

ACTORS FROM THE LONDON STAGE FALL TOUR 2017



Measure for Measure

by William Shakespeare

Venue Name

Performance Dates

Performance Times



ACTORS FROM THE
LONDON STAGE

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Actors From The London Stage is generously supported by the McMeel Family Endowment for Excellence for Actors From The London Stage, the Paul Eulau Endowment for Excellence for Actors From The London Stage, the Deborah J. Loughrey Endowment for Excellence in Shakespeare Studies, the D & J Smith Endowment for Shakespeare and Performance, as well as the University of Notre Dame's Office of the Provost, and College of Arts and Letters.

Design and artwork: www.imaginedesignassociates.com

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 *Measure for Measure* 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

Liz Crowther

Matthew Davies

Caroline Devlin

Tim Hardy

Richard Neale

Paul O'Mahony

Michael Palmer

Martin Parr

Eunice Roberts

Alison Skilbeck

Chris Staines

Lucy Tregear

Jack Whitam

Jennifer Winter

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

Interim Audience Development Manager: Marlon D. Deleon

Ryan Producing Artistic Director for the Notre Dame Shakespeare Festival:

Grant Mudge

THE PLAYERS

Peter Bray	Lucio/Elbow/Mariana
Ben Eagle	Escalus/Provost/Sister Francisca/Justice
Dominic Gerrard	Duke Vincentio/Froth /Barnardine
Wela Mbusi	Angelo/Claudio/Pompey
Anna Wright	Isabella/Juliet/Mistress Overdone/Abhorson

ABOUT THE PLAYERS



PETER BRAY (Lucio/Elbow/Mariana)

Peter Bray has performed on some of the most prestigious stages in the world working with the Royal Shakespeare Company (*The White Devil*, *Arden of Faversham*, *The Roaring Girl*, *The Heart of Robin Hood*), as well as the National Theatre, Shakespeare's Globe, the Folger Shakespeare Library, and the Royal Lyceum Theatre Edinburgh. His stage, film, and workshop experience allowed him to work with Bill Buckhurst, Pia Furtado, and Dan Barnard. He has taught extensively at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama as well as at the Arts Educational Schools. Additional workshop highlights include: Oxford University, Boston University, and SHAPE military school.



BEN EAGLE (Escalus/Provost/Sister Francisca/Justice)

Ben trained at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama graduating with the Lilian Baylis Award for Excellence. Theatre: Falstaff in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (Theatre N16), *Robin Hood* (Tewkesbury Roses), *Much Ado About Nothing* (Theatre N16), *This Was The World and I Was King* (Arts Theatre West End), *Robin Hood* (Chipping Norton), *The M Word* (Leicester Square Theatre), *The Eighth Wonder of the World* (Brunel Tunnel Shaft), *Animal Farm, 1984* (National Media Museum and tour), *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Twelfth Night*, *Waiting For Godot*, *A Christmas Carol* (Paper Zoo). Film: *Alice The Wild*, *The First Film*. Ben is a regular voiceover artist and singer and has performed in concerts at venues including the Royal Albert Hall and St. James Theatre.

Ben has directed two plays, *Doubt: A Parable* by John Patrick Shanley and *The Audition* by James Johnson. He has also, more recently, been Assistant Director on *A Little Night Music*, *Sunday in the Park with George* and *Merrily We Roll Along* at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama. Ben often works one-on-one with drama school auditionees and mentors students at Central. He is regularly asked to host corporate events and has experience as a Film Festival Producer.



DOMINIC GERRARD (Duke Vincentio/Froth /Barnardine)

Dominic Trained at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama. His Shakespeare credits include international tours of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Comedy of Errors* (Propeller), *As You Like It* (Southwark Playhouse), *The Tempest* (Barbican), *The Merchant of Venice* (Queen's Theatre Hornchurch), *Macbeth* (Exeter Northcott).

Other credits include: *For All Time* (Southwark Playhouse), *Swallows and Amazons* (Bristol Old Vic), *Adolf Hitler: My Part in His Downfall* (Bristol Old Vic, Hampstead and Chichester), *Old Earth* (Village Underground), *The Poor Soldier* (Theatre Royal Bury), *An Ideal Husband* (BKL Tour), *Northanger Abbey* (Salisbury Playhouse), *The Pickwick Papers* (Middle Temple Hall).

His West End theatre credits include: *Man and Boy* (Duchess Theatre) and *Les Miserables* (Palace Theatre).

He contributed to Research and Development for the RSC's *Multi-Storey* and Propeller's *Edward III* projects, and wrote and directed *Malvolio's Misorder* for Shakespeare 400.

Dominic is also an Education Practitioner at Shakespeare's Globe and has led drama workshops in Brazil, Switzerland, Turkey, Germany, France, and the UK. He also directs at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama and the East-15 drama school in London.

Every Christmas Dominic performs a one-man show of *A Christmas Carol*, which he devised with former Globe Associate, Tim Carroll.



WELA MBUSI (Angelo/Claudio/Pompey)

Wela Mbusi is a British/South African actor who lives and works in London.

Wela has appeared in numerous West End/Off West End productions with prominent UK directors: Sir Peter Hall (*Whose Life Is It Anyway?*) and Sir Michael Boyd (*The Histories Cycle* as the Boy in *Henry V* and Prince Edward in *Henry VI* Parts 1-3 for the RSC).

Wela also appeared as the Friar in *Redefining Juliet*, a BBC drama documentary for the Shakespeare 400 celebrations. His work with South Carolina Shakespeare Company includes Iachimo in *Cymbeline* and Albert in *Clybourne Park*. ADR work includes *Call the Midwife* (BBC) and *Guerrilla* (SKY Atlantic). For the last nine months, he has been on tour as a puppeteer with Fiery Angel and Chichester Festival Theatre's production of *Running Wild*.

Wela has also engaged in interdisciplinary work geared towards social transformation with the British Council, the Royal Shakespeare Company and Tribal Soul in Zimbabwe, South Africa and the UK. He has also led workshops focusing on multi-dimensional approaches to classical text which encompassed agendas about social inclusivity as well as equipping actors with skills that widen their reach across ethnicities and cultural norms.

(continued overleaf)

ABOUT THE PLAYERS (continued)



ANNA WRIGHT (Isabella/Juliet/Mistress Overdone/Abhorson)

Anna trained at The Drama Centre London; during her training she appeared for three years as *Rachel*, a regular character, in the BBC Asian Network Radio Soap, *Silverstreet*.

Productions and performances include Dora in *Les Justes* by Albert Camus, Julia in the *The Duchess of Malfi* by John Webster, Hermia in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and multiple BBC Radio 4 dramas.

Anna continues to work with the Old Vic New Voices production team, after having been selected to appear in the prestigious '24 Hour Plays' led by Kevin Spacey at The Old Vic Theatre in 2010; and she still also regularly works with the Royal Court Theatre on new material, having been a member of their acclaimed Young Writer's Program. Anna was shortlisted for the Bruntwood Prize in 2013, and her first full-length five-act play, written entirely in iambic pentameter, is currently undergoing supervised development by the REP Theatre, Birmingham. Anna has toured twice previously with Actors From The London Stage in *The Merchant of Venice* and *Othello*, the latter of which won an IRNE award for best visiting production in 2014. Anna also paints on commission as an oil portrait artist.

THE STORY

Mysteriously and without explaining his reasons, the Duke of Vienna leaves his city, appointing Angelo as his deputy. Order in the city has suffered from years of lax enforcement of the laws. Angelo, zealous and strict, is the ideal person to reassert the rule of law. The Duke disguises himself as a friar in order to watch what happens.

Angelo closes down the brothels and condemns to death Claudio for getting his fiancée Juliet pregnant. Claudio's sister, Isabella, who is just entering a convent as a novice, preparing to become a nun, hears the news from Claudio's friend Lucio and rushes to plead for her brother's life. Angelo is moved by her pleas in a way that neither she nor he had expected: he will pardon Claudio if Isabella will have sex with him. Isabella is horrified.

She tells her jailed brother of Angelo's proposition and is overheard by the Duke in his friar's disguise. The Duke creates a plot to save Claudio and trap Angelo. The 'friar' persuades Isabella to pretend to agree to Angelo's offer; when the moment comes, Mariana, a young woman once engaged to and then rejected by Angelo, takes Isabella's place.

Angelo orders the Provost to execute another condemned man, Barnardine, and the Duke persuades the Provost of the prison to send Angelo the head of Barnardine as if it were Claudio's and to keep Claudio alive. When Barnardine inconveniently refuses to be executed, the Provost sends the head of a dead pirate who looks similar enough to Claudio.

The 'friar' abandons his disguise and the Duke returns to Vienna. As the Duke arrives back to take over rule again, Isabella charges Angelo with his abuse of power. Cornered, Angelo attempts to discredit Isabella. When the Duke reveals himself as the friar, he condemns Angelo to death. Mariana pleads for Angelo's life and the Duke orders that Angelo marry Mariana. Claudio is revealed to be alive and the Duke ties up loose ends as neatly as he can by proposing marriage to Isabella.

Peter Holland

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