

# THE SCOOP ON



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## Pride and Prejudice *Despite it All, We Ball*

Greetings, beloved GOOPs!

The road back to live theater in the last few years has been a rocky one, but this semester TOOP put on our third fully in-person show of the pandemic era. Returning to the May Room, we produced Jane Austen's classic tale of love, betrayal and emotionally charged house parties.



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The show was a roaring success by any metric, and allowed us to feature over a dozen actors, along with a robust stage and tech crew. Notably, the casting was genderblind and ended up with a largely female cast, including all the romantic leads. As director Mila Bologna '24 has said, Mr. Darcy was already “such a lesbian,” so it wasn't too much of a stretch.

The photos on this page feature sophomores Molly Goonan and Lilli Tamm as Elizabeth Bennet and Mr. Darcy, respectively, and first-years Brooke Mackey and Nai'a Keith-Handschuh as wealthy siblings Charles and Caroline Bingley.





## Welcome to Longbourn

### *Bringing Pride & Prejudice to Life*

I spoke with the director of *Pride & Prejudice*, junior Mila Bologna, about the process of creating a show for TOOP, from deciding what to direct (and even to direct in the first place), to specific highlights and challenges presented by adapting this story.

Mila describes herself as “someone who has a lot of ideas,” and this show was no exception. She first learned that TOOP was looking for a director while working on a production team last semester, and decided, as many of our directors do, to step up and fill the need. She considered several scripts before settling on P&P, including *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*, the origin of TOOP’s name.

P&P jumped out for many reasons, especially because Austen’s work remains deeply resonant today. “*Pride and Prejudice* created a framework for literature and media forever,” Mila says. “If you watch modern rom-coms a lot of them are, in a way, a spiritual successor. So it felt fun to go back to the original.” The show was also a chance to dip into a period that TOOP hasn’t touched much in our recent history, but that Mila feels is rich with potential for the stage. “It’s a similar social situation to us, where everything is so closely regimented and all of the eyes are on you at all times, and that image of constantly policing your behavior is so resonant with a stage production. That is literally what you’re doing onstage.”

P&P is a natural fit for the stage, but Mila acknowledges challenges. The biggest? “Finding a production that the audience will be compelled by, and will not be bored by.” P&P is long, verbose and complicated, and she was careful to keep the humor and heart at the center of the play. And despite some outdated themes (“the way that they treat Lydia,” she notes, “is undeniably sexist”) other elements of the story are beautifully ahead of their time. “The romance works because they change each other for the better, because they both come out of it as better people, because they learn lessons from each other, which is what people forget about how romance is supposed to be.”

## Rave Review

### *Thanks, Alyssa!*

Anything written here would be blatantly self-congratulatory, so let me only urge you to check out the lovely Campus Times Culture review of our production of *Pride and Prejudice*, written by managing editor Alyssa Koh ’24:

<http://www.campustimes.org/2022/10/30/toop-brings-the-love-to-halloween-with-pride-and-prejudice/>



## Open to All

### *An Open Group for a New Era*

TOOP is now on our second year of being an open group. Gone is the grueling audition process of yesteryear; modern TOOPs need only show up at our general member meetings and help out with events like load-in and strike.

There were worries among the group that this change would result in a drop in engagement, cohesion, or the quality of our output. Fortunately, those worries have been put to rest, and the change is widely regarded as a successful one.

We’ve had historically high numbers of auditionees for our last three shows, and this embarrassment of riches has produced some really exceptional productions. Engagement is at an all-time high, and the ease of just showing up to meetings rather than signing up for a test of mettle has made the beginnings of our semesters more relaxed and positive. We’re also looking forward to getting more funding from the school in the very near future. Overall, this is a time of immense, positive transformation for TOOP. We have a more welcoming, better-funded group that’s equipped to keep making student theater for years to come.



*It’s not about some rich, handsome asshole...it’s the idea of growing with someone in a way that improves you.*

– Mila Bologna ’24





## The ConstiTOOPtion

### *A Living Document*

Our group constitution has undergone a lot of changes in the last couple of years, and it seemed pertinent to update y'all about them. The biggest change is a streamlining of our executive board. The duties of the Development Coordinator will be folded into other roles (so future editions of this newsletter will be written by our PR Officer), the role of Technical Director has been removed, though the Production Manager is free to appoint a TD as a sort of lieutenant, and the director's place on eboard has been solidified. Additionally, a lot of ambiguous wording has been cleared out and administrative processes have been clarified. All in all, the machinery of TOOP has been made much smoother and more efficient.



## Highlights, and the Future

### *Meliora Weekend Show*

For Mel Weekend this year, TOOP returned to Drama House to put on a staged reading of a student-written work: *Dr. Lance Goodman's Emporium of the Beyond, the Unknown, and Related Ephemera*, plucked from the mind of James Sheinbaum (T5 '23).

### *Writers' Guild*

TOOP Writers' Guild, better known as TWiG, is going strong under the supervision of dramaturge Basil Croak (F22), with sessions like TWiG D&D and a final papers workshop spicing up the weekly Saturday writing sessions, which are attended by both members and non-members.

### *Bigs & Littles*

Our Big/Little tradition continues, with a bumper crop of almost a dozen Littles added to the illustrious TOOP family trees.

### *Last Year*

Our shows from the 2021-22 schoolyear were a couple of 20th-century British classics: *Black Comedy* (dir. James Sheinbaum T5 '23) and *Murder on the Orient Express* (dir. Lilli Tamm '25). *Black Comedy*, our first in-person show since 2019, was performed in the May Room, and *Murder* was in Drama House.

### *Next Semester*

TOOP has voted to produce both *You Can't Take it With You* (dir. Evan Changar '24) and *The Aliens* (dir. Miles Harrison '23) in the spring. This will be the first semester since 2019 in which we produce two full shows. Get hype!

## TOOP while you POOP

...bringing you some much needed regularity!

## TOOP While You Poop

### *Often Imitated, Never Replicated*

Talking about TOOP with fellow undergrads, especially first-years, tends to follow a particular rhythm. First, a long moment of disinterested confusion. Oh, your hapless conversational partner thinks to themselves, I guess it's a theater group that doesn't do musicals. But why is their name so weird? Then comes the lightbulb. A gasp, a smile, and "ohhh, like TOOP While You Poop!"

I would guess that any TOOP of the modern era can relate to this experience, and as silly as it is, it speaks to the enduring power and innovative branding of our silly little bathroom posters. TOOP While You Poop, or TWYP, can be seen as a microcosm of TOOP itself, using its low-budget, by-students-for-students nature as a selling point rather than a disadvantage.

The posters are as ubiquitous as they are thanks to the unflagging work of our members and the creativity of our publicity chair, Dominique Neveu ('24), who had this to say about TWYP: "I've definitely seen the effects of Toop While You Poop around campus, with some people only knowing our group from our bathroom flyers. The only complaint I've gotten surrounding TWYP is the fact that we can't post them in all bathrooms around campus. Even if the people who fill out the surveys have no interest in joining TOOP or seeing our work, it's still fun to read their responses and know that even the least theatre-inclined people have some role in our group. Also, I hate to think of how boring the bathrooms would be without it."



November 2022 issue



November Haiku

The leaves fall away  
I can see the river from  
my window today

- T. W. Poo

## Come to TWIG!

TWIG is TOOP's writing guild.

There we do lots of fun stuff like write plays, fictional stories, DnD character backstories, etc. We meet on Saturdays, from 12 pm to 2 pm in room 202 in Todd Union. You don't have to be a part of Toop to attend.

Just bring yourself and the urge to write.



...bringing you some much needed regularity!

An updated TWYP? About time!

## What is a TOOP?

The Opposite Of People Theater Company puts on *straight\** plays for the UR community. We are entirely student-run, and we've got actors, directors, designers (light, sound, set, costumes, props), stage managers, and playwrights in our group! We meet on the bottom floor of Wilson Commons every Monday from 9 to 10 pm. Feel free to stop by!

\*By "straight" we mean non-musical, not heterosexual

Thank you to everyone who came to *Pride and Prejudice!* The show was a hit and we are very proud of the work we did this semester. Stay tuned for our next TWYP for when we announce next semesters show. ♡ ♡ ♡ ♡

## Take the POOPER Survey

Made purely for your (and our) entertainment, the POOPer survey is probably the most fun thing you've got going on right now. Tell us a secret and maybe your anonymous answer will be featured on the next Toop While You Poop.

## Here are some secrets from the last form:

1. I slept with my best friends fiance's mom.
2. Sometimes I can't focus in class because I'm thinking about boobs. Also one of my own boobs is noticeably bigger than the other.
3. I lick my toes in the shower.



## Executive Board

Isabella Kelly '24  
*Artistic Director*

James Harrod '23  
*Secretary*

Evan Changar '24  
*Financial Officer*

Dominique Neveu '24  
*Head of Public Relations*

Nadia Todd '24  
*Social Chair*

Michael Riches '23  
*Development Coordinator*

Claire Syverson '25  
*Production Manager*

Alexa Trzpis '25  
*Technical Director*

Basil Croak '23  
*Dramaturge*

## Advisor

Cat Crawford  
c.crawford@rochester.edu

## Contact Us

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[www.instagram.com/thisbetoop](https://www.instagram.com/thisbetoop)

Above: the most recent TOOP While You Poop, written by Dominique Neveu '24