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NEWS

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MISSOULA--

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local

"An Italian Straw Hat," a comedy with songs by Eugene Labiche and Marc Michel, opens Wednesday (April 17) in the Masquer Theater at the University of Montana for a five-day run.

The fast-paced comedy is in the French farcical vaudeville tradition, with songs from French operettas of the mid-19th century. Zany characters are woven throughout the play and jump into a song or dance for almost any reason.

Fadinard, played by Teddy Ulmer, Townsend, UM drama senior, is about to get married when an attractive lady and her irate lover pop up and announce that his horse has compromised her by eating her rare Italian straw hat and that they will not leave the bridal chamber until Fadinard produces an identical one.

He sets off, wedding party at his heels, his prospective father-in-law, by threatening to call the whole thing off, his bride's eccentric relatives constantly getting in the way.

During Fadinard's crazy quest he gets mixed up with an old flame, is mistaken by a baroness for a famous tenor and is forced to sing at her reception.

The Masquer production is directed and choreographed by Les Hankinson, Missoula, graduate student in drama. The set is designed by Glenn Gauer, Great Falls, and costumes by Corliss Nickerson. Nancy Johnson, Conrad, is music director for the production. All are students at the University.

The cast, in addition to Ulmer, includes Ralph Schmidt, Anaconda, as the blustering father-in-law, Nonancourt; George Cowan, Great Falls, as the deaf old uncle, Vezinet; Sharon Strobel, Great Falls, as the bride and Mike Minor, Great Falls, as Cousin Bobin, who would like to stop the wedding.

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The lady who allows a horse to eat her hat is played by Aylett Wright, Great Falls, and her fierce soldier friend is portrayed by Jim Schmidt, Conrad.

Sue Helen Hunt, Missoula, plays the Baroness and Linda Atkinson, Baltimore, Md., is Fadinard's old flame, Clara. The duped husband, Beauperthuis, is played by Paul Anderson, Billings.

Other members of the cast are Jack Lynch, Butte; William Shoyock, Bigfork; Rick Stokes, Great Falls; Rosalie Bracco, Butte; Diane Danichek, Red Lodge; Dick Russell, Dutton; and Jim Malin, Livingston.

Members of the wedding party and guests of the Baroness include Patty Duncan, Missoula; Julie Blakemore, Chehalis, Wash.; Mary Lou Buster, Big Timber; Jim Betson, Kalispell; Mike Mercer, Missoula; Pam Kelley; Shiela Frazier, Plains; Terri Doremus, Des Plaines, Ill.; Eric Henke, Missoula; and Tod Briggs, Dutton.

The musical is accompanied by Tom Enman, Drummond, at the piano.

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