

Profiles

Craig Bryant* (Narrator, Valerius, Herald, Garrold, Jailer's Friend) most recently appeared with *The Shakespeare Project of Chicago* in multiple roles in *Henry VIII* and prior to that as Antipholus of Syracuse in *The Comedy of Errors*, Doctor Caius in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, Orlando in *As You Like It*, Sebastian in *Twelfth Night*, Earl Rivers, 2nd Murderer and the Duke of Norfolk in *Richard III*, and the title role in *Richard II*. Craig has appeared in productions at the Goodman Theatre, Shakespeare Repertory, Mayfaire Theatre and various local stages with the comedy troupe, "Wilde Boys". He has performed regionally at the Hartford Stage Company and The Indiana Repertory Theatre and also toured nationally in John Houseman's "The Acting Company."

Joseph Bowen, (Doctor, Countryman 2, Knight 2) Joe's previous *Shakespeare Project* credits include Falstaff in *Henry IV, Part I*, Baptista in *Taming of the Shrew*, Leonine in *Pericles* and the King of France in *Edward III*. He recently returned from New York, having performed the roles of LeBeau and William in "The As You Like It Hike" in Central Park. His other Midwest credits include *Lonely Planet*, *Marisol*, *Monkey Business*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *William Shakespeare's Robin Hood*, and Shaw Chicago's recent production of *Lady Windermere's Fan*.

Will Clinger (Gentleman, Countryman 1, Knight 1, Jailer's Brother) has been writing and performing for the theater in Chicago for the past seventeen years. In addition to acting with numerous local theaters, he has traveled with the *Second City National Touring Company*, written and appeared in the play *Dr. Harlow's One-Way Ticket* at the Victory Gardens Theater and, as half of the musical comedy team *Clinger and FitzGerald*, performed their original revues for extended runs in Chicago, Minneapolis and Milwaukee. Will has also acted in a number of television shows, including *The Untouchables* (twice), *Early Edition*, *America's Most Wanted*, and *Jack and Mike*. In film, he can be seen in the upcoming motion picture *Serious Business*. This year he begins his eighth season as the host of *Wild Chicago* on Channel 11.

Joe Damour (Theseus) was last seen as Enrique in The Court's production of *The School for Wives* (The Show was recently recorded for airing on WFMT through the good graces of Chicago Theater On the Air.) He also understudied Fran Guinan in David Hare's new play *Skylight* at the Steppenwolf Theatre. Other Chicago appearances include Lord Shrewsbury in Shiller's *Mary Stuart* at the Gnu Yak Theatre, Chebutykin in *Three Sisters* at the Footsteps, and *The Subject Was Roses* at Stage Left. Then there are shows in sweet places like Santa Fe as Domy in *American Buffalo*, Yepikodov in *The Cherry Orchard*, Touchstone in *As You Like It*, the Father in Shanleys' *The Dreamer Examines His Pillow*, as well as the crazed husband in *The Conduct of Life* by Maria Irene Fornes. Joe is happy once again to be on board with *The Shakespeare Project* and this production of *The Two Noble Kinsmen*

David Skidmore* (Palamon) grew up in Madison, Wisconsin; received his BA from Brandeis University in Boston and MFA in Acting from Temple University in Philadelphia, and studied acting and improvisation for five years at the Piven Theatre Workshop. Most recently seen in Chicago as The Hunchback in NOWtheatre's *Signal to Noise* at Victory Gardens, he has appeared professionally in such diverse roles as Hally in *MASTER HAROLD...and the boys*, C.K. Dexter Haven in *The Philadelphia Story*, and Jesus in *The Medieval Mystery Cycle*. He recently played two leads in three shows at The Milwaukee Chamber Theatre; Philoctetes in Scamus Heaney's *The Cure at Troy* and Sidney in *Smash!*; an adaptation of one of G.B. Shaw's novels in MCT's annual Shaw Festival. A *Shakespeare Project* veteran, the many roles he has played include Iago, Troilus, Dogberry, Hotspur, Henry VI, Romeo and Hamlet, which he recreated for *TSP*'s premier production last March/April. David has recorded drama for Wisconsin Public Radio, has been hired to read testimony in trials, and in addition, has a business running focus groups for market research. He also speaks Spanish and currently reads a Spanish language weekly, *El Extra*, on CRIS Radio in Chicago. He thanks his wife Kori for her support.

Dennis Sook* (Jailer) most recently appeared with *TSP* as the Lord Chamberlain and Lincoln in *Henry VIII*. He has appeared in many of *TSP*'s Theatrical 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 soaps, and Off-Broadway in *New Mexican Rainbow Fishing* and the baseball comedy *A Perfect Diamond*. Dennis was 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.

Profiles

Georgina Stoyles (Jailer's Daughter) is happy to be taking part in *The Shakespeare Project* this year. Ms. Stoyles last appeared as Susan Brady in *The Playboy of the Western World* at both The Long Wharf Theatre and Steppenwolf Theatre. Most recently, she can be seen and heard in various commercial industrials. Other theatre credits include *The Mill on the Floss* with Vitalist Theatre, *Macbeth* at Shakespeare Repertory, *A Night in the Ukraine* at Callaway Gardens Rep, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* for ECT at the Athenaeum Theatre, and *Saved* for Azusa Productions at Profile's Theatre. Film credits include Jackie in *Don't Flush* with Canamac Productions. Georgina received her BFA from The Theatre School at DePaul University where she appeared in productions of *Sisterly Feelings*, *Offending the Audience*, *Pericles*, *Goodnight Desdemona/Good Morning Juliet*, and *The Women*. She can be next seen at The Goodman Theatre in *A Christmas Carol*. Ms. Stoyles hails from Ikley, England where she was first inspired by theatre.

Kevin Theis (Arcite) This is Kevin's second appearance with The Shakespeare Project, having previously played the King of Navarre in their production of "Love's Labors Lost". Recent Chicago credits include Joseph in "My Three Angels" at the Next Theatre, Silvius in "As You Like It" at the Goodman and Tuppy Glossup in "Right Ho, Jeeves!" with City Lit. He has also appeared with the Blue Star Performance Company, Peninsula Players, Oak Park Festival Theatre, Barto Productions, Buffalo Theatre Ensemble and CT20 Ensemble, where he serves as Artistic Director.

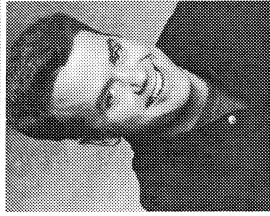
Lindley Curry Traynor (Emilia) most recently appeared as Ophelia in *The Shakespeare Project's* premier production of *Hamlet* and just prior to that in *Perfect Wedding* at Drury Lane Evergreen Park. Other Chicago credits include *The Merry Wives of Windsor* and *The Tempest* (*TSP*), *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (Shakespeare Repertory), *Emma's Child* (Victory Gardens), *The Nerd* and *Charley's Aunt* (Candlelight's Forum Theatre) and *Bobby Gould in Hell* (Center Theatre Ensemble), for which she was recommended for a Joseph Jefferson Citation. Lindley spent a season with the Orlando Shakespeare Festival, three seasons with the Kentucky Shakespeare Festival, toured with KSF's educational outreach program, and was an original member of Boom Chicago, the Amsterdam-based improv troupe. Lindley is a member of SAG, AFTRA, and AEA, and is represented by the Geddes Agency.

Mike Vaughn (Perithous) is pleased to make his Chicago debut with *The Shakespeare Project of Chicago*. Born in Detroit, MI, but raised in Berkeley, CA, Mr. Vaughn has been active as a professional actor since 1975. Some of his favorite roles include Creon in *Antigone*, Parrot in *The Iceman Cometh*, Teasle in *The School for Scandal* and the title roles in *Woyzeck* and *Agamemnon*. He has trained and or worked with The American Conservatory Theatre, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, The San Francisco Mime Troupe and The California Shakespeare Festival (where he appeared in *As You Like It*, *Coriolanus* and *Pericles*). He taught with The San Francisco Shakespeare Festival where he directed a shortened *Hamlet* with a cast of ten-year-olds. He has also worked in film and television.

Wendi Weber (Hippolyta) most recently appeared at Victory Gardens as Julia in Titan Productions' *Friday in America*. Other credits include Helena in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at Court Theatre, *Mere Mortals* at Organic Theatre, Valentina in *Stars in the Morning Sky* at European Repertory Company and Katherine in *Anastasia Krupnik* at Lifeline Theatre. This spring Wendi will be seen in Organic Theatre's production of Nicky Silver's *The Food Chain*.

Laura Wells (Queen I, Emilia's Woman, Nel, Messenger) is delighted to be working with *The Shakespeare Project of Chicago*. As a company member and Managing Director of Frump Tucker Theatre Company, she has been seen in FT's *Loose Knit*, *In Perpetuity Throughout the Universe*, and *The Original Last Wish Baby*. In Chicago she performed at the Organic Theatre, Stage Left, Chicago Dramatists, Footsteps Theatre, Theatre at the Center, and the improv comedy smash *Tony 'n Tina's Wedding*. In Dallas she was featured in *Extremities*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Lion in Winter*, *As You Like It*, *The Mousetrap* and *The Fantastics*. She has performed at Theatre Three, Dallas Repertory Theatre and the Dallas Children's Theatre.

This Month's Artists



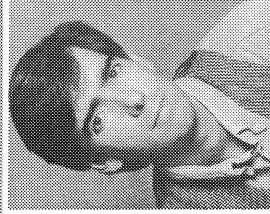
Craig Bryant*

Narrator, Valerius, Herald,
Gerrold, Jailer's Friend



Joseph Bowen

Doctor,
Countryman, Knight



Will Clinger

Gentleman, Countryman,
Knight, Jailer's Brother



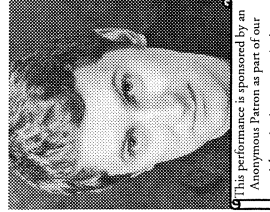
Joe Damour

Theseus



Sara Gmitter

Stage Manager, Queen,
Servant, Wench



David Skidmore*

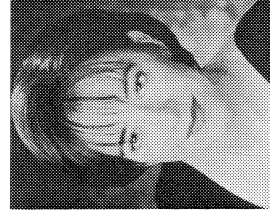
Palamon

*This performance is sponsored by an Anonymous Patron as part of our Adopt An Actor campaign!



Dennis Sook*

Jailer



Georgina Stoyles

Jailer's Daughter



Kevin Theis

Arcite



Lindley Curry Travnor*

Emilia



Mike Vaughn

Perithous



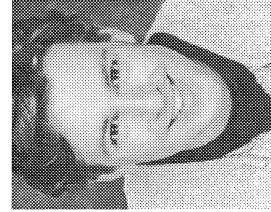
Wendi Weber

Hippolyta



Laura Wells

Queen, Emilia's
Woman, Nel, Messenger



Bart Philip Williams

Wooper, Countryman,
Knight



Stephen Spencer*

Director



Mary Ringstad*

Associate Producer

Notes from the Director:

Let me put this to rest right at the top: I don't *care* who wrote this play. The assignment of authorship to *The Two Noble Kinsmen* -- or *other* disputed plays like *Pericles*, *Cardenio*, *Henry VIII* and *Edward III* -- or, for that matter the authorship of any of Shakespeare's plays is all so much making Bacon, and is better left to the oft-times murky waters of scholarship. Say it's by Fletcher and Shakespeare and let them argue the point in dissertation! Meanwhile, we have a play to do; a story to tell.

By whatever hand, it is agreed that this is a story based on Chaucer's, *The Knight's Tale*. A tale so popular and viable that it found it's way into many adaptations for the stage, chief among them *The Rivals*. This is a story built upon the dual themes of Love and Friendship with a healthy dose of reliance on the gods, whether by invocation or sly meddling with the lives of the mortals. Men invoke Mars, other Men invoke Venus, and Women invoke Diana with the final caveat of "be careful what you ask for!"

At the beginning of this play -- even *after* my liberal cuts of two entire scenes from Act One -- we discover a conflict between chivalrous Athens and ignoble Thebes that results in our two noble kinsmen, Palamon and Arcite, being jailed in Athens. Two good guys who find themselves fighting for the "bad guys" which then begs the question: what is the value of loyalty when societal values are violated by individual action? (Come on, weren't you begging for that?)

So, as they say in Hollywood, where's the Arc? Our heroes follow a path from innocence to experience through love, deceit, war and the whim of the gods. The power of love is absolute and exacts a terrible cost: it tears apart two men "dearer in love than blood", deceives the jailer's daughter, kills one of these men and offers a bleak prospect for Emilia and her surviving suitor. But...I find a lot of humor in this play, some intended and some not, and I don't intend to mock the earnestness of these characters.

There is much of the familiar in this play. A Duke named Theseus marrying an Amazon named Hippolyta. A daughter torn from unrequited love into madness. Rude mechanicals just puttin' on a show! Two gentlemen in love with the same woman. Interference of the gods...I could go on. But *all* these characters have that little something extra that experience would tell. *If* Shakespeare wrote (or at least had a hand in) this play, he would have been 49 years old, almost 20 years older than when he penned an early play called *Two Gentleman of Verona*. Hmmmm... I wonder?

Please enjoy this show.

- Stephen Spencer

Benefactors

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 Mara Polster
 Mary Ringstad
 Janet Schirm
 David Skidmore
 Christopher Wilson

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The Shakespeare Project of Chicago is partially supported by the Chicago Park District; by a Program Grant from the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency; by CAAP and CityArts 1 grants from the City of Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs; by Employee Matching Contributions from the Lucent Technologies Foundation; by the Chicago Public Library/ Harold Washington Center; and the generous voluntary contributions of our program audiences.

Beloved Groundlings

(continued)

Kevin A. Swanson
 Ginny B. Sykes
 Jensen Wheeler
 Mary Young

Yeomen of the Guard

(In Kind Contributions)

Mario Alonso
 Mary Becker
 Michael Behrens
 Andrew A. Block
 Chicago Scenic Studios
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 Katten, Muchin Zavis
 Gail Locke
 Charles Lanny Lutz
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 Michael McAlister
 Matthais Minde
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 The North American Bear Company
 Michael O'Conner
 Scott Olson
 Mara Polster-Wilson
 Mary Ringstad
 Janet Schirm
 David Skidmore
 Dennis Sook
 Michelle Sterling
 Jim Studt
 Philip Turner
 Christopher Walz
 Christopher Wilson
 Nita Lee Wilson
 Elena Yuan

Pipers & Players

(\$50 - \$99)

Anonymous
 Dr. & Mrs. Murray Berkowitz
 Robert H. Clarke
 Linda & Richard Lauterbach
 Richard Sullivan Lee
 Mrs. Patricia McGrail
 Mr. & Mrs. Mark McManus
 Julian & Lou Ann Schachner
 Dr. & Mrs. Harry L. Sheehy

Beloved Groundlings

(\$10 - \$49)

Franklyn & Judith Alexander
 Scott & Charlotte Alexander
 Anonymous
 Jeffrey E. Awe
 Mary L. Bartholomus
 Myles R. Busse
 Robert H. Clarke
 Lorelei M. Delcastillo
 Emily Ehm
 Ethel Gale
 Richard F. Johnson
 Carolen King
 Emile E. Lebrun
 Iris Lieberman-Tausend
 Susan & Michael Lippitz
 Christopher Meskauskas
 Jane Mueller
 Art Nordenberg
 Joan and Charles Plock
 Norm & Sandy Robins
 Joyce Saxon
 Dr. & Mrs. Harry L. Sheehy
 Mary L. Smith
 Joan C. Spatafora

The Shakespeare Project of Chicago



presents

A Theatrical Reading

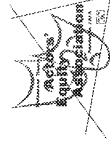
of

The Two Noble Kinsmen

Directed by Stephen Spencer

Stage Manager: Sara Gmitter

Performances: September 23, 24, 25, 1999



All Actors with The Shakespeare Project of Chicago are members of Actors' Equity Association the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers.

Profiles

Bart Philip Williams (Wooper, Countryman 3, Knight 3) made his debut with *TSP* in *Troilus and Cressida* and has appeared in several productions since that time. He has a BA from Bradley and an MFA from Wayne State University (Hilbery) in Detroit. Currently he is heading back to Michigan to be in *Tintypes* at Meadowbrook Theater and is frantically trying to make his new home in Oak Park look livable. He, ideally, would like professional work in Illinois because it's taken him forever to move here – so help him get another gig in town.

Stephen Spencer (Director) Stephen Spencer is a founder and member of the Core Acting Company for *The Shakespeare Project of Chicago*, and is pleased and overwhelmed to be directing this project. He most recently appeared as Buckingham and Surrey in *Henry VIII* and prior to that as Berowne in *Love's Labor's Lost*; Richard, Duke of Gloucester in *Henry VI, part 3*; Buckingham in *Henry VI, part 2*; Fluellen in *Henry V*; Edward, the Black Prince in *Edward III*; Benedict in *Much Ado About Nothing*; Lord Dumaine the younger in *All's Well That Ends Well*; Ross, Salisbury and Exton in *Richard II* and McDuff in *Macbeth*. He appeared in *Season's Greetings* at the Forum Theatre. In Chicago, he originated the title role in *Shakespeare's Robin Hood* at Chicago Dramatists Workshop where he's performed in *Judevine*, *Marisol* and *Wingwalkers*. Other Chicago credits include *The Sea* with The Cypress Group and *Limbo Tales* at Cafe Voltaire. Regional theaters include Florida's Asolo State Theatre and The Ruth Foreman Theatre; the Utah Shakespearean Festival; Wisconsin's Evergreen Theatre and New Jersey's Cape May Playhouse. He toured throughout Russia, starting with Moscow's Leninsky Konsomol Theatre, and performed at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe in Scotland. Steve works commercially doing Corporate Theatre for *The Breakthrough Group* and attempts to eke-out other work doing voiceovers, commercials, industrials and big-time film and television. He loves his daughter Keely (the teenager) and the woman to call in case of an emergency, Brenda.

Sara Gmitter (Stage Manager, Queen, Emilia's Woman, Nel, Messenger) Some of Sara's favorite credits include: *The Great Fire*, *Baron in the Trees* and *The Idiot* for Lookingglass; *Death of a Salesman* and *Mirror of the Invisible World* at The Goodman; and *The Planets* and *Dealer's Choice* with Roadworks. She is looking forward to stage managing Lookingglass Theatre's fall production in the Steppenwolf Studio.

Mary Ringstad (Associate Producer) has been a member of the *TSP* Core Acting Company since 1997 and became a member of the Board of Directors this year. Other *TSP* roles include Adriana in *Comedy of Errors*, Desdemona in *Othello*, Lavinia in *Titus Andronicus*, Rosalind in *As You Like It*, Lady Anne in *Richard III*, Margaret in *1-Henry VI*, Margaret in *Much Ado About Nothing*, Prince Edward in *Edward II* and Falstaff's page in *2-Henry IV* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor* and she is part of the premier cast of the *TSP* original *My Name Is Will*. Also for *TSP*, Mary directed *Love's Labor's Lost* and served as assistant director for *King Lear*. Mary has an MFA in Acting from Ohio University.

Mara Polster (Artistic Director) and her husband Chris have recently been blessed with the birth of their beautiful son, Michael Aaron Wilson. Since May of 1995 she has led *The Shakespeare Project of Chicago* through the entirety of William Shakespeare's dramatic works. Mara has acted on many of the stages here in Chicago and many others across the country. She played Agnes in *I Do, I Do* at the Evergreen Theatre, Vonnegut in *The Roads To Home* at the Eclipse, and Edna/Ma'am White in *Freedom Bound* at the Indiana Repertory Theatre. Other favorite roles include Lady Macduff in *Macbeth*, Amiens in *As You Like It*, Emily in *Our Town* and many musicals including *Candide*, *Guys and Dolls*, *Evita*, *A Little Night Music*, *Oklahoma*, *Brigadoon*, *Best Little Whorehouse*, *The King and I*, *Zorba*, and so on. With *TSP*, Mara has played many of the great Shakespearean women including Emilia in *Othello*, Tamora in *Titus Andronicus*, Margaret in *3-Henry VI*, Paulina in *The Winter's Tale*, Isabella in *Measure for Measure*, Katherina in *The Taming of the Shrew*, Lady Macbeth and has provided similar opportunities to other actors in Chicago. She has directed *Titus Andronicus*, *Henry VIII*, *Comedy of Errors* (twice), *Two Noble Kinsmen*, *Julius Caesar*, *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *Othello*, *Loves Labours Lost*, *King Lear*, *Macbeth* (three times), *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Coriolanus*, *Edward II*, *Henry V*, *Richard III*, *King Lear*, *As You Like It* and *Hamlet*, which was mounted as *TSP*'s premier production last March/April. *The Shakespeare Project of Chicago* is the grateful commemoration of two fiercely strong souls, Samuel E. LaMacchia and Michael Alan Wilson.

The Shakespeare Project

Presents

The Two Noble Kinsmen

The Players

(in order of appearance)

Narrator, a citizen of Chicago _____ Craig Bryant*
 Palamon _____ David Skidmore*
 Arcite _____ Kevin Theis
 Valerius, a Theban _____ Craig Bryant*
 Pirithous, an Athenian General, friend to Theseus _____ Mike Vaughn
 Hippolyta, an Amazon, bride to Theseus _____ Wendi Weber
 Emilia, her sister _____ Lindley Curry Traynor*
 Theseus, Duke of Athens _____ Joe Damour
 Herald _____ Craig Bryant*
 Queen 1, the first Queen _____ Laura Wells
 Queen 2, the second Queen _____ Sara Gmitter
 Jailer, Jailer of Athens _____ Dennis Sook*
 Wooper, to the Jailer's Daughter _____ Bart Philip Williams
 Jailer's Daughter, daughter to the Jailer _____ Georgina Stoyles
 Waiting Woman, to Emilia _____ Laura Wells
 Countryman 1 } _____ Will Clinger
 Countryman 2 } _____ Joseph Bowen
 Countryman 3 } _____ Bart Philip Williams
 Gerrold, a Schoolmaster _____ Craig Bryant*
 Nel, a wench _____ Laura Wells
 Wench, another wench _____ Sara Gmitter
 Jailer's Friend, friend to the Jailer _____ Craig Bryant*
 Jailer's Brother, brother to the Jailer _____ Will Clinger
 Gentleman, an Athenian gentleman _____ Will Clinger
 A Doctor, the Jailers' Family Doctor _____ Joseph Bowen
 Messenger, a messenger to the Jailer _____ Laura Wells
 Servant, a servant to Emilia _____ Sara Gmitter
 Knight 1, a knight to Palamon _____ Will Clinger
 Knight 2, another knight to Palamon _____ Joseph Bowen
 Knight 3, yet another knight to Palamon! _____ Bart Philip Williams

Scene: London, Westminster, Kimbolton

There will be one 10 minute intermission

* Denotes Core Company Members.

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