria seems so much a pose for that very reason—it is more to justify his self-absorption that a mania in itself. . . . The same tendency explains Argan’s fits of temper if his condition is questioned. Hypochondria, then, is his “comic fault.” It provides the impetus for the play, in that it allows the parasitic doctors and his wife to enter his life and take advantage of him. The hypochondria reveals a more specific weakness in him—his extreme gullibility. (105-106)

Argan’s gullibility allows the doctors to come in and administer ridiculous treatments for large sums of money. He assumes that if they call themselves doctors and he is paying enough for their treatments, they must know what they are doing. His wife,
Beline, worms her way into his life, and by coddling him like a child and professing her adoration for him, is able to very nearly disinherit his daughters and take all his money. Argan’s family also takes advantage of his gullibility. Toinette impersonates a doctor in order to shake his belief in medicine. His daughter Louison pretends to be dead to avoid blows from her father. Finally, at the end of the play, Beralde invites a whole company of actors to come in to Argan’s home and create a charade of conferring a doctoral degree upon him.

It is fortunate for the family that Argan is so gullible, because he takes a very tenacious and self-centered attitude about dictating the lives of his family to suit himself. He would gladly sacrifice his daughter’s happiness to get free medical treatments by marrying her to a doctor (Knutson 105). He would not care if his daughters were sent to convents, as long as he gets the proper number of enemas for the month. Beralde tries to be the voice of reason and dislodge Argan from his fanatical obsession with doctors and treatments, but Argan is completely resistant to change (Walker 172).

Argan only partially comes to his senses by the end of the play. He agrees not to force his daughter to marry against her will, but only if her chosen one will become a doctor. He abandons that idea in favor of Beralde’s suggestion that he become a doctor himself. He does not experience the shift in attitude that usually happens to a main character because he can not fully let go of his fascination for medical treatments. Hodge explains this type of character: “In comedy, if a character strongly resists being pried loose from what he already likes intensely at the beginning, he will survive, but he will be ridiculed and become what we call a “comic fool” (23). Argan does not undergo a radical attitude shift, but it does change slightly. His polar attitude at the beginning of the play is:
“I must manipulate others to support the constraints of my world.” At the end of the play, his attitude is: “I don’t need others to be able to immerse myself in my own world.”

Here is what Argan and the other characters say about Argan:

• Argan: (to himself) Easy Monsieur Fleurant, if you go on like this, I shall refuse to be sick any more (44).

• Toinette: This is the most sensible thing you’ve done! (47).

• Toinette: What’s this about? A joke? A farce? A wealthy man like you, marrying his daughter off to a doctor? (48).

• Argan: I’m feeble and ailing (49).

• Toinette: You’re sick, very sick, sicker than you think (49).

• Toinette: You’re naturally kindhearted (50).

• Argan: I can be mean when I want to be (50).

• Cleante: You’re looking so much better (63).

• Toinette: No, he’s getting worse and worse (63).

• Cleante: I heard he was better, and he looks well (63).

• Toinette: He looks terrible. He’s never been this sick before. . . . He walks, sleeps, eats, and drinks like the rest of us, but that doesn’t stop him from being deathly ill (63).

• Argan: Foolishness does not please me (71).

• Thomas Diafoirus: His pulse is that of an ailing man (74).

• Argan: What sort of monster am I? (76)

• Argan: You wouldn’t believe how weak I am. I don’t even have the strength to speak (77).
• Toinette: You’re forgetting you can’t walk without your cane (80).

• Argan: I am master of my household and free to do as I please (81).

• Beralde: I wouldn’t ask for a better constitution than yours. The proof that you’re healthy and that your body is in extremely good condition is that you haven’t died of all those medicines they’ve made you swallow (81).

• Argan: Monsieur Purgon says I’d die within 3 days if I stopped taking care of myself (82).

• Argan: You speak to me as if I were a healthy man (83).

• Beralde: You are a prejudiced man. You look at matters in an extremely strange fashion (88).

• Toinette (in disguise): A famous invalid such as yourself. . . . your reputation extends far and wide (89).

• Beline: What use was he on earth? A nuisance to everyone, filthy, disgusting, always with a medicine or an enema, wiping his nose, coughing, spitting, dull-witted, boring, ill-tempered, tiring everyone out and scolding his servants day and night (93).

Angelique

As a character, Angelique appears to be the most simple. Most of what she says about herself, or what other’s say about her, seems to be true. She is bound in duty and obedience to her father, just as girls of the period were supposed to be. Her biggest conflict stems from the arranged marriage. What her father wants for her conflicts with the deepest desires of her heart. Although her romance is newly found, there is nothing in
her action or dialogue in Act I that suggests it is insincere. Her devotion seems to be true to the stereotype of “young love.” It is almost an obsession, but a forgivable one:

ANGELIQUE. Can’t you guess what I want to talk to you about?

TOINETTE. I have a good idea. About our young lover. For six days now he’s been the sole topic of our conversation, and you’re miserable the moment we stop talking about him.

ANGELIQUE. If you know it, why don’t you mention him first and spare me the embarrassment? (46)

The tenderness of the story of the two lovers contrasts with Argan’s and Toinette’s boisterous and humorous exchanges. The playwright clearly intended to portray the lovers’ feelings as “passionate, forthright, selfless love between civil and wellborn people” (Knutson 104).

Angelique’s familial obligation is tested when Argan pretends to be dead to find out her true feelings. She does not waver, but renounces her love in the face of this new tragedy. Despite her deep love, her sense of duty is even deeper, as she states in Act III:

ANGELIQUE. Ah Cleante, let’s not talk about it any more. Let’s forget all thought of marriage. After losing my father, I am going to enter the convent and give up the world forever. (94)

Angelique’s polar attitudes probably change the most of any character in this play. Perhaps the play is really about her, and not the foolish invalid. At the beginning of the play, she believes that: “My father will take care of my best interests, and I am duty-bound to obey him.” By the end of the play, she has come to realize that: “Although I still
love my father, I can’t trust him to make important life decisions for me; I have the strength of myself and my friends to pull me through a crisis.”

Here is what Angelique and the other characters say about Angelique.

- Toinette: You’re miserable when we stop talking about him. It is impossible to talk about him enough to suit you (46).
- Angelique: if he deceives me I’ll never believe another man in my life (47).
- Angelique: I am bound to do what you command, and to obey you blindly (47).
- Argan: . . . Such an obedient daughter (47).
- Toinette: She’s not sick (49).
- Argan: I never knew she could sing a new song without stumbling over the words (70).
- Beline: A virtuous and honest daughter like you laughs instead of obeying their father (72).
- Beline: You are an insufferably stupid girl. Impossibly insolent. You have ridiculous pride and a presumption that makes everyone laugh at you (73).
- Louison: The man says she’s the most beautiful girl in the world (86).
- Argan: You are my flesh and blood, my very own child. I’m delighted to have seen your true good nature (95).

Toinette

Toinette is the witty, self-assured servant who has no compunction about standing up to her master. When he rages, she rages back, and shows her “healthy, vigorous nature” (Walker 170). As a matter of survival, she has learned to play the role of a devoted and competent servant to her mistress, Beline, even though she does not care for
the overbearing woman. But when she is with Argan she boldly disobeys, insults, and otherwise harasses him. She can sense that he is utterly impotent, and even if he could take action against her, he probably wouldn’t. She also knows what her job is, and does not cater to Argan’s obsession with his bodily functions in Act I:

ARGAN. How did my enema come out this morning?

TOINETTE. I beg your pardon! Do you expect me to mess about with those things? Monsieur Fleurant can stick his nose into them. He’s the one who makes the profit. (45)

Toinette is unusually adept at the art of deception. Not only does she deceive her mistress Beline by pretending to be on her side, she also dresses as a doctor to point out to Argan that medicine is a sham. As this doctor, she suggest that he cut of his left arm and put out his right eye in order to feel better. The brilliance of her scheme comes from the quick way in which she changes back and forth from herself to this doctor. Her quickness, coupled with Argan’s gullibility, allows her to pull off the stunt. She is also responsible for coming up with the idea of Argan playing dead to trick his wife and daughter into revealing their true feelings for him.

Toinette’s attitudes don’t really change throughout the show. She is a force of change, and is not meant to change. Here is what Toinette and others characters say about Toinette:

- Argan: Hussy! (44).
- Beline: She’s careful and clever, and above all faithful (52).
- Argan: You don’t know how vicious she can be (53).
Beline

Beline is the parasite character who has weaseled her way into Argan’s life by catering to his fantasy illness and treating him like a little boy. She feeds his need for attention in order to control him. She is pushing for Argan to disinherit his children, or to have them put into a nunnery so that Argan’s wealth won’t pass to them through sons-in-laws (Knutson 109). She schemes with her Notary, who is most likely her lover, to legally wrangle away Argan’s money. Her real intentions are very thinly veiled. Practically in the same breath in Act I, she declares no interest in his money if he were gone, then immediately asks how much he has. If Argan weren’t so blind to the truth, he would see right through her.

BELINE. Please don’t mention money to me. I can’t bear it! How much are the notes worth? (55)

By trying to cut Argan’s children from their inheritance, her corruption of the social order parallels the doctors’ corruption of Argan’s body (109).

Beline’s polar attitudes do not change her during the play. After she is exposed as a fraud, she leaves the scene without a word. She is a “self-seeking, grasping woman, devoid of humanity” (109). Here is what other characters say about her:

- Toinette: She knows what she is doing (47).
- Toinette: Your stepmother doesn’t waste a second. I’m sure that she’s plotting with your father to deprive you of your inheritance (55).
• Angelique: Some women marry out of sheer interest, and to be able to enrich themselves by the death of their husbands. These women move unscrupulously from one husband to the next in order to inherit their possessions (73).

• Argan: Everyone’s against her! (81).

• Beralde: She’d be delighted to see them both become nuns (81).

Thomas Diafoirus

This comic bungler resembles Molière’s other would-be lovers like Tartuffe and Trissotin. He is lacking in intelligence and basic social graces. When his father describes him to his potential bride and father-in-law, Monsieur Diafoirus tries to make bad qualities sound good, but only Argan believes it. Molière seems to be satirizing the type of personality that kept medical science from improving. According to the original stage directions that were not included in this translation, Thomas Diafoirus is a simpleton who always chooses to do the wrong thing at the wrong time. Through his character, and that of his father, Molière seems to be making fun of social misfits (Knutson 104).

Even his name gives hints that Diafoirus is not a polished socialite, nor is he a reasoning individual. The Greek word “diaphorus” means “different”. The related Latin word “diaphanous” means “characterized by such fineness of texture as to permit seeing through” (Merriam-Webster). Here is what other characters say about Thomas Diafoirus:

• Argan: He’s handsome, tall, charming, with a kind face, intelligent and well born, trustworthy—the most trustworthy in the whole world. Speaks Latin and Greek, and will be a Doctor in three days (48).

• Toinette: You are about to see the most handsome and witty young man in the world (64).
• Cleante: The gentleman speaks brilliantly (66).

• Monsieur Diafoirus: He’s never had a lively imagination or the enthusiastic spirit which you find in some people, but . . . I knew that he would have a dependable mind, which is very necessary for the exercise of our art. I had a laborious time teaching him to read. He didn’t know one letter of the alphabet until he was nine years old. “Good,” I told myself, “this slow comprehension, this leaden imagination is the foretaste of sound judgment.” When he went off to school it was not easy for him. Finally by hammering away at it, he managed to obtain his degrees. In the two years he has been at his advanced studies, no other student has made more noise in the discussions. He has proved himself a formidable adversary, and whenever a new theory is proposed he will argue to the death against it. He never changes his mind, and he pursues an argument into the very last stronghold of logic. He has never tried to understand or even listen to the reasoning or the evidence of those so-called discoveries of our century (66-67).

• Monsieur Diafoirus: As for marriage and propagation, I assure you that our doctors have pronounced him highly suitable. He is prolific to the point of praise, and he has the temperament necessary to beget and procreate well-formed children (67-68).

Cleante

Cleante, as the object of Angelique’s affection, is a relatively simple and unchanging character. Everything other characters say about him point toward sincere tender feeling for Angelique. We only hear them declare their mutual love for each other during the improvised opera in the presence of the other characters. Through the stated
previous action, we know Cleante gallantly came to Angelique’s rescue when she was
being harassed by a ruffian at the theater. He never directly challenges Thomas Diafoirus’
claim to Angelique. Instead, he uses the story of the opera in Act II to take aim at
Diafoirus:

CLEANTE. His unworthy rival, sponsored by a whim of her father,
arrives. He sees this ridiculous figure winning the shepherdess and the
sight fills him with an anger that is difficult to master. (69)

Cleante is a man of honor. Rather than directly challenging Angelique’s parents or
encouraging her to run away with him, he chooses to work within the society’s
boundaries, and have her uncle plead his case to her father. If that failed, he planned to
civilly make his case himself. He proves his chivalry in Act III by readily agreeing to
become a doctor, if that is what it would take to win her father’s consent for the marriage:

CLEANTE. I’ll become a doctor, even an apothecary if you like. I would
do many more things to win Angelique. (95)

Here is what Cleante and the other character’s say about Cleante:

• Angelique: He is so tender about his love for me (46).
• Angelique: He’s a good person, generous, handsome. The handsomest man who
every lived. No girl could hear anything more romantic than what he says to me
(46-47).
• Angelique: He says he loves me (47).
• Cleante: I’m not a very good singer (68).
• Louison: He says he loves her (77).
• Cleante: I had asked your uncle to plead my case with him, and I was coming here to pay my respects and to try to win his consent for our marriage (94).

Beralde

Beralde is the voice of reason in the play. He is one of the few characters who does not adopt a pretense himself. He speaks his own thoughts and does not attempt to patronize Argan. It is through Beralde that much of the criticism of the medical profession is spoken: “Indeed, Beralde’s role is probably the most complex of all: man of passionate eloquence, resourceful valet, good father, master of revels, he is a foil for all the evils we have seen: delusion, credulity, tyanny, and fear” (Knutson 110). When Beralde realizes that he can not sway Argan’s faith in his doctors, he devises a plan in which Argan can continue with his delusions in a way that will not interfere with his family. He invites the troupe of actors to perform the fake convocation ceremony so that Argan can indulge his own delusions without manipulating his family.

• Argan: You have an old grudge against him [Monsieur Purgon]. (83).

Bonnefoy

Bonnefoy is Beline’s notary, and presumably her lover (Gaines, Encyclopedia 51). He schemes with her to find a way to disinherit Argan’s children so that she can claim all his money. One scholar calls him “the sinister Notaire, symbolic of turpitude within the legal system” (Knutson 109). His name ironically suggests “good faith” (Walker 169). Here is what others say of the Notary:

• Argan: You are an honest and clever man (54).

Monsieur Purgon, Monsier Diafoirus, and Monsieur Fleurant
These three characters are the parasites that are sucking the life from Argan’s body, as well as the money from his pocketbook. Monsieur Purgon, the doctor whose name suggests purges, archetypally represents an “apostle of death and decay” (Knutson 105). Purgon latches onto Argan’s basic need for attention: “The knave’s strength lies in his ability to see beyond surface gullibility to his victim’s basically egotistic nature. Add the terrible weapon of a doctor—fear—and Argan’s conduct becomes perfectly plausible” (106). Indeed, Purgon waves his prescriptions like a holy writ, and when Argan starts to refuse his treatments, he rains down a litany of horrible-sounding curses on his head (Mander 196).

Monsieur Diafoirus is the would-be father-in-law of Angelique. He tells the truth about his son, and tries to slant it to seem like he is praising worthy qualities. He shows his social ineptitude as he bumbles through his introduction, speaking simultaneously with Argan. He commits a further social faux pas by speaking of his son’s sexual attributes as though he were discussing the mating potential of a farm animal (Knutson 105).

Monsieur Fleurant, the overseer of Argan’s enemas, receives the best rebuke in the play from Beralde: “It’s easy to see you’re not accustomed to speaking to people’s faces” (85). His name ironically suggests “flairer—sniffing” (Knutson 107) or “flowery” (Walker 169). Here is what the other characters say about these doctors:

- Toinette: They’ve latched onto a good thing in you (45).
- Beralde: Monsieur Purgon knows as little as his patients (82).
- Argan [of Fleurant]: His bills are so polite! (44).
- Beralde: It’s easy to see you’re not accustomed to speaking to people’s faces (85).
Ideas of the play

The Imaginary Invalid, as the title suggests, is about a man who believes that he is sick. He uses his delusion to fuel his obsession with doctors and medical treatments, which are not necessary to save his health. Molière is satirizing the state of medicine and the hypocrisy of doctors. It is one of the only plays by Molière that the subject of medicine is directly related to the theme as well as to the plot. He juxtaposes Argan’s fantasy illness with the doctor’s real, yet ineffectual methods of treating it (Howarth 190). The play takes on an ominous tone in light of the fact that it was Molière last, and he was dying during the fourth performance of it. It would seem that the playwright has buried some very serious issues about the medical profession underneath the lighthearted comedy (222).

The first issue is Argan’s misplaced faith in his doctors and their remedies. Argan seems to believe that if he spends enough money and takes enough treatments, he will be saved. He even keeps a parallel account of his expenditures along with his treatments. He is dismayed when he realizes that he has taken fewer treatments in the current month than he did in the previous, and immediately requests that his doctors fix that situation (Gaines, Social 220). Argan is completely under his doctors’ spell. By the power of their words, they control him. In act three, Purgon revokes his help and remedies from Argan and predicts that he will die within four days. Argan is completely paralyzed with fear, and fully believes he is about to die (Knutson 108).

Molière next takes issue with the doctor’s incompetence. He portrays all his doctor figures as socially inept bunglers to prove that they are nothing but overzealous parasites who do more harm to their patients than good (107). The doctors are never
tricked in the play, but the mystery and power that holds people in awe of them is taken away, and they are forced to leave (54). Some scholars believe that Molière put his true feelings about medicine and health into the words of the character Beralde:

> Medicine. . . is one of mankind’s greatest follies, and belief in doctors one of mankind’s greatest weaknesses. Doctors know what to call diseases in Latin and Greek, and they know how to define them and classify them, but they know noting at all about how to cure them. When someone is sick, the thing to do is—nothing at all. Rest. Be patient. Let nature heal.

(Scott 241)

Other scholars believe that Molière’s true feelings are not able to be gleaned directly from one speech, and that “Molière’s mode of expression was eminently theatrical and indirect. The man of the stage used a many-voiced form of discourse where speeches can only be analyzed in relation to other speeches, rather than as direct expressions of authorial intent” (Gaines, Social 13). Whether direct or not, Molière’s main themes seem to lean away from blind belief in medicine, and toward more natural remedies.

The motif of deception and trickery reoccurs throughout this play, and is practiced by almost all of the major characters. Certainly Argan is deceiving himself with his imagined illness and his devotion to his doctors’ orders. He is also blind to the tricks of those closest to him. His wife, Beline, treats him very much like a child and caters to his fantasy malady, all the while exploiting him to get to his money (Knutson 109). She is also almost certainly having an affair with the notary that she brings in to help Argan get his will in order (Gaines, Encyclopedia 51). She knows exactly what to say to keep Argan helpless and incapable of recognizing the truth. Toinette also proves to be a master of
pretense as she acts as if she is siding with Beline and Argan in order to help Angelique win her true love. She uses the art of disguise as she pretends to be a doctor for the purpose of shaking Argan’s faith in doctors. Also, it is Toinette who has the idea that Argan should pretend to be dead in order to hear his wife and daughter’s true feelings about him (Walker 172). This is the only time in Molière’s plays that death is “devalued” in this way (Knutson 110). Apparently, Toinette gets the idea for feigning death from Argan’s youngest daughter, Louison, who pretends to die in order to avoid being beaten by her father. Argan is completely taken in by Louison’s ruse, since he can not recognize the difference between truth and illusion (Gaines, Social 224). Finally, Beralde tricks Argan into giving up on the idea of marrying his daughter to a doctor by staging a fake ceremony so that Argan can become a doctor himself.

Molière pits the ideals of young love against the death-fixation of Argan. Angelique has found a man who loves her and wants to be with her. They wish to embrace life, while Argan seems to be obsessed with death, living a bed-ridden existence, reveling in treatments that leave him weaker, and smelling of medicines and bodily fluids (Walker 169-171). He is willing to sacrifice his daughter’s happiness in order to perpetuate his selfish illusion. Luckily for the audience, “The greater the threat posed by the obstacle character, the more intense and miraculous will seem the triumph of young love” (Knutson 44).

As one of the most famous of Molière’s commedie ballets, The Imaginary Invalid uses a great deal of spectacle in the form of song and dance during the musical interludes. This also becomes an important idea throughout the play. It is the first of Molière’s plays to integrate the plot with the music and dance. The interludes both reinforce as well as
distract from the serious issues raised in the play. The first interlude has the character Polichinelle flagrantly defying social convention, and behaving in whatever manner suits him, much like Argan (Gaines, *Social* 223). The second musical interlude is brought by Beralde for the stated purpose of cheering up Argan and putting him in a more receptive frame of mind (77). The final interlude, in which the play culminates in a song-and-dance doctoral ceremony, is apparently “closer to contemporary practice than one might think.” Induction ceremonies of the time were often elaborate, and had a musical component (Gaines, *Encyclopedia* 94). However, the overall purpose of the interludes seems to be to detach the audience from the underlying serious issues: “A colourful ceremony spun out of song, dance, and spectacle removes us from the realities of medical charlatanism and social pretensions to a land of playful fantasy, tolerant enough to accommodate the greatest fools” (Knutson 102). In his book, *Molière: An Archetypal Approach*, Knutson later explains how ideas were presented through spectacle to French society:

> An articulated or structurally implicit vision of the ideal society need not be presented; spectacle is sufficient in itself to provide a positive moral focus for the courtly audience. . . . Songs, dances, sumptuous decors, elegant and tasteful intermèdes represent clearly the discriminating milieu on the audience’s side of the stage; the actual impersonation of that society is unnecessary. (122)

In other words, by being theatrical and not realistic, the interludes leave the door open to the audience’s intellect without being too heavy handed. Molière had learned to be subtle with his writing. After being widely criticized for his play, Tartuffe, Molière added a preface to it in which he states, “Criticism is taken lightly, but men will not tolerate
satire. They are quite willing to be mean, but they never like to be ridiculed” (Worthen 275).
Previous Production Reviews

The original production of The Imaginary Invalid starred Molière himself as Argan, the hypochondriac. It opened on February 10, 1673 at the Théâtre du Palais-Royal in Paris. Armande Béjart Molière played Angelique; La Grange played Cleante; Beauval played Thomas Diafoirus; Mademoiselle Beauval played Toinette; and young Louise Beauval played Louison. It was extremely successful, drawing larger crowds than the opening week of any other Molière play (Frame 431).

The Comédie-Française touring troupe performed The Imaginary Invalid at the Brooklyn Academy of Music in New York on June 9-13, 2004. The production was in French, with English surtitles. I found two reviews of the production with opposing opinions. The first reviewer, David Finkle, gave a very favorable analysis of the production. He begins by explaining that the Comédie-Française troupe is charged with preserving the tradition of great playwrights such as Molière, Racine, and Corneille. But, he asks, "How do you stay true to a classic without such asphyxiating fidelity that the result is lifeless?" Finkle answers his question by explaining how director Claude Stratz, together with costume and set designer Ezio Toffolutti, provided a "modern take on 17-century [sic] French architecture." The effect created is of a place that is "simultaneously historically accurate and fantastical; it's almost as if René Magritte had designed the stately room." Finkle also seemed to appreciate the lighting designer Jean-Philippe Roy's use of elongated beams of light cast through high windows. He then made a neutral comment about the use of a wind sound effect as "atmospheric underscoring." Overall, Finkle seemed to like the performance of the actors, citing several specific scenes. The only exception was the "drawn-out finale." Finkle also felt that some of the scenes could
have been edited, with “the kind of trimming that the Comédie-Française overseers would never agree to.” The play was two hours long, without an intermission. He concludes the review, saying that the troupe has managed to “walk the fine line between curating and creating” and that they have proved that “something old can also be wonderfully new.”

The second reviewer, John Simon, writing for New York Magazine, was considerably less kind. He writes, “Molière, playing Argan . . . died just after the play’s fourth performance. At the first guest appearance by the Comédie-Française at BAM, I somehow survived, boredom being less lethal than lung disease. At fault was not the play but the long decline of the venerable C-F into something more institution than theater.” Simon seems to feel that the play strives for too much realism, something that was not expected in Molière’s time. According to Simon, the directing is not at fault, but rather “it comes down to the humdrum performances [of the actors] . . . .” He continues by slamming the performances of the lovers, Argan, and Beralde. The only exception he makes is the performance of Muriel Mayette as Toinette. He concludes the review by praising the commedia dell’arte interludes as “sensibly shortened and decently managed, even if hardest for sophisticated spectators to swallow,” and then criticizing the surtitles for being poorly translated and coming up too late for non French speakers to be able to adequately understand the production.

Two productions of The Imaginary Invalid occurred simultaneously in the Portland area in 2000, and were reviewed in the same article by Steffen Silvis for Willamette Weekly. The first was at Reed College Theater, using the Mildred Marmur translation. The director, Kathleen Worley, admitted to making a few cuts to Marmurs
translation, doing away with the shepherdess prologue, and the monkeys. Reed College also commissioned a new score by composer John Vergin to be used in place of Charpentier’s original work.

During the same weekends, Imago Theater also staged their production of Invalid. By contrast, it was a “wild adaptation” with director Jerry Mouawad also playing the role of Argan. Mouawad infused his Lebanese-American background into his production. He chose to set the play in modern-day New York. He decided to cut the Punchinello interlude, but kept the shepherdess prologue. The shepherdess was changed to resemble a Lebanese video singer, or a “love-drunk bar hostess crooning to a portrait of Omar Sharif” (Silvus).

A second reviewer, Christina Matei, writing for the Lewis and Clark College newspaper, shed more light on this adaptation. She describes Angelique as “a classic 80’s poster child.” Cleante is a “rosy-cheeked . . . skater/surfer, potential boy-toy type” and Toinette is a “bad-ass existentialist.” Perhaps the most intriguing part of this review is Matei’s description of other theatrical elements. She writes, “The plot includes Mormon belly dancers, bowel troubles, a pharmacist who is most likely Satan himself, an enraged proctologist, Argan’s death and reawakening . . . From there it also discusses erectile dysfunction, a lawyer who is a cross between Elvis and a used-car salesman, and Argan’s initiation into doctor-hood through a Sabbath-like ritual.”

Another interesting production of Invalid was produced in Sacramento at the Cosumnes River College Performing Arts Center in November, 2001. It was reviewed by Jeff Hudson in the Sacramento News and Review. Using his own adaptation of Molière’s script, Frank Condon chose to set the play in New Orleans around 1912. The production
uses a “ragtime-era sensibility and a racial subtext along the way.” Hudson calls the play's style of physical comedy “extravagant,” with much of the action being precisely choreographed. Hudson had only good things to say about the actors, set, and costumes.
The Playwright

Molière was born Jean-Baptiste Poquelin on January 15, 1622. His parents were Marie and Jean Poquelin, and his father held an important position as the king’s upholsterer, a position which his eldest son was expected to inherit. They sent young Jean-Baptiste to the Jesuit school, Collège de Clermont. The young playwright likely developed his first taste for drama by performing short plays for school. He finished school in 1641 with a law degree, and took over his father’s job (Walker 13-14).

Jean-Baptiste’s stint as a bedmaker for the king was very short-lived. He met Madeleine Béjart, an actress who was slightly older than himself, and his life changed forever. The precise nature of their relationship has never been concretely proven, but she certainly influenced him (“Molière” 2020site). Within two years of meeting her, he had given up his inherited job, adopted the stage name Molière, and with Béjart’s support, established the Illustre Théâtre (Walker 15). After one unsuccessful season in Paris, the troupe left to tour the French countryside from 1646 to 1658. The troupe returned to Paris under the patronage of the brother of Louis XIV, and later were supported by the Sun King himself (“Molière” Discover France).

During his years as a touring actor, writer, and director, Molière was greatly influenced by the Italian Renaissance style of acting known as commedia dell’arte. These traveling troupes used stock characters and situations to create lively comedies characterized by fast-paced dialogue and trademark gestures and movement.

In 1662, he married the younger sister of Madeleine Béjart, who was twenty-one years his junior. Rivals and critics speculated that Armande Béjart was in fact Madeleine’s daughter. Some went so far as to say that she was Madeleine’s daughter by
Molière. In any case, the union did not appear to be happy one. The couple spent many years in separation, and Molière was plagued by rumors of her infidelity (“Molière” 2020site). They had a daughter, Esprit-Madeleine, born in 1665 (“Molière” Discover France).

Molière endured many personal tragedies during his life. His mother died when he was just eleven years old. His father remarried, but his new stepmother died just three years later (“Molière” Moonstruck Books). Jean Poquelin and Madeleine Poquelin Boudet, Molière’s father and sister, died in 1669 and 1665, respectively. His infant son, Pierre-Jean-Baptiste-Armand Poquelin, died before he reached one month of age, in 1671. His former leading lady and alleged lover, Madelaine Béjart, died exactly one year before him in 1672 (Scott 256).

In the late 1660’s, Molière developed a disease of the lungs, presumably tuberculosis. He continued to write and perform despite his illness, playing such robust roles as Monsieur Jourdain in Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme, and Zéphire in Psyché. But his last play, Le Malade Imaginaire, he played the role of Argan from a bed or a chair. Despite his obvious illness and apparent disdain for doctors, his biographer, Virginia Scott, felt that “Molière’s personal feelings about doctors and medicine should not be exaggerated. Clearly he had some unpleasant experiences, but several of his good friends were doctors.” (241). She also points out that one of Molière’s friends felt that:

Molière’s intentions were not always vengeful. Doctors were funny for several reasons. They spoke a mysterious jargon, easy to mock; they wore pretentious costumes and rode around Paris on mules; they were not very effective and there were not many of them, only 110. Making fun of them
were not many of them, only 110. Making fun of them was also one way to lessen the fear they must have inspired in most people. (242)

On February 10, 1673, The Imaginary Invalid premiered at the Palais Royal. The first four performances were some of the most successful of Molière’s career. But before the fourth performance, many of Molière’s friends noticed that he was ill and asked him to stay home and cancel the show. He refused, saying that the other actors and theater workers were depending on him to be able to perform the show so that they might earn their daily wages (“Molière” Moonstruck Books). To describe his final performance, Virginia Scott quotes an earlier French biographer, saying “Molière performed with great difficulty; and half the Spectators noticed that in pronouncing ‘Juro’ in the ceremony he was seized by a convulsion. Realizing that the audience had noticed it, he made an effort and hid what had happened with a forced laugh” (257). He finished the performance, but died at his home later that night. Because he had died without recanting his scandalous profession, he was at first denied a church burial. After much struggle with church officials and an appeal to the king himself, the archbishop finally agreed to allow Molière to be buried at St-Eustache parish cemetery. The burial was to be conducted at night, and without any of the ceremony usually allowed at funerals (Scott 258). The musician Dassoucy wrote this epitaph for Molière:

Passerby, if . . . this famous poet

Was dear to you

Give at least a sigh or two

For his enlightened spirit,

And say, approaching his grave,
Farewell laughter... (Scott 260)
Learning Outcomes

Through the production of *The Imaginary Invalid*, the students will:

- Acquire knowledge about theater and the life in seventeenth century France.
- Gain an understanding of *commedia dell’arte*, and use it as a basis for creating unique and dynamic characters.
- Practice good vocal production and diction in order to better perform this classical piece.
- Work as a team to create cohesive scenes in which the actors support each other and maintain the comedic pacing of the production.
- Learn various vocal and physical warm-ups to prepare themselves for rehearsal and performance.
- Take constructive criticism and make alterations to their performance as needed.
- Practice self-discipline and goal-setting as they go through the rehearsals and performances.
Production Journal

Friday, July 30, 2004

This seems like as good a day as any to begin this journal. I’ve been working on the show and Section II of the paper for quite a while now. Already, a few things have been changed from my original production concept. I commissioned my sister, Kristin George, to write music for Mildred Marmur’s lyrics. During the summer, I spoke to her about the function and mood of the music in the show. I told her about my idea of pausing for Argan’s coughing fit. She suggested that a break like that would halt the flow of the music, and abruptly change the mood. I realized that it really did not fit in with the show as a whole, and I decided to take it out. Our audiences tend to be made up primarily of students seeking extra credit in their English classes, and friends and family members of the cast and crew. Even with a note in the program pointing out the reason, they may not get it. It was one of those things that seemed like a good idea at the time, but now it needs to be reevaluated.

Thursday, August 5, 2004

I made it in to the school today for the first time since I got back from Ellensburg. I almost wish I hadn’t. There was an email from the choir teacher saying that she was quitting her job here and moving to Connecticut, effective immediately. I had been speaking to her at the end of the year about teaching the kids the music for my thesis project. I have no idea who they are getting to replace her, or if they will be amenable to taking over that extra job for my show this fall. Guess I’ll wait and see.

Friday, August 30, 2004

I’m working hard trying to do two things at once—finish up part II and get ready for the first week of school. I have a feeling I’d better finish the paper before school starts, or I’m sunk.

Wednesday, September 1, 2004

Didn’t quite make it before school started, but the paper is in, nonetheless. When I called Sam French to order scripts, they could not find the manuscript for the Marmur translation! How does Samuel French, Inc. “lose” a play? They told me they could not give me permission to make copies of the script I have for the production. So should I change translations? I think I’ve done far too much work on this translation already, and I haven’t found another one that has those musical interludes. Kristin has already begun composing the music with the Marmur lyrics. I’ll try to find out if anyone else is publishing it now, and get permission.

Friday, September 3, 2004

I put out crew applications and posted audition notices. One major worry I have about this show is getting a competent Stage Manager. The girl that stage-managed the last nine shows for us graduated. We have a handful of ASM’s that are trained, but have never done the job.

Tuesday, September 7, 2004
The first round of auditions were today. Over 40 kids showed up. I don’t think I’ve ever had that many at one audition for a straight play before. I couldn’t let the kids read any more than twice, and I’ll have to call backs for singing parts later. The music is not in yet, but the composer tells me it will be done soon.

Wednesday, September 8, 2004

It’s the second day of auditions and only 16 people showed up. That’s the opposite of what usually happens. I think I can come up with a cast here. The kids are reading well, except for a few who are seriously “diction-challenged”. I didn’t see as much physical characterization as I wanted in the improvised pantomime scene I used for the auditions. I’ll probably have to spend more time on creating a physical life for the characters in rehearsals.

Thursday, September 9, 2004

The new choir director, Greg Fryhling, agreed to teach the kids the music! Hurray! He’s a recent CWU grad, too. He got his Master’s in music, and played Bernardo in West Side Story last year. This is a huge load off my mind. Now all I need is music.

Sunday, September 12, 2004

The callbacks went well on Friday. It seems like there is never enough time to read all the possible combinations of characters. I’ve slept on it for two nights now, and it seems that the cast list is falling into place. I’m not taking as many risks with new students as I usually do, but I’m giving some good veterans a chance to show their stuff. I’m casting Beline and Louison based on what I know of those actresses. I did not get a chance to read them in those roles, but my instincts are usually pretty good.

Monday, September 13, 2004

Music came in today! One more piece of the puzzle has fallen into place.

Tuesday, September 14, 2004

We started our movement workshop today. I made sure to do a full physical warm-up followed by a series of exercises I found in Barry Grantham’s book Playing Commedia. Most of these kids, especially the guys, are not particularly graceful, but they are all jumping right in and giving it their best shot. One of the obstacles that we have to overcome is a bit of actor training. Until last year, the drama class was offered for an English credit, so I could not spend the entire time focusing on actor training. I think only three of these kids have had my drama class, and two more are taking the class right now.

I talked to the orchestra teacher about the string quartet. He told me that there were no cello players interested in doing the project. This could present a problem. I’ll keep my fingers crossed.

Wednesday, September 15, 2004

Ha! Everyone is complaining of being sore today. Now they can see why actors need to be in top physical shape. We started out with a few commedia warm-up exercises, and moved into an activity I learned in George’s Mime and Movement class. It
uses animals as a basis for creating characters. We moved on to do vocal warm-ups, and I had them read Act I on their feet, with careful attention to projection and diction.

Thursday, September 16, 2004

We did more movement today, talking about leading body centers, and tempo rhythms. The kids are having a great time, but I wonder how much of this is really getting into their bodies. Without discipline, this will easily be forgotten by the time we get into blocking and memorizing lines.

After a vocal warm-up, we read Act II on its feet, again going slowly for projection and articulation.

Friday, September 17, 2004

This was our last day of our movement/voice workshop week. Unfortunately, an outside group was using the auditorium, so we had to cut the rehearsal a little short. I had them improvise short pantomime scenarios that related to their characters. Then they presented them to the group. We saw Toinette letting the Diafoirus’s into the house, Argan, Angélique, and Louison having an evening out at the theater before the onset of Argan’s imaginary malady. Polichinelle, M. Purgon, and M. Bonnefoy met at a pub, and Cleante had a run-in with the Night Patrol. I think they are starting to have an idea about what is needed physically for their characters. They read Act III on its feet, concentrating on enunciation, and we went home.

Saturday, September 18, 2004

I sent letter last week to Dr. Meshke asking which book he photocopied the Marmur translation of the script from. I also sent an email to the director who did the production with the Marmur translation at Reed College last year. Both of them cited a book that was printed over 40 years ago. I can’t find it currently in print. I think I’m going to apply for the royalties with Samuel French on-line, and see what happens.

Monday, September 20, 2004

I started the blocking today. This has always been one of the most difficult parts of directing for me. Things always look so different on stage with actual bodies than they do in my head. I explained to the actors about using diagonals and triangles so that they would be able to monitor themselves, and hopefully step back into the correct place. We worked on the first “chase” scene where Argan runs after the maid, Toinette. I tried to plan the groundplan of the furniture so that they would have plenty of obstacles to run around, but in the end I opted to simplify the chase by having them run a figure eight pattern around the bed and table. It reminded me of a cartoon chase. My assistant director said he thought of the Keystone cops when he saw it. Hopefully, it will still have the correct timing when the lines are memorized!

Tuesday, September 21, 2004

The second half of act II is turning out to be harder than the “chase” scene. I’m working with an inexperienced actor who seems to be less than comfortable moving about on the stage. I’ll need to figure out some exercises or warm-ups to loosen him up a bit.
On the bright side, the school’s best cello player talked to me about playing in the quartet. Her schedule is pretty full, so she may not be able to rehearse a lot, and she can’t audition this week, but she wants to play for the show. I gave her the music, since I’m not likely to get another cellist to audition.

Wednesday, September 22, 2004

Auditions for the string quartet are today. They were posted for over a week, and I talked to several interested students in the orchestra, but it is 3:15 now, and no one has showed up. The auditions are over in 15 minutes. When I originally spoke to our composer about using a string quartet as accompaniment, I guess I always had it in the back of my mind that I could take one of the violin parts if I absolutely needed to. I could even play the viola or cello again, if I could borrow an instrument. But I certainly can’t play all the parts. It’s 3:30pm. I’m officially “stood up”. I’ve never had auditions end like this before! I’m really keeping my fingers crossed for tomorrow.


A viola player came to talk to me about playing in the quartet. She’s leaving town and can’t make it to auditions, so I’ll hear her play next week. Two violinists came to audition today after school. They seem to play very well. It looks like I have my quartet, just barely! I’m extremely relieved.

I tried blocking the large group scene with the two Diafoirus’s today. It’s not quite working the way I’d planned it, so I’ll have to go back to the drawing board. The stage still seems very wide, even though I’ve used the main curtain to narrow the proscenium. I’ll have to re-plan some of the pictures I want to end up with in this scene.

Monday, September 27, 2004

We had the first crew meeting today. I have pretty much planned out most of the set (we’re renting a backdrop) and costumes (we’re renting most of them), but I still wanted to give the kids a chance to have input in a few of the design elements. This is usually a very frustrating process because these kids don’t know what to do, and I don’t have a lot of time to teach them. I’ll tell them what we need, and ask them to do some research. We’ll keep it very basic and simple. The set crew will need to come up with what the bed will look like, and the wall with the window for the Polichinelle scene. I’ve also asked them to pool resources and ask family members for leads on period-looking furniture. That will probably be the most difficult part of the set. For the costume department, I’ve asked them to research gypsies and uniforms of this time period. To hopefully save some money, we will be costuming the string quartet and the musical interludes. The costumes for everyone in the stage play will be rented.

I sent home a letter requesting parent help today, which listed a lot of our “hard to find” items and jobs. I normally don’t get much of a response from parents, but every once in a while I’ll get lucky. We’ll see what happens.

For the rehearsal today, we didn’t have access to the stage. I rearranged my room the best I could to simulate the stage to do some more blocking. It is still less than ideal to do blocking in these conditions.

Tuesday, September 28, 2004
Again, we are not on stage today because an outside group is using the stage. I’ve chosen another small scene with only a few people to block. This is the Monsieur Purgon’s scene. This actor is a very intense and unpredictable. He wants to start out the scene screaming. I’m trying to get him to build the intensity, and vary his tactics in ridiculing Argan. I know from previous experience with him that the louder he gets, the more strident his voice sounds. He isn’t able to relax enough to produce a clear sound quality when he’s yelling. He also has a problem with articulation when he starts speaking more quickly. Articulation will likely be a big challenge for other members of this cast as well, since several of them wear braces. For all these initial rehearsals, I am reminding them to slow down and take time with those words.

Thursday, September 29, 2004
We were finally able to be back on the stage to finish blocking the Diafoirus scenes. After some more thought and planning, I think the scene looks better than last week. We blocked another “chase” scene, this time where Thomas Diafoirus slowly chases Angelique around the chaise that her father is seated on. I tried to explain to them that it was my homage to the table scene in Tartuffe, where Orgon hides under the table as the salacious priest pursues Orgon’s wife. I’m sure it was lost on them, since none of them have read Tartuffe. But I think it is one of my favorite moments in the play so far. I really love what John Levesque has brought out in this character.

Friday, October 1, 2004
We are only a couple weeks into rehearsals, and it has already been a struggle to balance the paper load in my English classes with the preparations for the play. I spent 5 hours last Sunday grading essays, and I’ll probably spend another 5 hours this weekend on grading. There’s always so many balls I’m juggling, trying to keep them all in the air at once. I’ve already dropped one— I did not reserve the backdrop that I originally wanted for the show. I’ll have to go with my second choice. It may look a bit more like Victorian England than Neo-classical France, but hopefully the audience won’t really know the difference.

I got the royalties contract from Samuel French, Inc., so that is one less thing to worry about.

Tuesday, October 5, 2004
I had an epiphany today about how to tie together the musical interludes. Most translations don’t include the musical interludes because they don’t have much to do with the story of the play. I fell in love with the interludes last summer when we did a group reading of the play for Dr. Meshke’s class at the summer institute. Daryl Hovis and Bob Hunt improvised the singing parts, and it was absolutely hilarious (or maybe at that point in the summer we were just exhausted, and anything would have been funny-- who knows?) The songs were random and quirky, very much like Monty Python. I didn’t really want to use the second musical interlude, until I thought of having guys dressed up as gypsies and singing the girls’ parts. When I talked to Kristin this summer about scoring the parts for guys, we decided that it would be funny if there were two girls and two guys singing the four parts. That way the girls could play it straight and the guys could play for laughs. It has been nagging me for a while, though, that this might be a bit
too random to throw at our audience. I also don’t want to get into trouble in this conservative community! I think I’m going to change the roles around a bit and have Polichinelle on the run from one of the night patrol guys at the end of the first interlude. Then they can come back in the second interlude and be in “disguise” as gypsy girl/actors.

Wednesday, October 6, 2004

We blocked the finale today. Due to confusion about the schedule, and conflicts of several actors, we were missing several people, so I’m sure I’ll end up teaching the whole thing again. When Kristin and I talked about this number before she scored it, I told her I wanted something that was a cross between a religious ceremony (we were both raised Catholic, as was Molière) and a TV commercial jingle. When the kids learned the song last week, they came out of the rehearsal saying it was the most annoying song they’d ever heard, and that it would be stuck in their head for weeks. That proves that Kristin did exactly what I wanted her to do. I tried to make the movements to the dance extremely simple, repetitive, and kind of corny-looking. I don’t have a dance background, but I think I have the effect I wanted.

Thursday October 7, 2004

Today was the first day I tried to divide myself between my actors and the string quartet. Unfortunately, only two of the quartet showed up. I’m starting to feel very nervous about the quartet again. The orchestra director assures me that these girls are very self-directed, and they’ll be fine if left on their own. I sure hope he’s right.

I’m also becoming more dismayed by the lack of commitment to this project. Several cast members expressed displeasure at having to rehearse today, because there’s a three-day weekend starting tomorrow. They apparently felt entitled to have this afternoon off as well. I’ve been trying to work around actor’s schedules to give them a chance to be involved in other activities and jobs, but it is getting a little ridiculous.

Monday, October 11, 2004

Today was the first day off book. The lead actors have obviously done a lot of work on their lines. Some of the actors with much smaller parts obviously put in very little time on their parts. I don’t allow them to pick up their scripts, no matter what, so I spent the rehearsal making a to-do list for the production staff while the ASM’s fed some of the actors every single line.

Tuesday, October 12, 2004

Today, we worked off book again. A few more actors knew more of their lines today. We worked on the Thomas Diafoirus/Angelique chase scene again. I’m really enjoying the way the Thomas Diafoirus character is turning out. He’s the perfect blend of stupid and sleazy.

Wednesday, October 13, 2004

It seems like such a waste to have the stage during their first week off book. We can’t get much done, just a few blocking adjustments.
Thursday, October 14, 2004

I switched rehearsals today to accommodate another kid’s activity schedule today. I guess it didn’t really matter, because the stage was set up with music stands for the symphony concert rehearsal. We blocked the first interlude as best we could on the apron. The quartet rehearsed today, but a couple of them got there very late, and the first violinist was not able to make it at all because she was at a funeral. This is so frustrating, because Mr. Fryhling was able to rehearse with them today, but they did not get to have much of a practice.

Friday, October 15, 2004

The stage was still full of stuff, so we just ran some of the fast-paced scenes with Argan and Toinette. We took some time to do some of these scenes slowly and clearly, and then gradually sped them up. Another of my favorite moments is the “pillow fight” where Argan and Toinette, tug a pillow back and forth as they argue about Angelique’s upcoming marriage. It is hard to get those lines right, because some of them are so similar.

Saturday, October 16, 2004

I had a quartet rehearsal today for a couple of hours. It actually turned into a trio rehearsal because the viola player was at a swim meet. I figured three was better than none. I was able to get out my violin and actually play with them, and we went over a few of the cuts and repeats that have become necessary. Best of all, I could devote the whole time to them because I didn’t have actors to worry about.

Monday, October 18, 2004

Our male understudy, Bryan Corley, came up to me with some very disturbing news this morning. Apparently, John Levesque, who plays Thomas Diafoirus, was playing football over the weekend and blew out his knee. John said to Bryan, “I guess you’d better start learning my part.” I told Bryan that wasn’t a bad idea, but that we’d have to wait and see what would happen. I’m trying not to panic, but all I can think about is that this is the end of my homage to Tartuffe that I was so proud of.

We rehearsed the Gypsy interlude today by weaving around the risers and speakers that were set up on the stage for the choir concert this week.

Tuesday, October 19, 2004

John Levesque came to see me today. He was using crutches, and had a huge brace on his knee. He said his doctor will be checking to see if he tore his ACL. If not, he should be okay to do the show with a brace on. If he did tear it, he may need surgery in the next couple weeks. I’m still resisting the urge to panic and change the blocking, but I’m wondering if I should call the costume rental place and have them fix a special pair of pants for him that will accommodate the brace.

Wednesday, October 20, 2004

Amy (Toinette) wanted to skip rehearsal to go to Powder Puff football practice today. She said she was already excused from rehearsal for this week because she put it on her audition form. She said she’d just be gone for today, and she’d be there for the rest
of the week. I was in the middle of a crew meeting when she asked (or rather informed) me, so I didn’t have time to object. Her audition form said she was going to Florida to do some college visits, but her family must have canceled the trip because of the recent hurricanes.

Thursday, October 21, 2004
Josh Stanfield, one of the night patrol, asked me if we could do his scene first during rehearsal today so he could go to Powder Puff cheerleader practice. I told him yes, that was the only scene we were doing today, so of course it would be first. I guess we had a misunderstanding, because both Josh and Bryan (the other night patrol guy) went to Powder Puff cheerleader practice first, leaving me to send people out to the gym to track them down. To make matters worse, Mr. Fryhling was there to help with the rehearsal. We waited at least 20 minutes for those boys to finally show up. We couldn’t really do anything else, because the actor playing Polichinelle was 15 minutes late because he thought there was a crew meeting today, and had gotten confused about the schedule.

My stage manager and assistant stage managers approached me after the rehearsal about some concerns with the cast. Apparently, one of our lead actresses did not really want to be in the show in the first place, and she’d been bad-mouthing the show and the rehearsal process to anyone who will listen. I agreed that the morale issue needed to be addressed, and I told them I’d talk to the cast tomorrow.

Friday, October 22, 2004
It was an early release day today, and I gave up my lunch hour between teacher meetings to rehearse the final musical interlude with the full cast. After the hour was up, I gave them “the talk” that I’m sure directors have been giving actors since the beginning of time. Basically I tried to explain how important this show is to me, and that being in a show like this means work. It doesn’t happen by accident, or by magic. Real actors use the rehearsal process to work on their characters in order to make the show the best it can possibly be. I left my assistant director in charge of running through act II with the cast, and I went to my afternoon meeting. I hope they got the point.

Monday, October 25, 2004
I had a “Trouble Spot” rehearsal scheduled with scenes between Argan, Angelique, and Toinette. I wanted to take some time and slow down the pace of some of those high energy scenes so we don’t completely lose articulation. Amy (Toinette) never showed up. Apparently she told some people she was excused all week because of her college visit in Florida, and she wasn’t going to come to rehearsal. I sent my ASM’s to Powder Puff Football practice to see if she was there. They could only find the junior team practicing, not the seniors. We called all her friends’ cell phones. None of them answered. Finally we called home. Her mother assumed she was at play practice. After the speech I gave on Friday, this is a huge slap in the face to all of us. Kevin (Argan) is upset, because he really wanted the concentrated practice with Amy to get their scenes right. Without her, we couldn’t do any of the scenes I’d planned, just small pieces with Angelique. Melissa Queen (Berald) just happened to be hanging around, so I had her go over the scenes with Argan, otherwise it would have been a completely wasted afternoon.
I'm facing a very difficult decision. According to our company rules contract, I can remove cast members at any time for bringing down cast morale. The last time something close to this happened was three years ago. I had a lead actor blow off the last rehearsal before dress rehearsal week to go to the movies with his friends. I didn’t have an understudy to replace him, so I did what was best for the show and kept him for the rest of the run, and never cast him in anything again. Since he was a senior, this wasn’t much of a punishment, and I always regretted not booting him out and making a strong statement to the underclassmen that this is not something I take lightly. This time, we do have an understudy, and I could make some casting adjustments to replace Toinette. It might be better for my drama program, but it would not be good for my show. I keep thinking of the debate of which is more important in educational theater, the “process”, or the “product”?

I’ll talk to Amy first thing tomorrow. I probably won’t sleep much tonight.

Tuesday, October 26, 2004

I guess “product” wins. I decided to let Amy keep her part. With only two weeks until dress rehearsal, I couldn’t bring myself to put the rest of the cast through a major over-haul. But I won’t feel good about this choice until I see if her attitude has changed.

Wednesday, October 27, 2004

I have been racking my brain for the last couple of weeks trying to figure out how to cut down on the length of time that the scene changes will take. The biggest scene change is from Argan’s living room, to the night scene for the Polichinelle interlude. The only other major changes are bringing the string quartet on and off for the other two songs. I’d entertained the notion of building a large wagon-unit, and wheel the quartet on from the wings. I also considered leaving stands and chairs in one place for the whole show. We usually do the scene changes in the blackout, but they tend to be interminably long. Having scene changes in blackout or during two short intermissions would kill the pace of the show. I decided to make the running crew part of the show as commedia-style players. I recruited extra kids from my drama class, and scheduled the rehearsal for today and tomorrow after our regular rehearsal.

Saturday, October 30, 2004

Greg and I had planned on rehearsing with the string quartet today, but only two of them showed up. Greg worked with them while I managed our first work party. The set crew put the bed together, so all we had to do today was make it look fancy. I finally found a use for the old red piano cover. It looks fantastic on the bed. We put together the street scene walls and bushes. We didn’t finish as much as I’d wanted because the auditorium was being used that evening for a Warren Miller ski film.

The first musical interlude has a part where the night patrol give Polichinelle a beating. I’d been reading that the Commedia troupes used a slapstick to hit each other with, which produced a lot noise without hurting very much. But how do you make one? I had two students researching the problem, but they haven’t been able to come up with anything we can really use. They’ve found music store web sites that sell hinged boards with holes in it to be used a percussion instruments. But I can’t see how we can use that, since it needs to be operated with two hands to produce the sound. I got on the internet today and found out that the Italian term for the stick was battacio, and it consisted of two
thin pieces of wood that make a slapping sound on contact. I started poking about our shop, where my husband had just finished making new trim for the windows. I found two long ¼ inch pieces of cedar. One had a slight bow in it. I taped them together, and it made a beautiful slapping sound. How could something so simple have given me such a headache?

Monday, November 1, 2004

This week, I’d planned to have the quartet rehearse on stage with the actors during the full run today. However, since we didn’t have the viola player anyway, it seemed more prudent to have the music people work with Mr. Fryhling, while I attempted to get through a full run with the rest of the cast. I’m not really worried about the play itself, but I’m feeling uneasy about the music, and we’re running out of time to fix it.

I managed to find two large pieces of carpet and one large colorful area rug to mask footfalls with. They don’t match anything, and one carpet is kind of stained, but the audience can’t see the floor of the stage at all when they are seated. My options are to have crummy, ugly carpet, or to have Wes complain about loud footsteps on the hollow stage. Since we’ve added a lot of falls and tumbling, it would be to our advantage to cover the stage floor with a little extra cushioning. I’ve also noticed that there is a strange squeak where our new pit cover meets the main stage floor. Couldn’t hurt to try to mask that, too.

Tuesday, November 2, 2004

We put the quartet on stage today, and got through most of the show. We stopped to run the first interlude several times. I think it is going to work out, but it sounds a little rough. The quartet is having a lot of pitch and counting problems.

Wednesday, November 3, 2004

Another bombshell dropped today. My stage manager came in during 4th hour to have me sign his withdrawal form. He’s withdrawing from school with a serious medical problem and moving to Spokane immediately. He can’t even return his textbooks—he says he’ll mail it to me. This has taken me completely by surprise. I had no idea that there was anything wrong with him. And now there is five days until our first dress rehearsal. We have two very competent ASM’s, but they have never called a show before. I don’t think Nick had a chance to teach them how to do that yet. We’ve already worked Beth into our running crew-clown routines. Maggie will have to step up and be the stage manager. In the meantime, I’ll try not to panic. The show is not that complicated—it could be a lot worse.

At the rehearsal today, the actor playing Monsieur Purgon somehow missed his entire scene. He was at school at 2:45. I told him rehearsal started at 3pm, and that we were starting with Act III. He showed up around 3:45 and tried to apologize to me for being late. I was so angry I couldn’t even speak to him. On one of the breaks, I went back to my room to grab something, and noticed a large group of cast members huddled around my TV playing a video game that someone had brought in. Fortunately for M. Purgon, I didn’t put two and two together until after everyone had gone home. I’m sure I would have lost my job after throwing this kid and his video game out the door without
bothering to open it first. Apparently, this actor decided that the cast needed to experience a new video game that he’d gotten, and he went back to his house to get his Xbox so they could all play it. That is why he missed his entire scene. To make matters worse, I can’t replace him. It was the understudy who drove him to his house to get the game!

Thursday, November 4, 2004

The string quartet needed more help. The only thing I could think to do was to play with them and take it very slowly to check pitch. We had everyone except for the cellist today, so Greg sat in and played a string bass. We ran the interludes with the singers a couple times, then the quartet moved into Greg’s room. I was wishing I could split myself in half so I could be in two places at once. My assistant director ran the rehearsal on stage with the actors, while I stayed with the quartet. Maggie, the new Stage manager, ran the running crew practice in the lobby. Talk about multi tasking! I gave the running crew the day off tomorrow. We’ll put it all together on Monday with them.

Friday, November 5, 2004

It was our last rehearsal before dress rehearsal week and we finally got through a full run, even if it was without the running crew. We still managed it in under 2 hours. The first violinist was gone, so I sat in and played the part. I didn’t get a very clear perspective of how the interludes went, but the rest of the show went well.

Saturday, November 6, 2004

It was our last chance to finish up the set with the work party today. The costumes came in, so we fitted the actors. The measurements that we gave the Herff Jones company for the graduation robes aren’t going to work. We didn’t figure on needing extra length for the women, so that their large dresses would be covered. We’ll have to do some switching around. Some of the guys will be wearing very short robes, but I hope it will still look okay.

Sunday, November 7, 2004

My husband and I attached the bedposts to the bed today. I think (hope?) that is the last piece of the set.

Monday, November 8, 2004

The parent/teacher conferences for Richland High School were today. It made for a very long night, since I couldn’t start my dress rehearsal until conferences were over. Luckily, the kids were pretty close to ready to go when I got there at six o’clock. We had a major costume malfunction with Argan’s pants. The measurements we gave the rental company probably did not leave any room for the repetitive movement of crawling on and off of that big bed. We’ll have to come up with a different pair of pants for him. One cast member actually fainted during the finale. The weight of her heavy costume, plus the robe, plus the exertion of running to make her entrance made her woozy. It was a learning experience all around. To top off the evening, the local police showed up while I was giving notes. They’d seen some kids running around in the auditorium, and wanted to know if they were supposed to be there so late.
Tuesday, November 9, 2004

The second violinist didn’t show up until the last interlude today. Apparently she was just confused about the schedule. Monday and Wednesday had a 6:00 curtain because of parent conferences, but Tuesday was a 4:00 curtain. Other than that this rehearsal was fairly uneventful—thank goodness. I drove to my Mom’s house on my prep hour this morning to grab her dining room chairs. I just wasn’t happy with the plain wooden ones we were using. Hers actually match the footstool we made, so they’re perfect for the quartet.

Wednesday, November 10, 2004

The video of Monday’s dress rehearsal didn’t turn out very well, so my husband came after work to video today’s rehearsal. Once again, I attended parent teacher conferences in the gym while my cast got ready to go in the auditorium. The show went well, but some of the actors are going way too fast. I reminded them of that when I gave notes, and I’ll remind them again tomorrow after warm-ups. It looked like the bed was positioned too far stage right. I’ll have to fix that for tomorrow night.

Thursday, November 11, 2004

We had a very nice crowd for opening night. They were very receptive, and they did enjoy the first two musical interludes. I am breathing a sigh of relief. The show went well, except for the added adrenalin that comes with having an audience seems to have increased the pace, and a lot of dialogue is being lost. I should have expected that. Looks like the horse is headed for the barn—I’m not sure how to reign it in at this point. I just hope Wes can understand them tomorrow.

Friday, November 12, 2004

I thought we’d be home free during the run of the show, with no interruptions from outside groups, but today the school ASB staged a Veteran’s Day assembly in the Auditorium. We had to move everything back behind the main curtain line, and roll up our carpets. Unfortunately, we spiked the furniture on the carpet, but we neglected to spike where the carpets went. I was praying that the students would mess with the thousands of dollars worth of props, costumes, and backdrops that I had to store backstage.

We managed to the stage back in order, but the custodial staff had not come in to clean the house and lobby after 2,000 RHS students trampled through. With about 20 minutes before we were supposed to open the house, I raided the janitor’s closet for vacuum cleaners, and had 3 students vacuum the mud, leaves, and grass from the carpet.

If anything else was out of place during the show, I didn’t notice. Wes gave my students some useful feedback after the show. It really helps to have some one other than me tell them they need to slow down!

Saturday, November 13, 2004

This was probably our best performance. I’ll probably use it for the final video. Either Wes’ advice helped, or they were getting tired, because the pace was slightly slower and it was easier to understand them.
As we strike the set and clean up, some of the actors observe that the end of the show is a sad thing. I’m usually too relieved to feel sad, and this show is no exception. I just feel glad that this was such a great learning experience for everyone involved, myself included.
November 15, 2004

THE IMAGINARY INVALID by Molière, translated by Mildred Marmur, at Richland High School, Richland, Washington

Viewed Friday night, November 12, 2004

Directed by Dawn Schoepflin in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree, Master of Arts in Theatre Production

THE IMAGINARY INVALID is Molière’s final play and also the play he was acting at the time of his death. The play is often produced in America in different translations. This was the first time I have heard the Marmur translation and it seems honest to the writer’s intentions and accessible to the actors. Offered by high schools, colleges, and many professional theatres each year, the play captures one of Molière’s typical social observations – this time regarding the medical profession. The spirit of the time, the look of the period, and a wonderful plot are all combined to create a very accessible play. The play abounds with opportunities for both professional and amateur actors. All can have fun with these characters and with this plot.

Dawn has remained true to the period and the script. The overall “look” is fetching, and the technical production is strong in most ways. Supported by her staff (auditorium personnel, music director Greg Fryhling, composer Kristin Gordon George, and her students), the production is made to fit the large Richland High School Auditorium stage, a singular accomplishment, as the play could have been lost on that huge stage. Dawn wisely brings the play downstage and closes in the wings to give her a 24 foot proscenium. In this setting, the action flows very nicely. In fact, the pacing is one of the real strengths of the production.

My comments about the quality of the show are based on comparison to similar master’s thesis productions around the country.

Of considerable importance for this play is the ability of the director to draw truthful performances from the actors. This is a huge task in high school theatre, as the director often must teach basic acting before she can begin on the play that is in rehearsal, and she must work with those students who are available and willing to make a serious commitment to a lengthy rehearsal period.
As with dance, music, art, and some sports, theatre provides a clear measurement of achievement, as the director/performer responds to training and demonstrates learning. The demonstration is in the public arena. In high school theatre, especially if the director selects to produce a classical work, all of her strengths and weaknesses are displayed to the public.

Dawn’s production is extremely successful in some areas and needs more work in others. Of special importance is the invaluable learning experience the production has been for the students. They’ve learned how to evaluate and speak the techniques of high comedy, how to speak and understand seventeenth century language, how to understand play structure, basic acting, technology, design, and the integration of all of these elements to create harmony. The students involved in the production probably won’t realize the extent of their learning and growth for many years. But one day they will look back on this experience and realize what a successful production they assembled.

The overall design and technology of the production is quite strong, thanks to the very wise decision to rent a backdrop and costumes, both of which clearly define the period. Furniture pieces created for the show mostly work, if not quite seventeenth century. The program does not credit anyone with the lighting, but it is serviceable. The wigs and makeup work well, as does the stage management (most of the time). We did have to wait on the quartet and there are some other moments of blank time. I especially admire the director’s intent that the set creates an environment for the play, and the effect of the costumes supports that environment. Both support the play and the actors in necessary and helpful ways.

A working chandelier would be a nice touch to cap the downstage area. Sound is fine, as is the elegant touch of a real string quartet to back up the interludes. I love the pre-show, interlude, and scene change music.

A real strength is Dawn’s idea to use interlude routines. She has developed lazzi for fun and scene change cover. The audience appreciates the activity and the students seem to love playing the bits. And Dawn has cut the play to ninety minutes performed without an intermission. These decisions create an overall sense of artistic control for the production.

The floor plan is a bit of a problem, as the bed’s location forces too much action downstage, creating awkward blocking moments. For the most part the actors move well, they just get themselves into difficult downstage placement that is hard to get out of. The director would have more opportunities for lovely stage pictures if the bed were located more upright.
Acting, as in all high school productions, varies from experienced to beginner—and that is as it should be. Kevin Harris works hard as Argan and is mostly successful with the role. His energy is catching and he works well with the other actors. Amy Narquis looks wonderful as Toinette, has a good voice for the character, and proceeds to speak too fast most of the time. But she certainly possess the physical qualities to be excellent in the role. The other actors are generally successful in varying degrees, depending on experience. I especially enjoy John Bagaglio’s control of the language, and Melissa Queen for the same reason. Stephen Baird made good use of Pulcinella’s comic material. Everyone does their job and everyone captures a sense and spirit of the character they play. For the most part, the costumes help them considerably.

Projection is only a problem when actors face into the wings; and this is a technique that can be learned.

Dawn’s skills include an excellent sense of tempo and energy, which the show has, and for the most part the elimination of “let’s pretend,” the nemesis of amateur theatre. There’s none of that, and this draws a great bravo! from me. Also the staging is motivated. Dawn has a pretty good grasp on what she’s doing, and this production leaves little doubt about that.

One of Dawn’s jobs as director is to apply what she is learning in the master’s program to her production. This challenge can often be very difficult, especially when working with young students. But creating a real experience has to be the goal and RHS has created for the most part a real experience. I look forward to seeing another show in the future.

I enjoyed my evening; like the publicity that was widespread in the community and on a moving sign on the street, like the lobby display, and find the experience overall a successful production. Thanks for the lovely evening.

Sincerely,

Wesley Van Tassel, Ph.D.
Professor

Please note:
This signature has been redacted due to security reasons.
Self Evaluation

Now that the project is over and I’ve had some time to reflect, I find myself having positive feelings about my direction of Molière’s *The Imaginary Invalid*. On the whole, I am very proud of the choices I made for this show. Rather than taking the easy way out and directing a fluffy comedy we could do in our sleep, I took on the challenge of directing these kids in their very first period play. I further compounded the challenges of this play by insisting that we do the musical interludes as well. Any time a director and actors step outside their comfort zones, they are taking a great risk. With so many elements to fuse together, there is a risk that not all the pieces will fit just right. Sometimes the pieces get put in backward, and all you can do is cover it over with duct tape and hope it holds. We had a few lumps and bumps in this production, but I believe that we all learned something, and came away with a better understanding of our craft.

I felt that the biggest strengths of this production were in the energy and characterizations that the actors brought to the stage. Sometimes the energy seemed a bit too great as the actors shouted and rushed through their lines, but the actors were only responding to a director who had cracked the whip from the beginning, stressing that a lively pace was the key to this comedy. These young actors had never been trained in classical movement before, but they rose to the occasion. I am especially proud of the running crew/commedia clowns, who created some adorable comedy routines in a very short amount of time. Their parts helped hold the pace of the show, and didn’t allow for a lag in the momentum that a blackout set change would have created. All the actors showed a great deal of growth as they moved as their characters on stage. The biggest boost happened when they got into their costumes for the first time. Witnessing the
transformation was truly magical. I wanted them to learn about the style of Commedia
dell'arte, and use it to create a basis for their characters. I think we achieved that.

Audience members could not stop commenting to me about the fabulous
costumes and the grand backdrop. I wished we could take credit for creating them
ourselves, but just having them really enhanced the production. They became another one
of its strengths, along with the stage pictures I was able to create with the blocking. At
the same time, renting these elements solved one of the problems we always have while
producing theater at the Richland High School Auditorium. There is really no space to
build and store costumes or set pieces. Because of the constant use of the facility by
outside groups, there is never sufficient time to build a large set on stage. Another
limitation of the facility is its immense space, both on the stage, and in the house. I
brought the action of the play onto the apron and never used the main curtain. Instead, I
partially closed the main curtain in order to narrow the proscenium considerably. This
gave us nice areas on the far sides of the apron for the string quartet.

As an educator of teenagers, I have to have a realistic picture of what we can
achieve together. Often, things don’t turn out the way we want or expect. Rather than
exploding or criticizing, I have to remind myself to say, “Okay! What did we learn?”
Anything that goes wrong or becomes a weak spot is an opportunity for learning and
growth, certainly for them, but especially for me. One of part of this production that did
not meet my expectations was the string quartet. An overwhelming number of schedule
conflicts did not allow enough time to rehearse the pieces. I’ll be sure to remedy the
situation if I decide to do something similar in the future. I was also never quite happy
with some of the blocking because of the way I’d set my groundplan. When doing a
single unit-set for a show, it is critical to think through the entire show, trying several configurations of the groundplan before settling on the final placement.

Handling actors is often a tricky proposition for any director. The difficulty is compounded for high school directors because we’re dealing with 14-17 year old kids. Some are mature beyond their years. Others have a great deal of mental and emotional maturity to acquire. It is hard to develop a plan for dealing with them, because each student and each situation is different. This show highlighted for me the importance of having a variety of strategies for dealing with actors. Simply telling them repeatedly to “slow down and enunciate” or “pick up your cues faster” doesn’t work. Directors need to have an arsenal of exercises that show the actors what needs to be done. If I could do the show again, I’d spend more time working on this area, and stressing the discipline that acting requires.

In the end, I hope that these kids came away with a sense of pride and accomplishment about what we did with The Imaginary Invalid. I’m proud of the fact that we took on this challenging show, and did not let a few difficulties prevent us from presenting it. All hardships provide opportunities for growth. It is up to the individual, whether it be an actor or director, to embrace the challenge, struggle with it, and learn from it. If some measure of advancement occurred, there can be no regrets.
Work Cited


Commedia Dell’Arte page. 29 Mar. 1996. Dept. of Theater Arts, Furman University.


PRE-PRODUCTION IMAGES AND RESOURCES
Greetings from the drama world!
I was wondering if you could give us a quick phonetic pronunciation guide for some of our characters- just shoot me back a quick email:

Argan Are-gahn
Polichinelle Poh-lee-shee-nell
Cleante Clay-ahnt
Purgon Poor-gohn
Bonnefoy Bun-fwah
Fleurant Fle-ahnt
Louison Loo-ee-zohn
Diafoirus Dee-ah-fwah-roos

We'll probably do a bit of Anglicizing of the names, but I'd like to have it based on authentic pronunciation.

Thanks bunches!
Kristin Gordon received her bachelors degree in music with an emphasis in composition and vocal performance from Gonzaga University in 2000. That same year, she won the Washington State Student Composer's Award hosted by Opus 7 for her choral setting of "Regina Coeli." Her Easter cantata's "A Creation Cycle" and "Song of Light" were commissioned by the Niwot United Methodist Church choir in 2002 and 2003. Her most recent work has been in collaboration with her husband, Thomas George: "Grace in Midwinter," a Christmas cantata, also commissioned by Niwot United Methodist Church. She is currently compiling a series of breath prayers, music to be used as meditation.

Does this work for you? If you need more, let me know.

Love ya, sis!

Kristin
# To Do List for Dawn Schoepflin

## Priority 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rehearsal schedule, prod staff meeting, costume parade, photo call, set strike, Thrift rack run, post mortem, crew view</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Director’s list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calendars of deadlines</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schedule auditions, work parties, dress rehearsals, post mortem</td>
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<td>Director’s list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set design</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Director’s list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secure outside help - choreography, set, etc</td>
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<td>Director’s list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acting &amp; crew contract</td>
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<td>Director’s list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secure royalties</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Director’s list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talk to Alan about when his stuff is going to be on stage for his concerts</td>
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<td>Director’s list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tour set-up schedule on one day, send out letters to schools EARLY</td>
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<td>Director’s list</td>
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<tr>
<td>Purchase the supplies</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter soliciting help from parents</td>
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<td>Director’s list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research show time period</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Director’s list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read script several times</td>
<td>None</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crew aps</td>
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## Priority 2

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<td>Parent emails entered</td>
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<tr>
<td>Order scripts</td>
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<td>Director’s list</td>
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<tr>
<td>Audition forms</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan auditions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Set up time to visit RLOC</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blocking - ground plan</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lighting requirements to Jeff</td>
<td>None</td>
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<tr>
<td>T-shirt design</td>
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<tr>
<td>Send out press release - set up time for photo with Herald</td>
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<tr>
<td>Publicity list press release</td>
<td>None</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schedule after school 2-3 weeks before dress reh. - email Caren</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Director’s list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper tech w/ SM, and designers</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Director’s list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schedule periodic checks for Prod. Staff</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Director’s list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit Tour Sites to scope out the area</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Director’s list</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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To Do List for Dawn Schoepflin

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<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Secure necessary Lapel mics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Get an extra costume rack</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get lists of Prod. Areas to Prod coordinator</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research costumes</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent supervisors for prod. Staff</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students for production staff</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>find SM, PC, DAS</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Director's list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact parents about what they can help with</td>
<td>None</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publicity to Janet &amp; Robin</td>
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</tr>
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**Priority 3**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rent drop</td>
<td>12/15/2003</td>
<td>Director's list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alarm in palm about getting tickets</td>
<td>12/31/2003</td>
<td>Director's list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do PO's for T shirts, Lowe's, Freddies,</td>
<td>1/5/2004</td>
<td>Director's list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Order make up</td>
<td>1/5/2004</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>PO for programs</td>
<td>1/7/2004</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program info (compile the lists)</td>
<td>1/7/2004</td>
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**Priority 4**

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<th>Task</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plan all tasks to be completed at the work party(s)</td>
<td>1/12/2004</td>
<td>Director's list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notify Carolyn about tickets needed</td>
<td>1/21/2004</td>
<td>Director's list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make-up training</td>
<td>None</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Running crew training-dry tech</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Director's list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set up parents to sell tickets</td>
<td>None</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialty make-up prep</td>
<td>None</td>
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<tr>
<td>Create a sign up for the work party(?)</td>
<td>None</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of supplies needed to purchase</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usher school-house manager</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emergencies</td>
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**Priority 5**

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<tr>
<td>PO to ship back materials</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strike list</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collect Librettos-Fri/sat of performance</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Director's list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fines for scripts, costumes, etc.</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Director's list</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To Do List for Dawn Schoepflin

☐ Laundry & dry cleaning
  Due Date: None
  Category: Director's list

☐ Return materials at the end- get parents to make sure
  Due Date: None
  Category: Director's list
Les Farceurs français et italiens vers 1670
(Collections de la Comédie-Française)
AN INAMORATA OF THE ITALIAN COMEDY

Engraving after a drawing by Watteau
black felt hat, a jacket cut XIV, short trousers, and a
ruff about his neck. As may be seen by the illustrations, the costume varied
bly in detail in the course of three centuries, but never lost its basic character.

The Mask

The Doctor wore either a black or a flesh-coloured mask which covered only his
head and his nose. His cheeks were smeared with red, according to a tradition

Romagnesi as the Doctor
Seventeenth century

receives the support of Goldoni as well as of several others. Goldoni states, in
that "the singular mask which covers his forehead and nose took its form from a
mark which disfigured the face of a jurisconsult of those days. It is one of the
itions still in existence among the amateurs of the commedia dell'arte." The earlier mask
the Doctor was set off by a short, pointed beard. The general aspect of the face
COMICO
Io uo uendendo altre frottole e sole
fur non conratto mai serra bolletta;
E per più far la mercanta perfetta.
Accresco il capital di capriole.

MORTE
D'altarlo mio tu per jottare:
Sali inuain di tua comedy uii, ó faceto,
E jo inuain, ch'io fai far decreto
Nella Tragedia mia sali mortali.

Harlequin
Engraving by Giuseppe-Maria Mitelli (1634–1718)
Il Capitano, or The Lover.
Modest women wore long-sleeved, simple garments. A folded kerchief, pinned at the neck, might take the place of a collar. A white linen apron was a common accessory. Bracelets, chokers, long strings of pearls, and small earrings were popular. Jeweled rings, buttons, and pendants were worn.

Ladies' shoes were similar to men's styles and often had red heels. Other accessories for women included a muff, or folding, purse, and mask (in public).

RESTORATION 1660–1715

General Characteristics

A frivolous abundance of ribbons, curls, and exposed shoulders was popular. The waistline returned first to its original position and later to a lower line. Small shoulders, narrow coats, and skirts widening at the bottom created a narrow silhouette. The early frivolity gradually stiffened into a rigid and dignified style.

In addition to the brocades, velvets, satins, and velours available, linen and cotton prints began to be produced. Lace was used for trimming sleeves, coats, aprons, cravats, stomachers, petticoats, and handkerchiefs.

Dress for Men

The white shirt was made of fine fabric and was extremely light and smooth to the touch. It was fitted close to the body and sleeves. The neck was finished with a drawstring. Over the shirt was sometimes worn a waistcoat.

Two types of coat were popular. One was very short (length) and allowed the shirt to show around the waist. The cassock coat, was fitted in the body, above-the-knee length, and flared from the hip to the hem. This coat was collarless and buttoned down the front from neck to hem. It was often worn over the chest down to reveal a puff of shirt and a bunch of ribbons at the waist. Both coats had short sleeves which exposed the shoulders of the shirt might be caught into puffs with ribbons. The cassock coat had three-quarter-length sleeves with large turned cuffs.

As the period progressed, waistcoats became more important along the lines of the coat, the waistcoat also had buttons to hem, often had long fitted sleeves, and could match with the coat.

With the short jacket were worn either the tubular purse.
period or the new petticoat breeches (a full, open-pant like modern culottes). The latter was often profusely with ribbon loops at the bottom edge and on the sides. Anger coat, full knee breeches were more common. By the period, breeches were closer fitting and buttoned or neatly below the knee. Above-the-knee length were worn under or over the Although boots were no longer worn for dress occasions, were sometimes still worn, gartered to allow the lace ribbon loops at the bottom edge and on the sides. collar with a front pleat might be tied at the neck. A pair set on a band might be substituted by conservative folk. As progressed, the cravat came into fashion. A long strip e cloth with lace ends, the cravat was wrapped around ver the shirt collar) and tied in the front with a bow or ribbon tied in a bow was sometimes added under the.

Vigs luxuriant curls were fashionable for men. Parted e, the hair was dressed to rest on the chest and down the enteleman's own hair was clipped short. A cap was worn when the wig was removed at home.

Crown hats developed with high crowns and stiff, s. By 1690 men were wearing wider hats, turning up h three sides, and the resulting tricom hat became the ar style for the next century. The brim edges were h brided or ostrich.

Women might have short sleeves or be sleeveless. The puffed ves tied with ribbons showed below the bodice sleeves. e sleeves were close fitting to just below the elbow and a flounce of lace or a puff of chemise. The waist of the ed to the natural waist or lower. The long, stiffened t was sometimes duplicated in the back. The neckline w wide Bertha collar of the previous period. The comb underbodice and an overgown created a square neck- or scarf was sometimes draped to fill the neckline, or might be visible. A wide, deep collar was worn by many en. Gown revealed part of the bodice front and the decat. light have a train and was often draped back,
Molière in Spite of Himself. This costume for King Louis began with all white fabrics. The variations of color were carefully painted onto the fabric to suggest a watercolor painting come to life. Designed by Hilary Sherred for Colonades Theater Lab. Photo by Diane Gorodnitzki.

Heartbreak House. Dyeing techniques can produce interesting costume effects. This costume for Hesione was shaded from blue to burgundy by being dipped in successive dye baths, with areas of each color left undyed by the next solution. Designed by the author for SoHo Repertory Company.
THE MAGIC GARMENT

Principles of Costume Design

REBECCA CUNNINGHAM
REHEARSAL MATERIALS
Audition Form

*Imaginary Invalid*  Novembre 11, 12, 13

Name________________________________ Grade______________

Height_____________________________ Hair Color________________________

5th hour teacher_________________________  6th hour teacher________________________

Home Phone#_________ What is your primary mode of transportation?______________

Please Note:
Rehearsals will generally run after school on Monday through Friday from 3:00pm to 5:30pm. These rehearsals will start on Monday, Sept 13. During the week of Nov. 8 through Nov. 10, rehearsals will be later in the evening. Actor’s call will be at 6:00pm on performance dates. Crew call will be 5:30pm. The set strike will occur on Nov. 13 after the show, and last until the stage is cleared, and all make-up, props and costumes are put away. **All cast and crew are required to participate.** Also, all cast and crew will be expected to participate in at least one of the work parties to build the set for the show. The first of these will occur in October. Once the schedule is handed out, you will be expected to be at all the rehearsals you are scheduled for. That means arranging for time off from work, or other activities. **YOU MUST LIST ALL POSSIBLE CONFLICTS ON THIS AUDITION FORM.** Any absence from rehearsal other than the reasons you put on this form may be considered unexcused, and therefore grounds for dismissal from the play. It is very important that you review your schedule carefully, and let us know immediately of any changes that may occur. Actors will be asked to furnish part of their costumes, and buy a make-up kit ($14) for the production.

Please list any conflicts you have (recurring or one-time only) between now and November 13. Be complete! List dates and times. Let us know if any of these conflicts can be moved, if necessary.

Do you have an after school job? __yes__ no  Is your schedule flexible? __yes__ no

Are you available for weekend rehearsals? _____yes any time  _____Saturdays are okay  _____Sundays are okay  _____Sunday evenings are okay

What experience do you have on stage or backstage? Please be complete, and specific.

*****Do you have any special talents, or a knack for doing something? (artistic, juggling, gymnastic, playing an instrument, dance, music, athletics, etc.)

What part(s) are you interested in? _____ I will take any part offered
I would be willing to take an understudy part. ___yes  ___no
(As an understudy, you would be asked to attend 2/3 of all rehearsals, and fill in for an actor if they are sick. If an actor is removed from a role, or too ill to continue, you would take his or her place from that point on.)

All persons cast in the production are encouraged to help out in a behind-the-scenes capacity. Please indicate the areas you are most interested in helping with. (1 for 1st choice, 2 for 2nd choice, etc.) Take a look at the job descriptions sheet (orange packet) to get an idea of what each job involves.

I am interested in working on the production crew in the following area(s). Please indicate numerical preference:

____ Set  ____ Props  ____ Sound  ____ Make-up
____ Assist. Directing  ____ Costumes  ____ Publicity  ____ Running Crew
____ Stage-Manager-in-training

Would you be interested in taking a leadership position on one of these crews? (i.e. Costumes Chief, Sound designer, etc.)

If you would like to take on extra responsibility, please fill out a crew application, and turn it in ASAP. Whether you decide to do this or not, it will not affect the casting decision whatsoever.

_____ Even if I am not cast, I would like to be involved on one of the crews I checked above.

_____ I’m really just interested in an on-stage role at this time. I’d rather not help out back stage if I am not cast in the show.

What can you bring to this production if you were to be chosen as a member of the cast/crew?

What does having a “professional attitude” mean to you?
Company Rules
for the RHS Drama Department Production of
Imaginary Invalid Nov. 11, 12, 13

1. No person is excused from rehearsals without previous permission.
2. Each person must be available on ALL scheduled rehearsals or meetings (except those in which he/she is not involved or from which he/she has been previously excused.
3. An unexcused absence will result in prompt replacement of the actor or crew member.
4. If you are removed from the cast or crew of this production, you will not be considered for another show.
5. A student will be dropped from the cast of crew at any time the Director deems necessary (i.e. discipline problems, apathy, insubordination, line memorization problems, destroying cast morale)
6. Lines MUST be memorized by the dates indicated on the rehearsal schedule.
7. Remember, other responsibilities often present themselves. This must come first!!!
8. All actors must obey backstage rules and expectations, and obey the personnel in charge.
9. A minimum of 15 hours of work on the set will be required for each cast member. Every member of the cast and crew will participate in the strike.
10. Actors will make themselves available for costume fittings; they will be responsible for caring for the costumes, and returning them in good condition.
11. There will be no leaving during rehearsals for food or drinks.
12. Actors will be required to purchase an individual makeup kit for $14 if they do not already own stage makeup. They must learn how to apply their own make-up (training workshop will be provided.)
13. We do not sacrifice academics for the arts. Academic grades must be kept in good order during the period of participation in the production. Director may check up on grades.
14. All actors will be on time for rehearsals and bring the appropriate materials- i.e. scripts and pencils.
15. Actors need to be available if extra rehearsals are needed. Prior notice will be given.
16. Actors/Crew chiefs are responsible for scripts. You may write in them, but you will reimburse the Drama Department $6.00 to replace a lost script.
17. All crew members will be on time to scheduled meetings/rehearsals/performances and will fulfill all responsibilities for their positions.
18. All actors and crew are expected to sign in for all rehearsals, meetings, and performances. The stage manager will post the sign in sheets in the drama room.
19. All rehearsals are closed; there will be no visitors allowed.
20. No actor or crew member will purchase anything for this production without the Director’s okay and a Purchase Order. Purchases made without Purchase Orders will not be reimbursed.
21. All cast and crew members will conduct themselves in a cooperative spirit and will adopt a PROFESSIONAL attitude toward their roles, the cast and crew, and toward this production.
22. All cast and crew actively involved in the production (i.e. running crew, costumers, dressers, etc.) need to clear their schedules for the week of Nov. 8-13. ****Parents need to avoid scheduling appointments that would take students away from rehearsals or performances.

I, __________________ have read and understood the information and Company Rules on this form. I understand that if I am accepted as a part of the cast or crew, my presence and cooperation are vital to the success of the show. I am interested in being a part of the production, and I will abide by the Company Rules, and uphold the standard of professionalism and excellence if I am accepted.

__________________________          ______________________
Student signature                     date

To be considered for a position, you must have a parent signature as well.

__________________________          ______________________
Parent signature                     date
## Imaginary Invalid
### Scene Breakdown

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Act/scene #</th>
<th>Page #</th>
<th>Characters</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ACT I</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>I.1</td>
<td>43-44</td>
<td>Ar</td>
<td>&quot;Medical Bills&quot;</td>
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<td>I.2</td>
<td>44-45</td>
<td>Toin, Ar</td>
<td>&quot;Who’s the boss&quot;</td>
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<td>I.3</td>
<td>45-47</td>
<td>Toin, Ang</td>
<td>&quot;Lovestruck&quot;</td>
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<td>I.4</td>
<td>47-51</td>
<td>Ar, Ang, Toin</td>
<td>&quot;Unexpected news&quot;</td>
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<td>I.5</td>
<td>51-52</td>
<td>Bel, Ar, Toin</td>
<td>&quot;Mama’s boy&quot;</td>
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<td>I.6</td>
<td>52-55</td>
<td>Ar, Notary, Bel</td>
<td>&quot;Trap&quot;</td>
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<td>I.7</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>Toin, Ang</td>
<td>&quot;Call reinforcements&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>I.8</td>
<td>56-61</td>
<td>Polich, Night Watch, woman</td>
<td>&quot;Musical interlude #1&quot;</td>
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<td><strong>ACT II</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>II.1</td>
<td>62-64</td>
<td>Toin, Cle, Ar, Ang</td>
<td>&quot;Music teacher?&quot;</td>
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<td>II.2</td>
<td>64-68</td>
<td>Toin, Ar, Ang, TD, MD, Cle</td>
<td>&quot;Rival!&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>II.3</td>
<td>68-71</td>
<td>(Toin, Ar, TD, MD) Cle, Ang</td>
<td>&quot;Impro Opera&quot;</td>
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<td>II.4</td>
<td>71-74</td>
<td>Ar, Cle, Bel, TD, MD, Toin, Ang</td>
<td>&quot;The noose tightens&quot;</td>
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<td>II.5</td>
<td>75-77</td>
<td>Louison, Argan</td>
<td>&quot;Liar!&quot;</td>
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<td>77</td>
<td>Argan, Beralde</td>
<td>&quot;Entertainment&quot;</td>
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<td>II.7</td>
<td>77-78</td>
<td>4 gypsies, Ar, Ber, 2 Nightwatch(?)</td>
<td>&quot;Musical interlude #2&quot;</td>
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<td>80-85</td>
<td>Ber, Ar, Toin</td>
<td>&quot;About Doctors&quot;</td>
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<td>85-87</td>
<td>Ar, Ber, Toin, Purgon, Fleurant</td>
<td>&quot;Dead Meat&quot;</td>
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<td>87-93</td>
<td>Ar, Ber, Toin</td>
<td>&quot;Fake Doc&quot;</td>
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<td>III.4</td>
<td>93-96</td>
<td>Toin, Bel, Ar, Ang, Cle, Ber</td>
<td>&quot;Fake Dead&quot;</td>
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<td>All cast</td>
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Commedia Games/Warmups (Taken from Barry Grantham’s *Playing Commedia*, Nick Hern Books, UK, 2000.

HA

SILLY WALKS
--walk across the circle in a comedic way, accompanied by vocalization. Use rhythm and repetition (hen flapping wings & clucking)

MAKE YOURSELF LAUGH

HARLEQUIN KNEES BEND
Start in 2ns position
1- demi plie
2- increase the bend
3- grand plie
4- straighten back to standing
Assume an increasing annoyed expression as you go down, deadpan as you come up.

HARLEQUIN SURPRISED
1- Raise the shoulders. Mime sudden surprise (jaw drops)
2- Sudden drop to full knee bend (I don’t believe it)
3- Sharply drop shoulders (slight aggressive)
4- Slowly straighten knees, wobble head from side to side (nonchalant- “see if I care”)

HARLEQUIN HEARS NO GOOD OF HIMSELF
1- Raise right shoulder
2- Lunge right leg to the right, head and body facing front, but stick out ear (listening)
3- Drop right shoulder suddenly (Fancy saying that!)
4- Slowly return to upright position (mumble grumble)

PUT ON A HAPPY FACE
Wipe a smile on going up, off going down. Practice with both hands.
Mirror?

HAPPY FACE DUO
Partners can change their own or each other’s expression

SAD TO HAPPY SCALE
Make the most miserable face and body expression.
Make the most joyful.
Find snapshots in between as the instructor counts down and up.
1-8 from sad to happy
8-1 from happy to sad- hold each number for 5 seconds.
JUMPING THE SCALE
Remember the order of the pictures—Leader will call out random numbers and they will hold for 5 seconds.

WARM UP HANDS
Rotate wrists singly, then together, Inward and Outward. In=negative Out= positive
7 rotations out-happy, 7 in sad (go by degrees for each rotation.
3 out happy, 3 in sad
1 ½ out happy, 1 ½ in sad
½ out happy, ½ in sad

PIERROT ROTATIONS
Arms out to sides, rotate from elbows.
As you rotate outwards (happy), bend knees into demi plie, end arms up.
As you rotate inwards,(sad) stand and turn knees inward and slump the body.

SHOULDER MOVEMENTS
Warm up shoulders.
Mirror your partner- add expressions to various shoulder movements.

FOOT ROTATIONS
Warm up feet
BOLD AND SHY
4 rotations feet outward=bold (end on flexed foot, heel down.)
4 rotations hands outward, as you extend the arm= bold

4 rotations hand inward, bring arm in to body.
4 rotations foot, bring foot in, end on toe touching floor. =shy

HEAD WARM UP,
8 counts R, front, L, front
8 counts L, front, R, front
then add taking small steps forward 8, back 8

TIPPING HEAD
8 counts R, center, L, center
8 counts L,center, R, center
JAUNTY WALK
7 counts start on right foot, feet turned out,
Hold on 8th count
Step back with left foot, 7 counts back
Hold on 8th count.

Again, tipping head the same direction as the feet.
NODDING HEAD
8 counts forward, center, back, center
8 counts back, center, forward, center
add in plies and straight, with facial expression “what is that? Look at it go”

JUMPS
1- jump, land feet apart, knees bent
2- draw feet together by sliding along floor

QUARTER TURNS
1- jump quarter to R
2- draw legs together
3- jump to back
4- draw legs together
5- jump to L draw
6- legs together
7- jump front
8- legs together.

Again, this time
1- jump quarter to R
2- turn to back as you draw feet together
3- jump quarter to L
4- turn to front as you draw your feet together
5- jump half circle to back
6- turn to front as you bring feet together
7- jump full turn, (face front
8- hold pose

FREE QUARTER JUMPS
Jump as a reaction to people or sounds- divide into small groups
Haunted house
Scaring kids
Squishing frogs
Jumping puddles

DIRECTIONAL LUNGES
Lunge to all 8 positions, return on off beat (1 & 2& etc.) Torso front
1- R
2- R
3- R
4- R
5- L (straight back
6, 7, 8, R
RANDOM LUNGES
Leader calls out a number to lunge to.

THE LANTERN
1. Sway to 3
2. Sway to 7
3. Sway to 2, step on right foot
4. Sway to 6, step back on left foot
5. Sway to 4, step back on right foot
6. Sway to 8, step forward on left foot
7. Sway to 3, on right foot
8. Sway to 7 on left

THE LANTERN FIGURE 8
1, 2, 3 steps clockwise R L R, 4 draw left foot closed, don’t put weight on it
1, 2, 3 steps clockwise LRL, 4 draw right foot closed

Run the two lantern exercises back to back.

RIBCAGE DRILLS
Side to side- arms at sides, don’t move anything else
Front and Back- arms at sides.
Circles, both clockwise and counter clockwise.

HIP ISOLATIONS
Side to side
Front to back
quarter front, R, back, L.
Quarter front, L, Back, R
Circle, both ways.

LEANS
Lean from waist, to all directions, clockwise and counter.

TAPIS WALK
Start SL, face front, torso face dir. 3.
Feet straight to 3, knees tied together, small steps, heel hits first.

1/ 2345678 walk facing the way you’re going (3)
2/234 face audience
5678 face your direction
3/2 audience
34 your direction
5 audience, 6 turn
7 audience, 8 turn
4/ 8 tapis exit
Imaginary Invalid
by Kristin George
RICHLAND HIGH SCHOOL
PROUDLY PRESENTS

Moliere's THE IMAGINARY INVALID

November 11, 12 and 13
at 7:30 pm in the
RHS AUDITORIUM
STUDENTS/SENIORS $4  ADULTS $6
Imaginary Invalid
Production photos

Richland High School
November 13, 2004
Richland Highschool
Proudly Presents
Molière's
THE
IMAGINARY
INVALID

Translated by Mildred Marmur
Directed by Dawn Schoepflin

November 11, 12 & 13 2004
at 7:30pm in the
Richland Highschool Auditorium

Come and say HI to the cast
after the show on the right
side of the auditorium!

ENJOY THE SHOW!
The Imaginary Invalid  
by Molière

Act 1
Scene 1: Argan tells Angelique of her arranged marriage
Scene 2: Beline and M. Bonnfoy plot against Argan

Interlude 1
(Polichinelle, old women, Night Watch)

Act 2
Scene 1: Cleante comes to visit Angelique
Scene 2: M. Diafoirus and Thomas come to visit
Scene 3: Louison tells Argan about Angelique and Cleante

Interlude 2
(Gypsies, Polichinelle, Night watch)

Act 3
Scene 1: Beralde tries to convince Argan he is not sick
Scene 2: M. Purgon threatens Argan
Scene 3: Argan's "death"

Interlude 3
("Doctors", Argan)

The Players

Argan........................................ Kevin Harris
Toinette..................................... Amy Narquis
Beline....................................... Leslie Wolfe
Angelique................................. Rebecca Anderson
Louison................................. Samantha Erickson
Beralde.................................... Melissa Queen
Cleante.................................. Sam Turner
Monsieur Diafoirus.............. John Bagaglio
Thomas Diafoirus.............. John Levesque
Monsieur Purgon.............. Jason Reinhardt
Monsieur Fleuart.............. Josh Stanfield
Monsieur Bonnefoi........ Mason Forsyth
Polichinelle......................... Stephen Baird
Night Watch/Gypsy........... Travis Garland
Gypsy................................. Lauren Smith
Gypsy/Understudy.......... Megan Gifford
Understudy....................... Bryan Gorley
Biographies

Dawn Schoepfli: Mrs. Schoepfli is happy to be at Richland High School for her 5th year as the Drama Department Advisor. In addition to producing and directing 12 productions here at Richland High School, she has participated, both on stage and off, in many plays at CSC, Richland Players, Gonzaga University, and Eastern Washington University. She has a bachelor’s degree with a double major in Theater Arts and English from Gonzaga University, and a teaching endorsement in Drama from Eastern Washington University. She is currently working on her Master’s Degree in Theatre Production from Central Washington University. This production is her culminating project for the degree.

Greg Frickling: Mr. Frickling teaches choir and musical theatre at RHS. He has a Masters in Choral Conducting from Central Washington University, where he also studied theater. As a performer, he played the role of Bernardo in CWU’s production of West Side Story. He has been involved in Leatherworth Summer Theatre productions over the past two summers; roles included Fagin in Oliver, Will in Oklahoma, Tommy in Annie and Your Gun, and Pharoah in Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat. Previous experiences at Shanata High School include Director for productions of Grease, Seven Brides For Seven Brothers, The Secret Garden, and Fiddler on the Roof. He has been Musical Director for productions of West Side Story, Into the Woods, and Little Shop of Horrors.

Kristin Gordon George: Ms. George is a Gonzaga University Graduate with a Bachelor’s degree in Music, with an emphasis in Voice/Composition. She lives in Boulder, Colorado, where she teaches voice and piano, directs a church choir, and writes music. Kevin Harrill: Kevin is a senior this year and plays the part of Argos in this production. This is his sixth play at RHS and he hopes to continue with drama after high school. In his spare time Kevin enjoys drawing and spending time with his family, especially his niece and nephew.

Bea Ur: Bea is a junior this year and has participated in many plays at RHS and also in the community. She loves drama, singing, and especially spending time with her friends. She would like to thank her family, friends and God.

Amy Nagel: Amy is a senior this year and is in her 9th production at RHS. She plans to study sports medicine and acting at college.

Rebecca Anderson: Rebecca is a senior this year and is involved with Chamber choir. She is also the Drama club president, attends CBC and also participates in activities at her church. Rebecca hopes everyone enjoys the show.

Sam Turner: Sam Turner is a freshman and this is his first high school play. He loves acting, reading, and playing the violin.

Mollie Queen: Mollie is a senior and this is her first year at RHS. Previously, she has performed with the musical theater class and played flute in last year’s “Guys and Dolls” pit orchestra. After this year she plans to attend college where she will study English and Russian.

Samantha Erickson: Samantha has been in several plays at RHS including Don Quixote, Bye Bye Birdie, Guys and Dolls, and MT:AAST. She is also involved in the Jazz and Chamber choirs.

John Bagdon: John is a senior and will be portraying Monsieur Danglars in this production. This is his 4th RHS production and 10th overall. He will be attending the University of Idaho to study theater and history.

John Bevesque: John is a junior and has been in several productions at RHS. Most recently he portrayed Walter Wolowski in MT:AAST. He is now portraying M. Danglars.

Jason Rahn: Jason is a junior and has participated in productions here at RHS. He plays Monsieur Pargue in this production. Jason is also a member of the school newspaper “The Sandstorm”.

Josh Stanfield: Josh is a junior this year and “The Imaginary Invalid” is his sixth play at RHS. He plays the part of Monsieur Financier, the apothecary in this production. He enjoys the 80’s in general and is very excited for this year’s musical “Little Shop of Horrors”.

Stephen Bald: Stephen is a junior this year and “The Imaginary Invalid” is his 3rd RHS play. He started performing skin at scsctamp and still loves being on stage. He enjoys music of all nature

Bryan Cogherty: This is Bryan Cogherty’s second play at RHS. He portrayed Sperchuener Jones in last year’s production of MT:AAST. He is very excited to be involved in another play at RHS and especially enjoys spending time with the other actors.

Megan Gifford: Megan is a junior this year. She participated in the Musical theater class last year and this is her first play at RHS. She has enjoyed her part as a guppy in this production and “pancing” about on stage.

Travis Garland: Travis is a sophomore and this is his first play at RHS. He also acted as Bugay Malone in 7th grade and Nathan Dome in 8th. He also plays the guitar.

He is the eldest of six brothers and sisters. Travis hopes everyone enjoys the production and would like to thank his family and friends for support.

Mason Forsyth: Mason is a junior this year and has been in several other RHS plays. He plays Monsieur Bonefoy in this production.

Lauren Smith: Lauren is a sophomore and this is her 4th play she has been in at RHS. She has enjoyed spending time with her fellow actors and would like to thank friends and the support of her family.

The Crew

Director: Dawn Schoepfli
Music Director: Greg Frickling
Music Composer: Kristin Gordon George
Lyrics: Mildred Marmur
Assistant Director: Austin Reginald
Stage Manager: Maggie Gall
Assistant Stage Manager: Beth Galliprifi
Rehearsal Stage Manager: Nic Gallihan
House Manager: Caleb Gayll
Poster & Program Designer: Kevin Harris

Makeup: Stephanie Edlon (Chief) Rachael Dickinson, Alekha Davis, Shayla Mcke, Rain cellie, Janelle Hammerstrom, Sage Joslin, Megan Gifford

Props: Ann Zimmer⦼schneid (Chief), Megan Gifford, Alex Swensen, Beth Galliprifi, Angsty McPherson, Nora Duncan, Kevin Harris

Gestures: Gestures by Norcosto, Shayla Mcke, (Chief), Victoria Riosley, Beth Galliprifi, Robes by Her Jones

Publicity: Kevin Harris (Chief), Ann Zimmer⦼schneid, Alex Swensen, Beth Galliprifi, Sam Turner

Set: David Henderson (Chief), Nic Gallihan, Alex Swensen, Jackey Grook
Nick bowery, Gaelle Quirk , Jessica Welch, Becca Anderson

String Quartet Julie Earnl (1st Violin) Emelie Young (2nd Violin) Jeanette Lilly (Viole) Mari Hove(Gello)

Ranahit Crew: Beth Galliprifi, Alex Swensen, Jackey Grook, Nora Duncan, Angsty McPherson, Erika Bull, David Henderson, Aaron Wickensham,
Welcome to our fall production. This play is quite special to me because it is the culmination of my work toward a Master's degree from Central Washington University. I chose this particular production because it was Molière's last. In the last few years of his life, he became ill with tuberculosis. Doctors of the time could do nothing for him, and he became more and more frustrated with their useless medical remedies. The play satirizes the more incompetent doctors of the time, and puts forth Molière's own philosophy about health and healing. Ironically, Molière himself played the lead role of Argan, the hypochondriac. The Imaginary Invalid was one of Molière's most successful productions, but it was performed only four times with the original cast. On the day of the fourth performance, Molière was very ill. His friends urged him to cancel the production and stay home to rest, but he would have none of it. "What would become of the other actors and theater workers who depend on this performance to earn their daily bread?" he asked them. In the true spirit of the most committed actors, he knew the show must go on. During the final scene, as Argan is being sworn in as a doctor, Molière started coughing up blood. He made it to the end of the show, and went back to his home, where he died later that night.

We have worked very hard to create a play that stays true to the original. This particular translation is unique because it contains the musical interludes that audiences in Molière's time enjoyed. Composer Kristin Gordon George created original music especially for this production. Thank you for supporting our efforts and attending our production this evening.

Phillip & Terry Harris
Dan Schoepflin
Jim Zimmerschied
Abadan Copiers
Academy of Children's Theater
Jim Heckel of Herff-Jones for loaning us robes
Don Gordon for the beautiful work on the bed posts
Ken and Kathy Anderson
Wes Van Tassel
Greg Fryhling
Carma Kimball
Evan Painter and his family
Allen Eve
Kristin George
Ken Fletcher
Jeff Thomason
Richland Light Opera
Nic Callihan
Marlys McDermott
All the parents for their support

Please turn off all cell phones and beepers during the performance. And no flash photography. Thank You!
High schools hit the stage

Southridge, Richland and Hanford plays open today

By Alyssa Jocson
Herald staff writer

A newlywed couple, an enthusiastic hypochondriac and a lot of blood. All can be found in Tri-City high schools, which present their fall productions, including *The Imaginary Invalid*, *Julius Caesar* and student-written plays, this weekend and next.

Southridge High School student playwrights present three short plays in the school's fall production. *Soap Opera Deux*, written by senior Anna Sapp and recent Southridge graduate Nick Cirignano, is a sequel to renowned playwright David Ives' *Soap Opera*, a one-act play in which repairman Manny falls in love with a washing machine.

*In Deux*, newlywed couple Manny and Mabel, not the washing machine, go on a honeymoon. Meanwhile, hotel manager Lorraine hopes to make Manny her own. Mabel finds herself in confusion, caught between Manny, Lorraine, a blender and its repairman.

You'll have to see the play to figure it all out.

Also featured in Southridge's fall production is junior Joel Money's *First Date*, a look at two teenagers on their first date during which the boy makes numerous mistakes, and junior Jessica Flesher's *Fun-size M&Ms*, in which lead character Robyn encounters a lazy English teacher and an unproductive class.

In addition to writing, Cirignano and Flesher directed their own plays. "I have been heavily involved in the performance and sometimes stage crew aspects of theater but had a desire to try directing," Flesher said.

Richland High School's drama department presents Molière's last play, *The Imaginary Invalid*. The play is set in 1673, the time of the original performance. Molière himself played the lead role of

See Stage, Page D3
Stage: Student musicians

Continued from D1

Argan, a rich man who imagines he is ill and complies with worthless remedies prescribed by quack doctors. He pushes his daughter to marry a doctor so he can receive free treatments. However, Angelique already has her heart set on Cleante, so she appoints Toinette, the saucy maid, to change her father's mind. "The show itself is a farce," said Director Dawn Schoepflin. "The play satirizes the practice of medicine at that time and the people who were blindly devoted to it."

The cast features senior Kevin Harris as Argan, senior Becca Anderson as Angelique, freshman Sam Turner as Cleante and senior Amy Narquis as Toinette. Also included are senior John Bagaglio, junior John Levesque and junior Jason Reinhardt as Argan's doctors. The production also features original compositions by former Tri-City Kristin Gordon George and a live string quartet consisting of student musicians from Richland and Hanford high schools.

Fastfacts

What: The Imaginary Invalid
When: 7:30 p.m. today and Saturday
Where: Richland High auditorium
Cost: $6 adults, $4 students and seniors
Tickets: At the door.

Julius Caesar

What: Julius Caesar
When: 7:30 p.m. today, Saturday and Nov. 19-20
Where: Hanford High auditorium
Cost: $7 adults, $5 students and seniors
Tickets: At the door.

The play satirizes the practice of medicine at that time and the people who were blindly devoted to it. "The show itself is a farce," said Director Dawn Schoepflin. "The play satirizes the practice of medicine at that time and the people who were blindly devoted to it."

The cast features senior Kevin Harris as Argan, senior Becca Anderson as Angelique, freshman Sam Turner as Cleante and senior Amy Narquis as Toinette. Also included are senior John Bagaglio, junior John Levesque and junior Jason Reinhardt as Argan's doctors. The production also features original compositions by former Tri-City Kristin Gordon George and a live string quartet consisting of student musicians from Richland and Hanford high schools.

Drama department adds a twist to Shakespeare's Julius Caesar. Instead of ancient Rome, the play is set in the 20th century as if the Roman Empire never fell. Caesar's rise in power and popularity causes unease among Roman senators, especially Cassius and Brutus. The senators conspire and murder Caesar, creating fear and distress in the general population. Caesar's ally Marc Antony uses those emotions to his advantage to get revenge against Caesar's assassins.

Julius Caesar features senior Jared Brown in the title role, junior Nick Hinkleman as Cassius, senior Andrew Winters as Brutus and senior Alan Gephart as Antony. Also featured is senior Rosemary Stewart as Portia.

News clerk Alyssa Jocson is a senior at Hanford High School. She can be reached at 582-1515 or via e-mail at intern@tri-cityherald.com.