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A Scholar's Perspective

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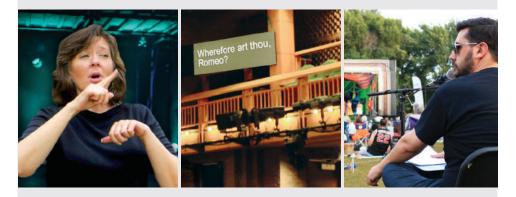
and James Frain

PHOTO BY: joe mazza

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# Welcome



## **DEAR FRIENDS.**

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. Makuveika 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!



stere John

**Barbara Gaines** Artistic Director Carl and Marilynn Thoma Chair

Criss Henderson **Executive Director** 

Steve Solomon Chair, Board of Directors

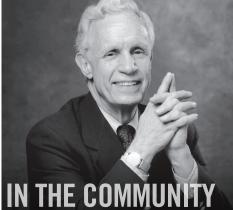
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# On the Boards



In April 2020, Chicago Shakespeare welcomes the illustrious Roval 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 "eyeopening 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).



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."



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. S/X 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.

In collaboration with Destinos - Chicago International Latino Theater Festival. Makuveika 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.

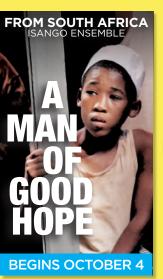
From left: Claire Price and Joseph Arkley in the Royal Shakespeare Company's *The Taming of the Shrew*; David Bevington; The company of *SIX*; The company of *Andares*. photos by Bill Burlingham, Raúl Kigra, Liz Lauren, and Ikin Yum © RSC.

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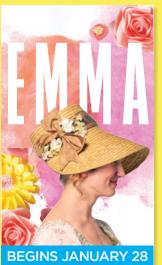
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For more information about how you can support our work on stage, in the community, and around the world, please contact Brooke Flanagan, Managing Director for Advancement and External Affairs, at 312.595.5581 or bflanagan@chicagoshakes.com.

# 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 more than one 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 Courtvard Theater and the Thoma Theater Upstairs. The Yard positions Chicago Shakespeare as the city's most versatile performing arts center.

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*In Memoriam* Harve A. Ferrill

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# Note from Director Michael Wilson

Visit chicagoshakes.com to explore more ideas and stories behind the art on CST's stages.

#### THE KING'S SPEECH

- BY DAVID SEIDLER
- DIRECTED BY MICHAEL WILSONTHE YARD AT
- CHICAGO SHAKESPEA
   SEPTEMBER 12-
- 312.595.5600
- WWW.CHICAGOSHAKES.COM



Guest Director Michael Wilson

*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.

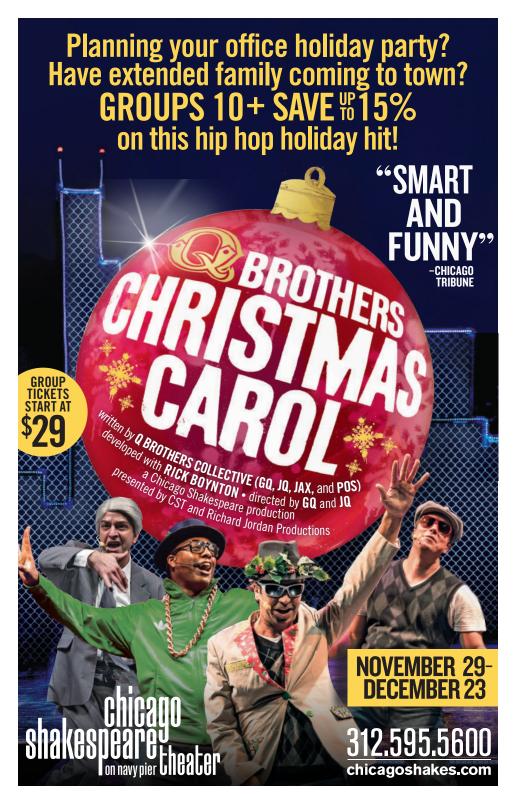
Though the play depicts a king and his two elder sons— King George V, David, Prince of Wales, and Albert, Duke of York—two monarchs who do *not* appear in this story are critical to understanding the time. George V's grandmother was Queen Victoria, with the morals and traditions of the period that bears 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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BARBARA GAINES Artistic Director Carl and Marilynn Thoma Chair CRISS HENDERSON Executive Director

RICK BOYNTON Creative Producer

E. BROOKE FLANAGAN Managing Director for Advancement and External Affairs

presents

# THE KING'S SPEECH

#### by **DAVID SEIDLER**

Scenic Design **KEVIN DEPINET** 

Projection Design

HANA KIM

Costume Design DAVID C. WOOLARD

Lighting Design HOWELL BINKLEY

**Original Music** Wig & Make-up Design & Sound Design **RICHARD JARVIE** JOHN GROMADA

Choreography JANE LANIER Dialect Coach

Casting **BOB MASON**  KATE DEVORE

New York Casting **BILLY HOPKINS** 

Production Stage Manager JINNI PIKE

Dramaturg

CHRISTOPHER BAKER

#### directed by MICHAEL WILSON

ASHLEY INGRAM

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 elements supported by the Anstiss and Ronald Krueck Stage Design Fund

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

Additional support provided by the Ruth D. and Ken M. Davee New Works and Education Outreach Fund and The Harold and Mimi Steinberg Charitable Trust

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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.

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# 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, <i>Lionel's wife</i>	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 MONSION*
Royal Footmen	CHAD PATTERSON TREVOR STRAHAN

Understudies never substitute for listed players unless a specific announcement is made at the time of the performance: Harry Belden for *Royal Footmen*; Jeff Diebold\* for *Bertie, David, Stanley Baldwin*; Tony Dobrowolski\* for *Cosmo Lang, Lionel Logue*; Tim Monsion\* for *George V, Winston Churchill, Lionel Logue*; and Tiffany Scott\* for *Elizabeth, Myrtle Logue*.

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.

# Playgoer's Guide

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 327<sup>th</sup> 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.

# 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,

Lincoln Center Theater). 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. TELEVISION: Bertie Pelham in Downton Abbev: Martin Charteris in The Crown; Gaston de Foix in Versailles; Hans von Enke in Wallander.



JAMES FRAIN (Lione) 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 (Roval Shakespeare Company), FILM: TRON: Legacy, Water for Elephants, Hilary and Jackie. The Lone Ranger. Shadowlands. Elizabeth, The Count of Monte Cristo, Where the Heart Is, Titus. **TELEVISION:** Elementary, The Twilight Zone (CBS): Star Trek: Discoverv (CBS All Access); Orphan Black, Intruders (BBC America); Gotham (FOX); Grimm (NBC), The White Queen, The Buccaneers (BBC): True Detective. True Blood (HBO): The Tudors (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.



JEFF DIEBOLD (Roval Herald/Royal Footman) CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE: Nell Gwvnn. Short Shakespeare! The Comedy of Errors. Hamlet. The Three Musketeers, Kabuki Lady Macbeth. CHICAGO:

Mv Fair Ladv (Lyric Opera of Chicago): Mamma Mia! (Paramount Theatre); The Addams Family (Mercury Theater Chicago); Hello Dollv!. The Sound of Music (Drury Lane Theatre): Man of La Mancha. Guvs 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: MFA in acting, Roosevelt University; BS in education, Buffalo State College.



**KEVIN GUDAHL** (Winston Churchill) CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE: Hamlet. Schiller's Mary Stuart, Tug of War: Foreign Fire and Civil Strife, Pericles, King Lear, The Merry Wives of Windsor, Henry VIII, The

School for Lies. Elizabeth Rex. Brutus in Julius Caesar, Fredrik in A Little Night Music, Hal in *Henry IV Parts 1* and *2*. Kavama in Pacific Overtures: title roles in Macbeth. Antony and Cleopatra, Troilus and Cressida. CHICAGO: Court Theatre. Goodman Theatre. Writers Theatre, Marriott Theatre, Northlight Theatre, Remy Bumppo Theatre Company, Drury Lane Theatre, Victory Gardens Theater, **INTERNATIONAL:** five seasons with Stratford Festival, Canadian Stage, Donmar Warehouse, Roval Shakespeare Company (CST tour). FILM: While You Were Sleeping. Home Alone III, The Poker House. TELEVISION: Chicago Fire, Crisis (NBC): Boss (STARZ): Empire. The Chicago Code (FOX); Early Edition (CBS). Mr. Gudahl is a multiple Jeff Award recipient and CST verse coach.

CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE: Romeo and Juliet (2010): The Feast: an intimate Tempest. CHICAGO: Shining City, Magnolia, A Christmas Carol, The Iceman Cometh, Sweet

JOHN JUDD (George V)

Bird of Youth. Measure for Measure. The Little Foxes (Goodman Theatre): Orson's Shadow. The Dresser, Last of the Boys, The Butcher of Baraboo. Clvbourne Park. Three Sisters (Steppenwolf Theatre Company); Gross Indecency, Lettice and Lovage, All My Sons (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. REGIONAL: The Old Globe, Berkeley

Repertory Theatre, Beaver Creek Festival, Actors Theatre of Louisville, Westport Country Playhouse, McCarter Theatre, Williamstown Theatre Festival, Huntington Theatre Company. INTERNATIONAL: Town Hall Theatre in Galway, Ireland. TELEVISION: Chicago Fire, Chicago PD (NBC): Sense 8 (Netflix); Empire (FOX); South Side (upcoming, Comedy Central).



ELIZABETH LEDO (Mvrt/e Loque) 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 Guynors. The Secret Garden.

Tartuffe. The Misanthrope. The Illusion. Titus Andronicus, Uncle Vanya (Court Theatre); The Matchmaker, Boleros for the Disenchanted, A Christmas Carol (Goodman 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 Theatre 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. Boeing Boeing, 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.



DAVID LIVELY (Stanley Baldwin) CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE: Love's Labor's Lost, King Charles III, Othello, King Lear. Henry VIII. Henrv V. Julius Caesar. Timon of Athens, The

Madness of George III. Romeo and Juliet (2005, 2010), Macbeth, Amadeus, Henry IV in Henry IV Parts 1 and 2 (CST/Royal Shakespeare Company, Stratford-upon-Avon), Much Ado About Nothing, A Midsummer Night's Dream. CHICAGO: Carousel. Mv Fair Ladv (Lvric Opera of Chicago); October Sky, White Christmas,

My Fair Lady, Beauty and the Beast, 1776 (Marriott Theatre): Cabaret. 1776. Camelot. Anything Goes, My Fair Lady, The Foreigner (Drury Lane Theatre); Hay Fever (Court Theatre). REGIONAL: national tour of Twelve Angry Men (Roundabout Theatre Company); productions with Asolo Repertory Theatre, Milwaukee Repertory Theater, Indiana Repertory Theatre, Virginia Stage Company, Geva Theatre, The Kennedy Center. TELEVISION: Proven Innocent. Empire. The Chicago Code, Prison Break (FOX); What About Joan, Cupid (ABC); George Washington (CBS), FILM: The Opera Lover, Contagion.



ALAN MANDELL (Cosmo Lang) CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE: Debut. BROADWAY: Beth Henley's Impossible Marriage opposite Holly Hunter and Lois Smith. OFF BROADWAY: The

Beard of Avon, Waiting for Godot. TOURING: original productions of Waiting for Godot, Endgame directed by Samuel Beckett; Twelve 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): Trving (Colony Theatre), FILM: John Cameron Mitchell's *Hedwig and the Angry* Inch, Shortbus, the Coen Brothers' A Serious Man. The Marrving Man. Midnight Witness. **TELEVISION:** Grey's Anatomy. 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 Theater of Lincoln Center, consulting director at Los Angeles Theater Company, and taught at UCLA's Graduate School of Management.



TIM MONSION (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/ Minneta Lane Theatre). REGIONAL: The Kennedy Center, Arena 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 Gueens, Cybill, 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/ Theatre Royal Bath/tour); Shelf Life (Old Red Lion Theatre); Much Ado About Nothing (National Youth Theatre at Hackney Empire); Spoonface Steinberg (Etcetera Theatre); The Master and Margarita (National Youth Theatre at Lyric Hammersmith): The Tempest (Brownsea Open Air Theatre). FILM: Dartmoor Killing, Suspension of Disbelief, Leopard, Rebecca, Framed, Tail, TELEVISION: Maigret (ITV); Agatha Raisin (Sky1); Starlings (Sky); This September (Telemunchen); The Courageous Heart of Irene Sendler (CBS): Law and Order: UK - Shaken, Wuthering Heights, Caught in a Trap (ITV1); Lark Rise to Candleford, Fanny Hill (BBC).



#### JEFF PARKER (David) CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE:

King Charles III, 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); Samsara (Victory Gardens Theater); The Brother/Sister Plays (Steppenwolf Theatre Company); Nine (Jeff Award nomination, Porchlight Music Theatre). **REGIONAL:** Candide (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 (Wallis Simpson) CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE: Sense and Sensibility, The Two Noble Kinsmen; Short Shakespeare! productions of Macbeth, The Comedy of Errors. A Midsummer

Night's Dream. CHICAGO: Writers Theatre, Goodman Theatre, Lookingglass Theatre Company, Court Theatre, Provision Theater, TimeLine Theatre Company, Lifeline Theatre, Eclipse Theatre Company, Griffin Theatre Company, Shakespeare Project of Chicago. **REGIONAL:** Berkeley Repertory Theatre, McCarter Theatre Center, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Illinois Shakespeare Festival, Utah Shakespeare Festival, four seasons with American Players Theatre.



CHAD PATTERSON (Royal Footman) CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE: Hamlet (understudy). CHICAGO: Red Rex (Steep Theatre Company); Home, The Odyssey (Creative Wellness). REGIONAL:

The Drowsy Chaperone (Oregon Cabaret Theatre); As You Like It, My Fair Lady, Peter and the Starcatcher, Christmas Is Here Again, Spring Awakening, Man of La Mancha (Pacific Conservatory Theatre/Pacific Conservatory for the Performing Arts); A Midsummer Night's Dream, King Lear, Moon Over Buffalo, Compleat Female Stage Beauty, Les Misérables (San Diego Performing Arts). FILM: Two Faced (short film). TELEVISION: Marvél (AB Entertainment); Kmart "Give Love" commercial; Jim Beam; Insinkerator. EDUCATION: Pacific Conservatory for the Performing Arts; BS, California State University Monterey Bay.



#### 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), 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, Geoffrev 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 nine foreign languages, and, after its run at Chicago Shakespeare Theater, will tour across North America before heading to Broadway. He no longer stutters. Mr. Seidler's career commenced with writing dubbing scripts for Godzilla: King of the Monster 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, Dreamago Institute in Switzerland, and Laboratorio 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.

#### 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 Tony Awardnominated 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 Lyons 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 Nielson. From 1998 to 2011, Mr. Wilson was artistic director of Hartford Stage.

#### **KEVIN DEPINET** (Scenic Designer) CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE: The Taming of the Shrew, Love's Labor's Lost, The Heir Apparent, Sense and Sensibility. Henry V. Gypsy. Cyrano de Bergerac, Sunday in the Park with George, Timon of Athens, Follies, As You Like It, Shakespeare in the Parks production of A Midsummer Night's Dream. CHICAGO: Steppenwolf Theatre Company, Goodman Theatre, Court Theatre, Writers Theatre, Drury Lane Theatre, Chicago Children's Theatre. BROADWAY: associate designer for Of Mice and Men, August: Osage County, The Motherfucker with the Hat. REGIONAL: American Players Theatre, McCarter Theatre, Denver Center for the Performing Arts. Mark Taper Forum, Arden Theatre Company, Milwaukee Repertory Theater, Yale Repertory Theatre, Brooklyn Academy of Music, The Glimmerglass Festival, The Public Theater EDUCATION: Yale School of Drama.

DAVID C. WOOLARD (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 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); Stonewall (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 from Away, A Bronx Tale, Hamilton (2016 Tony Award/2018 Olivier Award), After Midnight, How to Succeed in Business Without Really 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 Sondheim Celebration. Goodman Theatre, La Jolla Plavhouse, Allev Theatre, Guthrie Theater, McCarter Theatre, Hartford Stage. The Old Globe. Shakespeare Theatre Company. DANCE: Billboards (Joffrey Ballet); productions with Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, MoMix, Peter Pucci Plus, Hubbard Street Dance, American Ballet Theatre. AWARDS: seven Tony Award nominations, six Helen Haves Awards. Outer Critics Circle Award winner, 2006 and 2016 Henry Hewes Design Awards for Jersey Boys and Hamilton. Mr. Binkley is the co-founder and resident lighting designer for Parsons Dance, for which he has created 85 original pieces.

HANA KIM (Projection Designer) CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE: Debut. REGIONAL: Eve's Song (The Public Theater); Great Leap, Sweat (American Conservatory Theater): Ragtime (Pasadena Playhouse); Fun Home, The Christians (Baltimore Center Stage): MahaB (Shaw Festival Theatre); Little Black Shadows (South Coast Repertory). OPERA: Wonderful Town (LA Opera); Fallujah (New York City Opera/Long Beach Opera): Steal a Pencil for Me (Opera Colorado). VIDEO ART: Rustle and Cry (Oxy Arts); Purls of the Planet (Annenberg Space of Photography); Emille (Baryshnikov Arts Center in New York). AWARDS: 2018 Richard E. Sherwood Award, Princess Grace Award in Theater Design. Helen Hayes Award, Theater Bay Area Critics Circle Award, StageScene LA Award, Stage Raw Award, www.hananow.com

## JOHN GROMADA (Original Music & Sound Designer) CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE:

Debut. BROADWAY: over forty productions. including: All My Sons, Torch Song, The Elephant Man, The Trip to Bountiful with Cicely Tyson (Tony Award nomination), Gore Vidal's The Best Man (Drama Desk Award), Clybourne Park, Seminar, Prelude to a Kiss, Proof, Twelve Angry Men, the original A Few Good Men. OFF BROADWAY: The Cake, Amy and the Orphans, Bruce Norris's Domesticated, Old Hats, Measure for Measure (Delacorte Theater); The Orphans' Home Cycle (Drama Desk Award, Henry Hewes Award), Shipwrecked! (Lucille Lortel Award). The Singing Forest, Julius Caesar. The Skriker (Drama Desk Award), Machinal (OBIE Award). TELEVISION/FILM: The Trip to Bountiful (Emmy Award nominated). Showing Roots. Mr. Gromada has received the National Endowment for the Arts Opera/ Music Theatre Fellowship and grants from the New Jersey State Council.

RICHARD JARVIE (Wig & Make-up Designer) CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE: The Wizard of Oz, Hamlet, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Nell Gwvnn. Peter Pan - A Musical Adventure. Macbeth. Schiller's Marv Stuart. Red Velvet. The Taming of the Shrew, Madagascar, Shakespeare in Love, Chicago Shakespeare in the Parks productions of The Comedv 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 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.

JANE LANIER (Choreographer) CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE: Debut. CHICAGO: Mamma Mial, Chicago (Drury Lane Theatre). BROADWAY: Guys and Dolls (Associate Choreographer, Nederlander Theatre). OFF BROADWAY: Johnny Guitar (Century Center): Nightingale (Vinevard 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 Christmas Carol, Support Group for Men, 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 Carson 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 speechlanguage 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.

#### CHRISTOPHER BAKER (*Dramaturg*) CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE: Debut. OFF BROADWAY:

The Roads to Home, The Orphans' Home Cycle, The Milk Train Doesn't Stop Here Anymore. **REGIONAL:** (dramaturg): Alley Theater, American Repertory Theater, Hartford Stage, PlayMakers Repertory, The Shakespeare Theater; (playwright): Alley Theatre, Baltimore Center Stage, Repertory Theater of St. Louis (upcoming), Trinity College. PUBLICATIONS: Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice (Broadway Play Publishing); Shakespeare in an Hour, Moliere in an Hour (Smith & Kraus); chapters in The Production Notebooks (Theatre Communications Group), and African American Connecticut Explored (Wesleyan). EDUCATION: MFA, American Repertory Theatre/Moscow Art Theatre School: BS. Northwestern University. Mr. Baker is an associate professor and the graduate program director at University of Massachusetts, Amherst. At Hartford Stage for fourteen vears, he served in various capacities including associate artistic director and associate producer.

HANNAH TOVA WOLFF (Associate Director) CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE: Debut. CHICAGO: Fade (assistant director, Victory Gardens Theater): A Bad Night (Waltzing Mechanics); For the Loyal (assistant director, Interrobang Theatre Project); Exposing Abraham's Bosom (Women's Theatre Alliance). OFF BROADWAY: Monica: This Play Is Not About Monica Lewinsky (59E59 Theaters). NEW YORK: Security! (The Secret Theater); Still Rising (The Tank); Bachelorette (Walkerspace at Soho Rep.): Between Men (Jewel Box Theater). INTERNATIONAL: Monica: This Play Is Not About Monica Lewinsky (2019 Edinburgh Fringe Festival). EDUCATION: BA in theater and history. Northwestern University. AWARDS: Best Director 2016 Midtown International Theatre Festival. Ms. Wolff was a 2017-2018 directing follow in the Victory Gardens Theater's Director's Inclusion Initiative, and a 2017 Directors Lab Chicago participant. www.hannahwolff.com

**BOB MASON** (*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 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 *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 Austere 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 How and the Why. A Raisin in the Sun, Wasteland (TimeLine Theatre Company); Hillary and Clinton (Victory Gardens Theater). 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 Phylicia 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 (Signature Theatre); Into the Woods, The Two Gentlemen of Verona (New York Shakespeare Festival in Central Park): Fiction, Talley'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: Sousatzka (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, Chimerica (Studio Theatre); An Octoroon, Kiss (Woolly Mammoth); 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. 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 Marilynn 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 was 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 graduatelevel curriculum in arts management training created through a joint partnership between Chicago Shakespeare Theater and The Theatre School.

#### Moving Lights from PRG Lighting



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The Director and Choreographer are members of the **STAGE DIRECTORS AND CHOREOGRAPHERS SOCIETY**, a national theatrical labor union. The scenic, costume, projections, sound, and lighting designers of this production are represented by United Scenic Artists, Local USA-829 of the IATSE.

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AISLINN FRANT7 Associate Producer

DORFEN SAVEGH Producing Associate / Manager of International and Special Projects

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ALEXIS TAYLOR Casting Assistant

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## Aspirations A Scholar's Perspective on *The King's Speech*

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#### THE KING'S SPEECH

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- DIRECTED BY MICHAEL WILSON
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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. 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 selfremaking. And then the Duke has greatness thrust upon him: when his newly crowned older brother abruptly abdicates, Bertie becomes King George VI.



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.

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

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.



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

## In any epoch, the chief medium of the moment matters enormously

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.

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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