

## 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 and plans to work a full production or two into the 1998 schedule.

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 return to our namesake playwright, presenting *The Tragedy of Richard the Second*. 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 contributions 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](mailto:TSPchicago@aol.com).

### Regarding ELT

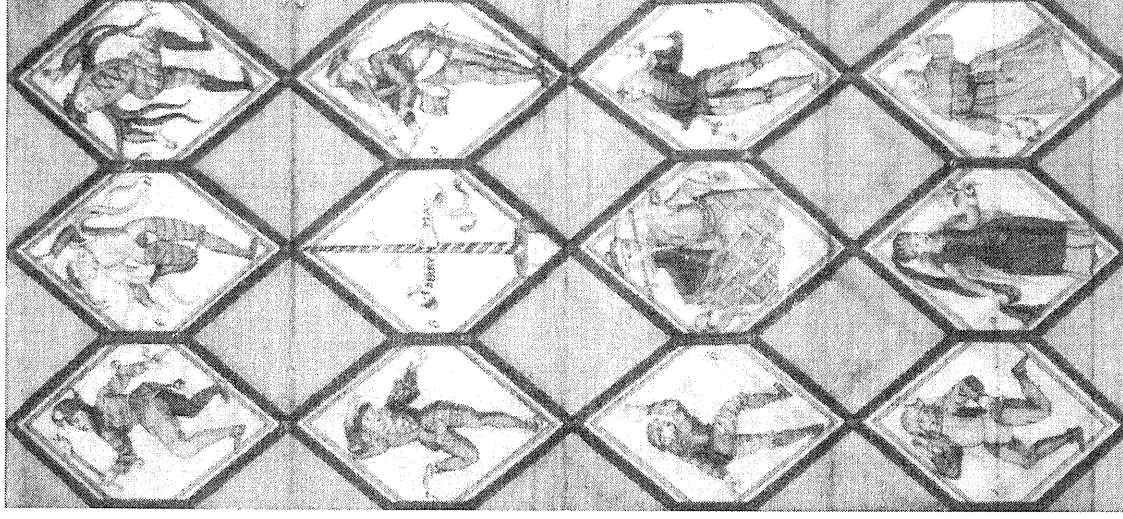
Formed in 1952 to let producers know that a talent pool of actors existed in Chicago, Equity Library Theatre remains the Midwest's only ongoing producer of showcases. ELT is open to any and all members of Actors' Equity Association who are in good standing with that union.

ELT offers performance opportunities to actors in many venues from full performance to staged readings, from scene showcases to various workshops and discussion with visiting artists.

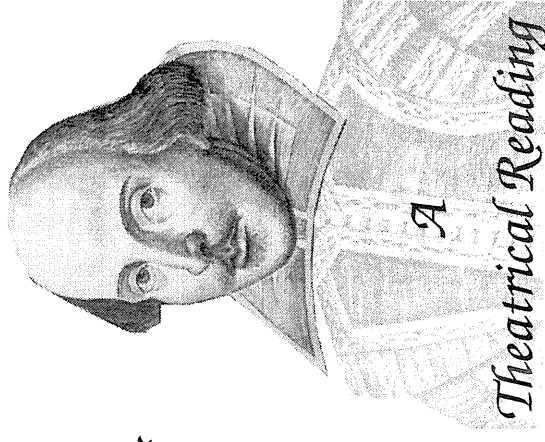
Members are encouraged to bring ideas for new projects to one of four yearly meetings. The Alternative Classic Theatre Project began this way in 1986 and has become one of the most successful ventures ELT has produced.

In 1993 ELT became a resident theatre of The Chicago Cultural Center. Each year ELT provides high quality, low cost theatricals to the downtown area; three to four fully produced plays in the Studio Theatre, plus 6-12 one hour presentations in the main theatre on the second floor. Our last effort at the CCC was the critically acclaimed production of Anton Chekov's *Uncle Vanya* directed by Margaret Knapp. In April, we will production William Shakespeare's *Hamlet*.

Equity Library Theatre is a nonprofit organization and may receive tax deductible contributions. If you would like to contribute to ELT, please send any contributions to: Treasurer, Equity Library Theatre, 4738 North LaPorte Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 30630-3801. A confirmation letter for tax purposes, will be sent by return mail.



*The Shakespeare Project*  
presents



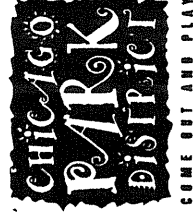
*Theatrical Reading*

of

# King Edward The Third

Directed By:  
Scott Lynch-Giddings

"The Shakespeare Project" is sponsored by



All of the actors with *The Shakespeare Project* are members of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of professional Actors and Stage Managers. All *T.S.P.* presentations at The Chicago Cultural Center are produced as a Special Project of Equity Library Theatre, for which the actors contribute their talents under a Special Agreement between *T.S.P.*, E.L.T. and A.E.A. All performances at The Berger Park Cultural Arts Center are sponsored by The Chicago Park District.

## Director's Notes

"Lies that fester smell far worse than weeds." This line of Shakespeare's verse has a unique distinction: it is the only one in all 154 sonnets which also turns up in a play. Yet, ironically Shakespeare is rarely credited as the author of that play. The sonnet is Number 94, and the play is "*The Reign of King Edward III*."

This is the third play of eleven to be presented in our 1997 Theatrical Reading series "The History of the English Kings". We began with Shakespeare's *King John*, the son of Henry II and brother of his predecessor, Richard I (Coeur-de-lion), who was succeeded at the end of the play by his son, Henry III. Unfortunately, there is no dramatization to portray the events of Henry's 57-year reign, nor of his son and heir Edward I, so we picked up the story again with Christopher Marlowe's classic, *Edward II*. That play ends with a promising young prince with his eye on the throne--the future Edward the Third.

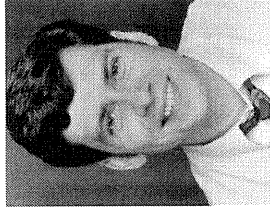
*Edward III* was entered in the Stationers' Register in 1595 and published anonymously a year later, but nearly 200 years passed before it was first ascribed to Shakespeare by scholars. By the 19th century, however, this belated accreditation was widely held by major critics and artists.

Scholars cite as evidence the play's literary sources, vocabulary, patterns of imagery and characteristic themes which recur in the Shakespeare canon. There is a familiarity in the script's many allusions to nature--particularly touching on birds and gardening--not to mention the sheer excess of poetic metaphors altogether. Most striking of all are certain plot devices that bear an uncanny resemblance to scenes in accepted works. These expressions and characterizations almost seem like prototypes for later plays. King Edward's sexual harassment of the Countess, for example, easily conjures up images of Angelo's predations upon Isabella in *Measure For Measure*. The play's opening scene mirrors that of *Henry V*, and the fatalistic musings of Prince Edward at Poitiers could just as well have come from Hal at Agincourt. Though many passages are either banal or bombastic, and though there is a certain clumsiness in the overall structure of the play, yet there are moments when we may hear Shakespeare's voice--when the King tries to compose a love poem or absent-mindedly utters "the Countess" when he means to name the Emperor; when Audley echoes Hamlet pondering death's inevitability, and the Prince responds--like Macbeth--that life is "an idiot."

There is even a theory to explain why "Edward III" might have been ostracized from the rest of his work: its shabby depiction of the Scots. Under Queen Elizabeth, it was fine--even popular--to portray the Scots as cowards and savages. Under James I, however, who united England and Scotland, it was simply *not done*. Once his patron occupied the throne, Shakespeare would have been glad to disown--and yet free to cannibalize--his early, politically-incorrect work.

We tend to view Shakespeare as The Poet-Genius emerging fully-formed on a half-shell, striding down the road from Stratford with stars in his eyes and "The Comedy of Errors" under his arm. But it probably wasn't that simple. He had to start somewhere as a writer, and "Edward III" may have been the place. Most likely, it was a script composed by someone else around 1589 which he reworked early in his career. Revising old scripts was not uncommon--particularly for Shakespeare. In fact, one of the earliest references to him--Robert Greene's infamous "upstart crow" remark--specifically concerned his habit of borrowing other writers' material. But Shakespeare was, after all, "a mere player"--a working actor, not a university-educated scholar like other writers of his day. So it is possible that he schooled himself in playwrighting technique by first trying his hand as a sort of "script doctor." (These days, Hollywood is full of them.)

Scott Lynch-Giddings (Director, Narrator) has acted in many productions over the last ten years with such theatres as National Jewish, Apple Tree, Equity Library, Blind Parrot, Griffin Theatre, Chicago Medieval Players, and the Wisconsin and Oak Park Shakespeare festivals. Favorite roles include Hamlet, Prince Hal in *Henry IV, parts I and 2*, Benedict in *Much Ado About Nothing* and Lysander in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. He has also frequently appeared in staged readings at the Chicago Cultural Center for both *The Shakespeare Project* and Shaw Chicago. He is the author of two scripts, both produced in 1995: *A Fancyfull Historie of Robin Hood*, a five-act play composed in the Elizabethan style (and strongly influenced by Edward III), performed at Chicago Dramatists Workshop; and *Louisa's Little Women*, a recently-published adaptation of Louisa May Alcott's novel, co-written with his wife Beth Lynch and co-produced by Roosevelt University and Wisdom Bridge Theatre. Scott has been fascinated by the Shakespeare Apocrypha for years and wishes to thank Mara for this opportunity to speak these forgotten words aloud.



Mara Polster (Producing 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 both Acting and Music, while minoring in dance. She has acted on many of the stages here in Chicago (although some still elude 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. *The Shakespeare Project* exists as the grateful commemoration of two fiercely strong souls, Samuel E. LaMacchia (the sower of the seed) and Michael A. Wilson.



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

Judy Blue

Ron & Barbara Butts

Chicago Park District

Chicago Cultural Center

Chicago Scenic Studios

Maureen Gallagher

Mr. & Mrs. Peter Garino

Arlene Hirsch

Gary Houston

Carolyn LaMacchia

Richard Sullivan Lee

Phil Martini

Arlene & Ralph Polster-Moore

Michelle Sterling

Mr. & Mrs. Christopher Paul Wilson

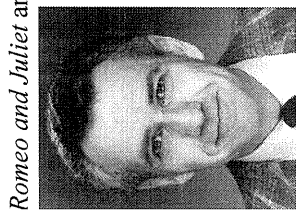
James P. & Nita Lee Wilson

Mr. & Mrs. Peter Wittrock

*and Our Many Anonymous Contributors*



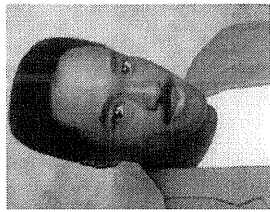
& F. Scott (as Ring



Master of Arts degree from the City College of New York.



Theatre and performed at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe in Scotland.



**Gary Houston** (King Edward) appeared in several of *The Shakespeare Project* performances, among them *King John* in the title role, *Edward II* as Lancaster and *The Taming of the Shrew* as Petruchio; last season he directed the Project's *The Merchant of Venice*. In January his Illinois Theatre Center production of *Camping With Henry & Tom* won high critical marks, as did his recent acting in Victory Gardens' *Emma's Child* (to be aired on WFMT in April) and in Writers' Theatre Chicago's *Blake*, wherein he portrayed the visionary poet, as well as *Damon, Ring Lardner* and *In the Heart of Winter '96* (as H.L. Mencken).

**Scott Olson** (Lodowick, Philip, Villiers, et al) most recently appeared for nine months as Tony Whitcomb in *Shear Madness*. Other Chicago credits include Opie in *As The Beaver at Zebra Crossing* and Alizack in *Vampire Lesbians of Sodom*. Past Shakespeare roles include Puck in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for the Denver Center Theatre Company; Oliver in *As You Like It*, Chiron in *Titus Andronicus*, Elbow in *Measure for Measure* at Idaho Shakespeare Festival; Hortensio in *The Taming of the Shrew* for the Commonweal Theatre Company and touring as Romeo in *Romeo and Juliet* and Cassius in *Julius Caesar* for Chichester Productions.

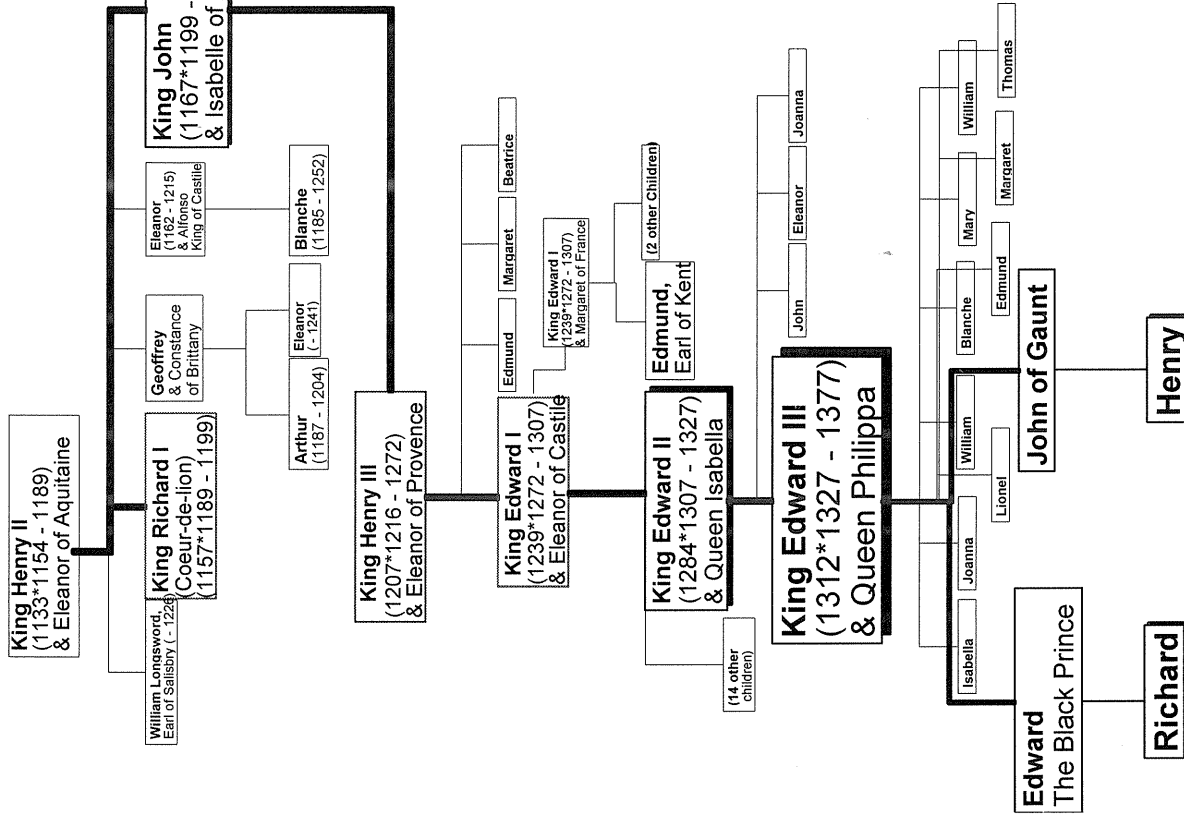
**Dennis Sook** (Lord Audley, et al) most recently appeared as a poker player in *The Odd Couple* at Candlelight's Forum Theatre. He's glad to be back in Chicago after working in New York for several years, where he appeared in commercials, on the soaps, and Off-Broadway in *New Mexican Rainbow Fishing* 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.

**Stephen Spencer** (Prince Edward, Lord Percy) just finished a run of *Seasons Greetings* at the Forum Theatre. He originated the title role in *Shakespeare's Robin Hood* and performed in *Judevine, Marisol*, and *Wingwalkers* at Chicago Dramatist Workshop. Other Chicago credits include *The Sea, Limbo Tales* and *The Barrow*. Regional theaters include The Evergreen Theatre in WI; Florida's Asolo State Theatre and Ruth Foreman Theatre; The Cape May Playhouse in NJ and the Utah Shakespearean Festival. He toured throughout Russia, starting with Moscow's Lininsky Konsomol Theatre and performed at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe in Scotland.

**Michael Torrey** (Artois, et al) is pleased to be making his *Shakespeare Project* debut with *Edward III*. Chicago audiences may remember him from such shows as *Julius Caesar*, *Romeo and Juliet* and *Shakespeare's Greatest Hits* with Shakespeare Repertory. He has also worked with many regional theaters including The Goodman, Tennessee Repertory and The Clarence Brown Theatre. Michael has many commercials, and extensive film and television work to his credit. He was proud to be a part of the Emmy Award winning PSA series, *Raising Parents*.

We must remember that there is no unequivocal reason to believe that the 36 plays in the First Folio were the only ones Shakespeare ever wrote. Seven more were included in the subsequent folios of the 17th century, and several others (like "Edward III") appeared in quartos. Some of these stragglers, like "Pericles" and "The Two Noble Kinsmen", are now universally accepted. Others, like "A Yorkshire Tragedy"--published under Shakespeare's name during his own lifetime--are not. A strong case has been made to include "Cardenio", chiefly on the basis of handwriting analysis and historical records. "Edward III" stakes its claim on ground which is admittedly subjective but artistically compelling: its poetry. As one 18th century critic put it, if Shakespeare didn't write it, then who did? And what ever became of this promising talent, "this second Shakespeare, this twin-brother of the great poet?"

-Scott Lynch-Giddings





**Rengin Altay** (Countess of Salisbury, *et al*) has been seen on many of Chicago's many stages, most recently at the Court Theater in *Carmen*; and also at The Goodman Theater in *Unjustifiable Acts*, *A Little Night Music*, *A Christmas Carol*, *The Iceman Cometh*, *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, and one performance of *A Touch of the Poet*; Steppenwolf Theater in *Awake and Sing*; Wellington Theater in *A Prelude To A Kiss*, and Victory Gardens, Appletree and Wisdom Bridge Theaters. Regional credits include *All My Sons* & *You Can't Take It With You* at Peninsula Players, *A Christmas Carol* in Milwaukee, *As you Like It* at the Huntington Theater in Boston and Pittsburgh Public Theater and the Man at Madison Rep.

## The Players

Narrator.....	Scott Lynch-Giddings.....
King Edward.....	Gary Houston.....
Edward, Prince of Wales.....	Stephen Spencer.....
Earl of Warwick.....	Rick Carter.....
Earl of Artois.....	Michael Torrey.....
Earl of Derby.....	Peter Garino.....
Lord Audley.....	Dennis Sook.....
Duke of Lorraine.....	Peter Garino.....
Sir William Montague.....	Joseph Bowen.....
Countess of Salisbury.....	Rengin Altay.....
King David of Scotland.....	Peter Garino.....
Earl of Douglas.....	Rick Carter.....
Messenger.....	Scott Olson.....
Messenger.....	Katherine Bennett.....
Lodowick.....	Scott Olson.....
King John of France.....	Joseph Bowen.....
Charles, Duke of Normandy.....	Rick Carter.....
Phillip.....	Scott Olson.....
Mariner.....	Michael Torrey.....
1 <sup>st</sup> Frenchman.....	Dennis Sook.....
2 <sup>nd</sup> Frenchman.....	Peter Garino.....
3 <sup>rd</sup> Frenchman.....	Katherine Bennett.....
4 <sup>th</sup> Frenchman.....	Rengin Altay.....
1 <sup>st</sup> Herald.....	Katherine Bennett.....
2 <sup>nd</sup> Herald.....	Scott Olson.....
3 <sup>rd</sup> Herald.....	Rengin Altay.....
Salisbury.....	Peter Garino.....
French Captain.....	Rengin Altay.....
Lord Villiers.....	Scott Olson.....
Poor Frenchman.....	Peter Garino.....
Lord Percy.....	Stephen Spencer.....
Esquire.....	Katherine Bennett.....
Queen Philippa.....	Katherine Bennett.....
English Herald.....	Rengin Altay.....
Copland.....	Scott Olson.....



**Peter Garino** (Lorrain, Salisbury, *et al*) For *T.S.P.*: Mortimer in *Edward II*, Hubert de Burgh in *King John*, Camillo in *The Winter's Tale*, Banquo in *Macbeth*, Titus Lartius in *Coriolanus*, Lord Capulet in *Romeo and Juliet*, Marc Antony in *Julius Caesar*, Gratiano in *The Merchant of Venice*.  
Direction: *The Taming of the Shrew* and *Pericles*. Other credits include work with Steppenwolf Theatre, Organic Theatre, Body Politic Ensemble, Equity Library Theatre and Oak Park Festival Theatre. Company member: Illinois Shakespeare Festival 1981, 1982, 1984, Hofstra Univ. Shakespeare Festival 1974-77 and National Shakespeare Company Conservatory 1976.