



## Smithsonian Institution

*National Museum of African American History and Culture*

### Playbill for Marie Christine

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[[pull quote]] To Mazzie, the 'shrew' of the title "does not only have to be a woman. I believe both of them are tamed." [[/pull quote]]

women get up in arms about this, but you have to look at the whole picture. She's just beat the hell out of him. He's warned her twice, but she doesn't stop. She deserves to be spanked. He's not doing it because she's a woman, but because she's acting like a child. There are also women who get upset when Kate sings 'I Am Ashamed That Women Are So Simple,' thinking that she's giving in to him. But it's a coming together, as couples come together in an understanding and a shared relationship."

On the other hand, if a lyric such as "I have oft stuck a pig before" offends anyone, or makes anyone uncomfortable even as they're laughing - well, it should. "It's shocking," says Mitchell. "But when a character owns a line like that, you know exactly who he is. In a sense, Petruccio isn't really a man; he's a frat boy. He's pure testosterone. He's about having fun and sex and sees women as objects. No wonder Kate hates men, particularly the kind of man he is. If you do that line with any bit of shame or any bit of political correctness behind it, you've missed the point. When he sings that line with great pride, it sets up the situation for the audience: okay, there are going to be fireworks."

For Mazzie and Mitchell, whose compelling, impassioned performances in Ragtime will long be remembered, Kiss Me, Kate is an opportunity to display very different aspects of their talents. "I have fallen in love with the character and with the show," says Mitchell. "I felt this way during Ragtime. It's the right people, the right time, the right director, the right everything. Marin is so brilliant and so funny, and talking together I realized we work very much the same way, think very much the same way and approach life and art in the same way. And we made a kind of pact with each other. We said, 'Let's make it the most fun we've ever had in the theatre.' And it's turning out to be just that." [[image: shadowed cube bullet to end article]]

[[boxed text shaded pink]] very nervous about this number. No one seems to like it.' And he said, 'Don't pay attention to them. I remember an operetta where a man sang a song called "I Want What I Want When I Want It," and banged a tankard on the table. You just do that.' I still thought the number was going to be a flop when we opened in Philadelphia. And it stopped the show."

[[image: photo of man and woman in theatrical costume, man with hand out poised to spank the woman's rear end]]

[[caption]] Morison with Alfred Drake (left and at the end of "I Hate Men" (above, right). [[/caption]]

[[credit]] PHOTOS COURTESY OF MS. MORISON [[/credit]]

Morison has only fond memories of Cole Porter and Alfred Drake. "Cole was very sophisticated and elegant," she says. "When we went to Philadelphia, his valet went down ahead to the hotel and hung his paintings on the walls in his suite, and put his bedclothes on. Everything was done very elegantly. He was also funny and witty and had a very sweet side, almost childlike."

Drake, she says, was the consummate man of the theatre. "He thought it was terrible when I got my movie contract. He said, 'You should not go to Hollywood. You belong in the theatre.' Shortly before he died, I took part in a tribute to him. He introduced me and said, 'I told her she should

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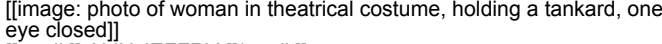
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never have gone to Hollywood,' After all those years! He lived theatre. He was an insomniac, and he used to stay up all night and talk theatre with starry-eyed young actors. He truly epitomized the best of theatre and musicals, and I adored him." 

  
[[credit]] ALIX JEFFRY [[/credit]]

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