



Poculi Ludique Societas

.....✦ PRESENTS ✦.....

# Three Farces



*from*



# Three Lands

## *The Stolen Shrovetide Cock*

by Hans Sachs ( Germany )

## *The Farce of the Fisherman*

by Cornelis Everaert ( Flanders )

## *John John the Husband*

by John Heywood ( England )



Friday, February 8<sup>th</sup> - 8:00 pm  
Saturday, February 9<sup>th</sup> - 8:00 pm  
Sunday, February 10<sup>th</sup> - 2:00 pm



.....✦ Studio Theatre ✦.....

4 Glen Morris Street, Toronto (1blk E of Spadina & N of Harbord)

\$20 Adult / \$15 Senior / \$10 Student

Reservations: 416 978-7986

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# *Three Farces from Three Lands:*

## *The Stolen Shrovetide Cock by Hans Sachs*

translated and edited by Stephen Hannaford and Marion Faber

directed by Julie Florio

Bil Antoniou.....Heinz Toesch, a peasant  
Tara Baxendale.....Martha, his wife  
Scott Moore.....Herman Grampas, his neighbour  
Madeleine Redican.....Schleckmetz, Herman's wife

## *The Farce of the Fisherman by Cornelis Everaert*

translated/edited/adapted by B. Parsons, B. Jongenelen, L.J. Phillips, C. Steenbrugge

directed by Linda J. Phillips

Peter McArthur.....Man  
Daina Valiulis.....Wife  
Madeleine Redican.....Primary Puppeteer  
Daniel Kim.....Assistant Puppeteer  
Emma Letki.....Assistant Puppeteer

## *John John the Husband by John Heywood*

edited by Edd W. Parks and Richmond C. Beatty

directed by Kimberley Radmacher

Bil Antoniou.....John John, the husband  
Kristen Zaza.....Tyb, his wife  
Daniel Kim.....Sir John, the priest

### **Production**

Production Manager, Costumes, Dramaturgy.....Linda J. Phillips  
Production Stage Manager, PLS Office Manager.....Katherine Belyea  
Stage Manager for *John John*.....Emma Letki  
Technical Director.....Paul Stoesser  
Lighting Designer.....Bianca Hossain  
Theatre Technician.....Teo Balcu  
Production Crew.....Laura Lucci, Jenny Salisbury  
Flemish Consultant, Production Assistant.....Charlotte Steenbrugge  
Puppet Design.....Lauren Shepherd, Madeleine Redican, Nell Coleman  
Fight Choreographer.....Luke Marty  
Poster Design.....Irenaldo Fumero  
Box Office, Front of House.....Luella Massey, Laura Philipps

Cast and crew photographs and biographies may be found at <[www.plspl.ca](http://www.plspl.ca)>.

**Please turn off your cell phones and refrain from photography during the performance. The performance has a running time of 1 hour 40 minutes, with a 15 minute intermission.**

## Special thanks to:

Paul Stoesser, Luella Massey, The Centre for Drama, Theatre and Performance Studies

## Director's Note for *The Stolen Shrovetide Cock*

When we began rehearsals, I was completely unaware of Hans Sachs' impact on the cultural history of Germany. It's one thing to write a lot of bawdy populist works, have your religious and political pamphlets banned, create singing and dramatic arts schools, and be immortalized by Richard Wagner as the leading character in the opera *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, centuries after your death. It's quite another to accomplish as much as he did while still having a "day job": which for Sachs was shoemaking.

His Carnival Plays, which included *The Stolen Shrovetide Cock*, were ridiculously popular (and I'm sure you will understand why). Though usually performed in taverns, Sachs is also credited for creating the first German theatre building, an expropriated Catholic Church (incidentally named St. Martha), which is where his Shrovetide plays were presented annually, and for several decades afterwards.

Over the course of his life (1494–1576) he has been credited with writing "4,275 master-songs, 208 dramas, and 1,558 comic stories, fables, histories, figures, comparisons, allegories, dreams, visions, lamentations, controversial dialogues, psalms, religious songs, street and tavern songs, and a few prose dialogues." To say Sachs was "accomplished" is an understatement. I prefer to use the word "inspirational".

(...now back to our day jobs...)

—Julie

## Director's Note for *The Farce of the Fisherman*

Having directed both of the other two farces in the past—*John John* many times with different casts in locations both indoors and out, I was excited to take on the challenge of a play and playwright I knew nothing about. I'm very grateful to Charlotte Steenbrugge for suggesting this delightful farce by Cornelis Evereart, the well-known 16th century Flemish *rederijker* (rhetorician), and for her help with understanding and occasionally rewriting a somewhat stilted translation from Middle Dutch. Evereart's play takes stereotypical misogyny to an amusing new level as the wife manages to talk her way out of a potentially damaging situation to restore marital harmony at the end. The Three Female Saints in the final line refers to the hall in Bruges where the play was performed. For more about Evereart and the *rederijkers* see <<http://wp.me/P2JUCZ-qW>>. When thinking about how to do the play with the smallest possible cast, I realized that my talented friend Nell Coleman's puppets could be the sons. From then on the cartoony puppetry aspect of the play grew in my imagination every time I read it. Fortunately, my human actors are quite capable of holding their own in this crazy world. Enjoy!

—Linda

## Director's Note for *John John*

John Heywood's *John John* is a favourite of PLS, and I am pleased to have this opportunity to explore this text as the latest director of the play. *John John* offers a bawdy inversion of the moral form, while it subverts the structural promise of romantic marital bliss found in typical comedy. In this early 16th-century play, we find familiar types: the cuckolded husband, the shrewish wife, and the less-than-holy priest. The latter two take great enjoyment out of mocking and beguiling poor John John, the husband. For his part, John John just isn't quite as clever as he would like to be. More brawn than brain, he is easily deceived by his wife and the priest as he gets sidetracked with problem-solving tasks and faulty reasoning—which he revels in for a good part of the opening of the play! But if this play echoes the morality plays, there is no obvious moral message revealed in it. None of the characters gain any self-knowledge, nor do they learn any moral lessons. For instance, contrasted to her forebears, like the shrewish Mrs Noah of the mystery cycles or her progeny Kate in *Taming of the Shrew*, Tyb, the wife, does not repent her ways. Instead, the farcical logic of this world lacks moral resolution and offers in its place a circular rhetoric that promises to play out unceasingly. Structurally, the play ends as it begins: with the hapless John searching for his wife who he fears is with the priest, and the audience is left with the sense that this is a daily occurrence which unfolds the same way each time. In *John John* we find “happily ever after” has gone badly amiss!

—Kim

## About PLS

The mission of PLS (Poculi Ludique Societas) is to rediscover the theatrical traditions of the Middle Ages and Renaissance through textual research and dramatic experimentation, and to bring those traditions to life for contemporary audiences of all ages. PLS sponsors productions of early plays, from the beginnings of medieval drama to as late as the middle of the seventeenth century. As part of the Centre for Performance Studies in Early Theatre, PLS operates in affiliation with the Centre for Drama, Theatre and Performance Studies at the University of Toronto. PLS also collaborates with the theatre history research project Records of Early English Drama (REED) at the University of Toronto.

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