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**UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF DRAMA TO PRESENT
*THE BEAUX' STRATAGEM***

CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA – February 8, 2010 — A pair of down-on-their-luck cads who set out to marry their money, discover that life and love have other plans in the comedy "The Beaux' Strategem," the latest in the University of Virginia Drama Department's 2010-11 season. The comedy opens Feb. 17 in Culbreth Theatre.

The original version of "The Beaux' Strategem," written by George Farquhar, debuted in London in 1709. It was later adapted by Thornton Wilder in 1939, though he never finished the project. That opportunity, passed on from Wilder's estate, went to Ken Ludwig ("Lend Me a Tenor"), who completed it in time for the new version's 2006 debut.

Three centuries in the making, the play romps through the minefields of love, money and marriage. It's an evening full of scheming, double dealing and swashbuckling bravado, proving that when it comes to matters of the heart, a foolproof plan can become a fool's errand in the batting of an eye.

"The Beaux' Strategem," directed by Betsy Tucker, an assistant drama professor, will be presented from Feb. 17 to 19 and Feb. 23 to 26, at 8 p.m. each night. Tickets are \$14 (\$8 for students; \$12 for seniors, U.Va. faculty, staff and U.Va. Alumni Association members).

Full-time U.Va. students can receive one free ticket to every performance. Those tickets must be reserved in advance and are not available on the day of a performance. For information, contact the U.Va. Arts Box Office.

Tickets can be purchased at www.artsboxoffice.virginia.edu or by calling 434-924-3376. Tickets can also be purchased in person at the U.Va. Arts Box Office (located in the lobby of the Culbreth Theatre building), weekdays from noon to 5 p.m. A \$3.50 processing fee applies to Internet, phone and mail orders.

"It's a lovely and good-hearted comedy," Tucker said, "and it's been so much fun to watch our cast just fall in love with it, and with each other. I've never seen such a happy group of people."

Audiences, she said, will find plenty of common ground with the ageless themes of love, marriage, money and the sometimes-fuzzy lines between the three.

Tucker said audiences connect with the various messages the play carries. "I think people really connect with the whole ideas of what to get married for, what not to get married for, that are at

the heart of this play. There is the whole idea of being stuck in a marriage you don't like, or falling in love with someone who is already married, or the overall theme of marrying for money, which a lot of these characters do for worse, and, I think, for better."

The play is also ripe with adventure, and nothing says adventure like good old-fashioned swordplay. "The swordfight is going to be pretty epic," Tucker said. "It's the longest one I've ever seen on stage. There are six people involved, three of them women. It's done in the spirit of those classic '30s swashbuckling films, so both epic and silly. I think it is definitely going to be something audiences will remember."

The 2010-11 U.Va. Drama MainStage season will continue with Andrew Lloyd Webber's "Evita" (April 21-22 and 27-30).

The RecentWorks series in the Helms Theatre will continue with Carlos Murillo's dark play, "or stories for boys" (March 23-26).

Parking is free at the Culbreth Road Parking Garage, conveniently located alongside the theaters.