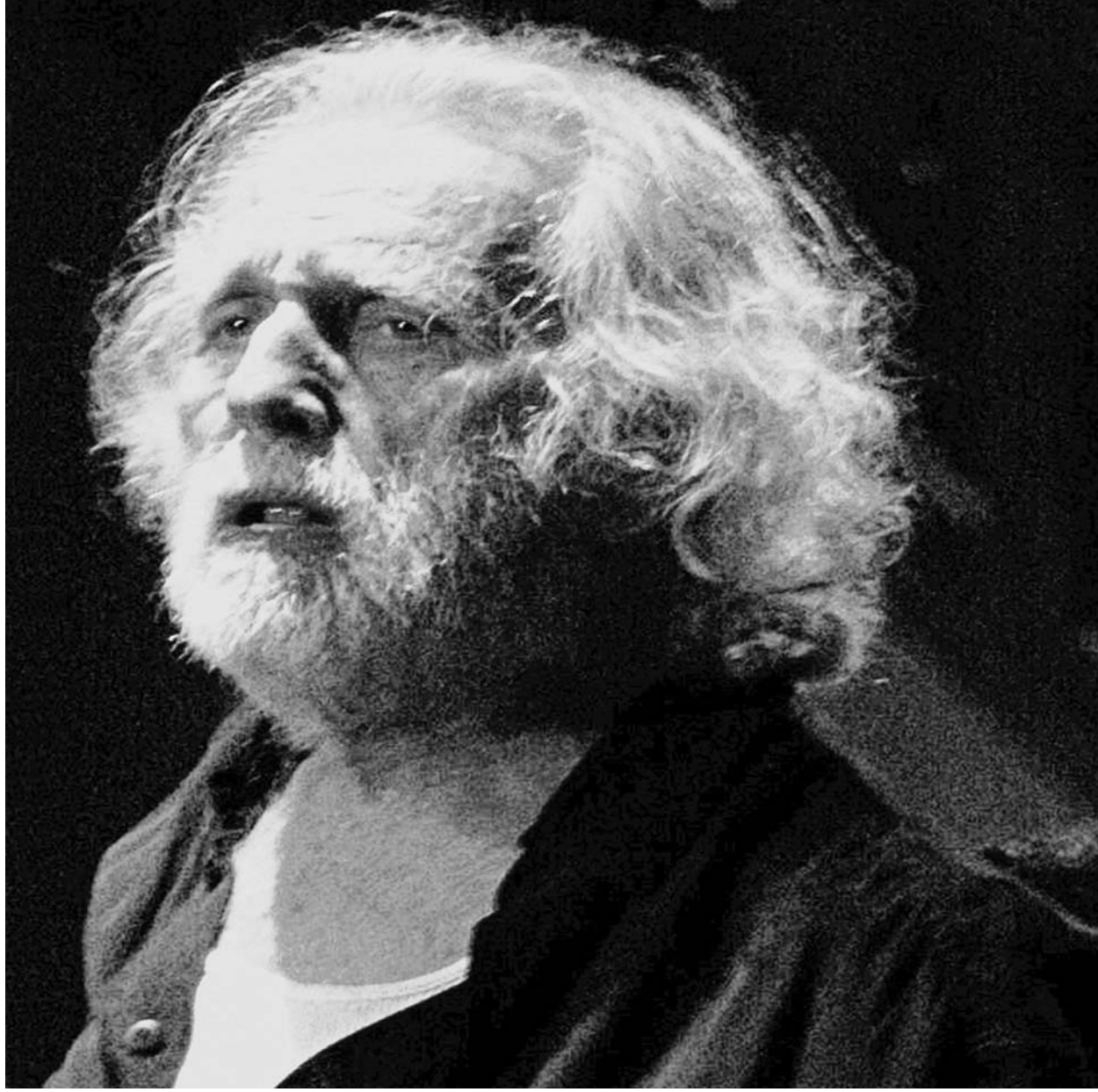


KING LEAR



La MaMa e.t.c.

and



Benjamin Evett, Artistic Director
Sara Stackhouse, Executive Producer

Present

KING LEAR

By William Shakespeare

With Alvin Epstein

Directed by Patrick Swanson

The Annex at La MaMa ETC
66 East Fourth Street, NYC 10003
June 16-July 2, 2006

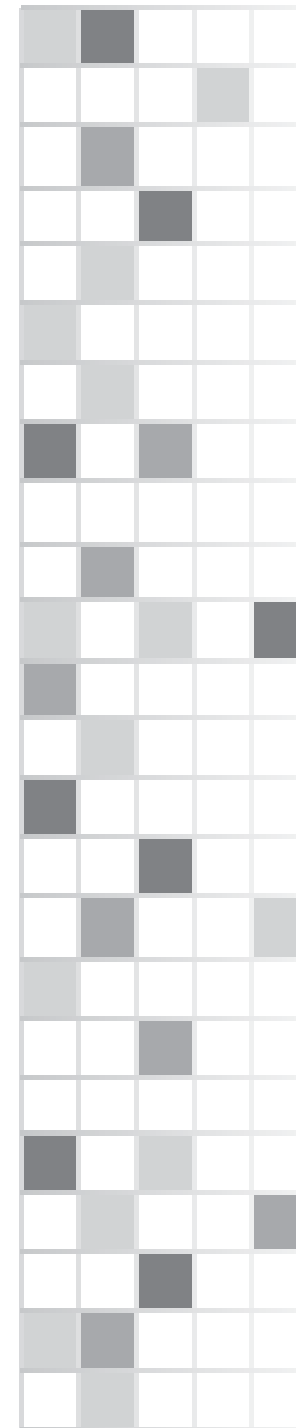
Production Design
Lighting Design
Props
Sound and Music Design
Fight Direction
Stage Manager
Assistant Stage Manager

David R. Gammons
Mark O'Maley
Elizabeth Locke
Bill Barclay
Robert Walsh
Adele Nadine Traub*
Elizabeth Ross*

This production was made possible in part by a generous gift from William F. Haney, Jr., and Uncommon Productions.

King Lear was originally a co-production with the Boston University School of Theatre.

*member of Actors Equity Association, the union of professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.



Actors'
Shakespeare Project
2006-07
Season
Journey THROUGH
DARKNESS INTO LIGHT...

the stark searchlight of justice and vengeance;
the joyous blaze of hope restored...

ASP's third season illuminates Shakespeare's extraordinary insight into questions urgently relevant to our lives today: the obstacles and pitfalls in the quest for justice, the disastrous consequences of revenge and the holy power of forgiveness. Join us on our most ambitious journey yet.

HAMLET OCTOBER 19 – NOVEMBER 12
Strand Theatre, 543 Columbia Rd., Dorchester MA

A kingly father murdered, a mother hastily remarried—to the murderer?
From the seeds of the revenge play Shakespeare creates one of the world's great tragedies, in which justice can only be achieved through terrible loss. Artistic Director Benjamin Evett takes on the role of Prince Hamlet, whose powerful feelings and mocking wit ill suit him for the task of vengeance. Rick Lombardo directs this intimate, profoundly human play on the awe-inspiring stage of the Strand Theatre.

A Winter's Tale January 25 – FEBRUARY 18
Cambridge Multicultural Arts Center,
41 Second Street, Cambridge MA

A tale for firelight and snug midwinter dreaming
A romance that tells the story of a husband whose passion and jealousy shatters his world and an oracle that comes too late. But Time rolls on. Spring comes, with a wily rogue, a beautiful shepherdess, a handsome prince, and, although anger once again threatens, a miracle occurs. Save the date for ASP's second Annual Gala including a performance of *A Winter's Tale* on February 10!

Titus Andronicus MARCH 29 – APRIL 22
Venue to be revealed...

A fantasy of blood and horror
Stephen King or Quentin Tarentino have nothing on the young Shakespeare, who crafted this unforgettable story from the cracked mirror of Roman tragedy. Its myth-sized figures include a Wicked Queen and her Paramour, a Father consumed by his lust for revenge, and a beautiful Maiden tragically made Mute. Directed by David R. Gammons.

For more information, visit WWW.ACTORSSHAKESPEAREPROJECT.ORG



About the Company

The Actors' Shakespeare Project (ASP) presents Shakespeare as a playwright urgently relevant to our own times through intimate, site-specific, fully professional productions and educational programs that celebrate the relationship between actor, audience and text. ASP is a not-for-profit theater company operating under an Off-Broadway Letter of Agreement with Actors' Equity Association (AEA). For more information, visit www.actorsshakespeareproject.org

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Sara Stackhouse, *Executive Producer*
Jennie Israel, *Associate Artistic Director*
Tom Lawton, *Business Manager*
Marianne Evett, *Director of Public Relations*
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Sarah Newhouse, *Artistic Associate*
Robert Walsh, *Artistic Associate*
David Evett, *Scholar in Residence*
Sandra Cohen/Bird Graphics, *Graphic Design*
Adele Nadine Traub, *Stage Manager*

Staff for *King Lear*

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Page Evett, *Scenic Painter*
Leigh Mumford, *Assistant Lighting Designer*
Rob Najarian, *Assistant Fight Director*
Jessica Fairwell, *Assistant to the Costume Designer*
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Momo Parra, *Master Electrician*
Daniel Nelson, *Sound*
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Geoffrey Nunes
Rick Teller, *Treasurer*

Cast

(in order of appearance)

Kent.....Allyn Burrows*
Gloucester.....Colin Lane*
Edmund.....Benjamin Evett*
King Lear.....Alvin Epstein*
Cornwall.....Michael Forden Walker*
Albany.....William Gardiner*
Goneril.....Jennie Israel*
Regan.....Paula Langton*
Cordelia.....Sarah Newhouse*
France.....Gabriel Levey*
Burgundy.....Bill Barclay*
Edgar.....Doug Lockwood*
Oswald.....Bill Barclay*
Fool.....Ken Cheeseman*
Curan.....Dan Domingues*
Old Man.....William Gardiner*
Messengers, Knights, Gentlemen, Servants.....Dan Domingues*, Gabriel Levey*

There will be one 15 minute intermission.

Recording or taking photos of the performance is not permitted.

* member of Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

The Cast

***Bill Barclay** (Oswald, Burgundy, Sound & Music Designer) Actors' Shakespeare Project: Composer for *Richard III*; Decius Brutus and Music Director, *Julius Caesar*. Recent credits include *Living in Exile* (Vineyard Playhouse), *The Rivals* (Huntington Theatre Co.), *Ophelia* (4th Street Theatre), *Romeo & Juliet* (North Shore Music Theatre), *L'Histoire du Soldat* (ALEA III Orchestra), *Turn of the Screw* and *King John* (Shakespeare & Co.). Bill has premiered his original musical plays at the Eugene O'Neill Theatre Center, the University of Virginia and next year on tour for the National Players with *Call of the Wild*. Graduate of Vassar College and the National Theatre Institute. MFA Boston University School of Theatre.

***Allyn Burrows** (Kent) Actors' Shakespeare Project: Parolles in *All's Well That Ends Well*; Duke Vincentio in *Measure for Measure*, Clarence/Catesby in *Richard III*. Recent Work: Candy Delaney in *Five by Tenn* at Speakeasy Stage Company, King John at Shakespeare & Company, Teddy in *The Homecoming* at Merrimack Repertory Theater; Stephano in *The Tempest* with Boston Theatre Works. Off-Broadway: *Bug*, *Killer Joe*, *Bonnie*, *Louis Slotin Sonata*, *Closetland*, *Flattering Word*. Regional: *Heartbreak House*, Berkshire Theatre Festival; *All My Sons*, Actors Theatre of Louisville; *Colossus of Rhodes*, American Conservatory Theatre; *Twelfth Night*, Long Wharf Theatre; as well as work with the American Repertory Theatre, The Pioneer Theatre, and The Lyric Stage. Artistic Associate with Shakespeare & Company where roles include Benedick in *Much Ado About Nothing*, Henry in *Henry V*, Oberon in *Midsummer Night's Dream*, Hal in *Henry IV Part 1*, Berowne in *Love's Labour's Lost*, Angelo in *Measure for Measure*, Jack in *Jack and Jill*, and Jerry in *Betrayal*. Television: *Law and Order*, *Against the Law*, *As the World Turns*, *All My Children*. Film: *The Windigo*, *Blown Up in Love*. 2006 Elliot Norton Award Winner for *The Homecoming*, *Five by Tenn*, and *King Lear*.

***Ken Cheeseman** (Fool) Actors' Shakespeare Project: Malvolio in *Twelfth Night*, Angelo in *Measure for Measure*, Lord Hastings in *Richard III*. Ken has performed in regional theatres around the country, including Trinity Rep, American Repertory Theatre, Yale Rep, Long Wharf Theatre, American Conservatory Theatre, Baltimore's Center Stage and Shakespeare and Company. In New York he has performed at Classic Stage Company as Silvestre in the Andrei Belgrader/Shelly Berc adaptation of *Scapin*, and as Sosia in the Eric Overmeyer adaptation of *Amphytrion*. He performed as Froth in the New York Shakespeare Festival's production of *Measure for Measure* starring Kevin Kline. His extensive film and television credits include *Mystic River*, *The Crucible*, *Housesitter*, *The Blue Diner*, *Next Stop Wonderland*, *State and Main*, *Malice* and the recently released *The Legend of Lucy Keyes*. His recent guest appearances include *Monk*, *Law and Order*, *L&O: Criminal Intent*, *L&O: Trial by Jury*. He is currently on the faculty as an artist-in-residence at Emerson College.

***Dan Domingues** (Ensemble) Actors' Shakespeare Project: debut. Boston credits: *Wait Until Dark* (Stoneham Theatre); *A Girl's War* (New Repertory Theatre); *Macbeth* (Commonwealth Shakespeare Company); *La Dispute*, *Island of Anyplace*, *Othello* (ART). Regional credits: *Henry IV* (Repertory Theatre of St. Louis); *Amadeus* (Pioneer Theatre); *Sunrise at Monticello* (Playwrights Theatre of NJ); *Human Events*, *Wit*, *Ancestral Voices* (George Street Playhouse); *Waiting for Godot* (Fleetwood Stage). New York credits:

Barons - \$500-\$999

K.H. & M.H. Barney
Ken Cheeseman
Michael & Amy Contrada
Nicholas Deutsch
Chester & Joy Douglass
Kathleen Emrich & Robert Sherwood
G. Anne Guenzel
Belle Halpern

Knights - \$100-\$499

Barry Andelman
Eric Hall Anderson
Jane Bachner
Harriet Barry
Kristen Belair
Paul Brouillette & Neil Miller
Joanne Burk
Barbara and Winthrop Burr
Judith Chaffee
Peggy & Stanley Charren
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Neil McDonough
Raymond Meador
Ellen & James Meadors
Amy Merrill
Howard & Judith Nelson
Ronald & Selma Newburgh
Samuel W. Overton
Tina Packer
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2005-2006 Season

Our deepest thanks to all the donors to the Actors' Shakespeare Project listed here. We would not be here, presenting this play, if it were not for your generosity and faith in our dream (list includes donations for the second season through May 30, 2006).

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The Cherry Orchard (Atlantic Theater Company); *Dog in the Manger* (Repertorio Espanol); *Shore Points* (Irish Arts Center); *Life and Death of Pier Paolo Pasolini* (Abingdon Theatre). TV & Film: *Hope and Faith*, *Third Watch*, *Blindfold*, *Gypsy Girl*. Dan is a company member at NJ Repertory Company, has an MFA from the ART/MXAT at Harvard and studied at the American Academy of Dramatic Arts.

***Alvin Epstein** (King Lear) just finished a run of *Tuesdays With Morrie* at the Seattle Repertory Theatre, and performed off-Broadway as Nagg in *Endgame* at the Irish Repertory Theater, Morrie in *Tuesdays With Morrie*, and Firs in *The Cherry Orchard* with the Atlantic Theater Company. He made his New York debut in 1956 when he was named most promising new actor of the season by the New York Drama Critics' Circle. Subsequently, his Broadway and off-Broadway credits have included performing with Marcel Marceau, playing the Fool to Orson Welles' King Lear, creating Lucky in the American premiere of *Waiting for Godot* and Clov in the American premiere of *Endgame*, the world premiere of Sam Shepard and Joseph Chaikin's *When the World Was Green*, Richard Rodgers' *No Strings* with Diahann Carroll and Richard Kiley, *The Madwoman of Chaillot* with Kim Hunter and Anne Jackson, *The Threepenny Opera* with Sting, *The Skin of Our Teeth* with Anne Bancroft and Estelle Parsons, and *Dynamite Tonight!* (for which he won an Obie Award). For twenty years he performed *A Kurt Weill Cabaret* with Martha Schlamme on and off Broadway and on tour of the United States and South America, and he is again singing that repertoire with Beth Anne Cole in *Songs Degenerate and Otherwise*, which won the New England Award for Best Cabaret performance. A founding member of the Berkshire Theater Festival, Yale Repertory Theater, and the American Repertory Theatre (ART) and former artistic director of the Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis, Mr. Epstein has directed over twenty productions (five at ART, including the inaugural *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in 1980) and acted in over a hundred (over fifty at ART, including *The Miser*, *Henry IV*, *Happy End*, *Woyzeck*, *Don Juan*, *Richard II*, *The Winter's Tale*, *Hamlet*, *The Threepenny Opera*, *Ivanov* and *Marat/Sade*). He recorded Stravinsky's *L'Histoire du Soldat* with Melvyn Douglas and performed it onstage with Dianne Wiest and on television with Jerry Orbach. He also starred in the television premiere of *Waiting for Godot* opposite Zero Mostel and Burgess Meredith. Among honors awarded to Mr. Epstein have been the Brandeis University Creative Arts Award (1966), the Elliot Norton Award for Sustained Excellence (1996), the IRNE Award for Best Supporting Actor (Shabelsky in *Ivanov*, 1999) the Torch of Hope Award, the Jason Robards Award for Dedication to the Theater, and the Spencer Cherashore Award for Lifetime Dedication to Not-For-Profit Theater.

***Benjamin Evett** (Edmund) Actors' Shakespeare Project: founder and Artistic Director, director, *All's Well That Ends Well*; Cassius, *Julius Caesar*; director and Richmond, *Richard III*. 2005 Elliot Norton Award for Best Actor for *Permanent Collection* (Paul Barrow), *Quills* (Abbe de Coulmier) and *Richard III* (Richmond). As a member of the Resident Acting Company at the American Repertory Theatre in Cambridge, he appeared in more than 50 productions from 1983 to 2003. He has also appeared at the Huntington Theatre, Commonwealth Shakespeare Co., Hartford Stage Co., Missouri Repertory Theatre, Virginia Stage Co., Great Lakes Theatre Festival, Cleveland Play House and others. He has performed at the Festival Biennale in Venice, the Festival d'Automne in Paris, at the Taiwan National Theatre and the Moscow Art Theatre. He teaches at the Boston Conservatory, and is a graduate of Harvard College with a degree in Classics.

Thoughts and Questions About *King Lear* – from the Director

***William Gardiner** (Albany). Boston credits include Falstaff in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, Feste in *Twelfth Night* and Pandarus in *Troilus and Cressida* at the Publick Theatre; Friar Lawrence in *Romeo and Juliet* at Boston Theatre Works, Egeus/Peter Quince in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at North Shore Music Theatre. Other local credits include American Stage Festival, Jewish Theatre of New England, Playwrights Platform, Underground Railway Theatre and Gloucester Stage. Education touring company credits include City Stage Company, Boston Arts Group, Loon and Heron Theatre, Boston's Museum of Science and Tempest Productions. Industrial film credits include Boston Herald, Dunkin Donuts, Allmerica Insurance, Franco-American and the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports. Bill has taught acting at the Actor's Workshop in addition to summer programs at Boston University and the American Stage Festival. Bill is currently working towards a Master of Fine Arts in Theatre Education at Boston University.

***Jennie Israel** (Goneril) Actors' Shakespeare Project, Associate Artistic Director; Helena in *All's Well That Ends Well*, Calpurnia/Trebonius/Pindarus in *Julius Caesar*, Elizabeth in *Richard III*. Other credits include Lady Macbeth for Commonwealth Shakespeare Company; *Living in Exile* at the Vineyard Playhouse; *Molly Maguire* at the Suga Theatre; *Tartuffe* at New Repertory Theater; *Undine's Valediction*, *Summer*, *The Scarlet Letter* and *Macbeth* for Shakespeare & Company, Yale Repertory Theatre, Actors' Theatre of Louisville, The Greenwich Street Theatre, Lincoln Center Theatre, Theatre Building Chicago, Ohio Theatre, Sun Valley Shakespeare Festival, and Chautauqua Theatre Festival. Film and television credits include *Rudy* for TriStar Pictures, *Guiding Light*, and *Coming to Litchfield*, an independent film. Jennie has taught voice, Shakespearean text and acting at Bowdoin College, Harvard, Boston College, SUNY/Purchase, Emerson, and The Boston Conservatory. MFA Yale School of Drama.

***Colin Lane** (Gloucester) Roundabout Theatre Company: *A Touch of the Poet* (dir. Doug Hughes), *Molly Sweeney* (dir. Brian Friel). Off Broadway credits include *Philadelphia Here I Come*, *Colleen Bawn*, and more for the Irish Repertory Theatre. *How Love Is Spelt* (Michael Sexton, dir.), *Trust* (dir. Erica Schmidt), *Communion*, *Poor Beast in the Rain*, *Liverpool Fantasy*, in which he played John Lennon, and *Portia Coughlan*. Resident Theater Credits: American Repertory Theatre, Arena Stage, The Guthrie Theatre, Yale Repertory Theatre. Mark Taper Forum, Gloucester Stage, Portland Stage, The Asolo Theatre, Capital Repertory Theater, The Wilma Theatre, Shakespeare & Company, the Elm Shakespeare Company, and a number of Chicago theaters. Colin most recently played Pato in *Beauty Queen of Leenane* for Julia Kiley at the historic Ivoryton Playhouse. Films include *Broken Harvest*, *Time Bomb*, *A Will of Their Own*, *Lesser Prophets*, and *Blood Oranges*.

***Paula Langton** (Regan) Actors' Shakespeare Project: First Lord, Marianna and Madeline in *All's Well That Ends Well*, Isabella in *Measure For Measure*, Rivers/ 2nd Murderer/ Mayor in *Richard III*. Recently played Galactia in *Scenes from an Execution* with BU at the Wimberly Theatre in the Calderwood Pavilion. She played the Goddess Juno in *Tales from Ovid* at Teatro Eos in Stromboli, Italy, last summer and will play the role again this summer at The Great Theatre of the World Festival at Teatro Nacional in Lisbon, Portugal. She has played Beatrice in *Much Ado about Nothing*, Miranda in *The Tempest* with Shakespeare &

We begin with a well-made folk tale. There is an Appalachian tale (collected by Richard Chase from an eight-year-old) that tells the story of the old king and his three daughters and how he insists on them telling everybody how much they love him. The elder sisters love him "more than life", and "more than I can tell ye" The Cordelia character says she loves him like meat loves salt. Which makes him mad.

The Appalachian illiterate who distilled the Shakespeare play was canny. Cordelia is a chip off the old block. Blandness was not for her. Lear must have liked her very much.

The setting for *King Lear* is pre-Christian, a harsh landscape dotted with occasional havens – fortified castles, elegant within, grim without. The action is frequently brutal yet the language of the play is often in glorious Renaissance verse.

At the beginning, Britain is held together by Lear, by effort, cunning, charm and sheer will. The geometry of the throne room is prescribed. Everyone knows their place. The stress of holding it all together is causing small fractures. Rust shows on the surfaces. Connecting wires quiver.

After the fairy tale everything is different. Lear begins his journey into what it is like to be human. He has been blind and now he will see. Gloucester is making the same journey. It will take them into the storm and eventually along with everybody else to the end of the earth, to the vertiginous cliffs of Dover. In this bleak landscape of meaninglessness Cordelia's death seems to bear out Gloucester's theory that the gods do "....kill us for their sport". It is a strangely timeless world. A Samuel Beckett world.

Goneril and Regan are not unreasonable about the unruly knight problem. If they were to hire a lawyer and take Lear to court they would have a pretty good case. The Fool pines like a dog for his mistress Cordelia. His wit is in speaking the truth. Is he a "natural fool", a bit "touched" as they say in the north of England? He guides Lear into the wilderness like a shaman.

What is attractive about Lear? What does Kent see in him? Cordelia? He is a wit and an eccentric. The Fool goes with him into the heart of darkness.

The storm is in the verse. Lear's brain is its epicenter. Sparks fly.

The hovel. The whole scene bleeds into an abandoned and timeless theatrical space. This is shelter at the lowest level. One would not be surprised to find Nag and Nell here in their ashcans. Here the paths of the first man of the kingdom and the very last (a mad beggar) meet. Who brought them to this? Lear prays.

In *Lear* there are no changes of scenery. Space unfolds within the poetry. Land swims to the surface, dwellings appear, roads disappear into the distance, features disintegrate, it all begins to totter, and then disappears completely, carried away into the void.

The cruelty, which surfaces through the layers of civility, is extreme, feral. Animal imagery favors raptors and carnivores. Eyes are put out. Where is the emotional engine for such behaviour? *Lear* has no unifying theme: it is immensely complex, the pace is forever changing. Diametrically opposing ideas fight each other. Civilization/wilderness, blindness/ vision, God/ rugged individualism.

A labyrinth of suffering brings enlightenment.

- Patrick Swanson

Bring *King Lear* to New York

Our thanks to everyone involved in the **Bring *King Lear* to New York** effort. Your generosity and enthusiasm have brought this historic performance to New York, and we are proud to have you as partners.

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Company; Mrs. Noah & Gil in *The Mysteries* with Shakespeare & Company & Revels, Kate in *Taming of the Shrew* with Boston Theatre Works. Feste in *Twelfth Night* with Los Angeles Women's Shakespeare Company at the John Anson Ford Amphitheatre in Hollywood, Maria in *Twelfth Night* with Counterpoint Theatre, Edgar in *King Lear* and Bardolph, Westmoreland, Michael Williams and Captain James in *Henry V* as a member of Kristin Linklater & Carol Gilligan's "Company of Women." Additional credits: Boston Playwrights Theatre, Nora Theatre, Gloucester Stage Company, Coyote Theatre, Hasty Pudding, New York Theatre Workshop, Charles Playhouse. Film: Documentary, *Vox Erotica: a Journey With Kristin Linklater*, about Linklater's work with *Tales From Ovid*. Currently Head of Acting at Boston University's School of Theatre.

***Gabe Levey** (France/Ensemble) is a recent graduate of Boston University's School of Theatre. Recent roles include Valentine in *Arcadia*, Urgentino in *Scenes from an Execution*, Darren in *The Drowned World*, Kleitsch in *The Lower Depths* (BU) Sir Peter Teazle in *The School for Scandal*, and the title role in *Macbeth* (LAMDA). In August Gabe will be appearing in *Happy Sauce*, a new play by Ben Lewis, at the New York International Fringe Festival.

***Doug Lockwood** (Edgar) Actors' Shakespeare Project: Richmond in *Richard III*; Claudio and Elbow in *Measure for Measure*; over 40 living room performances of Wallace Shawn's *The Fever* (dir. Ken Rus Schmoll); NYC: *The Hussy Chronicles* at Show World (by Kenny Finkle); *A Tale of Two Cities* at The Culture Project (dir. Will Pomerantz); Boston: *Twelfth Night*, *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* and *The Waverly Gallery* at New Repertory Theatre; *Pericles* at American Repertory Theatre; Regional: Colorado Shakespeare Festival, Fairbanks Shakespeare Theatre, Edinburgh Festival. Doug teaches Acting at The Boston Conservatory. He received his MFA in Acting from the University of Washington, under the direction of Steve Pearson.

***Sarah Newhouse** (Cordelia) Actors' Shakespeare Project: Viola in *Twelfth Night*, Lady Anne in *Richard III*. Recently appeared in the New England premiere of Rebecca Gilman's *The Sweetest Swing in Baseball* at Boston Theatre Works. Other Boston area credits include *Six Characters in Search of an Author*, *The King Stag*, *Macbeth*, *Picasso at the Lapin Agile* at the American Repertory Theatre, *Much Ado About Nothing* and *As You Like It* at The Publick Theatre, *Desdemona – A Play About a Handkerchief* at Boston Center for the Arts, *La Vita Claire* at Centastage, *Shear Madness* at the Charles Playhouse, *Red Herring*, *Lost in Yonkers*, and *The Miracle Worker* at the Lyric Stage Company of Boston, *Imperialists at the Club Cave Canem* and *The Square Root of Minus One* at The Market Theater, *The Sweepers* at Stoneham Theatre and *Twelfth Night* at Worcester Foothills Theatre. Regional / New York City credits include American Stage Festival, Berkshire Theatre Festival, Gloucester Stage Company, Jane Street Theater, Manhattan Punchline Theatre, Samuel Beckett Theater, Synchronicity Space, and The Kraine. Film &TV: *As The World Turns*, *Another World*, *MTV*, *Saturday Night Live*, *The Legend of Lucy Keyes*, *Dischord*, *Chain of Desire*, *Expired*, and *The Stupid Years*. Sarah is a graduate of Hampshire College and the ART Institute for Advanced Theatre Training at Harvard University.

***Michael Forden Walker** (Cornwall) Actors' Shakespeare Project: Sir Andrew Aguecheek in *Twelfth Night*; Pompey/Friar Peter in *Measure for Measure*; Brakenbury/Ratcliff in *Richard III*. He has appeared in Boston with Boston Theatre Works, Molasses Tank Productions, The Bridge, Company One, and Willing Suspension Productions; in Charlotte, NC with Innovative Theatre. Past credits include *Antony and Cleopatra*; *Ionesco, Not Ionesco*; *Troilus and Cressida*; *Native Speech*; *Love's Fire*; *The Roaring Girl*; *The Borderers*; *James IV*; *The Spanish Tragedy*; *The Dwarfs*; *The Alchemist*; *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside*; *The Rover*; *Tales of the Lost Formicans*; *Vampire Lesbians of Sodom and Sleeping Beauty or Coma*; and *The Metamorphosis*. Michael studied acting while an undergraduate English major at UNC-Charlotte, and he holds an M.A. in English literature from Boston University.

Patrick Swanson (Director) began theater work in London as an actor at the Arts Theatre in the West End. In 1969 he toured Europe with La MaMa Plexus and subsequently got his world theater education from Ellen Stewart at La MaMa E.T.C. His numerous directing projects have included opera, ensemble theater, music theater, and he was a founding director of *Circus Flora*. Mr. Swanson taught acting and improvisation at the London Academy of Dramatic Art (L.A.M.D.A.), the London Drama Centre, and New York University. He served as artistic director of the Castle Hill Festival at Castle Hill in Ipswich, Massachusetts producing opera and theatre works including the premières of Julie Taymor's *Liberty's Taken* and Peter Sellars' *Così fan Tutte*. Directing credits include: *Tristan and Iseult* with the Boston Camerata at the Spoleto USA festival, *Shirley Valentine* at Houston's Alley Theatre and Boston's Charles Playhouse, *Happy Days*, *The Caretaker* and two stage premieres at Gloucester Stage Company, *Talking Heads* by Alan Bennett and *Fighting Over Beverly* by Israel Horowitz. Mr. Swanson directed *The Mysteries*, a contemporary version of medieval mystery plays, co-produced by Revels and Shakespeare & Company as a millennium celebration at the Boston Center for the Arts. Currently, as artistic director of Revels Inc., in Cambridge, a company dedicated to exuberant musical celebrations of the seasons, Mr. Swanson creates scripts, directs, and serves as artistic consultant to ten independent Revels organizations scattered throughout the United States.

David R. Gammons (Production Designer) is a director, designer, theatre educator, and visual artist. Designs include Robert Woodruff's *Richard II*, Robert Scanlan's *Beckett Trio: Eh Joe, Ghost Trio*, and *Nacht und Träume* (which toured to Strasburg, France), and Spencer/Colton's *Winter Circus* for the American Repertory Theatre, and productions for Headlong Dance Theatre, Pig Iron Theatre Company, The Speakeasy Stage Company, Coyote Theatre, and Theatre Offensive. Mr. Gammons is a graduate of The A.R.T. Institute's directing program, where he directed productions of *The Balcony*, *Twelfth Night*, and *Edward II*, and designed sets and costumes for *Richard III*, *The Cure at Troy*, *Best Intentions*, *As You Desire Me*, and *St. Joan of The Stockyards* among many others. He is the founder and artistic coordinator of *no more masterpieces*, a performance collective dedicated to generating original dance/theatre work, and conceived and directed their world premiere productions *Spanking the Maid*, *A Crying of Bones*, and *Heaven's Sake*. David will direct *Titus Andronicus* for The Actors' Shakespeare Project's upcoming third season. He is currently the Director of the Theatre Program at Concord Academy, where he has conceived and directed the original works *Sea of Troubles*, *LHOOQ*, and *Tyger / Tiger*, among others.

The Story

Lear, the aging king of Britain, has decided to divide his kingdom among his three daughters, giving up his regal power and its burdens. First, however, he asks which one loves him most, so that he can give most to her. Goneril, the eldest, and Regan, next in line, each answer with elaborate protestations of overwhelming love. But Cordelia, the youngest, refuses to flatter her father, saying only that she loves him "according to my bond, no more nor less." In a rage (since she is his favorite), Lear disowns and banishes her. When the loyal Earl of Kent defends her, he is banished, too. Cordelia's suitor, the King of France, offers her his hand even though she now has no dowry, and they leave together. Lear divides the kingdom between Goneril and Regan, reminding them that although they now have the power to rule, he will retain the title of king and a retinue of 100 knights; he intends to live a month with each of them in turn.

The Earl of Gloucester, a follower of Lear, has two sons he loves, Edgar and Edmund, a bastard. Deprived of an inheritance by being both younger and illegitimate, Edmund decides to use trickery to obtain Gloucester's estate. He convinces his gullible father that Edgar means to murder him, then frightens Edgar into running away, an action that appears to prove his guilt. Fearing for his life, Edgar disguises himself as a wandering madman, Tom o' Bedlam.

Meantime, Kent, disguised as a serving man, joins Lear and his knights. Lear is already discovering that power has changed his daughters. Goneril demands he cut his train to 50 knights, saying they are rowdy and destructive; overcome with anger, Lear curses her and leaves for Regan's household, sending Kent ahead as messenger of his coming. But Regan and her husband, Cornwall, have left home and come to Gloucester's to prevent Lear from visiting them. When Lear arrives there, too, he finds Kent being punished in the stocks for insulting Goneril's messenger, Oswald. The two daughters have united against him, and Lear's burgeoning but impotent anger begins to drive him mad. Abandoned by his knights, shut out by his daughters, he goes out into a terrible storm, accompanied only by his Fool and Kent. On the heath, they meet Edgar, disguised as Poor Tom, and find a makeshift shelter. Gloucester surreptitiously comes to help them, advising them to head to Dover, where Cordelia and a French army have come to her father's aid. Edmund betrays his father to Regan and Cornwall, who puts out Gloucester's eyes as punishment – but an outraged servant kills Cornwall, leaving Regan a widow and free to woo Edmund. Goneril, still wed to Albany, becomes jealous – she finds Edmund attractive, too.

Everyone moves toward Dover: Edgar, in a new disguise, leads his blind father there; Lear, completely mad, wanders alone, while Cordelia and her army look for him. Regan and Goneril give Edmund control of their armies. As battle is joined, all come together for good or ill.

A Note on the Text

King Lear comes to us in two distinctly different texts: the Quarto version, published as a single volume in 1608, and the Folio version, published together with almost all the other Shakespeare plays in 1623. Q is longer than F by about 300 lines, but F contains significant material not in Q, and there are literally hundreds of differences in individual words and punctuation. F is tonally harder and more austere than Q; it cuts some speeches and acts that tend to ameliorate the effect, though not the fact, of the violence and cruelty that characterize the second half. Scholars are still debating the relationship between the two versions, but there is some consensus that F is close to the text that Shakespeare's company had recently been performing. For a long time, productions of the play tended to use a text that combined elements of both Q and F; more recently, directors have tended to favor one or the other, and this production is based on F.

Mark O'Maley (Lighting Designer) Actors' Shakespeare Project: set & lights for *Measure for Measure*. Mark is a native of Cape Ann, Massachusetts currently living in Philadelphia where he has designed for Headlong Dance Theater, Pig Iron Theater Company, New Paradise Laboratories, Prince Music Theater, Rennie Harris Puremovement, Brian Sanders' Junk, Walnut Street Theater, Delaware Theatre Company, Contemporary Stage Company, and The Philadelphia Live Arts Festival. His New York credits include Pearl Theater Company, Dance Theater Workshop, The Joyce, The Flea, P.S. 122, HERE, Brooklyn Academy of Music, and the Ohio Theater/Ice Factory Festival. Mark's credits nationally and internationally include Sadler's Wells (West End), River North Chicago Dance Company, Boston Playwrights' Theater, Dance Chicago, Northlight Theater, Boston Center for the Arts, Edinburgh Festival Fringe, Harris Theater for Music & Dance (Chicago), Orpheum/Phoenix Stages, Naples Philharmonic Center, The Brighton Festival (U.K.), Ravenna Teatro (Italy) & Colombia's Festival Imberoamericano de Teatro de Bogota. Mark is the co-director of Reactionaries – a Philadelphia based performance collective. He is a recent graduate of the University Without Walls program at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

Elizabeth Locke (Props) Actors' Shakespeare Project: *All's Well That Ends Well, Twelfth Night, King Lear, Julius Caesar, Measure for Measure, Richard III*. Local credits include stage management for *Christmas Revels, Summer Revels, RiverSing*, and *Noye's Fludde*; production assistance for *Dressed Up!/Wigged Out!*

***Robert Walsh** (Fight Direction) Fight Director: N.Y. Shakespeare Festival, Shubert Theatre (Boston) Long Wharf Theatre, Hartford Stage Company, Commonwealth Shakespeare Company, Huntington Theatre Company, American Repertory Theatre, Berkshire Theatre Festival, Boston Lyric Opera and Boston Ballet, among others. Director: *Twelfth Night, Measure for Measure* (Actors' Shakespeare Project/Artistic Associate), StageWest, Merrimack Repertory Theatre, Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey, American Stage Festival (Producing Artistic Director), Barter Theatre, Two River Theatre Company, and Gloucester Stage Company, among others. Actor: *Amistad, State and Main, In Dreams, Spanish Prisoner, Eight Men Out, Turk 182!, Guiding Light, One Life to Live, Another World*, off-Broadway & regional. Guest Faculty: American Repertory Theatre and Brandeis University.

***Adele Nadine Traub** (Stage Manager) Actors' Shakespeare Project: *All's Well That Ends Well, Twelfth Night, Julius Caesar, Measure for Measure, and Richard III*. Other local credits include *Seven Rabbits on a Pole* with Stoneham Theatre, *Living Room in Africa* and *Dinner With Friends* with Gloucester Stage Company, *Life x3* with The Vineyard Playhouse, *Private Lives, Sherlock's Last Case*, and *The Cemetery Club* with Pioneer Valley Summer Theater, *The Order of Things* with CentaStage, *Point of Departure* with The Huntington Theater Company, and assistant Stage Managing *Kindertransport* with New Repertory Theatre. Adele spent four years as the Production Stage Manager at The Boston Conservatory, working on over 40 productions with the Musical Theater, Dance, Opera and Music Departments. She graduated from Brandeis University in 1999.

The Turbulent World of *King Lear*

***Elizabeth Ross** (Assistant Stage Manager) Actors' Shakespeare Project: *King Lear*. Recent credits include *How I Got That Story* and *The Sea Horse* with The Nora Theatre Company; *The Tempest*, *Conspiracy of Memory*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Our Town*, and *BTW Unbound: A Festival of New Plays* with Boston Theatre Works; *A Doll's House, Reno*, and *An Evening of 75 Laughs* with Jonathan Katz, at Jimmy Tingle's Off Broadway. Elizabeth has just completed her Master's in Theatre Education at Emerson College.

Sara Stackhouse (Executive Producer) was the Supervising Producer of A&E's *INSIDE This Old House*, Executive Producer of the MIT Media Lab's *Toy Symphony*, Director of Education for Public Radio International's *From the Top*, and Producer for *A Taste of Chanukah* for PBS. In the 1990's, she served as Project Manager for cellist Yo-Yo Ma for nearly six years, managing international collaborations, education projects, tours, live events, television, and films. With Ma, she served as Associate Producer on nine films, including *Yo-Yo Ma: Inspired by Bach*, which was the recipient of over 12 international awards including several Emmys. She serves as an advisor to the Berkshire Institute for Theology and the Arts. She holds a degree in Theater from Oberlin College.

* Member of Actor's Equity Association (AEA). Founded in 1913, AEA represents 45,000 actors, singers, dancers and stage managers across the United States. Equity seeks to advance, promote and foster the art of live theater as an essential component of our society. Equity negotiates wages and working conditions and provides a wide range of benefits including health and pension plans. AEA is a member of the AFL-CIO and is affiliated with FIA, an international organization of performing arts unions. For more information, visit www.actorsequity.org



The early seventeenth century was an uncommonly turbulent moment in English thought. Conflicts in religious doctrine, the move from an agricultural toward a mercantile economy, the conceptual leaps of Galilean astronomy and other new science, the vast extension of geographical horizons as explorers opened the Far East and the Americas to Europeans – all surged and sloshed together in a country politically unsettled by the death of Elizabeth and the coming of her Scottish cousin as King James I. Daring thinkers were challenging ideas, doctrines, customs, and institutions; as John Donne put it, “the new philosophy calls all in doubt.”

None of Shakespeare's plays reflects this hectic activity as fully as *King Lear*. But at no point does it engage the issues in merely intellectual ways: here, philosophical matters are profoundly enmeshed in the lives of the people of the play. Cordelia and Kent are devoted to traditional order and the subordination of individual desire to the needs of the community; their devotion gets them banished. Edmund embraces the more modern concept of the liberated, autonomous self; it apparently authorizes him to betray, commit adultery, and murder. Thrown off balance by a world that no longer extends to them the deference and obedience they are used to, the play's elders, Lear and Gloucester, respond impulsively in ways that end up destroying themselves and others.

As he so often does, Shakespeare treats the conflicts in relation to the family, seen as a microcosm of the larger society. Inside and outside the family the lack of common ideals corrupts communication. In particular, *King Lear* elaborates the tormented relations between fathers and their children—Lear and his three daughters, Gloucester and his two sons. Conspicuously, there are no mothers. The absence of maternal ideas and characters exposes more fully the play's cruelty, violence, and focus on self. Is this what happens when society loses the maternal presence?

Both the play's probable primary source, Holinshed's *Chronicle*, and an earlier play of uncertain authorship on the same story called *The True Chronical History of King Leir*, give what is in effect a kind of fairy story a happy outcome, in which Cordelia helps restore Lear to kingship. Neoclassical England embraced a revision of Shakespeare's play by Nahum Tate (1681) that restored the happy ending. Shakespeare, however, offers a darker vision. Set in the pre-Christian era of English history, and wary of government directives that forbade treatment of doctrine on the stage, the play dodges matters of institutional religion. But it is deeply occupied with metaphysical questions. Is there, as Hamlet had earlier put it, “a divinity that shapes our ends” in accordance with some providential plan. Are we instead victims of irresponsible gods who “kill us for their sport”? Or is the anarchy that afflicts human life just nature at work, just the way things are? In Kent, Cordelia, the Fool, and Edgar, the play enacts a life of mutual service that would sustain rather than destroy. From the beginning of his career, however, Shakespeare was exquisitely sensitive to the tendency for those who gain power to abuse it. Here, the achievement of truly humane government seems difficult almost to the point of impossibility, and the dire consequences of the failure to achieve it only too immediate.

David Evett