

# ✓ Odd Couple a charming romp

Oh, the sixties.

Back before the hippie movement threw away the hair clippers and blew the doors wide open on free love, the last, tight vestiges of the 50s remained.

Those were the days when a sly wink was attached to the word divorcee and men wore dress slacks even to play poker with the boys.

Which brings us to the opening scene of *The Odd Couple*, presented by The Milton Players and running November 8-11 at the Senior's Activity Centre.

The Neil Simon comedy, directed by Geoff Ford and produced by Virginia Bancur, is presented by the Milton Players as a lighter than cotton-batting journey to a time when the mere idea of two bachelors sharing an apartment was worthy of a laugh.

The curtain rises on a weekly poker game by players who are embroiled in some form of matrimony, both happy or unhappy.

The exception is the slobbish Oscar Madison, so as played by Graham Morley is all slouchy sweats and a great leering grin.

Since getting the heave-ho from his wife, Oscar has been living in the splendid chaos of dirty dishes and unpaid bills.

Enter the so tight he squeaks Felix Unger, played against type and with relish by Gino Raimondo. As Felix, Raimondo is an energetic whirl of outrage, hissy fits and hysterics.

He's everything that Oscar isn't — such as obsessively neat and a hypochondriac.

After more than a decade of being a step away from justifiable homicide, Unger's wife Francis has decided to call it quits.

The distraught Felix reacts by sending a suicide telegram to his erstwhile beloved, before grimacing



## Spotlight

with IRENE GENTLE

and groaning his way to the weekly game.

Having heard the news but pretending they haven't, the bunch all but nab his shoelaces to ensure Felix doesn't do away with himself when they blink.

The pals include Pat Batty as Roy, who displays a knack for physical comedy. Gary Metcalfe plays the dim-witted but well-meaning Vinnie with a happy, cow-like placidity.

As portrayed by Jorge Moniz, the ever-complaining Speed is about as aggressive as his moniker. And Tim Beddoes appears as the hard as nails and twice as hungry cop, Murray.

Also, Catriona Wright and Laura Clement are simperingly appropriate as the 'coo-coo' Pigeon sisters who live upstairs and are invited on an ill-fated date with the fresh, new bachelors.

To prevent him from pitching himself off the nearest bridge, Oscar invites Felix to move in. The type of mayhem that ensues is well documented in the long-running series of the same name.

Broken up into three acts with two intermissions, the Players' *Odd Couple* is as frothy and pleasing as cappuccino foam.

For tickets or more information, call the Milton Players at 875-0629.

Be sure to check out our Arts & Entertainment section in this Friday's Champion. It appears every second Friday.

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