

PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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03 March 2014

Monterey Peninsula College Theatre Company presents

THE TAMING OF THE SHREW
by William Shakespeare
Directed by Gary Bolen
Preview Thursday March 13, 2014
Opens (Press Night) March 14, 2014
Plays through March 30, 2014

Tickets on sale now!

March 13-30, 2014

MONTEREY, CA – MPC Theatre Company’s 2014 season opens with William Shakespeare’s legendary “Battle of the Sexes,” THE TAMING OF THE SHREW. This timeless farce that has inspired countless other plays, films and televisions shows is now reimagined as a brawling, boozy Prohibition Era comedy, set in a shady 1930’s speakeasy.

The Story:

Shakespeare’s *The Taming of the Shrew* has seen many incarnations. It has been staged in the traditional “men in tights” versions, as a Western, with a cast of all men, with a cast of all Women and even as a musical (*Kiss Me Kate*). The upcoming MPC Theatre version, directed by Gary Bolen, will set the familiar tale of the curst shrew (Katherine) and the obstinate man (Petruccio) who seeks to tame her in a setting very familiar to American audiences – the boozy, brawling “Speakeasy” era.

“Shrew is really a commedia delle arte play in disguise,” Bolen stated. “As such, it’s filled with familiar archetypes that have been comedic staples since the 1500s.” Such “stock” characters as the elderly smitten miser, the braggart, the wily, scheming servant and his not-so-wise and bumbling sidekick, the young and naïve lovers, the merchant and – of course – the loud and boisterous scold are all present and accounted for in Shakespeare’s comedy. “As I was reading it over again, it struck me how so many of those characters paralleled

the era of the Speakeasy and Prohibition and how neatly they fit into the roles. I had some family members who were, let's just say 'involved' in not exactly legal activities during that time and really related to it. I just thought it would be a kick to see them come to life in this way."

Bolen's production concept is facilitated by MPC Technical Director Dan Beck's barroom design. Similarly to the way Shakespeare's plays all took place on an essentially bare stage at the Globe Theatre, the basic milieu for this production of *SHREW* is a Speakeasy owned by Baptista Minola (James Brady) and set in the town of Padua – *New Jersey*. As indicated by dialogue, the setting "becomes" whatever it needs to be from that point onwards: Petruchio's (Christopher Deacon) home; a road on the way to Padua; the outside of Hortensio's (Roland Shorter) home; and then back again. Audiences will be assisted in determining where the locals shift by the speakeasy's live-in "floozy" who will announce the new setting by way of displaying boxing ring style cards.

Scenic artist Carey Crockett provides murals for the speakeasy that truly evoke the images of the era and it's all accompanied by a period soundtrack and live music by the resident piano player "Morty" (Barney Hulse). Dances such as the Charleston and Black Bottom (choreography by Sherri Beck) break out unexpectedly. The boozing and bawling underscore the budding "romance" of Petruchio and Kate (Ayanna Blount) as well as that of her demure (but manipulative) younger sister Bianca (Amanda Schemmel) and her suitor Lucentio (Daniel Lucido) aided by the shenanigans and shady dealings of Lucentio's wily servant Tranio (Matthew Pavellas) and his bumbling assistant Biondello (Lane Edgington). Throw in the meddling of the old, lecherous miser Gremio (Phil Hopfner), the ominous presence (whether he's actually there or not) of the "Godfather" Vincentio and the frustrated bawling of Petruchio's "strong arm" servant Grumio (John Radley) and you have a formula for comedy madness.

Preview performance on Thursday March 13 at 7:30 PM. Regular performances are Friday & Saturday at 7:30 PM (March 14, 15, 21, 22, 28 & 29) and Sunday at 2:00 PM (March 16, 23, 30) at The MPC Box Office is located at 980 Fremont Street, downtown Monterey. Tickets are \$25 Adults, \$22 Seniors; \$15 Young Adults (16-21) & Military, and \$10 Children 15 & under; 24-hr Advance Purchase \$20; Online \$18 Adults & Seniors.

Tickets may be purchased from the MPC Box Office (831-646-4213) Wednesdays, Thursdays & Fridays from 3:00 PM – 7:00 PM, and 2 hours prior to any performance or online at www.TicketGuys.com

ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

Gary Bolen, Chairman of the Theatre Arts Department at MPC, holds B.A. and M.A. degrees in Theatre from Cal State University Fullerton and an M.F.A. in Acting from UCLA. A member of the Screen Actors Guild/AFTRA and Actors' Equity as well as the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, Mr. Bolen appeared in dozens of television dramas, sit-coms, soaps and national commercials prior to his employment at MPC. His most recent appearances on the Morgan Stock stage were in CHAPTER TWO and as a last minute replacement for one of his cast members in URINETOWN THE MUSICAL. Recent directorial efforts include THE MUSICAL OF MUSICALS (THE MUSICAL!), ONCE UPON A MATTRESS, RENT, COMPANY, BEYOND THERAPY, LIGHT UP THE SKY as well as last year's critically acclaimed MPC production of LES MISERABLES.

ABOUT THE DESIGN TEAM

The creative team includes **Gary Bolen** (*Director*), **Sherri Beck** (*Choreographer*), **Barney Hulse** (*Musical Director*), **D. Thomas Beck** (*Technical Director*), **D. Thomas Beck** (*Scenic & Lighting Design*), **Gloria C. Mattos Hughes** (*Costume Design*), and **Kirsten Clapp** (*Props Design*).

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Campus Parking is required for Thursday evening performances and is (\$2.00)

Performances are:

Thursday	March 13 – 7:30 PM - <i>Preview</i> (All Seats \$12.50)
Friday	March 14 – 7:30 PM - <i>Opening</i>
Saturday	March 15 – 7:30 PM
Sunday	March 16 – 2:00 PM
Friday	March 21 - 7:30 PM



Saturday March 22 - 7:30 PM
Sunday March 23 - 2:00 PM

Friday March 28 - 7:30 PM
Saturday March 29 - 7:30 PM
Sunday March 30 - 2:00 PM – *Closing*

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