

Educational Outreach

Attention Educators:

We are proud to announce availability of our newest educational outreach offering, “50-Minute Romeo and Juliet”. This abridged telling of Shakespeare's timeless love story focuses directly on the journey of the star-crossed lovers from their first encounter through their untimely end. Two actors portray Romeo and Juliet; two supporting actors play multiple roles in the play. A perfect complement to classroom studies of Romeo and Juliet and an exciting theatrical experience in your classroom. “50-Minute Romeo and Juliet” premiered on September 14, 2011 at The Newberry Library, Chicago. For more information on Shakespeare Project educational outreach bookings, contact peter@shakespeareprojectchicago.org.

STILL TO COME THIS SEASON!

Troilus and Cressida – April 21-22, 2012

“Love, friendship, charity are subjects all/ To envious and calumniating time...”

Shakespeare explores the nature of honor and fidelity in this “problem play” inspired by tales in Homer’s Iliad. Set during the final years of the Trojan War, it tells the tale of a young Trojan prince who falls in love with a defecting Trojan prophet’s daughter. Meanwhile, the proud Greek warrior Achilles refuses a challenge to fight the honorable Trojan prince Hector. But promises are broken and the hope of a people is destined to fall. Who, if anybody, will be victorious in the end? Associate Artistic Director Barbara Zahora directs.

Performances:

Saturday, April 21 at 10:00AM, [The Newberry Library](#), 60 W. Walton Street, Chicago, Illinois

Saturday, April 21 at 2:00PM, [The Wilmette Public Library](#), 1242 Wilmette Avenue, Wilmette, Illinois

Sunday, April 22 at 2:00PM, [The Highland Park Public Library](#), 494 Laurel Avenue, Highland Park, Illinois

An introduction to the play commences 15 minutes prior to curtain.
Admission is free, seating is limited.

THE
SHAKESPEARE
PROJECT OF CHICAGO

the world in words

PRESENTS

50-Minute Hamlet

From

The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark

By William Shakespeare

Adapted and Directed by Jeff Christian

April 12, 2012

Palatine Public Library



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

The Shakespeare Project of Chicago gratefully acknowledges *all* of the generous contributions made by its valued patrons over the past 16 years. With heartfelt thanks, we recognize contributors to our 2011-2012 season:

Francois Alouf, Anonymous, Karin Catania, Jeff Christian, Sheldon & Kayla Cohen, Brooks Davis, Mr. & Mrs. Ron Denham, Hannah Finston, Patrick Gagnon, Barbara S. Glatt, *In memory of Margaret D. Garino*, Virginia Gibbon, Joan Golder, Phillip & Suzanne Gossett, Christopher & Karen Harris, Chris & Suzanne Henn, Elissa L. Issacs, Kathy Janies, Leigh Johnson, Michael Laird, Donald & Sharen Linder, Vicki & Duane Mellema, George & Mary Messenger, Margaret L. Moses, Edward W. Muir, Jr., Daniel Pinkert & Freddie Greenberg, Dawn & John Palmer, Marina C. Phelps, Elizabeth Pollace, Gail Rastorfer, Catherine Regalado, Mary Ringstad, Julian & Lu Ann Schachner, Regina Schwartz & William A. Davis, Eric & Jill Schiller, *In honor of Florence Haggan Sheridan & Megan Gibbons Glasgow*, *In memory of John F. Sherman*, Felicity & Thomas Skidmore, Jack & Joan Spatafora, Melanie J. Spitz, Richard Strier & Camille Bennett, Dick & Mary Woods, Barbara & George Zahora

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Hamlet in 50 minutes? How do you do that?

Notes from the adapter and director, Jeff Christian

Not only is that a question I hear a lot these days, but it was one I continually asked myself when I agreed to take on this project. The Shakespeare Project of Chicago decided that it was incumbent upon us to offer an outreach program that could give students a quick and exciting introduction to the power of Shakespeare. We bandied about many ideas before settling on a condensed version of what many consider to be the greatest drama in English literature.

Budgets being what they are, I decided that we should pare the cast down along with the story, and arrived at this two-actor format. Having given myself some seemingly unworkable constraints, I set to work on the adaptation. I soon realized that it is both the story and the exquisite use of language that make the play so engrossing, so I knew that I could sacrifice neither in this 50 minute version. I plotted out the story line to its essence and began cutting. It became readily apparent that we would need some kind of narration to guide us through the story, and that it could be utilized without compromising the poetry or any of the most famous lines.

I also acknowledged that we needed a way into the story. Like many students, I was intimidated by Shakespeare and didn't think that it had anything to offer a modern young man like myself. By giving each actor a unique point of view on how the telling of the story should be approached, we created even more dramatic conflict while allowing humor to put the audience at ease. By requiring one actress to play all the roles in the play, save the titular one, we also gave the audience a better opportunity to connect with that actress as a person and to marvel at her theatrical flexibility. Furthermore, this had the effect of solidifying Hamlet's relationship to the audience and further elucidated his internal conflicts for them.

This production has played well to very young students, as well as to veteran play-goers (in fact, my parents used a viewing of the show as a refresher course before endeavoring to attend a full production). We hope that you enjoy the show.

Artist Biographies



David Skidmore (Guy) appeared this season in the title role in *Richard II*. Last season, he appeared as Doctor Caius and Bardolph in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* and Lucio in *Measure for Measure* and previously as Faulkland in *The Rivals*. In addition to his work with The Project, David has acted professionally in Philadelphia, Boston, Chicago and Milwaukee in a variety of contemporary and classical roles. David is currently Board President and is a founding member of The Shakespeare Project, and has been involved in many Project productions over the years, performing such roles as Lear's Fool, Puck, Iago, Cassio, Petruchio, Troilus, Dogberry, Hotspur, Henry VI, Romeo and Hamlet (in The Project's full theatrical production in 1999), and directing *Richard III* and *Macbeth*. David can also be seen regularly as Hamlet in The Project's *50-Minute Hamlet* in Chicago area schools. David received his BA from Brandeis University and MFA in Acting from Temple University, and studied acting and improvisation at the Piven Theatre Workshop. He is a branding consultant to the healthcare industry.



Barbara Zahora (Gal) is The Project's Associate Artistic Director and has been performing with The Project since 2005. Most recently she worked with artistic director Peter Garino and Michelle Shupe on adapting a new piece for our educational programming, *50-Minute Romeo and Juliet*. Favorite roles for The Project include Queen Elizabeth in *Mary Stuart*, Margaret in Jeff Christian's adaptation of *Henry VI Parts 1, 2, and 3* and Constance Middleton in *The Constant Wife*. Other Chicago credits include Writers' Theatre, ShawChicago, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, First Folio Theatre, Goodman Theatre, Illinois Theatre Center, Oak Park Festival Theatre, Northlight Theatre, and Lookingglass Theatre. She has also performed at a variety of places regionally and internationally, such as the Colorado Shakespeare Festival and Shakespeare's Globe Theatre in London. Barbara is an adjunct faculty member in Roosevelt University's Theatre Conservatory, a voiceover artist, a dialect coach, and a proud member of Actors' Equity Association.

Jeff Christian (Adaptor/Director) led the company for eight seasons, having adapted and directed *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Henry VIII*, the gender-swapped *The Comedy of Errors*, *In Medea Res* (from Euripides' *Medea*), *Henry VI* (from Shakespeare's trilogy), *Faust* (from Marlowe and Goethe), *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 *The Taming of the Shrew*, *King Lear*, *Love's Labours Lost*, *As You Like It*, Schiller's *Mary Stuart*, Sheridan's *The Rivals*, Somerset Maugham's *The Constant Wife* and Regina M. Schwartz's adaptation of John Milton's *Paradise Lost*. Other directing credits include *Mojo Mickybo*, *A Whistle in the Dark* and *Our Father* (Seanachai Theatre Company), *The Skin of Our Teeth* (The Artistic Home), *Proof* and *Driving Miss Daisy* (New American Theater), *As You Like It*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* and *Love's Labours Lost*

(Lakeside Shakespeare; Michigan), *Kill Me* (WildClaw) the short film *Still Live*, both parts of *Angels in America* (The Journeymen; co-director and actor, sharing in three Jeff Awards and an After Dark Award), and James Krag's one-man show *According to Mark*. Acting credits with The Project include Richard III, Brutus, Proteus, Mercutio, Caliban, Oberson/Bottom/Theseus, Enobarbus, Bassanio, Hortensio, Buckingham, Oliver, Amiens, Antonio (*Twelfth Night*), Richard (*Henry VI*), Leicester (*Mary Stuart*), Aegeus (*In Medea Res*), Hamlet in *50 Minute Hamlet*, Satan (*Paradise Lost*) and one of the four actor/singers in *My Name is Will*. Other acting credits include work with The Goodman, Syracuse Stage, Indiana Rep, Writers' Theatre, Chicago Shakespeare, Milwaukee Rep, Madison Rep, The Women's Project of New York, Chicago Dramatists, Lakeside Shakespeare, New American Theater, Artists' Ensemble Theater, Illinois Theatre Center, Oak Park Festival, Artistic Home, Bernie Sahlins' production of *Murder in the Cathedral* and Tennessee Williams' recently discovered *The Day on Which a Man Dies* (in Chicago, East Hampton and Cape Cod). He is a member of the Seanachai ensemble, co-fronts the rock band Ingenious Whittler, teaches directing in Columbia College's Department of Film & Video, is a creative consultant for Tessera Publishing, and writes and directs live action and animated sequences for the Emmy Award winning Digital Kitchen. Film work includes *Batman Begins*, *Witches' Night*, *The Express*, *The Poker House*, *Pickman's Muse*, *Helix*, *Cyrus* and *Good People*. Jeff thanks you for your continued support of The Project.

Peter Garino (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 is co-adaptor with Barbara Zahora and Michelle Shupe of The Project's newest education outreach production, *50-Minute Romeo and Juliet*. This season, he appeared as Vincentio in *The Taming of the Shrew*, Delio in *The Duchess of Malfi* and directed and appeared in *Richard II*. This past season, he directed *The Tempest*, *Measure For Measure* and appeared as Sir Amias Paulet in *Mary Stuart* and George Page in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. Previously for The Project, he appeared in *Paradise Lost*, *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. Other roles includes 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 *Antony and Cleopatra*, *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*. 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.

Welcome!

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 programs (such as 50-Minute Hamlet and 50-Minute Romeo and Juliet) to local schools.

In our theatrical reading series, 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 three local venues for our theatrical reading series are The Newberry Library, Chicago, The Wilmette Public Library and The Highland Park Public Library.

The company draws its talent from the extraordinary pool of local professional actors, all members of Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors. The actors receive a stipend for their work which is well below their regular union pay scale. The Shakespeare Project actors lend their talents to The Shakespeare Project because they share the Project's mission of making the Shakespeare experience accessible to all, regardless of proximity or economic means.

Our mission is to bring "the world in words" to audiences that might otherwise not be able to experience the genius of the greatest dramatist in the English language. Senior citizens and young people are our primary audiences. We pride ourselves in our ability to offer high quality, free performances to a demographic that is not able to afford local Shakespeare offerings. 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 and includes 50-Minute Hamlet (which you are seeing today) and workshops around Macbeth, Romeo and Juliet and The Sonnets. For our young learner audiences, our approach to the work is driven by a simple goal: to make the student's first experience with Shakespeare a positive one.

Thanks for coming. And special thanks to Phil Skeltis and The Palatine Public Library for sponsoring our performance here today.



Peter Garino
Artistic Director
The Shakespeare Project of Chicago
www.shakespeareprojectchicago.org

50-Minute Hamlet

Dramatis Personae (in order of appearance)

Claudius, *King of Denmark*

Hamlet, *son to the late King Hamlet, and nephew to the present King*

Horatio, *friend to Hamlet*

Polonius, *Lord Chamberlain*

Laertes, *son to Polonius*

Ghost of Hamlet's Father

Gertrude, *Queen of Denmark, and mother to Hamlet*

Ophelia, *Daughter to Polonius*

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, *Courtiers*

A Clown, *gravedigger*

Scene: Denmark

A discussion of the play will follow this performance.

All Actors with *The Shakespeare Project of Chicago* are members of Actors' Equity Association.

