

# *MISS BENNET: CHRISTMAS AT PEMBERLEY*

By Lauren Gunderson and Margot Melcon

## AUDITION INFORMATION

### WHAT IS THE PLAY ABOUT?

University Theatre greets the holiday season with the sparkling *MISS BENNET: CHRISTMAS AT PEMBERLEY*, a new play, first produced in 2016. *MISS BENNET* is a sequel to Jane Austen's *PRIDE AND PREJUDICE*, set in 1815, two years after the novel ends. The play continues the story of the Bennet sisters, only this time with bookish middle-sister Mary as its unlikely heroine. Mary is growing tired of her role as dutiful middle sister in the face of her siblings' romantic escapades. Lizzy and Mr. Darcy are happily settled in to their new marriage; Jane and Charles are also blissfully married and expecting their first child; Lydia, though still married to the scandalous Mr. Wickham, is as flirtatious as ever. When the family gathers for Christmas at Pemberley, Mr. Darcy's estate, an unexpected guest sparks Mary's hopes for independence, an intellectual match, and possibly even love. Period sensibilities meets modern day feminism in this delightful romantic comedy.

*"Droll and delicious, MISS BENNET is a charming, confectionary celebration . . . honoring the legacy of Jane Austen's humor, playfulness and wit in a warm-spirited holiday theatrical production."*

--DCMetro Theater Arts.com

*"... a perfectly constructed love story . . . Given its fizzy comedy, sweet spirit and clean structure, [MISS BENNET] seems destined to populate future holiday seasons . . ."*

--San Francisco Chronicle

*"... an unstuffy, highly entertaining and warm-spirited work, the kind of thing multiple generations can enjoy together."*

--Chicago Tribute

### WHO MAY AUDITION?

Auditions are open to all Fresno State students as well as community members.

### WHEN ARE THE AUDITIONS?

Preliminary Auditions

Wednesday, August 22, 6:00 -9:00 p.m., John Wright Theatre

Preliminary Auditions are for all Fall University Theatre productions.

Actors should prepare a monologue of their own choosing no longer than two minutes in length.

Actors who do not have a prepared monologue can still audition, and will be given a monologue from one of the Fall productions to cold read.

### *MISS BENNET* Callbacks

Thursday, August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 7:00-10:00 p.m.; Friday, August 24<sup>th</sup>, 4:00-7:00 p.m. John Wright Theatre

Callbacks will consist of reading scenes/monologues from *MISS BENNET*.

Actors should read with their best Standard English (Received Pronunciation) Accent. (Doesn't need to be perfect, but give it your best shot. The life and the dynamics between the characters is most important.)

Callback material will be made available at the Preliminary Audition.

Actors with conflicts with the callback times should notify the director.

### HOW WILL I KNOW IF I AM CALLED BACK?

A callback list will be posted on the Green Room call board, and on the University Theatre website late in the evening on Wednesday, August 22<sup>nd</sup>.

### HOW WILL I KNOW IF I AM CAST?

The cast list will be posted on the Green Room call board and on the University Theatre website the afternoon of Saturday, August 25<sup>th</sup>.

## WHEN WILL THE SHOW REHEARSE?

Rehearsals will be Sunday through Thursday evenings, 7:15-10:15 p.m., up until tech week. Rehearsals will begin Sunday, October, 14<sup>th</sup>.

(The first week will include dialect work and a review of PRIDE AND PREJUDICE.)

The show will not rehearse November 21<sup>st</sup>-24<sup>th</sup>, during Thanksgiving break.

First Tech rehearsal will be Sunday, December 2<sup>nd</sup>. The estimated call time for actors will be 12:30 p.m. The rehearsal could go as late as 11:00 p.m. with a dinner break.

Dress/Tech rehearsals will be December 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>; Estimated call time will be 6:00 p.m.

A preview performance for high school students will be on Thursday December 6<sup>th</sup>.

Estimated Call time will be 6:30 p.m.; 7:30 curtain.

## WHEN WILL THE SHOW PERFORM?

*MISS BENNET* performs December 7<sup>TH</sup>, 8<sup>TH</sup>, 11<sup>TH</sup>-15<sup>TH</sup> at 7:30 p.m. (Estimated 6:30 actor call); and December 9<sup>TH</sup> at 2:00 p.m.\* (Estimated 1:00 p.m. actor call).

\*There may be a photo shoot following the December 9<sup>TH</sup> matinee. The photo shoot should last about 2 hours.

## HOW CAN I GET A PERUSAL SCRIPT?

You can receive a digital copy of the script by emailing Amie Douglass (Theatre Arts Department Administrative Assistant) at [adouglass@mail.fresnostate.edu](mailto:adouglass@mail.fresnostate.edu).

## WHAT ARE THE CHARACTERS?

**CHARACTERS 3 Men, 5 Women (possible additional 1-3 servants)**

**The writers encourage diverse casting—"Jane Austen belongs to everyone"**

**MARY BENNET** – 20. Finally coming into her own, she is no longer the plain, boring girl she once was. She has a fire in her now. She is intelligent, curious, and lively, but her family only sees her as a future spinster. She does not suffer fools. She wants to live.

**ARTHUR DeBOURGH** – 25. A studious, unsociable only child who has never been around women or large families. He is a loner who prefers books to people. He has recently inherited a large estate and has no idea what to do next.

**ELIZABETH DARCY** – 22. Married to Mr. Darcy. Confident, charming, and witty. She makes a fun and surprising lady of the house. She is best friends with her sister Jane.

**FITZWILLIAM DARCY**– 30. A loving, generous and smart (if slightly stiff) husband. He is quiet and vigilant and thus sees what others often miss. He knows what being lovelorn is like.

**JANE BINGLEY** – 24. Married to Mr. Bingley. She is seven months pregnant with her first child and is sweet and optimistic as ever. The kindest heart in the house.

**CHARLES BINGLEY** – 25. Gracious, happy, and ever focused on the love of his life, Jane. A good friend and always ready with a smile.

**LYDIA WICKHAM**- 17. Flirtatious, youthful, self-centered. Her marriage to Mr. Wickham is a sham but she will not admit this. She is the person you want to have at your party: energetic, engaging, unstoppable.

**ANNE DeBOURGH** – 20s. Only daughter of the late Lady Catherine de Bourgh. Lived in her mother's very large shadow, never having to ask for anything or speak for herself her entire life. Judgmental and impatient, just like her mother.

**SERVANTS** – 18-22. Never speaking. Ever watchful. Serve the family and help to facilitate transitions.

## WHAT IF I HAVE ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS?

Contact Brad Myers (Director)

Email: [bradley@m@mail.fresnostate.edu](mailto:bradley@m@mail.fresnostate.edu); Office Phone: 559-278-2053; Cell Phone: 559-285-5686