

## COMMUNITY THEATER

## Trinity House arms itself for battle of the sexes

By KEELY WYGONIK  
STAFF WRITER

William Shakespeare's way of speaking isn't something you'd hear on a street corner, but his stories are just as relevant today as they were when he wrote them.

Men and women still fall in and out of love, play hard to get, and parents interfere creating madcap chaos.

Trinity House Theatre is giving "The Taming of the Shrew" Shakespeare's classic tale about a battle between the sexes, a 1960s makeover in a production opening this Friday.

"It's kind of over the top comedy," said Scot Martin of Redford who portrays Vincentio. "You could see Charlie Chaplin doing it - it's very physical - it's got charm, and it's funny."

Vincentio is the father who goes to visit his son Lucentio and finds that his son and servant have been up to some trouble. Kind of the equivalent of discovering your child had maxed out your Visa card.

## How men and women relate

"Shakespeare is for everyone," said Martin who teaches English and history to high schoolers at Pearson Education Center in Redford. "This is one of those plays that ages 12 and up can get something out of. It's about the way men and women act and relate to each other."

What: Trinity House Theatre presents William Shakespeare's "The Taming of the Shrew."

When: Friday, April 27 to Sunday, May 20. Performances 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday, 3 p.m. Sunday.

Where: At the theater, 38840 W. Six Mile Road (between Haggerty and I-275) Livonia

Tickets: \$10 general admission, discount for groups of eight people or more, call (734) 484-6302

Guy Snyder has been wanting to do Shakespeare at Trinity House Theatre ever since he made a couple of trips to England and saw the Royal Shakespeare Company in action.

Can we get actors, overcome a natural reluctance to the antiquated language? - these were some of the questions Snyder, a member of the theater's board of directors, pondered before suggesting they do "The Taming of the Shrew."

"It's a good first play," he said. "It's Shakespeare at his finest in terms of entertainment. Come for a very good laugh. It's a very good farce, a comedic look at the marital relationship. We're talking about the stirrings of feminism. What is the role of marriage - it's a partnership. Love within a marriage was a radical concept in Elizabethan times."

Snyder, a Livonia resident,

assistant directs and portrays Gremio, an elderly suitor to one of the women in the play.

Laura Gumina of Farmington Hills is directing, and decided to set the play in the 1960s.

Here's a brief plot summary, compliments of the theater.

Katharina the Shrew matches wits with a "mad brained bridegroom" to create "such a marriage that never was before."

The feminist, Kate, has to make peace with a real "macho guy," Petruchio. "It's a battle royale that triumphs in a 'Groovy Kind of Love' as modern times as it was in Shakespeare's time.

## So much fun

"It's so much fun," said Gumina about the play. "I did research on the Elizabethan era. There was an expectation for women to be demure, soft-spoken, unseen. Katharina is rejected by her dad because she was so self-confident. Her sister Bianca is every man's dream. She giggles a lot, plays up to men."

"If Kate had lived in the 1960s she would have been one of many young women asking for equality, to be taken seriously, and be allowed to make her own choices. There was a social revolution going on in England when Shakespeare wrote this play much like the 1960s."

Gumina likes the battle of words that goes on between characters in the play. "It's really funny, clever," she said. "I



Rehearsing: Scot Martin (left to right), Joe Wisniewski, and Mark Flanders are featured in the Trinity House Theatre production of "The Taming of the Shrew."

have good actors, I just got lucky. They're all young. There's a number under 25. They're full of mischief and energy."

Don't be turned off by the idea of an evening of Shakespeare. "The characters are fun, familiar to us, we know people like them,

that's why they're enduring," said Gumina. "There's music between every scene that fits well."

Trinity is an intimate theater space where you'll feel part of the action, just the way Shakespeare intended.

"When you walk on stage you're almost on top of the audience," said Snyder. "There's a synergy between the cast and the audience. You feel energy from the audience."

"Trinity should be rocking with laughter."

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