

SUNY OSWEGO THEATRE PRESENTS

# THE MISANTHROPE

By Molière | Adaptation by Constance Congdon  
Directed by Steven Mazzoccone



VIRTUAL PERFORMANCE

FRI 10/16 7:30 p.m.

SAT 10/17 2 p.m. & 7:30 p.m.

SUN 10/18 2 p.m. & 7:30 p.m.

# DIRECTOR'S NOTE

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Perhaps the most captivating idea I had while I was considering directing *The Misanthrope* was that it feels so much like a play written on the cusp of a major awakening and revolution. By the time Molière had written the play in 1666, he had traveled across Europe, witnessing immense poverty and hunger while touring with his theatre company. No doubt he certainly compared his travels to his own more privileged upbringing. His father was directly employed by King Louis XIII. Returning to Paris after touring, he became a famous actor and playwright. One can only imagine how he compared the “polite society” of the King’s Court to the destitution of his countrymen and women outside Paris. Maybe he knew the extreme wealth gap was on a total collision course, though the French Revolution was still a century away.

While working on the play, it is evident that Molière is speaking through our title’s character Alceste. The nuances, complexities, contradictions and self-awareness all present in Alceste’s language is too human to be fully contrived. Knowing his first audience would be the court itself, Molière offered them, through Alceste, a sharp critique and public arraignment of the way they lived their lives. One of my favorite lines in this adaptation by the marvelous Constance Congdon is Alceste’s “Leniency means license, yields injustice.” His meaning, shockingly relevant today, suggests that a society which allows little lies, little slips of truth and decency, will inevitably give license to those same people to commit larger crimes and bigger lies. In a governing structure, if

there is no basis for truth, with large lies being amplified and believed, injustice, Alceste would argue, is the only result.

Of course, Molière served them this dish of scorn in the form of satire and in the guise of a romantic comedy. Much fun is had in the play with the various love triangles, scenes of characters flaunting their wit with hilarious imagery and enjoying the court gossip. However, in rehearsal we often land on the idea of the character’s own complicity in this culture, where who you know and where you come from is what matters most. Identifying one’s own complicity in an unjust society is, I would argue, the greatest contributing factor to a broader cultural awakening.

Presently, we know the economic impact of the pandemic has only expanded the wealth gap. Marginalized communities are more deeply crushed by COVID-19. We know more people get their news from social media, from sources which are filled with disinformation aimed to purposely mislead the public. We know that finally more people are examining their participation in a systemically racist culture. So to me, it seems this play and its place in history suggests that we are in a similar state of awakening. Consequently then, what are we to expect? Well, in lieu of sharing what happens at the end of the play and what happens to Alceste, I will share the lesson it suggests—major change won’t come from those at the top.

*Steven Mazzoccone*

# DRAMATURGY NOTE

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Ask yourself if this is familiar: since the days of your childhood, each day, you wake up, sit on the edge of your bed, rub your eyes and ask yourself “why?”. Shuffling onto the bus, the train, or whatever mode of transportation, just to stand shoulder to shoulder with others amidst these mortal coils known as school or work. While we collectively stress about tests, long hours and making rent, for some reason we still hate each other. There’s a [misanthrope](#) in all of us. In every lifted toilet seat, every unmasked chap in Walmart, and every person playing loud music on public transportation, our antipathy for strangers grows. This feeling isn’t all that new: it was familiar and inspiring enough for the focus of the late and great [French](#) playwright [Molière](#).

*The Misanthrope* follows a [motley crew](#) of wannabes and know-it-alls as they traverse the [upper echelon](#) of [seventeenth century France](#). Poets and [lovers](#); [nihilists](#) and [pseudo intellectuals](#); [melancholics](#), and, yes, misanthropes, Molière captures the niceties and mundanity of [pre-modern France](#), making existential dread and self-loathing feel like an old friend. The power in Molière’s writing is that these unlikely heroes expose the worst in us and help make us realize how imperfect we all are. To empathize with the [narcissistic and internally misogynistic](#), prompts us to question ourselves and how we see others. In the reflection of these characters, we consider what makes us tick, what annoys us and what we perceive to be the best way to fulfill our desire for social acceptance and happiness, a journey that ends only when we die.

What you’ll find remarkable is that French high society won’t seem so unfamiliar as you might think. [In Molière’s world](#), every member of the upper social classes had a [loose mouth](#). In the world of [Salon](#) and [La Politesse](#), [gossip](#) was as integral as the concepts of nobility and honor. To gossip was to bring down the social standing of others and raise yours. [Legal battles](#) were fought not only for justice but to save face as well; not only were they fought in

courtrooms but in the [public court](#) as well, doing the most to turn the public’s view in your favor. [Every word uttered](#), every eye batted, and every public statement engineered to ensure every advantage possible. No matter how strange or toxic this seemed, this was the accepted way of life. To deny it was to ostracize yourself, all the while bruising egos and causing quite a bit of drama.

In today’s distracted world of social media and social distancing, the words spoken and unspoken are more important than ever, as we catch ourselves hate-scrolling through a frenemy’s Insta feed, where our likes and hearts and comments don’t match what’s truly under the surface. Is our current climate breeding more misanthropes than ever before?

*The Misanthrope* is more than a [witty, beautifully structured](#), and delightful [Comedy of Manners](#): it is a warning against what happens to those who break the norm; a satire which pokes holes in the conception of the ruling class; and a story of a man having had more than enough of the fakes who surround him. As you watch tonight, think about just how familiar the complaints of these privileged people are, as they live their lives through gossip, backstabbing, and drama. Maybe Alceste’s actions aren’t sociable, but maybe they’re understandable. What do we do when we’ve had enough?

For more research, check out the [THT334 Dramaturgy Hub](#).

## Dramaturgy Note generated by the students of THT334

Led by Ryan Ricketts, Kuvar Bhatnagar,  
Chloë Hill, and James Hough

Supported by AJ Battista,  
Mal DeVisser, Sami Digamus, Jared Mills,  
Ivy Naughton, Jileiny Padilla,  
Megan Sylvester, Anastasia West,  
and Toby Malone (supervisor)

Ke-nekt Chamber Music Series Presents

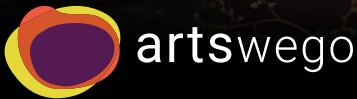
*Finger Lakes Trio*  
*Beethoven's Triple Concerto*

A Live Virtual Event

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Free Tickets Available at [tickets.oswego.edu](https://tickets.oswego.edu) or 315-312-2141

Streaming Link Sent within 3 days of Performance



**RABY'S**



***Home Center***

# CAST

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<b>Alceste</b> .....	Kieran McCormack
<b>Philinte</b> .....	Phillip Jones
<b>Oronte</b> .....	Nicholas Sweet
<b>Célimène</b> .....	Natalie Griffin
<b>Clitandre</b> .....	Ryan Figueroa
<b>Acaste</b> .....	Kamal Morales
<b>Éliante</b> .....	Claire Bosley
<b>Arsinoé</b> .....	Mal Devisser
<b>Basque/DuBois</b> .....	Winston White
<b>Guard</b> .....	Seth Nesbitt

# CREW

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<b>Director</b> .....	Steven Mazzoccone
<b>Assistant Director</b> .....	Kayla Elfers
<b>Stage Manager</b> .....	Alexis Miller
<b>Stage Manager Mentor</b> .....	Cole Sostak
<b>Dramaturgy Team</b> .....	AJ Battista, Anastasia West, Chloë Hill, Ivy Naughton, James Hough, Jared Mills, Jileiny Padilla, Mal DeVisser, Megan Sylvester, Ryan Ricketts, Sami Digamus
<b>Dramaturgy Mentor</b> .....	Toby Malone
<b>Production Manager</b> .....	Jonel Langenfeld
<b>Video Editor/Video Producer</b> .....	Patrick W. Mathis
<b>Media and Editing Tech</b> .....	Matthew Georgiades



# The Kennedy Center

*The Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival, part of the Rubenstein Arts Access Program, is generously funded by **David M. Rubenstein.***

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*Kennedy Center education and related artistic programming is made possible through the generosity of the National Committee for the Performing Arts.*

This production is entered in the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival (KCACTF). The aims of this national theater education program are to identify and promote quality in college-level theater production. To this end, each production entered is eligible for a response by a regional KCACTF representative, and selected students and faculty are invited to participate in KCACTF programs involving scholarships, internships, grants and awards for actors, directors, dramaturgs, playwrights, designers, stage managers and critics at both the regional and national levels.

Productions entered on the Participating level are eligible for invitation to the KCACTF regional festival and may also be considered for national awards recognizing outstanding achievement in production, design, direction and performance.

Last year more than 1,500 productions were entered in the KCACTF involving more than 200,000 students nationwide. By entering this production, our theater department is sharing in the KCACTF goals to recognize, reward, and celebrate the exemplary work produced in college and university theaters across the nation.

# BIOGRAPHIES

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## STEVE MAZZOCONE

### Director

Faculty, Acting/Directing. For SUNY Oswego Theatre: Debut. Elsewhere: NYC/Festivals: *Blanche in a Wheelchair* (Director), *Bus Stop* (Director), *The Passion of Athena* (Director), *Absolution* (Director), *At the Museum* (Director). Regionally: *As You Like It* (Director). NYC Off-Broadway: *Heartbreak House* (Assistant Director), *Long Lost* (Assistant Director), *My Real Mother* (Assistant Director). Etcetera: Great thanks to the faculty and students for their work on *The Misanthrope*. It was an absolute pleasure to work with each of you.

## ALEXIS MILLER

### Stage Manager

Junior, Technical Theatre Major. For SUNY Oswego Theatre: *The Shewing Up of Blanco Posnet* (Stage Manager), *Fun Home* (Assistant Stage Manager), *Dead Man's Cell Phone* (Stage Manager). Elsewhere: *Nutcracker* (Assistant Stage Manager), *La Boheme* (Assistant Stage Manager), *Jack and The Beanstalk* (Stage Manager), *Die Fledermaus* (Assistant Stage Manager), *Ragtime* (Stage Manager), *Nutcracker* (Head flyman/Prop Master), *George Washington Slept Here* (Stage Manager), *Tosca* (Assistant Stage Manager) *2017 Ballet Recital* (Stage Manager), *Disaster!* (Assistant Stage Manager). Etcetera: Thank you Mom and Dad for always believing in me!

## CLAIRE BOSLEY

### Eliante

Sophomore, Theatre and Studio Art Major. For SUNY Oswego Theatre: *Dead Man's Cell Phone* (Ballet Dancer). Elsewhere: *Legally Blonde* (Brooke Wyndham), *Twelfth Night* (Olivia), *The Addams Family* (Ensemble), *The Long View* (Zachary). Etcetera: I want to thank my friends and family for being amazingly supportive.

## MAL DEVISSER

### Arsinoe/Dramaturg

Senior, Theatre Major. For SUNY Oswego Theatre: *Dead Man's Cell Phone* (Costume Crew), *In The Cotton* (Dramaturgy). Etcetera: Thank you to my friends, family, and professors for having faith in me!

## RYAN FIGUEROA

### Clitandre

Freshman, Cinema and Screen Studies and Theatre Major. For SUNY Oswego Theatre: Debut. Elsewhere: *Romeo and Juliet* (Romeo), *The Spectre Bridegroom* (The Creature), *The Great Gatsby* (Young Gatsby), *Kaleidoscope* (The Captain) *King Henry VI* (King Henry VI), *Tape* by Jose Rivera (Main Attendant), *Sorry, Wrong Number* (Phone Operator #7), *Much Ado About Nothing* (Claudio), *The Wiz* (Uncle Henry & Lord High Underling), *The Night Before Christmas* (Narrator), *Dracula* (Minor Role). Etcetera: Thank you to my family and friends for always loving and supporting me.

## NATALIE GRIFFIN

### Célimène

Junior, Theatre, Gender and Women's Studies Major. For SUNY Oswego Theatre: *The Shape of Things* (Jenny). Elsewhere: *Fiddlers Three* (Gina), *Bad Seed* (Christine), *Little Women* (Marmee). Etcetera: Thank you to my family, friends, and professors for all their support and for believing in me!

## MATTHEW GEORGIADES

### Media and Editing Tech

Senior, Theatre Major. For SUNY Oswego Theatre: *In the Cotton* (Recording Engineer), *Kill Shakespeare: The Live Graphic Novel* (A1/Recording), *Holiday Cabaret* (A1), *The Fantasticks* (Light Board Operator). Elsewhere: *Don Giovanni* (A1), *La Cage aux Folles* (A2), *Sleep Rock* (Sound Design/A1), *Young Voices Project* (Light and Sound Design).

## PHILIP JONES

### Philinte

Junior, Theatre Major. For SUNY Oswego Theatre: *The Shape of Things* (Phillip), *The Fantasticks* (Hucklebee). Elsewhere: *Tales From White Diamond Mountain* (Grandfather), *Narnia's Back Door* (Igor), *Pippin* (Charlemagne), *Look Homeward Angel* (W.O Gant).

## PATRICK W. MATHIS

### Video Editor/Video Producer

Faculty, Technical Theatre. For SUNY Oswego Theatre: *Kill Shakespeare: the Live Graphic Novel* (Lighting Design, Sound, and Media Design), *The Fantasticks* (Lighting Design), *The Good Doctor* (Lighting Design), *The Shape of Things* (Lighting Design), *In the Cotton* (Recording Engineer).

## KIERAN MCCORMACK

### Alceste

Freshman, Communications and Broadcasting Major. For SUNY Oswego Theatre: Debut. Elsewhere: *Almost, Maine* (Jimmy), *The Addams Family* (Lucas Beineke), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Demetrius). Etcetera: I want to thank my parents for the non-stop support and love, after all these years of being on stage.

## KAMAL MORALES

### Acaste

Junior, Public Relations and Theatre Major. For SUNY Oswego Theatre: *In the Cotton* (Justin). Elsewhere: *Little Shop of Horror* (Orin "The Dentist"), *Once On This Island* (Papa Ge). Etcetera: You are your own competition. Period!

## SETH NESBITT

### Guard

Sophomore, Creative Writing Major. For SUNY Oswego Theatre: Debut. Elsewhere: *Don Giovanni* (Chorus), *Mamma Mia!* (Harry Bright), *Peter/Wendy* (Smee), *Fiddler on the Roof* (Motel Kamzoil), *She Kills Monsters* (Orcus), *The Sound of Music* (Captain Von Trapp), *Radium Girls* (Arthur Roeder), *The Little Mermaid* (Grimsb-y), *Thoroughly Modern Millie* (Bun Foo), *The Ever After* (Jiminy Cricket). Etcetera: Thanks to family and friends for supporting me through everything!

## NICHOLAS SWEET

### Oronte

Sophomore, Theatre and Creative Writing Major. For SUNY Oswego Theatre: *In the Cotton* (Michael), *The Fantasticks* (Matt). Elsewhere: *Hairspray* (Corny Collins), *Shakespeare's Twelfth Night* (Antonio), *Kiss Me Kate* (Hortensio), *Les Misérables* (Courfeyrac). Etcetera: Thanks to my wonderful parents and my amazing brothers Brad and Eric! Love you guys!

## WINSTON O. WHITE

### Basque/DuBois

Sophomore, Theatre Major. For SUNY Oswego Theatre: Debut. Elsewhere: Off-Broadway, *My Own Skin* (Simon), *Smaller This Year* (Mr.), *Pippin* (featured ensemble). Etcetera: I would like to thank my Director for giving me this opportunity.







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