

AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER
Carey Perloff, Artistic Director Heather Kitchen, Executive Director

PRESENTS

WORDS ^{on} PLAYS

INSIGHT INTO THE PLAY, THE PLAYWRIGHT, AND THE PRODUCTION

Souvenir

A Fantasia on the Life of Florence Foster Jenkins

BY STEPHEN TEMPERLEY
DIRECTED BY VIVIAN MATALON
AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER
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QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. How is *Souvenir* a fantasia?
2. In what ways is *Souvenir* Cosme McMoon's story?
3. How does the relationship between Cosme McMoon and Florence Foster Jenkins evolve over the course of the play? Why does McMoon choose to accompany Jenkins in the first place, and why does he hide the truth from her even at the very end?
4. What is the effect of juxtaposing classical pieces like "*Caro Nome*" with more contemporary songs like "Crazy Rhythm"? What is the importance of this juxtaposition?
5. Explain what happens in the final scene of *Souvenir*. Through whose perspective do we experience the closing moment?
6. Consider contemporary equivalents to Florence Foster Jenkins to be seen on shows like *American Idol* and on YouTube. How is our treatment of delusional performers different from the response Jenkins received from her fans? How is it similar?

FOR FURTHER READING . . .

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