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the ur international theatre program

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senior farewell

The UR International Theatre Program wishes to thank and wish godspeed to the following graduating seniors (and Take 5 scholars) who have contributed to theatre and to the Theatre Program over the course of their undergraduate careers:

Pradeep Ambrose - Emily Borgna - David Cernikovsky - Meghan Crawley
Anna Crisologo - Nick DiCola - Amanda Gjertson - Arthur Goldfeder
Gaby Jones - Julian Klepper - Ted Limprecht - Katie McManus - Matt Munderville
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the university of rochester international theatre program presents

kinglear

by william shakespeare

directed & set design by nigel maister
costume design by jessica gaffney
lighting design by thomas dunn
sound design & original score by obadiah eaves
voice and acting coaching by ruth childs

special thanks

Steve Crowley
Nazareth College Theatre Department

Robert Fox
Prof. Kenneth Gross

Harry Bruno and Alicia at the Harry Bruno Salon
Mike Levine
Tosh Farrell

Thomas O. Paddock Oriental Rug Exchange
CountryRode Motorwerks

Prof. Frank Shuffelton and the UR English Department
All Cast, Crew, and Staff Members who graciously lent their personal items to the production

get with the program!

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supporting the arts

This season is supported by pledges, gifts and donations from the following generous alumni and friends:

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Join their ranks and support the theatre by filling out the pledge form in your program. All donations are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

production staff

production stage manager......................emily pye
assistant production stage manager..........stefania lanno
assistant stage managers.............tonie phillips/costumes
............................................brian lobenstine/props
............................................montoia davis/sound
............................................kristine wadosky/props
master electrician..............................julia cosse
assistant master electrician..................mike levine
audiovisual engineer...........................emily erdman
assistant audiovisual engineer................michael minnick
assistant to the set designer...............carolotta gambato
assistant directors......................anna kroup & laura miguel
production dramaturg.....................kenneth gross
costume stitcher.............................irena kuvizic

this production runs two hours and forty-five minutes with one 15 minute intermission
please remember to switch off all cellphones and electronic devices

Please Note
theatrical gunshots are used in this production
Most of the dates are speculated by historians because of the nature of the records of the time.

1564, April 23: William Shakespeare born in Stratford-upon-Avon; son of Mary and John Shakespeare.
1582: Married Anne Hathaway.
1583: Birth of a daughter, Susanna.
1585: Birth of twins, Judith and Hamnet.
1592: Henry VI is performed. Theatres close in London because of the plague which takes the lives of Queen Elizabeth I.
1593: Shakespeare begins to write a series of 154 sonnets. He writes the long poem, Venus and Adonis, and the plays Richard III and The Tito Gentlemen of Terra.
1594: Shakespeare joins the acting troupe, the Lord Chamberlain’s Men. Pembroke’s Men, an acting troupe sponsored by the Earl of Pembroke, Henry Herbert. The troupe was very popular and performed regularly at the court of Queen Elizabeth I.
1596: Othello. The Globe theatre burns to the ground. Gloucester, King Lear, III, vi
1599: The Globe Theatre is built on Bankside, Southwark, London.
1603: The Merchant of Venice, Henry IV, Part One, Love Labour’s Lost, King John, A Midsummer Night’s Dream, Romeo and Juliet.
1604: Shakespeare writes Othello.
1607-1608: Timon of Athens, Pericles and Coriolanus.
1610-1611: The Winter’s Tale.
1611: The Tragedy of King Richard the Second.
1616: The Globe theatre burns to the ground. Collaborates with writer, John Fletcher, to write Cardenio (a lost work) and The Two Noble Kinsmen.
1614: The Globe theatre reopens.
1616, April 23: Shakespeare dies and is buried at Holy Trinity Church, Stratford. His death may have been caused by typhus, a disease commonly contracted that year. He was 52 and, in the context of the time, an old man. The average lifespan in 17th century England was 35.

A shakespeare timeline

I am a man more sinned against than sinning.
Lear, King Lear, III, ii

The worst is not, so long as we can say, this is the worst.
Edgar, King Lear, V, iii

As flies to wanton boys are we to the gods, They kill us for their sport.
Gloucester, King Lear, V, vi

When we are born, we cry that we are come To this great stage of fools.
Lear, King Lear, V, vii

Plate sin with gold, and the strong lance of justice hurtless breaks; arm it in rags, a pigmy’s straw does pierce it.
Lear, King Lear, IV, viii

We two alone will sing like birds i’ the cage; When thou dost ask me blessing, I’ll kneel down, And ask of thee forgiveness: so we’ll live, And pray, and sing, and tell old tales, and laugh At gilded butterflies.
Lear, King Lear, V, iii

I am tied to the stake, and I must stand the course.
Gloucester, King Lear, III, v

A man may see how this world goes with no eyes. Look with thine ears.
Lear, King Lear, V, viii

When you see him, tell him I have said nothing.
Lear, King Lear, V, i

I am明天 morning.
Gloucester, King Lear, III, vii

The oldest hath borne most: we that are young, Shall never see so much, nor live so long.”
Edgar, King Lear, V, iii

Nothing will come of nothing.
Lear, King Lear, III, vii

We have seen the best of our time.
Gloucester, King Lear, I, i

Machinations, hollowness, treachery and all ruinous disorders follow us disquietly to our graves.
Gloucester, King Lear, I, i

A note about the program

Program content is compiled by Assistant Directors, Anna Kroop and Laura Miguel (with assistance from Matt Munderville, and Prof. Kenneth Gross). For a complete list of sources and works cited, please contact the editor.

The program is supported in part by the UR English Department (“The Program Project”).
Jessica Gaffney (Costumes) received her MFA in design from NYU’s Tisch School of the Arts. Off Broadway: No Child (dir. Hal Brooks; Epic Theatre Ensemble), Off Off Broadway: The Internationalist (dir. Ken Rus Schmoll; 11F/Fairfield Theatre Co.), Wit (dir. Kent Nicholson; SPF/The Beckett); Cripple (dir. Katie Pearl; Chubb! Thumbs); Bagpecks’ House of Baseball (dir. Mary Kate Burke; The Flea); Bitter Red Fruits, Euthika, and First and Starts the Sacred Heart (Overlap Productions); Gears, Belling Petals, and The Farthest (dir. Mark Armstrong; The Production Co.); Jessica also designs costumes and scenery for film.

Thomas Dunn (Lighting) is pleased to have another opportunity to work at the U of R (he created the lighting design for last season’s Killer Joe and this season’s The Lower Depths). Thomas works primarily on the creation and development of new works in NYC and abroad. Recent company credits include works with Dramahaus, Human Future Dance Corps, Sens Productions, SPF, and Tinaj Harrell Dance Style.

Omariah Evans (Sound and Original Score) This marks Obadiah’s twelfth year designing for the University of Rochester. He recently designed sound for The Lieutenant of Inishmore and Shining City on Broadway, and has created sound and music for the world premieres of works by such playwrights as David Mamet, Woody Allen, Susan-Loi Parka, and Jon Robin Baitz. He won the 2005 Lortel Award for Outstanding Sound Design for his work on Nine Parts of Desire (Manhattan Ensemble Theater and national tour), and an AEAUS Viv Award for F*cking A (The Public). Other work includes Birds in the Sky (Second Stage), Moonlight and Magnolias (Manhattan Theatre Club), The Argument, Beautiful Child, Stepping Traffic (at the Vineyard Theatre), Celebration and The Room, The Bald Soprano/ The Laughing Fountain (Atlantic), Hamlet, References to Salvador Dali Make Me Hot (The Public/NYSSF), Fly (Playwrights Horizons) and Blue Clues Live (Radio City and tour). His music for television can be heard on ESPN Family, Nickelodeon, Discovery, and The Learning Channel, and he has appeared as a session violinist and mandolinist in numerous film and television scores. His band, “Big Hair”, has released two nationally distributed CDs. Obadiah is a UR International Theatre Program Master Artist.

Ruth Childs (Voice and Acting Coaching) is a voice/dialect coach, director, and actor. She was born in Cornwall, England, but has lived and traveled all over Europe and the US. Ruth completed a BA in Theatre and German at Grinnell College in Iowa, and an MFA in Acting from the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis. She has worked at many theatres and universities, including The Guthrie Theatre, Geva Theatre Centre, SUNY Albany, and Grinnell College. Ruth is a certified teacher of Fitzmaurice VoiceWork. She is an Assistant Professor of Theatre at SUNY College at Brockport. Previous voice and acting coaching/teaching for the University of Rochester International Theatre Program includes Shaw’s Major Barbara, Dario Fo’s Accidental Death of an Anarchist, Gertrude Stein’s Doctor Faustus Lights the Lights and Maxim Gorky’s The Lower Depths.
Shakespeare's *King Lear* is a play which deals explicitly with ideas of fate, divinity, and astrology. Shakespeare's was a time caught between two prevalent concepts of fate: that an individual's life was all but unaffected by fate, or that fate was so hopelessly complex as to be undetectable, though it still very much governed a person's life. Shakespeare takes the middle ground: his character's are subject to fate, but the fate that they must succumb to is of their own making.

The most skilled manipulator in the play and perhaps the only character to consider fate's inner workings, Edmund, fulfilling the role of the skeptic at the onset, prospers indeed, as if the gods truly intend to "stand up for bastards" (I, ii, 22). Working against the standards of his society, the "plague of custom," Edmund finds himself empowered—capable even of overthrowing his father the Earl. But it is not fate which gifts Edmund his position, nor which brings about the misfortunes of Lear, Edgar, or Gloucester, as Edmund well acknowledges; "when we are sick in fortune...we make guilty of our disasters the sun, the moon, and the stars, as if we were villains on necessity" (I, ii, 119-21). Edmund's usurpation, not only of his family, but of Fate itself, is due to his own invention. Shakespeare is not content, however, to allow a villain such free reign over his play, and we see Edmund himself succumb to the Fate he had purposed so cleverly to circumnavigate. This detail does not escape Edmund's attention. He responds to Edgar's assertion that "The gods are just and of our pleasant vices/Make instruments to plague us" with "Thou'st spoken right, 'tis true; / The wheel is come full circle, I am here" (V, iii, 168-72). It is interesting to note, then, that Edmund might have saved both the King and Cordelia had he, rather than bidding his brother "speak you on, / You look as you had something more to say," (V, ii, 199-200) chosen to send straight away to the prison. Whether this is meant to show Edmund playing his game one last time or simply to show that Fate can be a cruel mistress, only Shakespeare himself knows for certain.

The prime victims of Edmund's machinations, his own family, fall for disparate reasons. Edmund describes Edgar as "a brother noble, / Whose nature is so far from doing harms / That he suspects none" (I, ii, 177-179); Edgar has faith in the gods and trusts that they will protect the good and just. It is appropriate, then, that Edgar must assume a new identity—Edgar, like Lear and Gloucester, cannot survive in the godless world outside castle walls. Poor Tom, however, is an entirely different creature, one which allows Edgar to preserve himself in the malevolent outdoors. And just as Fate returns to lower Edmund to his "proper" place, so it does to raise Edgar to his.

Gloucester, in opposition to his sons, feels himself from the start to be a pawn of the gods. Upon being told of Edgar's supposed disloyalty, Gloucester places the blame upon the sky, saying: "These late eclipses in the sun and moon portend no good to us...Love cools, friendship falls off, brothers divide: in cities, mutinies; in countries, discord; in palaces, treason; and the bond cracked 'twixt son and father" (I, ii, 103-9). Gloucester's superstitious beliefs only assist Edmund in turning him against Edgar. Edmund uses them to incriminate his brother ("Here stood he in the dark, his sharp sword out,/ Mumbling of wicked charms, conjuring the moon," II, i, 38-40). It is only after his eyes are lost that Gloucester seeks to influence Fate through prayer: "O my follies! Then Edgar was abused? / Kind gods, forgive me that and prosper him," (III, vii, 90-1). He later expresses his new faith in Fate even more clearly, saying to Poor Tom "That I am wretched/ Makes thee the happier. Heavens deal so still" (IV, i, 68-9).

Each of the major characters in *King Lear*, as well as those in many of Shakespeare's other plays, find themselves the victims of Fate. *King Lear* plays with the idea on a scale unlike that of these other plays. Shakespeare does not seem to make a pronouncement on the laws of Fate, though, and despite character's varying amounts of belief in the inevitability of Fate, each finds himself subject to Fate's hand in a manner of their own making.

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*Tarry, take the Foose with thee; A Fox, when one has caught her, And such a Daughter, Should sure to the Slaughter, If my Cap would buy a Halter, So the Foose followes after.*

---

*fools by heavenly compulsion by matt munderville*
The two Lears

Many call it the greatest tragedy ever written, and although we just call it King Lear, there are two different and distinct texts on which modern editions of Shakespeare’s play are based. The two versions are presumably closely derived from Shakespeare’s original manuscript, which is now unfortunately lost, though no one can say for sure how close. The play was first published in 1608, in a small individual or “quarto” version, titled The True Chronicle of the History of the Life and Death of King Lear and His Three Daughters. This version appeared at least two years after Shakespeare's original was performed. The Tragedy of King Lear appeared in 1623, included in the First Folio edition of the complete plays of Shakespeare. The differences between these two versions are significant. The quarto contains 285 lines not in the folio; the folio contains around 100 lines not in the quarto. Also, at least a thousand individual words are changed between the two texts, each text has a completely different style of punctuation, and about half the verse lines in the folio are either printed as prose or differently divided in the quarto. The changes affect characterization, structure, and the pacing of scenes, even though there are no radical alterations in the plot. Some scholars prefer the early quarto text, presuming that it is based more closely on Shakespeare’s written manuscript.

However, the folio is more commonly used as a base for modern editions, since it is part of a volume whose publication was overseen by two former members of Shakespeare’s acting company, who moreover claimed that their book corrected many prior corrupt or pirated versions of the plays. Yet the debate remains unsettled. It has even been claimed that the folio is a distinct revision of the quarto, that there are in fact two King Lear. As happens with most modern productions of King Lear, the Todd Theatre production has used parts of both versions, in order to create our own unique interpretation of the play.

Coxcomb (KOKS-kohm, noun: 1. obsolete. A cap worn by court jesters; adorned with a strip of red.)

There have always existed men who have a peculiar faculty for taking life easily, for gliding out of awkward situations which would baffle more serious-minded and responsible humans beings.

Clowns, buffoons and jesters have existed at least as far back as ancient Greece. They found a place in the courts and in the theatres of Rome and medieval and Renaissance Europe. They were sometimes encouraged and sometimes suppressed, but they always survived.

Their function, whether in a noble household or in a play, is to point up the comedy of everyday life, to create comic material from the accidents of the moment. Fools, indeed, have their own characteristic kind of good luck, a strange providence that allows the stage clown to survive his pratfalls and bumps of the head, the court jester the rebukes and whippings of his master. There is a duality to the fool’s existence: he is equally at home in the world of reality and the world of imagination.

The court fool often caused laughter not merely through conscious jests, witty gossip, or knavish tricks, but by mental deficiencies or physical deformities. These deprived him of both rights and responsibilities, making him paradoxically at once an outlaw and a helpless dependent on his society. If the theatrical clown sometimes imitated the characteristics of such unfortunate souls, he was yet always a skilled actor, an “artificial” rather than a “natural” fool, to use a distinction proposed by Robert Armin, one of Shakespeare’s clowns.

Lear’s Fool has been regarded in many ways: as a clown, an idiot, a madman, an oracle, an ironical philosopher who tells the bitter truth, a proponent of learned ignorance, a whipping boy, and a good-natured saint. The Fool in this play serves as an intermediary between Lear’s silliness and madness. He is at once a sharp commentator on Lear’s conflicted situation and a vulnerable creature caught up in the tragic action. His business is to make clear, in this one peculiarly dreadful instance, the reversal of the position between wise man and fool. And yet he is no smug and facile satirist. His relentless, repeated jesting at the mad King’s expense, his tactless jokes and snatches of song, spring evidently from genuine grief.

Shakespeare could write King Lear because other men besides himself had thought poetically about kings and fools, but the fool in cap and bells (the “coxcomb”) survives in our imagination because Shakespeare numbered him among his dramatis personae and used him as a vehicle for his profoundest reflections on the nature of human pain and human beatitude.

Coxcomb (KOKS-kohm, noun: 1. obsolete. A cap worn by court jesters; adorned with a strip of red.)

1. obsolete. A cap worn by court jesters; adorned with a strip of red. (Now cockscomb).2. archaic. The top of the head, or the head itself.3. Obsolete. A fool.4. A vain, showy fellow; a conceited, silly man, fond of display; a superficial pretender to knowledge or accomplishments; a dandy; a fop.

Recent research suggests that the coxcomb may have originated as a cap worn by court jesters in medieval Europe. It typically featured a long, flowing tassel or plume, and was often adorned with feathers or other decorative elements. The coxcomb was a symbol of folly and absurdity, often worn by jesters and fools as a form of self-parody. The term “coxcomb” eventually came to be used to describe anyone who was vain, conceited, or excessively preoccupied with their appearance or status. This usage continues to the present day, although the original meaning has long been forgotten.
At the center of Shakespeare’s King Lear is the image of an old man running about in a storm, screaming at the rain, at the gods of the weather. He asks them to punish his cruel daughters, and to punish him as well. Or it is the image of that same old man sheltering from the storm in a poor hovel, kept company by a fool, a madman, and a disguised and exiled councilor. Pressed on from the storm in a poor hovel, kept company by a fool, a well. Or it is the image of that same old man sheltering to punish his cruel daughters, and to punish him as A

a fragmentary tales of a madman, or the eloquent “nothing” of a sense,

Human speech itself is stripped down to its bones here, to blunt insults, raging anger, senseless howling, non-sense, and noise. But it also reveals in this poverty moments of strange eloquence, as well as extravagant and wonderfully inventive play—in the jesting songs of a fool, the eerie cries and fragmentary tales of a madman, or the eloquent “nothing” of a betrayed daughter. States of absence, loss, and nakedness speak for more than one could ever think, they are generous; they produce weird riches of thought and action. “Nothing” takes on a strange, relentless substance in this play, by a kind of natural magic.

You should listen to how often the characters in this play can invoke the world of animals, how often they refer to, say, the mouse, hawk, horse, fox, hog, snake—and worm, the “ tadpole,” “ swimming frog” and “ditch-dog.” It is a way of speaking for what humans themselves both are and can become, and of what we make of them. And listen to how often people speak to the “gods,” invoking them as just, kind, vengeful, cruel, blind, mocking, playful, or silent. Such speech is no guarantee of divine presence. It only suggests just how much humans need to invoke such gods, trying thereby to clarify or rationalize or even disguise what it is they do, what they see in the world.

The character who calls himself “Mad Tom”—he is in fact the betrayed and disguised son of a nobleman—rants continually about the invisible demons who swarm around him. He names “the foul fiend Flibbertigibbet,” “Hobbididence,” “Obidicut,” “Smulkin,” and the like. It turns out that the true demons of the play are men and women who wander around in plain sight.

Alack, ’tis he. Why he was met even now As mad as the vexed sea, singing aloud, Crowned with rank fumiter and furrow-weeds, With burdocks, hemlock, nettles, cuckoo-flowers, Darnel and all the idle weeds that grow. In our sustaining corn.

When we are born we cry that we are come To this great stage of fools...

It is hard to know if Lear ever comes to his senses. Through the course of his madness, there are many moments when he seems to see the world plain, to acknowledge his former blindness and folly, his failure as a king and father. We as well must want him to see. But there is a relentlessness to his fantasy, his powers of denial, even however cruel, in the end reveal things about the world that would otherwise never be so clear.