



ADAPTED AND DIRECTED BY JAKI DEMAREST
A RUDE MECHANICALS PRODUCTION
IN RESIDENCE AT THE GREENBELT ARTS CENTER
MARCH 24 - APRIL 1, 2023

Filmed in Front of a Live Studio Audience in Glorious, Mod 1970s Technicolor!

#### The Crew

Director	Jaki Demarest
Assistant Directors	Alan Duda and Liana Olear
Art Director	Jaki Demarest
Music: Harp	Diana Dzikiewicz
Music: Banjo	Eric Honour
	Spencer Dye
Fight Choreographer	Rin MacDonald
	Jaki Demarest
	Jaki Demarest and Alan Duda
	Liana Olear and Stephen Duda
	Rachel Duda
	Samuel Kopel
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# Plot Synopsis, or What You're about to see

- I.I. Tom Aimwell, born in London, raised in Manhattan and mired in debt, comes to Lichfield, Kentucky in search of a wealthy wife. For the ruse, he and his best friend Frank Archer play master and servant. They check into the Dew Drop Inn and meet their innkeeper, the loquacious John Boniface, and his spirited daughter, Cherry. Boniface sets Cherry to finding out more about their guests, and she starts up a flirtation with Archer.
- **II.I.** We meet the lovely, wealthy Dorinda Bountiful, whom Aimwell and Archer will attempt to make 'their wife.' We also meet the play's unhappily married couple, Kate and Jeremiah Sullen, Dorinda's sister-in-law and half-brother. Kate enthusiastically ropes Dorinda into a dubious plot to make Jeremiah a more biddable husband. Jeremiah hides at the inn.
- **II.II.** Aimwell and Archer decide to go shopping for their wife in a country church. Boniface continues to try to learn more about his guests, with the help of Andre Foiegras, a mysterious French reverend. Cherry works on dragging Archer to the altar. Archer panics, because Archer panics.
- **III.I.** Dorinda, having seen Aimwell at church, has fallen in love with him on sight. She, Kate and their servant Peter Scrub form a plot to find out more about Aimwell by questioning his valet, Archer.
- III.II. Aimwell has also fallen for Dorinda on sight. Archer panics (again).
- **III.III.** Scrub invites Archer to drink with him, which allows Dorinda and Kate to question Archer about Aimwell. Archer and Aimwell contrive to meet Dorinda by seeking a cure from her mother, Mrs. Bountiful, the local witch doctress. Kate and Archer also meet, and sparks fly.
- **IV.I.** Archer tries again to get Aimwell to stick to the plan. Boniface, Foiegras and associates Hounslow and Bagshot plot to rob Mrs. Bountiful's house.
- **V.I.** Jeremiah offers to let Archer carry off his wife Kate, with a venison pie.
- **V.II.** Everyone from robbers to in-laws to prospective bridegrooms spends an exciting evening in Kate and Jeremiah's bedroom.

# Wandavisioning Restoration Comedies

Resetting Restoration classics amongst the rich and shameless denizens of Manhattan in the 1950s (The Country Wife), the 1960s (The Belle's Stratagem), and now 1970s Lichfield, Kentucky in The Beaux' Stratagem allows us to explore some of the greatest comedies ever written through the literal modernizing lens of early TV sitcoms. Shifting Farquhar's 'country block-head' and other archetypes to a time and place we recognize invites us to access them as their original viewers would have, with topical jokes and recognizable (if occasionally eye-gouging) visuals. May these resonate with you as the brilliant originals once did with their contemporaries.

In this third installment, *The Beaux' Stratagem*, we follow the adventures of two broke Manhattan rakes, Archer and Aimwell, as they work their way through the Lichfield, Kentucky society of the 1970s in search of a wealthy wife. Whichever one of them marries 'their wife,' they've agreed to share equally in her fortune. The plan starts going hilariously off the rails, of course, when Aimwell actually falls in love with their intended target.

The Beaux' Stratagem was the last of George Farquhar's comedies, written during the illness that would take his life. It was an early draft of an extraordinarily promising play, a gem he wouldn't live to polish to perfection. He died leaving this marvelous last work not quite finished, with characters that leap off the page, a genuinely funny premise, razor-edged dialogue, and enduring structural problems.

It becomes an unfortunate necessity to adapt the script, to wrap up the lost threads of plots that aren't completed, and other writers have taken a turn at this over the centuries. For example, Ken Ludwig (Lend Me A Tenor) completed a marvelous adaptation of The Beaux' Stratagem that Thornton Wilder (Our Town) had begun in 1939 but left unfinished on his death. Ludwig acknowledged the challenges of the original as structured, describing it as "very difficult to play, nigh onto impossible." He's not wrong. But I found myself missing the surprising and sympathetic strain of actual, women-are-people-too feminism in Farquhar's 1707 original, along with the dialogue that had inspired playwrights from Goldsmith to Wilde. I couldn't resist going back to the original text and situations and even songs, a treasure trove that shouldn't be buried or eclipsed by the modern. It's not great, for example, that the Wilder/Ludwig adaptation is now being taught in more than a few college courses as the original work. (As lovers of the original themselves, I'd imagine Wilder and Ludwig would have been as chagrined as I was to discover that.)

I kept a great deal of Farquhar's original text and situations in what you're about to see. The more I worked with his writing, the more I admired it. This play had a tremendous influence on later works, including Oscar Wilde's, particularly the interplay between Jack and Algy in The Importance of Being Earnest. I found myself highlighting that dynamic at every turn with Archer and Aimwell. And with just a little contrivance and tying up of loose ends, the Sullens' divorce manages to be the happiest of endings, and so does Cherry's great escape, and Boniface's finally-requited love for Mrs. Bountiful. This may be The Beaux' Stratagem as no one has ever quite seen or staged it before, 'filmed in front of a live studio audience in glorious, mod 1970s Technicolor,' but its love of and fidelity to the original are sincere, and we hope you'll enjoy the results.

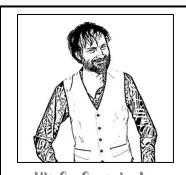
# The Cast: Who's Who (and What)



The English Visitor

Mr. Viscount Tom Aimwell

Tommy Hegarty



His Co-Conspirator
Mr. Martin Frank Archer
Daniel Hubbell



Their Intended Wije
Miss Dorinda Bountiful
Spencer Dye



Mrs. Marsha Bountiful
Marianne Virnelson



Her Best Friend Kate

Mrs. Kate Sullen

Melissa Schick



Her Brother, Kate's Husband Mr. Jeremiah Sullen Scott Farquhar



Their Innkeeper's Daughter
Miss Cherry Boniface
Caroline Adams



The French Reverend
Rev. Andre Foiegras
Joe Kubinski



Their Innkeeper
Mr. John Boniface
Joshua Engel



Mr. Jacob Hounslow
Alan Duda
Mrs. Janet Bagshot
Liana Olear



The Bountiful Butler
Mr. Peter Scrub
Peter Orvetti



RMTV Director
Diana Dzikiewicz
RMTV Assistant Director
Eric Honour

# Cast and Crew Bios

**Caroline Adams (Cherry)** is thrilled to be joining the Rude Mechanicals team for the first time in The Beaux' Stratagem. She was last seen with St. Mark's Players as Spike in Vanya and Sonya and Masha and Spike and has performed in productions with Rorschach Theatre, Silver Spring Stage, The Fat and Greasy Citizens Brigade, and The Theatre Lab where she is a 2018 graduate of the Honors Acting Conservatory.

**Jaki Demarest (Director)** thanks the brilliant cast and crew, and especially Alan Duda, for getting this play out of her head and onto the stage.

**Diana Dzikiewicz (RMTV Director, Harpist)** would follow the magnificent goddamned genius Jaki Demarest through the hottest, sparsest deserts in search of the perfect chili cheese enchilada.

**Alan Duda (AtotheD, Hounslow)** plans to AD five shows in a row. Hence his initials. His mom likes pop-up books. Hence the sets.

**Rachel Duda (Photographer)** shoots people in the face for money.

**Spencer Dye (Costumer)** will have costumed Rudes Restorations in 50s, 60s, and 70s. She does not look forward to the next one.

**Joshua Engel (John Boniface)** has been growing this moustache for two months now, and will be very glad that this show will be over before it gets really hot outside.

Scott Farquhar (Jeremiah Sullen) knows what you're thinking. Any relation? The truth is, George's exact parentage is a bit of a mystery to this day. One of the possible candidates for his father makes George a 7th Great-Granduncle. However, the 2018 book George Farquhar: A Migrant Life Reversed by David Roberts places two others as much more likely candidates. Regardless of any unverified blood relationship, there is certainly a kinship in the humor and writing. Scott was last in a Rude Mechanicals production \*mumblemumble\*-teen years ago, and is really digging coming back to be part of such a groovy show. Other favorite roles over the years include Oscar Madison in "The Odd Couple" with Columba Community Players and Cosme McMoon in "Souvenir: A Fantasia on the Life of Florence Foster Jenkins" with Vagabond Players.

**Tommy Hegarty (Tom Aimwell).** This is Tommy's first show with the Rudes, and he is very thankful for all the work that Jaki and others have put in to make it happen. His previous on-stage appearances include: Jim (Perfect Arrangement) in his one show with the Old Opera House in Charles Town, West Virginia, and Romeo (Romeo and Juliet), Macbeth (Macbeth), Pandarus (Troilus and Cressida), Chorus (Henry V), Touchstone (As You Like It), and others with the Maryland Shakespeare Players.

**Eric Honour (RMTV Assistant Director)** nearly quit until he was told he could just pretend this is a union job.

**Daniel Hubbell (Frank Archer)** is delighted to join the Rudes in person for Beaux Stratagem. Previous roles include the Revenger's Tragedy (Spurio), as well as Len with St. Marks Player's Book of Days. A sometime actor and

more frequent techie, he also grew this goddamned magnificent beard and moustache for this show, and thanks Caroline Adams for letting him. **Samuel Kopel (Light and Sound Operator)** would lay down his meager life for the brilliant and magnificent Jaki Demarest.

Joe Kubinski (The Reverend Andre Foiegras). Directors say that if you say "Joe Kubinski" three times in front of a mirror, he will appear in your show. He has performed at the Maryland Renaissance Festival and sung opera at the Austrian embassy. This is his twelfth show with the Rude Mechanicals. He has no theater training whatsoever.

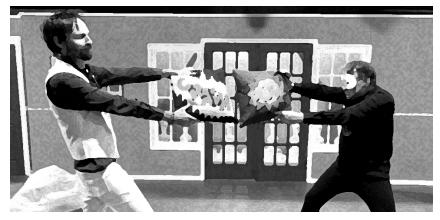
**Rin MacDonald (Fight Choreographer)** will wander the world for the next several decades in search of something to do that would be worthy of the godlike Jaki Demarest, and their undying love.

**Liana Olear (AD, Bagshot)** has been grousing with Jeff for over 20 years to the benefit of the Rudes.

**Peter Orvetti** (Peter Scrub) is honored to be working with the Rudes again for the first time since 2017's Richard II. He has been acting for the past decade, appearing most recently with Silver Spring Stage, St. Mark's Players, Kentlands Community Players, and the Fat and Greasy Citizens' Brigade. When not on stage, he is a news analyst and editor, as well as a freelance writer.

**Melissa Schick (Kate Sullen)** has been performing with the Rudes for over 20 years now. She is an actor/director by night and a proposal manager by day and volunteers part time for the National Suicide Prevention Hotline. She has been on at least 4 major out-of-town trips since the year began. Melissa is exhausted.

Marianne Virnelson (Marsha Bountiful) is tickled to be performing live for the first time since her move to MD and...you know. The whole global health crisis. She delights in bringing some cow bell to this production that—like most things—needs more cow bell. She would like to publicly proclaim her love and thanks to the Rude Mechanicals for letting her be a part of this wild ride, to Becca for helping her find said Rudes, to Zack for his invaluable support, and, of course, to Edith for being the cookie plug she needed to bribe her way onto the cast list.



# upcoming Rude Mechanicals Productions at the Greenbelt arts Center in 2023

#### III Met by Moonlight

directed by Joshua Engel August 25 – September 9

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#### Silver

Jeffrey & Katherine Albo, Mikki Barry, Carol Calhoun, William Bodie, Joseph Downs, Aaron Engel, Gretchen Hall, Lisa Hilliard & Al Bach, William Jones, Liana Olear & Samuel Kopel, Stephen & Barbara Schick, Melissa Schick, Harry Trout, Michelle Trout, Steven Vaughan-Nichols, John Vogel

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS' WARNING:

Failure to sponsor the Rudes may result in idle actors squatting in *your* basement.



