

(Logo)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 8, 2010

CONTACT: Jenny Juhl
707-664-2325
jenny.juhl@sonoma.edu

Sonoma State University's
Department of Theatre Arts and Dance
presents

The Imaginary Invalid

By Molière

Translated by Martin Sorrell

**“Is it... life threatening to pretend to be dead?”
Come get sick in the head with *The Imaginary Invalid!***

What: *The Imaginary Invalid*, a comic farce, featuring a talented young cast of SSU students!
Directed By Paul Draper, Original Music by H el ene Renaut, Dramaturgy by Scott Horstein

The Imaginary Invalid is Moliere's very last play, a wild comic ride deep into the imagination of a perfectly healthy man who thinks he is dying, while his wife plots, his children rebel, and his doctors pronounce his imminent demise.

When: **March 19-27, 2010**

Friday, 3/19 – Opening– **7:30 pm**; Saturday, 3/20 – **7:30 pm**; Sunday, 3/21 – **5:00 pm**;
Tuesday, 3/23 – **7:30 pm***; Wednesday, 3/24 – **6:30 pm** – Faculty/Staff Night **,
Thursday, 3/25 – **7:30 pm***; Saturday, 3/27 – **7:30 pm**

* **Post-show discussions** with cast and director

** **5:00 pm Preshow talk** by Moli re/Charpentier scholar and SSU alum, Dr. Stephen Fleck, on how *The Imaginary Invalid* helped invent opera. A light meal and beverages will be available to purchase before the show.

Where: Evert B. Person Theatre is located on campus at Sonoma State University.
1801 E. Cotati Ave, Rohnert Park, CA 94928

How: For tickets or more information visit www.sonoma.edu/tix or call 707-664-2353.
Directions: www.sonoma.edu/performingarts/perf/venues_dir.shtml
General Admission \$15, \$12 FANS (Faculty, Alumni, Seniors), \$8 Students, SSU Students are Free with a valid student I.D. *Group and Family rates available. Contact us!*

The Hook: Argan, a rich, eccentric hypochondriac, will do anything to defeat his fear of dying. When he tries to marry daughter Angelique to idiot doctor Thomas Lillcrap, Argan's rebellious children, strong-willed servant, and scheming wife all swing into action to save themselves from the impending domestic disaster. Can anyone reform Argan's health care? Can anyone convince him he's not really dying? What will triumph,

reality or the power of the imagination? Come and see in *The Imaginary Invalid*, Moliere's final satirical masterpiece.

Points of Interest:

- Molière's outrageous 1673 masterpiece brims with wild physical comedy, deliciously over-the-top characters, and a "heavenly" final musical number that has to be seen to be believed.
- This production honors Molière's structure by including comic/musical interludes done in Commedia 'del Arte style, created by physical theatre wizard, Doyle Ott. He trained at the Clown Conservatory in San Francisco, the Centro Maschere e Strutture Gestuale in Italy, Circus Center, the Dell'arte School, and with the SITI company. He is artistic director of Splash Circus in Emeryville, CA.
- Original choreography will be created by Sonoma State dance major, Gloria Rubio.
- Molière himself played the hypochondriac Argan while he was personally quite ill, and in fact died after the play's fourth performance in February of 1673. Ironically, the physically ill playwright created for himself the role of a well man who imagines himself sick as a way of coping with his fear of dying.
- Director Paul Draper wanted to do *The Imaginary Invalid* since seeing Garland Wright's 1988 production at the Guthrie Theatre, and decided to do it now after his personal experience with hip replacement surgery.
- SSU Alumni and renowned Molière scholar Dr. Stephen Fleck, a professor at Cal State Long Beach, gives a pre-show talk at 5 PM before the Wednesday, March 24 show, on how Moliere and his composer Marc-Antoine Charpentier helped invent opera in the musical numbers of *The Imaginary Invalid*.
- Original Music by Hélène Renaut combines her classical training with her interest in popular genres (folk, pop, rock and even, yes, jazz) in her compositions. Her experience with theater production include writing original music for Marivaux's *The False Servant* (Abydos Theater, Fall 05) and *The Green Bird* by Carlo Gozzi (Sonoma State University, spring 06). More on Helene and her music can be found at www.helenerenaut.com
- Dramaturg Scott Horstein (the historical and textual advisor) became devoted to France and French theater during three years of working in Paris (and celebrating France's 1998 World Cup soccer victory on the streets of Paris).
- Dramaturg Scott Horstein brings the world of *The Imaginary Invalid* to Santa Rosa in his February 11 talk at the Alliance Francaise, "Moliere in Sonoma: Translating Le Malade Imaginaire for an American audience." Details at <http://www.afsantarosa.org/>.
- Actor Nick Christiansen, who plays Argan, is a recent graduate of the Acting Program at Sonoma State, the Artistic Director of Narrow Way Stage Company in Sonoma County. Nick is well known as an actor with Narrow Way, and on the Person Stage where he played in *A Flea in Her Ear* and *Romeo and Juliet*.

ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT of THEATRE ARTS and DANCE

In the Department of Theatre Arts and Dance we are committed to creating, teaching, and learning about theatre that enlightens as well as entertains, that explores the values and ideas of many cultures and times, and that contributes to the artistic and personal growth of both participants and audience.

The Theatre Arts program is closely associated with SSU's Music Department, especially in the area of voice and music theatre. The Department of Theatre Arts and Dance and the Music Department together form the School of Performing Arts, which offers over 200 student performances of theatre, dance, and music each year.

End