

4/18/71

# THE LADY'S NOT FOR BURNING

by  
Christopher  
Fry



THE LADY'S NOT FOR BURNING

by Christopher Fry

CAST

Richard, an orphaned clerk.....Tom Robinson  
Thomas Mendip, a discharged soldier.....Peter Ellison  
Alizon Eliot.....Deborah Ross  
Nicholas Devise.....Ed Raspa  
Margaret Devise, mother of Nicholas..Christel M. Stevens  
Humphrey Devise, brother of Nicholas.....Dana Netherton  
Hebble Tyson, the Mayor.....Eric Scigliano  
Jennet Jourdemayne.....Jeanne Harrison  
The Chaplain.....Peter Aronson  
Edward Tappercoom, a Justice .....C. Brian Scott  
Matthew Skipps.....Craig Mooring

The scene is a room in the house of Hebble Tyson, Mayor of the small market town of Cool Clary. The time is the 15th Century, either more or less or exactly.

Act I

An afternoon in April.

Intermission

(Sunday night, refreshments  
courtesy of Caritas Society)

Act II

An hour later.

Act III

Later, the same night.

Director.....Rand Lee

Assistant Director.....Sue Conlin

Executive Producer.....Alvin Aronson

Set Construction

Bryant Cruse with:  
Nick Patrone  
Lex Hamilton  
Jay Gottlieb  
Gerry Kapolka  
T.H.E.  
Lyn Herrick  
Tom Day

Costumes

Sarah Harrison with:  
Laura Jenkins  
Marie Erickson  
Joanna Fitzick  
Linda Sharp

Lights

Lee Elkins

Program Cover

Eric Scigliano

Make-up

Jan Huttner with:  
Debbie Schifter  
Jeannie Bloss  
Elizabeth Unger  
Ileana Basil  
Ann Horton

Props

Lyn Herrick with:  
Christel Stevens

Prompters

Elly Sawits  
Harold Stone

Sound Effects

Jim LeVan

Props courtesy of  
Oliver Kennta  
Antiques,  
Maryland Ave.

By Arrangement with Dramatist Display Service

# Review

## *St. John's group scores a triumph*

By ANN HASKELL

The Modern Theater Group of St. John's, in a benefit performance for the Caritas Society, scored a resounding triumph last night with its production of Christopher Fry's play, "The Lady's Not for Burning".

Fry, a post-war British playwright whose admirers have linked his name with Shaw, Eliot and Shakespeare himself, shows himself worthy of such exalted praise in "The Lady's Not for Burning," a romantic comedy in blank verse.

In a setting "that is as much 15th Century as anything," the story revolves around the townsfolk of Cool Clary, England, who are gathered up in an uninhibited impish jest: A dashing young soldier, philosophically predisposed to death, tries to talk himself to the gallows to save an innocent young girl from the witches fire.

The laughter is interrupted from time to time by sudden stabs of disenchantment, but the spirit of the play is essentially ebullient; metaphors and similes come galloping from the author's pen so furiously that they almost trip over one another. It is obvious that Fry overwrites, but it is equally obvious that he writes beautifully.

For people who have grown weary of a theater that devaluates the spoken word, listening to Fry can be a rare and refreshing experience that revives one's ability and desire to listen.

If the playwright's lines had been exposed to a poetic verse, last night's play would have died an abrupt and painful death on-stage. But thanks to the restrained direction of Rand Lee, the actors showed themselves capable of bringing out the song in a poetic speech while keeping it conversational.

Peter Ellison (as the soldier) showed his instinct for emphasis and pacing while Jeanne Harrison (the "alleged" witch) delivered her lines with a sparkling variety and style. Christel Stevens gave a bravura performance as the mother; her timing was good and she hurled her voice with all the authority of a seasoned actress.

A special halo was earned by Peter Aronson for his delightful interpretation of a dazed clergyman, and Craig Mooring (as the drunk) projected the sprightly lines of Mr. Fry with great enthusiasm, while Hebble Tyson was singularly original in his performance as the volatile mayor. The entire cast, in fact, showed itself well-suited to act (rather than read) Fry's verses of sportive and polished irony.

At the age of 43, Christopher Fry was considered one of the most exciting talents of the postwar theater, with "A Phoenix Too Frequent," "Venus Observed" and "The Lady's Not For Burning" to his credit. Under a prosaic Labor government, in a theater made brackish by its realism, and during times aggressively unlyrical, he triumphed as a poet-dramatist. A Quaker by conviction, he was Elizabethian by heart and endowment — everything that is intellectual, disciplined and arctic in T.S. Eliot is flowing, fiery and eruptive in Fry.

In recent years, Fry has drifted from travelling on Pegasus to riding on the subway — he left England and the theater for Hollywood and was reported to be writing screenplays under an assumed name.

Fry may have gone to Hollywood but St. John's colorful producer-in-residence Alvin Aronson, and the Modern Theater Group deserve credit for reviving all the richness of his talent in the Francis Scott Key auditorium last night.

## *Candice Bergen signed*

NEW YORK (AP) — Candice Bergen has been signed to star in Paramount Pictures' "T. R. Baskin," a story of an individual in conflict with society which will be produced by Peter Hyams from his own screenplay.

# Evening Capital

Sunny today and Tuesday. High temperature around 70 both days. Clear tonight lows mostly in the mid 40s. Northerly winds becoming 10 to 20 mph today and 5 to 10 mph tonight.

Weather, tide details

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ANNAPOLIS, MD., MONDAY, APRIL 19, 1971



TEN CENTS