

Pittsburgh Shakespeare in the Parks

PRESENTS

KING SPEAK WHAT WE FEEL LEAR

Directed by Jeffrey Chips | Artistic Director Jennifer Tober

SEPTEMBER 2015

SAT & SUN 9/5-6 • 2PM

FRICK PARK, Beechwood & Nicholson, Squirrel Hill

SAT & SUN 9/12-13 • 2PM

ARSENAL PARK, 40th & Butler, Lawrenceville

SAT & SUN 9/19-20 • 2PM

SCHENLEY PARK, Schenley & Frew, Oakland

SAT 9/26 • 11AM & 2:30PM

SUN 9/27 • 2PM

FRICK PARK, Beechwood & Nicholson, Squirrel Hill



**RON SIEBERT
AS KING LEAR**

A Midsummer Night's Dream



Directed by Victoria Rhoades



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Pittsburgh Shakespeare in the Parks
presents

King Lear

by William Shakespeare
Directed by Jeffrey Chips

The Cast

CORDELIA/FOOL	Nick Benninger
KENT	Tonya Lynn
EDGAR/CORNWALL	Andrew Miller
REGAN	Jessica Moore
GLOUCESTER/ALBANY	Adam Rutledge
KING LEAR	Ronald Siebert*
EDMUND/OSWALD	Jennifer Tober*
GONERIL	Madelyn Tomko

Additional lords, servants, messengers also portrayed by members of the ensemble.

The Crew

Artistic Director	Jennifer Tober
Production Manager	Helen Meade
Stage Manager	Jack Muir
Production Designer	Lisa Leiberling
Fight Choreographer	Tonya Lynn
Pre-Show Director	Charles Beikert
Production Photographer	Catherine Aceto
Intern	Lincoln Alkind

** Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers, appearing under a special agreement with Actors' Equity Association.

Run time approximately 1 hour and 45 minutes with no intermission.

Pre-Show Schedule

Saturday, Sept. 5: Mrs Shakespeare's Storytime
Sunday, Sept. 6: Alan Irvine Storytelling

Saturday, Sept. 12: Mrs Shakespeare
Sunday, Sept. 13: Alan Irvine Storytelling

Saturday, Sept. 19: Alan Irvine
Sunday, Sept. 20 - Falstaff's Fellows

Saturday, Sept. 26 (both shows) - Alan Irvine
Sunday, Sept. 27 - Falstaff's Fellows

PSIP pre-shows should start around 10 minutes to curtain and last no more than 8 minutes.
Falstaff's Fellows shows will start at 45 minutes to curtain (1:15).

Bring a blanket, a loved one, and a thermos...

Artistic Director's Notes

Welcome to our 11th season of Pittsburgh Shakespeare in the Parks. We are delighted to offer you *King Lear* this season with Ron Siebert playing the title role. We chose *Lear* with Mr. Siebert in mind, because we knew he would do this great role justice with his humanity and honesty. Using a cast of only eight performers, director Jeffrey Chips has created a fascinating world in the round where there are no secrets left unturned: the actors remain “onstage in plain view” throughout the entire play, creating the misenscene together. Thank you for your patronage year after year, and enjoy the show!

—Jennifer Tober, Artistic Director

Director's Notes

I first fell in love with this play in the fall of 2008 at the American Shakespeare Center's production featuring James Keegan in the title role. It reignited my love for theater, and inspired me to pursue two Master's degrees in Shakespeare and Performance and training at the American Shakespeare Center in Staunton, VA.

A year after arriving back in Pittsburgh, I performed in PSIP's production of “Romeo and Juliet” with the wonderful Ron Siebert as Friar Laurence, and I knew I had found my *King Lear*. In Ron, I found a kindred spirit who shared my passion for Shakespeare and performing in general. I also noticed that he not only possessed a commanding stage presence, but he was in incredible physical shape. Through our many conversations during that show, we determined that the right amount of passion, skill, and physical stamina were essential for a quality performance as Lear, and through that, Ron convinced me that he was capable of such a feat.

Supporting Ron is a group of seven actors who give a whole new meaning to the word “ensemble.” They possess the talent and work ethic of 50 actors and rise to meet the challenges presented by this play and our staging of it. I am honored to work with such an amazing group of people.

—Jeffrey Chips, Director

Synopsis

The aging *King Lear* divides his kingdom evenly among his three daughters. He requires each make a profession of her love for him. Eldest daughters Goneril (gentle Albany's wife) and Regan (married to the cruel Cornwall) answer with flattery. Disdainful of her sisters' posturing, Cordelia, Lear's youngest and favorite daughter, says there are no words to describe her love. Enraged, Lear disowns Cordelia and banishes Kent, who has spoken on her behalf. When the king of France says that he still wants to marry her even without a dowry, she leaves with him. Meanwhile, Gloucester's illegitimate son, Edmund, tricks him with a false letter into believing that his legitimate son, Edgar, is trying to kill him. A manhunt sends Edgar on to the heath disguised as “Poor Tom”, a crazy beggar. Meanwhile, Lear's wrathful decision backfires as Goneril and Regan undermine their father's remaining authority as Lear begins to lose his mind. He wanders from their castles onto the heath with his Fool and followed by the loyal nobleman Kent in disguise. Lear rails at nature during a great thunderstorm and is taken to shelter by the concerned Gloucester. There they find “Poor Tom” in hiding. Gloucester urges Kent to take Lear to the safety of the city of Dover. When Gloucester returns home, Regan and her husband, Cornwall accuse him of treason and blind him. “Poor Tom” assists his father as they walk toward Dover. Gloucester's suicide attempt is thwarted when Edgar leads him off an imaginary cliff. In Dover, a French army lands as part of an invasion led by Cordelia in an effort to save her father. Edmund has garnered the infatuation of both Regan and Goneril, Albany, is increasingly sympathetic to Lear's cause while Goneril and Edmund conspire to kill him. At Dover, Edmund's English troops defeat the Cordelia-led French, but both Lear and Cordelia are captured. Edgar duels with and kills Edmund, Gloucester dies, and jealous Goneril poisons Regan then stabs herself when Albany learns of her treachery. Edmund's previous betrayal of Cordelia leads to her execution. Lear cannot bear his overwhelming grief and dies with his beloved daughter in his arms.

***King Lear* was first performed by playwright William Shakespeare's company in 1605—6 and was first published in 1608. Visit our Facebook page (Pittsburgh Shakespeare in the Parks) for posts on Acting Lear, the history of the play, and much more.**

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The Company



Nicholas Benninger (CORDELIA/FOOL) graduated from Slippery Rock University in 2013 with a degree in Theatre, and his recent acting credits include *The Tempest* or *The Enchanted Isle* (Hippolito) with The Unseam'd Shakespeare Co., as well as *Goodnight Desdemona*, *Good Morning Juliet* (Iago/Romeo), *View of the Dome* (Tommy), and *The Importance of Being Earnest* (Lady Bracknell) with SRU. He also traveled to the Fringe Festival in Edinburgh, Scotland, with SRU in 2013 with a production of *Acts of Contrition*.



Tonya Lynn (KENT/Fight Choreographer) is delighted to return for her tenth PSIP production as fight choreographer, and her seventh as a member of the acting company. Her previous credits with PSIP include Audrey in *As You Like It*, Caliban in *The Tempest*, and Mistress Page in *Merry Wives of Windsor*. Recent projects include performing as Paulina in *The Winter's Tale* (Poor Yorick's Players), providing fight choreography and alternating the roles of Beatrice, Dogberry, and Prompter in the Unrehearsed Shakespeare Project's *Much Adoe About Nothing*, and directing and choreographing the original work *Sword Play* for the Hallam Players in Colonial Williamsburg, VA. Tonya is also active throughout the Pittsburgh area as a teaching artist, working with Hope Academy for Music and the Arts, City Theatre, Pittsburgh Public Theatre, and the Community College of Allegheny County. She received her M.A. in Theatre from the University of Pittsburgh, and has trained with both the International Stuntmen's Association and the Society of American Fight Directors, where she is recognized as an Advanced Actor-Combatant.



Andrew Miller (EDGAR/CORNWALL) This is Andrew's third production with PSIP, having starred as Romeo in 2013's *Romeo and Juliet*, and as Orlando in last year's *As You Like It*. He is a graduate of the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown and the Classical Acting Program at the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art. Local credits include Pittsburgh Public Theater's production of *Othello*, Shmuel/Guard 2 in Prime Stage's *The Devil's Arithmetic*, and Dr. Jekyll/Mr. Hyde in *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. Other roles include Cassio in *Othello* and Valentine in *Two Gentlemen of Verona*.



Jessica Moore (REGAN) is thrilled to be working with PSIP for the first time. She recently received her MFA from the University of Georgia and became a certified Chekhov Teacher at the Great Lakes Michael Chekhov Consortium. She has worked with Ohio Shakespeare Festival, Fairmont Performing Conservatory (Adult Wing), Coach House Theatre and 7 stages in Atlanta. Her favorite roles include the title role in *Hedda Gabler*, Frau Death in *Mein Kampf* and Viola in *Twelfth Night*. She dedicates this performance to her loving and supportive husband.



Adam Rutledge (GLOUCESTR/ALBANY) is happy once again to play with Pittsburgh Shakespeare in the Parks. Highlights of his time with PSIP include last season's *As You Like It* (Charles/Hymen), *Romeo and Juliet* (Tybalt) and *Macbeth* (Macduff). He has also appeared in numerous other Pittsburgh venues, including The Pittsburgh Fringe Festival (*The Murder of Gonzago*), Poor Yorick's Players (*The Winter's Tale*, *Love's Labours Lost*, others) and The Unrehearsed Shakespeare Project (*The Comedie of Errors* and *Much Adoe About Nothing*), as well as Prime Stage Theater, Pittsburgh Playwrights' Theater, Pandora's Box Theater and Klasikos Theater. Adam has also been a fight choreographer and stage combatant with training under the Society of American Fight Directors since 2004, and recently made his directorial debut with Poor Yorick's Players' *The Tempest*.



Ronald Siebert (KING LEAR) is a proud member, in long standing, of Actor's Equity. He has worked professionally in over 60 theatres across America, from Broadway to Boca Raton, from Sarasota to Sacramento. He appeared on Broadway in the award winning *The Changing Room* and with James Earl Jones in *The Iceman Cometh* at the prestigious Circle in the Square Theatre. Some of the roles he has played are the title roles in *The Misanthrope*, *Macbeth* and *Titus Andronicus*. He was Bassanio in *The Merchant of Venice*, Ferdinand in *The Tempest* and Corin/LeBeau in *As You Like It*. At the Goodman Theatre in Chicago he was Poins in a combined version of *Henry IV, Parts 1 and 2*, along with George Hearn, David Selby and Pittsburgh's own Tom Atkins. Further roles include Henry in *The Real Thing* at the Arizona Theatre Company, Edward Chamberlayne in T.S. Eliot's *The Cocktail Party*, Cassius in *Julius Caesar* and the director in *Six Characters in Search of an Author* at the Indiana Rep. Also played were Marc in *Art*, Paul Sycamore in *You Can't Take It With You* and Larry Vauxhall in *Inspecting Carol*, all at the Florida Rep. At the Florida Studio Theatre he appeared in *Opus*, *Ruined*, *Race* and the world premier of the staged version of Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones*. At the G.E.V.A. Theatre in Rochester, New York, he appeared as Hildy Johnson in *The Front Page* and Michael in *Dancing at Lughnasa*. In the Pittsburgh area, he was seen as Uncle Peck in *How I Learned To Drive* at the Off The Wall Theatre, the title role in *Lamarck* at the Pittsburgh Playhouse, Morrie Schwartz in *Tuesdays With Morrie* at the Mountain Playhouse and Jerome Watkins in *Henceforward* at P.I.C.T. In addition he appeared in most daytime dramas broadcast from New York City: *Ryan's Hope*, *Loving*, *The Guiding Light*, *Another World*, *All My Children* and *One Life to Live* as well as having co-starred in *The Ghost of H.L. Mencken* and appearing as the younger Charles Francis Adams II on the acclaimed P.B.S. Production, *The Adams Chronicles*. Ron has a bachelor's degree from the University of Wisconsin and a M.F.A. degree from Brandeis University, where he had the great pleasure of studying with Morris Carnovsky.



Jennifer Tober (EDMUND/OSWALD/Artistic Director) is the Founding Artistic Director of Pittsburgh Shakespeare in the Parks. She is a professional actress, director and teacher who has made Pittsburgh her home since 2005. In Pittsburgh, Ms. Tober has performed as a Modern Dancer (New Moves Festival), *As You Like It* (PSIP); *Out of This Furnace*; *The Tempest or Enchanted Isle*; and *Macbeth 3* (Unseam'd Shakespeare Co); *Dream of Autumn*; *The Red Shoes* (Quantum Theatre) *Rope*; *The Queens* (Playhouse REP); *The Pillowman*; *Salome* (Pittsburgh Irish and Classical Theatre), *In the Voodoo Parlour of Marie Laveau* (Pittsburgh Playwrights); poetry and staged readings with Poets' Corner, Pittsburgh Irish and Classical Theatre. Regional/New York theatre includes *Macbeth*, *Comedy of Errors*, *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *As You Like It* and *Love's Labour's Lost* (Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival); *As You Like It* (NY Classical Theatre), *Winter's Tale*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (The Shakespeare Project); *The Christmas Cup* (Mill Mountain Playhouse); *Richard II*, *Midsummer*, and *Julius Caesar* (A Crew of Patches, NY - a company of which Ms. Tober was one of the founders); *The Fugitives* (NY Street Theatre Caravan/Marketa Kimbrell); and "DADDY CRUSH" (her award-winning one-woman show at the Belt Theater in NY). While in New York, Ms. Tober also started the organization "Shakespeare Inside," which taught Shakespeare, acting writing to convicted Bronx juveniles. Film and TV includes *Sex & the City*, *Rescue Me*, *Ed*, *SNL*, commercials/voiceovers and the local Pittsburgh film Progression. Ms. Tober holds a BA from Temple University and an MFA from West Virginia University and is a member of the Actors' Equity Association, Screen Actors' Guild, and American Federation of TV and Radio Artists, as well as a certified yoga instructor. For my mother, Eve Tober.

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Madelyn Tomko (GONERIL) is thrilled to be making her debut with PSIP! In May she graduated from Point Park University's Conservatory of Performing Arts with a BA in Acting. Recent theatre credits include Eunice in *A Streetcar Named Desire*, Emma in *Yo! Vikings*, and Olivia in *Twelfth Night*. In addition to performing, Madelyn is a passionate composer and writer. She recently traveled to Atlanta for Horizon Theatre Company's Young Playwrights Festival, where she was named The Dramatist Guild of America's Young Playwright of 2015.



Jeffrey Chips (Director) is thrilled to be participating in his fourth season with PSIP and his first as a director. Previous PSIP credits include Snout in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Alonso in *The Tempest*, and Prince and assistant director in *Romeo and Juliet*. Previous directing credits include *Twelfth Night* (Steel City Shakespeare Center), *Double Falsehood* (Mary Baldwin College, Staunton, VA), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Tailgate Shakespeare, Staunton, VA), and *Measure for Measure* (Circle in the Water Theatre Company, Pittsburgh). Jeffrey is the artistic director of Steel City Shakespeare Center. He holds a BA in theatre from Allegheny College and an M.Litt. and MFA in Shakespeare and Performance from Mary Baldwin College in Staunton, VA, where he trained at the American Shakespeare Center. He would like to thank Ron Siebert, Jennifer Tober, and the PSIP board for making this dream a reality, and send his love to his wife, Megan, and sons, Samuel and Isaac, for being his constant source of inspiration and wonder.



Lisa Leiberger (Production Designer) is a professional theatrical designer, puppeteer, and teaching artist, living in Pittsburgh, PA. She holds a BFA in Puppetry/Children's Theatre from West Virginia University, a MA in Theatre for Youth from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and a MA in Theatre from the University of Pittsburgh. Her recent, local artistic work includes building the Enroll-o-bot mascot, collaborations with Lincoln Park Performing Arts Center, Pittsburgh Shakespeare in the Parks, and the Children's Museum of Pittsburgh. Outside of Pittsburgh, some of her notable credits include, designing and constructing a 25' dragon puppet for Trollwood Performing Arts Center production of *Shrek*, creating the original mascot for the NFL's Carolina Panthers, managing the Character Shop for Paramount Parks/Production Services, and serving as the Resident Designer/Costume Shop Manager for the Children's Theatre of Charlotte. Lisa lives in Allison Park, PA, with her husband, two teenage children, a couple of dogs and cats, and a motley crew of puppets.

Special Thanks To:

David & Catherine Aceto, Calvary United Methodist Church, Charles Beikert, Nadine Brnilovich & Citiparks, Cuttita Chiropractic, Steve Doerfler, Franktury, Michael Mykita, New Place Collaborations, Scott Timm & Opera Theater of Pittsburgh, Social at Bakery Square, and Te Cafe

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