

The Shakespeare Project of Chicago
presents *the world in words*

5  Minute
Hamlet

Adapted and Directed by
JEFF CHRISTIAN



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the world in words

5  Minute **Hamlet**

September 30, 2006
The Newberry Library
The Wilmette Public Library
The Highland Park Public Library

New offerings for the 06-7 school year!!

This year we've added

My Name Is Will

(a musical celebration of
William Shakespeare's sonnets and songs)

and our newest adaptation,

5 Ⓛ Minute

Macbeth

to our list of school offerings.

5 Ⓛ Minute Hamlet

the poetry

the pathos

the power

the greatest play in the English language

all in one class period!



To bring 50 Minute Hamlet to your school contact:

The Shakespeare Project of Chicago

the world in words

Laura St. John,

Director of Education

773/334-TSP1

About The Shakespeare Project of Chicago

The Shakespeare Project of Chicago was founded in May of 1995 to address the lack of opportunities for students, seniors and the less affluent to experience -- and the local theater community to perform -- the timeless works of William Shakespeare and other great dramatists. We witnessed a dearth of classic works being produced, and those that were being produced, were often expensive affairs that lacked the depth and passion that should have been elicited from the text. We resolved to develop a theatrical reading format that would challenge classically-trained actors to emphasize textual work, and that could eventually be utilized as a way to successfully reach the people of the Chicago area -- regardless of income, waning eyesight, or other factors that had precluded one from benefiting from these works. Today, our mission strives to attain 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 within four years produced the entirety of Shakespeare's canon. Our 1997 Season (The History of the English Kings) traversed the breadth of the great Elizabethan history plays in chronological order: *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*. To date we have performed nearly 70 plays by Shakespeare, Marlowe, Moliere, Ibsen, Wilde and Dickens.

In 1999, we presented our first fully-realized production, *Hamlet*, and our first original adaptation, *My Name Is Will* (a musical celebration of William Shakespeare's sonnets and songs by Peter Garino, with music by Christopher Walz - both Founding Members). Garino's adaptation of Shakespeare's dark narrative poem, *The Rape of Lucrece*, was performed in 2001 and *50 Minute Hamlet* (adapted and directed by Jeff Christian, who was appointed Artistic Director in August of 2002) debuted in spring of 2002. Christian has since adapted and directed *The Cricket on the Hearth* (Dickens), *Ghosts* (Ibsen), *The Parvenu* (from Moliere's *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*) and *Faust* (from Marlowe and Goethe). *50 Minute Hamlet*, which became a fully-realized production in 2003, tours Chicago area schools and is available for booking during the 2006-07 school year. This year we add *My Name Is Will*, and our newest adaptation, *50 Minute Macbeth* to our list of school offerings.

Thank you for joining us as we kick off the 2006-7 season (our 12th), with the cornerstone of our educational outreach program, *50 Minute Hamlet*. In October, we continue telling the story of Prince Hal's maturation from gadabout to warrior king with *Henry V*. In February 2007, we present W. Somerset Maugham's comedic anti-valentine, *The Constant Wife* and then conclude the season in April with *Much Ado About Nothing*. We are thrilled to continue our long-time partnerships with The Newberry Library and The Wilmette Public Library, and to add new partnership with Sunday shows at The Highland Park Public Library.

The Shakespeare Project of Chicago is funded in part by the revenue from our school programs; by a grant from the Illinois Arts Council; by the generous support of Friends of the Wilmette Public Library and Friends of The Highland Park Public Library; and by the voluntary contributions of our audiences. The Shakespeare Project of Chicago is a not for profit 501(c)3 organization and, as such, all donations are tax-deductible. Please visit our website at www.shakespeareprojectchicago.org for further information.

This Month's Artists



David Skidmore^f (Guy) was last seen with TSP in *Love's Labours Lost* and can be seen regularly as Hamlet in Chicago area schools. In addition to serving as TSP's Board President, David is a Founding Member 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 production in 1999; and directing *Richard III* and *Macbeth*. David received his BA from Brandeis

University and MFA in Acting from the School of Communication and Theatre at Temple University, and studied acting and improvisation at the Piven Theatre Workshop. David is a senior consultant for Interbrand Wood Healthcare, where he advises major pharmaceutical and healthcare companies on brand development and brand strategy.



Laura St. John (Gal) was last seen with The Shakespeare Project as Jacquanetta in *Love's Labours Lost* and was pleased to open the Tenth Anniversary Season as Lady Macbeth. Laura can be seen regularly as Gal -- the role which she originally developed for the 2002 season's premier theatrical reading of the piece -- in Chicago area schools. Laura has worked with The Shakespeare Project of Chicago since 1999 and became their Education Director in 2002. Through her work with TSP and other projects, she hopes to bring the arts to as many kids as possible. Laura is a Drama Artist with

Reading-In-Motion- a drama based reading program servicing the children of the Chicago Public Schools. She is a founding member of New World Repertory Theatre and a collaborator on the children's book *Through the Cracks* (Davis Publications). Also with the Project, Laura has directed and played the role of Maria in December of 2001's *Twelfth Night*. Other TSP roles include Calpurnia (*Julius Caesar*), 3rd Witch (*Macbeth*), and the Player Queen (*Hamlet*).



Jeff Christian (Artistic Director) leads the company into his fifth season, having adapted and directed *Faust* (from Marlowe and Goethe), *The Parvenu* (from Moliere's *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*), Ibsen's *Ghosts*, Dickens's *The Cricket on the Hearth*, the outreach program *50 Minute Hamlet*, as well as having staged *King Lear* and *Love's Labours Lost* for the company. Other directing credits include *A Whistle in the Dark* (Seanachai Theatre Company), *Proof* and *Driving Miss Daisy* (New American Theater), *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*, the short film *The Outline* (Collaboration Sketchbook, with Mark Bashore and John Mossman and their production company, upright monkey), both parts of *Angels in America* (The Journeymen; co-director and actor, sharing in three Jeff Awards and an After Dark Award), and James Krag's one-man show *According to Mark* (which helped raise over \$16,000 for Habitat for Humanity in Madison, Wisconsin). In addition to directing *The Constant Wife* for TSP this February, he will direct S.N. Behrman's *Biography* for The Artistic Home in the spring. 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*, Hamlet in *50 Minute Hamlet*, and one of the four actor/singers in *My Name is Will*. Other acting credits include work with Syracuse Stage, Indiana Rep, Writers' Theatre, Chicago Shakespeare, Milwaukee Rep, Madison Rep, The Women's Project of New York, Lakeside Shakespeare, New American Theater, Artists' Ensemble Theater, Illinois Theatre Center, Oak Park Festival, Artistic Home, Bernie Sahlins' 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 Whittler, writes and directs live action and animated sequences for Digital Kitchen, has worked on a number of independent films and appeared in Christopher Nolan's *Batman Begins* -- and is filming the horror feature *Witches' Night* later this fall. Jeff earned a BBA in Marketing and a BA in International Relations from The University of Wisconsin.

Mara Polster^f (Founder and Executive Director) started The Shakespeare Project of Chicago in May, 1995 and during her tenure as Artistic Director, guided The Project through the entirety of William Shakespeare's canon within the first four years, and over 50 productions. For TSP she has directed numerous plays, favorites including *Hamlet*, *King Lear*, *As You Like It*, *Richard III*, *Timon of Athens*, *Taming of the Shrew*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Macbeth*, *Julius Caesar* and has played some of the great Shakespearean women, like Emilia, Tamora, Margaret, Paulina, Isabella, Katherina and Lady Macbeth. Mara has acted on many of the stages here in Chicago and many others across the country and is a graduate of The Conservatory of Theatre Arts at Webster University in St. Louis. Mara is married to Founding Member and Chicago Stagehand, Chris Wilson, and has two inspiringly brilliant and beautiful sons, Michael, 7, and Nathan, 16 months. This year, Mara's recent adaptation entitled *50 Minute Macbeth*, will be included as one of The Shakespeare Project's Educational Programs and will feature, Jeff Christian, David Skidmore and Laura St. John. Since it's inception, The Shakespeare Project of Chicago has been, for Mara, the grateful commemoration of two fiercely strong souls, her late uncle, Samuel E. LaMacchia and her late brother-in-law, Michael Alan Wilson. The Project's evolution was galvanized by Board Member, Chuck Lippitz, in whose memory we now endure.

Thank You to our Benefactors!

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The Players

Guy David Skidmore^F

Gal Laura St. John

Dramatis Personae

5⌚ Minute Hamlet

from

The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark by William Shakespeare

(in order as they appear herein)

Claudius, King of Denmark

*Hamlet, son to the late King Hamlet, and nephew to the present
King*

Horatio, friend to Hamlet

Polonius, Lord Chamberlain

Laertes, son to Polonius

Ghost of Hamlet's Father

Gertrude, Queen of Denmark, and mother to Hamlet

Ophelia, Daughter to Polonius

Rosencrantz

Courtiers

Guilденstern

A Clown, gravedigger

Scene: Denmark

^FDenotes Founding Members of The Shakespeare Project of Chicago.

All Actors with *The Shakespeare Project of Chicago* are members of Actors' Equity Association.

The Shakespeare Project is partially supported

by the following:

