

December 4-9, 2007

Peck School of the Arts

Department of Theatre

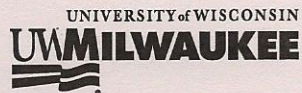
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Ring Round the Moon



UNIVERSITY of WISCONSIN
UWMILWAUKEE

Mainstage Theatre



Peck School of the Arts
Department of Theatre
proudly presents

Ring Round The Moon

Written by: Jean Anouilh

Adapted by: Christopher Fry

Director

Michelle Lopez-Rios

Set Designer

R.H.Graham

Costume Designer

Jeffrey Lieder

Lighting Designer

Stephen Roy White

Props Designer

Sandra J. Strawn

Sound Designer

Christopher Guse

Tango Choreographer

Ed Burgess

Vocal Coach

Raeleen McMillion

Assistant Director

Travis A. Knight

Fight Choreographer

Travis A. Knight

Dramaturg

Tanya Werchowski

Technical Director

Christopher Guse

Director's Notes

"Theatre is, first and foremost, characters."

-Jean Anouilh

These words resonated in each and every one of our rehearsals. Anouilh creates a world of excess and frivolity in *L'invitation au château*. Like spoiled children, these characters act out according to their own selfish needs. However, beneath the façade of social class, wealth, and excess we see a struggle. It is the struggle of the individual to stay true to him or herself.

Through the witty and deplorable actions and reactions of the characters, Anouilh takes a rather serious look at society and class structure. We witness the characters turn social order into chaos. The carelessness and cruelty of the upper class allows them to abuse and mistreat those of the lower class. One is only worthy if one is wealthy.

Though Christopher Fry's adaptation takes liberties from the original script, his poetic words and gift for comedy support the essence of the original script. Peter Brook once said, "Anouilh's plays are recorded improvisations—he is a poet of words acted, and of scenes set, of players performing." Fry embraces these characters and allows them to act out as they will. On the surface, *Ring Round the Moon* may seem to be a frivolous drawing room comedy. However, the undertones of power and privilege are very much alive and speak to a contemporary audience.

The characters' pursuit of happiness by means of money, power, and instant attraction are no different than our modern day pursuit of happiness through fancy sports cars, \$500 cell phones, and instant computer dating. Anouilh throws vivacious characters in a room together, captures the insane actions of human nature, and exposes our dark sides and weaknesses. Fry is able to capture this brilliance and still tell the story through his own unique artistic style.

What better way to spend a cold December evening than in the garden of a French chateau with an unruly group of players?

Michelle Lopez-Rios, Director