



Peter Garino (Adaptor and Director, Artistic Director) is a founding member of The Shakespeare Project of Chicago and has contributed to over 50 theatrical readings as an actor and director since 1995. He recently directed *Measure For Measure* to open the Shakespeare Project's 2010-2011 season. Last season, he appeared in *Paradise Lost*, directed *Antony & Cleopatra* appeared in *The Rivals* and played Cardinal Wolsey in *Henry VIII*. On behalf of The Shakespeare Project, he has facilitated his *Sonnet Workshop* and *Page to the Stage Macbeth* for local public and private schools and colleges.

Previous roles include Lord Stanley in *Richard III*, Creon in Jeff Christian's adaptation, *In Medea Res*, Duke Senior and Duke Frederick in *As You Like It*, Don Pedro in *Much Ado About Nothing*, Mortimer in *The Constant Wife*, Rev. Manders in *Ghosts*, multiple roles in *Henry V*, Boyet in *Love's Labour's Lost*, the title role in Jeff Christian's adaptation of *Faust*, Leontes in *A Winter's Tale* and Duncan in *Macbeth*. Peter has worked with the Steppenwolf and Organic Theatre companies, the Body Politic, Pegasus Players and with the Oak Park Festival Theatre and Illinois Shakespeare Festival (three seasons). His directing credits for The Shakespeare Project include *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *A Woman of No Importance*, *Pericles* (1996 and 2008), *The Taming of the Shrew*, *2 Henry IV*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and his own adaptations of Shakespeare's sonnets and songs, *My Name Is Will*, and *The Rape of Lucrece*. He has collaborated with Chicago playwright Leigh Johnson directing Johnson's Vietnam-era trilogy *The Khe Sanh Bagman* at the Center Theatre, *Lefties* (staged reading) and is the co-author of a new work with Johnson, *Designated Hero: The Unexamined Life of Lou Gehrig in Five Short Plays*. Peter attended the National Shakespeare Conservatory and holds a Master of Fine Arts degree in Acting from Illinois State University and a Bachelor of Arts in Theatre Arts from Hofstra University, New York. He is a member of Actors' Equity Association, AFTRA and the Screen Actors Guild.



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 in Woody Guthrie in the national tour of *Woody Guthrie's American Song* and is a founding member of The Shakespeare Project of Chicago. Chris has taught in the US and Europe, including at the Sorrento Guitar Camp in Canada. He toured the world with the bluegrass band Special Consensus as a 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. He has taught at the Old Town School of Music since 1996.

For information on booking The Shakespeare Project of Chicago and additional information on our Education Outreach offerings contact:

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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

Original Music by Chris Walz

16th Season

November, 4, 2010

Midwest Modern Language Association



All actors with The Shakespeare Project of Chicago are members of Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers.

www.shakespeareprojectchicago.org

P.O. Box 25126, Chicago, Illinois 60625

Artist Biographies



Patrick Gagnon is thrilled make his Shakespeare Project of Chicago debut! Patrick most recently appeared as the Ziegfeld Tenor in *Funny Girl* at Drury Lane Oakbrook where he has also appeared as Baby John in *West Side Story* and Eugene the geek in *Grease* (not much of an acting stretch there!). You may have seen him in the Marriott Lincolnshire Theatre's productions of *Show Boat*, *1776*, *Honk!*, *Bye Bye Birdie*, *Miss Saigon*, *Evita*, *Pinocchio*, *Cinderella*, and *The Wizard of Oz*. Other Chicago credits include: *The Good War* (Northlight Theatre – world premiere), *Forever Plaid* (Royal George Theatre); *Strike Up the Band*, *One Touch of Venus*, and *Babes in Arms* (Auditorium Theatre – *Ovation!* series); *The Little Mermaid* (Chicago Shakespeare Theatre).

Patrick is a graduate of Northwestern University and a member of Actors Equity Association. Thanks to the Peter Garino for this great opportunity. *Soli Deo Gloria (Only to God the Glory)*.



Nathan Hosner appeared this season as Angelo in *Measure For Measure* and in last season's *Henry VIII*. Recent credits include the title role in *Hamlet* at Alabama Shakespeare Festival, Duke Solinus in *Comedy of Errors* and the title role in *Dracula* at Arkansas Shakespeare Theatre, and the title role in *Macbeth* at First Folio Theatre. Other regional credits include productions at The Boarshead Theatre, Madison Repertory Theatre, Shaw Chicago, Door Shakespeare, and Illinois Shakespeare Festival. Next year Nathan is excited to play Charles/William in *As You Like It* and Pitt in *The Madness of George III* at Chicago Shakespeare Theater. Nathan is a proud Kalamazoo native and graduate of the Royal Academy of Dramatic

Art, and is thrilled to be working with such great actors here at The Shakespeare Project!



Gail Rastorfer It's hard to believe Gail's journey with The Shakespeare Project began in 2001 with *Twelfth Night* where she got to be 'one of the guys' with Steve Spencer, David Skidmore and Jeff Christian. Gail recently portrayed Isabella in *Measure For Measure* for The Shakespeare Project. She also performs for in The Project's outreach in *50 Minute Hamlet* and *My Name is Will*. Gail has worked for the Goodman Theatre, Northlight, The Chicago Theatre and First Folio Theatre amongst others and has performed regionally with Indiana Rep, Arrow Rock Lyceum Theatre and Hope Summer Rep. You may have seen her on TV selling a steam cleaner or paper towels.

When she's not acting, Gail shares a healthy appreciation for *Star Trek* and Andy Griffith with her husband Dan Rodden. She would like to thank Jeff Christian & Peter Garino for their love of theatre and letting her share it with you.



Mary Ringstad Previously for The Shakespeare Project, Mary directed *Much Ado About Nothing*, *All's Well That Ends Well*, and *Love's Labor's Lost* and assistant directed *King Lear*. Previous appearances include *Antony & Cleopatra*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *As You Like It*, *A Women of No Importance*, *Ghosts*, *My Name Is Will*, the title role in *The Rape of Lucrece*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Julius Caesar*, *Othello*, *Titus Andronicus*, *As You Like It*, *Richard III*, *1- Henry VI*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Edward II*, *Macbeth*, *Taming of the Shrew*, *2-Henry IV* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. Mary, who has an MFA in Acting from Ohio University, is an adjunct faculty member at Oakton Community College. Mary also serves on the Board of

Directors for The Shakespeare Project.

The Shakespeare Project of Chicago

Since 1995, The Shakespeare Project of Chicago has performed theatrical readings of William Shakespeare and other classic dramatists to Chicago area audiences free of charge to audience members. It also offers education outreach programs on Shakespeare studies to local schools. The company draws its talent from local professional actors, all members of Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors.

Our mission is to bring "the world in words" to audiences that might otherwise not be able to experience the dramatic genius of the greatest dramatist in the English language. Our venues attract senior citizens as well as younger audiences that are not able to afford local Shakespeare offerings with prohibitive ticket prices. Our education outreach programs provide abridged performances of Shakespeare's plays and in-class workshops to augment middle-school and high school teachers' studies of Shakespeare. For our young learner audiences, our approach to the work is driven by a simple goal: make the student's first experience with Shakespeare a positive one.

In our readings, our artistic focus is rooted in illuminating the timeless truths found in the words of these great plays. Our audience members value the emphasis we place on the text, opening up a unique experience for them unencumbered by scenery, props, costumes and imposed conceptual conceits.

Our proudest accomplishment over the past year is the relationship we have developed with the Academy for Urban School Leadership (AUSL). Created in 2001, AUSL is a not-for-profit organization that turns around persistently low-performing public schools. The Shakespeare Project of Chicago is honored to have been selected by AUSL to provide actor-led in-school workshops and programming in 2011 for four Chicago high schools: Collins Academy, Wendell Phillips Academy, Solorio Academy and Orr Academy.

2010-2011 Theatrical Reading Season at The Newberry Library, Wilmette Public Library and Highland Park Public Library

Our 16th season, which commenced with *Measure For Measure* in October 2010 includes:

Mary Stuart, by Friedrich Schiller, directed by Jeff Christian – Jan.15-16, 2011

The Merry Wives of Windsor directed by Barbara Zahora – Feb. 26-27, 2011

The Tempest directed by Peter Garino – April 30 – May 1, 2011



Shakespeare's Sonnets as Dialogue

By Dr. Peter Christensen

An Introduction to The Shakespeare Project of Chicago's Performance of "My Name is Will"

When the performance begins, you'll be watching something which will probably be new and different — a dramatic presentation which uses Shakespeare's sonnets as its dialogue. This idea may strike you as strange, since most people go to a poetry reading in order to hear and not to watch, but, if we read the sonnets with care, one of the first things we might notice about them is just how dramatic they really are. What you'll be seeing isn't a casual attempt to be different, but an effort to take advantage of what the sonnets have to offer. Their dramatic quality is something that we can overlook if we attend a conventional reading of these poems. There is a sense of immediacy about them, and the emotion expressed in them strikes us as real. They often reply to something that has been said, and they may often end on a note of waiting for a reply. Sonnet 109, for instance, begins with the words "O, never say that I was false of heart." It's clearly a response to someone who has accused the speaker of being untrue. There are some who have regarded the poems as letters, and although the idea seems unreasonable when applied to certain poems, we can see where the thought might have come from. We can say that many of the sonnets represent half of a conversation. The performance that you'll be seeing will present the sonnets as dramatic exchanges. For most part, there will be a speaker and someone who is listening (and there's one very interesting "duet"). It's astonishing to see just howactable these poems are—and each person, the speaker and the listener, will be acting. Each will deserve your attention. Listening to the poems is essential, but it's equally important to watch both the speaker and the listener, as these lyric poems get transformed into truly dramatic speech and are presented as a theatrical work.

As individual poems, the sonnets work in the way that human speech does. We watch a mind at work within each one. Like most good poems, they do not always end where they begin. There is a process of thought within each one. A given poem need not be consistent within itself. A poem may be overtly abject or full of praise, and yet reveal opposing attitudes at the same time. There is an inner drama within most of the sonnets. For instance, one may notice as Sonnet 87 is read to a listener that something very interesting is going on. What's the real tone of the poem, and how does the dramatic situation help to bring it out? Very few people can give up a beloved person happily or with full acceptance, and you might detect an undertone of sadness and even anger in the poem. It's important to listen not just for sense, but for the ways the mind and the feelings are working. As a given poem progresses, we can get a sense of a spontaneous opening up of things. Listen for mixed feelings, confusions, developments, and varied tones. Conscious intention may conflict with any number of other things. For example, self-abasement may run up against genuine resentment, as in Sonnet 87. Masochism can be mixed with aggressive nastiness.

Self-blame can co-exist with snideness. Ask yourselves what the speaker in each poem is responding to. What has just happened, or what has just been said? Ask yourselves what response the speaker is trying to evoke in his listener. And you might even wonder what the listener, as we see him created in the poems, will indeed say in response. In Shakespeare's sequence, the beloved person never speaks. In what you'll be seeing, there will always be two responses----one as a listener and then one as a speaker. Shakespeare the dramatist is at work here, creating both inner and external tensions. Our sympathy may not always be completely with the speaker. The poet may be viewing the speaker at an ironic distance on occasion. We never get inside the listener's head. How might he (or she) respond to some of the speaker's arguments?

The sequence doesn't provide a true narrative, but it presents meaningful scenes from that narrative--scenes that give us half the dialogue. It presents the complexity of human relationships. We'd be mistaken if we looked for general or objective meditations on love or anything else in these poems. What we should look for, and what we find, is high drama. Don't try to follow a plot in what you'll be seeing. The idea is to enjoy the moments for what each one of them gives us.

The wonderful music that you'll be hearing is also important to the overall effect of the show. Some of these are settings of famous songs from the plays; some are settings of less well-known songs. Together, they present a wide range of attitudes toward love—or moods of love-- ranging from the lyrical and tender to the extremely harsh and bitter-- even the obscene. We hope you'll enjoy them, both for themselves and for the ways in which they enrich the experience of the sonnets.

Form can be very revealing in the "drama" of the sonnets. It's not always an easy thing to hear, but when the form or structure of the sonnet breaks down, it's possible that the speaker's feelings aren't under tight control. Not every sonnet follows the "pure" form of Sonnet 73. Everything in these poems makes its contribution to the dramatic inner struggle within the speaker and to the struggle between speaker and listener. Listen, watch, and enjoy.

Peter Christensen (Professor Emeritus, Literature and Drama, 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 Yassen Peyankov) recently published and forthcoming 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.

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

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 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 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 include the four accomplished actors who have generously lent their considerable talents to this effort and, in particular, Chris Walz, who has completely re-imagined 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 Vedder 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. Special thanks especially to Dr. Peter Christensen for his insights into the sonnets and his support.

For Helene, with love.

Peter Garino

MY NAME IS WILL

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" Nathan
Sonnet 151 . "Love is too young to know what conscience is" Mary
Sonnet 152 . "In loving thee thou know'st I am forsworn" Nathan
Song: "Fie on Sinful Fantasy" from *The Merry Wives of Windsor* Gail
Sonnet 129 . "The expense of spirit in a waste of shame" Patrick and Gail
Sonnet 57 ... "Being you slave what should I do but tend" Gail
Song: "Lover and His Lass" from *As You Like It* Nathan and Patrick
Sonnet 138 . "When my love swears that she is made of truth" Patrick
Sonnet 130 . "My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun" Nathan
Sonnet 42 ... "That thou has her is not all my grief" Patrick
Sonnet 27 ... "Weary with toil, I haste me to my bed" Mary
Sonnet 43 ... "When most I wink, then do mine eyes best see" Nathan
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" Nathan
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" Patrick
Sonnet 12 ... "When I do count the clock that tells the time" Gail
Sonnet 15 ... "When I consider every thing that grows" Patrick
Song: "O Mistress Mine" from *Twelfth Night* Nathan
Sonnet 50 ... "How heavy do I journey on the way" Mary
Sonnet 44 ... "If the dull substance of my flesh were thought" Nathan
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" Nathan
Sonnet 119 . "What potions have I drunk of Siren tears" Patrick
Sonnet 116 . "Let me not to the marriage of true minds" Mary
Sonnet 49 ... "Against that time, if ever that time come" Patrick
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" Nathan
Sonnet 123 . "No, Time, thou shalt not boast that I do change" Gail
Sonnet 71 ... "No longer mourn for me when I am dead" Nathan
Song: "Come Away Death" from *Twelfth Night* Nathan
Song: "The Willow Song" from *Othello* Gail
Sonnet 93 ... "So shall I live, supposing thou art true" Patrick
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" Nathan
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" Patrick
Song: "Fear No More the Heat of the Sun" from *Cymbeline* The Company
Song: "Wind and the Rain Rag" from *Twelfth Night* The Company