



Mayslake Peabody Estate, 31st St. & Rt. 83, Oak Brook, IL
www.firstfolio.org

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Jeeves in Bloom Liven's Up Winter Nights ***Stylish Comedy Perfect Cure for the Blues***

OAK BROOK – First Folio Theatre’s Season of Invention will continue this coming January and February with P.G. Wodehouse’s *Jeeves in Bloom*, adapted for the stage by Margaret Raether. This sequel to First Folio’s hit production of *Jeeves Intervenes* features the return of the lovably loopy Bertie Wooster and his unflappable butler Jeeves. When Bertie gets himself into another scrape, Jeeves must resign his service, leaving Bertie in the lurch. The *Chicago Tribune* calls the Jeeves tales “as bright and engaging as a garden party in May, popping with pitch-perfect performances” and the *Daily Herald* hails them as being “as dry as a well-made martini and equally potent.” *Jeeves Intervenes* played to sold-out houses throughout its run in 2008, and this production promises the same level of popularity.

Directed by Alison C. Vesely, the production marks the return of Christian Gray as the sweet but scatterbrained Bertie and Jim McCance as the incomparable Jeeves, the same roles they played to critical praise in 2008’s production of *Jeeves Intervenes*. Christian has appeared in numerous First Folio productions over the past 12 years, including the role of James Tyrone in First Folio’s Jeff-Nominated production of *A Moon for the Misbegotten*. He is also a company member of ShawChicago, where he has appeared in over a dozen productions. Jim McCance has been a regular on the Chicago scene for more than 25 years, having begun his career with the famous Body Politic Theater. Recent Chicago appearances include *Barefoot in the Park* at Drury Lane, *Making History* at Irish Repertory, and *Man and Superman* with Remy Bumppo.

The cast will also include the return to First Folio’s stage of two of its most popular Artistic Associates, Kevin McKillip and Melanie Keller. Kevin McKillip will be playing the role of the newt-loving Gussie Fink-Nottle. Kevin has appeared in more than a dozen First Folio productions, including three Jeff nominated roles: Eustace Bassington-Bassington in *Jeeves Intervenes*, the title role in *Richard III*, and Puck in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*. He returns to the Chicago stage following four months at Door County’s Peninsula Players, where his roles included Phileas Fogg in *Around the World in 80 Days* and the painter Francois Millet in *Is He Dead?* Kevin has appeared with numerous Chicago area theaters including the Goodman (*The Story*), Court (*Arcadia*), and Famous Door (*Early and Often* and *Ghetto*), and he spent a year with the Stratford Festival in Ontario, Canada. Melanie Keller was last seen on the First Folio stage as Gilda in *Design for Living*, and has previously appeared in *Angel Street*, *Private Lives* and *The Importance of Being Earnest*. This coming spring, she will appear in Northlight Theater’s production of *A Life*. Melanie, too, is a veteran of the Stratford Festival, where she appeared in *Romeo and Juliet* and *Love’s Labors Lost*.

Rounding out the cast will be James Leaming and Jeannie Affelder. James Leaming, one of the founding members of American Blues Theater, has been a regular in the Chicago theater scene for

almost three decades, and his comic brilliance and facility with accents will be put to good use in the dual role of Uncle Tom and Anatole the French chef. Jeannie Affelder, who last appeared with First Folio as Miss Hodge and Grace Harrington in *Design for Living* will be taking on the role of Bertie's long-suffering Aunt Dahlia. She comes to First Folio following her appearance in Timeline Theater's *When She Danced*.

All performances take place on the grounds of the Mayslake Peabody Estate, which is owned and operated by the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County. Indoor shows are presented in Mayslake Hall, a 30-room Tudor Revival style mansion originally built by coal baron Francis S. Peabody. Completed in 1922, the mansion is on the National Registry of Historic Places. Located at 31st St. and Rt. 83 in Oak Brook, First Folio is easy to get to from either the East-West Tollway (I-88) or the Stevenson Expressway (I-55).

Folio Shakespeare Festival is supported in part by grants from the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency, and The DuPage Community Foundation.

Performance schedules, ticket prices, and cast list are attached.

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Jeeves in Bloom Adapted by Margaret Raether from the short stories of P.G. Wodehouse

Previews: January 27, 28, 29 @ 8:00
Opening Night: January 30 @ 8:00
Runs: January 27 – February 28
Performance Times: Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays @ 8:00
Sunday matinees @ 3:00
Tickets: \$28-30 adults, \$23-25 Students/Seniors (Previews \$18)
Box Office: 630-986-8067

CAST LIST

Cast for *Jeeves in Bloom* - directed by Alison C. Vesely, SDC+

Bertie Wooster	Christian Gray**
Jeeves	Jim McCance*
Madeline Bassett	Melanie Keller**
Gussie Fink-Nottle	Kevin McKillip**
Uncle Tom/Anatole the Chef	James Leaming*
Aunt Dahlia	Jeannie Affelder
Stage Manager	Matthew Kurtis Lutz

Production Staff

Scenic Design	Angie Miller+
Costume Design	Elsa Hiltner+
Lighting Design	Michael McNamara, USA
Sound Design	David Rice

* = Member Actor's Equity Association + = Artistic Associate of First Folio Theatre