Suffragist, actress, and playwright, Cicely Hamilton, was a woman ahead of her time. In 1908, she founded the Women’s Writer’s Suffrage League in the UK and her play, Diana of Dobson’s, had its London premiere. The play had an extended run in London and New York. Hamilton’s work portrays a woman of means, who, after being left penniless by her deceased father, finds herself living the life of a “shop-girl”—a form of bonded slavery. She realizes that choices for women are ridiculously limited, and after receiving an unexpected sum of money, takes an intentional journey of extravagance. Throughout this journey, Diana tests what she believes to be the disparities of men and women, and the power dynamic that society seems to support.

Diana of Dobson’s is a romantic comedy tinged with an edginess that tends toward caustic and sardonic. The play has a wisdom way ahead of its time, making it increasingly relevant. Having just celebrated the 100th anniversary of women rights in the UK to be followed by the same in the US, it feels like the right time for Diana to reemerge. It may even pose the question: how far have we come?

Diana of Dobson's will run September 26-29 and October 3-6 on the Mainstage Theatre in UNCW’s Cultural Arts Building. Full address and details are listed at https://uncw.edu/theatre/thrbuilding/facilities.html. Show times on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday are at 8 p.m., and Sunday performances are at 2 p.m.

Tickets for Diana of Dobson's are $15 for the general public, $12 for seniors, UNCW Alumni, and UNCW Faculty and Staff, and $6 for students.

Tickets are available for purchase at the Kenan Box Office on UNCW’s campus, by calling 910.962.3500, or online at their website, https://uncw.edu/arts/tickets.html. Tickets can also be bought in person an hour before the show on show dates.

A complete schedule for Diana of Dobson’s, as well as the rest of our season, can be found at https://uncw.edu/theatre/index.html.

Other 2019-2020 Department of Theatre productions include:

Terry Rogers Student Lab: The Fairytale Lives of Russian Girls, written by Meg Miroshnik, directed by Lizzie Bennett ’19

Darkness: The Enemy Inside, written by Gianluca Liumiento, Tale Næss, Albert Ostermaier, Kristín Eriksdottir & Sigbjørn Skåden, directed by Paul Castagno

Comedy of Errors, written by William Shakespeare, directed by Chris Marino

Titanic, written by Christopher Durang, directed by Ed Wagenseller