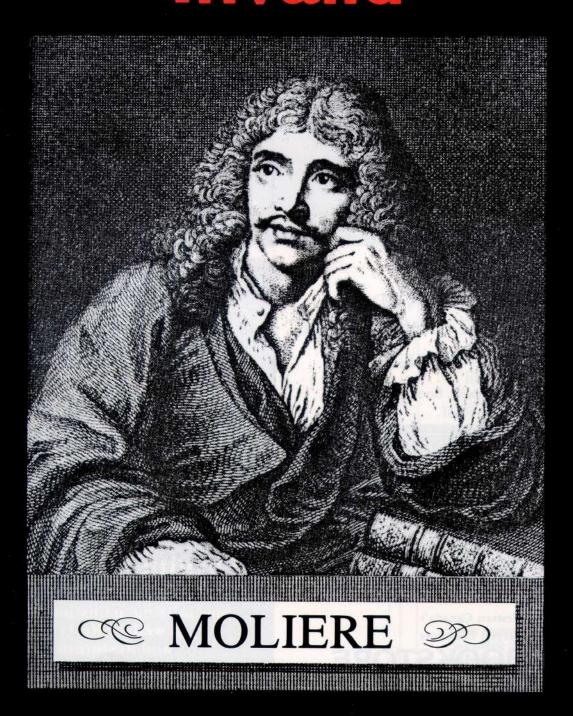
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Directed by Mavor Moore

January 16 - 26 1985

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Chronology of Important Dates

- Jean-Baptiste Poquelin born in Paris.
 Studies at the College de Clermont. According to legend, often taken by his grandfather to watch Italian comedians and French tragedians at the Hotel de Bourgogne. Begins law studies.
- 1638 Birth of Louis XIV.
- 1640 Poquelin meets Madeleine Bejart.
- 1642 Death of Richelieu.
- Death of Louis XIII. Birth of Armande, daughter or sister of Madeleine Bejart and future wife of Moliere. Poquelin founds "L'Illustre Theatre" with the Bejart family and other actors.
- Poquelin adopts the name "Moliere". Bankruptcy of "L'Illustre Theatre." Moliere imprisoned for debt in the Chatelet. Moliere's father pays his debts.
- Moliere and the Bejarts join the Dufresne company. They tour the provinces until 1658.
- Moliere becomes director of the company. Protected by the Prince de Conti.
- 1653-55 Moliere writes farces and his first comedy, L'Etourdi (1655).
- 1656 Le Depit amoureux.
- At the Louvre in Paris, Moliere and his company perform Corneille's Nicomede for the young King, as well as Moliere's own farce Le Docteur amoureux: "The King deigned to laugh."
- Dom Garcie de Navarre ("comedie heroique"). L'Ecole des Maris. Les Facheux, in a "Fete offerte au Roi par Fouquet."
 Louis XIV personally assumes power.
- 1662 Moliere marries Armande. L'Ecole des femmes.
- Le Mariage force. Louis XIV godfather of Moliere's son (who dies shortly after). For the feast given at Versailles by the King for his mistress Mlle de La Valliere, "Les Plaisirs de l'île enchantee," Moliere and his company participate in the great pageants and perform Moliere's La Princesse d'Elide, as well as the first version of Tartuffe, in three acts. Tartuffe banned in Paris. Moliere will fight until 1669 to obtain the authorization to produce it.
- Dom Juan, ou le Festin de Pierre, withdrawn after initial success. Louis XIV names Moliere's company "Troupe du Roy." L'Amour medecin.
- Moliere's health failing. Marital difficulties with Armande. Le Misanthrope (a modest success). Le Medecin malgre lui.
- 1668 Amphitryon. George Dandin. L'Avare (a flop). Moliere and Armande separated, but they continue to act together.
- Third version of *Tartuffe* authorized. *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac* at Chambord.

Œ

Moliere





MOLIERE AS SGANARELL. The actor playing the leading role in his own comedy, about 1660. (Drawing by Gerda Becker With, after an engraving by Simonin.)



1671 Psyche (in collaboration with Corneille and Quinault) in the "salle des machines" at the Tuileries. Les Fourberies de Scapin. La Comtesse d'Escarbagnas at Saint-Germain-en-Laye.

1672 Les Femmes savantes. Death of Madeleine Bejart.

1673 Le Malade imaginaire. February 17: during the fourth performance, Moliere falls ill, and dies the same night.

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MALADY AND MUSICAL COMEDY

As a culmination of a theatrical career, Moliere's comedy, Le Malade imaginaire, could not have struck a more fitting note. In a farce about a hypochondriac intent upon achieving an illusion of vitality and health, the doomed playwright wrote the last of his works which would give him his only triumph over death, the immortality of the great artist.

This comedy about "the imaginary invalid" caps a series of "medical" plays in which the doctor is portrayed as the destroyer of life and health, a figure whose verbal and material magic give him a peculiar power over the gullible. The character was ideally suited to the purposes of an author who delighted in exploiting the acceptance of such illusory notions for reality, so from 1659 on, medicine and doctors are frequently satirized. Le Medecin volant was followed by L'Amour medecin (1665), Le Medecin malgre lui (1666), and by the part of Dom Juan in which Sganarelle is disguised as a doctor. Then too, Monsieur de Pourceaugnac (1669) has heavy satire of medicine, so that the final comedy is very much a reprise of earlier material. Extending the satire in depth and resuming so many things observed throughout his works. Le Malade imaginaire moves far beyond its predecessors in medical farce.

The typically Molieresque twist is that the character who is so intent upon living should dwell as if in suspended animation, bound to his rest and cures. In contrast to this idea, the true magic life - joy in the present moment – is stressed by the young lovers and by Toinette. The message of natural happiness is presented by Beralde as well, and the grasping Beline also expresses her version of present joy through her wish for gold to buy happiness. The wife is a transitional sort of character, thematically speaking, since she is partly one of the group of leeches who live by exploiting illness and death, the doctors and lawyer. They profit from Argan's mania which has made living a hollow mockery by purging and medicating the body until he is nothing but an evacuating, embalmed bag of flesh, to use Beline's terms of description. To go on living, he feels he must limit himself to a deathlike imprisonment; chaining himself to a cane, chair or toilet. The morbid preoccupation with the chance of demise has led him to reject his true healthy nature and take on the stench of death.

So consistently does the author develop a theme in this manner that one may say that an aspect of his style is the use of great paradoxes of the sort, the endless, striking contrasts of truth and its distortions, of fact and fancy, of knowledge and ignorance. There can be no greater paradox than a light comedy about fear of death, but the mastery of Moliere comes to the fore as he creates this very thing.

Le Malade imaginaire is a full development, by the best theatrical means at Moliere's command, of the concept of joyous living and of the "imaginary" obstacles to such living erected by men's fancies.

During the fourth performance of this comedy, on February 17, 1673, Moliere was seized by a paroxysm of coughing in the final ballet, but he insisted upon completing the show. Carried to his home, he was dead within an hour. His final physical efforts, like his whole existence, had been dedicated to the service of his art.

Hallam Walker

DOCTORS AT VERSAILLES

Illness and death were very dreadful at Versailles. As soon as the breath had left the body of a member of the royal family, his or her gilded bed-chamber was turned into a butcher's shop. Lords or ladies-in-waiting, who had spent their lives with the deceased and wereoften in a sad state of grief, were obliged to stand by the bed while the body was chopped to pieces. The head was sawn open and examined; the liver and lights laid aside, the heart, on a silver salver, was given to one duchess and the entrails, in a big silver bowl, to another. Seven or eight doctors made notes of their gruesome findings and pronounced the causes of death; the only cause which invariably escaped their notice was their own incompetence.

Moliere has presented that sort of doctor once and for all; a consultation of big-wigs is ever a scene from one of his plays. The learned, magic, meaningless words, the grave looks at each other, the artful hesitation between one worthless formula and another — all are there. In those days, terrifying in black robes and bonnets, they bled the patient; now, terrifying in white robes and masks, they pump blood into him. The result is the same; the strong live; the weak, after much suffering and expense, both of spirit and of money, die.

The hazards to human life in those days were chilbirth for women, battle for men, babyhood and smallpox for everybody. Old age was not particularly dangerous or disagreeable; people lived to enormous ages and never seem to have become senile. Lauzun rode to hounds every day at eighty-nine. Mme de Ventadour danced a minuet at ninety. Mme de Maintenon, at over seventy, complained bitterly to her confessor that the King insisted on his conjugal rights every day and sometimes twice. She died at eighty-four, but only of boredom. Mme de Clerambault was the best of company at ninety. Le Notre was in perfect health at eighty-eight. Isaac Bartet, one of the King's secretaries, died at a hundred and five, and the Spanish Marquis de Mansera at a hundred and seven, having practically lived on chocolate for years.

The King's first doctor was M. de L'Orme (1584-1678) who had attended Louis XIII and was the fashionable doctor for fifty years. De L'Orme swore by hygiene and applied his theories to himself, with the result that he lived to be ninety-four. 'Why do fish live to such a great age? Because', said he, 'they are never subjected to draughts.' So he spent his days in a sedan chair draped with blankets and lined with hares' fur to ensure that no air could percolate. When obliged to go out, he covered himself with a morocco robe and mask and wore six pairs of stockings and several fur hats. He always kept a bit of garlic in his mouth, incense in his ears and a stalk of rue sticking out of each nostril. He slept in a sort of brick oven, surrounded by hot water bottles, and lived on sheep's tongues and syrup of greengages — he never touched vegetables, raw fruit, jam or pastry. At eighty-seven he married a young wife and wore her out; she died within the year.

Nancy Mitford



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Costumes designed by Brian H. Jackson

Dances arranged by Garry Semeniuk

With SIMON WEBB*

CHARACTERS

Carnival Revellers: Gypsy singers: Pamela Dangelmaier, Julie Atchison; Gypsy dancers: Katarina Thorsen, Claudia Wober; Judge: Tom Carlson; Cavalier: Steve Grant; Policeman: Michael Langton; Priest: Tom Jones; Presiding Physician: Christopher Beck.

Orchestra: Harpsichord: John Burgess; Flute: Beverley Chiu

The action takes place in Paris: in Argan's bed-sitting room, and in the street near his house.

The play is in three acts, with two intermissions.

* Appearing through the courtesy of Canadian Actors' Equity Association

ary invalid

n three acts iste Poquelin, RE (1622-1673) toine Charpentier -1704)

rmed at the 10 February 1673

PRODUCTION

Technical Director	IAN PRATT
	SHERRY DARCUS
	DON GRIFFITHS
Set Construction	ROBERT EBERLE, JOHN HENRICKSON
Costume Supervisor	ROSEMARIE HESELTON
CuttersCH	RISTINA McQUARRIE, ANITA SIMARD
Properties	MELODY ANDERSON
Wigs	TERRY KOZAK

Stage Manager	
Properties Assistants	KATHLEEN MEASURES, NANCY FORD
Assistant Stage Managers .	ROSS PALFREY with DIANA CRUMBACH,
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Box Office CAROL FISHER, M.	ARK HOPKINS, LINDA HUMPHRIES
House Manager	CHRISTINE PLUNKETT
Production	NORMAN YOUNG

Vocal Coach.....STEVEN THORNE

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

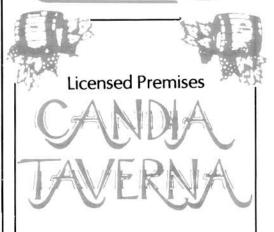
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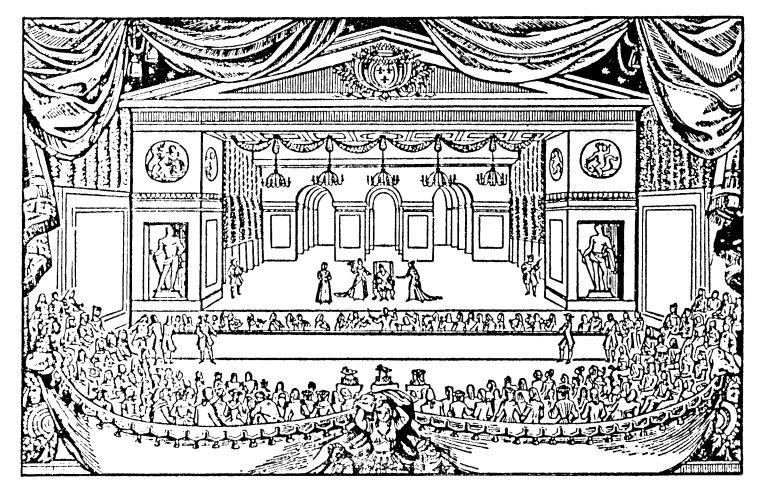
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AN OPEN AIR THEATER AT VERSAILLES. Le Malade imaginaire, the play in which Moliere appeared on the night of his death in 1673, was first produced as part of one of the spectacular festivities that Louis XIV ordered for his country estate outside Paris. (Drawing by Gerda Becker With, after an engraving by Le Pautre.)



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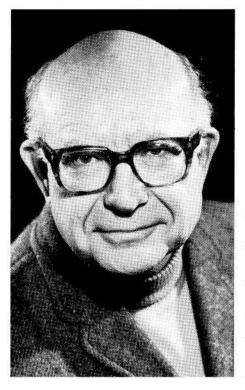
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MAVOR MOORE

Playwright, actor, director, producer, critic and essayist, Mavor Moore has long been in the forefront of modern Canadian theatre, radio, television, films and cultural affairs. The first artist to be appointed Chairman of the Canada Council (1979-83), he is professor emeritus of York University (Toronto) and adjunct professor of Fine Arts at the University of Victoria, B.C. He was CBC-Television's first chief producer, founding director of the Charlottetown Festival and Toronto's St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, founding chairman of the Canadian Theatre Centre and of the Guild of Canadian Playwrights, and winner of the 1982 Drainie Award for lifetime service to broadcasting. He holds the Order of Canada, the Centennial Medal, the Queen's Medal and three honorary doctorates.

SIMON WEBB

Simon Webb is well known in Vancouver as a writer, composer and actor. In the last year he has been seen in various productions at the Arts Club Theatre such as *Reflections on Crooked Walking* for which he received a Jessie Richardson Award, and *The Chairs*. He is also the Artistic Director for the Vancouver Cabaret Society. He has recently appeared at the Vancouver Playhouse in *A Man for all Seasons* and *Terra Nova*. Mr. Webb's previous appearances at the Frederic Wood Theatre include Fadinard in *The Italian Straw Hat* and Semyon Semyonovich Podsekalnikov in *The Suicide*. Last summer he directed *Bedroom Farce* for UBC Stage Campus Summerstock.



A NOTE ON THE PRODUCTION

Le Malade Imaginaire is one of the most "adapted" of classical dramas. In its original form it contained an irrelevant prologue saluting the monarch (Moliere's patron), two only faintly relevant entre-actes, and a dramatically essential finale (in mock Latin) that makes little sense formally without the earlier interludes. Furthermore, the composer Charpentier set a song that Moliere wrote as an alternative prologue, and constantly revised his entre-acte music for later productions.

The present revival retains more of the full text and music than customary, by the device of added connections between the (alternative) prologue, interludes and finale, and the main action. We have sought English equivalents for the punning names of Moliere's medical characters, and in general emphasized the carnival context in which the playwright set his comedy of retreat from life. M.M.

A NOTE ON THE MUSIC

MARC ANTOINE CHARPENTIER (1634-1704), generally considered the most important composer of his generation in France, and writer of much music for plays, was born in Paris in 1634. On his return to France after studying in Rome with Giacomo Carissimi, he wrote the music for a new version of Moliere's Le Mariage force (1672) and collaborated with him again in La Malade Imaginaire (1673). After Moliere's death Charpentier continued to work for the Theatre Francais until 1685; his greatest stage work, Medee, to Corneille's text, was produced in 1693.

In his own lifetime he was considered by many to be a finer musician than Lully, who until his death in 1687 ruled French music with an iron hand. From 1680 to 1688 Charpentier was director of music to the Princess de Guise; from 1679 he composed music for the dauphin's private chapel; in about 1692 he began teaching composition to the duc d'Orleans, the future regent of France; and in 1698 his official functions were further increased when he was made *maitre de musique* at the Ste. Chapelle in Paris.

His works include, besides 24 works for the stage (comedie-ballets, pastorales, etc.), many masses, motets, Te Deums and other sacred choral works; he made use of a comparatively large orchestra and double chorus. In his music for the sacred tragedies performed by the Jesuit community in Paris he established the oratorio in France, and one of these works, Le Reniement de St. Pierre, is considered his masterpiece.

Charpentier composed music for a number of different productions of Le Malade Imaginaire. The production here at UBC has drawn from this rich musical material.





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