Rinuccio announces arrival of the notary, Amantio di Nicolao, the witnesses, Guccio and Pinellino. Schicchi (as Buoso) greets them and explains that he cannot write his will himself because he suffers from palsy. As the notary reads the Latin preamble, “Buoso” revokes all previous wills, requests that his funeral expenses be modest, and pronounces his legacy to the monks--five lire. The family is overjoyed, but the notary is skeptical so “Buoso” explains that if he left too much to charity, people would think it was dirty money. He now keeps his promises as to the cash and land, but when it comes to the mule, the house, and the mills, he leaves each to his dear friend, Gianni Schicchi. The family is horrified, but remembers the penalty for forgery, so they only grumble. After silencing the relatives, the notary and witnesses leave in sorrow.

After the notary departs, the family turns on Schicchi and begin to loot the house before he can chase them out. Meanwhile, Lauretta and Rinuccio recall their first kiss. When Schicchi returns with the loot he took back from the Donatis, he is moved by the sight of the happy lovers. He turns to the audience and asks, “Tell me ladies and gentlemen, if Buoso’s money could end up better than this? For this bit of fun, they stuck me in hell...and so be it. But with the permission of the great father Dante, if this evening you’ve been amused, grant me extenuating circumstances.” He bows gracefully as the curtain drops.
The Old Maid and the Thief
A Grotesque Opera in 14 scenes
By Gian Carlo Menotti (1911-2007)

The Cast
Miss Todd, mezzo-soprano, a middle aged spinster
Laetitia, soprano, her maid
Miss Pinkerton, soprano, neighbor of Miss Todd
Bob, baritone, a free-thinking vagabond
An Italian Immigrant Liquor Store Owner

Jennifer Vickers, Deborah Nansteel
Allison Jones, Sarah Davis
Melissa Dull, Lauren Mazzola
Fred Rice, Matthew Gillette
Ali Cleland

The action takes place in West Chester, Pennsylvania.  Time: 1939

The Old Maid and the Thief was originally conceived as a Radio-Opera and broadcast as World
Premiere by the National Broadcasting Company, April 22, 1939. The first stage performance
was by the Philadelphia Opera Company, February 11, 1941.

Production Team
Music Director/Conductor
Stage Director
Costume Design
Lighting
Assistant to the Director
Set Design
Publicity

John O'Brien
John Kramar
Jeff Phipps
Michael LaRoche
Shelley Maddox
John Kramar
Michael Crane

VIOLIN I
Gayane Grigoryan, concertmaster
Elizabeth Upson
Laura Eis
VIOLIN II
Elizabeth Devereux
Joy Schaub
Andrew Minguez
VIOLA
Myra Yeung, principal
Anna Stainback
FLUTE
Jessica Lim, principal
PIECOLO
Rachael Arnold

CELLO
Hovhannes Alanakyan
Marina Moran
Kathryn York
BASS
Ryan Shoaf, principal
Shawn Simon
HORN
David Lewis, principal
Tremayne Smith
TRUMPET
James Old, principal
Christopher Neverve
TROMBONE
Jesse Rackley, principal

stifled rage, “we will see the friars fattening themselves on the wealth of the Donati’s!”
The other relatives are outraged that the friars will feast while they go hungry. Rinuccio's
hope of happiness is now crushed, and the family moves madly around the room cursing
and breaking into fits of sardonic laughter. After the climax of their frenzy, they sink
from exhaustion, some begin to cry. “Who would have thought that when Buoso went
to the cemetery we would be crying real tears?” comments Zita bitterly.

Then they have a thought: what if they were able to suppress the will? The
family turns to Simone for advice, but he gestures that it is hopeless. Suddenly, another
idea comes to them. They want to find a way to get around the will. Once again, they
ask Simone's advice, but before he can answer Rinuccio suggests that Gianni Schicchi
might be able to help them. However, Zita will not hear of it. When Gherardino
returns with news that Schicchi is coming, he gets a spanking from his father and the
whole family attacks Rinuccio for his presumptuous behavior. Simone and Zita strongly
disapprove of a marriage between a Donati and the daughter of a mignon like Schicchi.
Schicchi arrives with Lauretta and he cynically comments about the Donati family's
reaction to the loving words between Lauretta and Rinuccio. Schicchi expresses his
sorrow for the family's loss and points out the comfort they will have in the inheritance.
Zita then informs him of their dis-inheritance and asks him to take Lauretta and leave
since he has no dowry for them. Lauretta and Rinuccio are devastated and their outcries
prompt a shouting match between Schicchi and Zita. Rinuccio begs Schicchi to help
them find a way to save the inheritance, but he is not moved to do so until Lauretta
pleads with him, threatening to throw herself in the Arno if she cannot marry the man
she loves. (“O mio babbino caro”)

Schicchi cannot resist his daughter's request, so he formulates an idea. He
sends Lauretta away and then questions the relatives as to who knows of Buoso's death.
When he finds that no one does, he orders the men to take Buoso's body to another room
and the women to remake the bed. Though they comply, the family is quite confused.
When there is a knock at the door, Buoso warns not to allow anyone in. He then hides
behind the bed as the family talks with Doctor Spinelloccio. They tell him that Buoso
is feeling better, but is resting. A strange voice comes from the bed asking the doctor to
return later. He agrees, and asks Buoso if he is feeling better. The fake Buoso answers,
“I've risen from the dead.” Schicchi then explains his plan to the befuddled family. He
explains what they must do: run to the notary, tell him that Buoso is dying and wants
him to write a will. When the notary arrives, he asks Simone if Buoso is feeling better.
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to make his will so to bring the parchment and come quickly. When the notary arrives,
the room is dark, and in the bed he sees the figure of Buoso, complete with cap and chin
strap -- except that the figure will be Schicchi, impersonating Buoso, and making the will.
It will be his greatest deception. Zita sends Rinuccio for the notary. Then the
family begins to decide how the riches will be divided which prompts a squabble. It ends
at the sound of the funeral bell. They all assume that the news of Buoso’s death has been
leaked. Gherardo runs to see who has died and returns with news that it is the captain's
servant. They happily pray that he will rest in peace as they wait for the notary to arrive.
At this point, the bribery begins. Each relative secretly offers Schicchi large sums to leave
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### The Orchestra

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<tr>
<th>Violin I</th>
<th>Violin II</th>
<th>Viola</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leonardo Perez, concertmaster</td>
<td>Rachel Harmatuk, principal</td>
<td>Sze-ee-won Lee, principal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elizabeth York</td>
<td>Raoul Mata</td>
<td>Byron Watkins</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alicia Arnold</td>
<td>Micaela Frund</td>
<td>Carolyn Dunn</td>
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<td>Ashley Dyer</td>
<td>Christina Haake</td>
<td>Joseph Walker</td>
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<tr>
<td>Amanda Krauss</td>
<td>FLUTE/PICCOLO</td>
<td>Cello</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joshua Doggett</td>
<td>Erin Munnelly, principal</td>
<td>Weipeng Liu, principal</td>
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<tr>
<td>CLARINET</td>
<td>Kristen Shaheen</td>
<td>Laura Booth</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tracey Jones, principal</td>
<td>CLARINET</td>
<td>Deborah Ramos</td>
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<tr>
<td>HORN</td>
<td>Rissa Young</td>
<td>Stephen Duran</td>
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<tr>
<td>HORN</td>
<td>Keyondra Price, principal</td>
<td>BASS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alex Smith</td>
<td>Jason Pulley</td>
<td>Richard Jordon, principal</td>
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<tr>
<td>TROMBONE</td>
<td>TIMPANI/PERCUSSION</td>
<td>Adrea Reavis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grayson Woodcock principal</td>
<td>OBOE/ENGLISH HORN</td>
<td>OBOE/ENGLISH HORN</td>
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<td>Alex Smith</td>
<td>CLARINET</td>
<td>Kelly Longmire, principal</td>
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<td>HARP</td>
<td>BASSOON/CONTRABASSOON</td>
<td>BASSOON/CONTRABASSOON</td>
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<td>HARP</td>
<td>CLARINET</td>
<td>Shrieka Gilliard, principal</td>
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<td>John O’Brien</td>
<td>Cello</td>
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<td>Adam Fussell, principal</td>
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### Synopsis

The story begins just after Buoso Donati’s death. His relatives have come to his house to express their grief when one of the poor relatives, Betto, tells the family that Buoso has left his entire estate to the monks. Upon hearing this news, the tears subside and the family turns to Simone, Buoso’s brother-in-law, who advises them that if they find the will, there is still some hope. The family frantically searches until Buoso’s nephew, Rinuccio, announces that he has the will, but will not give it up until his aunt Zita, Buoso’s cousin, allows him to marry Lauretta, daughter of Gianni Schicchi. Zita says if everything turns out the way they want, she does not care who he marries. Rinuccio then sends Gherardino to bring Gianni Schicchi and Lauretta to Buoso’s house. Rinuccio gives Zita the will which she quickly opens. The family begins to read. There are a few tokens left to Buoso’s cousins, but the bulk of the estate, the house in Florence, the mills of Signa, and his prize mule, have all been left to the monks. Their faces gradually assume a genuinely tragic expression. They are all frozen in a state of shock. Simone is the first to move. He lowers the curtains and snuffs the candles. Slowly, with eyes wide, other relatives sit down. “So it was true”, Simone suddenly exclaims, with

### A note from the Director

I vividly remember one morning in early September 1987, when I arrived for my first day of classes at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia. After bounding up its marble staircase, I struggled with a massive set of iron doors only to be verbally accosted by the acid tongue of Curtis’ receptionist – the meddling Mrs. Schactel. “You have an audition for Gian Carlo Menotti at 11:00! Sing an Italian aria, a song in English, and look presentable!” Having just arrived in Philadelphia from Rochester, NY, I literally flew up Walnut Street to my new apartment, threw on my only suit, ripped open boxes of scores to find Puccini’s Edgar and a tattered volume of songs by Charles Ives. In less than an hour I was back in Curtis’ grotesque lobby, struggling to compose myself for my first-ever meeting with a long-time idol – the Pulitzer Prize winning composer Gian Carlo Menotti! As it turned out, Curtis was mounting a special production of his opera The Medium to celebrate his 75th birthday. Menotti was in town to cast the production, and he would later return to direct it. The Medium was the first opera I ever saw. It remains one of my favorite stage works to this day. To say I was nervous would be a gross understatement. Mr. Menotti greeted me curtly, and I sang the Edgar aria for him. “What do you have in English, young man?” “West London, by Ives” was my reply. I sang my heart out, and Mr. Menotti responded with “Curious. I don’t like Ives. Do you have something of mine?” As luck would have it, I had tucked my first day of classes at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia. After bounding a note from the Director

Radio approached the young composer with the idea of writing an opera specifically for

The Old Maid and the Thief

Amelia al Ballo

Edgar

The Medium

The Old Maid and the Thief was Menotti’s first opera written in the English language. His only previous opera, Amelia al Ballo (Amelia goes to the ball), was composed while he was still a student at the Curtis Institute of Music. Its immediate and enormous success led to subsequent performances at no less than the Metropolitan Opera. Menotti had a knack for attracting attention and publicity throughout his career. When NBC Radio approached the young composer with the idea of writing an opera specifically for
performance on the radio. Menotti was only too happy to embrace the novel project. (He would later be the first important composer to write an opera specifically for television – the now cherished Christmas opera Amahl and the Night Visitors.) For his new subject matter, Menotti drew upon personal experiences from his student days. As one of the first students at Curtis, he immediately befriended the composer Samuel Barber. Both young men were handsome, elegant, well read, and immensely talented. As Menotti was now thousands of miles away from his Italian family, he often spent weekends and holidays with the Barber family in West Chester, Pennsylvania. The quiet, small-town American life was strangely exotic to Menotti. He became fascinated with the drawing room gossip, the repressed behavior of West Chester’s citizens, and what he imagined to be secret intrigues that were taking place over cups of tea and finger sandwiches. The plot of The Old Maid and the Thief is rooted in actual events. At the time of its conception, Menotti viewed the work light-heartedly – with Miss Todd being the object of ridicule and jokes. As he matured, he changed his sympathies. No longer did Bob and Laetitia occupy a fond place in his heart. When Menotti accepted middle age in his own life, Miss Todd became sympathetic to him.

My own views on this work are similar. I found myself emphasizing the “cartoon-like” aspects of this frothy piece when I began working on the current production. During our rehearsal period, Mr. Menotti passed away. I was deeply saddened by his death. Suddenly, my cartoon vision began to have elements of truth, beauty, and pain creeping into it. Perhaps Mr. Menotti’s creative genius had this odd juxtaposition at its core all along. I fear that my work on this production has been neither perfect, nor always right. That being said, perhaps Mr. Menotti would still be pleased with it. I can only hope so. --JK

Acknowledgments

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Dr. Jeff Elwell, Dean of the ECU College of Fine Arts and Communication, and Dr. Chris Buddo, Director of ECU School of Music, for their continuing support of the opera program.

Michael Worley, Mary Jane Gaddis, and the CFAC Development Staff for their help with Friends of Opera.

Friends of ECU Opera

ECU School of Theatre and Dance, Mr. John Shearin, Director, for its friendship and cooperation with costumes.

Ella Shaw and Evelyn McBride for the loan of furniture

ECU Department of Vocal Studies Faculty

Gianni Schicchi
An Opera in One Act by Giacomo Puccini

The Cast

Gianni Schicchi —A resourceful and cunning man
Lauretta— His daughter who is in love with Rinuccio
Buoso Donati – An extremely wealthy man who dies

BUOSO DONATTI'S RELATIVES
Zita – A money-grubbing cousin of Buoso Donati
Rinuccio – Zita’s nephew who is in love with Lauretta
Gherardo – Nephew of Buoso Donati
Nella –
Gherardino – Gherardo and Nella’s son
Betto di Signa – Buoso’s poor brother-in-law
Simone – Money-grubbing, wise old mayor of Fucecchio and cousin of Buoso Donati
Marco – Simone’s son
La Ciesca – Marco’s wife
Spinelloccio – gullible doctor of Buoso Donati
Amanario Di Nicolao — Buoso Donati’s lawyer
Pinellino – the cobbler
Guccio – the dyer

* denotes understudy

The action takes place in Florence, Italy, circa 1939

Production Team

Conductor: Jorge Richter
Music Director: Catherine Garner
Stage Directors: Sharon Munden, Oliver Henderson
Italian Coach: Francesco Izzo
Costume Design: Jeff Phipps
Lighting: Michael LaRoche
Assistant to the Director: Shelley Maddox, Quentin Powell
Set Design: John Kramar
Publicity: Michael Crane
Super Title Design: Sasha Gerritson