

## Regarding ELT

Formed in 1952 to let producers know that a talent pool of actors existed in Chicago, Equity Library Theatre remains the Midwest's only ongoing producer of showcases. ELT is open to any and all members of Actors' Equity Association who are in good standing with that union.

ELT offers performance opportunities to actors in many venues from full performance to staged readings, from scene showcases to various workshops and discussions with visiting artists.

Members are encouraged to bring ideas for new projects to one of four yearly meetings. The Alternative Classic Theatre Project began this way in 1986 and has become one of the most successful ventures ELT has produced. Another was the establishment of The Shakespeare Project, which began as a Special Project in May of 1995.

In 1993, we became a resident theatre of the Chicago Cultural Center. Each year we provide high quality, low cost Theatricals to the downtown area. Three to four fully produced plays in the Studio Theatre plus six to twelve one hour presentations in the Main Theatre on the second floor. Our next production at the CCC will be William Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* opening September 19th. Call (312) 743-0266 for tickets and information

Workshops for children and the elderly have been conducted by ELT Members. These workshops encourage participation from both groups to keep the spirit of the theatre alive and to bring theatre into new areas.

You can also see ELT at work during our summer season; this summer we presented two productions at Players Workshop Theatre: *Lonely Planet* by Steven Dietz and the World Premiere of *The Ascension of Ivy Buirhewlitz* by Chicago playwright Bret Cisco. Sign our mailing list book; we'll mail you all the details of next years summer season.

Equity Library Theatre Chicago is a nonprofit organization, and as such, may receive tax-deductible contributions. If you would like to contribute to ELT to help us continue programs such as this, please send any contributions to Treasurer, Equity Library Theatre, 4738 N. Laporte Avenue, Chicago 60630-3801. A confirmation letter for tax purposes, will be sent by return mail.

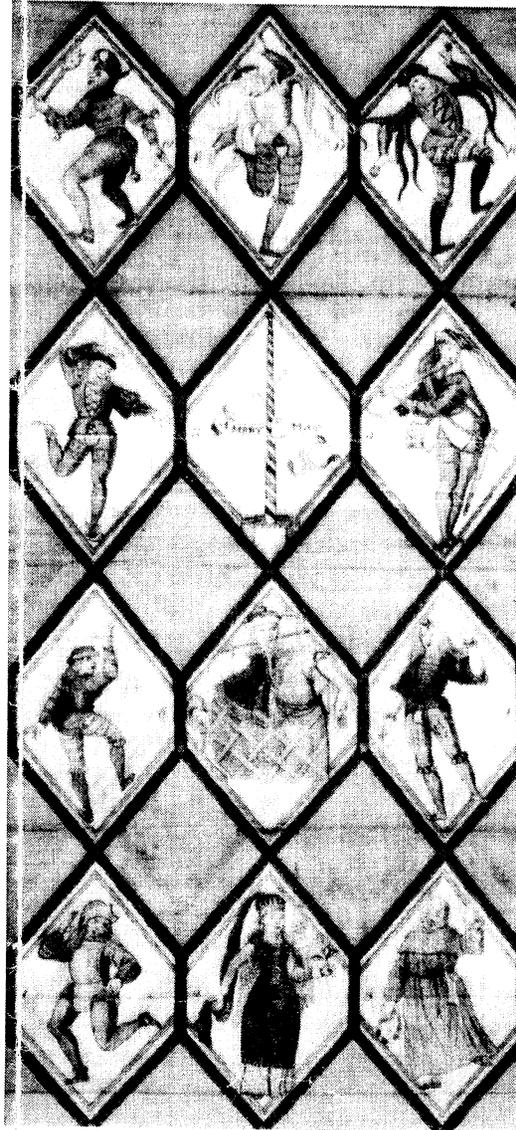
## Regarding The Shakespeare Project

*The Shakespeare Project*, which had its genesis as a Special Project of Equity Library Theatre Chicago, is a group of actors dedicated to the exploration of the complete works of William Shakespeare. The group's current endeavor is reading the plays aloud in a presentation that achieves the clarity that could otherwise only be accomplished by fully producing the plays. Assembled by *The Shakespeare Project's* director and producer Mara Polster, these exceptionally skilled actors have previously been seen on the stages of The Shakespeare Repertory, The Goodman, Steppenwolf, The Court Theatre and many other theatres in the Chicago area and around the country.

In January 1996, *The Shakespeare Project* began presenting one play per month at the Chicago Cultural Center, 78 East Washington, under agreement with Equity Library Theatre and Actors' Equity Association. Starting in June 1996, *The Shakespeare Project* began also presenting each play at The Berger Park Cultural Center, 6205 N. Sheridan, under contract with The Chicago Park District to augment park programming. Feel free to pick up a schedule of upcoming events as you leave the performance today. Join us next month for the classic tragedy of *Macbeth*. All readings begin at 1:00 p.m. and are free to the public. Donations are accepted. For further information or to book a reading by *The Shakespeare Project*, call (312) 252-8544.

## The Shakespeare Project

Presents



## A Theatrical Reading of Measure for Measure

Direction: Michelle Sterling

This is a Special Project of Equity Library Theatre Chicago. All of the actors are members of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers, and are contributing their talents under a Special Agreement between E.L.T. and A.E.A.

## Director's Comments:

*Measure for Measure* is a fascinating and difficult play. Considered by many critics as a "Problem Play," one problem that doesn't exist is the approximate dating of the play. The Master of the Revels records the performance of a play called "Mesur for Mesur" by "Shaxberd" at Whithall on St. Stephen's Night (Dec. 26) 1604. The play was first published in the Folio of 1623, where it appears as the fourth play in the section of Comedies. By Elizabethan standards, a comedy was a play that ended in a marriage. In the modern sense, a comedy has humor and a happy ending. Herein lies the "problem" of *Measure for Measure*. The play is not concerned with the rituals of courtship and romantic love; the humor originates from the low characters and is not germane to the plot; the ending is tidy, but not really "happy" for all the characters; and even the marriages are not necessarily cause for celebration. I find *Measure for Measure* closer to the tragedies in theme and imagery, with main characters full of complications and contradictions.

The title *Measure for Measure* comes from St. Matthew's account of Christ's Sermon on the Mount: "Judge not, that ye shall be judged. For with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured unto you again." In this play, Shakespeare explores the concepts of Justice and Mercy and the dichotomy found in the law, which compels government to punish the criminal, and religion, which teaches man to forgive the sinner. The examination of morality codified and punishable by law and corrupt rulers who punish others for the very crimes they have committed, is certainly relevant to the modern audience. But the relationship of a ruler and the law was very topical to Shakespeare's audience as well. Only a year before the play's production, James I became King of England and his book *Basilicon Doron* (Royal Gift) was widely discussed among his subjects. In it, James opines that, "*Lawes are ordained as rules of vertuous and sociall living, and not to be snares to trap your good subjects: and therefore the lawe must be interpreted according to the meaning, and not to the literall sense.*" In a play populated by characters who are "desperately mortal", Shakespeare pays tribute to his patron and most esteemed audience member, in this exploration of the uses and abuses of power. "*They say best men are molded out of faults And, for the most, become much more the better For being a little bad*". (*Measure for Measure*, 5.1.444-446)

*Michele Sterling*

## The Shakespeare Project

Presents

# Measure for Measure

The Players

(in order of appearance)

<i>The Duke</i> .....	<i>Alan Ball</i>
<i>Escalus</i> .....	<i>Richard Sullivan Lee</i>
<i>Angelo</i> .....	<i>Peter Witrock</i>
<i>Mistress Overdone</i> .....	<i>Judy Blue</i>
<i>Pompey</i> .....	<i>Lance Retallick</i>
<i>Lucio</i> .....	<i>Phillip VanLear</i>
<i>Provost</i> .....	<i>Rick Carter</i>
<i>Claudio</i> .....	<i>David Skidmore</i>
<i>Juliet</i> .....	<i>Sandi Litt</i>
<i>Friar Peter</i> .....	<i>Lance Retallick</i>
<i>Isabella</i> .....	<i>Mara Polster</i>
<i>Nun</i> .....	<i>Judy Blue</i>
<i>Elbow</i> .....	<i>Christopher Walz</i>
<i>Froth</i> .....	<i>Dennis Sook</i>
<i>Servant</i> .....	<i>Lance Retallick</i>
<i>Mariana</i> .....	<i>Nancy Nichol</i>
<i>Abhorson</i> .....	<i>Christopher Walz</i>
<i>Messenger</i> .....	<i>Dennis Sook</i>
<i>Bernardine</i> .....	<i>Dennis Sook</i>

Scene: Vienna

There will be one 10 minute intermission