THE KING'S SPEECH
On the Boards
A selection of notable CST events, plays, and players

Note From the Director

Cast

Playgoer’s Guide

Profiles

A Scholar’s Perspective
Part of the John W. and Jeanne M. Rowe Inquiry and Exploration Series
Welcome

Welcome to the North American Premiere of The King’s Speech, an inspiring story from Oscar Award-winning writer David Seidler, under the masterful direction of director Michael Wilson. Against a turbulent political backdrop, Seidler illuminates a deeply personal tale: a man’s journey to assume the mantle of leadership as he overcomes his debilitating self-doubt with the help of an unconventional counselor.

At Chicago Shakespeare, we believe in the transformative power of theater. In our arts-based education initiatives, students develop the confidence to express themselves on stage and form meaningful relationships with their peers through programs like the Chicago Shakespeare Slam. Teachers develop new strategies for their classrooms and build valuable networks with colleagues in our professional development programs. And through our work on stage, audiences of all ages discover how Shakespeare speaks to their own lives as they witness his vibrant, very contemporary characters come to life.

We hope to see you later this fall for more stories about people who find courage, hope, and love, despite overwhelming barriers. In October, South Africa’s Isango Ensemble uses song and dance to share a resilient young refugee’s odyssey in A Man of Good Hope. Makuyeika Colectivo Teatral’s Andares reveals the extraordinary, untold stories of México’s indigenous communities. Following these two WorldStage productions, a bold reimagining of Shakespeare’s Romeo and Juliet will lead us back to the neighborhoods of Chicago as two young people fall in love against a backdrop of generations of hatred.

With this exciting line-up ahead, we look forward to welcoming you back to the Theater soon!

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On the Boards

In April 2020, Chicago Shakespeare welcomes the illustrious Royal Shakespeare Company back to Chicago for the first time in 25 years. Artistic Director Barbara Gaines’ Henry IV, Parts 1 and 2 toured to Stratford-upon-Avon during the RSC’s Complete Works Festival in 2006. Now, Chicagoans have the opportunity to experience the RSC’s work through a groundbreaking new production of The Taming of the Shrew. Director Justin Audibert turns Shakespeare’s provocative comedy on its head by setting it in a matriarchal world where women hold all the power.

By reversing the traditional gender of each role, this production offers an “eye-opening and illuminating” (The Stage, UK) perspective on the play’s themes of hierarchy and power. Audiences can look forward to “seeing the RSC in full flow with an array of sumptuous Elizabethan costumes” (Evening Standard, UK).

The Queens of SIX have taken their final bows at Chicago Shakespeare, but their reign continues around the world. The pop-concert spectacle about the wives of Henry VIII made its North American Premiere in The Yard at Chicago Shakespeare in a twelve-week, sold-out run this summer. Night after night, fans “lost their heads” for this empowering musical, introducing new audience members of all ages to CST’s work on stage. Next, SIX plays in three cities across the US and Canada before opening on Broadway this winter and returning to Chicago at the Broadway Playhouse next summer. With upcoming engagements in Australia, on Norwegian Cruise Line, and more, SIX has become a truly global phenomenon, thanks to the “one of a kind” audiences who made it such a spectacular success in Chicago.

The company of SIX; the company of Andares; photos by Bill Burlingham, Raúl Kigra, Liz Lauren, and Ikin Yum © RSC.

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World-renowned scholar David Bevington, who passed away in August, was a beloved professor at University of Chicago, editor of Shakespeare’s complete works, author of multiple seminal books, a dear friend to Chicago Shakespeare, and a fierce advocate for the art of theatrical performance. In the company’s early days as a small storefront theater—with dreams of taking its place amongst the world’s great Shakespeare theaters—Dr. Bevington supported Chicago Shakespeare’s growth and artistic exploration at every step. In the words of Artistic Director Barbara Gaines, “He was a scholar who believed in the power of performance to reimagine Shakespeare across continents and centuries, impacting generations of students, readers, and audiences. We celebrate and honor his illustrious life and legacy.”

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In collaboration with Destinos – Chicago International Latino Theater Festival, Makuyeika Colectivo Teatral’s Andares takes the stage for 5 performances only, October 23–27, as part of Chicago Shakespeare’s 2019/20 WorldStage Series. Before creating this production, director Héctor Flores Komatsu explored his homeland of México for one year through the inaugural Julie Taymor World Theatre Fellowship, collecting personal anecdotes, ancestral myths, as well as traditional music and art forms among the country’s indigenous youth. Of his trip, Komatsu writes, “What is clear is that not two cities, villages, or homes are the same. The richness and diversity of the country are astounding.” Based on these explorations, Andares shines a light on the range of issues—land usurpation, widespread violence, ancestral duties, and community resistance—that indigenous people confront at the crossroads of modern life and tradition.

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From left: Claire Price and Joseph Arkley in the Royal Shakespeare Company’s The Taming of the Shrew; David Bevington; The company of SIX; The company of Andares; photos by Bill Burlingham, Raúl Kigra, Liz Lauren, and Ikin Yum © RSC.
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BEGINS NOVEMBER 29

HOPE

GOOD

OF

MAN

A

BEGINS OCTOBER 4

FROM SOUTH AFRICA
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EMMA

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THE TAMING OF THE SHREWS

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For more information about how you can support our work on stage, in the community, and around the world, please contact Brooke Flanagan, Managing Director for Advancement and External Affairs, at 312.595.5581 or bflanagan@chicagoshakes.com.
The King’s Speech is set just after one Great War, with another on the horizon. The Great Depression weighs on the world, and everything seems to be in the midst of struggle, challenge, and transition.

Though the play depicts a king and his two elder sons—King George V, David, Prince of Wales, and Albert, Duke of York—two monarchs who do not appear in this story are critical to understanding the time. George V’s grandmother was Queen Victoria, with the morals and traditions of the period that bears her name still influencing the decisions and behavior of the characters in this story. His granddaughter would be crowned Elizabeth II, still a young girl during the events of this play, and who, as queen for the past sixty-seven years, has witnessed rapid changes in both the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

Our characters are caught between the Victorian and the “Modern.” To a contemporary audience, the abdication of a king might seem fascinating or even romantic. At the time, however, it was shocking, even dangerous—something beyond imagination. In today’s post-Cold War world, Bolshevism might seem unsuccessful or passé. But in 1930s England, it was a serious threat to the established order of things (and to royal necks besides).

Queen Victoria knew nothing of radio broadcasts, while Elizabeth’s coronation was the first to be televised. In between the two, David and Albert (“Bertie” to his family) had to struggle with a new phenomenon: British subjects, spread over the vast reaches of a disintegrating empire, hungry to hear the royal voice.

Playwright David Seidler shows us a rich and captivating slice of history. We find ourselves in the company of giants—kings and queens and prime ministers and Winston Churchill, who is not yet the hero of the Free World. But like all good history plays, The King’s Speech is about the personal as well as the political, the private and the public, the psychological and the philosophical, and all the tensions—and fears—of living between these conflicting spheres.
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THE KING’S SPEECH

by DAVID SEIDLER

directed by MICHAEL WILSON

Chicago Shakespeare dedicates this production to the memory of Harve A. Ferrill, our beloved board member whose wisdom and loving spirit will remain with us, always.

PRODUCTION SPONSOR

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Production elements supported by the Anstiss and Ronald Krueck Stage Design Fund

Music amplification supported by the Gayle and Glenn R. Tilles Music Fund

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Welcome. If we can help accommodate you during your visit, please speak with our House Manager. Please note that flashing lights and haze will be used during this performance. For your safety, we ask that you keep aisles and doorways clear. We request that you refrain from taking any photography and other video or audio recordings of the production.

There will be one 15-minute intermission.
The King's Speech

Now is the winter of our discontent / Made glorious summer by this son of York...

—William Shakespeare

THE STORY

Albert, Duke of York and second son to King George V, stands by quite helpless as his elder brother David falls hopelessly, stubbornly in love with Wallis Simpson, American socialite and divorcée. In 1936 David’s ascension to the throne and to the head of the Church of England are viewed by most in the government as incompatible with his impending marriage to Mrs. Simpson.

Since childhood, Albert (“Bertie” to his family) has spoken with an incapacitating stammer, undermining his confidence in himself and from all those around him—except his wife, Elizabeth, Duchess of York, who understands the depths of her husband’s intellect and humanity. She visits Harley Street, seeking out an Australian speech therapist named Lionel Logue. Logue’s practice soon reveals itself as offensive as it is unorthodox—both to the Duchess and to her husband, who abruptly terminate the relationship after a first session. Tormented by his struggle to speak, however, Albert returns to Logue to continue their work.

Myrtle, Lionel’s wife, wants nothing but their return home to Australia. But as the threat of Nazi Germany looms over Europe’s sovereignty, the stakes grow infinitely higher—most of all, for the reluctant English king who must now lead his nation into war.

ABDICATION

“I have found it impossible to carry on the heavy burden of responsibility and to discharge the duties of king, as I would wish to do, without the help and support of the woman I love.” On his 327th day on the throne, Albert’s brother David, King Edward VIII, signed the Instrument of Abdication on December 10, 1937, becoming only the fourth king in English history to renounce the crown—the first to do so voluntarily. The following evening Edward delivered a radio address to his former subjects and the world; on December 12, Albert was proclaimed King George VI.

NEW MEDIA

In the wake of a revolution in mass communication decades before television, the Internet, and social media, George V became the first British monarch to broadcast live on radio. It was Christmas Day 1932, as the King spoke to millions of his subjects around the globe in their homes, with words carefully crafted by writer Rudyard Kipling. His son Albert, King George VI, would soon face a world that demanded its leaders to inspire through their broadcasted words.

The Royal Christmas Message has since become a tradition still carried on by George VI’s daughter Elizabeth, with the first televised address airing in 1957.

Cast (in order of appearance)

SETTING: ENGLAND, 1930s

George V, King of Great Britain: JOHN JUDD*
Bertie (Prince Albert, Duke of York), the King’s second son: HARRY HADDEN-PATON*
Cosmo Lang, Archbishop of Canterbury: ALAN MANDELL*
Elizabeth (Duchess of York), Bertie’s wife: REBECCA NIGHT*
Stanley Baldwin, Prime Minister: DAVID LIVELY*
Winston Churchill, MP, House of Commons: KEVIN GUDAHL*
Lionel Logue, an Australian expatriate and speech specialist: JAMES FRAIN*
Myrtle Logue, Lionel’s wife: ELIZABETH LEDO*
David (Prince of Wales), the King’s eldest son: JEFF PARKER*
Wallis Simpson, an American expatriate: TIFFANY SCOTT*
Royal Herald/Royal Footman: JEFF DIEBOLD*
BBC News Reader/Royal Footman: TIM MONSEN*
Royal Footmen: CHAD PATTERSON, TREVOR STRAHAN

Production Stage Manager (through October 13): JINNI PIKE*
Production Stage Manager (beginning October 16): LORI LUNDQUIST*
Assistant Stage Manager: AMANDA LANDIS*

*denotes member of Actors’ Equity Association.

Chicago Shakespeare productions are made possible in part by the Illinois Arts Council Agency and an IncentOvate Grant from the City of Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events.

Chicago Shakespeare is a constituent of the Theatre Communications Group, Inc., the national service organization of non-profit theaters; National Alliance for Musical Theatre; Shakespeare Theatre Association; Arts Alliance Illinois; the League of Chicago Theatres; and Ingenuity, Inc.

Now is the winter of our discontent / Made glorious summer by this son of York...
Profiles

HARRY HADDEN-PATON
(Bertie) CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE: Debut.
BROADWAY: Professor Henry Higgins in My Fair Lady (Tony Award nomination – Outstanding Lead Actor in a Musical, West End; The Importance of Being Earnest (Ian Charleson Award nomination); Flare Path; The Pride. OFF WEST END: She Stoops to Conquer (National Theatre); Posh (Royal Court Theatre); The Changeling (Young Vic); The Prince of Homburg (Donmar Warehouse).
FILM: The Little Stranger, About Time, The Hollow Crown, The Deep Blue Sea, in the Loop, La Vie en Rose

CHICAGO: Court Theatre, Goodman Theatre, Writers Theatre, Marriott Theatre, Northlight Theatre, Remy Bumppo Theatre Company, Drury Lane Theatre, San Diego Court Theatre.
INTERNATIONAL: five seasons with Stratford Festival, Canadian Stage, Donmar Warehouse, Royal Shakespeare Company (CST tour).

JOHN JUDD (George V)
CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE: Romeo and Juliet (2010); The Few; an intimate Tempest.
CHICAGO: Shining City, Magnolia, A Christmas Carol, The Iceman Cometh, Sweet Bird of Youth, Measure for Measure, The Little Foxes (Goodman Theatre); Orson’s Shadow, The Dresser. Last of the Boys, The Butcher of Babaroo, Clybourne Park, Three Sisters (Court Theatre); productions with A Red Orchid Theatre, Lookingglass Theatre Company, Writers Theatre, Northlight Theatre, among others.
NEW YORK: Barrow Street Theatre, 59E59, Brooklyn Academy of Music.

JAMES FRAIN (Lionel Logue) CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE: Debut.
BROADWAY: The Homecoming (Teddy).
LONDON: Other People (Royal Court); King Lear (The Almeida); She Stoops to Conquer (Peter Hall Company); Zenobia (Royal Shakespeare Company).
TELEVISION: Elementary, The Twilight Zone (CBS); Star Trek: Discovery (CBS All Access); Orphan Black (BBC America); Gotham (FOX); Grimm (NBC); The White Queen, The Buccaneers (BBC); True Detective, True Blood (HBO); The English (Showtime); 24 (FOX).
EDUCATION: degrees in drama and film, University of East Anglia in Norwich; London’s Central School of Speech and Drama.
AWARDS: Drama Critics’ Circle Best Ensemble Award for The Homecoming.

CHICAGO: My Fair Lady (Lyric Opera of Chicago); Mamma Mia! (Paramount Theatre); The Addams Family (Mercyuky Theatre 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: West Side School of Acting, Roosevelt University; BS in education, Buffalo State College.

ELIZABETH LEDO (Myrtle Logue) CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE: Tug of War; Civil Strife, A Midsummer Night’s Dream, As You Like It,
Amadeus, Funk It Up About Nothin’, CHICAGO: One Man, Two Guvnors, The Secret Garden, Tartuffe, The Misanthrope, The Illusion, Titus Andronicus, Uncle Vanya (Court Theatre); The Matchmaker, Doleris for the Disenchanted, A Christmas Carol (Goingson Theatre); Charm, The Chalk Garden (Northlight Theatre); Bright Half Life, Le Switch, The Homosexuals (About Face Theatre); Isaac’s Eye, Arms and the Man (Writers Theatre); The How and the Why (TimeLine Theatre Company); Barefoot in the Park, Mamma Mia! (Drury Lane Theatre); Homebody/Kabul, Morningstar (Steppenwolf Company).
REGIONAL: twenty productions with Milwaukee Repertory Theatre; five seasons with Notre Dame Shakespeare Festival; Russian Transport (Renaissance Theatreworks); The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time, Boeinmg, Arcadia (Indiana Repertory Theatre).
EDUCATION: Loyola University of Chicago.
Nominated by Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Ms. Ledo was chosen as one of the 2016 Lunt-Fontanne Fellows.

NEW YORK: Carousel, My Fair Lady (Lyric Opera of Chicago); October Sky, White Christmas,
My Fair Lady, Beauty and the Beast, 1776 (Marriott Theatre); Cabaret, 1776, Camelot.

CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE: Debut.
CHICAGO: Old Shepherd in The Winter’s Tale, Light Up the Sky, The Visit, Marvin’s Room, A Flea in Her Ear (Goodman Theatre); Butler, City of Conversation.

ALAN MANDELL (Cosmo Lang) CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE: Debut.
BROADWAY: Beth Henley’s Impossible Marriage opposite Holly Hunter and Lois Smith.
TELEVISION: original productions of Waiting for Godot, Endgame directed by Samuel Beckett; The Twenty Angry Men (CIBC Theatre).
REGIONAL: No Man’s Land (Odyssey Theatre); Restoration (La Jolla Playhouse/New York Theatre Workshop); The Cherry Orchard, Waiting for Godot, Arthur Miller’s The Price (Mark Taper Forum); Trying (Colony Theatre).
FILM: John Cameron Mitchell’s Hedwig and the Angry Inch, Shortbus, the Coen Brothers’ A Serious Man, The Man Who Married a Myth, Witness.

TELEVISION: Grey’s Anatomy; various roles on The Young and the Restless, and The Bold and the Beautiful.

AWARDS: several Los Angeles Ovation Awards. Mr. Mandell is a founding member of the San Francisco Actor’s Workshop and co-founder of the San Quentin Drama Workshop, which started with a performance of Waiting for Godot inside a prison. He has been a producer on and off Broadway, general manager of the Repertory Theatre of Lincoln Center, consulting director at Los Angeles Theatre Company, and taught at UCLA’s Graduate School of Management.

TIM MONSEN (BBC News Reader/Royal Footman)
CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE: Debut.
CHICAGO: Old Shepherd in The Winter’s Tale, Light Up the Sky, The Visit, Marvin’s Room, A Flea in Her Ear (Goodman Theatre); Butler, City of Conversation.
(Northlight Theatre). OFF BROADWAY: Marvin’s Room (Playwrights Horizons/ Minnetta Lane Theatre). REGIONAL: The Kennedy Center, Center Stage, Hartford Stage, Dallas Theatre Center, Cincinnati Playhouse, Mark Taper Forum. FILM: Blink, Men of Honor, Second Greatest Story Ever Told, Cotton, Fenton Black’s Last Dance. TELEVISION: Modern Family, Desperate Housewives (ABC); Law and Order: LA, Frasier, Mad About You, Medium, Sisters (NBC); Numb3rs, King of Queens, Cylbii, Chicago Hope (CBS); Monk (USA); 7th Heaven (The WB).

REBECCA NIGHT (Elizabeth) CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE: Debut INTERNATIONAL: Prism (Hampstead Theatre); Racing Demon (Theatre Royal Bath); A Flea in Her Ear (The Old Vic); The Grapes of Wrath (Chichester Festival Theatre); The Importance of Being Earnest (West End/ Royal Theatre Bath/; Shelf Life (Old Red Lion Theatre); Much Ado About Nothing (National Youth Theatre at Hackney Empire); Spoonface Sternberg, Taxi (Off West End Theatre); The Master and Margarita (National Youth Theatre at Lyric Hammersmith); The Tempest (Brownsea Open Air Theatre). FILM: Dartmoor Killing, Suspension of Disbelief, Leonard, Rebecca Tramped, Taxi (Scenes). TELEVISION: Maigret (ITV); Agatha Raisin (Sky); Starlings (Sky); This September (Telematchen); The Courageous Heart of Irene Sendler (CBS); Law and Order: UK - Shaken, Wuthering Heights, Call Girl (Sky); The Duke of Cumber (ITV); Lark Rise to Candleford, Fanny Hill (BBC).

JEFF PARKER (David) CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE: King Charles II, As You Like It, Cymbeline, The Three Musketeers, Timon of Athens; understudy in Schiller’s Mary Stuart, Red Velvet. CHICAGO: Parade, Days Like Today, Isaac’s Eye (Writers Theatre); Wonderful Town, Objects in the Mirror, Camino Real, Bounce, Turn of the Century, Floyd Collins, The House of Martin Guerre (Goodman Theatre); Mamma Mia!, Young Frankenstein (Drury Lane Theatre); Discord, Mothers and Sons (Northlight Theatre); The Secret Garden (Court Theatre); Samara (Victory Gardens Theatre), The Brother/Sister Plays (Steppenwolf Theatre Company); Nine (Jeff Award nomination, Porchlight Music Theatre). REGIONAL: Candid (Huntington Theatre Company); My Fair Lady (Asolo Repertory Theatre); 1776 (American Conservatory Theatre); Boy Gets Girl (Manhattan Theatre Club); The American in Me (Magic Theatre); Winesburg: Ohio (Kansas City Repertory Theatre). TELEVISION: Chicago Med, Chicago PD (NBC); Proven Innocent, Prison Break (FOX); Love is a Four Letter Word (ABC); Early Edition (CBS). EDUCATION: BFA in acting, University of Southern California. www.jeffparkeractor tumblr.com

TIFFANY SCOTT (Valdis Simpson) CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE: Sense and Sensibility, The Two Noble Kinsmen; Short Shakespeare! productions of Macbeth, The Comedy of Errors, A Midsummer Night’s Dream, Much Ado About Nothing, Twelfth Night (Theatre Evolve); Non-Player Character (Red Theatre).

REGIONAL: Pericles, Macbeth, Romeo and Juliet (Oklahoma Shakespeare in the Parks); Richard III (Shakespeare Dallas); Peter and the Starcatcher (The Oklahoma City Repertory Theatre). EDUCATION: BFA, Oklahoma City University.

DAVID SEIDLER (Playwright) A Londoner by birth, Mr. Seidler was sent to the United States as an infant during WWII, which resulted in a childhood stammer. George VI, the reluctant stuttering king, became his boyhood hero, role model, and, many years later, the inspiration for the play The King’s Speech, subsequently adapted for film starring Colin Firth, Geoffrey Rush, Helena Bonham Carter, and Guy Pearce. The film won the 2010 Academy Award for Best Picture, and Mr. Seidler was awarded the Academy Award for Best Original Screenplay, two BAFTAs, and numerous other gongs. His stage version has toured England, played the West End, been produced so far in five foreign languages, and, after its run at Chicago Shakespeare Theatre, will tour across North America before heading to Broadway. He no longer stutters. Mr. Seidler’s career commenced with writing dubbing scripts for Godber’s King of the Monkeys movies. In Hollywood he has over twenty credits to his name, including: Tucker: The Man and His Dream starring Jeff Bridges, directed by Francis Coppola. Nominated for Writing Achievement by the Writers Guild of America three times (winning for Onassis: The Richest Man in the World), Mr. Seidler has lectured in Milan, Rome, Porto, A.F.I. Los Angeles, Sundance, Dreamogo Institute in Switzerland, Laborator Novas Historias in Sao Paulo, Brazil. He lived for several years in Fiji, where he was Political Advisor to Chief Minister Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara. He also resided in New Zealand for eight years and returns yearly to educate the trout and torment his son Manu. His daughter Maya is a documentary producer at Edgeline Films. Mr. Seidler divides his time between Santa Monica, Ketchum, Idaho, and a cabin in the Urawera Mountains of New Zealand.

TREVOR STRAHAN (Royal Footman) CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE: Macbeth, Short Shakespeare! Romeo and Juliet, Chicago Shakespeare in the Parks production of Romeo and Juliet. CHICAGO: Human Resource(s). Two Night’s (Theatre Evolve); Non-Player Character (Red Theatre).

REGIONAL: Pericles, Macbeth, Romeo and Juliet (Oklahoma Shakespeare in the Parks); Richard III (Shakespeare Dallas); Peter and the Starcatcher (The Oklahoma City Repertory Theatre). EDUCATION: BFA, Oklahoma City University.

MICHAEL WILSON (Director) directed the Tony Award-nominated revivals of Gore Vidal’s The Best Man and Horton Foote’s The Trip to Bountiful (Tony Award – Best Actress in a Play for Cicely Tyson), as well as the Park Avenue Armory’s Tony-nominated new plays Enchanted April and Dividing the Estate. A Drama Desk Award and Outer Critics Circle Award winner for his acclaimed three-part, nine-hour production of Foote’s The Orphans’ Home Cycle, Mr. Wilson directed the 2016 Los Angeles premiere of the musical Grey Gardens starring Betty Buckley and Rachel York. Recent projects include the premiere of the new musical Beau by Douglas Luses and Ethan Pakchar, the American Repertory Theatre revival of The Night of the Iguana, and the premiere of Fellow Travelers by Jack Canfora. This fall, he will be represented off Broadway with the first New York revival of The Young Man from Atlanta starring Aidan Quinn and Kristine Nielsen. From 1998 to 2011, Mr. Wilson was artistic director of Hartford Stage.


DAVID C. WOOLLARD (Costume Designer) CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE: The Heir Apparent. BROADWAY: Dames at Sea, Bronx Bombers, First Date, Lysistrata Jones, West Side Story, 33 Variations, Dividing the Estate, The Farnsworth Invention, All Shook Up, The Rocky Horror Show (Tony Award nomination), The Who’s Tommy (Tony Award nomination).
and Olivier Award nominations), Marlene, Wait Until Dark, Horton Foote’s The Young Man from Atlanta, Damn Yankees, A Few Good Men, REGIONAL: The Toxic Avenger, Bare, The Orphans’ Cycle (Hewes Award), The Donkey Show (American Repertory Theatre). OPERA: Cold Mountain (Santa Fe Opera); Stone Age (New York City Opera). www.davidcwoolard.com

HOWELL BINKLEY (Lighting Designer) CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE: Debut. BROADWAY: Ain’t Too Proud - The Life and Times of The Temptations, Come Away, A Bronx Tale, Hamilton (2016 Tony Award/2018 Olivier Award), After Midnight, How to Succeed in Business Without Trying, West Side Story, Gypsy, In the Heights, Jersey Boys (2006 Tony Award), Avenue Q, Parade, Kiss of the Spider Woman (1993 Olivier Award/Canadian Dora Award). REGIONAL: The Kennedy Center’s School in Washington, Goodman Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse, Alley Theatre, Guthrie Theater, McCarter Theatre, Hartford Stage, The Old Globe, Shakespeare Theatre Company (American Conservatory Theater); (Shaw Festival Theatre); (1993 Olivier Award/Canadian Theatre); (Second City). REGIONAL: Alliance Theatre, Interrobang Theatre Project; (Joffrey Ballet); productions with Alvin Alley American Dance Theater, MoMix, Peter Pucci Plus, Hubbard Street Dance, American Ballet Theatre. AWARDS: seven Tony Award nominations, six Helen Hayes Awards, Outer Critics Circle Award winner. 2006 and 2016 Hewes Design Awards for Jersey Boys and Hamilton.

RICHARD JARVI (Wig & Make-up Design) CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE: The Wizard of Oz, Hamlet, A Midsummer Night’s Dream, Neil Gwynn, Peter Pan – A Musical Adventure, Macbeth, Schiller’s Mary Stuart, Red Velvet, The Taming of the Shrew, Madagascar, Shakespeare in Love, Chicago Shakespeare in the Parks productions of The Comedy of Errors, A Midsummer Night’s Dream, and Romeo and Juliet, Short Shakespeare! productions of Romeo and Juliet, A Midsummer Night’s Dream and Macbeth, 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 Oakbrook, twenty-eight years with the Lyric Opera of Chicago, eleven of those as the 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.

JANE LANIER (Choreographer) CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE: Debut. CHICAGO: Mamma Mia, Chicago (Drury Lane Theatre). BROADWAY: Guys and Dolls (Associate Choreographer, Nederlander Theatre).

OFF BROADWAY: Johnny Guitar (Century Center); Nightingale (Vineyard Theatre). REGIONAL: The Wild Party, Little Fish (Blank Theatre Company); Ring of Fire (Denver Center Theatre Company); Pippin, Smokey Joe’s Café (5th Avenue Theatre); A Little Night Music (Interact Theatre Company); Kiss Me Kate (Musical Theatre West). TV/FILM: Spells (Independent Art Film); Not Your Time (Independent Short Film); Dream On (HBO); Summer Stories (ABC Mini-Series). AWARDS: Jeff Award nomination for Chicago, LA Weekly Award - Ovation and NAACP Award nominations for The Wild Party. Ms. Lanier’s Broadway acting credits include: Fosse (Drama Desk Award nomination), Guys and Dolls, Jerome Robbins’ Broadway (Tony Award nomination), Anything Goes, Sweet Charity, On Your Toes. She is head of the musical theater dance concentration program at the Chicago College of Performing Arts.

KATE DEVORE (Dialect Coach) CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE: Debut. CHICAGO: West Side Story (Lyric Opera of Chicago); Sweat, A (American Repertory Theatre, Support Group for Men). REGIONAL: The Wolves, A View from the Bridge, Destiny of Desire, Uncle Vanya, Another Word for Beauty, Feathers and Teeth, The Jungle Book, Sweet Bird of Youth (Goodman Theatre). THE CURIOUS INCIDENT OF THE DOG IN THE NIGHT TIME, fml: how carbon McCullers saved my life (Steppenwolf Theatre Company); And Then There Were None, Roald Dahl’s Matilda, Mamma Mia!, Beauty and the Beast (Drury Lane Theatre); Small Mouth Sounds, Evening at the Talk House, The Opponent, Butcher of Baraboo, Abigail’s Party (A Red Orchid Theatre); Vocal Stamina for Touring Performers Workshops (Second City). EDUCATION: MA in speech-language pathology (voice therapy); BA in theater (acting and voice/speech coaching). Ms. Devore teaches at the School at Steppenwolf, Columbia College Chicago, and Acting Studio Chicago. She coaches clients through her company Total Voice, Inc.

BOBBY BISHOP (Artistic Associate/Casting Director) is in his twentieth season as CST’s casting director, where his credits include over 150 productions and thirty-two plays in Shakespeare’s canin. 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 SIX (CST, A.R.T., Citadel, Ordway Center, and opening on Broadway in March 2020), by Toby Marlowe and
Lucy Moss. 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.

BILLY HOPKINS and ASHLEY INGRAM (New York Casting) have been working together for the past eight years. Films include Lee Daniels’ The Butler, You Were Never Really Here directed by Lynne Ramsay, and Mudbound directed by Dee Rees for which they received the Robert Altman Independent Spirit Award. Television projects include When They See Us for Netflix directed by Ava DuVernay (Emmy Award nomination), Empire and Star on Fox, HBO’s Bessie (Emmy Award nomination). Theater credits include the world premiere of Tennessee Williams’ In Masks Outrageous and Austeré at the Culture Project, and currently Blues for an Alabama Sky for the Keen Company.

JINNI PIKE (Production Stage Manager, through October 13) CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE: SIX, Schiller’s Mary Stuart, Ride the Cyclone, CHICAGO: The Producers, The Wizard of Oz, Once, Elf the Musical, Sweeney Todd, Disney’s The Little Mermaid, Hairspray, The Who’s Tommy (Paramount Theatre), Bakersfield Mist, Danny Casolaro Died for You, The History of the World, A Raisin in the Sun, Wasteland (TimeLine Theatre Company); Hillary and Clinton (Victory Gardens Theatre). REGIONAL: eight seasons as production stage manager with Heart of America Shakespeare Festival (Kansas City, MO); three seasons as production stage manager and twenty-five productions at Unicorn Theatre (Kansas City, MO); A Christmas Carol (Kansas City Repertory Theatre).

LORI LUNDQUIST (Production Stage Manager, beginning October 16) CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE: Debut. BROADWAY: Fosse, The Best Man, Holiday. TOUR: Fosse, Spelling Bee, The Will Rogers Follies. OFF BROADWAY: Head of Passes with Phyllica Rashad (The Public Theater); Julie Taymor’s A Midsummer Night’s Dream (Theatre for a New Audience); The Legend of Georgia McBride (MCC Theater); Gloria (Vineyard Theatre); Incident at Vichy, Big Love (Signo Theatre); Into the Woods, The Two Gentlemen of Verona (New York Shakespeare Festival in Central Park); Fiction, Tailey’s Folly (Roundabout Theatre Company); The Shaggs, The Burnt Part Boys (Playwrights Horizons); The Wolves (New York Stage and Film, The Playwrights Realm) REGIONAL: McCarter Theatre Center, The Ordway, Alley Theatre, Hartford Stage, Long Wharf Theatre, Trinity Rep, Kansas City Repertory Theatre, Dallas Summer Musicals. OPERA: Minnesota Opera, Indianapolis Opera, Opera Memphis, and two seasons with New York City Opera. INTERNATIONAL: Sosatza (Elgin Theatre, Toronto). TRAINING: BA and BS, Bemidji State University.

AMANDA LANDIS (Assistant Stage Manager) CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE: Macbeth, Two Pints: CHICAGO: True West, The Children, La Ruta (Steppenwolf Theatre Company). REGIONAL: Lettice and Lovage (Resident Ensemble Players); The Wolves, Hedda Gabler, Moment, Between Riverside and Crazy, Bad Jews, Eclipsed (Steppenwolf Studio Theatre); An Octooon, Kiss (Wolly Mamma); The Smartest Girl in the World (Imagination Stage); In the Heights (GALA Hispanic Theatre); Peter and the Starcatcher (Constellation Theatre Company). EDUCATION: BA in theater arts, Northwestern University.

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: SIX (CST, American Repertory Theatre, and upcoming at Citadel Theatre, Ordway Center for the Performing Arts, Broadway), The Book of Joseph, Ride the Cyclone (CST, MCC, 5th Avenue/ACT, Alliance Theatre), Sense and Sensibility (CST, Illinois Shakespeare Festival, Cadre (co-producer) (CST, Johannesburg, Grahamstown, Edinburgh, Vancouver), Othello: The Remix (CST, London, Germany, Edinburgh, South Korea, New York), Punk It Up About Nothing’ (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) has directed nearly sixty productions at Chicago Shakespeare since founding the Theater in 1986, including thirty 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, the Making History Award, as well as multiple Joseph Jefferson Awards for Best Production and for Best Director. Ms. Gaines has directed at the Royal Shakespeare Company in Stratford-on-Avon, Lyric Opera of Chicago, and The Old Globe in San Diego.

CRISS HENDERSON (Executive Director) has produced the Theater’s past thirty seasons. Under his leadership, CST has become one of Chicago’s most celebrated cultural organizations and a leading American regional theater, honored with the 2008 Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre, as well as multiple Laurence Olivier and Joseph Jefferson Awards. He oversaw the Theater’s move to its home on Navy Pier in 1999 and led the recent development of The Yard at Chicago Shakespeare. In 2016 he spearheaded the citywide, yearlong celebration of Shakespeare’s legacy. Shakespeare 400 Chicago. Mr. Henderson has garnered multiple honors, including: the 2013 Cultural Innovation Award from the Chicago Innovation Awards; Arts Administrator of the Year by Arts Management Magazine at the Kennedy Center; recognition in Crain’s Chicago Business “40 under 40”; and the Chevalier de L’Ordre des Arts et des Lettres by the Minister of Culture of France. This year with Barbara Gaines, he has been honored with the Making History Award, given to Chicagoans whose contributions to the city have made it “a better and more vibrant place to live.” Mr. Henderson has served on the boards of directors of the League of Chicago Theatres and Arts Alliance Illinois, and for many years as president of the Producers’ Association of Chicago-area Theaters. Mr. Henderson is director of DePaul University’s 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.
Theater has always been a particularly potent venue for tracking such transformations, because transformation is its core M.O. Actors are always assuming new roles; mastery of speech in many modes is indispensable to their art; and we remain at least subliminally aware of their self-remaking from the moment they step on stage.

But the particular appeal of *The King’s Speech* arises in part from the ways it has played its transformations across several media—even, in a way, across media history. What made Albert’s speaking skill historically pivotal was the power of radio, to extend the reach and grasp of those who know how to wield it, and to disgrace and debilitate those (like Albert at the start) who do not.

Lately, from within our ever-ascending Babel of texts and images, radio can sometimes feel a little ground-floor. *The King’s Speech* reminds us that in any epoch, the chief medium of the moment matters enormously. Winston Churchill figures here as Albert’s foil, his pointedly effectual opposite: tuba-voiced and fabulously articulate, he, alongside Franklin Roosevelt (and, for that matter, Adolph Hitler), showed in ways unprecedented the power of new media (radio, film), for better and for worse, to change the world.

Our own present-day ways of moving among different media will matter in this play too. After decades of research, Seidler first drafted it as a play, recrafted it as a film, and then reshaped it once more for the stage. (The scripts thus trace their own long and winding arc of aspiration: the movie secured for Seidler—himself a childhood stutterer—an Academy Award for best original screenplay.)

Plays tend to do transformation differently from movies, partly because, while movies are always fixed and finished products by the time we first encounter them, live performance is intrinsically more open-ended and present-tense. The outcome can feel less inevitable, more precarious, and therefore more involving, as we mesh the characters’ aspirations with our own in real time.

Like most events in our lives, theatrical performances tend to catch us mid-aspiration. Day and night, at whatever level of consciousness, we spend much of our time hoping to do better, either at something (tennis, piano, cooking, chess…) or as something (friend, parent, earner, lover, spouse…).

Good plays work this truth for all it’s worth. They place ardent aspirers upon the stage, confident that we, possessed by our own hopes of betterment, will find identification near-irresistible. Think of Eliza Doolittle, heroically rounding her vowels and hardening her h’s in *Pygmalion* and *My Fair Lady*.

In *The King’s Speech*, playwright David Seidler plucks a kindred story from relatively recent history, and stages it with several twists. His protagonist—Albert (“Bertie”) George (1895–1952): Duke of York, a stammerer since childhood, and second son to the King of England, George V—begins by resisting aspiration at every turn. Birth order will secure him from becoming king, and he regards his stammer as beyond repair.

Nonetheless, a repairman cometh: Lionel Logue, a commoner with his own complicated history of aspiration. A failed actor, he now earns a living teaching others to improve their speech. Under Logue’s sturdy, quirky influence, Albert, still resistant, feels the pull of aspiration. The process and the prospect of improvement begins to fascinate him. The men converge in a fraught and halting dance of self-remaking. And then the Duke has greatness thrust upon him: when his newly crowned older brother abdicates, Bertie becomes King George VI.

Birth order will secure him from becoming king, and he regards his stammer as beyond repair.

**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.*
This trick of theater has been in operation a long while. Not for nothing does Lionel Logue, frustrated actor, particularly pride himself on his delivery of the opening monologue from Shakespeare’s *Richard III* (“Now is the winter of our discontent”), wherein Richard declares to us his ambition to become king, no matter how many murders it will take to get there. That is the play, and this the moment, in which the young playwright seems to have discovered human aspiration as a near-inexhaustible audience attractant, so powerful and pervasive as to eclipse even ordinary morality: for more than half the play, and through many murders, we’ll find it difficult not to root for Richard as we have, in gentler terrain, for the likes of Eliza Doolittle.

*In any epoch, the chief medium of the moment matters enormously.*

But here again, Seidler tweaks the ancient formula. At the start of Shakespeare’s play, Richard enters and addresses us alone, or, in the initial Latin stage direction, *solus*: at once solitary and (in the cross-language pun) soulless. *The King’s Speech*, by contrast, remains soulful from start to finish. It entwines two men, a failed player-king and a reluctant real one, within one shared and deepening endeavor. Thanks to theater’s mysterious cohesions, we share in it too. “I’m not what I ought to be,” goes a line that recurs in many Gospel songs, “But I’m not what I used to be.” Playwrights plot their plays, as we our lives, along that arc, and help us travel in good company.

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