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800 E. Grand on Navy Pier  
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# Welcome



## DEAR FRIENDS,

We are thrilled to welcome you to Chicago Shakespeare's 2018/19 Season Opening and Jessica Swale's quick-witted comedy, *Nell Gwynn*. The play's celebrated world premiere at Shakespeare's Globe and its subsequent run on London's West End garnered the coveted Olivier Award for Best New Comedy. UK Director Christopher Luscombe returns both to his *Nell Gwynn*—and to us here at Chicago Shakespeare—assembling an all-star cast for this luminescent play's North American premiere.

As we launch the 2018/19 season, our twentieth year in our artistic home on Navy Pier, our theaters are bustling with work from around the world, fulfilling our mission to serve as a global company reflective of Chicago. While the internationally lauded creative team and cast of *Nell Gwynn* transports audiences in the Courtyard Theater, our WorldStage series activates our expanded campus with two productions that, like our Theater itself, push theatrical boundaries. On the brink of our own midterm elections, *Fight Night* arrives from Belgium, offering up a hilarious, thought-provoking examination of free will and politics. From Bogotá, we bring Circolombia, a high-energy circus spectacle, packed with explosive power, raw skill, and pulsating beats.

This expansive body of work is just the beginning of a year of bold artistry. In the coming months, you can explore re-imaginings of Shakespeare's plays, a hip-hop holiday classic, and more breathtaking work from around the globe. And, beyond our work on stage, our education team is working alongside English teachers to boost literacy skills through theatrical techniques in the classroom. Our home for Shakespeare in the twenty-first century is a dynamic, expansive one. You never know what adventure awaits you at your next visit, and we hope to see you here, again and again! ■

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# About CST

Under the leadership of Artistic Director Barbara Gaines and Executive Director Criss Henderson, Chicago Shakespeare has redefined what a great American Shakespeare theater can be—a company that defies theatrical category. This Regional Tony Award-winning theater's year-round season features as many as twenty productions and 650 performances—including plays, musicals, world premieres, family programming, and presentations from around the globe. The work is enjoyed by 225,000 audience members annually, with one in four under the age of eighteen. Chicago Shakespeare is the city's leading presenter of international work, and in touring its own productions across five continents has garnered multiple accolades, including the prestigious Laurence Olivier Award. Emblematic of its role as a global theater, the company spearheaded Shakespeare 400 Chicago, celebrating Shakespeare's legacy in a citywide, yearlong international arts and culture festival, which engaged 1.1 million people. The Theater's nationally acclaimed arts in literacy programs support the work of English and drama teachers, and bring Shakespeare to life on stage for tens of thousands of their students each school year. Over the summer, the company tours a professional production of Shakespeare's work, free for all, to neighborhood parks across the city. In 2017 the Theater unveiled The Yard at Chicago Shakespeare—with its innovative design that has changed the shape of theater architecture. Together with the Jentes Family Courtyard Theater and the Thoma Theater Upstairs, The Yard positions Chicago Shakespeare as the city's most versatile performing arts center. ■

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# On the Boards



Beginning this December in the Courtyard Theater, lauded director Joe Dowling returns to reimagine his production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, featured in Chicago Shakespeare's inaugural season on Navy Pier. This marks Dowling's latest collaboration on *Midsummer* with composer and music director Keith Thomas. Together, they continue to explore the play and have built an incredible original score that has evolved over the past twenty years. The stories of royalty, quarrelsome fairies, young lovers, and a troupe of players are underscored by vibrant music from jazz and rock to blues and 50's doo wop. Dowling explains the production uses music, raucous humor, and wondrous imagery to examine "those pains that everybody has going from some kind of teenage angst to some sense that we know who we are as people."



In August, the Illinois Theatre Association (ITA) recognized Chicago Shakespeare Theater's Education Department at their Red Carpet Gala with a 2018 Award of Honor. Presenting the award was ITA President Elect and Chicago Shakespeare's longtime partner in education, Kevin Long. In his remarks, Long gave tribute to the Theater's impact: "So many people in this room tonight have been touched by their incredible work . . . Now, our students are teachers, and *they* are engaging their students at Chicago Shakespeare Theater. Chicago Shakespeare's influence is profound." Director of Education and Communications Marilyn J. Halperin, along with Education Outreach Manager Jason Harrington and Learning Programs Manager Molly Truglia, accepted the award with Chicago Shakespeare Executive Director Criss Henderson and Creative Producer Rick Boynton in attendance to honor them.

From left: Chicago Shakespeare Education Department, Molly Truglia, Jason Harrington, and Marilyn J. Halperin; The company of Circolombia; Bentley; photos by Gracie Meier and Roberto Ricciuti.





From Belgium to Bogotá, Chicago Shakespeare hosts seven critically acclaimed companies from five countries in this season's WorldStage series. The adventure begins with SKaGeN's *BigMouth*, a tour-de-force performance from Belgium. Then, enjoy two more boundary-pushing Belgian productions: Ontroerend Goed's *Fight Night* and BRONKS's *Us/Them*. This fall, experience music- and circus-infused artistry with Circolombia, the culminating event of Destinos— Chicago International Latino Theater Festival. In January, France's Compagnie Non Nova brings *L'après-midi d'un foehn version 1*, presented as part of the Chicago International Puppet Theater Festival. The National Theatre of Great Britain's landmark production of *An Inspector Calls* begins in February. *Two Pints* by Ireland's Abbey Theatre is installed in Chicago Shakespeare's lobby Pub, this March.

Bounding on to the Courtyard stage in *Nell Gwynn* in his Chicago Shakespeare debut is the incomparable, inimitable Bentley, who portrays one of King Charles II's twenty-two beloved Cavalier King Charles Spaniels. This is two-and-a-half-year-old Bentley's acting debut, but his cast- and crewmates are all supportive of his recent career shift. "He will have his moment," promises *Nell Gwynn* Director (and canine acting coach) Christopher Luscombe, "It's very exciting to be working with Bentley." Bentley is a true Cavalier King Charles Spaniel, a breed originally known as English Toy Spaniels, later renamed in honor of the king who hardly went anywhere without one nestled in his arms. Charles II's love for humankind's best friend went so far that it's rumored he passed an edict decreeing it unlawful to refuse the spaniel's entry to any public place in his realm.

# A Conversation with the Playwright



Visit [chicagoshakes.com](http://chicagoshakes.com) to explore more ideas and stories behind the art on CST's stages.

## Jessica Swale talks to arts journalist Heather Neill about the world of *Nell Gwynn*.

### NELL GWYNN

- BY JESSICA SWALE
- DIRECTED BY CHRISTOPHER LUSCOMBE
- COURTYARD THEATER
- SEPTEMBER 20–NOVEMBER 4, 2018
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*Nell Gwynn* Playwright  
Jessica Swale

Interview first appeared in Shakespeare's Globe program with the play's premiere in 2015. Reprinted with permission of Heather Neill, a freelance journalist and arts writer in the UK.

**Heather Neill:** *Nell Gwynn*, orange seller and mistress of Charles II, is a figure of legend, but where did she come from?

**Jessica Swale:** It's hard to know exactly; working-class lives weren't recorded in enough detail for there to be accurate records, but many believe she was brought up in Coal Pan Alley in Covent Garden, where her mother, 'Old Ma Gwynn,' kept a brothel. Nell probably worked there, either serving drinks to clients or as a prostitute. . . . Her father died in a debtors' prison and she had one sister called Rose. Part of the joy of writing *Nell Gwynn* has been sketching around the bones of the known facts, imagining and inventing. I never set out to write a documentary-style play, but even if I had, the task would have proved impossible with the inconsistencies and contradictions in her history.

**What was theater like when it was re-established after Cromwell's Commonwealth?**

When Charles II returned from France in 1660, he licensed two theater companies in London: Killigrew's 'King's Company' at Drury Lane and Davenant's 'Duke's Company' at Lincoln's Inn Fields. I imagine Killigrew must have been under tremendous pressure as the two companies were in constant competition. . . . As for John Dryden [poet and playwright, who is among *Nell Gwynn*'s characters], it is funny that so many of his plays are badly written, but he must have felt the weight of expectation; theater was re-emerging after an eleven-year gap, he was at the helm of the new culture, the king wanted new plays—it can't have been easy. No wonder they reinvented so many familiar texts. There was a fashion for rewriting Shakespeare,



particularly cheering up the tragedies. *King Lear* was given a new ending in which Cordelia survives, and Dryden wrote a ‘new play’ called *The Enchanted Island*, about Prospero and his two daughters—Miranda and Dorinda. Sound familiar? Yet, though his plays haven’t stood the test of time, he was a successful poet and even became Poet Laureate.

**Part of the joy of writing**  
**Nell Gwynn has been**  
**sketching around the**  
**bones of the known facts,**  
**imagining and inventing**

**How did the first actresses fit into the picture?**

Charles II had seen actresses on stage in Paris and decided it was high time we followed fashion. However, the early actresses got a rather raw deal. Writers knew the audiences’ interest in actresses was often voyeuristic, so played into this by writing body-exposing rape scenes, or writing ‘breeches parts,’ in which women, disguised as tight-trousered men (exposing their shapely legs) were then revealed to be female with the dramatic exposure of their breasts. Male audience members often paid an extra penny to watch the actresses change, many of whom were prostitutes. This was Nell’s world, but I wanted her to question it.

**You have actors demonstrating ‘attitudes,’ poses to indicate emotions. Would the acting style have seemed alien to us?**

It’s easy to assume that it was melodramatic, but actually [diarist Samuel] Pepys describes the best actors as seeming real, so I wonder if the style somehow used precise physical positions as a structure, rather like ballet, whilst still being emotionally connected, like naturalism. The ‘attitudes’ weren’t static poses but frameworks of movements and gestures that actors used to underscore the text. As theaters were large buildings, it was important that emotion could be read in an actor’s posture. Heightened emotion, stylized, but still real.

**Are the songs in the play based on the music of the period?**

They’re certainly inspired by it. I love writing lyrics, and had been listening to everything from Purcell to an album called *The History of Bawdy Songs*, which tells you all you need to know! So I would write in pastiche of a style, then pass the lyrics on to Nigel Hess, who would transform them by writing original melodies and scoring them so beautifully that they’d become unrecognizable. He is a genius, I think. ►►

### How much is known of Nell's relationship with the king?

I think they really were in love. She was his favorite mistress for many years, and they spent a lot of private time together. He had a secret passage built from his court rooms in Westminster to her house in Pall Mall, so they could rendezvous for card games and evenings away from the public. Unlike Barbara Castlemaine, she made no attempt to interfere in politics and never asked for a title for herself (though she did for her sons). Louise de Kérouaille, another favorite mistress and Nell's rival, was tremendously unpopular and was known as 'the Catholic whore.' There's a story that a crowd once attacked Nell's coach thinking Louise was inside, so Nell merrily stuck her head out and said, 'Hold, good people, I am the Protestant whore!' which garnered whoops and cheers from the delighted onlookers. The people loved her because she was one of them. And, of course, there's Charles' famous dying wish, 'Let not poor Nellie starve.'

### Who was Arlington, the courtier?

Arlington was an ambitious advisor to the king, significantly older and more experienced. I've conflated him with Buckingham to give Charles a right-hand man. He may seem outspoken in his manner with the king, but the reality is that the court was terribly shaken after the Commonwealth, and it was essential that Charles didn't put a foot wrong. The divine right of kings had just been re-established, order restored, the aristocrats returned. If Arlington and his courtiers could ensure the king's image was spotless, divine, he would stay on this pedestal. But if his saintly image was tarnished by an affair with a prostitute from Coal Pan Alley, who would see him as divine then? What would stop the next Cromwell?

### The people loved her because she was one of them.

#### One of your themes is celebrity.

It's fascinating to ask whether Nell's celebrity was because of her brilliance as an actress or because she was the king's mistress. Pamphleteers—like paparazzi today—would quickly report the activities of the famous, and Charles

and his mistresses were the hot topic. There was such a frenzy to see him that they even allowed the public into the gallery to watch him eat dinner at night. There was a culture of writing lewd poems about society figures. So if there are a few dirty jokes in the play, don't blame me. It's all in the name of historical accuracy . . .

### Was it difficult to distinguish fact from legend and gossip?

Yes, and I made a decision early on that the play should be an entertaining homage to Nell rather than an attempt at documentary-style historical accuracy. . . . The key events of the play are historically accurate, but I've allowed myself to embellish. Primarily, I wanted it to be fun. And if it's a play that Nell would have enjoyed, that's enough for me. ■



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# NELL GWYNN

by JESSICA SWALE

Music by NIGEL HESS

Scenic & Costume Design  
HUGH DURRANT

Lighting Design  
GREG HOFMANN

Sound Design  
STEPHEN PTACEK

Wig & Make-up Design  
RICHARD JARVIE

Music Direction  
JERMAINE HILL

Choreography  
AMBER MAK

Dialect Coach  
EVA BRENEMAN

Casting  
BOB MASON

New York Casting  
LAURA STANCZYK, CSA

Production Stage Manager  
DEBORAH ACKER

directed by CHRISTOPHER LUSCOMBE

*Nell Gwynn was commissioned by Shakespeare's Globe and premiered at  
the Globe Theatre, London in September 2015.*

---

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**There will be one 15-minute intermission.**



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# Cast

## *The Ladies*

Nell Gwynn, *our heroine*

Rose Gwynn, *Nell's sister*

Nancy, *Nell's dresser and confidante*

Lady Castlemaine, *Charles' most ambitious mistress*

Louise de Kérouaille, *Charles' French mistress*

Queen Catherine, *Charles' Portuguese wife*

Old Ma Gwynn, *Nell's mother, a brothel madam*

**SCARLETT STRALLEN\***

**EMMA LADJI**

**NATALIE WEST\***

**EMILY GARDNER XU HALL\***

**HOLLIS RESNIK\***

## *The Gents*

King Charles II, *the King. Obviously.*

Charles Hart, *leading actor in the King's Company*

Thomas Killigrew, *manager of the King's Company*

Edward Kynaston, *actor who plays the women's parts*

John Dryden, *playwright*

Lord Arlington, *Charles II's advisor*

Ned Spiggett, *actor-in-training in the King's Company*

William, *a servant*

Oliver Cromwell

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**CARTER SHERMAN†**

Understudies never substitute for listed players unless a specific announcement is made at the time of the performance: Rengin Altay\* for *Queen Catherine/Old Ma Gwynn, Nancy*; Jeff Diebold\* for *King Charles II, Charles Hart*; Emily Goldberg for *Rose Gwynn, Ensemble*; Colin Lawrence for *Ned Spiggett, Ensemble*; Maddy Low for *Ensemble*; Emily Rohm\* for *Nell Gwynn*; Colter Schmidt for *Ensemble*; Kelsey Shipley for *Lady Castlemaine/Louise de Kérouaille*; Robert Sicklesteel for *Ensemble*; Ryan Stajmiger for *John Dryden, Ensemble*; and David Turrentine\* for *Thomas Killigrew, Edward Kynaston, Lord Arlington*.

Production Stage Manager

**DEBORAH ACKER\***

Assistant Stage Manager

**SAMMY BROWN\***

(*through October 28*) and

Stage Manager (*beginning October 30*)

Assistant Stage Manager

**HANNAH WICHMANN\***

(*beginning October 30*)

\*denotes member of Actors' Equity Association.

†Chicago Shakespeare Theater gratefully acknowledges Carin Silkaitis along with the faculty of North Central College for their participation in this production's intern program.

# Playgoer's Guide

## THE STORY

The Commonwealth is dead. Long live the King! As women first set foot upon the English stage, Nell Gwynn peddles oranges at the new theater in Drury Lane to help support her mother and sister, Rose. Crushing a heckling patron with her sharp wit and comedic grace, Nell catches the eye, and affection, of Charles Hart, lead actor in the King's Company. Under Hart's tutelage, she channels her charms into a different kind of performance, impressing the theater manager, Thomas Killigrew, as well as the playwright, John Dryden. And so it is that Nell swaps orange-selling in the audience for acting on the stage. As she enchants her theater-going public, Nell captures the heart of England's new king, for whom mistresses offer the spice of life. Resisting the fierce objections of Lord Arlington, his chief political advisor, King Charles II grows devoted to a young actress raised up from her mother's Coal Pan Alley brothel. And Nell, as she assumes the role of England's leading lady, soon becomes the king's, as well. But with the affections of Charles comes the acrimony of court life, and Nell must choose her favorite part to play.

## WHO'S WHO IN HISTORY

(abridged and selectively curated...)

**NELL GWYNN** According to many accounts of her early life, Nell lived with her sister Rose and her mother in London's Coal Yard Alley ["Cole Pan" in the play script], where she worked in her mother's brothel and sold food in the streets. Around age fourteen, Nell began to sell fruit to playgoers at Drury Lane, where some accounts suggest she was discovered by the King's Company theater troupe. By the time Nell was seventeen, she had become one of England's most beloved comedic actresses—and it was in this role that she first caught the eye of the king of England. Retiring from the stage when she was twenty-one, Nell Gwynn died in 1687, two years after the king's death.

**KING CHARLES II** Known as the "Merry Monarch," Charles II reigned (1660–1685) during the Restoration period following the English Civil War, in which his father, King Charles I, was executed. As a young man, Charles lived in exile for nine years in Continental Europe, from which he returned in 1660 with decidedly European cultural tastes. As king, he was criticized for his inability to act decisively, appearing fearful of upsetting the balance of power between him, Parliament, and his people. Without legitimate heirs, he named his younger brother James his successor—the last Catholic to reign in England.

**CHARLES HART** Lauded leading actor of the King's Company, Hart was a boy actor before the Civil War and performed at Drury Lane during the Restoration. It is widely believed that he and Nell were lovers, and that Hart helped train Nell as an actor.

**THOMAS KILLIGREW** Best remembered as manager of both the King's Company and Drury Lane, Thomas Killigrew began his career as a dramatist. A Royalist, he supported the monarchy and went into exile during the Civil War and Interregnum. After the monarchy was restored to the English throne, for his allegiance Killigrew was granted a coveted royal license to form the King's Company. He was later appointed Master of the Revels, the official who regulated England's entertainment industry.

**JOHN DRYDEN** Dryden was one of the most prolific literary figures of the Restoration era. A playwright, translator, and poet, Dryden helped cultivate a distinct style of writing associated with the period. Working with actress Nell Gwynn, he wrote plays that would highlight her talents. King Charles II named Dryden England's Poet Laureate.

**EDWARD KYNASTON** Edward Kynaston made his name playing women's roles. Samuel Pepys, the famous diarist, referred to Kynaston as the "loveliest lady" he ever saw. Kynaston transitioned to playing male roles in 1662 when it became illegal for men to play female characters.

**LORD ARLINGTON** During the king's European exile, Henry Bennet, 1st Earl of Arlington, served as an agent to England's royal family. He later became secretary of state under Charles II. Bennet was among the ministers who pushed the king to pursue relations with Louise de K rouaille.

**QUEEN CATHERINE** Daughter of Portugal's king, Catherine of Braganza was married to King Charles II to secure an alliance between England and Portugal. She is said to have cared for Charles II, who spent most of his time with his many mistresses. Being Catholic in a Protestant land made Catherine an unpopular queen. Members of the court pressured the king to divorce the woman who had borne no heirs, but the two remained married until Charles II's death in 1685.

**LADY CASTLEMAINE** Countess of Castlemaine, Barbara Villiers became a favorite among the king's mistresses, whom he appointed "Lady of the Bedchamber," despite the queen's vehement opposition. Villiers was deeply invested in politics: she vied for titles and involved herself in political rivalries in the government. She fell from the king's favor when he met Louise de K rouaille. Her son— one of the king's many illegitimate children—Henry FitzRoy is ancestor to the Spencer line; Prince William will be the first of Charles II's descendants on England's throne.

**LOUISE DE K ROUAILLE** A French noblewoman, Louise de K rouaille was a lady-in-waiting to the French king's sister, with whom she traveled to England in 1670. Members of the court and Parliament conspired with French diplomats to use her to better relations with France. She, too, became a favorite mistress to Charles II—and a rival to Nell Gwynn for his affections. ■

# Profiles



## SCARLETT STRALLEN

(Nell Gwynn) **CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE:** Debut. **BROADWAY:** *Travesties*, *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder*, *Mary Poppins*. **OFF-BROADWAY:** *The New Yorkers* (NY City

Center/Encores!); *Macbeth* (Park Avenue Armory). **REGIONAL:** *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Hartford Stage); *Pirates of Penzance* (Barrington Stage Company). **WEST END:** *She Loves Me*, *Candide*, *A Chorus Line*, *Mary Poppins*, *Singin' in the Rain* (Olivier Award nomination), *Clara in Passion*, *The Music Man*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *HMS Pinafore* (Olivier Award nomination), *Cymbeline*, *Twelfth Night*. Ms. Strallen was seen as Laurey in the concert production of *Oklahoma!* at Royal Albert Hall with the John Wilson Orchestra, as well as numerous other concerts with symphony orchestras globally.



## DAVID BEDELLA

(Edward Kynaston) **CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE:** Debut. **CHICAGO:** *West Side Story*, *Evita*, *A Chorus Line* (1985 Jeff Award - Actor in a Supporting Role in a Musical), *My*

*One and Only*, *Rags*, *La Cage aux Folles*, *Sweet Charity*, *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, *Dreamgirls* (Candlelight Dinner Playhouse); *Lyle the Crocodile* (Forum Theatre); *Man of La Mancha* (Drury Lane Theatre); *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, *Book of the Night* (Goodman Theatre). **BROADWAY:** *Smokey Joe's Café* (Virginia Theatre). **REGIONAL:** *West Side Story* (Paper Mill Playhouse); *Paint Your Wagon* (Goodspeed Musicals). **TOUR:** *Jesus Christ Superstar* (20th Anniversary National Tour); *Almost Like Being in Love: The Lerner and Loewe Songbook in Concert* with Diahann Carroll. **LONDON:** extensive stage and screen credits spanning eighteen years, with five series for the BBC and a live monthly chat show at the St. James Theatre. On stage, he created the role of Satan in *Jerry Springer: The Opera* (West End, Carnegie Hall, Australia; Olivier Award - 2004 Best Actor in a Musical) and Kevin in *In the Heights* (Olivier Award - 2016 Best Supporting Actor in a Musical).



## ALLISON SELBY COOK

(Ensemble) **CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE:** Debut. **CHICAGO:** *Heartbreak House*, *Misalliance*, *You Never Can Tell*, *Jeeves in Bloom* (ShawChicago

Theater Company); James Joyce's *The Dead* (Court Theatre); *Pygmalion* (Remy Bumppo Theatre Company); *Spooky Shakespeare* (Shakespeare Project of Chicago); *La Traviata*, *Die Fledermaus* (DuPage Opera Theatre); *La Tragédie de Carmen*, *Faces of Eurydice* (CUBE Ensemble). **INTERNATIONAL:** opera and early music festivals in Siena (Italy), New York, Boston, Berkeley; WFMT 98.7FM radio broadcast. **CONCERT:** Ravinia with Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Newberry Consort, Marion Consort, UNUM. **EDUCATION:** Northwestern University. Ms. Cook is a classical actor, singer, and multi-instrumentalist specializing in early music and historical performance. [www.AllisonSelbyCook.com](http://www.AllisonSelbyCook.com)



## RICHARD DAVID

(Ned Spiggett/Ensemble) **CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE:** *Macbeth*. **CHICAGO:** *For the Loyal* (Interrobang Theatre Project); *Letters Home* (Griffin Theatre

Company); *Force Continuum* (Eclipse Theatre Company); *You for Me for You* (Sideshow Theatre Company); *Peerless* (understudy, First Floor Theater).

**REGIONAL:** *Every Tongue Confess* (Horizon Theatre Company). **TELEVISION:** *Chicago Med* (NBC). **FILM:** *Addicted to You*, *Unconditional*. **EDUCATION:** BFA, Chicago College of Performing Arts.



## JEFF DIEBOLD

(William/Ensemble) **CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE:** *Short Shakespeare! The Comedy of Errors*, *Hamlet*, *The Three Musketeers*, *Kabuki Lady Macbeth*. **CHICAGO:** *My*

*Fair Lady* (Lyric Opera of Chicago); *Mamma Mia!* (Paramount Theatre); *The Addams Family* (Mercury Theater Chicago); *Hello Dolly!*, *The Sound of Music* (Drury Lane Theatre); *Man of La Mancha*, *Guys and Dolls* (Court Theatre). **TOUR:** *Mamma Mia!*



(Broadway North American Tour).

**REGIONAL:** Beef and Boards Dinner Theatre, Montana Shakespeare in the Parks  
**TELEVISION:** *Chicago Med*, *Chicago Fire* (NBC). **EDUCATION:** BS in education, Buffalo State College; MFA in acting, Roosevelt University.



# **EMILY GARDNER XU HALL**

(*Lady Castlemaine*/  
*Louise de K rouaille*)

## **CHICAGO**

**SHAKESPEARE:** Debut.

**NEW YORK:** *Stockholm*

(Stageworks Hudson);

*Black Is Beautiful But It*

*Ain't Always Pretty* (The Public Theater's Under the Radar Festival); *I Am This for You* (Ars Nova ANT Fest); readings and workshops at: The Public Theater, Signature Theatre, Ma-Yi Theater Company, Red Bull Theater, Page 73; commission for Cornerstone Theater Company. **REGIONAL:** *Snow Queen* (Triad Stage); *The Light Princess* (Arden Theatre Company). **AWARDS:** inaugural Lilly Award for the Stacey Mindich "Go Write a Musical Award." **EDUCATION:** BA in music and English, Wellesley College; MFA in acting, New York University Tisch School of the Arts. Ms. Hall's work as a playwright and composer centers on feminist perspectives inclusive to people of color. She is a member of the BMI Lehman Engel Musical Theatre Writing Workshop, Johnny Mercer Songwriters Project, New Dramatists Composer-Librettist Studio, Catwalk Institute residency program, and the Rising Circle INKtank. Her work has been featured at 54 Below, New York Musical Festival, and Joe's Pub.



# **TIMOTHY EDWARD KANE**

(*King Charles II*)

## **CHICAGO**

**SHAKESPEARE:** sixteen

productions including

*Tug of War: Civil Strife*,

*A Midsummer Night's*

*Dream, The Comedy of*

*Errors, A Flea in Her Ear, Love's Labor's Lost, Henry IV Parts 1 and 2* (at CST and at the Royal Shakespeare Company, Stratford-upon-Avon), *King John, King Lear*. **CHICAGO:** *An Iliad, All My Sons, Harvey, One Man, Two Guvnors, The Illusion, Wild Duck, Titus Andronicus, Uncle*

*Vanya, The Romance Cycle, Hamlet* (Court Theatre); *The North Plan* (Steppenwolf Theatre Company); *Buried Child, Hamlet, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead, Arms and the Man* (Writers Theatre); *Faceless, Lost in Yonkers, The Miser, She Stoops to Conquer* (Northlight Theatre); *Blood and Gifts* (TimeLine Theatre Company). **REGIONAL:** The Mark Taper Forum, Notre Dame Shakespeare Festival, Peninsula Players, Illinois Shakespeare Festival. **TELEVISION:** *Chicago Fire* (NBC). **EDUCATION:** BS, Ball State University; MFA, Northern Illinois University.



# **EMMA LADJI** (*Rose*

*Gwynn*) **CHICAGO**

**SHAKESPEARE:** *Short*

*Shakespeare! Romeo*

*and Juliet, Pericles,*

Chicago Shakespeare in

the Parks productions of

*Shakespeare's Greatest*

*Hits and Romeo and Juliet*. **CHICAGO:** *Quixote: On the Conquest of Self* (Writers Theatre); *Mother of Smoke* (Walkabout Theater); *A Christmas Carol* (Goodman Theatre); *A Hedda Gabler* (assistant director), *Mnemonic* (Red Tape Theatre); *Year of the Rooster* (Red Theater Chicago). **INTERNATIONAL:** *United States of Amnesia* (New Now Festival, Amsterdam with ROOM916). **EDUCATION:** BA in theatre and acting, minor in black world studies, Columbia College Chicago.



# **JUSTIN LaFORTE**

(*Ensemble*) **CHICAGO**

**SHAKESPEARE:** Debut.

**CHICAGO:** *Fun Home*

(Victory Gardens

Theater); *Jesus Christ*

*Superstar, Rent* (Jeff

Award - Best Musical,

Theo Ubique Cabaret Theatre); *In the Heights, Memphis* (Porchlight Music Theatre); *Bat Boy: The Musical* (Griffin Theatre Company). **AWARDS:** Walter Zanozik Scholarship recipient.

**EDUCATION:** BA in music, Loyola University Chicago. Mr. LaForte is a music composer and arranger for popular gear website zZounds.com.



**NICHOLAS J. OBER**

(Ensemble) **CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE:** Debut.

**OPERA:** *L'enfant et le Sortilège* (University of Maryland); *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Dialogues des Carmélites*. (Northwestern

University). **ORCHESTRA:** Second Bassoon, Evanston Symphony Orchestra.

**EDUCATION:** BM in performance, University of Maryland; MM in performance, Northwestern University.



**LAURA OSTERLUND**

(Ensemble) **CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE:** Debut.

**CHICAGO:** *Medea* (Chicago Opera Theater). **REGIONAL:** *The Coronation of Poppea* (Cincinnati

Opera); *Serse* (Cleveland Opera Theater); *Richard the Lionheart* (Opera Theatre of Saint Louis).

**EDUCATION:** MA in historical performance practice, Case Western Reserve University; BM in early music performance and music history, McGill University.



**HOLLIS RESNIK** (*Queen Catherine/Old Ma Gwynn*)

**CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE:** Miss Judith Smith as Gremio/Peter in *The Taming of the Shrew*, Carlotta Campion in *Follies* (Jeff

Award). **CHICAGO:** *Candide*, *A Little Night Music* (Goodman Theatre); productions with Court Theatre, Northlight Theatre, Marriott Theatre, Apollo Theater Chicago, Ravinia Festival. **REGIONAL:** Amanda in *The Glass Menagerie*, Judy Garland in *End of the Rainbow* (Milwaukee Repertory Theatre); *The Light in the Piazza* (Arena Stage); *Grey Gardens* (Philadelphia Theatre Company); productions with Shakespeare Theatre Company, Long Wharf Theatre, Alliance Theatre, Indiana Repertory Theatre, Arizona Theatre Company. **TOURS:** *Les Misérables*, *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*, *Thoroughly Modern Millie*, *Mother Superior* in *Sister Act*.

**AWARDS:** Twelve Joseph Jefferson Awards, Helen Hayes Award, two Sarah Siddons Awards, Lunt-Fontanne Fellowship 2012.



**EMILY ROHM** (*Ensemble/Dance Captain*)

**CHICAGO**

**SHAKESPEARE:** Jane Doe in *Ride the Cyclone*, Belle in *Beauty and the Beast*. **CHICAGO:** Arminy in *Carousel* (Lyric Opera

of Chicago); title role in *Mary Poppins*, Marian in *The Music Man*, Grace in *Annie*, *Hair* (Paramount Theatre); Jane Ashton in *Brigadoon* (Goodman Theatre); Cosette in *Les Misérables*, Irene Molloy in *Hello Dolly!*, Johanna in *Sweeney Todd* (Drury Lane Theatre); Alice in *Alice in Wonderland* (Marriott Theatre). **OFF-BROADWAY:** *Ride the Cyclone*, *Creature*. **EDUCATION:** BA in music theatre, Lawrence University.



**CHRISTOPHER SHEARD**

(*John Dryden*) **CHICAGO**

**SHAKESPEARE:** *Short Shakespeare!* productions of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Macbeth*, and *Romeo and Juliet*,

Chicago Shakespeare in the Parks production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. **CHICAGO:** Definition Theatre, Remy Bumpo Theatre Company, Steppenwolf Theatre Company, Writers Theatre, American Blues Theater, TimeLine Theatre Company, Windy City Playhouse. **REGIONAL:** American Players Theatre, Great River Shakespeare Festival. **EDUCATION:** BA, Florida State University; MFA, University of Illinois at Urbana/Champaign.



**JOHN TUFTS** (*Charles Hart*)

**CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE:** *Love's Labor's Lost*, *Tug of War*, *Foreign Fire*, *Civil Strife*.

**OFF-BROADWAY:** *Pride and Prejudice* (Lucille Lortel Award nomination,

Primary Stages); *Virtual Meditation* (Ensemble Studio Theatre); *Fashions for Men* (Mint Theater Company). **REGIONAL:** *Romeo in Romeo and Juliet*, Puck in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Hal/Henry V in *Henry IV Parts 1 and 2*, *Henry V*, *The Cooanuts*, *Animal Crackers*, *The Cherry Orchard*, *Into the Woods*, *The Belle's Stratagem* (Oregon Shakespeare Festival);

*Equivocation* (Arena Stage/Seattle Repertory Theatre world premiere); *The Cocoanuts* (Guthrie Theater); *Seagull* (Marin Theatre Company); *The Glass Menagerie* (PlayMakers Repertory Company); *I Am My Own Wife* (Ensemble Theatre Company).

**TELEVISION:** *Fashions for Men* (PBS), *Bad Teacher* (FOX). **FILM:** *Dangers of a Broken Car*, *BAQ-132*. **EDUCATION:** BFA, Carnegie Mellon University.



**BRET TUOMI** (*Thomas Killigrew*) **CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE:** *Macbeth*, *Othello*, *Henry V*, *Julius Caesar*. **CHICAGO:** *Lieb in The Iceman Cometh* (Goodman Theatre);

Victor in *The Price*, Jeff Skilling in *Enron* (TimeLine Theatre Company); Red Will O'Danaher in *The Quiet Man Tales* (Smock Alley Theater Company); Mr. Braithwaite in *Billy Elliot*, Lt. Schrank in *West Side Story* (Drury Lane Theatre); Chanal in *Feydeau-Si-Deau*, Jim Shine in *Two for the Show* (Theater Wit). **BROADWAY:** Hertz in *Rock of Ages*. **REGIONAL:** Notre Dame Shakespeare Festival, Montana Repertory Theatre, Alpine Theatre Project, Montana Shakespeare in the Parks. **FILM:** *Keep the Change* (TNT). **TELEVISION:** *Mind Games* (ABC), *Chicago P.D.* (NBC), *The Fly Fishing Challenge* (ESPN2).



**NATALIE WEST** (*Nancy*) **CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE:** Debut. **CHICAGO:** *Traitor*, *Evening at the Talk House*, *The Mutilated*, *Strandline*, *Mud Blue Sky*, *The Butcher of Baraboo*

(Jeff Award - Actor in a Supporting Role), *Abigail's Party* (Jeff Award - Actor in a Supporting Role, A Red Orchid Theatre); *City of Conversation*, *How I Learned to Drive* (Northlight Theatre); *House and Garden* (Goodman Theatre); *The Man Who Came to Dinner* (Steppenwolf Theatre Company); *Life and Limb* (Jeff Award - Actor in a Supporting Role, Wisdom Bridge Theatre). **INTERNATIONAL:** *The Man Who Came to Dinner* (Barbican Theatre, London). **FILM:** *Nate and Margaret*, *Bushwhacked*, *Poker House*. **TELEVISION:** Crystal in *Roseanne* (ABC). **EDUCATION:** BFA in theatre, Indiana

University; MSW, Loyola University Chicago. **TRAINING:** Webber Douglas Academy, London. Ms. West is an ensemble member of A Red Orchid Theatre and a former ensemble member of Remains Theatre.



**LARRY YANDO** (*Lord Arlington*) **CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE:** *Shakespeare in Love*, *Tug of War*, *Foreign Fire* and *Civil Strife*, *The Tempest* (2002, 2015), *King Lear* (2001, 2014), *Julius*

*Caesar*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Twelfth Night*, *Cymbeline*, *Timon of Athens*, *All's Well That Ends Well*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Henry IV Parts 1 and 2*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *The Two Noble Kinsmen*.

**CHICAGO:** ten years as Scrooge in *A Christmas Carol*, *The Little Foxes*, *Candide*, *The Jungle Book* (Goodman Theatre); *The Dance of Death*, *As You Like It*, *Nixon's Nixon*, *Rocket to the Moon*, *Hamlet*, *Bach at Leipzig* (Writers Theatre); *Angels in America*, *Travesties*, *An Ideal Husband* (Court Theatre); *Fake*, *Mother Courage and Her Children* (Steppenwolf Theatre Company). **TOUR:** three years as Scar in *The Lion King*. **INTERNATIONAL:** Peter Brook's *Battlefield*. **AWARDS:** 2014 Sarah Siddons Society, *Chicago Magazine* Best Chicago Actor, DePaul University's Excellence in the Arts, one of nine national recipients of the prestigious 2010 Lunt-Fontanne Fellowship, four Joseph Jefferson Awards. Mr. Yando has taught acting at DePaul University, Northwestern University, and Chicago Shakespeare and is a freelance acting coach.



**JESSICA SWALE** (*Playwright*) is an Olivier Award-winning playwright, screenwriter, and director. As playwright, Ms. Swale's first play *Blue Stockings* (Shakespeare's Globe)

won her an *Evening Standard* Most Promising Playwright nomination. *Nell Gwynn* (Shakespeare's Globe) transferred to the West End starring Gemma Arterton, and won the Olivier Award for Best New Comedy. Ms. Swale is adapting *Nell Gwynn* as a feature film with Working Title,

alongside original films for Studio Canal and Fox Searchlight, and writing the *Horrible Histories* movie for Altitude. She is currently directing her first feature, *Summerland*, also starring Arterton. Plays include: *All's Will that Ends Will* (Bremen Shakespeare Company); *Thomas Tallis* (Wanamaker Playhouse); adaptations of *Sense and Sensibility*, *Far from the Madding Crowd* (Watermill Theatre); *The Secret Garden*, *Stig of the Dump* (Grosvenor Park, Chester); and *The Jungle Book* (UK Tour); and her new play, *The Mission*, about secret adoptions in the 1920s. Ms. Swale is an associate artist with NGO Youth Bridge Global, author of a best-selling series of drama games books, and is also involved in Times Up UK, actively campaigning for greater equality and diversity across theater and film.



## CHRISTOPHER LUSCOMBE

(Director) CHICAGO

**SHAKESPEARE:** *Henry V.*  
**US DIRECTING CREDITS:**

*Hay Fever* (Guthrie Theater). **UK DIRECTING**

**CREDITS:** *Twelfth Night* (Royal Shakespeare

Company); *Love's Labour's Lost*, *Much Ado About Nothing* (Royal Shakespeare Company, Theatre Royal Haymarket); *The Shakespeare Revue* (Royal Shakespeare Company, Vaudeville Theatre); *Nell Gwynn* (Shakespeare's Globe, Apollo Theatre; Olivier Award - Best New Comedy); *Star Quality*, *The Madness of George III* (Apollo Theatre); *Home and Beauty* (Lyric Theatre); *Fascinating Aida* - *One Last Flutter* (Harold Pinter Theatre, Olivier Award nomination - Best Entertainment); *The Comedy of Errors*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (Shakespeare's Globe); *The Rocky Horror Show*, *Spamalot* (Playhouse Theatre); *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Regent's Park Open Air Theatre); *Enjoy* (Gielgud Theatre); *Alphabetical Order* (Hampstead Theatre); *When We Are Married* (Garrick Theatre, Olivier Award nomination - Best Revival); *Travels with My Aunt* (Menier Chocolate Factory); *Masterpieces* (Birmingham Repertory Theatre); *Little Shop of Horrors*, *The History Boys* (West Yorkshire Playhouse); *Things We Do for Love* (Harrogate Theatre); *Candida* (Oxford Stage Company); *The Likes of Us* (Sydmonton Festival); *Arms and the Man*

(Salisbury Playhouse); *A Small Family Business* (Watford Palace Theatre); *Hobson's Choice* (Crucible Theatre, Sheffield); *Candida* (The Grange Festival); *While the Sun Shine* (Theatre Royal Bath). **TOUR:** *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Tell Me on a Sunday*, *The Lady in the Van*, *Lord Arthur Savile's Crime*, *Single Spies*, *Dandy Dick*, *Blue/Orange*. Mr. Luscombe is an associate artist at the Royal Shakespeare Company.

## NIGEL HESS (Music) CHICAGO

**SHAKESPEARE:** Debut. **BROADWAY:**

*Cyrano de Bergerac*, *Much Ado About Nothing* (Drama Desk Award, Royal Shakespeare Company). **LONDON:** numerous productions for the Royal Shakespeare Company and Shakespeare's Globe. **TELEVISION:** over 100 TV dramas.

**FILM:** includes *Ladies in Lavender* (with violinist Joshua Bell and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra). **SELECT**

**CONCERT:** *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra* (commissioned by HRH The Prince of Wales and recorded by Lang Lang); performances of symphonic wind band music worldwide; Her Majesty the Queen's private ninetieth birthday celebration at Windsor Castle.

**FELLOWSHIP:** St. Catharine's College, Cambridge. Mr. Hess is the great-nephew of British pianist Dame Myra Hess, to whose memory Chicago's series of lunchtime concerts is dedicated. Run by the International Music Foundation, the concerts have recently celebrated their fortieth anniversary.

## HUGH DURRANT (Scenic & Costume Designer) CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE:

Debut. **LONDON:** *Nell Gwynn* (Olivier Award nomination - Best Costume Design), *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers*, *The Mikado*, *Copacabana*, *A Little Night Music* (British premiere), *Company* (British premiere), *Mack and Mabel* (European premiere), *Lady in the Dark* (European premiere).

**AWARDS:** Primetime Emmy Award for *Cher: The Farewell Tour*, three consecutive Olivier Award nominations. **EDUCATION:** MA in fine art, Magdalene College Cambridge. Mr. Durrant has previously collaborated with Christopher Luscombe on his worldwide smash hit productions of *Spamalot* and *The Rocky Horror Show*. In his fifty years as a designer, his range is

extensive from Sophoclean tragedy to Las Vegas extravaganzas, and includes twenty Shakespeare plays (many several times), works by Schiller, Shaw, Ibsen, Strindberg, among others. Next, Mr. Durrant will return for a third consecutive year creating "outrageous and spectacular" costumes for the leading artists in the London Palladium Christmas mega-pantomime.

### GREG HOFMANN (Lighting Designer)

**CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE:** *Peter Pan - A Musical Adventure*, *Schiller's Mary Stuart*, *Love's Labor's Lost*, *Ride the Cyclone*, *Road Show*, *Short Shakespeare!* productions of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Twelfth Night*, and *Romeo and Juliet*. **CHICAGO:** *Elf*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *Mamma Mia!*, *Hairspray*, *Oklahoma*, *Tommy* (Jeff Award), *Mary Poppins*, *Annie*, *42nd Street* (Paramount Theatre); *The Game's Afoot*, *Les Misérables* (Jeff Award nominee), *Oliver!* (Drury Lane Theatre); *A Loss of Roses*, *Vieux Carre* (Raven Theatre); *Sweeney Todd*, *Pal Joey*, *Tick Tick Boom!* (Porchlight Music Theatre); *Wonderland* (Chicago Children's Theatre). **OFF BROADWAY:** *Ride the Cyclone* (MCC Theatre). **REGIONAL:** *Ride the Cyclone* (ACT Theatre); *Marjorie Prime*, *Outside Mullingar*, *Silent Sky*, *Sons of the Prophet* (Forward Theater Company); *American Girls Revue*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *The Music Lesson*, *Anne of Green Gables* (Children's Theater of Madison); *Permanent Collection* (Madison Repertory Theatre). **EDUCATION:** MFA from University of Wisconsin - Madison. Mr. Hofmann has also designed over fifty productions for Cedar Fair amusement parks across the country.

### STEPHEN PTACEK (Sound Designer)

**CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE:** assistant designer for *The Tempest*, *The Little Mermaid*, *Seussical*. **CHICAGO:** *Mies Julie* (Victory Gardens Theater); *Long Way Home* (Q Brothers with Chicago Children's Choir); *The Skin of Our Teeth* (Remy Bumpoo Theatre Company); *The Pride*, *The Flowers*, *Stupid Kids*, *The Young Ladies Of...* (About Face Theatre); *How We Got On* (Haven Theatre Company); *Killer Angels* (Lifeline Theatre); *Breach*, *Roadkill Confidential*, *Dead Letter Office*, *The Twins Would Like to Say*, *God's Ear*, *As Told by the Vivian Girls* (Dog & Pony Theatre Company); *Faster* (Side Project Theatre Company). **FILM:** *May Days*,

*What Remains*, *Some Girls Never Learn*.

**TELEVISION:** *Brujos*. **EDUCATION:** BA in English, theatre arts, University of Iowa. **AWARDS:** Non-Equity Jeff Awards for Sound Design 2008, 2014, 2017; Nicholas Meyer Scholarship for Playwriting 2005. Mr. Ptacek is a member of *El Is A Sound Of Joy*, an astromusicological collective, and a company member with Dog & Pony Theatre Company.

### RICHARD JARVIE (Wig & Make-up Designer)

**CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE:** *Peter Pan - A Musical Adventure*, *Macbeth*, *Schiller's Mary Stuart*, *Red Velvet*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Madagascar - A Musical Adventure*, Chicago Shakespeare in the Parks production of *Romeo and Juliet*, *Shakespeare in Love*, *Short Shakespeare!* productions of *Romeo and Juliet* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Love's Labor's Lost*, *King Charles III*; the inaugural season of Chicago Shakespeare on Navy Pier. **CHICAGO:** Goodman Theatre, Court Theatre, Steppenwolf Theatre Company, Drury Lane Theatre, twenty-eight years with the Lyric Opera of Chicago, eleven of them as the wig master and make-up designer. **REGIONAL:** Alliance Theatre, McCarter Theatre, Guthrie Theater (wig master). **OPERA:** Atlanta Opera, San Francisco Opera, Hawaii Opera, Chicago Opera Theatre, Saint Louis Opera, the Spoleto Festivals of Charleston, South Carolina, and Italy. **INTERNATIONAL:** Tom Patterson Theatre in Stratford, Ontario.

**JERMAINE HILL (Music Director)** **CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE:** *Madagascar - A Musical Adventure*. **CHICAGO:** *Memphis* (Porchlight Music Theatre); *Breathe with Me* (Erasing the Distance); *Ragtime* (Jeff Award - Best Musical, Best Ensemble; Jeff Award nomination - Best Music Direction, Griffin Theatre). **REGIONAL:** *The Lost Colony* (NC). **INTERNATIONAL:** Aldeburgh Festival (UK). **TELEVISION:** *Chicago Med* (NBC). **EDUCATION:** Master of Music, New England Conservatory; Bachelor of Music, Ithaca College. Former Core Associate Member, Chicago Symphony Orchestra Chorus. Mr. Hill is an assistant professor of theatre at Columbia College Chicago and an active music director, pianist/conductor, and vocal coach.



**AMBER MAK** (*Choreographer*) **CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE:** *Peter Pan - A Musical Adventure* (director/choreographer), *The Wizard of Oz* (ensemble member), *The Emperor's New Clothes* (associate director/choreographer to Rachel Rockwell). **CHICAGO:** *The Little Mermaid*, *Hairspray*, *Elf: the Musical* (Paramount Theatre); *Singin' in the Rain* (Drury Lane Theatre, Jeff Award – Choreography); associate director/choreographer to Rachel Rockwell on *Ragtime*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Xanadu* (Drury Lane Theatre); *The Sound of Music* (Lincoln Center Library Archive); *Shout! the Mod Musical* (Marriott Theater). **BROADWAY:** *Big Fish*, SDC observership/assistant to Susan Stroman. **REGIONAL:** *Mary Poppins*, *Swing, Legally Blonde*, *The Sound of Music* (The Little Theatre on the Square); *The Music Man* (Clarence Brown Theatre).

**EVA BRENEMAN** (*Dialect Coach*) **CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE:** *Schiller's Mary Stuart*, *Red Velvet*, *Shakespeare in Love*, *King Charles III*, *Tug of War: Foreign Fire and Civil Strife*, *Henry V*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Elizabeth Rex*, *The Madness of George III*. **CHICAGO:** *The Doppelganger* (Steppenwolf Theatre Company); *The Importance of Being Earnest* (Writers Theatre); *The Belle of Amherst* (Court Theatre); *Lady in Denmark* (Goodman Theatre); *Hard Times* (Lookingglass Theatre Company); *By the Water* (Northlight Theatre). **REGIONAL:** *Always Patsy Cline*, *The Who and the What* (Milwaukee Repertory Theater); three seasons at American Repertory Theater; *Love's Labour's Lost* (Actors Theatre of Louisville); *Around the World in 80 Days* (Center Stage/Kansas City Repertory Theatre). **TOUR:** *Mamma Mia!* (National Tour/Las Vegas). **EDUCATION:** MA, Royal Central School of Speech and Drama; BFA, NYU. Ms. Breneman is an associate artist at TimeLine Theatre Company.

**THERESA HAM** (*Associate Costume Designer*) **CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE:** Costume Designer for *Peter Pan - A Musical Adventure*, *Ride the Cyclone*, *The Little Mermaid*, *Seussical*, *Shrek the Musical*, *Beauty and the Beast* and *Short Shakespeare! Romeo and Juliet*. **CHICAGO:** Bailiwick Chicago, Drury Lane Theatre, Marriot Theatre, Northlight Theatre, Paramount Theatre, The Ryan Opera Center at Lyric Opera Chicago,

DePaul Opera Theatre, Porchlight Music Theatre, Bohemian Theatre Ensemble (artistic affiliate), Theater on the Lake, Stage Left Theatre (artistic associate), First Folio Theatre. **OFF-BROADWAY:** *Ride the Cyclone* (MCC Theatre), **REGIONAL:** Delaware Theatre Company, ACT Theatre, 5th Ave Theatre, The Little Theatre on the Square, Finger Lakes Opera. **EDUCATION:** BA in theatre from Eastern Illinois University, MFA in costume design from Illinois State University. **AWARDS:** Jeff Awards for *The Glorious Ones* (Bohemian Theatre Ensemble) and *The Little Mermaid* (Paramount Theatre). Ms. Ham is an adjunct faculty member at Wilbur Wright College and Columbia College Chicago.

**DEBORAH ACKER** (*Production Stage Manager*) **CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE:** Twenty-nine seasons. **CHICAGO:** *Puttin' on the Ritz* (National Jewish Theater); *Six Degrees of Separation*, *Driving Miss Daisy*, *I'm Not Rappaport* (Briar Street Theatre); *The Nerd* (Royal George Theatre); *A...My Name is Alice* (Ivanhoe Theatre). Ms. Acker has production managed extensively throughout Chicago and has also provided lighting designs for Apollo Theater Chicago, Candlelight Dinner Playhouse, Chicago Shakespeare Theater's Team Shakespeare, Museum of Science and Industry, *Some Like it Cole* (Tour), *Pump Boys and Dinettes* in Branson, Missouri.

**SAMMY BROWN** (*Assistant Stage Manager, through October 28, Stage Manager, beginning October 30*) **CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE:** *Short Shakespeare! A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Chicago Shakespeare in the Parks productions of *Romeo and Juliet* (Stage Manager) and *Twelfth Night* (Assistant Stage Manager), *Peter Pan - A Musical Adventure*, *Red Velvet*, *The Book of Joseph*. **OFF BROADWAY:** *Summer Valley Fair* (Theatre 3, New York Musical Festival); *The Old Man and the Old Moon* (The New Victory Theater). **REGIONAL:** South Coast Repertory, Laguna Playhouse, Williamstown Theatre Festival, Norwegian Cruise Line, Mill Mountain Theatre. **EDUCATION:** MFA in drama, University of California, Irvine; BS in stage management, University of Evansville.

**HANNAH WICHMANN** (*Assistant Stage Manager, beginning October 30*) **CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE:** *The Little Mermaid*. **REGIONAL:** Paramount Theatre, Mercury Theater, 5th Avenue Theatre, Seattle Children's Theatre, Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse, White Heron Theatre Company, Anchorage Ballet, PCPA Theatrefest. **EDUCATION:** MFA in stage management, University of California San Diego.

**BOB MASON** (*Artistic Associate/Casting Director*) is in his nineteenth season as CST's casting director, where his credits include over one hundred productions and thirty-two plays in Shakespeare's canon. In addition to numerous productions with Barbara Gaines, other productions of note include: a host of Sondheim musicals directed by Gary Griffin; *Ride the Cyclone* (CST, MCC, Fifth Avenue/ACT), directed by Rachel Rockwell; *Rose Rage: Henry VI, Parts 1, 2, and 3*, directed by Edward Hall; and *The Molière Comedies*, directed by Brian Bedford. He directed and co-created *Shakespeare Tonight!* with Beckie Menzie, as part of Shakespeare 400 Chicago. Prior to casting, Mr. Mason enjoyed a career as a Jeff Award-winning actor and singer, and has been a visiting educator for the School at Steppenwolf, Acting Studio Chicago, the University of Illinois at Chicago, and Northwestern University.

**LAURA STANCZYK, CSA** (*New York Casting*) **BROADWAY/OFF BROADWAY/TOUR:** *SideShow, After Midnight, A Night With Janis Joplin, Follies, Lombardi, Ragtime, Impressionism, Seafarer, Radio Golf, Coram Boy, Translations, Damn Yankees, Dirty Dancing, The Glorious Ones, Cripple on Inishmaan, Tryst, Flight, Urinetown*. **REGIONAL:** The Broadway Center Stage series at The Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts; premieres of *Cotton Club Parade, Harps and Angels, Me Myself & I, Fetch Clay Make Man, Gruesome Playground Injuries*, and *Golden Age* as well as productions of *Master Class, Lisbon Traviata, Broadway Three Generations, Don't Dress For Dinner, Shawshank Redemption, Long Day's Journey Into Night*. **AWARDS:** nominated for six Artios Awards for excellence in casting; won for Eric Schaeffer's production of *Follies*.

**RICK BOYNTON** (*Creative Producer*) focuses on current and future artistic planning and production, as well as the development of all new plays, musicals, and adaptations for CST. Projects include: *The Book of Joseph, Ride the Cyclone* (CST, MCC, 5th Avenue/ACT, upcoming at Alliance Theatre), *Sense and Sensibility* (CST, Old Globe), *Cadre* (co-director) (CST, Johannesburg, Grahamstown, Edinburgh, Vancouver), *Othello: The Remix* (CST, London, Germany, Edinburgh, South Korea, New York), *Funk It Up About Nothin'* (CST, Edinburgh, Australian tour, London), *A Flea in Her Ear* (CST, Williamstown Theatre Festival), *The Three Musketeers* (CST, Boston, London), *The Emperor's New Clothes, The Adventures of Pinocchio, Murder for Two* (CST, New York), and *The Feast: an intimate Tempest* (in collaboration with Redmoon). Former artistic director of the Marriott Theatre and multiple Jeff Award-winning actor, he has starred in productions nationally, including CST's production of *A Flea in Her Ear* as Camille (Jeff Award, After Dark Award). As casting director/associate at Jane Alderman Casting, projects included: the television series *Early Edition, Missing Persons, Untouchables*, and *ER*; the films *While You Were Sleeping* and *Hoodlum*, among others; and numerous national tours. Mr. Boynton has lectured at his alma mater Northwestern University and is the former president of the board of the National Alliance for Musical Theatre.



**BARBARA GAINES** (*Artistic Director/Carl and Marilyn Thoma Chair*) founded Chicago Shakespeare Theater, where she has directed nearly sixty productions of Shakespeare's plays. Honors include: the 2008 Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre; the prestigious Honorary OBE (Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire) in recognition of her contributions strengthening British-American cultural relations; and Joseph Jefferson Awards for Best Production (*Hamlet, Cymbeline, King Lear*, and *The Comedy of Errors*), and for Best Director (*Cymbeline, King Lear*, and *The Comedy of Errors*). Ms. Gaines

has directed at the Royal Shakespeare Company in Stratford-on-Avon, Lyric Opera of Chicago, and The Old Globe in San Diego. As the cornerstone production of Shakespeare 400 Chicago, the 2016 international celebration of Shakespeare's legacy, she created a world premiere Shakespeare history cycle, *Tug of War*, including the rarely staged *Edward III*. Ms. Gaines received an Honorary Doctorate of Letters from the University of Birmingham (UK), the University Club of Chicago's Cultural Award, and the Public Humanities Award from the Illinois Humanities Council.

the top 40 business people under the age of 40 in *Crain's Chicago Business*. He serves as president of the Producers' Association of Chicago-area Theaters and is director of the MFA/Arts Leadership Program, a two-year, graduate-level curriculum in arts management training created through a joint partnership between Chicago Shakespeare Theater and The Theatre School at DePaul University.



### **CRISS HENDERSON**

*(Executive Director)*

has produced Chicago Shakespeare Theater's past twenty-nine seasons and developed the citywide, yearlong celebration through 2016

of Shakespeare's legacy, Shakespeare 400 Chicago. Under his leadership, CST has become one of the nation's leading regional theaters and one of Chicago's most celebrated cultural organizations, honored with the 2008 Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre, as well as multiple Laurence Olivier and Joseph Jefferson Awards. Mr. Henderson has garnered multiple honors, including: the 2013 Cultural Innovation Award from the Chicago Innovation Awards; the Arts Administrator of the Year by *Arts Management Magazine* at the Kennedy Center, and the Chevalier de L'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres by the Minister of Culture of France. He was named among

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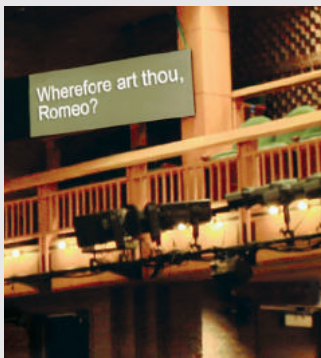


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# Greatness

A Scholar's Perspective on *Nell Gwynn*

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Stuart Sherman, who contributes this essay, is a professor of English at Fordham University and the author of *Telling Time: Clocks, Diaries, and English Diurnal Form, 1660–1785*.

“Some are born great. Some achieve greatness. And some have greatness thrust upon them.”

In these famous lines from Shakespeare’s *Twelfth Night*, “greatness” means high rank: some are born to it, some work their way up to it, and some receive it (by marrying upward, for example) from others more highly placed.

Nowadays, we use “greatness” to connote something larger: some stellar combination of talent, accomplishment, and fame. And by that reckoning, Nell Gwynn remains one of the very few artists in all of history to have fulfilled all three of Shakespeare’s dicta, and with such ferocious, idiosyncratic energy that she changed the fame-game ever after.

She was not born great in Shakespeare’s sense; she grew up in her mother’s brothel, perhaps even working as a prostitute when very young. Still, she was clearly born with the innate, unteachable skill-set by which she’d later make her name: the wit, the insouciance, the fearlessness, the instinct for making every encounter an opportunity for “play” in the widest sense of the word. The tough streets around Coal Yard Alley [“Coal Pan” in the play script] were doubtless a fine place for honing such gifts. But for Nell in that milieu, greatness of any kind must have been barely imaginable.

And greatness on the stage even less so. In England, women had been proscribed for centuries from performing on the public stage—and in any case there were at the moment no English stages to perform on. Eight years before Nell’s birth, a Puritan Parliament had shut down all playhouses as insidious sites of sin. Seven years later, the execution of Charles I initiated a kingless Commonwealth that aimed (among many another cultural shifts) at keeping the theaters closed forever.



When Nell was ten, things changed. In 1660 the English, fed up with Puritan rule, orchestrated a Restoration. They summoned from Europe the exiled son of their executed king. Within a year, the newly crowned Charles II had reopened the playhouses—and had instituted, for the first time in England, the Continental practice of allowing actresses on stage.

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It did not take Nell long to take the lead among them; she achieved her greatness in a few quick steps. By age twelve or thirteen, she got a gig at the King's Theatre working as an orange girl, hawking that snack (the Restoration equivalent of our movie popcorn) among the audience, and deepening her gift for mischief: strutting, swanning, alternately talking up, teasing, and telling off the audience members who

bought her wares or sought her burgeoningly beautiful person. In the tight-knit world of that small playhouse, the actors, too, soon took note and took her in; they made her one of them. By the age of sixteen, she had become something close to a superstar.

Especially in comedies. They gave full scope to her best gifts: the ad-libbing, the swaggering, the sheer sex and sass, the force of personality as a force of nature. The new theaters were, by our reckoning, remarkably “democratic” spaces in a still-monarchic world. Everyone from aristocrats to apprentices attended the same plays, in the same compact and intimate space (the earliest Restoration playhouses were merely remodeled tennis courts). Even the lighting was even-handed: under chandeliers spread across the entire ceiling, audience members could see each other as easily as they could see the players (think of Wrigley Field). In making the crossing from brothel-child to orange wench to comic titan, Nell in her dazzling motility embodied the whole enterprise's energetic essence. Audiences fell in love with her not so much for the way she played her various roles as for the dexterity with which she performed her own supple, kaleidoscopic self.

Soon enough, Charles II followed suit. Having reopened the playhouses, he became the first English monarch to frequent them (his theater-loving predecessors, *pace* Judi Dench in *Shakespeare in Love*, had stayed home ►►



and summoned the theater companies to them). A few years into Nell's career, Charles fell in love with her. She became his mistress, moved into a splendid house of her own near the Palace, and retired from the stage at twenty-one.

She thus had greatness (in Shakespeare's sense) thrust upon her: raised in a brothel, she grew up to give birth to a duke. But to echo Shakespeare's phrase is to misrepresent the transformation as more Charles's "thrusting" choice than as Nell's extraordinary accomplishment. Among the many Ladies

**Nell Gwynn's fame feels  
handmade: brought forth,  
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and Duchesses whom Charles took as mistresses, Nell more than held her own, mastering the graces of the court while retaining her own sharp wit and tongue, her knack for antic self-assertion. She held on to Charles's affections too, through the decade and a half that remained to him; his last words and thoughts were of her.

These days, fame is managed by machine: the vast apparatus of PR in which every star comes swaddled. By contrast, Nell Gwynn's fame feels handmade: brought forth, sculpted, and sustained throughout life by a single profoundly appealing, phenomenally forceful mind. We can see in her what Norman Mailer observed about one of her successors, John Lennon—who, like her, cultivated his gifts in obscurity, then wore his greatness with rare, raw wit and authenticity. Nell was, like John, "a genius of the spirit." She made life more fun for multitudes by remaining, throughout all her guises from alley to playhouse to royal court, her wild, radiant self. ■



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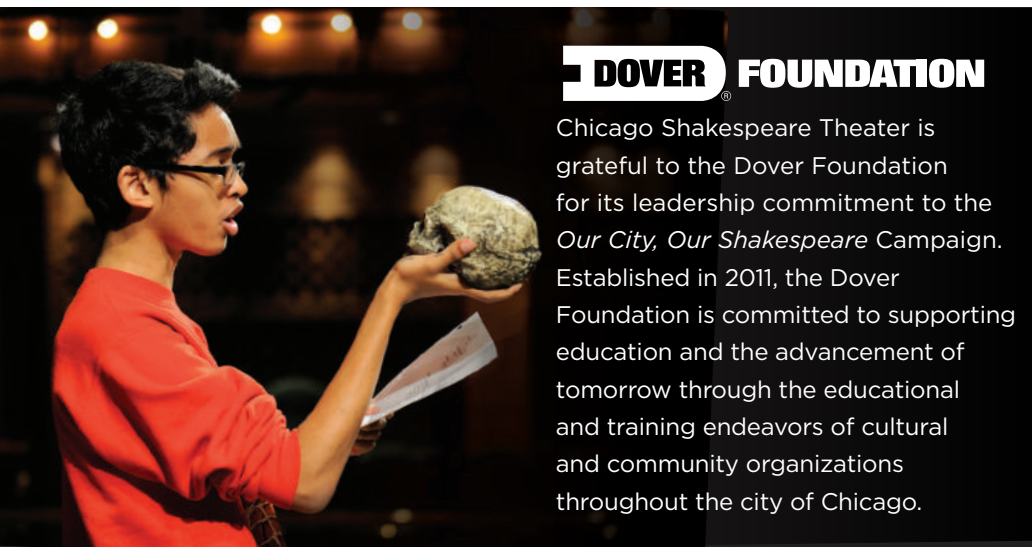
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CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE THEATER

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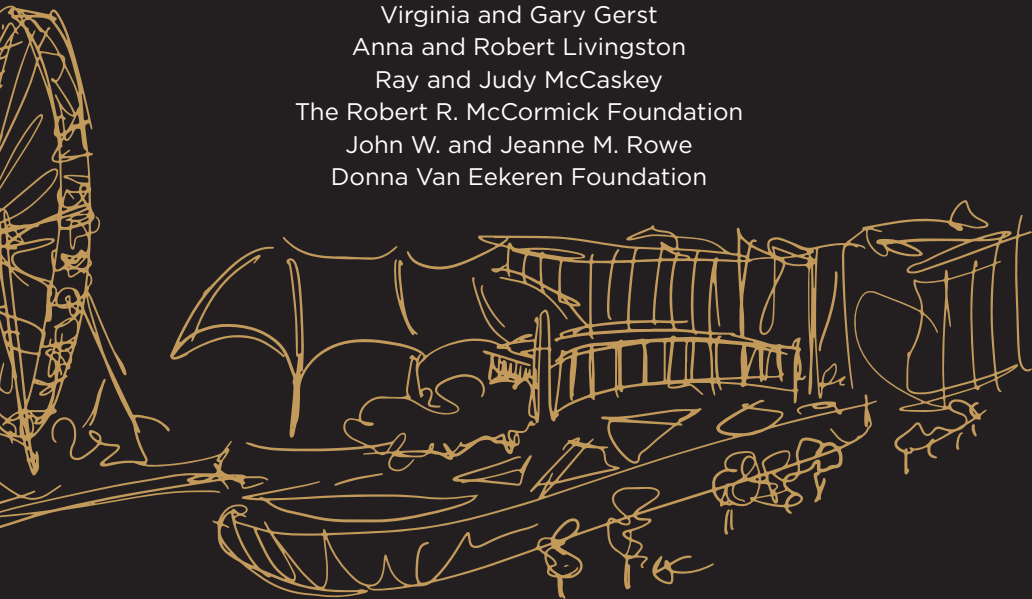
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