

*illinois state*  
presents theatre

# A Scrap Of Paper

by Victorien Sardou

**WESTHOFF THEATRE**

Oct. 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 at 8 pm

Oct. 6 and 13 at 3 pm

1991

# A SCRAP OF PAPER

by VICTORIEN SARDOU

Director  
NYALLS HARTMAN\*

Set Designer  
JOHN C. STARK

Lighting Designer  
SETH HIBLE

Costume Designer  
SUSAN HAYES

Sound Designer  
KEITH BLUE

Technical Director  
DAN BROWDER

\*Master of Fine Arts Candidate

— *A Scrap of Paper*  
will be performed with two-10 minute intermissions —

This production is costumed, in part, with the assistance of the Krannert Center for Performing Arts at the University of Illinois.

## ABOUT VICTORIEN SARDOU

French playwright Victorien Sardou was one of the most uniformly successful playwrights of his era. While *A Scrap of Paper* was his most successful play, Sardou expertly constructed farces, comedies, melodramas, spectacles, and social dramas. Many of Sardou's plays were written for Sarah Bernhardt, to whom they owed much of their success. Sardou became the principal practitioner of the well-made play after giving up his medical studies for playwriting in the early 1850's. *A Scrap of Paper* exemplifies the well-made play and assured Sardou's stature as the most successful fashionable playwright of his age.

Sardou was often a victim of critics, most notably Bernard Shaw who dubbed this type of drama "Sardoodledom," a term that perhaps more than the well-made plays themselves helped immortalize Sardou, who in 1887 was elected to the French Academy.

# CAST

(In Order of Appearance)

Claudine	ERIN GERACE
Henri	SCOTT PERLOW
Baptiste	TIM GRIFFIN
Solange	KATHLEEN CHRISTIANSON
Paul	CHRIS SMITH
Marthe	LORI BERKOWITZ
Colomba	TONYA CAHOJ
Thirion	TODD WINEBURNER
Prosper	PHILLIP MATT
Busonier	KAWONE HARRIS
Vanhove	PAUL KALINA
Clarisse	KATI BRAZDA*
Suzanne	KEYTHA GRAVES*
Servant	SCOTT LANDELLS

## PRODUCTION STAFF

Stage Manager	TAMMY SMITH
Assistant Director	MACE ARCHER*
Assistant Stage Managers	MAUREEN BRENNER ANTONIETTA D'AGOSTINO
Assistant Costume Designer	MISSY SKELTON*
Properties Master	PATRICIA ELLISON
Master Electrician	STEVE WOJDA
Dialogue Coach	PAMELA KLARUP

## PRODUCTION CREWS

**Set Crew:** William C. Bresemann, Anastasia Davis, Tim Grimes, Leigh Ann Jolley, Dale Schaaf, Isaac J. Triska, Garrick Veenstra, Elaine Witom

**Light Crew:** Michael Downsley, Shari Gilmore, Steve Hosmer, Kevin Kaplan, T.J. Minogue, Sara Powell, Cari Schlikas, Cheri Skidmore

**Light Board Operator:** Ari Muvaney

**Sound Board Operator:** Arlena Longtin

**Costume Crew:** Antonietta D'Agostino, Lida Dexter, Pequette Lacasse, T.J. Minogue, Ako Miyaki, Kelly Morris, Lisa Richter, Merelda Smith

**Costume Crew Head:** Jennifer Wilson

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Cal MacLean  
Antiques Mart  
University of Illinois  
Illinois Wesleyan University  
Robin Brtva of Silk Plants Etc.  
Illinois State University Greenhouse

---

---

## AMERICAN COLLEGE THEATRE FESTIVAL XXIV

Presented and produced by the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts  
Supported in part by the Kennedy Center Corporate Fund,  
the U.S. Department of Education, and Ryder System

This production is an Associate entry in the American College Theatre Festival (ACTF). The aims of this national theatre education program are to identify and promote quality in college-level theatre production. To this end, each production entered is eligible for adjudication by a regional ACTF representative, and certain students are selected to participate in ACTF programs involving awards, scholarships and special grants for actors, playwrights, designers, and critics at both the regional and national levels.

Last year approximately 800 productions and 17,000 students participated in the American College Theatre Festival nationwide. By entering this production, our department is sharing in the ACTF goals to help college theater grow and to focus attention on the exemplary work produced in college and university theaters across the nation.

---

---

## THEATRE STAFF

General Manager ..... Peter Guither  
Costume Shop Supervisor ..... Tona Schenck  
Scene Shop Supervisor ..... Dennis Mays

**COSTUME SHOP — Graduate Personnel:** Carol Dorward, Susan H. Erdmann, Amy Khongkhakul, Richard Kagey\*, Teresa S. Pruitt\*, Scott Robinson\*, Missy Skelton\*;  
**Undergraduate TA:** Susan L. Hayes; **Undergraduate Personnel:** Kris Benzschawel, Patricia Peterson, Kelly VanKirk, Jennifer Wilson

**SCENESHOP — Graduate Personnel:** Scott Cavin\*, Armella Nefzger\*, Patty Ellison\*, Seth Hible, Richard Kagey\*, Tina White\*; **Undergraduate Personnel:** Kristi Batt, Gina Diehl, Jeffrey Lewis, Jeffrey McCloskey, Jerry Swatek, Laura Steib

**MANAGEMENT — Box Office Managers:** Mickey DiPiero, Mark D. Hayes\*; **Asst. Box Office Manager:** Renee Perreault; **Marketing Director:** Tim Burruss\*; **Publicity and Programs:** Barb Matysik; **House Managers:** Betsy Baxter, Rachel Kasper; **Assts. to the General Manager:** G.B. Altman, Jenny Rosenberg

## DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE FACULTY

**Chairperson:** John Stefano

Nancy Benjamin, Caryn Brieschke, Julie Brinker, Dan Browder, Kathi D'Alessandro, Connie de Veer, Darrel Ford, Peter Guither, John Kirk, Pamela Klarup, Calvin MacLean, Kathleen McLennan, Ron Mottram, Patrick O'Gara, Kim Pereira, Pam Ritch, J. William Ruyle, Jean Scharfenberg, John Sipes, John Stark, John Stefano, Lee Templeman, Frank Vybiral, Scott Walters, Dan Wilhelm, Sandra Zielinski

**Office Staff:** Caroline Gordon, Betty Stephenson, Rosemary Stockle

**Dean, College of Fine Arts:** Alvin Goldfarb

Written by Victorien Sardou in 1860, *A Scrap of Paper* is a delightful comedy that traces the journey love makes as it lays siege on the hearts and minds of the characters. Although it is a comedy, its inception, as with all of Sardou's plays, was spurred by his grappling with a significant issue of his time. According to Jerome Hart in *Sardou and the Sardou Plays*, Victorien Sardou spent a great deal of time pondering a problem of life. He mused over it until he has figured out the essence of the problem in the form of question. For Sardou, once the question was discovered and properly stated all that remained was for the play to be written. With the purpose that motivates the drama defined, the dramatic form was revealed. In *A Scrap of Paper*, I believe that he asks the question, "What is the proper reason for undertaking marriage?"

We are presented with two opposite reasons for marriage in this play: Prosper's need to marry so that he may secure his estate, and Paul's desire to marry because he is in love. Prosper's pursuit becomes one ruled by his intellect, plotting out the undertaking with sheer use of his wit, void of his heart. Paul's pursuit is just the reverse. For Sardou, neither of the two reasons for marriage when pursued exclusively, is valid. Proper use of "reason" a state of balance between the heart and the mind, is missing and by themselves, each void of the other, they are imbalanced. In *A Scrap of Paper* we are shown a world out of balance.

Though Sardou's question may be a serious one, he uses the comic mode to present it. The plot turns on the retrieval of an old love letter that has been intercepted by the wrong hands, only to fall into the wrong hands again and again, until it is finally burned. While the scrap of paper is destroyed in the process, the characters are far better off for their wear and tear. By the end of the play the relationships are reduced to the more natural state of couples: even and balanced. Prosper's statement in Act 2 after he falls in love, "It is reason returning with love" is one that affected me strongly and supports my feelings about the missing balance.

The position of the women in the play is an important aspect affected by the need for balance. During the preparation of *A Scrap of Paper* I made an interesting discovery while comparing the English translation of *A Scrap of Paper* by Leonie Gilmour with the French translation by W. O. Farnsworth. Unlike the French version, the English translation contains additional lines during Acts 2 and 3 which reveal Suzanne's understanding of her actions at the end of the play. By showing that Suzanne is aware of her later actions, our view of Suzanne is altered. She is not rendered inferior by the turn of events, but rather she is a knowingly equal participant. The decision to leave these crucial lines in the text supports my interpretation of both the play and the position of women in general. In terms of the play, as seen in the relationships of the married couples, marriage is only balanced when the individuals involved are equals.