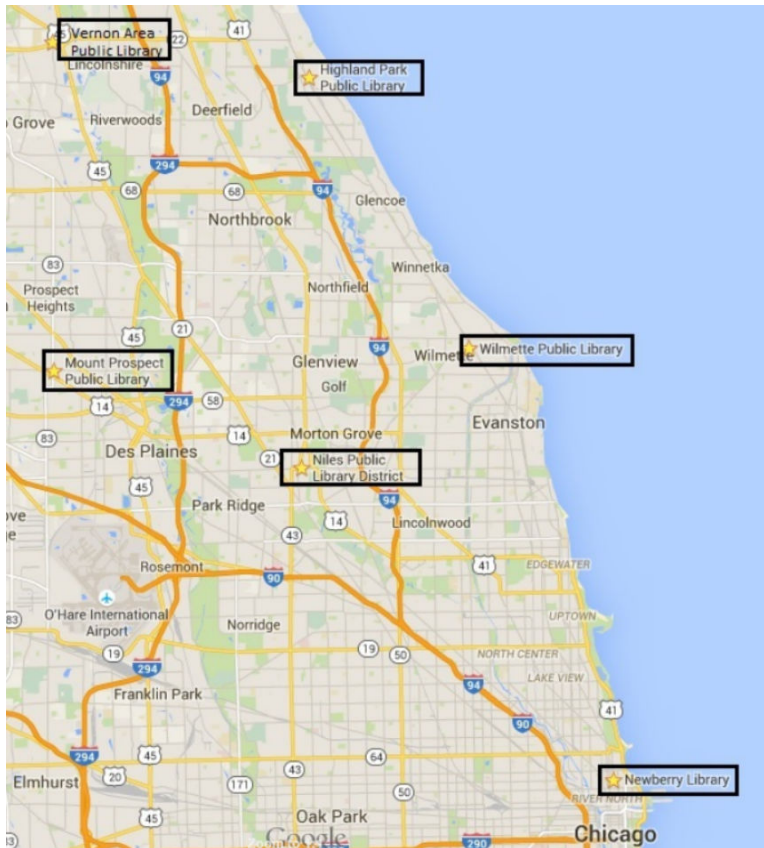


THE SHAKESPEARE PROJECT OF CHICAGO

December 2015

the world in words

Two New Venues Added in 21st Season



The Shakespeare Project of Chicago is pleased to announce that it has added two new library venues in its 21st theatrical reading season. The Vernon Area Public Library, 300 Olde Half Day Road, Lincolnshire, Illinois will host Monday evening performances at 6:30pm with the pre-show introduction beginning at 6:15pm. Pre-registration is required by calling the library at 847-634-3650. Beginning in January 2016, Tuesday evening performances will be offered at the Mount Prospect Public Library, 10 S. Emerson St., Mount Prospect, Illinois. Curtain is 7:15pm with pre-show introduction at 7:00pm. Pre-registration is required by calling the library at 847-253-5675. With the addition of these two libraries, The Shakespeare Project now offers six locations for audiences to take advantage of its free theatrical reading program which includes performances at the Newberry Library (Chicago) and public libraries in Niles, Wilmette, and Highland Park. Artistic director Peter Garino commented, "The addition of these two new libraries opens up new audiences in the northwest suburbs for us and supports our mission of making Shakespeare more available in these communities."



UP NEXT: "The Winter's Tale" - January 15-19, 2016

Shakespeare Project Presents Stoppard Premier



Photograph by Peter Garino

On September 27, The Shakespeare Project presented the Chicago premier of Tom Stoppard's "Darkside" to a sold-out audience at Chicago's Mayne Stage in Rogers Park. The play incorporated Pink Floyd's iconic album, *The Dark Side of the Moon*, in its narrative. The performance was a fundraiser to support The Project's education outreach program. Coincidentally, the performance was staged on the evening of a total lunar eclipse. The production featured actors Tony Dobrowolski, Chris Landis, Doug MacKechnie, David Skidmore, Stephen Spencer, Fredric Stone, Ashley Wickett and Barbara Zahora. Production staff included Peter Garino (Director), George Zahora (Sound and Music design), John Slywka (Visual Design), Michelle Shupe (Assistant Director), Christopher Prentice (Production Stage Manager/Assistant Director), Gail Rastorfer (Costume Coordinator) and Brenda Fournier (Movement Consultant).

Brush Up Your Shakespeare at Niles Public Library

Actors from The Shakespeare Project have been facilitating "Brush Up Your Shakespeare" workshops for high school students at the Niles Public Library. The workshops focus on assisting students select, rehearse and present monologues and sonnets — the components required for students to participate in the National Shakespeare Competition, sponsored by the English Speaking Union (ESU). The workshops began in September and run through January. Pre-registration is required by contacting the Niles Public Library at 847-663-1234.

21st Season Highlights

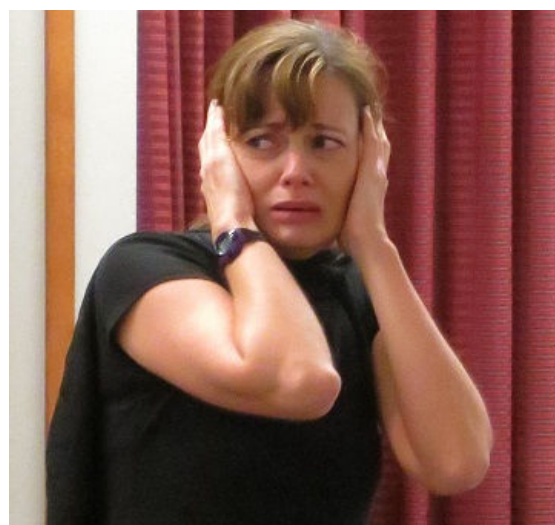
Our 21st theatrical reading season opened the weekend of October 23rd when we presented Shakespeare's "The Tragedy of Julius Caesar." It was the first time the play has been staged by The Shakespeare Project since October 2001. Stephen Spencer directed and marked our first performance at the Vernon Area Public Library in Lincolnshire, Illinois. We will offer two of Shakespeare's romances this winter. Barbara Zahora will direct "The Winter's Tale", January 15-19, 2016, and will be our first performance at the Mount Prospect Public Library on January 19 at 7:15pm. Former artistic director, Jeff Christian, will direct "Cymbeline", February 26-March 1, 2016. The final play for the season, "Cardenio," will be directed by artistic director Peter Garino April 15-19. The play is adapted from the Shakespeare/Fletcher collaboration by Shakespeare scholar Stephen Greenblatt with Charles Mee.



Mark D. Hines (Cassius) and Matthew Fahey (Brutus) were featured in "The Tragedy of Julius Caesar" presented October 23-26, 2015.

50-Minute Hamlet Bookings

"50-Minute Hamlet", adapted and directed by Jeff Christian, will play three local libraries in February 2016. The Elmhurst Area Public Library will host a 2:00PM performance on Sunday, February 7. A 7:00PM performance will be given at the LaGrange Park Public Library on February 8. The Morton Grove Public Library will host a 2:00PM performance on Sunday, Feb. 21. The show will also make two performances at the Odyssey Festival, hosted by Stevenson High School on February 10. To book a performance of "50-Minute Hamlet", email: outreach@shakespeareprojectchicago.org



Gail Rastorfer is featured in "50-Minute Hamlet."

Thank You to our 2015-2016 Benefactors

The Shakespeare Project gratefully acknowledges all of the generous contributions made by its valued patrons over the past 20 years.

With heartfelt thanks, we recognize contributors to our 2015-2016 season: John Allen, Catherine C. Alterio, Anonymous, Sarah & Allen Arnett, Ann & Ken Avick, Gary & Mary Ann Berg, Ingrid & Phil Berman, Bruna Bertocci, Christine Brode, Ben Brown, Regina Buccola, Dan Burns, Robert Bray, Rebecca Cameron, Craig Campbell, Michael Carelly, Mary Christel, Helen Crowley, Brian & Lydia Davies, Ken Davis, Linda Dienberg, Steve Dixon, Dan Durbin, Suzanne Engle, Marc D. Falkoff, Liz Farris, Darlene Flynn, In Memory of Margaret D. Garino, Maureen Gawlik, Virginia Gibbons, Joan Golder, Scott Gordon, Brian Gore, Anita Gottlieb, Mike & Joan Gumbel, Patrick Haun, Barbara Hudoba, Liz Huyck, Elissa Issacs, Steven Issacson, Carl Jacobson, Leigh Johnson, John Katzberger, Marcia Kazurinsky, Diana King, John & Regina Kulczycki, Bill Leonard, Rhita Lippitz, Marcia Levy, Peter Lukidis, Sheila MacManus, David Mahvi, Lynn Mallek, Alan Mansfield, Julia Marchenko, Bill Marcus, Ann Marikas, Michael Maurer, Duane & Vickie Mellema, George & Geraldine Messenger, Edward Muir, Jr., Bob Murphy, Elise Naccarato-Grosspietsch, Jeffrey Nahan, Dawn & John Palmer, Marsha Parrott-Boyle, Raymond & Jeanette Piesciuk, Edward Pinkowski, Maria Poulos, Jordan Pritikin, Cynthia Rademacher, Theodora Rand, George Reisch, Harv & Elanor Reiter, Karla Renhofer, Mary Ringstad, John Rohskoth, Mary Ann Rouse, Jay & Lou Ann Schachner, Regina Schwartz, David Sibley, Eileen & Hal Sirkin, Vikram Sharma, Brian & Melissa Sherman In Memory of John Field Sherman, David Skidmore, Melanie Skidmore, Ernest Sota, Stephen Spencer & Brenda Fournier, Sara Spitz, Carol Southard, Kurt & Lora Swanson, Ljiljana Brkic Tasic, Hilary Thornton, David Thurm, Linda Tiesse, Ann Tighe, Anastasia Tinari, Deborah Walsh, Bronna Wasserman, Rick Weber, Amy Wickett, Laurie Williams, Lynn Zurowski. The Illinois Arts Council, Swedish Covenant Hospital, Walter Payton College Preparatory High School, Niles Public Library, Kraft Foods.

“Spooky Shakes” Premieres at Halloween Gathering

The Shakespeare Project premiered a new education outreach production at The Halloween Gathering in Chicago on October 24, 2015. The production was sponsored by the Forest Preserve District of Cook County. “Spooky Shakes: *Exploring the Supernatural in Shakespeare*” was adapted and directed by Gary Alexander and featured excerpts from *Macbeth*, *Hamlet*, *Richard III*, *The Tempest* and *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*. The production featured music by Allison Cook and a cast that included Kathy Logelin, Brian McKnight and Richard Marlatt.



“Spooky Shakes” was presented in Millennium Park.

National Shakespeare Competition

The Shakespeare Project has partnered with the English Speaking Union to help promote student participation in the National Shakespeare Competition – an annual event that has engaged more than 250,000 young people since its inception in 1983. The Project’s artistic director, Peter Garino, is co-chair along with Jackie Thompson of the ESU’s Chicago branch Shakespeare Committee. Actors from The Shakespeare Project are visiting local high schools to create greater awareness of the competition and recruit new schools to participate in the Chicago regional competition which will be held in February 2016 at Roosevelt University. Students compete in their own local school competition and the school’s winner then goes to the Chicago regional event. The winner of the Chicago regional competition gets a \$1,000 cash prize and an all expenses paid trip (along with their teacher) to the national finals held in April at Lincoln Center in New York City. Artistic Director Peter Garino commented, “Every student that participates in this event is a winner, since they further develop their critical thinking and public speaking skills in the process. There is no better way to enable our next generation’s love and appreciation of Shakespeare than by empowering students to confidently speak his language and share their experience with their peers through this exciting competition.”



Evanston Township High School student Harry Thornton was the Chicago regional finalist in the 2014 National Shakespeare Competition. He is shown here competing at the national finals held at Lincoln Center in New York.

50-Minute Romeo and Juliet Plays Hofstra Shakespeare Festival

“50-Minute Romeo and Juliet”, one of The Project’s educational outreach productions, was presented in March at Hofstra University’s 66th Annual Shakespeare Festival in Hempstead, New York. Adapted by Barbara Zahora, Michelle Shupe and Peter Garino, the production included two Hofstra University theatre students in the title roles. Hofstra alumni Peter Garino and Lydia Leeds were also featured in the production which helped raise funds for restoration of Hofstra’s globe stage in the John Cranford Adams Playhouse.



Peter Garino (Friar Laurence) and Maya Carter (Juliet) in “50-Minute Romeo and Juliet” at Hofstra University.

Actor Profile: Ashley Wickett



Ashley most recently appeared with The Project, playing the role of Emily McCoy in Tom Stoppard's *Darkside*. She has also appeared in readings as Charlotte in "The Contrast", Granddaughter in "Saving Grace: Anne Hutchinson", and Castiza in "The Revenger's Tragedy." She has worked at several regional theaters across the country, including The Indiana Repertory Theatre, The Pioneer Theatre Company, The American Conservatory Theatre, California Shakespeare Theatre, The Livermore Shakespeare Festival and The New Harmony Project. She has also appeared in commercials and industrial films. Along with her passion for acting, she has a love for teaching and has worked as a

teaching artist with various companies, including Stages on the Sound (Brooklyn, NY), Groves Performing Arts Company (Birmingham, MI), and Emerald City Theatre and Vagabond School of the Arts, here in Chicago. She has also joined the education team here at The Shakespeare Project of Chicago! She will be teaching a Brush Up Your Shakespeare class this Fall/Winter at the Niles Public Library and has also helped with the Ambassador program, reaching out to Chicago high schools to inform teachers and students about the English Speaking Union's National Shakespeare Competition. As the 2004 Michigan representative in the competition, Ashley is thrilled to share her knowledge and excitement about the competition with this generation's high school students. Ashley holds her MFA in Acting from the American Conservatory Theatre and her BFA in Theatre Performance from the University of Evansville. She is a proud member of Actor's Equity and is represented here in Chicago by Stewart Talent. She lives with her husband, fellow actor and Project alum, Patrick Lane. They are expecting their first child this spring. Please visit Ashley's website to hear more about upcoming projects and news: www.ashleywickett.com

"Dark Lady" at Summer Benefit

The Shakespeare Project presented George Bernard Shaw's classic, "The Dark Lady of the Sonnets", at its summer fundraiser held in Winnetka, Illinois on July 11, 2015. The one-act play depicts a fictitious encounter between William Shakespeare, Queen Elizabeth and a mysterious dark lady. Michelle Shupe directed a cast which included: Chris Amos, Doug MacKechnie, Corliss Preston and Barbara Zahora. Special thanks to our hosts Jacqueline and John Thompson.



Barbara Zahora and Doug MacKechnie in "The Dark Lady of The Sonnets."

Education Outreach: Shakespeare Seminar



The Shakespeare Project of Chicago facilitated a five-hour Shakespeare Seminar on November 9, 2015 for 100 students from nine Chicago-area high schools. The seminar, held in Ganz Hall at Roosevelt University, was sponsored by the English Speaking Union and was led by Barbara Zahora and Michelle Shupe. Acting students from Roosevelt's Chicago College of the Performing Arts mentored students in preparation and presentation of scenes from "A Midsummer Night's Dream" and "Henry IV, Part II."

Selections from Cervantes' "Eight Interludes"

As a part of the symposium, "Cervantes and Shakespeare: A Transnational Conversation", being held at the Newberry Library in April to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the death of these giants of European Literature, David Skidmore will be directing a dramatic reading of a selection from Cervantes' "Eight Interludes", short comic works written by Cervantes as entre-acts for longer plays. Best known for the novel "Don Quixote," Cervantes was also a playwright who deeply loved theatre. "Eight Interludes" are broad farces featuring the kinds of rustic and marginal characters familiar to Shakespeare lovers – prostitutes, pimps, con men, posers, buffoons, and wisecracking servants in brief sketches that functioned almost as Saturday Night Live-style sketches of bawdy humor laced with social commentary. Join us for the reading on Friday, April 15 at 10:00AM, with a roundtable discussion on Cervantes, Shakespeare and performance that afternoon at 2:00PM.



Don Miguel de Cervantes (pictured) and William Shakespeare died on the same day: April 23, 1616.

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Theatrical Reading Venues:
Highland Park Public Library
Mount Prospect Public Library
Newberry Library, Chicago
Niles Public Library
Vernon Area Public Library
Wilmette Public Library

Since 1995, The Shakespeare Project of Chicago has dedicated itself to presenting free theatrical readings of William Shakespeare and other classic dramatists to Chicago area audiences. The Shakespeare Project of Chicago also offers education outreach productions to local schools. The company draws its talent from the extraordinary pool of local professional actors, all members of Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors. Actors share their talents with The Shakespeare Project because they support The Project's mission of making the Shakespeare experience accessible to all.

The Oregon Shakespeare Festival

The Oregon Shakespeare Festival's recent announcement that it had accepted a large corporate grant from a technology entrepreneur to commission playwrights to re-write all of Shakespeare's plays in "modern" English, is yet another troubling development in the ongoing marginalization of the greatest writer in the history of our language. Shakespeare scholar, James Shapiro, writing in *The New York Times* observed, "However well intended, this experiment is likely to be a waste of money and talent, for it misdiagnoses the reason that Shakespeare's plays can be hard for playgoers to follow. The problem is not the often knotty language; it's that even the best directors and actors — British as well as American — too frequently offer up Shakespeare's plays without themselves having a firm enough grasp of what his words mean." Our focus here at The Shakespeare Project of Chicago will continue to be on illuminating meaning and mining the emotional depths and richness of Shakespeare's language — something we've been doing now for 21 years.

Donate to The Shakespeare Project

Remember The Shakespeare Project in your year-end charitable giving. Mail your tax-deductible contribution to: THE SHAKESPEARE PROJECT OF CHICAGO, P.O. Box 25126, Chicago, IL 60625. Or donate online at our website:

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Thank You!