

The Shakespeare Project would like to say a heartfelt, "THANK YOU" to our many anonymous contributors and to the following people and organizations for their generous donations at the levels indicated:

"Queen Elizabeth I"

(\$5,000 - \$9,999)

The Chicago Park District

"King James the First"

(\$2,500 - \$4,999)

The Chicago Public Library/
Harold Washington Center

"The Lord Chamberlain"

(\$1,000 - \$2,499)

Oakton Community College

Earls & Countesses

(\$500 - \$999)

Illinois Arts Council

Mr. & Mrs. Christopher Wilson

Knights & Ladies of the Realm

(\$250 - \$499)

Leo Kadanoff

Carolyn LaMacchia,

In Loving Memory of Sam LaMacchia

Arlene Polster & Ralph Moore

Janet Schirn

James P. & Nita Lee Wilson

Masters of the Revels

(\$100 - \$249)

Ron & Barbara Butts

Harvey T. Lyon

Phil Martini

George & Gerry Messenger

Nancy Nickel

Leo & Ruth Polster

Herbert S. Siegel

Michelle Sterling

Pipers & Players

(\$50 - \$99)

Dr. & Mrs. Murray Berkowitz

Janice B. Dodson

Maureen Gallagher

Gary Houston

Linda & Richard Lauterach

Anita & Jim McDonald,

In Loving Memory of Alene Johnson

Julian & Lou Ann Schachner

Kristan Schmidt

Ned & Suzanne Schmidtk

Mr. & Mrs. Peter Wittrock

Beloved Groundlings

(\$10 - \$49)

John Agar

William Barnet

Judy Blue

Richard Allen Eisenhardt

Arlene Gloria Hirsch

Scott & Ruth Hughes

Richard F. Johnson

Richard Sullivan Lee

Rhita & Chuck Lippitz

Susan & Michael Lippitz

Elfriede Matejsik, PhD.

John McCrite

Mr. & Mrs. Mark McManus

Kevin & Laura McVey

Anna J. Petkus Tee

Joan & Charles Plock

Norm & Sany Robins

Mr. David Rogner

Mr. & Mrs. Richard Satterthwaite

Joyce Saxon

Patrick, Michelle & Miranda Siler

Harriet A Swanson

Jensen Wheeler

June Wilkinson

Yeomen of the Guard

(In Kind Contributions)

Andrew A. Block

Rick Carter

The Chicago Cultural Center

Chicago Dramatists Workshop

Chicago Scenic Studios

Mr. & Mrs. Peter Garino

Joseph A Holt

Katten, Muchin & Zavis

Phil Martini

Suzanne Plunkett Photography

Mara Polster-Wilson

Michelle Sterling

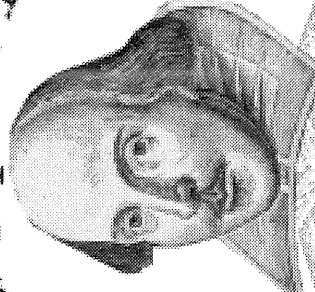
Christopher Walz

Richard Wharton

Christopher Wilson

Bess Winakor

The Shakespeare Project



presents

A "Theatrica l Reading " of

KING LEAR
BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Directed by Mara Polster
&

Featuring Music Written & Performed by Janine Regal

Stage Manager: Mary Ringstad

Assistant Directors: Mary Ringstad & Michelle Sterling

Presented: January 16th, 17th, & 18th, 1998



COME OUT AND PLAY
Chicago Public Library

The Shakespeare Project of Chicago is graciously supported by the Chicago Park District, Chicago Public Library/Harold Washington Center, The Illinois Arts Council and the voluntary contributions of our audiences. All of the actors and stage managers with *The Shakespeare Project* are members of Actors' Equity Association.

READ, LEARN, DISCOVER!

DIRECTOR'S NOTES:

I find I have a total heart, mind, body and soul response to *King Lear*. Like *Hamlet*, the play speaks in a voice (or voices) so profoundly universal, that it conjures visceral images from my own life, of my own family, and loves, and the deaths I have been witness to. My thoughts about *King Lear*? Well...how about... If we can't learn humility from this play, then we'll not be humble! That's certainly the long and the short of it.

There is a bottomless well of commentary on this play, much of which is entirely brilliant. And although, as I read and study the different conclusions and encapsulations of this piece of immense vastness, I repeatedly hear myself saying, "Yes, I can see that. Yes, that's in there too." I still keep returning to myself, and my limited, though plentiful, experiences in this life and I realize - as I think you will - that the play speaks to us all at our essential core. We are human. We are flawed. We are perfect. We are powerless. We are loved. We must love.

This play strikes me as a folk play. In the same way that folklore and folk music are passed down through the ages as a mechanism for educating the future of the common truths, observations and morals of the "folks" who came before, so is this play. The simple folklore from which it receives its genesis: A King stages a contest to see which of his three daughters loves him most. The first says she holds him as precious as Gold, the second as Silver, and the third as Salt. The King, insulted, in his outrage banishes the third daughter to the tower "forever". While there, she convinces the palace cooks to prepare the Kings food without salt. After a long period of very bland food, the King realizes how precious his third daughter holds him and they are reconciled to the perfect happy ending.

Lear takes this simple form of folklore and expands it to include multiple/multilevel lessons and in fact, the essential truths of life and the purposes of humanity. It is a play about redemption; Transformation of the soul; Love, love, love; Themes of love versus ingratitude and selfishness, good versus evil, the pursuit of justice and again, redemption. This is the life experience, the journey of the human soul on its way to "the divine". And finally, though we may strive to create for ourselves a happy ending, those endings are none the less always difficult and coarser than we would like. So also is the ending of *King Lear*.

Although some of the scholars would tend toward limiting the scope of the characters in *Lear* to either Good or Evil, or simply as symbolic voices, I find they are all ardently human. Each having a drive that propels them down their particular path. When I think of Edmund, for instance, I think "A Lack." This man, boy, child has a very definite lack that makes his subsequent choices in the play inevitable. This I find also to be true of Regan, Goneril, Oswald and Cornwall. Not evil, but simply further from Grace than the other characters in the play, such as Cordelia, Kent, Edgar and Albany. When I was a child, try as I might, I couldn't understand a word of this play. I thought it was the Bible or something; Today, I know in many ways, it is.

- MARA POLSTER

Regarding "The Shakespeare Project of Chicago"



The Shakespeare Project of Chicago is an Acting Ensemble made up entirely of members of Actors' Equity Association and dedicated to the exploration of the complete works of William Shakespeare and other great dramatists. *TSP Chicago* currently presents monthly "Theatrical Readings" of the complete works of

Shakespeare that achieve a clarity usually only accomplished by fully producing the plays. Established as a vehicle to enable Chicago's professional actors to explore great literature while working in the company of others with like experience and interest levels, these exceptionally skilled performers have previously been seen on the stages of The Goodman Theater, Steppenwolf, Shakespeare Repertory, Northlight Theatre, The Court Theater, and many other great stages in the Chicago area and around the country.

This presentation of *King Lear* marks the beginning of our 1998 Theatrical Reading Series. Since November of 1995, *The Shakespeare Project of Chicago* has been performing our trademark "Theatrical Readings" at various Chicago locations. In 1998, we expand our audience to include the patrons of the Lincoln Park Cultural Center, located at 2045 North Lincoln Park West. This Series promises three opportunities each month to see twelve of the greatest plays of Shakespeare's canon. Next month we present a unique slant on the Elizabethan "School" of Love and Shakespeare's twist on the comic form with *Love's Labour's Lost*. Performances are February 13th, 14th, and 15th at three locations. All readings are free to the public.

TSP Chicago is a nonprofit organization and may receive tax-deductible contributions. If you wish, you may send contributions to *The Shakespeare Project of Chicago*, 2706 North Albany Street, Chicago, Illinois 60647. We receive information on performance dates and locations as we push toward the completion of the entire canon -with *Hamlet* in December of 1998- fill out a card as you enter or leave the performance and you will be put on our mailing list. For further information or to book a reading, contact *TSP Chicago* at 773/252-5433. (Phone and Fax). Email address TSPchicago@aol.com. Website: <http://members.aol.com/TSPchicago>.

PRESENTS

PRESENTS


PRESENTS

PRESENTS

PRESENTS

PRESENTS

PRESENTS





Judy Blue (Regan) for TSP: Viola in *Twelfth Night*, Lady Grey in *3-Henry VI*, Hero in *Much Ado*, 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 include Desirée 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* at B Street Theatre in CA and favorite roles include *Evita* and *Pigf* and also Alice and Elizabeth in the world premiers of Jack Hefner's *Homefires* and Horton Footé's *I Valentine's Day*. Other theaters include Baltimore Theatre Project, Movement Theatre Intn'l, Henry Street New Federal Theatre in New York.



Maureen Gallagher (Goneril) has appeared with **The Shakespeare Project** as Beatrice in *Much Ado About Nothing*, the Duchess of Gloucester in *Henry VI, part 2*, Constance in *King John*, Thaisa in *Pericles*, *Prince of Tyre*, Lady Macduff and Witch in *Macbeth*, and Calpurnia in *Julius Caesar*. She has performed at The Goodman Theatre, The Body Politic Theatre, Next Theatre, Remains Theatre, Victory Gardens Theatre, Wisdom Bridge Theatre, Shakespeare Repertory, Court Theatre, Shaw Chicago, and, most recently, in The Claudia Cassidy Series in *Lute Song* and *The Glass Menagerie*. In February and March she will be appearing in *To Kill a Mockingbird* at The Bog Theatre in Des Moines.



Peter Garino (Albany, Cornwall's Servant) has acted with the company as Warwick & Sir William Lucy in *Henry VI, part 1*, as the Constable of France in *Henry V*, Warwick in *2-Henry IV*, Carlisle in *Richard II*, Salisbury in *Edward III*, 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*, and Gratiano in *The Merchant of Venice*. He has directed *Taming of the Shrew*, *Pericles* and *2-Henry IV* for **TSP**. Other credits include work with Steppenwolf Theatre, Organic Theatre, Body Politic Ensemble, Equity Library Theatre, Oak Park Festival Theatre, Hofstra Shakespeare Festival (1974-97, Illinois Shakespeare Festival (1981-84).



Terry Hamilton (Kent) was last seen as Doc in *Mr. Roberts* for Powertap Productions and previous to that as Claudius and The Ghost in Powertap and Rivendell Theatre Ensemble's Production of *Hamlet*. He last appeared with **The Shakespeare Project** as *Richard III*, and prior to that was York in *Henry VI, parts 2 & 3*. He has appeared on Broadway, off-off Broadway, and regional, summer stock and Dinner Theaters throughout the country. Mr. Hamilton has studied with Lee Strasberg and Snonia Moore in New York, and Shakespeare with Peter Forster here in Chicago.



Jason Eric Hays (Cornwall, Servant) directed *Henry VI, part 3* for **The Shakespeare Project** in October. Last month Jason was Antonio and Curio in *Twelfth Night* and prior to that he played both Jack Cade and the Earl of Suffolk in *2-Henry VI* and was Henry Bullingbrook in *Richard II*. Other **TSP** credits include the title role in *Macbeth*, Claudio in *Much Ado About Nothing*, Antigonus in *The Winter's Tale*, The Bastard in *King John* and Kent in *Edward II*. Prior to becoming a company member of **The Shakespeare Project**, Jason had the pleasure of performing at the Stratford Festival in Ontario, and also with Chicago's Shakespeare Repertory. Jason is pleased to return to Chicago after directing a full season of Summer-Stock in southern Illinois.



Gary Houston (Gloucester) for **TSP** directed *The Merchant of Venice* and played Petruchio in *Taming of the Shrew*, Peter Quince in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Lenox in *Macbeth*, John in *King John*, Lancaster in *Edward II*, Edward in *Edward III*, York in *Richard II*, and Winchester in the first two parts of *Henry VI*, and Warwick in the third. At Oak Park Festival he was Buckingham in *Richard III*. Other roles are J. Earl Sheets in *Moonlight Daring Us to Go Insane* and Vince Corey in *Wenceslas Square* (Body Politic) and Tom in *Triple Exposure* (Wisdom Bridge), all with Maureen Gallagher; David Quinn in *The Voice of the Prairie* (Illinois Theatre Center), with Connie McGrail; George in *Dealing* (Northlight), Roger in *Charisma* (Next), William Blake in *Blake* (Writers' Theatre), Michael in *Fur* (Latino Chicago), Sam in *Emma's Child* (Victory Gardens) and, last month, Scrooge in Holiday Productions' *A Christmas Carol*.

Hollis Huston (Burgandy, The Knight) is a reformed clown and recovering



with The Goodman, Marriott's Lincolnshire Theatre, Detroit Repertory, New Harmony Theatre, the St. Louis Muny Opera and Starlight Musicals Indianapolis. Some favorite roles include Giovanni in Dario Fo's *We Won't Pay! We Won't Pay!*, Alan in *Malibyl* Shire's *Baby*, and Uncle Billy in *It's a Wonderful Life*. He played Sgt. O'Hare in the HBO movie *Truman*, Mayor Dent in *The Untouchables*, and the Frankenstein Monster for Bud Lite. In other commercials he plays various truck drivers, construction workers and middle-American dads. Though he has been called a poor man's Nick Nolte, he prefers to think of himself as a Midwestern Zero Mostel.

Connie McGrail (Cordelia) has appeared with **The Shakespeare Project** as Olivia in *Twelfth Night*, Katharine in *Henry V*, Perdita in *The Winter's Tale* and varied roles in *Richard III*. Other Shakespearean credits include *Romeo and Juliet* (Juliet), *King John* (Prince Henry), *The Tempest* (Miranda), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Peaseblossom), and *All's Well That Ends Well* (Diana). She has been seen locally with Northlight Repertory, Illinois Theatre Center, The Cypress Group, Alternative Shakespeare Co., and the Drury Lanes, and regionally with Peninsula Players (Door County, WI), Midland Theatre (KC, MO), Purple Rose Theatre (Chelsea, MI), and Florida's Asolo Theatre. Earlier this season, she directed Montini Catholic High School's fall production of *Our Town*.

Scott Olson (Fool, The Captain) has appeared with **TSP** in the title role of *Henry V* as well as in *Henry VI, part 2*, *Edward II* and *Henry IV, parts 1 & 2*. He appeared for nine months as Tony Whitcomb in *Shear Madness* and as Opie in *As The Beaver at Zebra Crossing*. 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 at *Romeo in Romeo & Juliet*, Cassius in *Julius Caesar* and *Hamlet* for Chicspeare Productions. Recently, Scott appeared with Shaw Chicago in *The Millionaire* and *Lute Song*.

David Skidmore (King of France, Oswald) was last seen with **The Shakespeare Project** as Orsino in *Twelfth Night* and prior to that as Clarence in *Richard III*, in the title role of *Henry VI in parts 2& 3* and Hotspur in *Henry IV, part 1*. He recently returned from Milwaukee Chamber Theatre, where he appeared in *The Cure at Troy* and in their 15th annual Shaw Festival. David has also appeared professionally in such roles at Hally in *Master Harold and the Boys*, Dexter Haven in *The Philadelphia Story*, and Malcolm in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, as well as Romeo and other roles in **The Shakespeare Project's** ongoing series of staged readings for the Chicago Park District. David grew up in Madison, Wisconsin, received a BA from Brandeis University in Boston and an MFA in Acting from Temple University Philadelphia. He thanks his wife Kori for all her support.

Dennis Sook (Curan, et al) has appeared in many of **TSP's** readings and 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.

Kameron Steele (Edmund) recently appeared as Christy Mahon in the Chicago Humanities Festival production of *The Playboy of the Western World*. Other **TSP** appearances include Fabian in *Twelfth Night*, Richmond in *Richard III*, and Clarence in *Henry VI, part 3*. Off and Off-Off Broadway credits include Ben in *The Dumb Waiter*, Cassio in *Othello*, Odysseus in *Penthesilea* (Juliard School/The Salon), and Frank in James Joyce's *Eveline* (Trilogy Theatre). Some regional credits include, Caliban in *The Tempest* (StageWest, MA), Simon in *Hay Fever* (Centennial Theatre Festival, CT) and most recently as Gerald in *An Inspector Calls* (Wayside Theatre, VA). Kameron has also appeared in Japan on stage and television with Tadashi Suzuki's SCOT Company as, Romeo's Ghost in *Juliet*, which toured to the '93 Saratoga International Theatre Festival.