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Lawrence University

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# Tony Award-Winning Musical “The Drowsy Chaperone” Performed at Lawrence University

*Posted on: October 18th, 2012 by Rick Peterson*

Four performances of Lawrence University’s production of the Tony Award-winning musical “The Drowsy Chaperone” will be staged Oct. 25-27 in Stansbury Theatre of the Music-Drama Center.



A “musical within a comedy,” “The Drowsy Chaperone” parodies 1920s musicals with a show-within-a-show plot device. The show begins in the apartment of a character known only to the audience as Man in Chair, an agoraphobic Broadway fanatic who has acquired a recording of a fictional 1928 musical titled “The Drowsy Chaperone.” As he listens to the record, the musical’s characters appear in his apartment to tell the farcical story of fiancés Janet Van de Graaf, a Broadway chorus girl giving up show business for married life, and Robert Martin, an oil tycoon.

“This piece echoes the 1920s, the decade that developed our shared definition of Broadway, and through those references lets us explore our own ideas about entertainment and escape,” said Kathy Privatt, associate professor of theatre arts and the production’s director.

Associate Professor of Music Phillip Swan serves as the music director for the production, which is based on a book by Bob

Martin and Don McKeller.

Among the 1920s-era musical clichés “The Drowsy Chaperone” spoofs are stock characters — a ditzy chorus girl, comic gangsters and a stiff English butler, among others — impromptu tap-dancing numbers and mistaken identities.

Freshman David Pecsí plays the Man in Chair, with juniors Madeline Bunke and Alex York portraying Janet Van de Graaf and Robert Martin. Junior Gabriella Guilfoil plays the titular character, the drowsy chaperone, an alcoholic stage diva tasked with keeping Janet away from Robert until the wedding.