

**Review of *Continental Caper*,
A New Musical
written by
Lawrence E. Brandt and
John Fritscher (Jack Fritscher)**

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**Josephinum Glee Club
presents Spring musical
*Continental Caper***

On March 19, the Josephinum Glee Club presented, as the first play in the new Josephinum Auditorium, the premiere of *Continental Caper*, a new musical comedy written and produced by Lawrence Brandt and John Fritscher, and directed by the Reverend Joseph James. The musical score, with lyrics adapted and written by John Fritscher, was performed by pianist John Dighton, with Don Graff, drums, and Dave Oxley, bass. The play was sung by a cast of 39 actors.

The curtain rises in Moscow where Commissar Miklos Petronov (Dan Mosca) is being commissioned by the Minister of the Interior (John Bresch) to “terminate the membership” of three Russian secret agents (John Romero, Dave Roesch, Tony Curran) stationed in celebrated Vienna. The time is June 1958.

The next day the Commissar arrives in Vienna at the “one and only” Liechtenstein Hotel, hotly in pursuit of the three spies. Also residing in the hotel run by the inimitable Herr Liechtenstein (Terry Gatlin) are three American singers (Joe Dominic, John Springer, Mark White) who are stranded in the international city. They would like to solve their “problems” by getting a job in an American motion picture being filmed on location in Vienna. The star, Robert Scott (Ken Ludden), and his press agent (Bob Margrett) are also living in the same hotel.

The Russian spies pose as producers for Scott’s movie and tell the three singers that Petronov is the casting director. Scott, they say, wants them to audition as three Russian spies—the part he has in mind for them.

Assuming those characters, the singers audition. Petronov, thinking he has made his contact, plans to carry out his termination orders. But the singers escape. When they explain how they’ve been duped into danger, Scott determines to help them.

The showdown fireworks begin at Herr Liechtenstein’s “Once a Year Day” celebration when Scott’s plan backfires and the singers are once more in the clutches of the sinister Commissar. As he prepares to make good his escape with the kidnaped singers, the gendarmes enter and arrest everyone who looks suspicious. The spies quickly confess to the tune of “Hang Down Your Head, Tom Dooley” because they say they will “only be safe in an American jail

because the Party is in every country.”

The Burgermeister of Vienna (Bob Pearson) diplomatically pieces together the scraps of evidence and everyone from spies to singers to movie stars end up winners.

And the constantly befuddled Herr Liechtenstein? What with the publicity, his “Once a Year Day” is better than ever.

The two-act musical comedy featured thirteen songs chosen by Lawrence Brandt and John Fritscher. It was author Fritscher’s task to adapt the songs to fit the plot as well as tailor the words to appropriate Josephinum lyrics. The songs were: from *South Pacific*, “There Is Nothing Like a Dame [Like a Steak]”; the Everly Brothers’ “Problems”; Will Glahe’s “Liechtensteiner Polka”; from *Damn Yankees*, “Whatever Lola [Kruschev] Wants, Lola [Kruschev] Gets”; Johnny Mercer and Hoagy Carmichael’s “In the Cool, Cool, Cool of the Evening”; Harry Woods’ “Side by Side”; Guy Lombardo’s “Enjoy Yourself (It’s Later Than You Think)”; Cole Porter’s “Stereophonic Sound” from *Silk Stockings*; the Kingston Trio’s “Tom Dooley”; the traditional Jewish “Hava Nagila” sung as “Dance, Everyone, Dance”; Cole Porter’s “Wunderbar” from *Kiss Me, Kate*; from *The Pajama Game*, “(This Is Our) Once a Year Day”; and “Wir Trinken Einen Halben,” an unpublished German folk song, arranged by a German friend of Father James.

The cast of Josephinum students included in order of appearance: John Bresch, Kevin Axe, Dan Mosca, Terry Gatlin, Dave Roesch, Tony Curran, John Romero, David McCauley, Ken Ludden, Frank Fulkerson, Bob Margrett, Gerald Knueven, Joe Dominic, John Springer, Mark White, Bill Rall, Walter Phelan, Guy Tumulo, Gerald Beckman, Norman Zimlich, Tom Rogan, Gene Mariani, John Boltz, Bob Szarnicki, Mart Meyer, P. Mcoughlin, Matt Robbins, John Macek, Steve Lautermilch, Dan Warniment, Leslie Hartmann, Jim Koenigsfeld, Larry Hartmann, Bob Pearson, K. Lubbers, D. Wampach, J. Brezovec, M. Schmidt, and L. Jones.