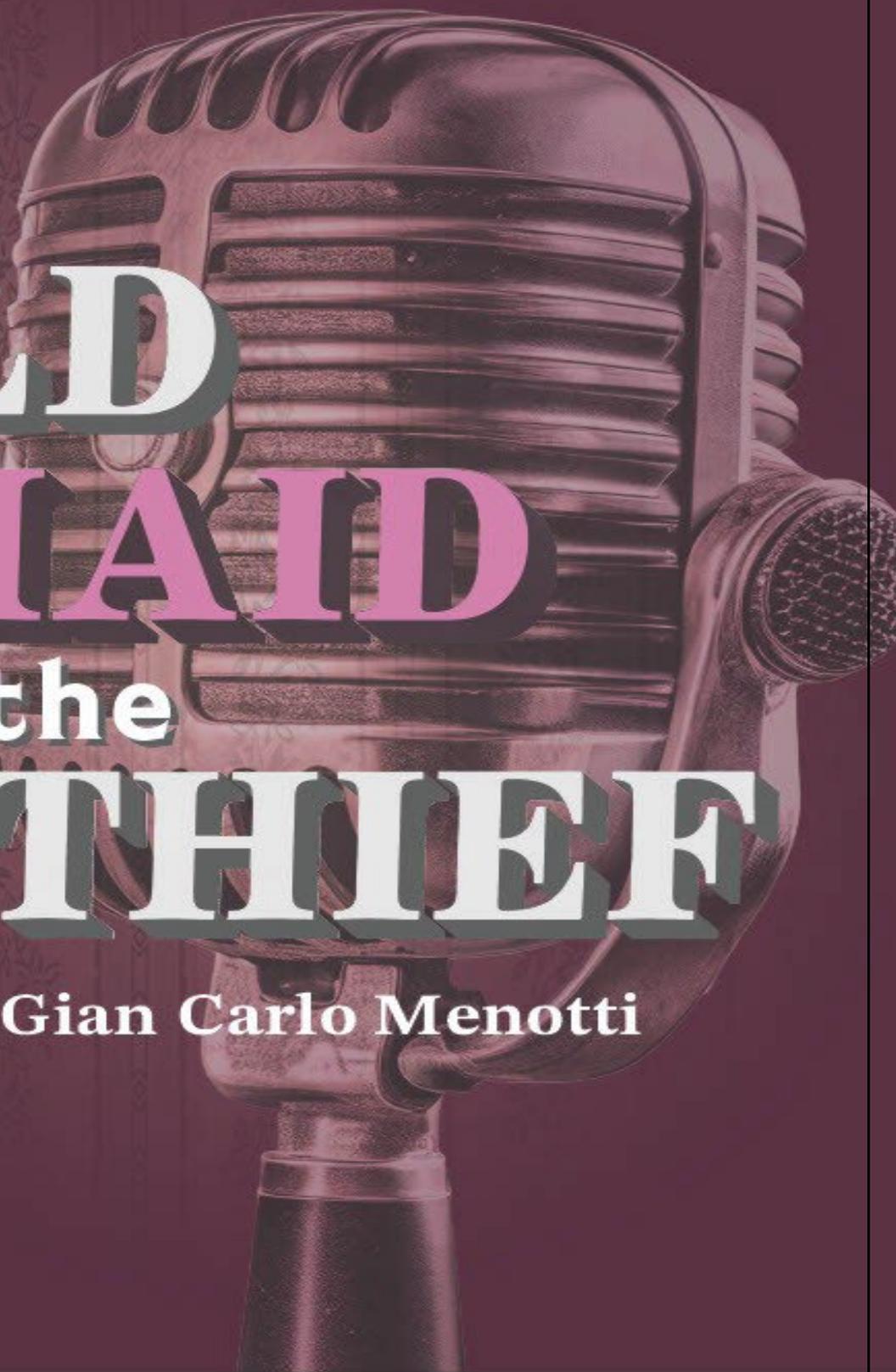


SIMPSON COLLEGE



**The
OLD
MAID
& the
THIEF**

By Gian Carlo Menotti

SP SIMPSON
Productions

Feb. 20-21 at 7:30 p.m. &
Feb. 22 at 2 p.m.

Blank Performing Arts Center
Barnum Studio Theatre

2025-26 Season



WELCOME to *The Old Maid and the Thief*, our third production of the 2025-26 Season!

Originally commissioned for radio in 1939, *The Old Maid and the Thief* is a witty and satirical tale of gossip, deception, and the facades we maintain in the name of propriety. Set in a quiet American town, the opera follows the lives of Miss Todd and her housemaid Letitia as they take in a charming wanderer—only to find themselves entangled in increasingly outrageous moral compromises.

This production brings Menotti's lively score and sharp humor to life in a clever recreation of that first radio play that's as thought-provoking as it is entertaining.



The Old Maid and the Thief written by Gian Carlo Menotti. ©WC Music Corp. (ASCAP) All Rights Reserved.
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Production Team

Conductor

Damon Stevens

Director

Ann Woldt

Scenic Designer

Natalie Hining-Bruce

Lighting & Sound Designer

Rick Goetz

Props Designer

Maddy Gunzenhauser

Costume & Make-Up Designer

Piper Jackman

Stage Manager

Cory Cox



Cast

Miss Todd.....Jasper McGrath
Laetitia.....Elainë Frey
Miss Pinkerton.....Hannah Larsen
Bob.....Maxwell Wearmouth-Gweah
Host.....Erick Randall
Foley Artist.....Hunter Wepler
Stage Manager.....Lola Vincent

Setting

NBC radio studios, Rockefeller Center (Radio City),
New York, NY. 1939.

There will be no intermission

*Please make sure cell phones and alarms are turned off.
Please no text messaging during the performance.
Restrooms are located on the main and upper lobby levels*

Production Staff

Technical Director.....Natalie Hining-Bruce
Asst. Stage Manager.....Brooklyn Mastin
Foley Prop Supervisor.....Lupe Contreras
Deck/Prop Crew Head.....Paisha Goodrich
Deck/Prop Crew.....Hannah Dank, Naomi Graves
Wardrobe Crew Head.....Robyn Aguilar
Wardrobe Crew.....Anastasia Peron, Kaeding Phillips,
Arseydia Rodriguez
Lightboard Operator.....Tye Landrum
Box Office Manager.....Diego Solorio
House Manager.....Bekah Geerdes
Front of House.....Cade Clark, Ben Hodges, Juliet Low,
Chessa Strauser, Michael Thacker
Poster Design.....Mady Vasquez

Simpson Productions would like to thank

Josh Jepson

Production Crew

Scene Shop Supervisor: Natalie Hining-Bruce

Lighting and Sound Supervisor: Rick Goetz

Costume Shop Supervisor: Caroline Frias

Costume Construction Crew: Piper Jackman^{UGA}, Robyn Aguilar,
Sydney Meierotto, Ale Salazar-Campos

Set Construction Crew: Maddy Gunzenhauser, Aaron Scholes,
Diego Solorio, Chessa Strauser

Lighting Crew: Nox Bazer, Cory Cox, Hannah Dank, Bella Dix,
McFarland

Sound : Lupe Contreras^{UGA}

Properties: Maddy Gunzenhauser^{UGA}

Simpson Productions:

Production Assistant: Hannah Larsen^{UGA}

Marketing: Arseydia Rodriguez^{UGA}

Faculty Supervisor of Marketing: Jennifer Nostrala

Audience Services: Amanda Orozco^{UGA}

Faculty Supervisor for Audience Services: Kara Raphaeli

Recruitment/ Outreach: Bekah Geerdes^{UGA}

Faculty Supervisor for Recruitment/Outreach: Ann Woldt

*UGA-Undergraduate Assistant

Simpson Productions Student Leadership

Simpson Productions Scholarship Students

Scholarship recipients hold theatre as an essential part of their lives and are an integral part of the Simpson Productions company.

Cade Clark
Cory Cox
Bekah Geerdes
Paisha Goodrich
Naomi Graves
Maddy Gunzenhauser

Ben Hodges
Piper Jackman
Tye Landrum Hannah
Larsen Juliet Low
Brooklyn Mastin

Anastasia Peron
Arseydia Rodriguez
Diego Solorio
Chessa Strauser
Michael Thacker

UGA-Undergraduate Assistants

Undergraduate Assistants are positions across campus that are designed to offer students the opportunity to gain practical, in-depth experience complementing their formal education.

2025-2026 UGAs

Props--Maddy Gunzenhauser
Production Assistant--Hannah Larsen
Audience Services--Amanda Orozco

Marketing --Arseydia Rodriguez
Sound--Lupe Contreras
Recruitment & Outreach--Bekah Geerdes

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Gian Carlo Menotti (1911–2007) was a prolific composer, librettist, and director, renowned for revitalizing 20th-century opera with accessible works such as *The Consul*, *Amahl and the Night Visitors* and *The Saint of Bleecker Street*.

Commissioned by NBC in 1938, *The Old Maid and the Thief* was one of the earliest operas composed specifically for performance on the radio. It premiered April 22, 1939, and was the first of several operas in English composed by Menotti who was just 28 years old at the time.

Menotti said he was inspired to write the story of the opera after visiting the family of his partner, composer Samuel Barber. He found that what appeared on the surface to be a quaint, American small town was rife with secrets and gossip.

The opera was well-received by American music critics and its success helped further establish Menotti's career in the United States. Menotti later adapted the opera so it could be performed on the stage; with the first theatrical production in 1941. This theatrical production was later performed on NBC television by the NBC Opera Theatre in 1949.

Menotti went on to win two Pulitzer Prizes; the first in 1950 for *The Consul*, a drama about refugees, and again in 1955 for *The Saint of Bleecker Street*, a musical drama set in New York. His most famous work, *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, was the first opera commissioned for television premiering in 1951.

Simpson Productions most recently produced Menotti's *The Medium* and *The Telephone* in a double-bill in 2024

NEW RADIO OPERA OF MENOTTI GIVEN

'The Old Maid and Thief,' in
One Act of 14 Scenes, Heard
From Radio City Studio

ONE-HOUR PERFORMANCE

Robert A. Erede Conducts the
Season's Final Broadcast of
NBC Symphony Orchestra

THE OLD MAID AND THE THIEF—Radio opera in one act and fourteen scenes. Music and book by Gian-Carlo Menotti. Produced at Radio City under the auspices of the National Broadcasting Company with Robert Alberto Erede conducting the NBC Orchestra.

Miss Todd.....Mary Hopple
LetitiaMargaret Daum
Miss Pinkerton.....Dorothy Sarnoff
BobRobert Weede

By **OLIN DOWNES**

A radio audience of the North American Continent, and beyond, participated last night in the première of the "radio opera," entitled "The Old Maid and the Thief," by young Mr. Gian-Carlo Menotti. For this work, Robert A. Erede conducted the NBC Symphony Orchestra in its final performance here for the season. This "opera," of a kind for which the music dictionaries make no allowance, was heard, but not seen, save by a comparatively small group in Studio H-8 in Radio City. The performers did not act, save as they indulged in a few gestures or facial play as they stood before the conductor and the orchestra. But the sound of the "opera" conveyed action, event, climax. It is a lyric comedy, modelled in its essential nature upon the melodious farce, "Amelia Goes to the Ball," with which Mr. Menotti has successfully entertained the audiences of two seasons at the Metropolitan Opera House.

The libretti of both these works are creations of the composer. Both books were sketched in Italian, translated into English. Both were sung in the latter language, and it may be said that in this respect last night's interpretation did a signal service for opera in the vernacular, since every word of the characters could be understood in such a way that the auditors, with the brief comment of Joseph Curtin, the narrator, were able to follow every instant of the drama and behold in the mind's eye the scene. Fresh voices, musicianship and excellent diction graced the occasion.

The Scenes Are Brief

The opera is in fourteen brief "scenes" and in performance it takes just one hour. Bob, a good-looking young loafer possessed of wanderlust, strays into town. He gets food and shelter from Miss Todd, the elderly single lady of the plot. She and her maid Letitia are fascinated by the visitor and invite him for a week's stay. But Miss Pinkerton, the village gossip, frightens Miss Todd by telling her of a thief who has escaped jail and is believed to be hiding in the town. The ladies, convinced that the thief is Bob, nevertheless steal and fend for him, and when Bob says he is thirsty they supply him by breaking into the liquor store, almost at the cost of their reputations.

The police make a house-to-house search for the malefactor. Bob declares his innocence. Finally Miss Todd goes for the police. Then the young man, despairing of proving his guiltlessness, leaves the house, stealing everything—clothes, money, jewels—and not only these, but also the handsome, impressionable Letitia!

The opera was a success. It is so planned as to afford opportunity for special sound effects of a comic sort, and an ingenious illustrative orchestration. Much of it is conversation set to music, and Mr. Menotti handles all this well, often with a pleasing flippancy. He writes set numbers in places, when they spring readily from the situation.

Score Has Melodious Quality

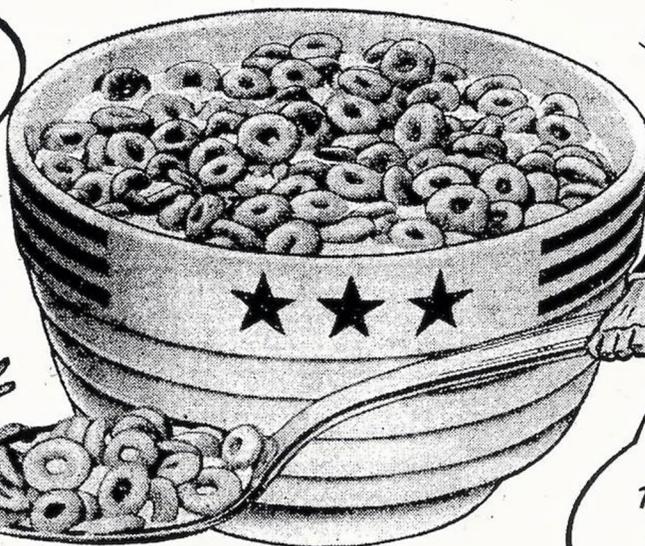
Most of the score is quick give-and-take, but there is fully enough of sustained song, and here and there orchestral commentary, to give it substance and melodic quality. The long solo of Miss Todd, revealing her longing and loneliness; Bob's solo passage, "I must wander again," are cases in point. Then there are the funny dance pieces, very gay, which set off the imaginary action, and the music for the scene of the rifling of the liquor store, the grotesque measures as Miss Todd goes for the police; the wholly irresponsible mixture of fugue and scherzo while the jewels are being stolen.

The opera shows again how skillful and adroit Mr. Menotti becomes when he approaches his stage. He has lost nothing of his native wit and his easy, plentiful invention. He was fortunate in his solo artists, who showed the high standard of vocal competence and interpretive skill that radio singers can now bring to performance. Mr. Erede directed admirably, and full credit must be extended Mr. Richard Leonard, who as "production director" made additional appropriate sounds, effected the necessary synchronization and the numerous other details essential to a finished radio performance.

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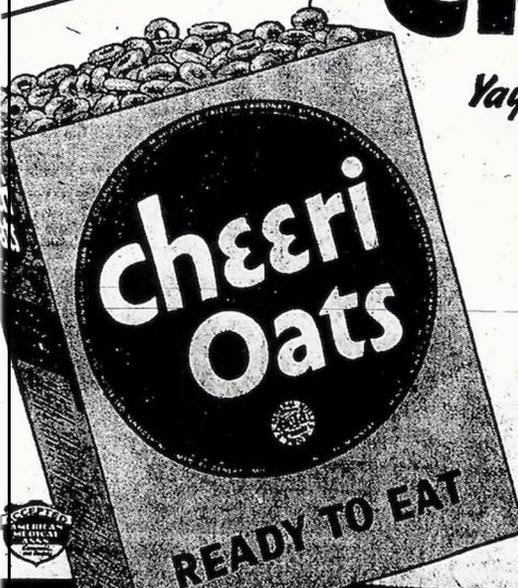
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The idea of a wholesome, nourishing oat cereal in ready-to-eat form makes a lot of good common sense. And the photograph on this page gives you a preview of CHEERRI OATS' novel, intriguing form.

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Simpson Productions 2025-2026 Season



ANTHROPOLOGY

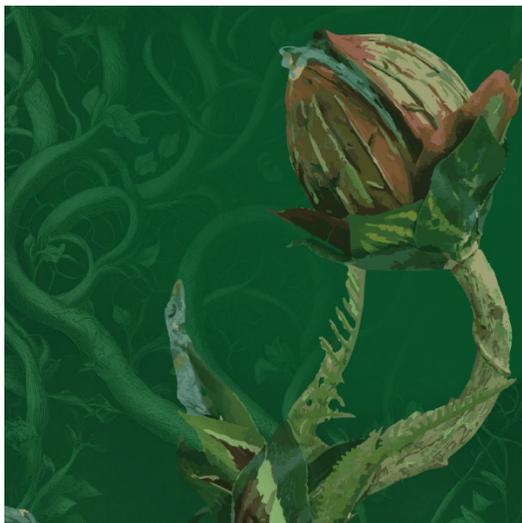
By Lauren Gunderson

Director, Ann Woldt

Oct. 3-4 at 7:30 pm and Oct. 5 at 2:00 pm

Barnum Studio Theatre

Merril has gone through what no sister should ever go through- the disappearance of her sister, Angie. In an effort to help manage her grief, Merrill assembles all the digital material that Angie has left behind and creates a ‘virtual Angie’. Virtual Angie is helpful until it begins to unravel the real Angie’s disappearance. *anthropology* raises compelling questions about the ethics of artificial intelligence, the nature of memory, and the lengths to which individuals will go to preserve or recreate lost loved ones.



LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS

Book and Lyrics by Howard Ashman

Music by Alan Menken

Director, Jennifer Nostrala

Musical Director, Damon Stevens

Nov. 14-15 at 7:30 pm and Nov. 16 at 2:00 pm

In conjunction with the 28th annual High School Theatre Festival

Pote Theatre

The delightfully dark and wildly entertaining musical *Little Shop of Horrors* blends doo-wop, Motown, and rock-and-roll to tell the quirky tale of Seymour, a meek floral assistant who discovers a strange plant with a secret thirst for human blood. As the plant grows, so does Seymour’s fame—but at a horrifying cost. With catchy songs, eccentric characters, and a touch of horror-comedy, *Little Shop of Horrors* has become a beloved staple of American musical theatre.



THE OLD MAID & THE THIEF

By Gian Carlo Menotti

Conductor, Damon Stevens

Director, Ann Woldt

Barnum Studio Theatre

Feb. 20-21 at 7:30 pm and Feb. 22 at 2 pm, 2025

Originally commissioned for radio in 1939, *The Old Maid and the Thief* is a witty and satirical tale of gossip, deception, and the facades we maintain in the name of propriety. Set in a quiet American town, the opera follows the lives of Miss Todd and her housemaid Letitia as they take in a charming wanderer only to find themselves entangled in increasingly outrageous moral compromises.

This production brings Menotti's lively score and sharp humor to life in a clever recreation of that first radio play that's as thought-provoking as it is entertaining.



THE CHILDREN'S HOUR

By Lillian Hellman

Director, Kara Raphaeli

April 17-18 at 7:30 pm and April 19 at 2:00 pm

Pote Theatre

Rumor. Scandal. Destruction. Set in a school for girls run by two unmarried women, this 1934 play examines the destructive force of a homophobic moral panic. Once a malicious youngster starts a rumor about the two women, the community shuns them, leading to tragedy.

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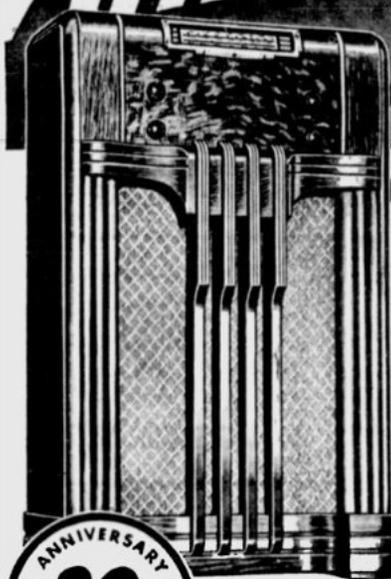
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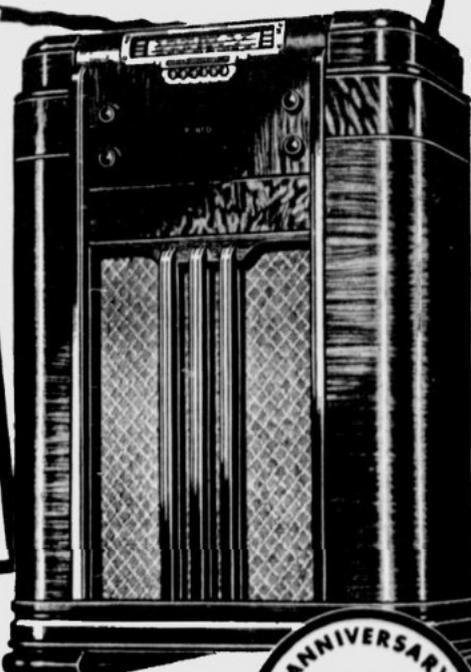
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Natalie Hining-Bruce	Scene Designer; Technical Director; Scene Shop Supervisor; Courses in Design and Tech
Jennifer Ross Nostrala	Simpson Productions Producer; Courses in Directing, Acting, Literature, Script Analysis; Director
Kara Raphaeli	Assistant Professor; Courses in Directing, Plays and Performances, Script Analysis, World Theatre; Director
Damon Stevens	G. Dewey and M. Maine Larsen Chair in Opera; Courses in Music History, Ensembles, Collaborative Piano, Opera; Conductor
Ann Woldt	Theatre Department Chair; Recruitment & Outreach Coordinator; Courses in Acting, Voice, Script Analysis, Interpretation; Director