THE AFTLS APPROACH

For most of his working life, William Shakespeare was a sharer in the King’s Men, London’s leading theatre company. He knew the actors he was writing for and collaborated with them on seeing the plays into performance.

All theatre is a collaboration, of course, and while actors can no longer collaborate directly with Shakespeare, the Actors From The London Stage (AFTLS) company always aims to work with him, respectfully and creatively, throughout the rehearsal process. Our company’s aim is to make his words exert their magic and their power in performance, but we do this in a vital, and perhaps unconventional, way. We have no massive sets to tower over the performers and no directorial concept to tower over the text of Shakespeare’s play. In fact, AFTLS does not have a director at all; instead, the play has been rehearsed by the actors, working together to create theatre, cooperating with each other in their imaginative engagement with the play’s words.

Now the actors ask you, the audience, to perform that same kind of imaginative engagement that Shakespeare was thinking about when, in the Prologue to Henry V, he instructed his spectators: “Think, when we talk of horses, that you see them, / Printing their proud hoofs i’ the receiving earth / For ‘tis your thoughts that now must deck our kings.”

Now the actors seek a new collaboration, working with you, the audience, in the way that only live theatre can. It is not a hard job for people to do, even though we are now used to having everything shown us on screen, and even though we usually no longer rely on the powers of the imagination and collaboration to bring a play’s world into being. If you share the fun of collaborating with us, then the excitement of the performance will be richly rewarding for you and for the actors, for this special act of working together, actors and audience combined, marks the latest stage of that long journey Macbeth has made from Shakespeare’s writing the play with and for the actors he knew so well. So, tonight, watch and listen and “let us... / On your imaginary forces work.”

Peter Holland
McMeel Family Chair in Shakespeare Studies
Associate Dean for the Arts, College of Arts and Letters
University of Notre Dame
ABOUT ACTORS FROM THE LONDON STAGE

Actors From The London Stage (consisting of five British Shakespearean artists from such companies as the Royal Shakespeare Company, the Royal National Theatre of Great Britain, and Shakespeare’s Globe Theatre, among others) is an educational program developed in 1975 by Homer Swander at the University of California, Santa Barbara. The theatre company is now based in London and at the University of Notre Dame. The artists devote a large part of their time to lectures, workshops, seminars, and informal meetings with students. Their stay provides students and faculty with a unique opportunity both to observe extraordinary performances and to discuss literature and the art of theatre in depth with some of the most talented artists from some of the most important theatre companies in the world. Contact us at www.aftls.nd.edu.

Founder
Homer Swander

Academic Director
Peter Holland

Founding Directors
Tony Church
Lisa Harrow
Bernard Lloyd
Sir Patrick Stewart

Associate Directors
David Acton
Bruce Alexander
Gareth Armstrong
Matthew Davies
Caroline Devlin
Tim Hardy
Vivien Heilbron
Jennifer Higham

Richard Neale
Michael Palmer
Martin Parr
Eunice Roberts
Alison Skilbeck
Chris Staines
Lucy Tregear
Alinka Wright

ABOUT SHAKESPEARE AT NOTRE DAME

Actors From The London Stage is a national outreach program of Shakespeare at Notre Dame. Shakespeare at Notre Dame consists of the McMeel Family Chair in Shakespeare Studies, the Ryan Producing Artistic Director, the Notre Dame Shakespeare Festival, Actors From The London Stage, ancillary lectures and events, and library collections. Shakespeare at Notre Dame’s mission is to become a pre-eminent venue for the study and performance of the works of Shakespeare, providing Notre Dame and the wider community with an on-campus culture steeped in the works of William Shakespeare — both on the page and on the stage.

Executive Director: Scott Jackson
General Manager: Debra Gasper
Ryan Producing Artistic Director: Grant Mudge
Audience Development Manager: Aaron Nichols
THE PLAYERS

Annie Aldington  Donalbain, Ross, Menteth, Fleance, Lady Macbeth, Third Witch
Charles Armstrong  Duncan - King Of Scotland, Macduff, Angus, Second Witch, Murderer
Joanna Bending  Bloody Soldier, Old Man, Malcolm, Cathness, Lady Macduff, First Witch, Murderer, Gentlewoman
Michael Palmer  Macbeth, English Doctor, Murderer
Ben Warwick  Banquo, Lennox, Seyward, Son Of Macduff, Scottish Doctor, Porter, Hecate

ABOUT THE PLAYERS

ANNE ALDINGTON  (Donalbain/Ross/Menteth/Fleance/Lady Macbeth/Third Witch) studied drama at the University of Northumbria and works as an actor and voiceover artist. Recent theatre credits include: Mistress Quickly, Henry V (Shakespeare’s Globe); The Nurse, Romeo and Juliet (Globe Education); Eileen, Regarding X (Hot August Comedy Fringe); and Julie, A Certain Minor Light (Wimbledon Theatre). Annie is also a sonneteer at Shakespeare’s Globe and was a 2012 cast member in ‘Pop up Shakespeare,’ a project set up by Mark Rylance and directed by Jonathan Moore. This was a 50 strong cast taking Shakespeare out onto the streets of London. Annie’s recent film credits include: Sandra, Flinch (Iblade Films); and Dr. Adele Smith, English Wine (FFP Media, Germany). Annie has also recorded around 300 audio books and is the voice of many London based authors, including Martina Cole and Roberta Kray. Annie founded ‘Actup’ Theatre school in 2007 for children aged 7-12 years and also tours and workshops a play about Queen Victoria, called Victoria And Me to schools in London.

CHARLES ARMSTRONG  (Duncan - King Of Scotland/Macduff/Angus/Second Witch/Murderer) is an AFTLS veteran who trained at the Drama Studio London after studying French and Philosophy at Oxford University. Theatre credits include: Witness for the Prosecution and Engaging Shaw (Vienna’s English Theatre), Stop Messing About (Leicester Square Theatre and Number 1 Tour), Round The Horne Revisited (West End and Number 1 Tour), Wake Up and Smell The Coffee (New End), The Two Gentlemen Of Verona (Royal Shakespeare Company), Trelawny Of The Wells and The Soldiers (National Theatre), Of Mice and Men (Harrogate Theatre), The Tenant Of Wildfell Hall (Salisbury Playhouse), Wait Until Dark (Royal Theatre, Northampton), Bless The Bride (King’s Head), Twelfth Night (Liverpool Playhouse), Peter Pan (Northcott, Exeter), Rebecca (Number 1 Tour), Hay Fever (Jersey Opera House), The Provok’d Wife and The Provok’d Husband (New End), Henry V (Union Theatre), Othello (Cochrane Theatre & Tour), and How He Lied To Her Husband (Orange Tree). Film credits include: The King’s Speech, The Spell, The Pharmacist, The Navigators, The Ultimate Truth, and On The Other Hand. Television credits include: Call
the Midwife, Doctors, Holby City, Scoop, Round The Horne Revisited, Head Over Heels, EastEnders, Poirot, The Hello Girls, Futurecast, and Strictly Chuckle. Radio credits include Changeable and Twice Ken Is Plenty (Radio 4). Charles was on the BBC’s Radio Repertory Company and has recorded numerous voiceovers. Charles has taught Acting Workshops for Act Up and directed theatre productions for Theatre Clwyd and the London Sitcom Trials.

JOANNA BENDING (Bloody Soldier/Old Man/Malcolm/Cathness/Lady Macduff/First Witch/Murderer/Gentlewoman) trained at The Royal Academy of Dramatic Art. In theatre she has most recently appeared as Eleanor Hopkirk alongside Alan Cox in Kingmaker, which transferred to the St. James Theatre in London after its sell out Edinburgh run this summer. Earlier in the year, she played Connie in Under the Mulberry Tree (Festival Theatre Edinburgh) and Emily, an Alzheimer’s sufferer, in Hand Over Fist (Seabright Productions and the Comedians’ Theatre Company) for which she was nominated as Best Solo Performer by The Stage in 2012. Other career highlights include spending a year at the National Theatre in The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie, appearing at the Royal Court in Pinter’s Mountain Language, at Regents Park in Two Women for One Ghost, and Carl Djerassi’s play, Phallacy, at the Kings Head. Joanna also enjoyed a summer season of weekly rep at Frinton playing Ruth in Blithe Spirit and all the female characters in Intimate Exchanges. For television, she has appeared in Doctors (many times in different guises), Holby City, Eastenders, Coronation Street, The Sarah Jane Adventures, Love Soup, The Bill, Angel of Death: the Beverley Allitt Story, and PMTV for the Paramount Comedy Channel. Films include this year’s Second Coming, the first feature from acclaimed playwright Debbie Tucker-Green, (Hillbilly Films); and Tick Tock Lullaby (Valiant Doll), which won Best Feature Award at the Britspotting British & Irish Film Festival.

MICHAEL PALMER (Macbeth/English Doctor/Murderer) teaches Drama at the Sylvia Young Theatre School, London. His theatre credits include: All Creatures Great and Small (UK tour, Bill Kenwright Ltd); The Butterfly Lion (UK tour, BKL); The Merchant of Venice playing Shylock and Twelfth Night playing Malvolio and Sir Andrew Aguecheek (Actors From The London Stage); Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde (one man show, Creation TC, Oxford UK); Friend or Foe by Michael Murpogo (UK tour); A Doll’s House (Cambridge, UK); the title role in Volpone (Wilton’s Music Hall, London); The Country Wife at the Bridewell; Hamlet, King Lear, and The Merchant of Venice for Compass Theatre Company; Gamblers at Battersea Arts Centre; Descent: The Diary of a Madman (one man show, Edinburgh festival); The Mysteries at the Orange Tree in Richmond; Breaking the Code, As You Like It, and The Real Thing in Basingstoke. He also has recorded numerous Shakespeare plays on CD. Musicals include tours of Footloose; The Wedding Singer; Sing-along-a-Abba; Company at Westcliffe, UK; and the title role in Did You, Dr Crippen? at the Trafalgar Studios, London. On television Michael has appeared in Bear Behaving Badly, How Not to Live Your Life, Waking the Dead, Casualty, and Wish Me Luck.

(continued overleaf)
THE STORY

In the middle of a war, Duncan, King of Scotland, hears the news that his generals, Macbeth and Banquo, have defeated two invading armies. On their way back from victory, Macbeth and Banquo encounter three witches who prophesy that Macbeth, now Thane of Glamis, will be made Thane of Cawdor, and eventually King of Scotland. They also prophesy that Banquo will father a line of kings, although never king himself. The witches vanish, and Macbeth and Banquo are surprised when Scottish lords arrive with the news that Macbeth has been named Thane of Cawdor, replacing a traitor. Macbeth is fascinated by the possibility that he will be crowned king. Duncan announces that he will visit Macbeth’s castle and Macbeth writes ahead to his wife, Lady Macbeth, telling her all that has happened.

Lady Macbeth suffers none of her husband’s uncertainty: he must murder Duncan and become king. When Macbeth arrives, she overrides all of her husband’s objections. The two make Duncan’s servants drunk and, while Duncan is asleep, Macbeth stabs him, overcoming his own doubts and a supernatural vision. When Duncan’s death is discovered the next morning, Macbeth kills the servants – ostensibly out of rage at their crime – and easily assumes the kingship. Duncan’s sons Malcolm and Donalbain flee to England and Ireland, respectively, fearing that whoever killed Duncan desires their deaths as well.

Fearful of the witches’ prophecy that Banquo’s heirs will succeed him, Macbeth hires men to kill Banquo and his son Fleance. They ambush and murder Banquo but they fail to kill Fleance, who escapes. Macbeth is furious: as long as Fleance is alive, his power remains insecure. At a feast that night, Banquo’s ghost appears and terrifies Macbeth...
who alone can see it. Worried, Macbeth goes to visit the witches. They show him apparitions who present him with further prophecies: he must beware of Macduff; he cannot be harmed by any man born of woman; and he will be safe until Birnam Wood comes to Dunsinane Castle. Macbeth feels secure. When he learns that Macduff has fled to England to join Malcolm, Macbeth orders that Lady Macduff and her children be murdered.

News of his family’s slaughter reaches Macduff in England; grief-stricken he vows revenge. Malcolm has succeeded in raising an army in England and Macduff joins him to make war on Macbeth. Lady Macbeth, meanwhile, walks in her sleep, reliving her guilty secrets, and kills herself. Macbeth awaits the English and fortifies Dunsinane, certain that the witches’ prophecies guarantee his invincibility. But the apparitions’ prophecies come true, Macbeth is killed by Macduff, and Malcolm is acclaimed as the new King of Scotland.

**Peter Holland**  
McMeel Family Chair in Shakespeare Studies, University of Notre Dame.

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