

THE SHAKESPEARE PROJECT OF CHICAGO IS PROUD TO ANNOUNCE the lineup for our **25th Anniversary Season**. “Hamlet” by William Shakespeare, directed by J.R. Sullivan (Oct. 11-17, 2019); “Richard III” by William Shakespeare, directed by Peter Garino (Jan. 10-16, 2020); “Romeo and Juliet” by William Shakespeare, directed by Michelle Shupe (Feb. 21-27, 2020); “Measure for Measure” by William Shakespeare, directed by Erin Sloan (May 15-21, 2020). For venues and show times, visit: www.shakespeareprojectchicago.org

THE
SHAKESPEARE
PROJECT OF CHICAGO

1995-2020
25th
anniversary

PRESENTS

GARY ALEXANDER, HELENE AUGUSTYNIAK, JUDY BLUE,
DEVRI CHISM, MEGAN DeLAY, JEFF DIEBOLD, MATT HOLZFEIND,
RONALD KEATON, JOE LEHMAN, MICHAEL JOSEPH MITCHELL,
MARY RINGSTAD, DAN RODDEN, RICHARD SHAVZIN,
MICHELLE SHUPE, HANNAH MARY SIMPSON,
DANNI SMITH, GRACE SMITH, SARAFINA VECCHIO
IN

FOR THE LOVE OF SHAKESPEARE

a musical tribute to the Bard

conceived and arranged by

Judy Blue and Michael Joseph Mitchell

music accompaniment by

Kara Kesselring

25th Anniversary Gala

August 17, 2019

Sheridan Shore Yacht Club, Wilmette, Illinois

The Shakespeare Project of Chicago expresses its gratitude to the Performer's Unions: ACTORS' EQUITY ASSOCIATION, AMERICAN GUILD OF MUSICAL ARTISTS, AMERICAN GUILD OF VARIETY ARTISTS, SAG-AFTRA through Theatre Authority, Inc. for their cooperation in permitting artists to appear in this program.

www.shakespeareprojectchicago.org
P.O. Box 25126
Chicago, Illinois 60625
773-710-2718

The Shakespeare Project gratefully acknowledges all of the generous contributions made by its valued patrons over the past 24 years. With heartfelt thanks, we acknowledge contributors to our past season.

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Announcing our Newest Venue for the coming season!

Wednesday evening performances (6:30PM) at:

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Artist Biographies



Gary Alexander is pleased to be a part of The Shakespeare Project's 25th Anniversary Gala. He has appeared with The Project as an actor (*Coriolanus*, *The Changeling*, *Winter's Tale*, *King Lear*, Heywood's *Fair Maid of the West*, and *Merchant of Venice*), as assistant director (*50-Minute Romeo and Juliet*), and as a music consultant (*Cardenio*). In Fall of 2015, Gary created and directed *Spooky Shakes*, an original adaptation, which was The Project's contribution to the Chicago Cultural Mile Association's inaugural event in Millennium Park. This past season, Gary also directed ShawChicago's production of *The Doctor's Dilemma*. Other recent acting credits include: Voltaire/Pangloss in Music Theater Works' *Candide*, *The Book Club Play*, at the 16th Street Theater and Drury Lane's *A Christmas Carol*. He has appeared in 19 productions for ShawChicago and with the Goodman Theatre, the Ravinia Festival, Light Opera Works, Rising Moon, Noble Fool, and Stage Left. Television and film credits include Dennis West in season five of *Chicago Fire* and *Prince and Me, II*. GaryAlexanderActor.com.



Helene Augustyniak has performed in and around Chicago since the early 80's, and is a proud member of SAG-AFTRA since 1993. She is honored to be a part of The Shakespeare Project of Chicago's 25th anniversary celebration, and wants to wish The Project 25 more wonderfully successful years! Helene also wants to thank Peter and Glen for all their love and support!



Judy Blue most recently appeared with The Shakespeare Project as Mrs. Tiltyard in *The Roaring Girl*. Last season, she appeared in The Project's *Women Beware Women*. This past season, she also appeared in *My Name Is Will* and served as assistant director for *Titus Andronicus*. Judy is a proud founding member of The Shakespeare Project of Chicago, in which she has appeared in countless readings, the touring *My Name Is Will* and the four-person *50-Minute Romeo and Juliet*. Judy has appeared numerous times at Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Goodman Theatre, Steppenwolf, as well as Writers Theatre, Drury Lane Oakbrook, CollaborAction, and Theatre at the Center among others. A veteran of many tours she has also appeared across the country at B Street Theatre (Sacramento), Syzygy (LA), Henry Street (NYC), Dallas Theater Center, Theatre Three (Dallas), Arkansas Repertory Theatre, Stage West and Casa Manana (Fort Worth). She has workshopped new plays as both director and actor with Chicago Dramatists for over 25 years, and most recently directed Chicago playwright Mia McCullough's *Impenetrable* at Clockwise Theatre and Jayme McGhan's *Life In A Sandcastle* for Concordia University. Television roles include *Chicago Med* and *Chicago PD*, and her audio book narration includes the *Sleuth Sisters* mystery series, and the award-winning Myrtle Clover series. Judy is an Artistic Associate of Chicago Dramatists, and Syzygy Theatre, and coaches lawyers in communication skills through Chicago Litigation Consultants. She is a proud member of AEA and SAG-AFTRA.



Grace Smith You might have seen Grace in *Pericles*, *Shakeshafte* and *Love's Labour's Lost* with The Shakespeare Project. Chicago credits: *Plantation!* (Lookingglass Theatre); *Eden Prairie, 1971* (Goodman Theatre New Stages); *The Names* (Equity Library Theatre); *The Wayward Bunny* (Victory Gardens Ignition Fest); *MARYSHELLEYSHOW* (Chicago Fringe). New York: *As I Lay Dying* (Live Source Theatre Group); *Censored on Final Approach* (Infinite Variety Productions); *King Lear* (TheatreLAB); *Never Sleep Alone* (Joe's Pub). Regional: *Peter and the Starcatcher* (City Equity Theatre); *Alice in Wonderland*, *As You Like It*, *A Christmas Carol*, and *King Lear* (Alabama Shakespeare). Ms. Smith is a proud Equity member represented by Paonessa Talent. gracesmithactor.com.



Sarafina Vecchio began her acting career at the age of three as a fidgety Christmas pageant angel in her hometown of Elgin, IL. Since then, she has appeared in hundreds of productions, eventually earning her Bachelor's in Theatre from Roosevelt University and a Post Graduate Award in Teaching Shakespeare from The University of Warwick in Coventry, England. She also worked for many years as a plus size model in Chicago, NYC and LA. Currently, Sarafina is part of the faculty at Acting Studio Chicago, and works as a private audition coach and freelance director.

George Zahora (Sound Engineer) has done sound design, in various professional and non-professional capacities, for more than 25 years, and has been composing original music since 2012. You've heard his work in dozens of Project readings over the last eight years. Additional recent work includes shows at Oak Park Festival Theatre (*Macbeth*, *You Can't Take It With You*, *The African Company Presents Richard III, I and You*), where he's also an artistic associate, and many productions at the already-much-missed ShawChicago. Upcoming projects: *Elizabeth Rex* and *Much Ado About Nothing* for OPFT's summer season. George is also a playwright, and is currently putting the finishing touches on *Christmas Comes But Once A Year*, The Shakespeare Project's holiday offering for 2019. George thanks you for supporting the Project and the many outstanding Chicago actors it employs, and hopes that his work will add context and depth to your experience today.

Peter Garino (Artistic Director) is a founding member of The Shakespeare Project of Chicago and has served as Artistic Director since June 2010. He will direct *Richard III* in The Project's 2019-2020 season. This past season, he appeared as Marcus Andronicus in *Titus Andronicus* and as Helicanus in *Pericles*, *Prince of Tyre*. He also directed *The Roaring Girl* in May 2019. He adapted and directed The Project's holiday show this past season, *A Selection of English Christmas Carols/A Baker Street Christmas Caper*. Last season, he directed *Much Ado About Nothing* and played the Duke of Florence in *Women Beware Women* and Duke Senior and Duke Frederick in *As You Like It*. He also directed John Kishline's *Dream Upon Avon* and Rowan Williams' *Shakeshafte* for The Shakespeare Project. Previous appearances with The Project include Boyet/Anthony Dull in *Love's Labour's Lost*, Sir Thomas Erpingham and the Duke of Burgundy in *Henry V* and Tackleton in Charles Dickens' *The Cricket on the Hearth*. Peter directed the Chicago premier of Tom Stoppard's *Darkside* (Incorporating The Dark Side of the Moon by Pink Floyd). Other appearances for The Project include the Bard in *Cymbeline*, Camillo in *The Winter's Tale*, the title role in *The Tragedy of Julius Caesar*. Lord LaFew in *All's Well That Ends Well* and Antonio in *The Merchant of Venice*. Other directing credits for The Shakespeare Project include: *King John*, *Cardenio*, *The Revenger's Tragedy*, *King Lear*, *The Fair Maid of the West*, *The Reign of King Edward III*, *A Woman Killed*

With Kindness, Othello, The Tempest, Richard II, Measure For Measure, Antony and Cleopatra, The Importance of Being Earnest, A Woman of No Importance, Pericles (1996 and 2008), The Taming of the Shrew, 2 Henry IV, A Midsummer Night's Dream, and his own adaptations of Shakespeare's sonnets and songs, My Name Is Will, and The Rape of Lucrece. Other appearances with The Project include Friar Laurence/Lord Capulet in *50-Minute Romeo and Juliet*, Agamemnon in *Troilus & Cressida*, George Page in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, Cardinal Wolsey in *Henry VIII*, Lord Stanley in *Richard III* and many others. Peter has worked with the Steppenwolf and Organic Theatre companies, the Body Politic, Pegasus Players and with the Oak Park Festival Theatre and Illinois Shakespeare Festival (three seasons). Peter attended the National Shakespeare Conservatory and holds a Master of Fine Arts degree in Acting from Illinois State University and a Bachelor of Arts in Theatre Arts from Hofstra University, New York. He is a proud member of Actors' Equity Association, and SAG/AFTRA.

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August 17, 2019

Dear Friend:

Thank you for sharing this special evening with us as we celebrate the 25th anniversary of The Shakespeare Project of Chicago.

A very special thank you to Jim and Paula Kiefer for hosting us here at the lovely Sheridan Shore Yacht Club.

Tonight's program of music which has been expertly conceived and produced by the considerable talents of Judy Blue and Michael Joseph Mitchell is appropriately titled, "For the Love of Shakespeare." I have said on several occasions that it was a deep and abiding love of Shakespeare's work that brought together a small group of actor friends back in 1995 – just to read his plays aloud to each other. And it is love that each of you, our patrons, supporters and friends has given to our humble ensemble over the years that has sustained us and allowed us to grow and, at the same time, remain true to our mission.

In Sonnet 74, Shakespeare says, "My spirit is thine, the better part of me." It is his spirit, that endures today in our performances, that we celebrate tonight, and continues to inform and challenge our understanding of what it means to be human. I think Shakespeare would be a fan of The Shakespeare Project of Chicago – a theatre company that puts his remarkable words and ideas front and center every time we take the stage.

A special thank you to the remarkable group of artists that Michael and Judy have assembled for tonight's show. You are in for a very special treat.

With gratitude and friendship,



Peter Garino
Artistic Director
THE SHAKESPEARE PROJECT OF CHICAGO



Dan Rodden is happy to be included in tonight's celebration. He has participated in over twenty-five staged readings with The Shakespeare Project of Chicago since 2003. His credits include appearing as Prof. Sloane in David Bell's production of *The Explorers Club* at Windy City Playhouse; sharing the stage with his wife, Gail Rastorfer, in *Neil Simon's Rumors* at Arrow Rock Lyceum Theatre (MO); playing Charles Condomine in Noel Coward's *Blithe Spirit* at PICT Classic Theatre in Pittsburgh, PA; as well as the iconic role of Atticus Finch in *To Kill a Mockingbird* at Cardinal Stage Company in Bloomington, Indiana. Other credits: Dr. Adams in *Marrying Terry* (Nightingale Group); Felix in *The Odd Couple* (Drury Lane Oakbrook); Antipholus of Syracuse in *The Comedy of Errors* (Oak Park Festival Theatre); Apple Tree Theatre; Drury Lane E.P.; The Aardvark; Pegasus Players; IO Chicago, and New American Theater, Rockford, IL. Don Quixote in *Man of La Mancha*, Normandale Community College in Bloomington, MN; Hannay in *The 39 Steps*, and *Making God Laugh* at Nebraska Rep.; Texas Shakespeare Festival, Nebraska Theatre Caravan, Cidermill Playhouse, and Beechwood Theatre Company. You may currently see him tackling the taxing role of "Dad eating a sandwich" in a commercial for Buddig meats, and hear his voice in numerous commercials and productions for The Onion. Thanks and congratulations to Peter and all the great people at The Shakespeare Project!



Richard Shavzin has acted a bunch—some of it with The Shakespeare Project—and has also been seen at Northlight, Victory Gardens, National Jewish Theatre, American Blues, Madison Repertory, the Royal Alexandra (Toronto), the Organic, the Annoyance, and Strawdog, where he was Artistic Director from 1993-1998. The recipient of two Jeffs, Richard has directed at theaters across Chicago. He is an Artistic Affiliate with American Blues, and an Associate Artist at Chicago Dramatists. He currently serves on the Central Regional Board of Actors' Equity, the National Board of Directors of SAG-AFTRA, and the Executive Board of the Illinois AFL-CIO.



Michelle Shupe most recently appeared as Mistress Gallipot in Middleton and Dekker's *The Roaring Girl* with The Shakespeare Project of Chicago. Active with the Project for many years, Michelle's favorite TSP roles include: Constance in *King John*, Goneril in *King Lear*, the Duchess in *Revenger's Tragedy*, the Duchess in *Duchess of Malfi*, and many others. She has appeared at various theaters throughout the country, including: Theatre Squared, Shaw Chicago, Alabama Shakespeare Festival, the Shakespeare Theatre, the Goodman, Illinois Shakespeare Festival, and many others. Upcoming: Michelle will be directing *Romeo and Juliet* for The Project in February 2020.



Hannah Mary Simpson is thrilled to be back with The Shakespeare Project of Chicago. This spring, she understudied and performed as Moll Cutpurse in *The Roaring Girl* with The Project—a role she's wanted to play since college. Other recent Chicago credits include Theo Ubique (*The Bridges of Madison County*, Jeff Award for Best Musical), and The Cuckoo's Theater Project (*Moby Dick! The Musical*). Hannah is currently understudying all of the women's roles in *A Kind Of Love Story* at Oil Lamp Theater, and she's about to begin Level 6 of the Music Program at The Second City. Hannah is proud to be represented by Lily's Talent. hannahmarysimpson.com



Devri Chism most recently served as assistant director on *The Roaring Girl* and *Back of the Yards* for The Shakespeare Project. Devri has recently relocated to Chicago from Detroit where she earned her Master of Fine Arts in acting from Wayne State. Last season she had the pleasure of working on The Shakespeare Project's production of *As You Like It* as dramaturge, assistant director, and understudy. But, most recently Devri has been traveling and working with Hope Summer Repertory Theatre in Holland Michigan and Titan Theatre Company in New York City. She's so happy to be back and making her chilly home in Chicago once again!



Jeff Diebold is presently in rehearsals for Chicago Shakespeare Theater's North American premiere of *The King's Speech*—a stage adaptation of the NYT bestseller and Oscar Award-Winning motion picture of the same name. National Tour: *Mamma Mia* (North American Tour). Recent local credits: *An American Dream* (Lyric Opera of Chicago), *Nell Gwynn* (Chicago Shakespeare.) He has been seen on stages all over Chicagoland including Paramount Theater, Mercury Theater, Drury Lane Theater, Court Theatre, Theatre at the Center, and Noble Fool Theater. TV Credits: *Chicago Fire*, *Chicago Med*. He received his M.F.A. in Acting from Roosevelt University's Chicago College of Performing Arts and is represented by Paonessa Talent. Proud member of Actor's Equity.



Megan DeLay is thrilled to be performing tonight! In the Chicago area, she has worked with Lifeline, Redtwist, Black Button Eyes, Akvavit, Arc Theatre, Piccolo, Artemisia, Open Door Rep, and is an Ensemble Member with Promethean Theatre where she was last seen as Lady Croom in *Arcadia*. Favorite regional credits: *In the Next Room*, *Tartuffe*, and *Two Gentlemen of Verona* at Asolo Repertory. Megan received her MFA in Acting from FSU/Asolo Conservatory. www.megandelay.com



Matt Holzfeind Chicago-area credits include: *I Am My Own Wife* (About Face); *Oklahoma!* (Paramount); *Peter Pan—A Play* (Lookingglass); *The School for Lies* (Chicago Shakespeare); *Porgy & Bess* (Court); *Another Part of the Forest* (Writers); *Completeness* (Theatre Wit); *Our Class* (Remmy Bumpopo); *ENRON* (TimeLine); *The Three Faces of Dr. Crippen* (Steppenwolf/Fringe NYC); Back Room Shakespeare Project. Regional credits include: *Measure for Measure* (Theatreworks); *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Titus Andronicus*, *Scapin* (Utah Shakespeare Festival); *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* (Indiana Repertory); *A Streetcar Named Desire* (Cardinal Stage); *Pump Boys and Dinettes* (Theatre at the Center); *Fox on the Fairway* (The New Theatre); and five seasons with Peninsula Players, where credits include: *Peter and the Starcatcher*, *The Full Monty*, *Lend me a Tenor* and *Almost, Maine*.



Ronald Keaton has appeared with The Project in *King John* and *Julius Caesar*. He recently completed a successful six-month off-Broadway run of *Churchill*. In his four-plus decades as an actor, he has established himself as a dependable, versatile performer at many theatres – Goodman Theatre, Chicago Shakespeare Theatre, Marriott Theatre, the Drury Lane in Oakbrook Terrace, Theater Wit, Oak Park Festival Theatre, First Folio Theatre and several others. His regional credits include roles at the Indiana Repertory Theatre, Coconut Grove Playhouse in Miami, Houston’s Alley Theatre and New York’s Nat Horne Theatre. Ronald wears many hats as an actor/writer/singer, a director, stage manager, fundraiser and an advocate for all the arts. He has career paths in voiceover and commercial entities as well. And with the fine and talented director Kurt Johns, Keaton now becomes a producer with SoloChicago Theatre, which is singularly devoted to the creation and development of works for solo performance. He is also a proud member of and elected representative to the Central Regional Board of Actor’s Equity Association.



Kara Kesselring Pianist, vocalist, and arranger Kara Kesselring is a bustling freelance musician and dedicated educator based in Chicago. For over a decade she’s mined the Windy City’s vibrant music scene, establishing an eclectic career. Highlights include playing keys and singing in the Tony award-winning smash hit *Jersey Boys* (2nd National Tour, Broadway in Chicago); touring and arranging for the breakout PBS retro-rock sensation *Under the Streetlamp*; as well as composing, arranging, and performing around the globe for educational comedy troupe *Wavelength*. Kara founded homespun country/folk group *Sugarcreek Road* (writer, keyboards, vocals, accordion) releasing her first original album, “Hurry Up & Relax” in 2015, and appears with celebrated society band *Standing Room Only Orchestra* (keyboards,vocals). She also frequents Chicago piano bars such as *The Drake*, *The Pump Room*, *Stetson’s-Hyatt Regency*, and *Mastro’s Steakhouse*. Other notable venues include *Chicago Symphony Hall*, *Taste Of Chicago Festival*, *Old Town School Of Folk Music*, *Park West*, *Club Nokia* (Los Angeles), and *MGM Grand* (Las Vegas). Recordings include *If I Should Lose You*, *Sonho Meu*, *Calling All Kids*, and *The Grandma Project*. Passionate about education, she earned a BA in Classical Voice Performance from the University of Iowa. Since 1999 Kara has taught at the *Old Town School of Folk Music* offering private and group lessons in piano and voice to children and adults, as well as leading a vocal jazz combo class. She also maintains *Grove Ave. Music Studio*, a prospering private studio for piano and voice in her Berwyn, IL home. Teaching inspired Kara to pen the revue *Musical Staff* (a parody on educational issues) with partner *Brendan Kelly*. Additionally, Kara was a founder of the *Berwyn Arts Council* and serves as a very active member of her church, *Lake View Presbyterian*. She and her husband, musician *Pat Williams*, are the proud parents of 8 year old daughter *Iris Mae*.



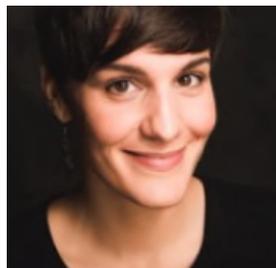
Joe Lehman is delighted to pitch in with The Shakespeare Project's Gala celebration. Previous credits with the project include: *My Name is Will*, *The Roaring Girl*, *Cardenio*, *A Woman Killed with Kindness*, and *A Winter's Tale*. He is currently performing in *Freaky Friday* with *Williams Street Rep* and will then be in *Buddy Holly* with *Fireside Theatre* in Wisconsin. A proud member of *Actors’ Equity*, he has performed with *Drury Lane Oakbrook*, *Marriott Theatre*, *Theatre at the Center*, *Fireside Theatre*, *Greenbrier Valley Theatre*, *First Folio*, *Creede Repertory Theatre*, *Michigan Shakespeare Festival*, *Classical Kids Live*, and *Meadow Brook Theatre* among others. He is also an active director working with *Williams Street Rep*, *Citadel Theatre*, and *Metropolis Performing Arts Center* most recently. For more info, visit www.joe-lehman.com. Thank you for your support of live theatre!



Michael Joseph Mitchell has appeared in several past Shakespeare Project performances, including *Jefferson And Adams*, *King John*, *King Lear*, *Macbeth*, *Edward III* and *A Woman Killed With Kindness*. Recent credits include *Elizabeth Rex* (Oak Park Festival Theatre), *Mary Stuart* (Chicago Shakespeare Theater), *My Fair Lady* (Lyric Opera), *Finding Home* (Indiana Repertory Theatre); *Oberon/Theseus in A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, *Antigonus in The Winter’s Tale* and *Antonio in The Merchant Of Venice* (First Folio Theatre). He will appear as *The Wizard* in *Chicago Shakespeare Theater’s The Wizard Of Oz* starting August 21, and will reprise his cabaret act *The Musical Meaning Of Life* at *Davenport’s Piano Bar* on September 8. He is a proud member of the *Actors Equity Association*.



Marv Ringstad Previous appearances with The Project include *Moby Dick Rehearsed*, *Cardenio*, *Antony & Cleopatra*, *As You Like It*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *Edward II*, *Ghosts*, *1-Henry VI*, *2-Henry IV*, *Julius Caesar*, *Macbeth*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *My Name Is Will*, *Othello*, *The Rape of Lucrece*, *Richard III*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Selections from The Hollow Crown*, *Taming of the Shrew*, *Titus Andronicus*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, and *A Woman of No Importance*. She has directed *Much Ado About Nothing*, *All’s Well That Ends Well*, and *Love’s Labour’s Lost* and assistant directed *King Lear* for The Project. Mary, who has an MFA in Acting from Ohio University, is Associate Professor of Speech and Theatre at *Oakton Community College*. Mary also serves on the *Board of Directors* for The Project.



Danni Smith appeared most recently with The Shakespeare Project as the featured vocalist in *A Selection of English Christmas Carols* accompanied by her husband *Martin Monahan*. She also appeared with The Project in *A Baker Street Christmas Caper* and *Cymbeline*. Chicagoland credits include *Fun Home* (Victory Gardens); *Mamma Mia!*, *Man of La Mancha*, *Bridges of Madison County*, and *City of Angels* (Marriott Theatre); *Cabaret* (TATC); *A Christmas Story* (Paramount); *Wild Party* and *See What I Wanna See* (Bailiwick Chicago); *Henry VIII*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Comedy of Errors*, *Twelfth Night*, and *Richard III* (Lakeside Shakespeare). She also performs in concert with her dear friends *Meghan Murphy* and *Cassie Slater* (“*We Three: Loud Her. Faster Her. Funny Her.*”) around Chicago. Proud graduate of *Ball State University*.