



**you  
can't  
take it  
with  
you**

a classic comedy by  
**Kaufman & Hart**

First Congregational  
Church of Somerville

89 College Avenue  
(4 blocks from Davis Square)

Thu May 4	8 PM
Fri May 5	8 PM
Sat May 6	8 PM
Sun May 7	3 PM
Thu May 11	8 PM
Fri May 12	8 PM
Sat May 13	8 PM



## Director's Note

*You Can't Take It With You* is a true gem of American theatre. Written by the legendary duo of Moss Hart and George S. Kaufman, and debuting in December of 1936, the play soon garnered a Pulitzer prize, and a wildly successful movie adaptation starring Jimmy Stewart quickly followed in 1938. It's not hard to see why. Almost 70 years after its initial run, the play, with its lovably eccentric characters and witty repartee, is as fresh as if it had been written at the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

I think the play's success and longevity are due largely in part to its theme of fierce individualism and the rejection of societal pressure. Who hasn't wished they could quit their job to pursue their hobbies? Who hasn't longed to reduce their stress level by dropping out of the rat race? In the Vanderhof family, we see an alternate version of ourselves, a version that's stepped up and abandoned the daily grind for what's really important in life. In the play, the Vanderhofs are depicted as happy, fulfilled people; never once are they the butt of a joke, or treated with anything but dignity. Through the Vanderhofs, we can vicariously, for a couple of hours, live a life of freedom both from toil and judgement.

With all that said, though, it's not necessary to look *too* deeply into *You Can't Take It With You*. After all, it's a comedy, and a really funny one—and just as relevant today as it was in 1936. On behalf of all us—cast, crew, and production staff—I hope you enjoy the show as much as we've enjoyed putting it together.

— Matt Kimmel, 2006

**NOTICE:** No smoking inside the building. Flash photography is not allowed during the performance. Please silence your cell phones, pagers, and other electronic devices.

# Scenes

The scene is the home of Martin Vanderhof, New York.  
The year is 1937.

**ACT ONE:** A Wednesday Evening

**ACT TWO:** A Week Later

**ACT THREE:** The Next Day

There will be two intermissions.

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# Cast

Penelope “Penny” Sycamore.....	Elizabeth Hunter
Essie Carmichael .....	Jude Shabry
Rheba .....	Shaunna Francis
Paul Sycamore.....	Brian Rogalski
Mr. De Pinna .....	Braddoc DeCaires
Ed Carmichael .....	Jack Dietz
Donald.....	Rob Noyes
Martin “Grandpa” Vanderhof.....	John Olson
Alice Sycamore .....	Katie Leeman
Mr. Henderson.....	Michael Babish
Tony Kirby.....	Santiago Rivas
Boris Kolenkhov.....	Matt Ringel
Gay Wellington .....	Renni Boy
Mr. Kirby.....	Jason Merrill
Mrs. Kirby .....	Gilly Rosenthol
The Grand Duchess Olga Katrina.....	Mare Freed
G-Man 1 (“The Man”).....	David Stokes
G-Man 2 (“Jim”) .....	Renée Johnson
G-Man 3 (“Mac”).....	Alyssa Osiecki

# Staff

Producer .....	Jo Guthrie
Director.....	Matt Kimmel
Rehearsal Assistant.....	Kerri Centrella
Technical Director .....	Jennifer Koerber
Stage Manager.....	Kerri Centrella
House Manager.....	Chris DeKalb
Publicity.....	Ari Herzog
Ad Sales Manager .....	Alyssa Osiecki
Promotional Design .....	Gilly Rosenthol
Lighting .....	Mindy Klenoff
Assistant Lighting Director .....	Jason Merrill
Sound Design & Webmaster .....	Neil Marsh
Costume & Makeup Design .....	Renée Johnson
Props Master.....	Amanda Hughes
Props Manager.....	Becky Dowgiert
Set Design .....	Shaunna Francis
Photographer.....	Matt Ringel
Painting of Mr. De Pinna by Karla Zimonja	

# Biographies

**MICHAEL BABISH** (Mr. Henderson)

Brains he's got in spades,  
'ccasionally seen in shades,  
Always had good grades.

*Courtesy of IRON POET HAIKU ([ironpoet.livejournal.com](http://ironpoet.livejournal.com))*

**RENNI BOY** (Gay Wellington) is delighted to be part of her third Theatre@First production, although she is beginning to worry about this theme of Russians and drunks. Her theatrical debut was as Mrs. Trotsky in Ives' *All in the Timing* ("Variations on the Death of Trotsky"); last year she was the Host of the Garter Inn in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. Renni is a member of Revels' Circle of Song and has appeared in several Revels productions.

**KERRI CENTRELLA** (Stage Manager) is pleased to be a part of her seventh T@F production. She has enjoyed carrying her day job (telling 6th graders to be quiet) over into her theatre experience (where she now gets to tell adults to be quiet). Her last stage managing experience was for a play in which all but one character was on-stage the whole time and there was one cue. She thanks Matt for a slightly more challenging job.

**BRADDOC DECAIRES** (Mr. De Pinno) has recently moved to Massachusetts and is honored to perform at Theatre@First. Brad has appeared in a number of theatre productions in his home state of Hawai'i and in California. Some of his previous roles have included: Motel the Tailor in *Fiddler on the Roof*, Orlando in *As You Like It*, Friar Laurence in *Romeo and Juliet*, and Evan Wyler in *As Bees In Honey Drown*. As always, a giant thank you to Dr. Spencer Nyholm for his support.

**CHRIS DEKALB** (House Manager) is delighted to be back for his 8<sup>th</sup> production with T@F (not counting one night as a Chicken Heart). When he's not running concessions and selling tickets he is an Outsource Manager at [Books24x7.com](http://Books24x7.com). He is also the editor of the Cambridge Movie News ([www.cambridgemovies.com](http://www.cambridgemovies.com)).

**JACK DIETZ** (Ed Carmichael) is most happy to be on stage with T@F a second time, this time without having to carry Falstaff across the stage! When not printing leaflets or practicing the xylophone, he is working in network research at BBN Technologies and volunteering for the science fiction convention Arisia.

**REBECCA DOWGIERT** (Props Manager) has done many theater tasks, from concessions to stagehand. She's having a grand time being in charge of the doodads and nicnacks that add so much to each scene. When not chasing props, she works in a medical lab at Brigham & Women's Hospital keeping track of skin cells.

**SHAUNNA FRANCIS** (Rehearsal, Set Design) is thrilled to be onstage again. It's been wonderful working at T@F and a thrill to watch the set go up. In a previous life she performed as the Artful Dodger in *Oliver* and the Old Woman/Jazz Singer in *Barnum*. Dear Mr. Kimmel, I luv you, I luv, you, I luv you. I am such a goof.

**MARE FREED** (The Grand Duchess Olga Katrina) returns for her 5th wild run with T@F, having appeared in *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead*, *All In The Timing*, *Murder In The Cathedral*, and *Merry Wives of Windsor*. She has a novel to write about the comic foibles of independent theatre. But she's still living the story.

**JO GUTHRIE** (Producer) What started as a lark has lasted three years and Jo hasn't completely tired of it yet. In her new role as Producer, Jo has been blessed to work with an amazing cast and crew who seem to allow her to hang around even when she's not needed and who have worked incredibly hard to make this show come to life.

**ARI HERZOG** (Publicity) has the distinction of having acted, directed, and managed publicity for the Theatre@First stage...yet never won an award or accolade for his talents. He hopes you are enjoying the show, will return to future T@F shows, and waves at you from across the pond while he traipses around China.

**MANDY HUGHES** (Props Master) came and she gave without taking, like the song says. She provided masks and make-up management for *Merry Wives of Windsor* and has previously been seen onstage in *Autumn Leaves* (Alice). See her artwork, custom clothing, theatrical portfolio, and learn about dramaturgy at [breadloafproductions.com](http://breadloafproductions.com).

**ELIZABETH HUNTER** (Penelope Sycamore) is a founding member and Artistic Director of Theatre@First. She has directed *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead*, *Murder in the Cathedral*, *Talley's Folly* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor* for us, and after a decade's hiatus dipped her toes back in the acting waters as Raina in *My Boyfriend's Wife* during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Evening of One-Acts. She would like to thank Matt for believing that she could ever be someone as sweet as Penny, and Jason—you know, *I still feel that way!*

**RENÉE JOHNSON** (Jim, Costume Design) This is Renee's second production with T@F. Continuing a trend that began in college, she has again found herself cast as "the little scrappy one" and will hopefully confuse traditional gender roles with her stunning cross-dressed performance. One day, she dreams of playing a girl on stage, even if it's a girl who is disguised as a boy (like in Shakespeare!) *You Can't Take It With You* also marks her first attempt with T@F to make the cast look good. Damn good, in fact.

**MATT KIMMEL** (Director) is thrilled to be directing his third show for Theatre@First—and one of his favorite plays, to boot. If you'd like to know why it's one of his favorites, see the Director's Note! Matt's past directing credits include *The Philadelphia* and *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown* with Theatre@First, as well as *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Flowers for Algernon*, and others with theatre groups in his native Western Massachusetts. In what might be considered "real life", Matt plays the role of Engineering Director at a local computer game company and otherwise endeavors to live just like the Vanderhofs, except with fewer snakes. He'd like to thank his incredibly talented cast, his extremely capable crew, and Jo, and Kerri, and all of his friends at Theatre@First—and of course Shaunna for putting up with all this AGAIN.

**MINDY KLENOFF** (Lighting Designer) has been a techie for as long as she can recall, and is happy to return for her second show with T@F. While not behind, under, or to the side of the stage, she performs the role of errant law student and aspiring prosecutor two T stops away.

**JENNIFER KOERBER** (Technical Director) first donned gloves and goggles for a show in high school and has been behind the scenes off and on ever since. After a many-year hiatus, she's back behind the saw with her first Theatre@First production. Kudos and thanks to the cast and crew for making this a painless re-entry to the magic.

**KATIE LEEMAN** (Alice Sycamore) This production marks Katie's second show with T@F, having recently appeared as the jokester Mistress Ford in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. Currently, she is a cast member at ImprovBoston, where she is able to play out her multiple personalities on stage on a weekly basis. Katie graduated from Ithaca College with a B.A. in Drama, and has worked in stage management at North Shore Music Theatre, West Virginia Public Theatre and the Orange Tree Theatre in London. Katie is also a freelance flutist and has performed with the Newton and Civic Symphony Orchestras, and with several Boston-based chamber groups. She would like to thank Matt for giving her the opportunity to play outside her comfort zone of "deranged."

**NEIL MARSH** (Sound Design, Webmaster) finds providing for Theatre@First's audio needs a very relaxing form of therapy, which has been very helpful in his recovery from a recent encounter with a ravenous chicken heart. He is mostly recovered now, but still babbles occasional nonsense about a plan to fill the Charles River with Jell-O. Just humor him.

**JASON MERRILL** (Mr. Kirby) is happy to be back at T@F, though he's too dignified to show it. He has previously donned the hats of Simple, Thomas Beckett and The Player, as well as The Unexpected Guest at Arlington Friends of the Drama. He has also performed hatless on occasion, but would like to put such youthful indiscretions behind him.

**ROB NOYES** (Donald) Mr. Noyes, a professional Googler, lives within running distance of the First Church. Although the stories of his single-handedly discovering Antarctica in 1957 are nothing but baseless rumors, he does look good for his age.

**JOHN OLSON** (Martin "Grandpa" Vanderhof) Despite pleading costumers, this is John's fourth production with Theatre@First and his second portraying a senior citizen. In his real life, John works at a software company in Kendall Square and is a member here at First Church, where he plants flowers and sings in the choir.

**ALYSSA OSIECKI** (Mac, Ad Sales) is proud to continue her long tradition of dressing in drag for the sake of theater with her role as G-man Mac. When Alyssa is not sashaying around in men's clothing she can be found dancing, reading, crafting, travelling and teaching drama in the Cambridge Public Schools. (Though not all at once, she's not that talented yet.)

**MATT RINGEL** (Kolenkhov) At first, Matt had no idea how he was going to play the role of an enormous loud hairy Russian, but that was solved with a few language tapes. His last theatrical appearance was in high school, when he was not nearly as hairy or Russian. During the time when he's not at rehearsal (for the show) or at rehearsal (for the a-cappella group Honorable Menschen), he works as an (enormous, loud, hairy) network engineer for Tufts University.

**SANTIAGO RIVAS** (Tony Kirby) Only in the theater can a man go from a drunken, womanizing bartender to a clean-cut vice-president. Formerly Bardolph of *Merry Wives of Windsor*, he is more than pleased to be romantic in a tux in his second T@F appearance. Thanks go to his fiancée and apologies to everyone else for the short hair.



**BRIAN ROGALSKI** (Paul Sycamore) Hot off his debut as a cold corpse in *The Unexpected Guest* by the Friends of the Drama in Arlington, Brian is ready to breathe new life into the part of Paul with T@F. When not acting, Brian spends his time in the Financial District creating complex encryption algorithms and tearing up the bike paths of Arlington while planning a concerto or two in his head.

**GILLY ROSENTHOL** (Mrs. Kirby, Promotional Design) is pleased to return to the T@F stage, albeit as a slightly less merry wife this time. She has previously appeared in such roles as Ramon in *Variations on the Death of Trotsky* and Pig Pen in *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*, as well as Mistress Page in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. She would like to state for the record that she has no issue with snakes, but pickled pigs' feet are Right Out.

**JUDE SHABRY** (Essie Carmichael) enjoys taking bad dancing to new lows in her return to the T@F stage, where she has previously been seen in *Merry Wives of Windsor* (Faerie), *Ole Olsen Buys a Bottled Water* (Trent), and *Murder in the Cathedral* (Chorus).

**DAVID STOKES** (The Man) This marks David's first performance with T@F, as well as his first time on stage since 1989. A recent immigrant from Western Massachusetts, he was often found on the other side of the curtain in numerous Arena Civic Theatre productions. David is a technical artist (which is like a real artist, only nerdier) for an area computer game developer.



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# About Theatre@First

The mission of Theatre@First is to work together to provide a fun, friendly, and creative theatre experience for cast, crew, and audience alike. We welcome volunteers at all levels of experience and offer a supportive environment in which to work, play, grow, and explore new areas of the theatre arts. We offer affordable and eclectic entertainment to the community, aiming to surprise, delight, entertain, and educate our audiences.

T@F welcomes your support. We depend on the patronage of our audience members. Become a T@F member today!

T@F is a non-profit organization hosted by the First Congregational Church of Somerville. All donations are tax-deductible and held in a fund dedicated to Theatre@First. You'll receive a membership card, and have your name listed in our programs unless you prefer to remain anonymous. These are the four levels of membership:

**MEMBER (\$25): 1 free ticket** to every production for one year, **1 free item** at the snack bar per show (must present membership card)

**FRIEND (\$50): 2 free tickets** to each production for one year, **2 free items** at the snack bar per show (must present membership card)

**PATRON (\$100): 4 free tickets** to each production for one year, **premium seating, 4 free items** at the snack bar per show (must present membership card)

**SPONSOR (\$500+): 10 free tickets** to each production in 2006, **premium seating** center stage in the first 2 rows, **10 free items** at the snack bar per show (must present membership card), program autographed by the leads, and **free ad space** in our programs

If you wish to pay by check, please make it out to First Congregational Church of Somerville, and mail to:

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Molly Baskette	Chris DeKalb
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## Special Thanks

- ☞ Rev. Molly Baskette and all the members of First Church
- ☞ Our dedicated and tenacious team of volunteers, including Amy Lee Bennett, Jenn Cseh, Dee Dalrymple, Rebecca Dowgiert, Julia Lunetta, Elizabeth Ryan, Paulo Ruffino, Debbie Steiner, Dorie Zackin, and various members of the cast and crew. Thank you for building our set, sewing our costumes, working the box office, selling snacks, ushering and generally making these shows happen.
- ☞ Renni Boy, Betsey Solensky, Robin Garner and Mark Mason, and Scott Gagnon, for their generous help with props and costuming
- ☞ The costume crew's "Errand Angel" Andrea for costume delivery
- ☞ Nick for the use of his smart 1930's suit and Jeff for moral support of our costume designer
- ☞ Liz at the Garment District in Cambridge
- ☞ Jim Paradis, our transportation expert
- ☞ Paul Guttry, for knitting Grandpa's cardigan
- ☞ Daniel Dolinov, Russian accent coach
- ☞ Beckie Hunter, for always stepping in and making things happen
- ☞ Everyone who helped us after the program went to press!

We also thank our friends, family, and all the members of our audience. Without your support of the arts, we wouldn't be here.

# Glossary

**ANNA PAVLOWA** – famous Russian ballet dancer of the nineteen-teens and twenties. She went on to be an early film star for Universal Studios.

**BAKST AND DIAGHILEFF** – Leon Bakst was a Russian visual artist who attained fame by creating revolutionary scenic and costume designs for the ballet. He often worked with and cofounded the journal “World of Art” with Sergei Diaghilev who founded one of the first independent ballet companies in Europe.

**CHELTENHAM BOLD** – typeface designed by Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue, a renowned American architect celebrated for his work in neo-gothic design. **It looks like this.**

**CHILD’S RESTAURANT** – a cafeteria-style restaurant chain catering to office workers in downtown New York.

**THE CZAR** – in this case, Czar Nicholas II, the leader of Russia when the Revolution came. He was killed, along with his family, when the Communists came to power.

**THE “DISCUS THROWER”** – statue created by Greek sculptor Kostas Dimitriadis. It was awarded a prize at the 1924 Olympics and then housed in various NYC locations.

**THE GOOD EARTH** – 1932 Pulitzer Prize winning novel by Pearl S. Buck about the life of a Chinese farmer.

**HATTIE CARNEGIE’S** – a fashion designer’s salon where models would show off dresses, purses, etc. Lucille Ball started there as a model. Famous for her “little black dress” and jewelry.

**KAY FRANCIS** – a famous screen actress of the 1930s, who appeared in, among many other films, the Marx Brothers film *The Cocoanuts*.

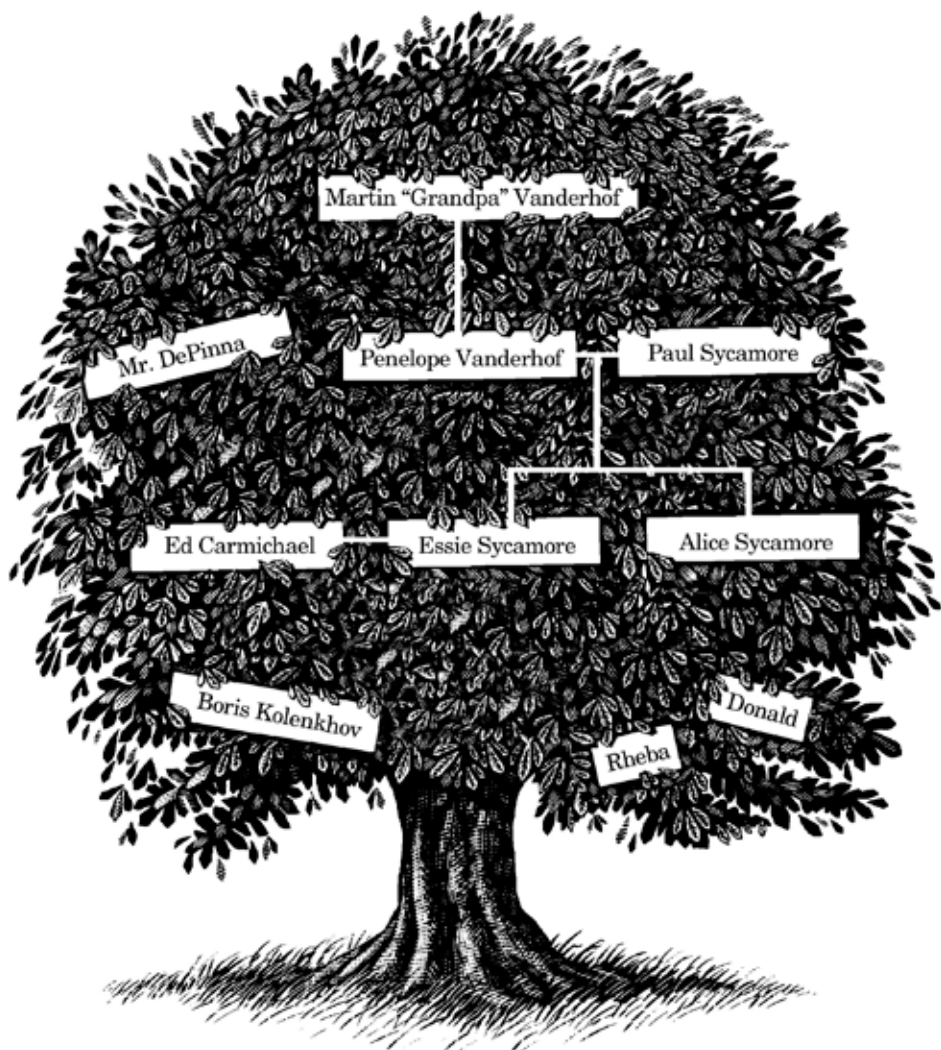
**THE MONTE CARLO BALLET** – the official national company of the Principality of Monaco since 1911. In the 1930s, at the time of the show, they were working with famed choreographer George Balanchine.

**SCHEHERAZADE** – a ballet with music by Rimsky-Korsakov, based on the storyteller in the *1,001 Arabian Nights*. Her husband the sultan wanted her killed, but she told him stories lasting 1,001 nights. He eventually became convinced of her loyalty and let her live.

**THE SINGER MIDGETS** – vaudeville act formed by Leo Singer. They are most famous for having played the Munchkins in MGM’s 1939 film *The Wizard of Oz*.

**WPA** – Works Progress Administration, a New Deal agency that provided jobs and income to the unemployed during the Depression, including artists, musicians, and writers.

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