

Drama Production Memories

1966 Merry Wives of Windsor





HE'LL BE FALSTAFF—Charles Moshontz, 17, senior at Reseda High, requires 30 minutes to age 30 years for role of Falstaff in "Merry Wives of Windsor," opening today at 1 p.m. in the school auditorium.



FIRST STEP — Rubber-base make-up is applied to Charles' face by Barry Tuchman, member of wardrobe section, to hold false whiskers to cheeks. Students will see play today, public Friday, Saturday.



TIME FOR WHISKERS—Charles applies hirsute adornment with help of mirror. Curtain time for his appearance Friday and Saturday is 8:15 p.m. His role—fat old knight-about-town in 17th century.



SUCCESS—Charles lifts mug in toast in Shakespeare play as realistically as though he actually is Sir John Falstaff, according to David Farley, drama teacher and director for the student production.

Times photos by Stan Mandel

Production Memories:

This was a dreadful adaptation of Shakespeare's slapstick comedy. The costumes were great, but the set had wet paint on opening night, as usual. Most of the ribald humor in the text had to be cut out (after all, this WAS a high school production!) but the play still ran an agonizing three hours long – about an hour too long for the attention span of the average high schooler.

We recruited neighborhood kids and our own younger brothers and sisters to play the children of the “Merry Wives”, and we used many of them again six months later when we performed “The King and I.”

The highlight of the show for the actors was never noticed by the audience: In one performance, some stage hand forgot to tell Laura Fetterman in her dressing room it was time to go on, and she missed her cue. Left on stage with nothing to do were Tom Bosak, Gary Mussell, and Roy Cameron who had to ad lib in Elizabethan English for about five minutes until somebody finally got Laura onto the stage. We were very proud of our acting skills that day! Laura was quite distressed and embarrassed but it wasn't her fault.

This marked the only return of Tom Bosak to Drama Production after a two-year layoff (he was on the school swim team and that took his after-school attention.) playing the comical priest who is mortified that the two wives (Maddy DiMaggio and Linda Honzel) might be having an affair with the rotund Falstaff (played very robustly by Chuck Moshontz.) Barry Tuchman was at his best as the jealous husband, frustrated as he tried unsuccessfully to catch the women in the act. (Now you know where the idea for “Desperate Housewives” came from!)