



Tartuffe by Moliere, translated from the French by Harold Dixon

Moliere

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Tartuffe by Moliere: a new rhymed verse translation by Harold Dixon Tartuffe is the story of a religious hypocrite who worms his way into a middle class household in 17th century France. It has a cast of 13 characters, 8 men, 5 women (1 man, 1 woman in non-speaking roles). It is the most popular of Moliere's plays. This version is a modern, American English translation of the French classic. Like the original, it is entirely in rhymed couplets, but you will find that this version is fresh and accessible for modern audiences while keeping the spirit of the original. This translation has been performed at the University of Arizona and at the University of Redlands, CA, where it was enthusiastically received. After reviewing the manuscript, Shepard Sobel, artistic director of the acclaimed Pearl Theatre Company in New York City, wrote: "Your text is an extraordinary accomplishment. Whenever we take on Moliere and other rhymed coupleters, we struggle over the difficult choice of opting for speakability or for authenticity. Hats off to you for managing both. I have some sense of what a feat that is." More praise for this translation: "...pitch-perfect...[a] limber verse translation of the French original. For once, here is a Moliere free of Briticisms and archaic turns of phrase. True, Dixon does pepper the dialog with modern colloquialisms—'rat race,' walk the walk,' 'horny husbands,' usually for the sake of an arresting rhyme—but none of this ever seems out of character." (Tucson, AZ Weekly) Dixon's "rhymed translation is quite actable and occasionally vernacular-sharp." (Los Angeles Times) Dixon's translation "of the text into rhymed couplets is always smooth, often brilliant." (Redlands, CA Daily Facts) Dixon's "achievement is rather monumental...since the entire comedy is in rhymed couplets...Dixon's accomplishment is to be highly commended, as the speech flowed easily, comedy was unimpaired and even a few modern idioms inserted." (Loma Linda, CA Bulletin)

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