



THE TAMING OF THE SHREW



SIT BY MY SIDE, AND LET THE WORLD SLIP:
WE SHALL NE’ER BE YOUNGER.

PLOT SYNOPSIS

Lucentio of Pisa arrives in Padua with his servant Tranio and falls in love with Bianca, but he learns that her father, the wealthy Baptista, will allow no suitors to Bianca until his elder daughter Katherine weds. Baptista vows to keep his daughters at home to study with tutors until they marry. Hortensio and Gremio, two of Bianca’s suitors, decide to find a husband for Kate. Tranio suggests that Lucentio disguise himself as the poetry tutor Cambio in order to woo Bianca, and Tranio will take his place as Lucentio in Padua.

Petruchio and his servant Grumio arrive in Padua. Petruchio visits his friend Hortensio and shares his plans to catch a wealthy wife. Learning of Kate, a woman with a sizable dowry but a sharp tongue, Petruchio decides to pursue her. At Baptista’s house, Petruchio offers Hortensio in disguise as the music tutor Licio. Gremio offers the poetry tutor Cambio, charging him to woo Bianca for Gremio, not knowing that Cambio is Lucentio in disguise, aiming to woo Bianca for himself.

Baptista accepts Petruchio’s bid to marry Kate. On their wedding day, Petruchio is late and stirs up trouble at the ceremony. After the wedding, Petruchio hastily whisks Kate away to his home in Verona. In Padua, Baptista prepares for the wedding of Bianca, now promised to Tranio disguised as Lucentio. Hortensio leaves and plans to marry a wealthy widow. Tranio finds a Pedant to pretend to be Vincentio to bless the marriage of Lucentio and Bianca. At Petruchio’s house, Kate is starved of food and rest, while Petruchio behaves erratically. Petruchio then tells Kate they will return to Baptista’s house. On the way, Kate vows that she is done fighting and will be a partner to Petruchio, no longer an opponent. On the road, they encounter the real Vincentio, and all travel to Lucentio’s house. The disguised characters meet their counterparts and Vincentio and Baptista meet for the first time.

The confusion is resolved and a wedding feast ensues. Petruchio starts a wager on whose wife is the most obedient, and when Bianca and the widow are sent for, they refuse to come. When Petruchio sends for Kate, she comes, brings the wives and shares her thoughts on wives’ duties to their husbands. The feast ends in merriment as Petruchio has won the bet, and the others marvel at his and Kate’s unconventional union.

—Bianca Gordon, Dramaturg

ARTISTIC TEAM

Director Christopher DuVal
Scenic Designer Caitlin Ayer
Costume Designer Meghan Anderson Doyle
Lighting Designer Shannon McKinney^
Sound Designer Jason Ducat
Fight Director Christopher DuVal
Choreographer Erika Randall
Assistant Fight Directors Benaiah Anderson, Ava Kostia
Dramaturg Bianca Gordon
Stage Manager Stacy R. Norwood*
Assistant Stage Manager Miranda Baxter*

CAST IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

Lucentio, suitor to Bianca Christopher Joel Onken*
Tranio, Lucentio’s servant Tony Ryan
Baptista, a rich citizen of Padua Robert Sicular*
Gremio, a rich old man, suitor to Bianca Sam Sandoe
Katherine, Baptista’s elder daughter Shelly Gaza*
Hortensio, Petruchio’s friend, suitor to Bianca Casey Andree
Bianca, Baptista’s younger daughter Rachel Turner
Biondello, Lucentio’s servant Benaiah Anderson
Petruchio, a gentleman of Verona Scott Coopwood*
Grumio, his groom Matthew Schneck*
Curtis, Petruchio’s steward Meredith C. Grundeil
Pedant, from Mantua David Derringer
Tailor David Derringer
Haberdasher Ian Roy Fraser
Vincentio, Lucentio’s father Coleman Zeigen
Widow, Hortensio’s wife Anne Sandoe
Attendants, Servants, Officer Michael Chen,
 David Derringer, Evan Ector, Ian Roy Fraser,
 Anne Sandoe, Ayla Sullivan, Robert Wester

JOYFUL, CELEBRATORY AND DELIGHTFULLY COMPLEX LOVE

The Taming of the Shrew is first and foremost a deeply joyful, celebratory and delightfully complex love story of two strong-willed human beings who employ every verbal barb, every tactical response and every behavioral maneuver and counter as they test the waters of a relationship. These initial clashes ultimately reveal the strength of their eventual unity, but not at the expense of their independence.

The relationship of Kate and Petruchio is a shining example of unity that is forged in complexity and therefore bound to survive the tests of time.

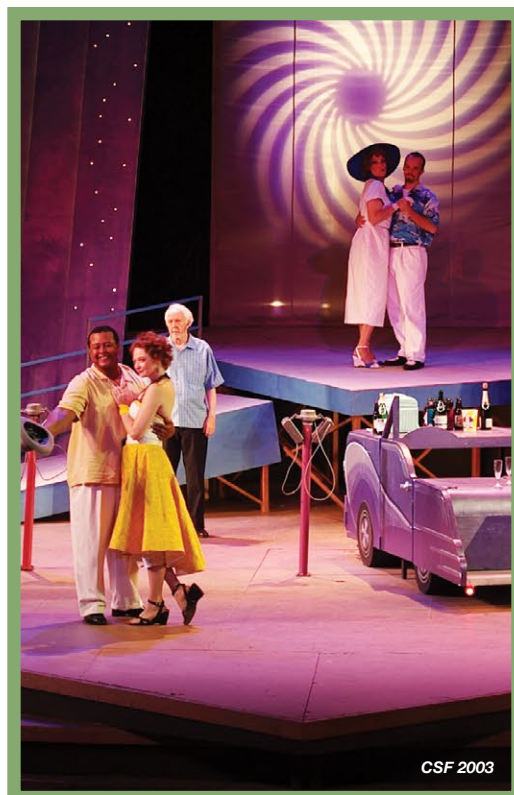
Civility, trust and true respect are the frameworks for any relationship—whether that relationship is within business, society or culture, between governments or between individuals within governments. One cannot truly be in communication and connection without civility, trust and respect. To opt to “choose your battles,” to “agree to disagree” or to embrace someone else’s needs and hopes as your own are also fundamental frameworks for relationship-building. Kate and Petruchio, as mature individuals who secretly (and perhaps even unconsciously) long for a deeper connection with another human being, surprisingly learn that sometimes it’s worth picking your battles to enjoy the richness of a loving and supportive true partnership.

However, this relationship between Petruchio and Kate is a “warts and all” real relationship, not the superimposed Hollywood version of love. It has an ugly side, yet it endures and will stand the test of time precisely because Kate and Petruchio, for all their complexity, are vulnerable in their relationship.

As the common saying goes, “only through vulnerability lies strength”—and so too do Kate and Petruchio find their strength through their ability to place each other in deep trust.

We hope you sit forward and revel in our story as we celebrate humanity’s foibles and strengths, along with our collective hopes for trust, civility and a bright future.

—Christopher DuVal, Director



PLEASURE AND DANGER: POST-WAR LITTLE ITALY AND THE TAMING OF THE SHREW

The Taming of the Shrew was likely received as a farcical comedy in its original context. However, the performance history and critical reception of *Shrew* has greatly varied over time. Barbara Hodgdon writes that productions can focus anywhere from “delighted celebrations of the play’s comic artistry and metatheatrical playfulness to troubled acknowledgement of its merged pleasures and dangers.”

CSF’s production takes us to the “pleasures and dangers” of Little Italy in a post-World War II context, where the characters are deeply informed by that socio-cultural time and place.

The significance of Little Italy, a neighborhood in New York City, has shifted over time. At the turn of the century the neighborhood was the foremost destination for Italian immigrants arriving from Southern Italy. Scholar Bogdana Simina Frunza defines 1880 to 1930 as the “flourishing phase,” where more than 20,000 immigrants moved from Italy to New York. The first wave of immigrants largely kept to this neighborhood, maintained social relations with established family and friends, and came with the intention to make enough

money to return to Italy and buy land. During the “declining phase,” the 1930s to 1970s, the children of the initial wave of immigrants had acquired more wealth and taste for American culture. Younger generations left the neighborhood for other New York suburbs. This phenomenon is threaded throughout our production as intergenerational tensions emerge. The older Baptista and Gremio maintain older worldviews and are unable to control younger characters like Kate and Bianca, who explore different ways of defying their elders and seeking their own paths.

Another contextual influence is Kate’s role as a WASP, or a Women Airforce Service Pilot. Although more than 350,000 women served in the U.S. military during World War II, the conflict between acceptable feminine and masculine roles was particularly threatening in the WASP program. Molly Merryman writes in *Clipped Wings: The Rise and Fall of the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs) of World War II* that:

“WASPs were the first American wartime service unit composed entirely of women who performed functions traditionally associated with men.

WASPs were involved in activities considered both dangerous and adventurous for the men who performed them; thus, a high level of status was associated with their roles and missions.”

However, the WASP program was also not militarized, and returning WASPs were not able to benefit from the GI bill or other veteran rewards programs.

The injustice of historical events like the end of the WASP program reveal how changeable and yet how entrenched cultural beliefs about gender and identity can be. In *The Taming of the Shrew*, these characters must work through their limitations, fears and confusions by building relationships with one another. In doing so, we discover, along with the characters, how danger and pleasure are deeply intertwined.

—Bianca Gordon, Dramaturg

Costume Renderings by Meghan Anderson Doyle

