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Is now announcing

# The 2005-06 Season

## Henry IV

by William Shakespeare  
(Weekend of September 17, 2005)

## Faust

by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe  
(Weekend of October 29, 2005)

## Love's Labours Lost

by William Shakespeare

(The weekend of February 11, 2006)

## My Name Is Will

an adaptation of Shakespeare's

Sonnets and Songs  
by Peter Garino\*, with music by Chris Walk\*  
(The weekend of April 22, 2006)

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50 Minute Hamlet, adapted by Jeff Christian from William Shakespeare  
August 2005 – June 2006  
Various schools throughout the Chicago area

*The Shakespeare Project of Chicago*  
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presents

# A Woman of No Importance

By Oscar Wilde

a theatrical reading

DIRECTED BY  
PETER GARINO\*

STAGE MANAGER  
DAN RODDEN

April 23, 2005: The Newberry Library & The Wilmette Public Library,  
April 24, 2005: Duncan YMCA Chernin Center for the Arts



All Actors with *The Shakespeare Project of Chicago*  
are members of Actors' Equity Association  
The union of professional actors and stage managers

## Notes from the Director

Modern audiences are perhaps most familiar with Oscar Wilde's best known and most frequently produced play, *The Importance of Being Earnest*. It was the fourth in a series of social comedies he penned between 1892 and 1895, preceded by *Lady Windemere's Fan*, *An Ideal Husband* and the play we are performing today, *A Woman of No Importance*.

Wilde demonstrates the considerable influence of his late 19<sup>th</sup> century contemporaries (Ibsen, Shaw, Strindberg and Chekhov among others) in his depiction of Mrs. Arbuthnot, a strong-willed, determined, "modern" woman who challenges the sexual double standards present in Victorian society. While most theatre critics dismissed the play in 1893 as being "problematic" or "irregular", it is clear that Wilde wrote a play that went beyond the

## This Month's Artists



**Rick Carter**  
*Lord Illingworth*



**Deborah Clifton**  
*Mrs. Arbuthnot*



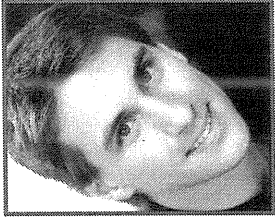
**Alyson Green**  
*Miss Hester Worsley*



**Todd Hissong**  
*Sir John Ponterfract*



**Connie McGrail\***  
*Lady Stufield, Alice*



**Ian Novak**  
*Gerald Arbuthnot*



**Gail Rastorfer**  
*Mrs. Allonby*



**Mary Ringstad\***  
*Lady Hunstanton*



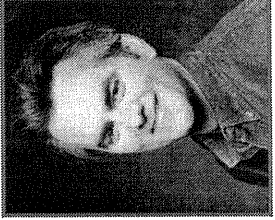
**Dan Rodden**  
*Mr. Kelvil, M.P.*



**David Skidmore\***  
*Archdeacon Daubeny*



**Barbara Zahora**  
*Lady Caroline Ponterfract*



**Peter Garino**  
*Director, Lord Alfred*

## About The Shakespeare Project of Chicago

The Shakespeare Project of Chicago began in 1995, providing free public performances of the complete works of William Shakespeare, offering several performances of one play per month at various public venues. From that time, our mission became to meet three goals: (1) To provide to our community, free or easily affordable professional performances of the works of William Shakespeare and other great dramatists; (2) To create the opportunity for professional actors to explore this great literature; and (3) To provide exceptional theatre experiences for audiences and artists by maintaining an artistic emphasis on the language of the plays and skill of the actors, all of whom are members of Actors' Equity Association.

We made our public debut with *Macbeth* in 1995, and in little over three years, completed William Shakespeare's canon with *Hamlet* in December of 1998. Our 1997 Season: The History of the English Kings, traversed the entirety of the great Elizabethan history plays in chronological order including *King John*, *Edward II* (by Christopher Marlowe), *Edward III* (an apocryphal play), *Richard II*, both parts of *Henry IV*, *Henry V*, all three parts of *Henry VI*, and ending with *Richard III*. (we saved *Henry VIII* for 1999) To date we have performed well over 50 plays and again, William Shakespeare's canon in its entirety.

In 1999, adding to our five theatrical reading offerings, we presented our first fully realized production, *Hamlet*, opening in March of 1999. We also produced our first original adaptation, of *My Name Is Will*, (an exciting dramatic adaptation of William Shakespeare's sonnets and songs by Artistic Associate Peter Garino), debuting as a reading in 1999 and then as a full production in 2000. Our original adaptation (also by Peter Garino) of Shakespeare's dark narrative poem, *The Rape of Lucrece* was performed in 2001 and we began development of our newest adaptation, *50 Minute Hamlet* in 2002, which we produced for its first fully realized production in 2003. This production of *50 Minute Hamlet*, adapted and directed by Jeff Christian (appointed Artistic Director in August of 2002) is now performing regularly at Chicago area schools and is available for booking for the 2005-06 school year.

As we complete our Tenth Anniversary Season (which we have dedicated to our friend Chuck Lippitz) with Oscar Wilde's scathingly witty comedy *A Woman of No Importance*, we look forward to our 2005-06 Season. A season that will include Shakespeare's *Henry IV* and *Love's Labour's Lost*, Goethe's *Faust* and the remounting of our own original adaptation of Shakespeare's Sonnets and Songs, *My Name Is Will*, by Peter Garino, with music by Chris Walz. We are honored to have been asked to continue our partnerships with The Wilmette Public Library, The Newberry Library and The Duncan YMCA Chernin Center for the Arts into next year. We hope you will be with us as we continue to fulfill our mission, offering exciting, free performances of the works of Shakespeare and other great dramatists, maintaining an artistic emphasis on the language of the plays and skill of the professional actors, all of whom are members of Actors' Equity Association. Our Education Program furthers this mission by bringing age-appropriate Shakespearean productions to the children of Chicago area schools. We sincerely appreciate your continued attendance, enthusiasm and financial support.

The Shakespeare Project of Chicago's tenth season is funded in part by the revenue from our school programs and program advertisements; by a grant from the Illinois Arts Council; by the generous support of Friends of the Wilmette Public Library; and of course by the voluntary contributions of our audiences. Please know that The Shakespeare Project of Chicago is a not for profit 501(c)3 organization. As such, all donations are tax-deductible. Visit our website at [www.ShakespeareProjectChicago.org](http://www.ShakespeareProjectChicago.org).

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traditional boundaries of 19<sup>th</sup> century melodrama.

Unlike *Earnest*, the plot of *Woman* takes a decidedly serious turn. Wilde does his usual job of serving up an array of memorable epigrams in Act One "softening up" the audience so to speak for the serious nature of his argument that follows.

That argument continues to resonate today, over one hundred years later, as women continue their struggle for equality. It is this juxtaposition of the comedic with the very serious domestic struggle that emerges in the play, which provides us with an experience that entertains and at the same time engages our intellect and emotions.

-- **Peter Garino**

# The Players

(In order of appearance)

Lady Caroline Pontefract	Barbara Zahora
Sir John Pontefract	Todd Hissong
Miss Hester Worsley	Alyson Green
Lady Jane Hunstanton	Mary Ringstad*
Gerald Arbuthnot	Ian Novak
Mrs. Allonby	Gail Rastorfer
Lady Stutfield	Connie McGrail*
Mr. Kelvin, M.P.	Dan Rodden
Lord Illingworth	Rick Carter
Lord Alfred Rutford	Peter Garino*
Mrs. Arbuthnot	Deborah Clifton
The Archdeacon Daubeny	David Skidmore*
Alice the Maid	Connie McGrail

The Scene: The Shires. At Hunstanton Chase and Mrs. Arbuthnot's Wrockley House.  
The Action of the play takes place within twenty-four hours.

*There will be one ten minute intermission*

\* Denotes Artistic Associates of *The Shakespeare Project of Chicago*.

# Profiles

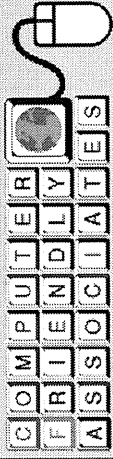
**Rick Carter** (Lord Illingworth) was Warwick and Charles in *TSP*'s presentation of the apocryphal *Edward III*, as well as Nym and Orleanse in *Henry IV, York in Henry VI part 1*, Edward in *Henry VI, parts 2 & 3*, Diomedes in *Troilus and Cressida*, Bassianus in *Titus Andronicus* and most recently Oberon in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Rick has performed locally for ten years, appearing in Chicago Shakespeare Company's touring *Macbeth* as Macduff, Mr. Darcy in Lifeline's original adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice*, and MacHeath in Bailiwick's *Three Penny Opera*. He also worked with the Commons Theatre, where he portrayed Tyler in the original script by M. Nowak and A. Meyer *The Signal Season of Dummy Hoy*, reprising the role off-Broadway at the Hudson Guild Theatre. Rick also appeared regionally with the Iowa Shakespeare Project as Don Pedro in *Much Ado*, and the title role of *Macbeth*, and with Actors' Repertory as Danny in *Grease*. Young Joe in *Damn Yankees*, and Action in *West Side Story*.

**Deborah Clifton** (Mrs. Arbuthnot) Made her TSP debut as Nicole in *The Parvenu*. She was a Theatre X company member for years and years, acting, writing and directing plays and won an OBIE somewhere back there. She's performed at various theatres in Milwaukee and Madison and in Chicago at the Goodman (understudy for *The Goat or Who Is Sylvia?*) and The Chicago Shakespeare Theatre (*King John*) and with Aspect Theater (*Media*). She spends her summers in Wisconsin, cooking and serving lunches at her restaurant, The Monches Mill House Tea Room.

**Alyson Green** (Miss Hester Worsley) is pleased to be back with The Shakespeare Project where she last appeared in *The Cricket on the Hearth*. An ensemble member with Shaw/Chicago she has appeared in over a dozen productions, some favourites include, Eliza in *Pygmalion*, Vivie Warren in *Mrs. Warren's Profession*, Prossy in *Candida*, and Fanny in *Fanny's First Play*. Other theatre credits include Lynzie in *Bright Ideas* with Mason Street Warehouse, Diana in *Alls Well That Ends Well* with Chicago Shakespeare Theatre, Milbs in *A Life with Irish Repertory* and 3<sup>rd</sup> Witch in *Macbeth* with Oak Park Festival. In Canada, Alyson was co-Artistic Director of Orange Dog Theatre and appeared their many productions including *The League of Nathans*, *Andromache* and *Miss Julie*. Film and television credits include the CBC mini-series *A Conspiracy of Silence* and the weekly television series *Traders*. A longtime vegan, she is currently developing a television series about food makeovers. When not doing that she can be found learning lines for the upcoming production of *Arms & the Man* at Writer's Theatre; she is understanding the roles of Raina, Louka and Catherine.

**Todd Hisson** (Sir John Pontefract) Co-Producer of The Aspect Theatre Co., Todd last directed Aspect's reading of *Pygmalion*. Other directing credits include Aspects' readings of *An Enemy of the People*, *Antigone*, and *Pygmalion*. Was last seen onstage as Botvinnik in Aspect's reading of *A Walk in the Woods*, and prior to that as Don Pedro in *Much Ado...*, The Chief in *Belle of the Golden West*, Buck in *The American*, Glas in *Slow Dance on the Killing Ground*, and as Moliere in *Noxious Humors*. A former company member of The Shakespeare Project of Chicago, he played Polonius in their full production of *Hamlet* in 1999. Todd has had a prolific theatrical career in his native Detroit where he last appeared as Sir Toby in the Artix Theatre's acclaimed production of *Twelfth Night*, and worked extensively in local television, earning three Emmys - the last one for his independent documentary *Death on the Inland Seas* which aired on PBS stations across the country. Todd's voice has been heard nationally on numerous commercials.

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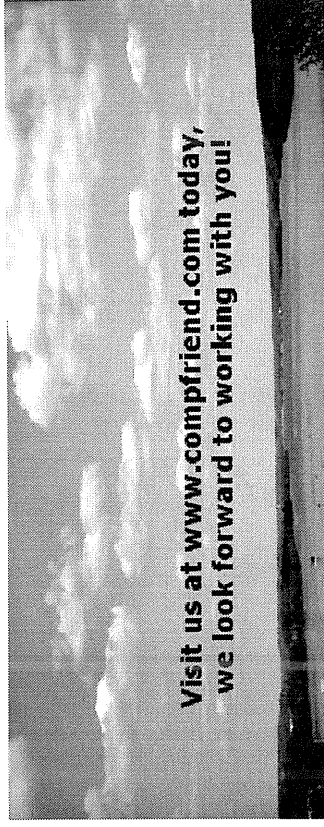
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- Claudio
  - Ghost of Hamlet's father
  - Tenth
  - Night
  - 14
  - Regan
  - 52
  - 3
  - Measure
  - Merchant
  - Venice
- How old was Titus when was he the duke?
- Who spoke the famous words: "A horse, a horse, my kingdom!"
- Which comrade, often killed as a "dark comrad", is generally obsessed with death?
- In Romeo and Juliet, Juliet's birthday is on Tuesday, June 1st. How old does she expect to turn?
- In which play does a man named Lorenzo love Jessica, the daughter of Shylock?
- Which play opens with "If it must be the food of love, play on..."
- Which play is the closest to "twelve" as far as the number of characters in the cast and Cordelia are two of King Lear's

[illegible]

Answers at: <http://www.jokesnloves.net/nivajournals/shakespeare.htm>



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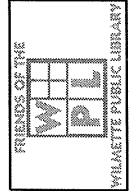
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*This Program is partially supported by the following:*



## Profiles

**Connie McGrail\*** (Lady Stutfield, Alice) has been seen with The Shakespeare Project in *Macbeth* (Lady Macduff), *Henry V* (Katharine), *Troilus and Cressida* (Cressida), *Twelfth Night* (Olivia), *The Taming of the Shrew* (Katherine) and *King Lear* (Cordelia). She has appeared locally with Northlight Repertory, Illinois Theatre Center, Candlelight and Theatre at the Center and regionally with Peninsula Players, Purple Rose Theatre, Florida's Asolo Theatre and Kansas City's Midland Theatre. Connie is a mortgage banker with Professional Mortgage Partners.

**Ian Novak** (Gerald Arbuthnot) is pleased to return to The Shakespeare Project where he appeared in *The Winter's Tale*, *Macbeth*, *All's Well That Ends Well*, *Romeo & Juliet* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Other credits include productions at The Stratford Festival of Canada, Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, Chicago Shakespeare Theatre, Goodman Theatre, Apple Tree Theatre, Live Bait Theater, Lifeline Theatre, Bailiwick Repertory, and The Griffin Theatre where he is an active company member. He is a graduate of The Conservatory for Classical Theatre Training at The Stratford Festival of Canada as well as the Conservatory of Theatre Arts at Webster University.

**Gail Rastorfer** (Mrs. Allonby) This marks Gail's sixth production with TSP. Other TSP credits include *The Parvenu*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *The Cricket on the Hearth*, *The Merchant of Venice* and *Twelfth Night*. Other regional and Chicago credits include: *Lend Me A Tenor* at Theatre at the Center, Rosalind in *As You Like It* at Indiana Repertory Theatre, *Twelfth Night* at First Folio Shakespeare Festival, *The Rose Tattoo* at Goodman Theatre, *The Gamester* at Northlight Theatre, and various productions at Drury Lane Evergreen Park (may it rest in peace). Gail has been living in Chicago for the last 9 years with her husband, Dan Rodden.

**Mary Ringstad\*** (Lady Jane Hunstanton) Previously for TSP, Mary directed *All's Well That Ends Well* and *Love's Labor's Lost*. She also served as assistant director for *King Lear*. Former TSP roles include Mrs. Alving in *Ghosts*, *Anna* in the premiere production of *My Name Is Will*, the title role in *The Rape of Lucrece*, Lady Capulet in *Romeo and Juliet*, Portia in *Julius Caesar*, Adriana in *Comedy of Errors*, Desdemona in *Othello*, Lavinia in *Titus Andronicus*, Rosilind in *As You Like It*, Lady Anne in *Richard III*, Margaret in *I-Henry VI*, Margaret in *Much Ado About Nothing*, Prince Edward in *Edward II*, Witch/Gentlewoman in *Macbeth*, Biondello in *Taming of the Shrew*, and Falstaff's Page in *2-Henry IV* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. Mary, who has an MFA in Acting from Ohio University, is an adjunct faculty member at Wright College, Oakton Community College, and Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary. In addition to being a TSP Artistic Associate, Mary also serves on the TSP Board of Directors.

**Dan Rodden** (Mr. Kelvil, M.P.) This is Dan's fifth production with TSP. Other TSP credits: *The Winter's Tale*, *The Parvenu*, *Macbeth*, and *All's Well That Ends Well*. Other credits include New American Theater, Drury Lane Oakbrook, Drury Lane Evergreen Park, Aardvark Theatre, Apple Tree Theatre, Pegasus Players, and the ImprovOlympic. Regionally: Texas Shakespeare Festival; Nebraska Theatre Caravan; Cidermill Playhouse, and Beechwood Theatre Company. This summer, look for Dan as Antipholus of Syracuse in Shakespeare's *The Comedy of Errors* with Oak Park Festival Theatre. He also thanks his lovely wife Gail Rastorfer.

## Profiles

**David Skidmore\*** (Archdeacon Daubeny ) was last seen in *The Winter's Tale* and opening The Shakespeare Project's Tenth Anniversary Season as Banquo in *Macbeth*, in The Shakespeare Project's 2003 Holiday adaptation of Charles Dickens' *The Cricket on the Hearth* and can be seen regularly as Hamlet in The Shakespeare Project's school production of *50 Minute Hamlet*, the role which he developed for the 2002 season's premier theatrical reading of the piece. David has appeared in such diverse roles as the Hunchback in NOWtheatre's *Signal to Noise*, Hally in *Master Harold and the Boys*, C.K Dexter Haven in *The Philadelphia Story*; Jesus in *The Medieval Mystery Cycle*, Philoctetes in Seamus Heaney's *The Cure at Troy* and Sidney in *Smash*; an adaptation of one of G.B. Shaw's novels in Milwaukee Chamber Theater's annual Shaw Festival. In addition to serving as TSP's Board President, David is a longstanding Artistic Associate and has been involved in nearly every production, performing such roles as Lear's Fool, Puck, Iago, Cassio, Petruchio, Troilus, Dogberry, Hotspur, Henry VI, Romeo and Hamlet in TSP's premier full production in March of 1999; and directing *Richard III* and *Macbeth*. David grew up in Madison, Wisconsin; received his BA from Brandeis University in Boston and MFA in Acting from Temple University in Philadelphia, and studied acting and improvisation for five years at the Piven Theatre Workshop. In addition to his professional acting and directing pursuits, David has recorded drama for Wisconsin Public Radio and has been hired to read testimony in federal court trials. David is currently a senior consultant for Interbrand Wood Healthcare, a branding consultancy for the healthcare industry.

**Barbara Zahora** (Lady Caroline Pontefract) is very happy to be working with The Shakespeare Project of Chicago! Chicago area credits include *Lady Windermere's Fan* (Northlight Theatre); *The Moliere Comedies*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Richard II*, *The School for Scandal*, and *All's Well That Ends Well* (Chicago Shakespeare Theatre); *A Christmas Carol*, *Wit* (Goodman Theatre); *Misalliance* (Writers' Theatre), and *Hard Times* (Lookingglass Theatre). Regional credits include *Henry IV Parts 1 and 2* at the Colorado Shakespeare Festival. Barbara has also performed at Shakespeare's Globe Theatre in London, where she was chosen to be part of the International Artistic Residency in 2004. She holds an M.F.A. in Theatre Performance from Roosevelt University.

**Peter Garino\*** (Lord Alfred/Director) is an Artistic Associate with TSP and has been a company member since 1995. During this past season, he has appeared as Leontes and the Old Shepherd in *The Winter's Tale*, Parson Manders in *Ghosts*, and Duncan in *Macbeth*. He has worked locally in Chicago with the Steppenwolf Theatre Company, Organic Theatre Company, Body Politic Ensemble, Pegasus Players, Absolute Theatre Company and regionally with the Oak Park Festival Theatre and Illinois Shakespeare Festival. Peter has appeared in over 35 TSP staged readings and he has directed readings of *Pericles*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *2 Henry IV*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *The Rape of Lucrece*. In April 2000, his adaptation of Shakespeare's sonnets, *My Name is Will* received a full production by TSP at Oakton Community College. Peter is a partner in Ten November with Chicago playwright Leigh Johnson. He directed Johnson's Vietnam trilogy, *The Khe Sanh Bagman* at the Center Theatre in 2000. Currently, he is helping prepare Johnson's new play, *Lefties*, for its Chicago premier. Peter holds a B.A. in Theater Arts Performance Studies from Hofstra University, New York and an M.F.A. in Acting from Illinois State University. He is a graduate of the National Shakespeare Company summer conservatory.

## Profiles

**Jeff Christian\*** (Artistic Director) marks the completion of his third season as Artistic Director with this *A Woman of No Importance*, having adapted and directed the outreach program *50 Minute Hamlet*, Ibsen's *Ghosts* and *Dickens's The Cricket on the Hearth*, as well as having staged *King Lear*. Other directing credits include *Proof and Driving Miss Daisy* (New American Theatre), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* (Lakeside Shakespeare; Michigan), the national touring production of the interactive comedy *Sister Bernie's Bingo Bash*, *Cruise Control* (Artistic Home); also playwright, *Land of the Free* (Artistic Home; written with Mark Ulrich), *Crate Expectations* (Chicago Dramatists; written with Nathan Carver), *Singer & Saw* (Actors' Gymnasium; written with Nathan Carver), *A Walk in the Woods* and his adaptation of *Medea* (Aspect Theatre), and both parts of *Angels in America* (The Journeymen; co-director and actor, sharing in three Jeff Awards and an After Dark Award). Acting credits with TSP include Brutus in *Julius Caesar*, Buckingham in *Richard III*, Proteus in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Mercutio in *Romeo and Juliet*, Bassanio in *The Merchant of Venice*, Antonio in *Twelfth Night*, Hortensio in *The Taming of the Shrew* and Hamlet in *50 Minute Hamlet*. Other acting credits include work with Writers' Theatre, Chicago Shakespeare, Milwaukee Rep, Madison Rep, The Women's Project of New York, New American Theater, Illinois Theatre Center, Oak Park Festival, Artistic Home, Bernie Sahlin's production of *Murder in the Cathedral*, and Lt. Osborne in *Seanachai's After Dark*-winning and Jeff nominated production of *Journey's End*. He is a member of both the Seanachai and Lakeside Shakespeare ensembles, co-fronts the rock band Ingenious Whittier, has appeared in a number of independent films and recently worked on Christopher Nolan's *Batman Begins*, and holds BBA in Marketing and a BA in International Relations from The University of Wisconsin. He will direct his Moliere adaptation, *The Parvenu*, in November and will perform in *The Grapes of Wrath* in both Syracuse and Indianapolis this winter.

**Mara Polster\*** (Founding and Executive Director) During her tenure as Artistic Director Mara guided The Shakespeare Project through over 50 productions and the entirety of William Shakespeare's canon, directing such plays as *Hamlet*, *King Lear*, *As You Like It*, *Richard III*, *Timon of Athens*, *Taming of the Shrew*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Macbeth*, *Julius Caesar* and playing many great Shakespearean women, like Emilia, Tamora, Margaret, Paulina, Isabella, Katherine and Lady Macbeth. Mara has acted on many of the stages here in Chicago and many others across the country. Mara is a graduate of The Conservatory of Theatre Arts at Webster University in St. Louis and her work with The Shakespeare Project of Chicago began as the grateful commemoration of two fiercely strong souls, Samuel E. LaMaccchia and Michael Alan Wilson, and now continues commemorating our beloved Chuck Lippitz.

*A discussion of the play will  
follow this Performance!*

*You are all welcome.*

*Please stay, meet the cast,  
and share your ideas and questions.*