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# The Shakespeare Project of Chicago

*the world in words*

presents

# My Name Is Will

A Dramatic Adaptation of  
Shakespeare's Sonnets and Songs

Adapted and Directed by  
Peter Garino<sup>f</sup>

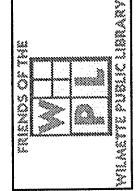
Original Music Composed and Performed by  
Chris Walz<sup>f</sup>

Assistant Director  
Stage Manager  
Barbara Zahora



All Actors with *The Shakespeare Project of Chicago*  
are members of Actors' Equity Association  
The union of professional actors and stage managers  
<sup>f</sup> Indicates Founding Members of The Shakespeare Project.

*The Shakespeare Project is partially supported by the following:*



## Notes from Adapter/Director, Peter Garino

My first experience with Shakespeare's Sonnets came in my freshman year of college as a drama major at Hofstra University in 1973. We were assigned Sonnet 12 ("When I do count the clock that tells the time") to perform in our Speech Class. I found the sonnets to be exquisite little morsels that were very accessible to someone just cutting their teeth on Shakespeare: Fourteen lines of iambic pentameter that expressed an idea, turned it over, and came to a realization. I would sometimes employ a sonnet as an audition piece alongside a monologue from one of the plays when faced with the constraint of presenting two contrasting selections from Shakespeare in under three minutes.

For me, the sonnets have always been more than just 154 short poems tucked at the back of the Complete Works of Shakespeare. The landscape of the sonnets is a jagged one where the author has revealed for us some of his most deeply private emotions. If conflict is the essence of drama, in my mind, the sonnets qualify as drama in the truest sense of the word. Like the plays, they possess a kind of potential energy sitting there on the page awaiting realization through the actor's imagination and instrument. Unlike a play, the sonnets are non-linear in their sequencing. Stripped of any consideration to plot or convention, what's left is the pure emotional thought of the speaker without artifice. I found that very liberating. My task as an adaptor of this material was similar to a film director and film editor poring over hours and hours of shot footage and deciding what scenes would end up in the final cut that ultimately would tell my story. If I haven't included your favorite sonnet, I apologize. I did not set out to create "Shakespeare's Greatest Hits" (Sonnets). If I did, Sonnet 18 ("Shall I compare thee to a summer's day") most certainly would have made the cut among others.

Our purpose today as it was ten years ago when we first presented "My Name Is Will" is to allow you to experience a selection of the sonnets (35 to be exact) through the art of theatre. Also included you will hear songs from eight of Shakespeare's plays that comment on or provide counterpoint to the themes expressed in the sonnets. There is an intentional edginess to many of the sonnets I've included whose themes include passion, separation (both physical and emotional), betrayal, adultery, and mortality. At the same time, these darker themes are simultaneously balanced by other sonnets and songs from the plays whose expressions of hope, optimism, patience, understanding and fidelity provide a more positive perspective on the many aspects of love. Love can sometimes be a drag, but it can be fun, too.

My collaborators today include the four accomplished actors who have generously lent their considerable talents to this effort and, in particular, Chris Walz, who has completely reimagined his original score that he wrote for our 2000 production with completely new arrangements and new songs.

Countless volumes have been written examining these little "contraptions" as noted scholar Helen Vendler refers to the sonnets in their native art form. Some have speculated on whether or not Shakespeare wrote the sonnets, the respective identities of the Dark Lady, the Rival Poet, the Young Man, whether they were autobiographical, etc. That's not why we're here today. Our goal is to breathe life into this work and to allow you, our audience, to experience the reverberations of this work in a singular way.

As usual, I have many people to thank for their assistance in my ongoing journey on this project: Mara Polster, for her support and encouragement when I approached her with my first draft of *My Name Is Will* back in 1996; Mary Ringstad, Judy Blue, Rick Carter, Bob Eustace and Maureen Gallagher who appeared in earlier productions; and today's cast whose collective commitment to this work has brought it to a new level of realization. Thanks especially to Barbara Zahora and to Peter Christensen for his insights into the sonnets and his support.

For Helene, with love.

# JOIN US NEXT FALL FOR THE 2006-07 SEASON

## 5① Minute Hamlet

Adapted from Shakespeare by Jeff Christian  
September 16/17, 2006

## Henry V

by William Shakespeare  
October 28/29, 2006

## The Constant Wife

By W. Somerset Maugham  
February 17/18, 2007

## Much Ado About Nothing

by William Shakespeare  
April 21/22, 2007

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**The Shakespeare Project of Chicago**  
*as well as more*

## My Name Is Will

April 20 & 22, 2006  
The Highland Park Public Library  
The Newberry Library  
The Wilmette Public Library

# About The Shakespeare Project of Chicago

The Shakespeare Project of Chicago was founded in May of 1995 by Mara Polster to address the lack of opportunities for students, seniors and the less affluent to experience -- and the local theater community to perform -- the timeless works of William Shakespeare and other great dramatists. We witnessed a dearth of classic works being produced, and those that were being produced, were often expensive affairs that lacked the depth and passion that should have been elicited from the text. We resolved to develop a theatrical reading format that would challenge classically-trained actors to emphasize textual work, and that could eventually be utilized as a way to successfully reach the people of the Chicago area -- regardless of income, waning eyesight, or other factors that had precluded one from benefiting from these works. Today, our mission strives to attain three goals: (1) To provide to our community, free or easily affordable professional performances of the works of William Shakespeare and other great dramatists; (2) To create the opportunity for professional actors to explore this great literature; and (3) To provide exceptional theatre experiences for audiences and artists by maintaining an artistic emphasis on the language of the plays and skill of the actors, all of whom are members of Actors' Equity Association.

We made our public debut with *Macbeth* in 1995, and within four years produced the entirety of Shakespeare's canon. Our 1997 Season (The History of the English Kings) reversed the breadth of the great Elizabethan history plays in chronological order: *King John*, *Edward II* (by Christopher Marlowe), *Edward III* (an apocryphal play), *Richard II*, both parts of *Henry IV*, *Henry V*, all three parts of *Henry VI*, and ending with *Richard III*. To date we have performed nearly 70 plays by Shakespeare, Marlowe, Goethe, Moliere, Ibsen, Wilde and Dickens.

In 1999, we presented our first fully-realized production, *Hamlet*, and our first original adaptation, *My Name Is Will* (a musical celebration of William Shakespeare's sonnets and songs adapted and directed by Peter Garino, with music by Christopher Walz - both founding Members). Garino's adaptation of Shakespeare's dark narrative poem, *The Rape of Lucrece*, was performed in 2001 and *50 Minute Hamlet* (adapted and directed by Jeff Christian, who was appointed Artistic Director in August of 2002) debuted in spring of 2002. Christian has since adapted and directed *The Cricket on the Hearth* (Dickens), *Ghosts* (Ibsen), *The Parvenu* (from Moliere's *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*) and *Faust* (from Marlowe and Goethe). *50 Minute Hamlet*, which became a fully-realized production in 2003, tours Chicago area schools and is available for booking during the 2005-06 school year.

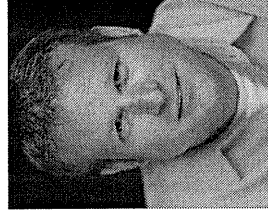
Thank you for joining us for our 11th Season, which began last fall with Charley Sherman and Peter Christensen's original adaptation of Shakespeare's *Henry IV*. We are thrilled to continue our long relationships with The Wilmette Public Library and The Newberry Library, and hope to foster this new one with The Highland Park Public Library. We appreciate your continued attendance, enthusiasm and financial support. See you next season!

The Shakespeare Project of Chicago is funded in part by the revenue from our school programs and program advertisements; by a grant from the Illinois Arts Council; by the generous support of Friends of the Wilmette Public Library; and by the voluntary contributions of our audiences. Please know that The Shakespeare Project of Chicago is a not for profit 501(c)3 organization, as such, all donations are tax-deductible. Please visit our website at [www.shakespeareprojectchicago.org](http://www.shakespeareprojectchicago.org) for further information.

# The Players



**Mary Ringstad** Former TSP roles include Lady Jane Hunstanton in *A Woman of No Importance*, Mrs. Alving in *Ghosts*, *Anna* in the premiere production of *My Name Is Will*, the title role in *The Rape of Lucrece*, Lady Capulet in *Romeo and Juliet*, Portia in *Julius Caesar*, Adriana in *Comedy of Errors*, Desdemona in *Othello*, Lavinia in *Titus Andronicus*, Rosilind in *As You Like It*, Lady Anne in *Richard III*, Margaret in *I-Henry VI*, Margaret in *Much Ado About Nothing*, Prince Edward in *Edward II*, Witch/Gentlewoman in *Macbeth*, Biondello in *Taming of the Shrew*, and Falstaff's Page in *2-Henry IV* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. Previously for TSP, Mary directed *All's Well That Ends Well* and *Love's Labor's Lost*. She also served as assistant director for *King Lear*. Mary, who has an MFA in Acting from Ohio University, is an adjunct faculty member at Wright College, Oakton Community College, and Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary. In addition to being a Founding Member, Mary also serves on the TSP Board of Directors.



**Jeff Christian** completes his fourth season as Artistic Director, having adapted and directed *Faust*, *The Parvenu* (from Moliere's *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*), Ibsen's *Ghosts*, Dickens's *The Cricket on the Hearth*, the outreach program *50 Minute Hamlet*, as well as having staged *King Lear* and *Love's Labours Lost*. TSP Acting credits include Brutus in *Julius Caesar*, Buckingham in *Richard III*, Proteus in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Mercutio in *Romeo and Juliet*, Bassanio in *The Merchant of Venice*, Antonio in *Twelfth Night*, Hortensio in *The Taming of the Shrew* and Hamlet in *50 Minute Hamlet*. Other directing credits include *A Whistle in the Dark* (Seanachai Theatre Company, currently running at Victory Gardens), *Proof and Driving Miss Daisy* (New American Theater), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* (Lakeside Shakespeare), the national touring production of *Sister Bernice's Bingo Bash*, the short film *The Outline*, both parts of *Angels in America* (The Journeymen; sharing in three Jeff Awards and an After Dark Award), and James Krag's one-man show *According to Mark*.



**Gail Rastorfer** This marks Gail's ninth production with TSP. Other TSP credits include *Love's Labours Lost*, *Faust*, *A Woman of No Importance*, *The Parvenu*, *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *The Cricket on the Hearth*, *The Merchant of Venice* and *Twelfth Night*. Other regional and Chicago credits include: *Comedy of Errors* (Chicago Shakespeare Theatre), *Lend Me A Tenor* (Theatre at the Center), *As You Like It* (Indiana Repertory Theatre), *Twelfth Night* (First Folio Shakespeare Festival), *The Rose Tattoo* (Goodman Theatre), and *The Gamester* (Northlight Theatre). This past fall she had the privilege of working with playwright Theresa Rebeck on her new play, *Mauritius* at the Madison Rep New Plays Festival. Gail has been living in Chicago for over 10 years with fellow actor and husband, Dan Rodden.



**Dan Rodden** This is Dan's eighth TSP production, after last playing Costard in *Love's Labours Lost*. Other TSP: *Henry IV*, *A Woman of No Importance*, *The Winter's Tale*, *The Parvenu*, *Macbeth*, and *All's Well That Ends Well*. Other credits include: Oak Park Festival Theater, New American Theater, Drury Lane Oakbrook, Drury Lane Evergreen Park, Aardvark Theatre Company, Apple Tree Theatre, Pegasus Players, and the ImprovOlympic. Regionally: Texas Shakespeare Festival, Nebraska Theatre Caravan, Cidermill Playhouse, and Beechwood Theatre Company. Dan is pleased to share the stage with his lovely wife, Gail Rastorfer.

Song: ..... “Where is Fancy Bred” from *The Merchant of Venice*.....The Company

Sonnet 87. “Farewell, thou art too dear for my possessing” .....Gail

Sonnet 149“Canst thou, O cruel! Say I love thee not” .....Jeff

Sonnet 151“Love is too young to know what conscience is” .....Mary

Sonnet 152“In loving thee thou know’st I am forsworn” .....Jeff

Song: ..... “Fie on Sinful Fantasy” from *The Merry Wives of Windsor*.....Gail

Sonnet 129“The expense of spirit in a waste of shame” .....Dan and Gail

Sonnet 57. “Being you slave what should I do but tend” .....Gail

Song: ..... “Lover and His Lass” from *As You Like It*.....Jeff and Dan

Sonnet 136“When my love swears that she is made of truth” .....Dan

Sonnet 130“My mistress’ eyes are nothing like the sun” .....Jeff

Sonnet 42. “That thou has her is not all my grief” .....Dan

Sonnet 27. “Weary with toil, I haste me to my bed” .....Mary

Sonnet 43. “When most I wink, then do mine eyes best see” .....Jeff

Sonnet 61. “Is it thy will, thy image should keep open” .....Mary

Sonnet 34. “Why didst thou promise such a beauteous day” .....Gail

Sonnet 142“Love is my sin, and thy dear virtue hate” .....Jeff

Song: ..... “Love’s Bow Blues” from *Troilus and Cressida* .....Mary

Sonnet 140“Be wise as thou art cruel; do not press” .....Gail

Sonnet 60. “Like as the waves make toward the pebbled shore” .....Dan

Sonnet 12. “When I do count the clock that tells the time” .....Gail

Sonnet 15. “When I consider every thing that grows” .....Dan

Song: ..... “O Mistress Mine” from *Twelfth Night* .....Jeff

Sonnet 50. “How heavy do I journey on the way” .....Mary

Sonnet 44. “If the dull substance of my flesh were thought” .....Jeff

Sonnet 56. “Sweet love, renew thy force; be it not said” .....Mary

Sonnet 120“That you were once unkind befriends me now” .....Gail

Sonnet 143“Lo, as a careful housewife runs to catch” .....Jeff

Sonnet 119“‘What potions have I drunk of Siren tears” .....Dan

Sonnet 116“Let me not to the marriage of true minds” .....Mary

Sonnet 49. “Against that time, if ever that time come” .....Dan

Song: ..... “Take O Take Those Lips Away” from *Measure for Measure* .....Mary

Sonnet 64. “When I have seen by Time’s fell hand defac’d” .....Jeff

Sonnet 123“‘No, Time, thou shalt not boast that I do change” .....Gail

Sonnet 71. “No longer mourn for me when I am dead” .....Jeff

Song: ..... “Come Away Death” from *Twelfth Night* .....Jeff

Song: ..... “The Willow Song” from *Othello* .....Gail

Sonnet 93. “So shall I live, supposing thou art true” .....Dan

Sonnet 90. “Then hate me when thou wilt; if ever, now” .....Mary

Song: ..... “Blow, Blow Thou Winter Wind” from *As You Like It*.....Mary

Sonnet 29. “When in disgrace with fortune and men’s eyes” .....Jeff

Sonnet 30. “When to the sessions of sweet silent thought” .....Gail

Sonnet 147“‘My love is as a fever longing still” .....Mary

Sonnet 136“‘If thy soul check thee that I come so near” .....Dan

Song: ..... “Fear No More the Heat of the Sun” from *Cymbeline* .....The Company

Song: ..... “Wind and the Rain Rag” from *Twelfth Night*.....The Company

## Profiles

**Peter Garino** (Adaptor, Director) is a Founding Member of TSP and has been with the company since 1995. Most recently, he appeared as Boyet in *Love’s Labour’s Lost*. Last October, he played the title role in Jeff Christian’s adaptation of *Faust*. This season he has also appeared as the Earl of Westmoreland and Justice Shallow in Charley Sherman and Peter Christensen’s adaptation of *Henry IV*. Last year, he directed *A Woman of No Importance* by Oscar Wilde and appeared as Leontes in *A Winter’s Tale* and Duncan in *Macbeth*. He has worked locally in Chicago with the Steppenwolf Theatre Company, Organic Theatre Company, Body Politic Ensemble, Pegasus Players, Absolute Theatre Company and regionally with the Oak Park Festival Theatre and Illinois Shakespeare Festival. Peter has appeared in over 35 TSP staged readings and has directed readings of *Pericles*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *2 Henry IV*, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, and *The Rape of Lucrece*. His adaptation of Shakespeare’s sonnets and songs, *My Name is Will* was previously produced by TSP in 1997 and 2000. A native of Wayne, New Jersey, Peter holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Theatre Arts Performance from Hofstra University, New York and a Master of Fine Arts degree in Acting from Illinois State University.

**Chris Walz** (Composer, Musician) is an accomplished vocalist, guitar player and actor. He holds a degree in theatre from Syracuse University and has lived in Chicago since 1988 and worked both as a musician and an actor. He played the lead role of Woody Guthrie in the national tour of *Woody Guthrie’s American Song* and is a Founding Member of TSP. Chris has taught in The US and Europe, including at the Sorrento Guitar Camp in Canada. He toured the world with the bluegrass band The Special Consensus as lead singer and guitarist, contributing three original songs to the repertoire. Since returning home, Chris has continued to work as a musician, teacher, composer and lyricist. Chris has taught at the Old town School since 1996.

**Barbara Zahora** (Assistant Director, Stage Manager) is always happy to be working with The Shakespeare Project folks again, having previously performed in their readings of *Love’s Labour’s Lost*, *Faust*, *Henry IV Parts 1 and 2*, and *A Woman of No Importance*. Other Chicago area credits include *Lady Windermere’s Fan* (Northlight Theatre); *The Moliere Comedies*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Richard II*, *The School for Scandal*, and *All’s Well That Ends Well* (Chicago Shakespeare Theatre); *A Christmas Carol*, *Wit* (Goodman Theatre); *Misalliance* (Writers’ Theatre), and *Hard Times* (Lookingglass Theatre). Regional credits include *Henry IV Parts 1 and 2* at the Colorado Shakespeare Festival. Barbara has also performed at Shakespeare’s Globe Theatre in London, where she was chosen to be part of the International Artistic Residency in 2004. She holds an M.F.A. in Theatre Performance from Roosevelt University.

**Peter Christensen** (pre-show presentation) is a Professor of English at Columbia College, received his Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota and has regularly taught courses in Shakespeare, The Bible as Literature, Romantic Poets, Women Romantic Poets, British Literature, and Irish Literature. He has co-authored (with noted actor Yasen Peyankov) and has recently published new translations of plays by Chekhov and Bulgakov. Peter has also performed in productions of early English drama and served as dramaturg on many productions of both classic and modern plays in Chicago and London.

**Mara Polster** (Founder and Executive Director) During her tenure as Artistic Director, Mara guided The Shakespeare Project through over 50 productions and the entirety of William Shakespeare’s canon, directing such plays as *Hamlet*, *King Lear*, *As You Like It*, *Richard III*, *Timon of Athens*, *Taming of the Shrew*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Macbeth*, *Julius Caesar* and playing many great Shakespearean women, like Emilia, Tamora, Margaret, Paulina, Isabella, Katherina and Lady Macbeth. Mara has acted on many of the stages here in Chicago and many others across the country. Mara is a graduate of The Conservatory of Theatre Arts at Webster University in St. Louis and her work with The Shakespeare Project of Chicago is the grateful commemoration of Samuel E. LaMacchia, Michael Alan Wilson, and Chuck Lippitz.