

Tartuffe by Molière

The Goshen College Theater Department's "Think for Yourself" Season continues with the comical portrayal of difficult issues such as the exposure of hypocrisy, the hunger for personal wealth at the expense of others, and the unveiling of true allegiances. The GC Players will perform the classic French comedy on March 19-21 and 26-28. **March 28 ASL Interpreted performance 3 pm.** The comedy is directed by Doug Liechty Caskey, Professor of Theater. Tickets can be purchased at the GC Welcome Center beginning March 1 at \$8 general admission and \$5 for students and seniors. The play runs 2 hours and is rated PG for all ages.

Controversy has been with the play since its inception in the 17th century, because the impostor at the focus of the play was posing as a member of the clergy, a powerful entity in France at that time. *Tartuffe* was first produced in 1664 but it was so violently attacked by religious groups as a burlesque on piety that even the tacit support of King Louis XIV was not sufficient to quell the opposition. Molière had to rewrite the play two times, and it was not until five years later that he succeeded in getting it publicly performed in Paris.

The story takes place in the home of the wealthy Orgon, where Tartuffe a pious impostor has insinuated himself. Tartuffe succeeds magnificently in winning the respect and devotion of the head of the house and then tries to marry Orgon's daughter, seduce his wife and secure the deed to his property. Tartuffe nearly gets it all, but an emissary from the King arrives in time to recover the property, free Monsieur Orgon and bring Tartuffe his due. Duplicity is finally exposed, but not before Molière has mercilessly examined the evil that people can commit in the guise of religious fervor, and the dangers which imperil those who would believe only what they choose to believe despite a mountain of evidence to the contrary.

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