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Cider Mill Playhouse Presents “You Can’t Take It With You”

(Endicott, NY) The first three weekends in November, the Cider Mill Playhouse (CMP) is presenting *You Can’t Take It With You*, by George S. Kaufman and Moss Hart. The classic screwball comedy won the Pulitzer Prize for Drama, and the movie version with Jimmy Stewart won Best Picture at the Academy Awards. “It champions family, friendship, and art, in direct opposition to the blind pursuit of wealth and social status,” says director Tim Mollen. “It’s also hilarious, and we’re lucky to have a dream team of local talent on stage bringing the colorful characters to life.”

Local theatre fans will see many familiar faces, including Mitch Tiffany as Grandpa, Dori May Ganison as Penny, and Amoreena Wade as Alice, with strong comedic support from Chris Nickerson, Rona Knobel, Ted Nappi, Joe Bardales, Andrew Simek, Michael O’Donnell, Tony Yajko, Amy Smith, and Kate Murray. Bret Jaspers, as Tony, Bill McManus, and Amber Gance make their CMP mainstage debuts, and Laura Brennan, as Essie, returns after her acclaimed performance in *The 39 Steps* last month at CMP.

Mollen has worked with the show’s designers to create a different feel from most productions of the play, which typically place the action in a household that is well-to-do, with chandeliers and gilded portraits. Samantha Adamson’s set design, in particular, presents the Sycamore home as a modest, functional artist’s enclave, where opulence is ignored in favor of creativity and a sense of play. That idea is amplified by Rhiannon Randall’s whimsical but realistic costumes, and Paul M. Radassao’s warm, inviting lighting design. Patrick Lachance’s sound design painstakingly details the sounds and songs of Depression-era America. Music plays an outsized role in this production, with cast members grabbing instruments from furniture – and even the walls – for spirited, impromptu jam sessions.

Kaufman and Hart had one of the great writing partnerships of the American theatre. In addition to this play, they teamed up on *Once In A Lifetime*, *Merrily We Roll Along*, and *The Man Who Came To Dinner*. But *You Can’t Take It With You* is their most enduring work. The 2014 Broadway revival starred James Earl Jones, and earned a Tony Award for Annaleigh Ashford. Gail King Belokur, Artistic and Executive Director at the Cider Mill Playhouse, sums up the play’s extraordinary appeal this way: “Comedy with unabashed sentiment is rare today, so we look back to this masterpiece as a hallmark of sharp, witty writing with humanity and heart.”

You Can’t Take It With You runs November 5 – 22. All performances are at 7:30 p.m. The show is sponsored by Belknap Building Center and WNBF Talk Radio. Tickets for all Cider Mill Playhouse shows are available at the box office. CALL 607-748-7363, VISIT 2 S. Nanticoke Ave, Endicott, or CLICK www.cidermillplayhouse.org. This 254-seat, cabaret-style playhouse is honored to receive season support from the New York State Council on the Arts and the Broome County Arts Council.

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