

Feydeau was indeed a great master of comedy. Feydeau's plays have the concutiveness, the force, and the violence of tragedies. They have the same ineluctability. In tragedy, one is stifled with horror. In Feydeau, one is suffocated with laughter. We are occasionally given some respite by the heroes of Shakespeare and Racine, when they melodiously bemoan their fate in beautiful poetry. But Feydeau's heroes haven't got me to complain. It is characteristic of their destiny to make us laugh, while the small atastrophe, which barely manages to come off, paves the way for an immense vexation, which we know, will be only the first in a whole series of new ones. The god Feydeau controls his infernal machine from a practical-jokes-and-novelty shop.

But an infernal machine it is, for it turned itself on its creator.

Georges Feydeau's light was extinguished on June 5, 1921, at dawn. He died from his desire to make us laugh, killed by his own genius.

—from Marcel Achard's appendix to
Let's Get a Divorce! Eric Bentley, Ed.

PRODUCTION STAFF

Assistant to the Director—Sandra Erlandson
Stage Manager—Leo Jones
Lighting Crew—Linda Bredin
Properties—Joan Gossett, Carolyn Johnson
Special Costume Advisor—Sandra Finney
Costume Construction—Molly Burns, Peck Keng Cheong, Constance Edquiban, Debora Farrell, Barbara Hartman, Karen Inouye, Cynthia Kunishige, Phyllis Look, Mei Linh Ly, Celestine Ranney, Gail Stewart
Set Construction—Kevin Murphy, Bob Maeda, Leo Jones, and the students of Drama 260 and 299.
Scene Painters—Bob Maeda, Donald Ranney, Richard Romer, Linda Bredin
Photography—Francis Haar
Publicity—Kitty Heacox
House Managers—Phyllis Look assisted by Bob Cassell, Carol Chee, Jim Farmer, Aileen Hanai, Alberta Nobu, Karen H. Yamashita, Patti Najita, Ann Nishiguchi, Sari Horovitz.
Members—Castle High School Thespian Troupe 566, Mililani High School National Honor Society, Leilehua Thespians, Iolani Drama Group, Punahou Playmakers, Hawaii School for Girls Drama Group.
Box Office—Michele Du Barry, Hunter Johnson, Bonnie Killin, Elsie Yamakawa.

DEPARTMENT OF DRAMA AND THEATRE

FACULTY—Bernard Dukore, chairman; Mark Boyd, James Brandon, Glenn Cannon, Dennis Carroll, Elizabeth Cole, Sandra Finney, Nell Fuson, John Hu, Tamara Hunt, Audrey Jung, Terence Knapp, Edward Langhans, Richard Mason, Yasuki Sasa, Carl Wolz.

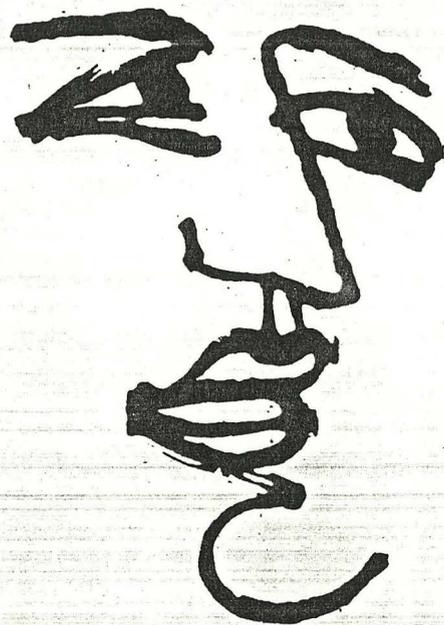
STAFF—Art Caldeira, Takeo Miji, Nancy Takei

GRADUATE ASSISTANTS—Patrick Acampora, Anne Bach, Linda Bredin, James Donohue, Margaret Egbert, Kitty Heacox, Tomas Hernandez, Dan Kluever, Donald Ranney, Richard Romer, Margo Sancken, Elizabeth Wichmann.

UPCOMING EVENTS

October 18, 19, 25, 26, 27 Kumu Kahua
November 8, 9, 10 The Beelzebub Sonata
November 14, 15, 16, 17 Young Choreographers Dance Concert
November 16, 17 Reynard The Fox, a play for Child Audiences
December 5, 6, 7, 8, 11-15 Kabuki Comedy The Scarlet Princess of Edo

A WOMAN FOR HIS MISTRESS



The University Theatre
October 4, 5, 10, 11, 12, 13
Kennedy Theatre
University of Hawaii
Honolulu, Hawaii

THE UNIVERSITY THEATRE
PRESENTS

A GOWN FOR HIS MISTRESS

BY GEORGES FEYDEAU

Directed by GLENN CANNON
Scene and Lighting Design by RICHARD ROMER
Costume Design by MARGARET ANN EGBERT
Technical Direction by MARK BOYD

THE CAST (in order of appearance)

ETIENNE	RON NAKAHARA
YVONNE	MICHELE DU BARRY
MOULINEAUX	RAP REIPLINGER
BASSINET	DICK ROBLEE
MME. AIGREVILLE	DIANA BERGER
SUZANNE	VALERIE BOOLOOTIAN
AUBIN	DOYAL DAVIS
MME. POMPINETTE	VANA VASSALLO
MME. HEBERT	GAIL STEGMAIER
ROSA	JOAN GOSSETT

The action takes place in Paris; the time is the present.

ACT ONE
Moulineaux's home-office
ACT TWO
A furnished apartment
ACT THREE
Same as Act One

There will be a ten-minute intermission between acts two and three.

NOTICE: Smoking is not allowed in the auditorium nor may photographs or recordings be made during performance.

ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

Georges Feydeau, the greatest French comic dramatist after Molière, was born in Paris on December 8, 1862. According to the Goncourts, in their *Journal*, Georges was an enchanting child—and a lazy one. The indefatigable worker who produced over sixty plays, according to the *Oxford Companion to the Theatre*, was, above all else, a great sluggard. He tells in his own words how he found his vocation:

How did I come to write comedies? Very simple! Through pure indolence. Does that surprise you? Are you not aware that indolence is the miraculous mother of industry? I say miraculous, for the father is quite unknown. I was a mere child—six or seven, I can't remember exactly. One evening, I was taken to the theatre. The play? I have forgotten it. But I came home full of enthusiasm. I was infected. The evil had entered into me. Because of it, I did not sleep all night; the next morning, at dawn, I went to work. Biting my tongue, fiercely tugging at my hair which was tangled from a sleepless night, I was writing a play—just like that.

From that blessed day on, whenever I forgot to do my homework or to learn my lessons I flung myself upon my notebook of plays, and my governess, nonplused, left me in peace. People are not sufficiently aware of the uses of dramaturgy.

Some sketches of the adult Feydeau:

Cordial, though somewhat cool. An actor asks him, "Dear Master, did you happen to see me in the play at the Variétés?" "Of course, of course, my dear friend. And I earnestly hope you will forgive me for having done so."

Extremely sensitive beneath an apparent indifference. "I say," says a friend, "I've noticed you have a weakness for deaf-mute beggars." "Oh, I'm like everyone else—I give them money because I'm afraid they'll give me hell."

Ambitious but modest. He is about to be made an officer of the Legion of Honor, and fourteen francs are demanded of him for chancery fees. He does not agree to pay them: "Either they are giving me this rosette because I deserve it, or else they're selling it to me, and in that case I don't want it. Not even for fourteen francs."

A carefree worker. He rehearses the first two acts of *A Gown For His Mistress* for six weeks. Then, after driving the actors to distraction, he writes the most famous scene between eight o'clock at night and midnight.

With success came money. Then, to his sorrow, Feydeau began to play the stock market. At first he made a few substantial killings. Then, one fine day, after an unexpected panic, he found himself several millions in debt—Feydeau experienced the agonies of Dostoevsky and Balzac. Just as they were forced to write novels and more novels, so he was forced to contrive plays and more plays.

It is to material preoccupations that we owe his masterpieces. Perhaps we ought to be glad that Feydeau had reverses on the stock market: they kept him writing plays.

In a Feydeau play, the events are linked together with the precision of a well-oiled machine. The *qui pro quo* precedes the imbroglio. Unexpected *coups de théâtre* superabound, follow one upon the other, and frequently become entangled. It is impossible to cut anything in Feydeau's plays. The most amazing thing about them is the infallibility with which all things are regulated, explained, and justified, even in the most extravagant buffoonery.

Everyone knew Feydeau's first and most important commandment:

"When two of my characters should under no circumstances encounter one another, I throw them together as quickly as possible."

A splendid rule—indispensable to any good dramatist. Sophocles, Shakespeare, and Molière followed it instinctively. Feydeau had the gumption to formulate it. And he never repudiated it.