

Regarding "The Shakespeare Project"

The Shakespeare Project is an Acting Ensemble made up entirely of members of Actors' Equity Association, dedicated to the exploration of the complete works of William Shakespeare and other playwrights. The group had its genesis as a Special Project of **Equity Library Theatre Chicago** and currently presents "Theatrical Readings" of the plays of Shakespeare that achieve a clarity usually only accomplished by fully producing the plays. Assembled by **The Shakespeare Project's** Artistic Director, Mara Polster, these exceptionally skilled actors have been seen on the stages of the Shakespeare Repertory, The Goodman, Steppenwolf, The Court Theater, and many other theatres in the Chicago area and around the country.

The Shakespeare Project performed its first public reading in November of 1995. In January of 1996, monthly performances began at The Chicago Cultural Center, at 78 East Washington Street (These readings are presented as a Special Project for Equity Library Theatre). In June of 1996, The Chicago Park District adopted **TSP** as a sponsored organization to present its monthly readings as a survey course with discussion to follow at The Berger Park Cultural Arts Center, 6205 North Sheridan Road. **TSP** will continue performing at both of these locations throughout 1997- completing the entire canon with *Hamlet* in December of 1998- and plans its first full production, the apocryphal *King Edward the Third*, for early in 1998.

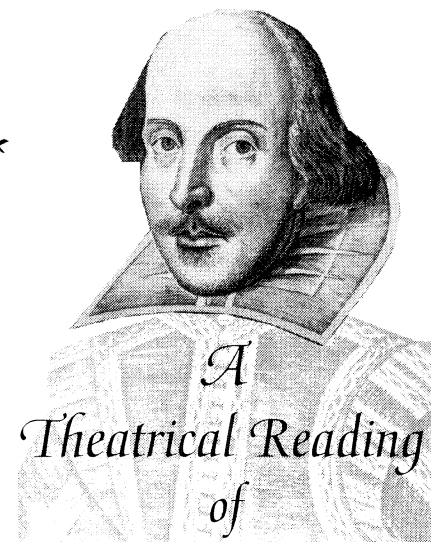
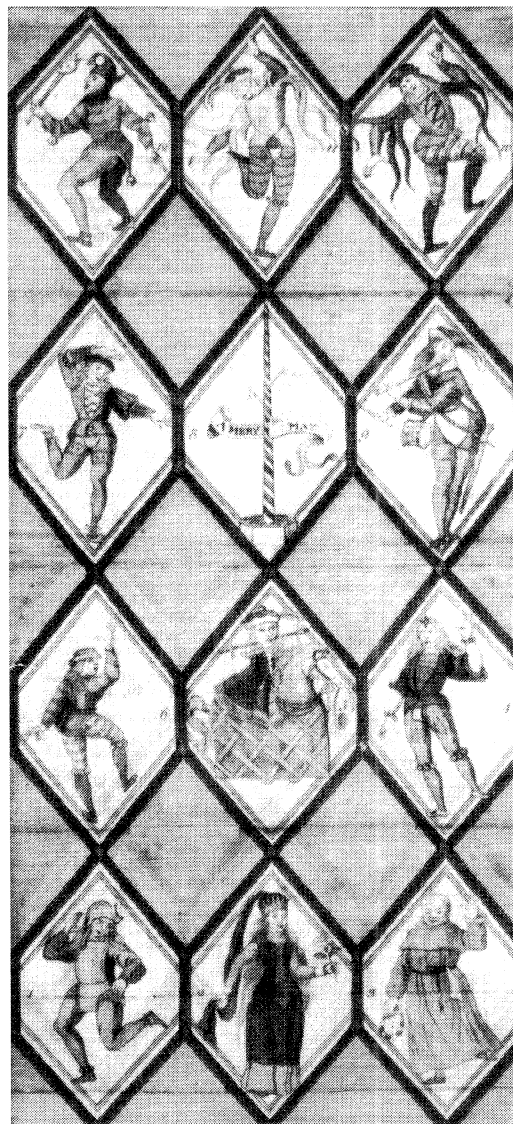
This year, **The Shakespeare Project** presents its 1997 Theatrical Reading Series, entitled "A History of the English Kings (as presented by Elizabethan Dramatists)." We hope you will join us as we take you through eleven of the Elizabethan history plays in chronological order. Next month, we begin what is affectionately known as "The Lancaster Cycle" with *The First Part of Henry the Fourth*. All readings begin at 1:00 p.m. and are free to the public. **TSP** is a nonprofit organization and may receive tax-deductible contributions. If you wish, you may send donations to **The Shakespeare Project**, 2706 North Albany Street, Chicago, Illinois 60647. For further information or to book a reading, contact **TSP** at 773/252-8544. Fax number 773/252-5433. Email address TSPchicago@aol.com. Or take a look at our website: <http://members.aol.com/TSPchicago/shakespeare.html>.

The Shakespeare Project would like to say, "THANK YOU" to the following people and organizations for their generous donations:

Judy Blue	Carolyn LaMacchia
Ron & Barbara Butts	Richard Sullivan Lee
Chicago Park District	Phil Martini
Chicago Cultural Center	Arlene & Ralph Polster-Moore
Chicago Scenic Studios	Michelle Sterling
Maureen Gallagher	Mr. & Mrs. Christopher Paul Wilson
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Garino	James P. & Nita Lee Wilson
Arlene Hirsch	Richard Wharton
Gary Houston	Mr. & Mrs. Peter Wittrock

and Our Many Anonymous Contributors!

The Shakespeare Project
presents



A
Theatrical Reading
of

Much Ado About Nothing

Sponsored by The Oakton College Program Board
and The Honors Program of Oakton College.

All of the actors with *The Shakespeare Project* are members of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of professional Actors and Stage Managers.

The Shakespeare Project

In association with
The Oakton College Program Board
and The Honors Program at Oakton College

PRESENT

A Theatrical Reading of *Much Ado About Nothing* by William Shakespeare

Directed by Mara Polster
and Cheryl Leigh Williams

Featuring: Robert W. Behr, Judy Blue, Norm Boucher, Maureen Gallagher,
Peter Garino, Jason Eric Hays, Richard Sullivan Lee, Sandi Litt,
Richard Marlatt, Mary Ringstad, Dennis Sook, Mark Ulrich,
and Peter Wittrock.

With the music of:

J.S. Bach: "Badinerie"

Antonio Vivaldi: "Allegro"

Marc-Antoine Charpentier-Leppard: "Introduction"

Anonymous: "Two Galliardes"

Pierre Phalese: "Gaillarde Ferrarese"

& "Gaillarde 'la Brune'"

Henry Purcell: "Rondeau"

Giovanni Bassano: "Oy me, Oy me dolente"

Anonymous: "Alamonde 'Est-ce Mars'"

Giles Farnaby: "A Maske"

Anonymous: "L'Homme Arme"

Michael Praetorius: "Three Voltas"

Robert Morton: "Bicinium"

John Adson: from "Eighteen Courtly Masquing Ayres"

G. Frideric Handel: "Arrival of the Queen of Sheba"

Special thanks to RINDA WEST, KATE CROWLEY, PETER WITTRICK AND THE
SPIRITS OF THE SWEAT LODGE; IRENE ALWAN, BARBARA KNAAP AND THE STAFF OF
STUDENT ACTIVITIES AT OAKTON; PETER McMANUS, CHUCK DOOLITTLE, THE
OAKTON COLLEGE PROGRAM BOARD, THE HONORS PROGRAM OF OAKTON,
SHARON ROHAN AT ACTORS' EQUITY, CHERYL WILLIAMS, MARY BECKER,
KENT KLINEMAN, H.P. AND AS ALWAYS, CHRIS WILSON.

The Shakespeare Project

presents
The 1997 Theatrical Reading Series

"A History of the English Kings"

(as represented by Elizabethan Dramatists)

The Life and Death of King John by William Shakespeare

Berger Park Cultural Center.....	COMPLETED	January 19 th
Chicago Cultural Center.....		January 26 th

Edward the Second by Christopher Marlowe

Berger Park Cultural Center.....	COMPLETED	February 16 th
Chicago Cultural Center.....		February 23 rd

King Edward the Third An Apocryphal Play

Berger Park Cultural Center.....	COMPLETED	March 16 th
Chicago Cultural Center.....		March 23 rd

The Life and Death of Richard the Second by William Shakespeare

Chicago Cultural Center.....	COMPLETED	April 13 th
Berger Park Cultural Center.....		April 20 th

The First Part of King Henry the Fourth by William Shakespeare

Chicago Cultural Center.....		May 11 th
Berger Park Cultural Center.....		May 18 th

The Second Part of King Henry the Fourth by William Shakespeare

Berger Park Cultural Center.....		June 15 th
Chicago Cultural Center.....		June 22 nd

The Life of King Henry the Fifth by William Shakespeare

Berger Park Cultural Center.....		July 20 th
Chicago Cultural Center.....		July 27 th

The First Part of King Henry the Sixth by William Shakespeare

Berger Park Cultural Center.....		August 17 th
Chicago Cultural Center.....		August 24 th

The Second Part of King Henry the Sixth by William Shakespeare

Berger Park Cultural Center.....		September 14 th
Chicago Cultural Center.....		September 21 st

The Third Part of King Henry the Sixth by William Shakespeare

Chicago Cultural Center.....		October 12 th
Berger Park Cultural Center.....		October 19 th

The Life and Death of Richard the Third by William Shakespeare

Chicago Cultural Center.....		November 9 th
Berger Park Cultural Center.....		November 16 th

And, in anticipation of "The Twelve Days of Christmas,"
enjoy our final reading of 1997

Twelfth Night, or what you will by William Shakespeare

Chicago Cultural Center.....		December 7 th
Berger Park Cultural Center.....		December 14 th

Admission is Free, No Reservations.

All Readings Begin at 1:00 P.M.

Feel Free to join us at either location:

The Berger Park Cultural Center

6205 North Sheridan Road

Chicago, Illinois 60660

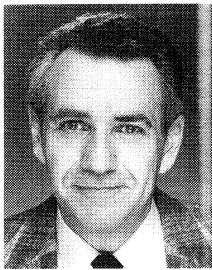
A Discussion follows all readings at this location.

The Chicago Cultural Center

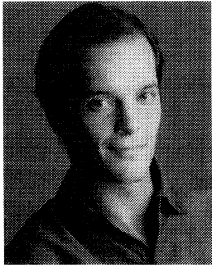
78 East Washington Street

Chicago, Illinois 60602

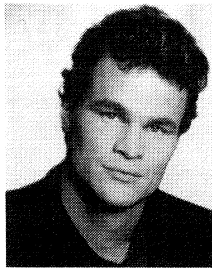
In The G.A.R. Annex



Dennis Sook (Verges, Friar Francis) most recently appeared as a poker player in *The Odd Couple* at Candlelight's Forum Theatre. He's glad to be back in Chicago after working in New York for several years, where he appeared in commercials, on the soaps, and Off-Broadway in *New Mexican Rainbow Fishing* and the baseball comedy *A Perfect Diamond*. Dennis was also in the Actors' Studio production of Tennessee Williams' *Orpheus Descending*. His career began touring with the National Shakespeare Company for two seasons. Dennis earned his Master of Arts degree from the City College of New York.



Mark Ulrich (Don Pedro) appeared in *The Shakespeare Project's* readings of *The Life and Death of King John* in January and *Much Ado About Nothing* in November of 1996. He has also performed with Organic/Touchstone Theatre, Next Act Theatre and New American Theatre, among others. Mark would like to dedicate his performance to Ernest Borgnine.



Peter Wittrock (Benedick) is delighted to be returning to the role of Benedick. He recently directed *King John* for *T.S.P.* and has acted for the Project as Leontes in *The Winter's Tale*, Macduff in *The Scottish Play*, Angelo in *Measure for Measure* and as *Coriolanus*. Peter has dallied with the Bard at "Shakespeare and Company" in Massachusetts, where he studied with the renowned voice teacher Kristin Linklater, done stints acting, teaching and directing at University of Wisconsin, Colorado College, and the University of Pittsburgh. Peter is currently finishing a degree in

Psychology and Theatre at DePaul while teaching voice for actors and non-actors alike.

Mara Polster (Artistic Director) believes- much to the general discomfort of her friends- that *The Shakespeare Project* is divinely guided. The Project began as a "fire in the belly" and has grown to an object of much pride and promise with little more than imagination and a love of the words (plus a brilliant Acting Company). Mara ran from Ohio in 1982 to **The Webster Conservatory of Theatre Arts and Dance** in St. Louis, to major in Acting and Music, while minoring in dance. She has acted on many of the stages in Chicago (although some still allude her) and many others across the country. Favorite credits include *The Roads to Home*, *Macbeth*, *Our Town*, *Top Girls*, and

more musicals than she cares to name. Since May of 1995 *The Shakespeare Project* has enabled her to explore dream roles such as Katherina, Isabella and Paulina, to provide the same opportunity to other actors and to exercise that directing muscle everyone pesters her about. With the help of an ever growing and enthusiastic audience and again, a wonderful acting company, *The Shakespeare Project* is gathering much steam in its journey towards our first full production -the apocryphal *King Edward the Third*, scheduled for early 1998- and the completion of the Canon with our final reading, *Hamlet*, December 98. *T.S.P.* exists as the grateful commemoration of two fiercely strong souls Samuel E. LaMacchia (the sower of the seed) and Michael A. Wilson.

Much Ado About Nothing

The scene: Messina

The Players

(in order of appearance)

Leonato, governor of Messina.....*Richard Sullivan Lee*
Antonio, brother to Leonato.....*Robert W. Behr*
Balthazar, attending on Don Pedro.....*Richard Marlatt*
Beatrice, Niece to Leonato.....*Maureen Gallagher*
Hero, Daughter to Leonato.....*Judy Blue*
Don Pedro, Prince of Arragon.....*Mark Ulrich*
Benedick, a young lord of Padua.....*Peter Wittrock*
Claudio, a young lord of Florence.....*Jason Eric Hays*
Don John, bastard brother to Don Pedro.....*Peter Garino*
Conrade*Richard Marlatt*
Borachio.....] <Followers of Don John> [.....*Norm Bouchier*
Margaret.....*Mary Ringstad*
Ursula....] >Gentlewomen attending on Hero< [.....*Sandi Litt*
Dogberry, a constable.....*Peter Garino*
Verges, a headborough.....*Dennis Sook*
1st Watch.....*Mary Ringstad*
2nd Watch.....*Sandi Litt*
Friar Francis.....*Dennis Sook*
The Sexton.....*Robert W. Behr*

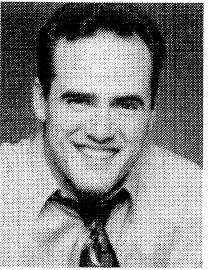
There will be one 10 minute intermission



Robert W. Behr (Antonio, The Sexton) has just completed a run of *Hamlet* as Polonius with Equity Library Theatre where he also appeared in *William Shakespeare's Robin Hood*, a World Premiere. These are just two of his 60+ productions in the last 30 years. Favorite roles include Victor in *Private Lives*, Dr. Carrasco in *Man of La Mancha*, and Count Carl Magnus Malcolm in *A Little Night Music*. He also directs and stage manages.



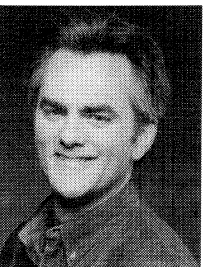
Judy Blue (Hero) for TSP: Queen Elinor in *King John*, Titania in *Midsummer*, Nurse in *Romeo & Juliet*, Portia in *Merchant of Venice* (to name a few). Judy was Viola in Shakespeare Festival of Dallas' *Twelfth Night*, Portia in *The Merchant of Venice* at Stage West and Phebe in *As You Like It* at the Dallas Theater Center. In Chicago, roles included Desiree in *A Little Night Music* at The Goodman and Arlene in Apple Tree's *Baby*. She has appeared opposite Timothy Busfield in *Fool For Love* and in his production of *A Coupla White Chicks Sitting Around Talking* at B Street Theatre in CA. Favorite roles include the title roles of *Evita* and *Piaf* and also Alice and Elizabeth in the world premiers of Jack Heifner's *Homefires* and Horton Foote's *Valentine's Day*.



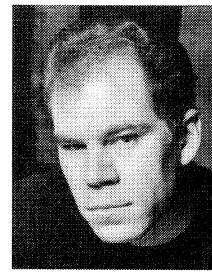
Norm Boucher (Borachio) is glad to continue his association with *The Shakespeare Project*, which began as a Special Project of Equity Library Theatre, of which he is now Co-President of the Board with Jack Hickey. ELT is currently producing *Hamlet*. His favorite ELT roles include Puck in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, David in the critically acclaimed *Judevine*, and *Macbeth*. Norm was recently seen promoting Bud Light on Super Bowl Sunday. He would like to dedicate his performance to his best friends, George and Daisy.



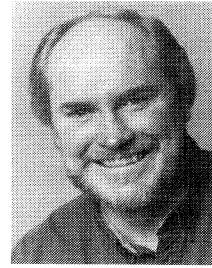
Maureen Gallagher (Beatrice) has appeared with *The Shakespeare Project* as Constance in *King John*, Thaisa in *Pericles*, Prince of Tyre, Lady Macduff and 2nd Witch in *Macbeth*, and as Calpurnia in *Julius Caesar*. Elsewhere in Chicago she has performed at The Goodman Theatre, Body Politic Theatre, Next Theatre, Remains Theatre, Victory Gardens Theatre, Wisdom Bridge Theatre, Shakespeare Repertory, The Court Theatre and for Shaw Chicago, where she will be appearing as Lady Britomart in *Major Barbara* starting April 27th.



Peter Garino (Don John, Dogberry) For *T.S.P.*: Carlisle in *Richard II*, Salisbury in *Edward III*, Mortimer in *Edward II*, Hubert in *King John*, Camillo in *The Winter's Tale*, Banquo in *Macbeth*, Titus Lartius in *Coriolanus*, Capulet in *Romeo and Juliet*, Marc Antony in *Julius Caesar*, Gratiano in *The Merchant of Venice*. Direction: *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Pericles* and *Henry IV, Part II* this coming June. Other credits include work with the Steppenwolf, Organic, Body Politic, E.L.T., Oak Park Festival Theatre and Illinois Shakespeare Festival. Company member: Hofstra University Shakespeare Festival 1974-77 and National Shakespeare Company Conservatory 1976.



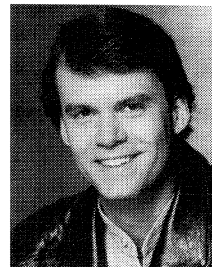
Jason Eric Hays (Claudio) is really excited about the work being done by *The Shakespeare Project*. As an aspiring director, the readings are invaluable as a source of inspiration and exploration of the Bard's works. As an actor, they offer a wondrous opportunity to play with Shakespeare's words. He has been with the group for many of its recent projects: *Pericles*, *Macbeth*, *Much Ado*, *The Winter's Tale*, *King John*, *Edward II* and this month as Henry Bullingbrook in *Richard II*. Prior to working with *T.S.P.*, Jason had the pleasure of performing at the Stratford Festival in Ontario, and also with Chicago's Shakespeare Repertory. Jason looks forward to putting on the director's hat for *T.S.P.* later this season.



Richard Sullivan Lee (Leonato) has appeared in many of *The Shakespeare Project's* presentations since the spring of 1996. He joined Purdue's theatre faculty in the fall of 1992 in the MFA Acting Training program. Richard's twenty-year stage career has spanned both coasts. His stage credits include A Contemporary Theatre in Seattle, The New Jersey Shakespeare Festival, The Riverside Shakespeare Company in New York City, as well as a variety of film and television commercial credits. Richard is a member of Screen Actors Guild, American Federation of Television and Radio Artists, Actors Equity Association. Love to Devon.



Sandi Litt (Ursula, 2nd Watch) first fell in love with Shakespeare during childhood family trips to the famed Stratford Festival in Canada. Roles she has played range from Juliet in *Romeo & Juliet* to *12th Night's* Maria to *A Midsummer Night's Dream's* Hermia to the *Comedy of Errors's* Dromio of Ephesus! She is forever grateful to the small, dark-haired boy in Shakespeare's acting company who caused the creation of these and other wonderful roles. "And though she be but little, she is fierce!"



Richard Marlatt (Balthazar, Conrade) has appeared with *The Shakespeare Project* in *Coriolanus*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Pericles*, *Macbeth*, and *The Winter's Tale*. He just completed a short run in the title role of *Hamlet* this month for Equity Library Theatre in Chicago. Recent regional credits include Lysander in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for Boarshead Theatre, The Duke of Buckingham in *The Three Musketeers* at Meadowbrook, and Ed in *Torch Song Trilogy* with Jewish Ensemble Theatre. He has toured nationally, played a wide range of classical and contemporary roles and has appeared on film and in commercials for radio and television.



Mary Ringstad (Margaret, 1st Watch) is pleased to be joining the talents of *The Shakespeare Project* again for this reading of *Much Ado About Nothing*, having recently lived a troubled life and grown to manhood as Prince Edward in Christopher Marlowe's *Edward the Second* for *TSP* in February. Although Mary calls Chicago her home, she is really a "road hag" - traveling to wherever the work is. She has performed in theaters all over the country, particularly when she appeared in the national tour of *CATS*. Most recently, she completed a run of *Oklahoma* at Drury Lane Oakbrook. Mary has a MFA in Acting from Ohio University.