

## PRODUCTION STAFF

Stage Manager ♦ Duffy Ford  
Juggling Coach ♦ Mark Branner  
Lighting Operator ♦ Lucia Saboe  
Sound Operator ♦ Ali Fishburn  
Followspot Operator ♦ Hal Schneider  
Scenic Design Supervisor ♦ Joseph D. Dodd  
Staff Technical Director ♦ Gerald R. Kawaoka  
Staff Assistant T.D. ♦ M.J. Matsushita  
Construction Crew ♦ Kelly Berry, James M. Davenport,  
Mark Ginsberg, Lauren Kepa'a, Vince Liem,  
Audra Lincoln, Cindy Sakumoto, Shen Sugai  
Stage Crew ♦ Mitchell Goo, Lizbeth Grote  
Staff Costume Shop Manager ♦ Hannah Schauer Galli  
Makeup Assistant ♦ Miyuki Hill  
Wardrobe Supervisors ♦ Sadie Yi, Kristen Takemura  
Costume Crew ♦ Nicole Chan, Duffy Ford, Heather Isa,  
Angela Mangano, Samantha Mauro, Taryn Ogawa,  
Sommer Ouchi, Kristen Takemura,  
Cassandra Wormser, Sadie Yi  
Dressers ♦ Edward J. Dyer, Scot Davis, Sara Hatfield,  
Tanya Hitchcox, Welina M. Kādota  
Staff Theatre Manager ♦ Marty Myers  
Staff Facilities Manager ♦ Mark Boyd  
Box Office Supervisors ♦ Jeni Kido, Michael S. Lee  
Box Office Staff ♦ Karen Isozaki, Kaitlyn Ma,  
Cherry Ann Rivera, Melissa Teodoro, Tim Wiler  
Publicity Director ♦ Kristy Miller  
Publicity Assistants ♦ Christy Zehr,  
Theatre 101 & 200E students  
Photographer ♦ Lynn L. Mayekawa  
Graphic Designer ♦ Lauren Forsythe  
Poster Concept ♦ Sandra Finney  
Program Editor/House Manager ♦ Kelly Williams  
Assistant House Managers ♦ James Keawe Bright,  
Eva Hang, Tim Wiler



KENNEDY THEATRE 2000-2001 SEASON  
MAINSTAGE

# La Bête

(The Beast/The Fool)

by David Hirson

Directed by Lurana Donnels O'Malley

November 10, 11, 16, 17, 18 & 19



Department of Theatre and Dance  
College of Arts and Humanities  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

## ARTISTIC STAFF

Director ♦♦ Lurana Donnels O'Malley  
Assistant Director ♦♦ Bridget Kelly  
Scenic Designer ♦♦ Stephen Crowell\*  
Costume Designer ♦♦ Sandra Finney  
Lighting Designer ♦♦ Cora Yamagata  
Sound Designer ♦♦ Josh Fanene  
Properties Design & Construction ♦♦ Kelly Berry,  
James M. Davenport  
Makeup Designer ♦♦ Storm Stafford  
Dramaturg ♦♦ Mark Ginsberg

## CAST (in order of appearance)

Elomire, leader of the troupe ♦♦ Joseph Abraham  
Bejart, his second in command ♦♦ Kelli Melson<sup>o</sup>  
Valere, a troubadour ♦♦ Mark Branner  
Dorine, a serving maid ♦♦ Denise White  
Prince Conti, patron of the troupe ♦♦ Jeremy Pippin  
Madeleine Bejart ♦♦ Kathy Hunter  
De Brie ♦♦ Steven Wasick  
Catherine de Brie ♦♦ Alissa Joy Lee  
Rene du Parc ♦♦ Grant Okubo  
Marquise-Therese du Parc ♦♦ Leia E. Powles

**Time:** 1654

**Place:** Prince Conti's Estate in Pezenas, Languedoc, France

*There will be one intermission, at which time refreshments will be available for purchase on the Upper Lanai.*

\* In partial fulfillment of the Masters of Fine Arts Degree in Scenic Design

<sup>o</sup> In partial fulfillment of the Masters of Fine Arts Degree in Acting

**"It's a well known rule/That no fool's  
greater than a learned fool."**

Molière, *The Learned Ladies*

**Special thanks:** THEA 612, Kathryn Hoffmann and FR 690,  
Lisa Niemczura, Amber Jo Manuel, Sean T.C. O'Malley,  
Yvette Branner, Lee Siegel.



For large print programs and program information in alternative forms, please contact the House Manager, or call Kennedy Theatre Box Office at 956-7655 (v/t).

In consideration of the performers and your fellow audience members, please turn off or silence all pagers, cellular telephones or digital watches. Also, eating, drinking, smoking, photography and/or video recording are not permitted in the auditorium.



**"You are a fool in four  
letters, my son"**

Molière, *Tartuffe*

*Pre-Show chats will take place at 7pm prior to the Friday and Saturday performances.*

Produced by special arrangement with Dramatists Play Service, Inc.

## DIRECTOR'S NOTE:



**Bête.** *noun.* 1. Beast, animal, dumb creature. 2. Fool, blockhead, simpleton. 3. Insect, bug.

Our production of this play is inspired by a recently discovered document from a dusty archive in Languedoc, France. It is thought to have been written by Molière in 1654:

*After falling asleep at my writing desk, I have just awakened from the most appalling and intriguing nightmare. I attribute its inanity to my having consumed, at dinner, an excess of acidic vinaigrette. In the dream, a mighty struggle between a beast and a fool. I suspect that I alone was the winner.\**

Our *La Bête* is that dream.

\*The account of this document is not really true, nor is it truly real.

## THE PLAYWRIGHT

David Hirson, born in 1958, was raised in Manhattan, and received a B.A. in English from Yale, and a Ph.D. from Oxford. Unlike Molière, he was born into a theatrical family: his father was a playwright, and his mother an actress. Prior to his writing *La Bête*, Hirson adapted "Gli Equivoci Nel Semeiante," a 1690 Scarlatti Opera, into English rhyming verse. It was performed at Yale and on Public Radio. *La Bête* opened on Broadway in February 1991. Ironically, although it ran in New York for only four weeks, the play won many accolades such as five Tony nominations, six Drama Desk nominations and the Best Play citation in "Best Plays of 1990-91." *La Bête* also had a successful run in London, where it received the 1992 Olivier Award for Best Comedy of the year. Since writing *La Bête*, Hirson has written another play, *Wrong Mountain*, which, after a successful run, recently closed on Broadway.

## THE PLAY

*La Bête* is written in the style of Molière's plays as translated by Richard Wilbur. Molière, a seventeenth century French playwright (1622-1673), was famous for choosing inflammatory subjects for his work. Molière enjoyed mocking pretension and hypocrisy, often incurring the wrath of the church or aristocracy.

In *La Bête* there are strong echoes of Molière's most popular works, *The Misanthrope* and *Tartuffe*. Elomire's argument with Bejart is almost identical to one between Alceste and Philinte in *The Misanthrope*. The character Valere can be compared to Tartuffe in his outrageousness and in his role as a stranger winning influence over an established and exclusive group of people. Dorine is the classic *soubrette* (saucy serving girl) present in almost all comedy of the period, and takes her name from the same character in *Tartuffe*.



The characters in *La Bête* are also based on the members of Molière's theatre company, and, for the most part, have retained their names.

## MOLIÈRE AND HIS COMPANY

In seventeenth-century France, there were few permanent theatres. Paris boasted only two until 1661. A troupe without a permanent theatre of its own would travel the country, and sometimes abroad, playing at pubs, tennis courts, or whatever venues they could find. Molière was playwright and actor-manager for just such a troupe until their installation by Louis XIV in the Palais Royal Theatre. At the time the play is set, Molière's troupe was under the patronage of a lesser



nobleman, the Prince de Conti. Conti was later to revoke his support of the company in order to gain power within the Catholic Church.

The core of the troupe was the Bejart family, beginning with Madeleine Bejart, for whom Molière left his home and his father's upholstery business to join the theatre. Five Bejarts were members of the troupe, and Molière eventually married the sister (or perhaps daughter) of Madeleine. The Bejarts continued to perform with Molière until his death in 1673.

### MOLIÈRE AND *COMMEDIA DELL'ARTE*

In the same period that Molière was writing his plays, troupes from Italy were touring France with traditional Italian forms of comedy--*Commedia dell'arte* (an improvised form with stock characters) and *Commedia Erudita* (a more literary comedy). While Molière was strongly influenced by *Erudita* in his earliest years, he found greater success in borrowing from the more popular *dell'arte* forms. Many of Molière's plots closely follow the outline for *Commedia dell'arte* improvised performances. While Molière used these outlines only as rough frames for his more developed and scripted work, some comic scenes in his work contain classic *Commedia dell'arte* physical humor 'bits,' called *lazzi*.



Mark Ginsberg  
Dramaturg

**"Yes, man's a beastly creature; but must we then/  
Abandon the society of men?"**  
Molière, *The Misanthrope*

### FOR FURTHER READING

Mongredien, Georges. *Daily Life in The French Theatre at the Time of Molière*. Trans. Claire Elaine Engel. London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd. 1969.

"Production Information - Playnotes: *La Bête*" Court Theatre 1998-1999  
<<http://courtheatre.uchicago.edu/betenotes.html>>

Wadsworth, Philip A. *Molière and the Italian Theatrical Tradition*. 2nd ed. Birmingham: Summa Publications, 1987.

**"Is not a face quite  
different from a mask?/  
Cannot sincerity and cunning art,/  
Reality and semblance,  
be told apart?"**  
Molière, *Tartuffe*



### CURRENTLY PLAYING

Late Night Theatre  
**A Way Home**  
Nov 10, 11, 17 & 18 at 11pm

### COMING ATTRACTIONS

Earle Ernst Lab Theatre  
**Machinal**  
Nov 29, 30, Dec 1 & 2 at 8pm  
Dec 3 at 2pm

