

DIRECTING RESUME AND VITAE

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Additional information including testimonials and production stills may be found on my website **nycDirector.com**

"By the end, Bond and his merry players had the thing going like a firestorm. It was extremely funny, and better yet, offered a resolution at the end that is usually only found in Verdi's opera.

"...This is a *Merry Wives* to be recommended, especially to those who imagine they have already seen one more *Merry Wives* than was strictly necessary. Take Heart. You haven't."

Clive Barnes, The New York Post

"When it's done right, *The Merry Wives of Windsor* can be an adorably silly evening's entertainment. And the Pearl Theatre has done it right.

"...The entire cast does itself proud in this briskly paced, high-energy production."

Critic's Pick, The New York Times

"Director James Alexander Bond gives each scene the proper pace, from frantic to mellow, while maintaining just the right comedic and dramatic tone."

The Miami Herald

"Extremely well directed..."

"...The show is colorful, funny and moves along with an energetic clip."

Virginia gazette

"...Ingeniously directed by James Alexander Bond... uniquely funny. The world needs such laughter as the excitingly balanced cornucopia of delicious delirium."

Hometown News Publications

"James Alexander Bond has once again put together a rare night of theatre where all of the pieces come together in a seamless fit.

"...With Bond's approach we go past some of the build-up, and linger on those truly powerful moments the script offers... you'll see what I mean when you go see it for yourself."

John Porter, WCVE Public Radio

The Pearl Theatre Company
Club El Flamingo, Ars Nova, The Kraine Theatre
The New 42nd Street Theatre

Manhattan Repertory Theatre
Sandie Shurin Theatre
West Side Dance Project
NY Public Libraries
The Producers Club
HERE Arts Center
Ensemble Studio Theatre
Impact Theatre

Birmingham Hippodrome

Ocean Professional Theatre Co.
Theatre West

Richmond Shakespeare
Measure for Measure
A Midsummer's Night Dream
Julius Caesar

Off Square Theatre
Muhlenberg Summer Theatre
MaineStage Shakespeare
Othello

Richmond Triangle Players
Surflight Theatre
The Secret Garden
The Lion in Winter
The Man Who Came to Dinner
The Miracle Worker

Princeton Repertory Theatre
Connecticut Repertory Theatre
Virginia Shakespeare Festival
Hollywood Boulevard Theatre
Hollywood Performing Arts
Florida Playwrights' Theatre
Pioneer Playhouse
Broadhollow Theatre Company
Shakespeare in the Valley
Stagedoor Manor

The Wiz
The Good Person of Setzuan
The Women

Mechanicsburg Little Theatre
Butte Opera House

OFF BROADWAY

The Merry Wives of Windsor
ROCKSHOW
Deathclaw 7: The Escape

OFF-OFF BROADWAY (selected)

Twelfth Night
On the Verge
Burn This
Coriolanus
Savage in Limbo
Burning Habits
Scared Clouds (WP)
Female Bonding (WP)
Othello
Java Jive (World Premiere)
The Cockroach Show (WP)
American Standard (WP)

UNITED KINGDOM

Liz Lochhead's *Dracula*

REGIONAL THEATRE (selected)

Thoroughly Modern Millie
Spamalot
Richard III
Elizabeth Rex
Amadeus
The Tempest (twice)
Cabaret
Godspell
Romeo and Juliet
Hamlet
Devil Boys from Beyond
Jesus Christ Superstar
Swingtime Canteen
Wait Until Dark
Harvey
Ten Little Indians
As You Like It
The Foreigner
The Comedy of Errors
Macbeth
Equus
Twelfth Night
Wait Until Dark
Same Time Next Year
Love's Labor's Lost
Brigadoon
Oliver!
The Crucible
Thirteen Hands
Zelda (World Premiere Musical)
A Cripple Creek Christmas Carol (WPM, Twice)
The Addams Family
Henry IV, Part 1
Henry IV, Part 2
Henry V
King Lear
The 39 Steps (Twice)
Candide
Much Ado About Nothing
The Odd Couple
Biloxi Blues
The Mousetrap
Dial "M" for Murder
Blithe Spirit
The Taming of the Shrew
I Remember You
A Woman in Mind
The Art of Dining
Cactus Flower
The Comedy of Errors
The Mikado
Our Country's Good
Runaways
Once Upon a Mattress

"A brilliant directorial coup... giving the evening a wholeness of tone and purpose... James Alexander Bond directed with a masterful delicacy and pure comic inventiveness that rarely, if ever flagged..."

"Bond also used a lack of physical trappings to his, and the performers' advantage... The production whizzed by at a breathtaking pace, and like a good cup of coffee, left one wanting more"
[oobr: Off Off Broadway Review](#)

"With an ingenious script, excellent acting, and the impeccable direction of James Alexander Bond, *I Remember You* is a fantastic gift."
[City Link](#)

"It has been a while since I flat out laughed so hard at a production. The little slice of delicious wickedness known as *Devil Boys From Beyond* is highly recommended."
John Porter, [WCVB Public Radio](#)

"Director James Alexander Bond has assembled a superb cast. Suave, confident, addled and blissfully eccentric, they put winds in Ayckbourn's sails and send *A Woman in Mind* scudding along at a breathtaking rate... With *A Woman in Mind*, theatregoers have been given something a lot meatier to chew on"
[Sun-Sentinel](#)

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Stage Directors and Choreographers Society (SDC). New York City
American Renaissance Theatre Company. New York City
Hells Kitchen/Clinton Theatre Company. New York City
MaineStage Shakespeare. Artistic Associate. Kennebunk, ME.
Richmond Shakespeare. Artistic Associate. Richmond, VA.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Masters of Fine Arts (MFA), Directing. University of California, Davis, 1994
Bachelors of Fine Arts (BFA), Theatre Management. Ithaca College, 1991
Developing New Works Symposium. SDC Foundation, 2003
Making Musical Theatre Symposium. SDC Foundation, 2002
Classical Directing Symposium. SDC Foundation, 2001
Shakespeare Symposium with Cicely Berry. Theatre for a New Audience, 2001
Directing Labs. Ensemble Studio Theatre, 1995 - '97. The Lab Theatre Company, 1997 - '98
Film Production Summer Intensive. New York Film Academy, 1994

MENTORSHIPS & ASSISTANTSHIPS (selected)

Cicely Berry, John Rando, Sara Pia Anderson*, John Burgess*, Margaret Denithorn, Casey Childs, Elizabeth Carlin Metz, Frank Hauser*, Peter Lichtenfles*, Arthur Lithgow,
Charles Nelson Reilly, Pip Simmons* Jonathan Tammuz, and Shepard Sobel
[* Members of Granada Television, London]

NEW PLAYS, ONE-ACTS & READINGS (250 plus)

The Ensemble Studio Theatre, The Century Theatre, D'Stages, Theatre By The Blind, The Lab Theatre Company's *All Day Sucker II*, The Henry Street Settlement, Pulse Ensemble Theatre, Abingdon Theatre Company, *Drop Your Shorts* Play Festivals,
The Trilogy Theatre, Samuel French's *Off Off Broadway Short Play Festivals*, American Renaissance Theatre Company, The Neighborhood Playhouse, etc.

*Recommendations and additional information available upon request
Or you may visit my website at [nycDirector.com](#)*

"James Alexander Bond's refreshingly low-concept direction disproves former [New York Times](#) critic Frank Rich's claim that Shakespeare's silliest play 'demands invention to ward off rigor mortis.' Speaking the 400-year old text without conceptual gimmicks or modern updates, the Pearl's vibrant actors earn more laughs than most contemporary comedies do."

Critic's Pick, [Time Out New York](#)

"My enjoyment of Richmond Shakespeare's *King Lear* started the moment I sat down... The production itself was fabulous with a boldness and sense of gravitas... I'm sure there's plenty else I could say but this is a production that is rich with gifts and I can't really enumerate them effectively. As a director, Bond has once again shown he has a firm grasp of the oeuvre and can make Shakespeare vital and entertaining."

[Richmond Timberline Theatre Blog](#)

"If the staid Tudor presence of Agecroft hall is too tame for you, check out the roller coaster they've installed. It's called *Henry IV Part 2* and it's [a] knockout production... Director James Alexander Bond manages this circus using the stage masterfully and somehow making the emotional changes work... *Henry IV Part 2* turns us all into satisfied groundlings."

[Richmond Times Dispatch](#)

Thanks to the skill of director Bond the scene is neither pandering nor titillating. It is simply honest theatre about a confrontation between two young people with beautiful bodies playing characters with wildly divergent motives. The result, admittedly daring, is magic. *Equus* is a startling, landmark play for the Hollywood Performing Arts Theatre.

[Sun Sentinel](#)

CAREER OBJECTIVE

To preside over a major regional or seasonal theatre as artistic director, thereby establishing a platform upon which to base my life's work in professional theatre and academia;

To inspire and cultivate the next generation of theatre artists both in the college and university classroom and via the production process;

To continue my exploration of the dramatic arts as a guest director concentrating on musical theatre, contemporary and classical plays with a strong emphasis on new works; and

To direct the entire canon of the works of William Shakespeare, a life-long personal goal.

EDUCATION

M.F.A. in Directing Theatre from The University of California, Davis (1994)

UCD had a three-year MFA playwriting program, giving me the opportunity to interact with playwrights as they develop new works.

Graduate, Intensive Film Program, New York Film Academy, NYC (1994)

B.F.A. in Theatre Management from Ithaca College, NY (1991)

Graduated with departmental honors.

Graduate. Dillard High School of the Performing Arts. Student. Ft Lauderdale, FL (1987)

ADDITIONAL TRAINING

I continue to regularly attend lectures, seminars, symposiums and acting classes to better understand and communicate with my collaborators and fellow artists.

Derek Jacobi Shakespeare Workshop. Participant.

Shakespearean text workshop led by Derek Jacobi. NYC (summer 2011)

Directing a New American Theatre. Symposium Host and Participant. A National Symposium bringing together theatrical leaders from around the country to examine the role of artists in the development of new works and to explore ways in which plays and musicals can be relevant, economically competitive and theatrically compelling in an ever-shifting media culture.

Sponsored by the Stage Directors and Choreographers Foundation. Intensive panels and workshops led by Christopher Ashley, Karen Azenberg, Gaberiel Barre, Arthur Bartlow, Jo Bonney, Mary Catherine Burke, Ben Cameron, Tisa Chang, Hope Clarke, Jorge Cotinas, Thomas Cott, Ellie Covan, Margaret Croyden, Clinton Turner Davis, Mark Dendy, Steven Drukman, Susan Einhorn, Scott Ellis, Fritz Ertl, Jef Evans, Leah Gardiner, Nancy Gibbs, Ain Gordon, Michael Greif, David Herskovits, Miranda Hoffman, David Henry Hwang, Tom Igoe, Chris Jaehnig, Devanand Janki, Jon Kimbell, Virginia Loulodes, Ruth Maleczek, Robert Marx, Keryl McCord, Joe Miloscia, Ryan Mueller, James Nicola, Diane Paulus, Sabrina Peck, Neil Pepe, Ruben Polendo, Peter Pucci, John Rando, Cicki Reiss, Jordan Roth, Scott Spahr, Daniella Topol, David Warren, and Les Waters. NYC (summer 2003)

Building the American Musical. Symposium Host and Participant. A Symposium on the Process of Making Musical Theatre.

Sponsored by the Stage Directors and Choreographers Foundation. Intensive panels and workshops led by Rob Ashford, Christopher Askley, Karen Azenberg, Gabriel Barre, Arthur Bartow, Marty Bell, Susan Birkenhead, Pat Birch, Jeff Calhoun, Wendy Bobbit Cavett, Brian Crawley, Scott Ellis, Heidy Ettinger, Sue Frost, Larry Fuller, Todd Haimes, Barbara Hauptman, Robert Johnson, Geoffrey Johnson, Clifford Lee Johnson III, Peter Kaczorowski, Greg Kotis, Jack Lee, Vincent Liff, Andrew Lippa, Robert Longbottom, Robert Marx, Michael Mayer, Joey McKneely, Sally Campbell Morse, Daniel Pelzig, Harold Prince, Michael Rego, Charles Repole, Mary Robinson, Susan Schulman, Scott Schwartz, Lynne Taylor-Corbett, Jeannie Tesori, Keith Thompson, Victoria Traube, Elizabeth Williams, David Warren, and Catherine Zuber. NYC (summer 2002)

Directing Shakespeare. Symposium Host and Participant. A Classical Directing Symposium Exploring the Fundamentals and Unique Challenges of Directing Shakespeare.

Sponsored by the Stage Directors and Choreographers Foundation. Intensive panels and workshops led by Libby Appel, Arthur Bartow, Mark Bly, David Burdries, Daniel Fish, Gerald Freedman, James F. Ingalis, Deborah Hecht, Mark Lamos, Oni Feida Lampley, Ming Cho Lee, Michael Lupo, Boris McGiver, Louis Scheeder, Paul Tazewell, Jordan Thaler, Rosemarie Tichler, Robert Wierzel, Elizabeth Woodman Frank Venture, And Ralph Zito. NYC (spring 2001)

American Directors Project. Cicely Berry Shakespeare Symposium. Participant.

Theatre for a New Audience. Shakespeare text work intensive led by Cicely Berry, verse coach for the Royal Shakespeare Company. NYC (winter 2000)

Comic Improv Workshops. Led by Christine Farrell. Participant.

NYC (fall and spring 1996 - 1998)

Ensemble Studio Theatre Labs. Participating Director.

Ensemble Studio Theatre. Four three-month long theatre labs led by Peg Denithorne. Each lab consisted of five directors, ten playwrights and fifteen actors. The labs explored techniques to further the artistic development of the participants. Each week I directed staged readings of new plays working with the playwrights. Each lab ended with a series of showcases in which I directed four to six new plays. NYC (1995 – 1997)

Ensemble Studio Theatre Catskill Summer Collaborative. Participating Director.

Seven directors, eighteen playwrights and twenty-five actors came together for a month on a large farm in the Catskill Mountains. New plays were written, explored and directed every day. Performances took place each night in the barn or some odd site-specific corner of the farm or the abandoned 100 year-old hotel across the road. Catskills, NY (summer 1996)

Ithaca College London Center. Undergraduate Theatre Student.

Ithaca College has a Victorian mansion ‘campus’ a few blocks from the V&A in London. While there I studied British Art and Architecture, Victorian art and Society, and took the intensive English Theatre and History course which included seeing and analyzing fifteen productions. I saw an additional fifteen shows on my own. 85% of my all classes were on site in museums, on walking tours or at theatres. Classrooms were for tests. Pubs and parks were better suited for discussions. (spring 1990)

French Woods Festival of the Performing Arts. Acting Student.

Performed in shows and took classes. Hancock, NY (summers 1985 – 1987)

Fort Lauderdale Children’s Theatre (FLCT). Acting Student.

Over the course of eight years, I performed as an actor in a dozen shows including the FLCT Touring theatre, which performed in schools, parks, fairs, country clubs and at the Southeastern Theatre Conferences. Ft. Lauderdale, FL (1979 – 1987)

MEMBERSHIPS AND PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Stage Directors and Choreographers Society (SDC). Member. (1993 – Present)

Theatre West. Artistic Associate. (2017 – Present)

Quill Theatre. Artistic Associate. (2014 – Present)

MaineStage Shakespeare. Artistic Associate. (2011 – Present)

Hollywood ArtsPark Advisory Board. Co-chair. (2015 – 2019)

Richmond Shakespeare. Artistic Associate. (2010 – 2014)

American Renaissance Theatre Company. Director.

ARTC provides an artistic home for theatre professionals to explore and develop their gifts and ideas with support from other writers, directors, and actors. In a nurturing workshop environment, actors stretch their boundaries, directors develop projects, and writers conceive, collaborate, and create new plays. At ARTC I have directed over sixty-five readings including fourteen in their Spring Reading Series. NYC (1999 – present)

Southeastern Theatre Conference.

Adjudicator to the Community Theatre Division. Knoxville, TN, (2019) Chattanooga, TN. (2015) Louisville, KY. (2013) Performed the Fort Lauderdale Children's Theatre touring shows *Flashback* and *Magic Theatre*. (1985 - 1987)

Hells Kitchen/Clinton Theatre Project. Directing Founding Member.

Conceived by Etain O'Malley. Over 40 theatre artists based in Hells Kitchen/Clinton creating short works focusing on the social and political history of the neighborhood. Works spanned from the Lenopi Indians settling through proposed future development plans for Manhattan's mid-west side. All sociologies, ethnicities and religions with a hand in developing the area were represented. We had 68 original pieces ranging from five to 30 minutes. If a performance were booked requesting a focus on Irish immigration, gang wars, or Sophie Tucker's support of the Actor's Temple, I would compile an evening to fit the bill. Music was included, some original, some historical, all related to Hells Kitchen. Annually, in compliance with our grant, a free performance of our entire repertoire (approximately five hours) was performed in May Matthews Park (the site of the Capeman Murders, also the subject of four of our pieces.) I was the sole production director of the project.

NYC (1998 - 2005)

Theta Alpha Phi. President.

Theatre honors fraternity. Ithaca College. Ithaca, NY (1988 - 1991)

Thespian Society. Troup 2233.

As the local performing arts high school, hosting festivals fell to us. Ft. Lauderdale, FL (1986 – 1987)

THEATRE DIRECTING EXPERIENCE

Theatre West. Scottsbluff, NE

SHREK, The Musical. Director. (summer 2019)
Forever Plaid. Director. (summer 2019)
Lucky Me. Director. (summer 2017)
Always Patsy Cline. (summer 2017)
Willy Wonka. Director. (summer 2016)
Buddy. Director. (summer 2016)
The Addams Family. Director. (summer 2015)
Godspell. Director. (summer 2015)
Spamalot. Director. (summer 2013)

Southern Shakespeare Company, FL

Macbeth, starring Marc Singer. Director. (spring 2019)

Miami-Dade College, Kendall Campus, FL

Eleemosynary. Director. (spring 2019)
You're a Goodman Charlie Brown. Director. (spring 2018)
David Mamet's *The Frog Prince*. Director. (spring 2017)

Surflight Theatre. Long Beach Island, NJ

Jesus Christ Superstar. Director. (summer 2018)
Accomplice. Director. The first season under Producer Roy Miller. (fall 2010)
The Odd Couple. Director. Starring Walt Willey. (fall 2009)
Wait Until Dark. Director. (fall 2009)
The Man Who Came to Dinner. Director. (fall 2009)
Harvey. Director. (summer 2008)
Swingtime Canteen. Director. (fall 2008)
The Miracle Worker. Director. (fall 2007)
Dial "M" for Murder. Director (fall,2006)
The Lion in Winter. Director. (fall 2005)
Biloxi Blues. Director. (fall, 2004)
Lend Me A Tenor. Director. (fall 2003)
The Mousetrap. Director. (fall 2002)
The Secret Garden. Director. (summer 2002)
Blithe Spirit. Director. (fall 2001)
Ten Little Indians. Director. (fall 2000)

William & Mary College, Williamsburg, VA

Noises Off. Director. (Fall. 2017)

Venice Theatre. Venice, FL

Noises Off. Director. (spring 2016)
Don't Dress for Dinner. Director. (fall 2014)
Parallel Lives. Director. (spring 2014)

Richmond Shakespeare. Richmond, VA

The Compleat Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged). Director. (fall 2014)

Richard III. Director. Summer Festival, Agecroft Hall. (summer 2014)

The Tempest. Director. (winter 2013)

King Lear. Director. Summer Festival, Agecroft Hall. Staring Alan Sader.

Received seven award nominations from the Richmond Critic's Circle:

1] Best Play, 2] Best Direction, 3] Best Actor - Lear, 4] Best Costume design, 5, 6, and 7] Best Supporting Actor - Edgar, Edmund, and Kent. (summer 2011)

Elizabeth Rex. Director. Richmond CenterStage. (spring 2010)

Henry V. Director. Summer Festival, Agecroft Hall. (summer 2009)

Henry IV, Part 2. Director. Summer Festival, Agecroft Hall. (summer 2008)

Amadeus. Director. Part of the 2008 Acts of Faith Festival. (spring 2008)

Measure for Measure. Director. Part of the 2007 Acts of Faith Festival. (winter 2007)

Henry IV, Part 1. Director. Summer Festival, Agecroft Hall. (summer 2007)

Julius Caesar. Director. (fall 2006)

Dogwood Dell. Richmond, VA

The Compleat Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged). Director. (summer 2014)

Off-Square Theatre Company. Jackson Hole, WY

Cabaret. Director. (winter 2014)

Sixteen Wounded (reading). Director. (fall 2012)

Godspell. Director. (summer 2012)

The Understudy. Director. (fall 2011)

The 39 Steps. Director. (winter 2011 and revived summer 2012)

While in residence, I taught Shakespeare Text and Elizabethan/Jacobean theatre history for the after school theatre program for high school theatre students. Jackson, WY

Free Jambalaya. Richmond, VA

The DOCTOR WHOSICAL, a world premier original musical about the infamous time/space traveling Doctor. Director. (fall 2013)

Ocean Professional Theatre Company. Barnegat, NJ

Thoroughly Modern Millie. Director. (summer 2013)

MaineStage Shakespeare. Kennebunk, ME

Hamlet. Director. (summer 2013)

Much Ado About Nothing. Director. (summer 2013)

Othello. Director. (summer 2012)

Romeo and Juliet. Director. Inaugural season. (summer 2011)

Turnip Theatre Company and American Globe Theatre, NYC

Testamental Health. World premiere original short play written by Erich Goldstein Director. (spring 2013)

Maymont Park. Richmond, VA

The Tempest. Director. (spring 2013)

A Midsummer Night's Dream. Director, Maymont Park. (spring 2012)

Illinois Shakespeare Festival, Normal, IL

As You Like It. Director. (summer 2012)

New York Musical Festival (NYMF), NYC

Zelda (reading), a new musical about Zelda Fitzgerald written by Colette Silvestri. Director. (summer 2012)

Richmond Triangle Players. Richmond, VA

Devil Boys from Beyond. Director. (spring 2011)

Theatre Battery Park. Richmond, VA

As You Like It. Director. Inaugural season. A theatre company dedicated to bringing theatre to a community previously not targeted by the arts. Richmond, VA (summer 2010)

The Butte Opera House/Thin Air Theatre Company. Cripple Creek, CO

A Cripple Creek Christmas Carol. Director. Original musical written by Chris Armbrister and Chris Sorenson. (winter, 2010)

A Cripple Creek Christmas Carol. Director. World premier musical. (winter 2002)

Shakespeare in the Valley/Theatre Under the Stars. Waterville, NH

Love's Labour's Lost. Director. (summer 2009)

The 'Unrehearsed' Comedy of Errors. Director. (summer 2009)

Each actor memorized two character tracks and was only given his/her text plus three cue words. Nobody was allowed to read the full play or tell each other who they were playing. I rehearsed actors individually and did not reveal to them any information not found in their own character's text. There was one full cast rehearsal where I showed all the entrances and exits and the whole cast learned how to beat each other up safely. Besides that, they were on their own. With the multiple tracks there were 64 possible casts. At the start of each performance, the stage manager asked an audience member to pick a number. Then she read the cast list for that performance. Once used, a number was retired so no cast would be repeated. A prompter sat on stage to honk a horn if actors veered far off track. It was an experiment in listening and organically responding in the moment. Opening night began as the most terrifying time in the company members' lives and ended as the most exhilarating. The same actors simultaneously rehearsed *Love's Labour's Lost*. I used that rehearsal process to create a unified company, getting them comfortable with each other, the space, and give them the tools they would need for *The 'Unrehearsed' Comedy of Errors*.

Virginia Shakespeare Festival. Williamsburg, VA

Taming of the Shrew. Director. (summer 2008)

The Comedy of Errors. Director. (summer 2001)

Moonbeam Productions. NYC

Othello. Director. NY Public Library/Shakespeare Saturdays series. NYC (spring, 2008)

Coriolanus. Director. NY Public Library/Shakespeare Saturdays series. (fall, 2006)

Twelfth Night. Director. Manhattan Repertory Theatre. Original music by Donna Stearns. (spring 2006)

Festival 56/The November 10 Group. Princeton, IL

Absolutely Anything. Director. World premiere original musical written by Erich Goldstein and composed by Brian Cimmet. (summer 2007)

Impact Theatre. Brooklyn, NY

Female Bonding. Director. World premiere original play written by Susan Kaessner. (winter 2006)

Pioneer Playhouse. Danville, KY

Wait Until Dark. Director. (summer 2006)

Cactus Flower. Director. (summer 2004)

Ars Nova. NYC

RockShow. Director. Original interactive rock musical written by Matt Uremovich, Paul Stancato and Chris “Red” Blisset. (fall 2005)

El Flamingo. NYC

RockShow. Director. (spring 2005)

Muhlenberg Summer Music Festival. Allentown, PA

Candide. Director. (summer 2005)

Godspell. Director. (summer 2004)

Stagedoor Manor. Lock Sheldrake, NY

The Wiz. Director. (summer 2005)

The Mikado. Director. (summer 2004)

Brigadoon. Director. (summer, 2003)

Once Upon a Mattress. Director. (summer 2002)

Oliver!. Director. (summer 2001)

Our Country's Good. Director. (summer 2000)

The Good Person of Setzuan. Director. (summer 1999)

Runaways. Director. (summer 1999)

Thirteen Hands. Director. (summer 1999)

The Crucible. Director. (summer 1998)

The Women. Director. (summer 1998)

Museum. Director. (summer 1998)

Hells Kitchen/Clinton Theatre Project- NYC

Director of over 65 original plays of varying length, some with music, about Hells Kitchen/Clinton.

Performed in and around Manhattan. Project manager, Etain O'Malley. NYC (1998 – 2005)

The Comedia Street Café, Manhattan Theatre Source. NYC

Following the Yellow Brick Road Down the Rabbit Hole. Director. Solo show written and performed by Terry Campion. (winter 2004)

The Kraine Theatre. NYC

RockShow. Director. (fall 2004)

The Open Stage Theatre. Harrisburg, PA

Zelda (Reading). Director. This “reading” was added to accommodate the tremendous number of people who were unable to get tickets to the sold out Little Theatre of Mechanicsburg production. It was nominated for The Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival. Book writer and composer Colette Silvestri was a student at Penn State but since it was not on the Penn State campus nor part of their formal drama program, it could not be audited to go any further. (fall 2004)

Little Theatre of Mechanicsburg. Mechanicsburg, PA

Zelda. Director. Original musical by Colette Silvestri. (summer 2004)

Gretna Theatre. Gretna, PA

Zelda (reading). Director. New work series. Original musical by Colette Silvestri. (summer 2003)

The Dramatists Guild of America. NYC

Zelda (reading). Director. Original musical written by Colette Silvestri. *Zelda* is a new musical I have been nurturing for years. This was its New York debut to find interested parties. (winter 2003)

Hollywood Boulevard Theatre. Hollywood, FL

Macbeth. Director. Outdoor Summer Shakespeare Festival, Young Circle. (spring 2003)

I Remember You. Director. (winter 1997)

Don't Tell Mama Cabaret Theatre. NYC

So Far... With Erich Bergen. Director. Original one-man show. (summer 2003)

The Hippodrome, Birmingham School of Speech and Drama. Birmingham, UK

Liz Lochhead's *Dracula*. Director. (fall 2002)

Princeton Repertory Shakespeare Festival. Princeton, NJ

As You Like It. Director. (summer 2002)

Watts Collaborative, Sande Shurin Theatre. NYC

On the Verge. Director. (spring 2002)

School of Performing and Visual Arts. Erie, PA

A Charlie Brown Christmas. Director. Additional original music and lyrics by Brian Feinstein. (winter 2001)

Connecticut Repertory Theatre. Storrs, CT

The Foreigner. Director. (summer 2000)

The New 42nd Street Theatre. NYC

Deathclaw 7: The Escape. Director. World premiere written by Bill Cosgriff. (summer 2000)

The Producers Club. NYC

Java Jive. Director. Six short plays written by Hank Meyerson, woven into one complete evening with music by James Alexander Bond. NYC (winter 2000)

Savage in Limbo. Director. Produced by Triskelion Productions (fall 1999)

Broadhollow Theatre Company. Lindenhurst, NY

Same Time Next Year. Director. (winter 2000)

The Pearl Theatre Company. NYC

The Merry Wives of Windsor. Director. Listed in Clive Barnes' year in review as one of the top ten shows of 2000. (winter 2000)

The Seagull. Assistant Director. Directed by Shep Sobel, Artistic Director. (spring, 1999)

The Forest. Assistant Director. Directed by Shep Sobel, Artistic Director. (spring 1997)

Abingdon Theatre Company. NYC

Rosemary. Director. Original play about Rosemary Kennedy by James O'Connor. (spring 1999)

University of Connecticut, Avery Point. Avery Point, CT

Java Jive. Director. Six short plays written by Henry Meyerson, woven with music into one complete evening by James Alexander Bond. (spring 1999)

Theatrix 'Drop Your Shorts' play festival at Center Stage, NYC

The Men in Joan's Life. Original play by Henry Meyerson. (winter 1999)

This has Been Some Day. Director. Original play by Henry Meyerson. (winter 1999)

No Prune. Director. Original play by Henry Meyerson. (winter, 1999)

HERE Arts Center. NYC

Burning Habits. Director. Written by Blair Fell. An original series of eight 'episodes' telling the saga of gay vampires and dead lesbian nuns in an East Village bar. A new episode opened every two weeks. (winter, 1998 – spring, 1999)

Just Say No, The Cockroach Show. Director. Original play with music written by Ben Medley and Raquel Hecher. (winter 1997)

West Side Dance Project. NYC

Burn This. Director. Produced by Triskelion Productions (fall 1998)

Theatre by the Blind (TBTB)/Vineyard Theatre.

Slippage. Director. Original play written by Leslee Snyder.

Theatre by the Blind is a company of actors who range from visually impaired to completely blind. I also directed three plays in the TBTB reading series so the company members could hear plays aloud before choosing their season. NYC (fall 1998)

The Trilogy Theatre. NYC

100 Women. Director. Written by Kristina Halvorson. (winter 1997)

Ensemble Studio Theatre (EST). NYC

The Shift. Director. Octoberfest. World premiere written by Richard Cottrell. (fall 1997)

Slippage. Director. World premiere written by Leslee Snyder. (fall 1997)

Five New One Act Plays. Director. EST Fall Play Festival. NYC (fall 1997)

Cappuccino. Director. Written by Brenda Shoshona Lukeman. World premiere. (fall 1997)

Six New One Act Plays. Director. EST Spring Play Festival. (spring 1997)

What I Meant Was. Assistant Director. Original play written by Craig Lucas. Directed by Margret Denithorne. EST *Marathon*. (fall 1997)

American Standard. Director. EST Spring Play Festival. World premier Original play by Steve Chizmadia. (Spring 1997)

Continental Divide. Director. EST Fall Play Festival. Original play by Bill Cosgriff. (fall 1996)

Scared Clouds. Director. EST Octoberfest. World premiere. (fall 1996)

The Boom Box. Director EST Fall Play Festival. Original play by Craig Lucas with music and lyrics by Patrick Barnes. Worked on with Craig Lucas. (fall 1996)

Metropolitan Playhouse. NYC

The Haiku Boys. Director. World premiere written by Brenda Shoshona Lukeman. NYC (winter 1997)

The Grove Street Theatre, D'Stages. NYC

Chocolate Morning. Director. Original play written by Bill McMahon. (spring 1997)

Samuel French's Off Off Broadway Short Play Festival. NYC

Sanctuary. Director. World premiere written by Brenda Shoshona Lukeman. NYC (spring 1997)

LaMama Galleria. NYC

Cappuccino. Director. Original play written by Brenda Shoshona Lukeman. (spring 1997)

House of Candles. NYC

Just Say No, The Cockroach Show. Director. Original play written by Ben Medley and Raquel Hecher. (winter 1997)

The Lab Theatre Company, 'All Day Sucker II'. NYC

Test Time. Associate Director. World premiere directed with Margret Denithorne. Starring Scottie Bloch. (winter 1997)

Pulse Ensemble Theatre. NYC

Multiple Climaxes. Director. (winter 1997)

Florida Playwrights' Theatre. Hollywood, FL

The Art of Dining. Director. (winter 1997)

Times Square Angel. Director. (winter 1996)

Twelfth Night. Director. FPT's Summer Shakespeare Festival. (summer 1996)

Primary Stages. NYC

English Made Simple. Assistant Director. Directed by John Rando. World premiere written by David Ives. (spring 1996)

Ancient History. Assistant Director. Directed by John Rando. World premiere written by David Ives. (spring 1996)

Preservation Society. Assistant Director. Directed by Artistic Director Casey Childs. World premiere written by Wm. S. Levengood. (winter 1996)

The Theatre Studio. NYC

How He Lied to Her Husband. Director. Part of the G. B. Shaw festival. (winter 1995)

Laundry and Lies. Director. World premiere. (fall 1995)

Hollywood Performing Arts Repertory Theatre. Hollywood, FL

The Good Doctor. Director. (fall 1993)

Equus. Director. (fall 1993)

A Woman in Mind. Director. (summer 1993)

University of California, Davis Theatre. Davis, CA

The Marriage of Bette and Boo. Director. The Wyatt Pavilion. (spring 1994)

Macbeth. Director. UCD Arboretum. An outdoor production staged environmentally throughout the Davis Arboretum. (winter 1994)

Bent. Director. The Studio Theatre. (Spring 1993)

Peer Gynt. Assistant Director. Directed by Pip Simmons, British Granada Artist in Residence. (winter 1991)

Dillard School of the Performing Arts. Ft. Lauderdale, FL

Man of La Mancha. Assistant Director. Directed by Jonathan Gillespie, Artistic Director. (spring 1987)

Twelfth Night. Assistant Director. Directed by Marybeth Strautz. (fall 1986)

Readings and Short Plays, NYC

Specific records are long gone, but I have directed approximately 250 or more staged readings and short plays for, among others: (1995 - 2007)

American Renaissance Theatre Co.,	Ensemble Studio Theatre,
The Lab Theatre,	New York Playwrights Group,
Metropolitan Playhouse,	The Century Theatre,
Henry Street Settlement Theater,	Turnip Theatre Company,
Pulse,	The Neighborhood Playhouse,
American Globe Theatre,	D'Stages,
Abingdon Theatre Company,	The Director's Company,
Theatre by the Blind,	The Samuel French Play Festivals,
Musical Theatre Works,	Grove Street Theatre,
Drop your Shorts Play Festivals,	Sanford Meisner Theatre,
No Bucks Theatre,	LaMama Galleria,
House of Candles,	The Trilogy Theatre.
and	

FILM PRODUCTION

Breathing Room. Production Assistant.

Independent feature film directed by John Suits. (Released 2008)

Just for the Time Being. Preproduction Coordinator.

Independent feature film written and directed by Gil Brenton. Starring Eva Herzigova, Patrick O'Neal and Grainger Hines. (Released 2000)

Survivors of the Shoah. Video Interviewer.

Produced by Steven Spielberg. A project to overcome prejudice, intolerance, bigotry, and the suffering they cause through visual history testimonies. For four years a video tech and I would enter the homes of Holocaust survivors to record their stories. NYC (1994-1998)

Minotaur. Production Coordinator.

Independent Feature film directed by Jonathan Tammuz. Starring Dan Turgeman and Mili Avital. (Released 1997)

Ripe. Second, Second Assistant Director.

Independent feature film written and directed by Mo Ogrodnik. Director of Photography, Wolfgang Held. Starring Daisy Eagan, Monica Keena and Gordon Currie. (Released 1997)

New York Film Academy. NYC

Directed four short films, served as a crewmember for sixteen other films. (summer 1994)

THEATRE MANAGEMENT

Stage Directors and Chorographers Society, Nominating Committee Member. (2005-2010)

Stage Directors and Choreographers Society, Tallying Committee Member.

(2005, 2006, 2008, 2009, 2010)

Stage Directors and Choreographers Society, Negotiating Committee Member.

League of Resident Theatres (LORT) collective bargaining agreement. (fall 2002)

Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS. Assistant Stage Manager. NYC

Sweet Charity. Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center. Directed by Cy Coleman. AIDS benefit performance starring Gwen Vernon, Chita Rivera, Bebe Neuwirth, Debbie Allen, Donna McKechnie, Helen Gallagher, Jim Dale, Brian Stokes Mitchell, John McMartin, Robert Goulet, Jerry Orbach, Carol Channing, Dom Deluise, Hinton Battle, Marla Maples, Marisa Tomei, Betty Buckley, Lillias White, Whoopi Goldberg, Pamela Isaacs, Charles Nelson Reilly, Carol Arthur, Mayors Ed Koch and David Dinkins, and the Broadway Gospel Choir. (summer 1998)

Florida Playwrights' Theatre. Board Member. Hollywood, FL

Primary responsibility: grant writing. (1996 - 1997)

Primary Stages/Directors Company. Production Assistant. NYC

Nightmare Alley. World premiere musical backers production. (winter 1996)

Homefires Company/Tropicana. Production Assistant. Atlantic City, NJ

Swingtime Canteen. Directed by Ken Elliot. (spring 1996)

Gay Men's Health Crisis. Production Assistant. NYC

Anyone Can Whistle. Carnegie Hall. Directed by Herbert Ross. Benefit production starring Angela Lansbury, Bernadette Peters, Madeline Kahn, Scott Bakula, Walter Bobbie, and others.
(spring 1995)

Westside Theatre. Production Assistant. NYC

You Should Be So Lucky. Directed by Ken Elliot. Written by and starring Charles Busch. (fall 1995)

Primary Stages. Production Assistant. NYC

You Should Be So Lucky. Directed by Ken Elliot. World premiere written by and starring Charles Busch. (fall 1994)

American Place Theatre. Production Assistant. NYC

The Cover of Life. Directed by Peter Masterson. Starring Carlin Glenn. World premiere. (fall 1994)

University of California at Davis, Theatre. Davis, CA

Main Stage House Manager. (1991 – 1994)

Stage Manager. *Casimir and Caroline*. Directed by John Burgess, British Granada Artist in Residence.
(winter 1993)

Ithaca Parks and Recreation department. Company Manager. Ithaca, NY

Tin Can Fantasy Factory. A touring Children's Theatre troupe performing all original shows.
(summer 1991)

No Bucks Theatre. Ithaca College. Board Member. Ithaca, NY

Inaugural year. A student run producing body to provide opportunities for students and faculty to produce and present productions on a small scale with artistic freedom. Ithaca, NY (1990 - 1991)

Ithaca College Theatre. Ithaca, NY

Marketing/PR Supervisor. (1991)

Ticketing Supervisor/Sales Director. (1989 - 1990)

Box Office Manager. (1988)

Ithaca College Bureau of Concerts. Ithaca, NY

Producer. *Romanovsky and Phillips*. (1989, 1991)

Production Assistant. *INXS*. (1988)

Hangar Theatre. Ithaca, NY

Assistant Stage Manager. *The Pajama Game*. Directed by Bob Moss (summer 1988)

Assistant Stage Manager. *The Waves*. World premiere musical directed by Lisa Peterson.
(summer 1988)

Parker Playhouse. Front of House Staff. Ft. Lauderdale, FL (1986 – 1987)

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Broward College. Ft. Lauderdale, Miramar, Coconut Creek, and Davie, FL

Adjunct professor of theatre teaching Theatre Appreciation. (2015 – present)

Audition Monologue Private Coaching.

Individual sessions of private coaching for text work or audition preparation. (1996 – present)

William & Mary. Williamsburg, VA

Guest lecturer on Directing. (fall 2017)

Tabor Dance Academy. Scottsbluff, NE

Taught workshop on building a character and acting for the dancer. (summer 2016)

Southwestern Oklahoma State University. Weatherford, OK

Guest lecturer on the relationship between the director and the technical production staff by invitation of Associate Professor Debra P. Holmes. (spring 2015)

Principia College. Elmhurst, IL

Guest monologue coach by invitation of Professor John O'Hagen (fall 2013)

Appalachian State University. Boone, NC.

Guest lecturer on interview and audition preparation, and Shakespeare by invitation of Distinguished Professor of Theatre Keith Martin. (fall 2013)

University of Virginia. Charlottesville, VA.

Guest lecturer on design and transitioning from university to professional theatre by invitation of Associate Professor Michael Rasbury. (spring 2013)

Off-Square Theatre Company. Jackson, WY

While directing in residence I taught Shakespeare text and Elizabethan/Jacobean theatre history to the after-school theatre program for high school students. (winter 2011 and 2014)

New York Public Schools. Substitute Teacher. NYC (2000 – 2006)

Vermont Stage Company, Guest Director. Burlington, VT

Vermont Young Playwrights Festival. Professional playwrights conducted weekly workshops in the public high schools. Professional directors and actors were then brought up from New York to put up the plays and run workshops with the students. (2002)

Stagedoor Manor. Theatre Instructor. Loch Sheldrake, NY

Theatre instructor and director. I taught Shakespeare, comic improvisation, scene study, playwriting, directing, audition techniques, acting, and advanced master classes. (summers 1998-2005)

Greenwich Village Middle School. Drama Teacher. NYC

I taught basic theatre to 6th, 7th and 8th grade students and directed small productions. (1998 – 1999)

Florida Playwrights' Theatre: Summer Theatre Camp. Hollywood, FL

Taught Acting, playwriting and theatre games to campers ages eight to eighteen. (summer 1996)

University of California at Davis. Teaching Associate. Davis, CA

Taught theatre and acting classes to non-theatre major undergraduates. (1992 – 1993)

Broward College Student Evaluations

The following is compiled of all 211 student evaluations received for the eleven sections of Theatre Appreciation I have taught on Broward College campuses.

Did you receive the following?	Yes	No	Was it clear?	Yes	No	No Answer (N/A)
Course syllabus	211	0		208	1	2
Course Objectives	211	0		207	2	2
Grading Procedure	208	3		197	12	2
Attendance Policy	211	0		207	2	2

Would you recommend this instructor to another student needing the same course? **Yes – 207 No - 4**

Do you feel comfortable to ask questions in class and/or seek needed assistance outside of class? **Yes – 205 No – 2 N/A - 4**

What was your overall evaluation of this instructor?	Superior (one of the best)	148 (71%)
Above Average (better than most)	50 (24%)	Average (about as good as others) 11 (5%)
Poor (much worse than most)	0 (0%)	(Did not answer question) 2

Selection of Student Comments:

- Great professor, if you don't understand something, just raise your hand. He'll explain it to you again all the times you need. He has patience.
- He was an awesome teacher. I learned so much and had fun while doing it. I would definitely take this class again,
- Passionate, knowledgeable, expressive
- I like this professor a lot. He was a really good teacher. He made classes enjoyable but still very educational.
- He is very interactive and easy to understand.
- Really well-spoken/understandable
- Extremely knowledgeable and prepared. Highly Qualified.
- Really enjoy coming to class. Never a dull moment.
- Organized and informative. Great professor and funny!
- Excellent. Clear and understandable. Best professor yet.
- Professor Bond is probably one of the best teachers a non-theatre student could have. I'm a theatre student and I believe I've learned more from him in these 3 months than any other actual theatre class could have taught me. I really love Professor Bond and I hope that in my years to come, when I get on stage I have the opportunity to have him as my director.
- Professor Bond is by far the best.
- He is a great teacher. He is very organized. He explains the material thoroughly. He loves explaining things in detail.
- Outstanding; very knowledgeable about what he was talking about.
- It is nice to be taught by a person who is actively working in the field.
- Love everything about this professor!
- He is a great instructor. Wants to help his students.
- Makes everything clear & easy for us to understand. Involved. Energy.
- Great teacher! I wish I can take him again.
- This professor is my favorite. I love his class so much that he actually made me reconsider my major, and I didn't think that would ever happen. He makes you love theatre.
- James is good at teaching. He breaks it down for us to understand. He such a good teacher. I love his class. He made me feel comfortable and he is really fun,
- The best professor ever.
- He is very interesting and a lot of fun.
- I love Mr. Bond (not the spy)
- Great professor, makes the best of each class.
- Whatever he is talking about he makes sure everyone got it.
- He's very intelligent & has real unique shirts.
- He's awesome!! Passionate and cares about his students.
- One of the best professors I've ever had! Really passionate about the subject and getting his students to learn in detail.

MISCELLANEOUS

The Other Fellow, a documentary about living with the name “James Bond”. Primary Source
(Opening in theatres late 2020)

South Eastern Theatre Conference. Adjudicator to the Community Theatre Division
Knoxville, TN (spring 2019), Chattanooga, TN (spring 2015) and Louisville, KY (spring 2013)

Miss Virginia, United States. Pageant Judge. Richmond, VA (spring 2011)

Read the Top 10 list on The Late Show with David Letterman
“Good things about being named James Bond.” You can find it on YouTube, but I don’t recommend it. (winter 2009)

Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS. Volunteer. NYC
Volunteering for BC/AFA, including production work on various fundraisers including *The Broadway Easter Bonnet Competition*, *Broadway Bears*, *Broadway Bares*, and *The Broadway Flea Market*. Other jobs include office work, collecting donations as audiences exit Broadway shows and whatever BC/EFA needs on a given day. NYC (1999 – 2010)

Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS. Lighting Crew/Lead Follow Spot Operator. NYC
Broadway Bares. Directed and Choreographed by Jerry Mitchell. Electrician, Lead Follow Spot Operator. Annual Broadway fundraising strip show. (spring 1995 – 2005)

Present Laughter. “Fred” (Actor) Surfliht Theatre. Long Beach Island, NJ
My only professional non-co-curricular acting role. (fall 2000)

C Lazy U Ranch. Wrangler. Granby, CO
I was in charge of 23 out of 179 horses, taught teenaged guests to ride, led trail rides and oversaw all of their social activities including campouts and meals. (summer 1997 – 1998)

The Barrow Group. Sound Technician/Board Operator. NYC
Trust- Original play by Stephen Dietz directed by Seth Barish. (spring 1996)

Primary Stages. Sound Technician/Board Operator. NYC
I Sent a Letter to My Love- Original musical directed by Pat Birch starring Robert Westenburg. (winter 1995)

HOMES: Housing Organization Management and Essential Services. Counselor. Ithaca, NY
HOMES is a service preparing the developmentally challenged to live on their own. They ran residences ranging from group homes with round-the-clock care to single occupancy apartments with weekly visitations. Many of the residents were previously institutionalized and preparing to re-enter society. I was a counselor in one of the group homes. (1990 – 1991)

Kids on the Block. Puppeteer. Ft. Lauderdale, FL
A touring interactive educational puppet show designed to give the non-disabled peers of children with disabilities a comfortable forum to learn about, understand and accept their disabled peers. (1986 – 1987)

Royal Palm Dinner Theatre. Boca Raton, FL
Applause and *Jerry’s Girls*. Costume Stitcher (1986)

SELECTED REVIEW EXCERPTS

ADDITIONAL REVIEWS AND FULL TEXTS AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

Richard III: Captivating Villain is Terrifyingly Excellent

Sarah Lockwood. Richmond Family Magazine

Director James Bond, who has directed more than 200 productions including more than half of Shakespeare's cannon, brought together a talented company.

This classic is vibrant and enthralling under the direction of the prestigious Bond. As the play culminates in an awesome battle, staged by Fight Director Kevin Inouye, there's no better ending for us Richmonders than to rejoice in the victory of Lord Richmond.



'Cabaret' an electrifying musical riot

Brielle Schaeffer, Jackson Hole news & guide

Off Square Theatre Company's performance of Kander and Ebb's musical "Cabaret" is electrifying, entertaining, titillating and heartbreaking.

It's a journey to the raucous — politically and socially — time of 1930s Berlin, with all the glory of sexual freedom in the Kit Kat Klub as well as the tightening grip of the Nazi party.

Director James Alexander Bond, in his fifth production for the company, perfectly executed both ideas in the show, with phenomenal costumes, convincing accents and impressive dancing. It's imperfectly beautiful.

In a first for Off Square, the show was a hit before it even started, with all performances selling out before opening night Friday. To appease the crowds, the theater company added another show Tuesday, and that sold out too. People who would like to be put on a wait list should visit the arts center's box office.

The Black Box Theatre perfectly fits the play, too. It's been transformed into the nightclub, which gives audiences the sensation of being immersed in the setting. Some spectators sitting at tables in the first row became part of the show, getting canoodled by cast members and Kit Kat Girls.

Every single one of the 18 singing, dancing and acting cast members — most of them valley residents — is an amazing performer. All had the raw energy needed for the story.

"Cabaret" has truly revitalized theater in Jackson.

All in all, to borrow a line in the musical, the show is a "thrillingly scandalous" romp that probably couldn't add enough performances to meet the demand of all the people who need to see it.



Triumphant *King Lear* for Richmond Shakespeare

John Porter. WCVE Public Radio

One of the most magical experiences that Richmond has to offer... a delight to slip into the symphony of language and story that is uniquely Shakespeare. Good productions can take you away from the cares of the world, and their latest production *King Lear* is a great production – one that you may find to be transformative.

... director James Alexander Bond [has] worked with the actors so that the language rolls off their tongues and into our ears in a direct and understandable manner.

James Alexander Bond has once again put together a rare night of theatre where all of the pieces come together in a seamless fit. In the one conversation I've had with Mr. Bond, James Bond, we discussed our mutual love of great over the top comedies. And while that may seem incongruous to *Lear*, I maintain that the approach works in the timing of the players and the pacing of the scenes.

In tragedies, it is often common to linger over each and every scene. In doing so, the audience is drained over trifles, but with Bond's approach we go past some of the build-up, and linger on those truly powerful moments the script offers. I hope I haven't given away any of his secrets, but you'll see what I mean when you go see it for yourself.



Lear

David Timberline. Dave's Theatre Blog.

My enjoyment of Richmond Shakespeare's *King Lear* started the moment I sat down... The production itself was fabulous with a boldness and sense of gravitas...

I loved the way director James Alexander Bond staged the first scene with the king and his daughters, *Lear*'s directive for flattery seeming almost off-hand and casual. Oh, but what a tragic series of events springs from this simple command.

I'm sure there's plenty else I could say but this is a production that is rich with gifts and I can't really enumerate them effectively. So I'll end where I began, with Mr. Sader and Mr. Bond. As a director, Bond has once again shown he has a firm grasp of the oeuvre and can make Shakespeare vital and entertaining.



King Lear

Matthew K. Miller. GAY RVA.

King Lear, Richmond Shakespeare's inaugural installment in this year's Richmond Shakespeare Festival, is a downright electrifying dramatization of William Shakespeare's tragedy.

To add to the pulsating energy of director James Alexander Bond's authentic, classically staged production, you feel like you are actually seeing this performance unfold at The Bard's Globe Theater... If you can stomach three hours of richly vocalized iambic pentameter, it's worth catching this show before the run ends July 3rd.

... director Bond deviates exponentially from his last undertaking – you may remember it for its succulent spoofery: Richmond Triangle Players' *Devil Boys From Beyond*. He proved in that production back in March that he was a master of executing farce and slapstick comedy. In this production, however, starring TV commercial and screen actor Alan Sader as the titular sovereign King Lear, Bond has staged tragedy adeptly. The directorial interpretation emphasizes Lear's' ultimate supplication to the vices of his cosmic destiny: a fate that will reconcile Lear with Cordelia or bring further personal devastation (...you should see the show to find out which outcome predominates).

He has casted an ensemble of such high quality that the complex and lush Shakespearean language ... dances off their tongues with unswerving fluency and harmony of sound. Even when the diction of the second act becomes more densely populated reflecting the plot's rising momentum accelerated by Lear's declining mental stability, I was able to follow the dialogue as if it were 21st century English literature. Pack a picnic, grab some friends, and see this show! Highly Recommended.



Delightful Devil Boys from Beyond at RTP

John Porter. WCVE Public Radio

... *DEVIL BOYS* is a scream...

Director James Alexander Bond has taken a little time in between stints with Richmond Shakespeare to mix up these ingredients into a crazy evening that will have you laughing from the opening moments to well past the curtain call. It has been awhile since I flat out laughed so hard at a production. The little slice of delicious wickedness known as *DEVIL BOYS FROM BEYOND* is highly recommended.



Devil Boys From Beyond Deliciously Campy

Matthew K. Miller. GAY RVA

... director James Alexander Bond's drag spoof is a tour de farce not to be missed.

... it was sublime to attend a production that let my mind rest and my laughter break loose. But while the show's no mental exercise, there are a handful of social sound bites to please the more cerebral-oriented. James Alexander Bond manages to impregnate his lip-smacking tasteless campfest with non-stop humorous social irreverence. Outperforming this production's hype in every gaudy dimension possible, Bond's pageantry of goofy caricatures entangled in gimmicky comedy is worth the price of admission.



The 39 Steps

Matthew Irwin. Jackson Hole Weekly

Jackson Hole, Wyo. - After an opening night performance of *The 39 Steps* that earned the cast two standing ovations, actor Jeff Bratz stepped backstage to catch his breath. For the 100-seat Black Box Theatre, however, backstage doubles as the lobby, and a line quickly queued to congratulate Bratz on his hilarious performance as Man #2. He cordially, even gladly, accepted the praise, saying "I didn't mean to be out here for this."

But in this case, intentional mistakes and puns acted as exclamation points and pauses in director James Alexander Bond's fast-paced, farcical rendition of Alfred Hitchcock's film, *The 39 Steps*. Though the audience missed a number of jokes, they practically sprayed water out of their mouths at the ones they did catch.

With *The 39 Steps*, Off Square Theatre showed its sense of humor and its relevance to Jackson Hole theater. Bond's vision for making a Hitchcockian rom-com into an all-out farce is exactly what it needs to bounce back after a rough period. And moving into the Black Box may be the best thing that's happened to the company since the Laff Staff.



Java Jive

Good to the last Drop

By Doug DeVita. The Off Off Broadway Review (OOBR)

James Alexander Bond directed with a masterful delicacy and a pure comic inventiveness that rarely, if ever, flagged. In what can be assumed a brilliant directorial coup, the six plays were tied together as one of them interweaved through the action of the other five, giving the evening a wholeness of tone and purpose not normally associated with productions of this kind. Bond also used a lack of physical trappings to his, and the performers', advantage. Two black-and-white checked cafe tables, a variety of character-appropriate costumes, and simple lighting were all that were necessary to give the four performers the room they needed to dominate, which they did with a free-wheeling, well-polished glee.

At just over an hour, the production whizzed by at a breathtaking pace, and like a good cup of coffee, left one wanting more. But the resulting caffeine high lasted far longer, penetrated much deeper, and left a better aftertaste than any four-dollar Designer Cup of Joe ever could.



KING ME

Richmond Shakespeare's *Henry V* proves sequels can improve on the originals.

A fine evening of entertainment

Mary Burruss. STYLE Weekly

Anglophiles, history buffs and drama nerds rejoice! It is summer and the long-awaited Richmond Shakespeare production of *Henry V* has opened. For those of you not listed in the aforementioned categories of the anticipatory, the excitement is akin to the release of the next "Harry Potter" or "Twilight." But unlike some sequels, this production is wonderful.

Henry V, the fourth installment of Shakespeare's tetralogy chronicling the reigns of Richard II, *Henry IV* and *Henry V*, is the best of the four and Richmond Shakespeare has done it proud.

Director James Alexander Bond has selected a stellar cast of local actors and directed deftly around the central figure, played by London-based actor Phillip James Brown...

This play has something for everyone: humor, battle scenes, romance and a winning underdog. *Henry V* is a fine evening of entertainment for anyone who can stay up past 10:30.



***Henry V* ends cycle on passionate, comedic note**

"The Peak Theatrical Experience in Richmond Is Back"

Susan Haubensstock. Richmond Times Dispatch.

The peak theatrical pleasure to be had in Richmond is back: summer Shakespeare at Agecroft Hall.

This season's opener is *Henry V*, the culmination of three years pursuing the Henry cycle. James Alexander Bond has directed all three plays, and Phillip James Brown has played the younger Henry throughout, granting audiences a marvelous artistic continuity.

And again Bond ... has brought us a rousing and gripping production, full of action, passion and comedy.

Bond has balanced the production by emphasizing Shakespeare's varied comedic turns. This *Henry V* is a fully satisfying end to the saga.



***Henry IV Part 2* is Another Knockout Production**

Shakespeare troupe offers a fun time with Henry IV

Drama, comedy keep audience involved in Agecroft production

Susan Haubenstock. Richmond Times Dispatch

If the staid Tudor presence of Agecroft Hall is too tame for you, check out the roller coaster they've installed.

It's called *Henry IV, Part 2*, and it's another knockout production by Richmond Shakespeare Festival.

Director James Alexander Bond manages this circus, using the stage masterfully and somehow making the emotional changes work

Apparently Shakespeare thought his audiences couldn't take their history without a good dose of laughs. *Henry IV, Part 2* turns us all into satisfied groundlings.



As You Like It

U.S.1

By most people's standards, Katherine Hepburn's triumphant Rosalind, in *As You Like It* on Broadway in the early 1950s, is the quintessential portrayal of Shakespeare's most charming heroine. But for sheer-easy-going joy, it is difficult to imagine Kate, or anyone else, outdoing the job Missy Thomas is currently doing under the stars at Pettoranello Amphitheater in Princeton.

Set in what appears to be Hollywood's idea of the Old West, circa 1890's Rosalind is brassy, yet sensitive; coy, yet boldly assertive – just the way Shakespeare wrote her. She is a perfect example of everything a modern woman is supposed to be. Not bad for a play written over 400 years ago.

Princeton Rep's production is grandly conceived and precisely realized. The old west setting and costumes work as a palatable sugar coating for the audience to digest – period costumes can be a bit off putting to those hot brought up on TV's "Masterpiece Theater."

Shakespeare's text is untouched. The actors, apart from a few "yee haws" a couple of cowboy songs strummed on a badly out-of-tune guitar, pretty much ignore the insertions anyway. This, of course, maintains the integrity of the play while injecting a bit of lighthearted fun.

James Alexander Bond's direction is a mix of reverence for the text as masterpiece, and good old fashioned fun. He pays special attention to enliven some of the saucier aspect of the play, whether it be a well-placed hand across the breasts, a couple pledging their love while rolling in the hay, or a young man's overenthusiastic encounter with a cactus. This may sound like blasphemy, but with all the love and sexual innuendo splashed about the stage, and the quick entrances and exits, it is tempting to characterize *As You Like it* as a really-really-good episode of the old John Ritter sitcom, "Three's Company."

The production is terrific.



Great Performances You Won't See on PBS

Tom Wrona. The Beachcomber

There are some great performances in Surflight's current production, *The Lion in Winter*. In fact the play puts me in mind of the long running Great Performances PBS series.

This play won't become a favorite of mine. Yet I thoroughly enjoyed myself. Why? Those great performances. All of the players were spot on but a few deserve to be singled out.

Perhaps some of the credit for Konigisor's success as Eleanor should go to Lion's director, James Alexander Bond. Bond once dropped me a note complaining that I don't talk about the direction enough in my reviews. I can't argue with him. I'm guilty and the reason is simple: Ignorance.

The impact of the director on a stage play is more subtle and it's only slowly that I am able to tease out how much of what I see is due to the director's choices rather than the actors'. So I offer my apologies to Bond and the other Surflight directors for my negligence and I promise that as my understanding grows, so will my appreciation of their talents. One thing

is crystal clear. Bond got the best out of his cast this time around.

When Hamlet said, "...the play's the thing," he was talking about scheming, not theatrical plays. Nevertheless the line is apropos and nevertheless I beg to differ. Sometimes the play isn't the thing. Sometimes it's the acting. And the directing. Reason enough to see Surflight's production of *The Lion in Winter*.



***Biloxi Blues* Makes it a Simon Triple Play**

Tom Wrona. The Beachcomber

In 2002 Surflight gave us Neil Simon's *Rumors*, which I described as a "riotous romp." Last year Marc Tumminelli starred as Simon's alter ego Eugene Jerome in the first of the playwright's autobiographical plays, *Brighton Beach Memoirs*. I loved that production so much that I wrote, "Last year's *Rumors* was great. This year *Brighton Beach* is great too. If they do a Simon play again next year maybe I'll just save myself the effort and write the review for it now: 'Yeah, they did it again. Go see it'."

Yeah. They did it again. Go see it.



***Lend Me A Tenor* Pays Dividends in Laughs**

Tom Wrona. The Beachcomber

What can you say about a play where you get to see Elena Gutierrez and Erin Esposito prance around the stage in their underwear? In garters belt and stockings no less? How about, "Two seats in the first row please"?

I spent a good part of my time watching the Surflight's current production rolling my eyes at the onstage antics but in the end I'll be damned if it didn't win me over.

So it ain't Neil Simon. It's merely silly, sexy, and speedy. And worth seeing.



***Dial M for Murder*, and a Great Evening**

Tom Wrona. The Beachcomber

Dial M for Murder is a lot of fun in a number of ways and on a number of levels.

Part of the fun for me was the feeling I was looking back into a bygone era. The story is a period piece now but more than that, it's a literate and deliberately paced story that seems to be increasingly rare these days. In some ways it reminded me of another old British murder mystery I saw at the Surflight, *The Mousetrap*, in 2002

This is a play very much about dyads—pairings. Tony and Margot, Tony and Lesgate, Tony and Max, Margot and Max, Margot and Lesgate... Watching the pairings embrace and interlock and shift is part of the story's appeal to me.

I'm sometimes remiss in giving credit to the artists who help shape our perceptions of a play in less obvious ways than the cast but this time out I felt their contributions were quite conspicuous.

James Alexander Bond's direction, Jessica Kaplan's scenic design, Andi Lyn's costume design and even Jeffrey Greenberg's lighting design all conspired to make *Dial M for Murder* a perfect October evening. Even the quiet and lonely streets of Beach Haven seemed to be in on the game. Go see *Dial M for Murder*.



A Miracle, Working

Tom Wrona. The Beachcomber

Speaking of ingenious and appealing, the true star of this story is the relationship between Anne Sullivan and Helen Keller. It's almost as if director James Alexander Bond uses the two actors to create a third character: a confused and angry girl who somehow knows there is a world beyond if only she can find the way. As Keller and Sullivan found a symbiosis which lasted a lifetime so Carlo and Esposito forge a partnership in which each brings out the best in the other. Although their relationship in the play is dead serious, often contentious and always dramatic you can tell they are having the times of their lives--that they are loving what they are doing.



Style Weekly: *Measure for Measure* is "Bracing" and "Gratifying"

David Timberline. STYLE Weekly

Richmond Shakespeare Theatre's practice of "doubling" — having each of its actors play two or three roles in a show — has always led to some interesting juxtapositions. Its current production of *Measure for Measure* may present the most fascinating and artistically rewarding combinations yet.

As is befitting one of Shakespeare's "problem" plays, this production has some issues with the mix of comic and melodramatic elements. But the overall effect is a bracing — and gratifying — journey down a murky moral path.



The *Odd Couple*

Starring Walt Willey from 'All My Children' fame plays at Surflight

Tom Wrona. The Beachcomber

Daytime Television's Walt Willey stars in Neil Simon's study of two friends - total opposites (The Odd Couple) - who become roommates. One of the finest comedies of all time and is not to be missed!



This Wonderful ‘Wives’ Missus Few Tricks

Clive Barnes. New York Post

Legend has it that Queen Elizabeth (the first one) asked Shakespeare to write a play showing Falstaff in love, which became *The Merry Wives of Windsor*.

Legend also has it that it became the monarch’s favorite play.

It is not, I suspect many other people’s favorite by Shakespeare. It seems to have inspired all those drearily unsexy English bedroom farces, and many people prefer Verdi’s opera on the play to the play itself.

Yet, yet... Shakespeare is always Shakespeare, and you have to be wary of giving the Bard the bird. When *The Merry Wives* is played absolutely straight – rare since people always want to jazz it up – it can work wonderfully.

It does just that with the new staging by James Alexander Bond (now, there’s a man who you can understand wanting to use his middle name), which opened at the Pearl Theater Monday night.

By the end, Bond and his merry players had the thing going like a firestorm. It was extremely funny and, better yet, offered a resolution at the end that is usually only found in Verdi’s opera.

Altogether this is a *Merry Wives* to be recommended, especially to those who imagine they have already seen one more *Merry Wives* than was strictly necessary.

Take heart. You haven’t.



The Merry Wives of Windsor

Jason Zinoman, Time Out New York

In the past year I’ve seen Shakespeare performed as a disco party, a farcical horror show, a postmodern collage, an absurdist drama, a puppet show, a melodramatic soap opera, a hip-hop musical and a ‘40s show-business parody. So imagine my shock when the Pearl Theatre’s charming production of *The Merry Wives of Windsor* turned out to be nothing more than a Renaissance comedy taking place in the Bard’s England. What Gal! James Alexander Bond’s refreshingly low concept direction disproves former *New York Times* critic Frank Rich’s cynical claim that Shakespeare’s silliest play ‘demands invention to ward off rigor mortis.’ Speaking the 400-year old text without conceptual gimmicks or modern updates, the Pearl’s vibrant actors earn more laughs than most contemporary comedies do.

The Pearl Theatre’s no-frills production is not bold or innovative, and its willfully conventional interpretation may disappoint some. It’s just an amusing light comedy, which remains faithful to Shakespeare’s text—and these days, that seems quite radical indeed.



The Merry Wives of Windsor

Where Women Are Merry And Men Hide in Closets

Anita Gates. The New York Times

Shakespeare is said to have written this comedy in two weeks as a sort of spinoff from "Henry IV" (Elizabeth I had liked Falstaff so much in Part I and Part II that she wanted to see him again), and it's never been considered his finest work. At times the "let's play a trick on the boys" plot seems almost sitcomish. But when it's done right, *The Merry Wives of Windsor* can be an adorably silly evening's entertainment. And the Pearl Theater Company has done it right.

The director, James Alexander Bond, has taken such a modern-day approach to the play's humor that you might suspect him of having updated Shakespeare's language or attitudes. But apparently he hasn't. '

"You are not to go loose any longer. You must be pinioned." If those lines don't strike you as funny, they are when delivered by this cast. The production -- which is three hours long with two intermissions -- gets laughs from lines like, "She has brown hair and speaks small like a woman."

The entire cast does itself proud in this briskly paced, high-energy production.



Elizabeth Rex at Richmond Shakespeare

John Porter for WCVE Public Radio

If one of the purposes of theatre is to start conversations, then *Elizabeth Rex*, the current offering by Richmond Shakespeare is bound to start some very interesting dialogues. It is the kind of play that I find intriguing, one that strips away at human emotion, pulling the audience deeper into the world of the characters and offering you the opportunity to examine your own beliefs. By putting these discussions and arguments into the mouths of historic figures brings the debate alive and elevates the stakes to a much higher level.

There is much to recommend about *Elizabeth Rex*, as time is short so allow me to hurry.

Director James Alexander Bond has shown once again that he is a director of some serious talent. He has taken a delicious play and delivered a marvelous production. *Elizabeth Rex* is one of those plays whose reverberations will be felt long after it closes. I hope you'll make the opportunity to see it at your earliest convenience.



Colorful, funny Shrew

Ann Efimetz. The Virginia Gazette

I ... attended a dress rehearsal a few nights before opening and thoroughly enjoyed myself, as did my teenaged daughter. The production falls in the "family-friendly Shakespeare" category.

The show is colorful, funny and moves along with an energetic clip. It should be very popular because the story is familiar and is extremely well –directed and acted.

Director James Bond sets the play in the 18th century, complete with wigs and knickers. It was a novel approach and generally it worked well, hinting of Colonial Williamsburg, although set in Europe.

Bond's production crackled with physicality and humor. There are some outlandish characters and situations in this production, and it frequently goes over-the-top.

... Sparks fly immediately between these two, and I thought the famous opening sequence was particularly well done, setting the stage for Petruchio's designs to get Kate to acquiesce. For me the runaway comedy belonged to the supporting cast, whose performances were brilliant...

The production is a nice way to start the anniversary season. It looks good and it plays well. So enjoy. Shakespeare is back.



***Comedy of Errors* Lively, Colorful** **Shakespeare fest gets started with laughter**

David Nicholson. Daily Press

If Shakespeare sounds a bit high-brow for you, *The Comedy of Errors* should cure you of that thought.

An early comedy with a silly premise and a lot of physical shenanigans, the play comes close to a slapstick film or a vaudeville skit from an earlier time. It opened this summer's Virginia Shakespeare Festival on Friday and in most cases the production sparkles with unrefined comedy and youthful vitality.

Credit goes to this mostly young group of actors for delivering a clean, uncomplicated production that kept the plot moving forward and the various characters clearly defined. The diction is good, the lines are delivered with confidence, and the physical comedy makes for a lively evening.

It's surely one of the most colorful productions this festival has presented, with bright costumes and scenery that approach cartoon-like merriment. Director James Bond has lightened the action, and there's a kind of over-the-top zaniness in many of the speeches delivered that suits the senseless story driving the action.

... overall it's a lively, well acted production that the company can be proud of.



***Bard's Errors* is Rollicking Fun**

Ann Efimetz. The Virginia Gazette

...*Comedy* is a fun, rollicking way to spend a couple of hours during the dog days of summer.

The Festival delivers in nearly every aspect. This is a fresh, lively production...

Director James Bond really capitalized on the charm and energy of his cast. He staged some funny stuff, and pulled it off without it being so outlandish that is smacked of contrivance.

This play is good, and I think will get even better as the company hits its stride... The festival didn't make a mistake presenting *The Comedy of Errors*.



Bold Staging serves *Equus* revival well

Bill Von Maurer. Sun Sentinel

What to do with a revival of Peter Shaffer's '70s play *Equus*, a drama rife with psycho-patter agonizing internalizing and talk, talk, talk?

Hollywood performing Arts Theatre's Ed Schiff and director James Alexander Bond did they only thing they could do to justify a resurrection of Shaffer's turgid, ego-entered drama: Hit hard with a production that is bold, gutsy and fevered. You are not likely to forget it despite all the playwright's verbose meanderings and pretensions in the field of psychodrama.

What you are conventionally expected to remember from this play is its shocking theme: A 17-year-old boy (John Sama) blinds six magnificent horses by plunging a stake in their eyes, a horror worthy of Stephen King's brain.

But what you will retain from the Hollywood Performing Arts production is the famed scene where a beautiful girl (Bridgette Morrison) attempts to seduce the boy.

It is done here in total, unapologetic nudity for a sustained 10 minutes at least with no cop-outs such as props to conceal body parts or strategic lighting dodges.

Thanks to the skill of director Bond the scene is neither pandering or titillating. It is simply honest theatre about a confrontation between two young people with beautiful bodies playing characters with wildly divergent motives. The result, admittedly daring, is magic.

Equus is a startling, landmark play for the Hollywood Performing Arts Theatre.



Rakish Accident Starts Garden Party

Bill Von Maurer. Sun-Sentinel

Director James Alexander Bond has assembled a superb cast. Suave, confident, addled, and blissfully eccentric, they put winds in Ayckbourn's sails and send *A Woman in Mind* scudding along at a breathtaking rate.

Theirs are almost impeccable performances.

With *A Woman in Mind*, theatergoers have been given something a lot meatier to chew on.



Funny *Foreigner* Harvest Hilarity

Bob Cumming. Hometown News Publications

A fulfilling harvest of hilarity by playwright Larry Shue, entitled *The Foreigner*, ingeniously directed by James Alexander Bond. The "Alexander" is important to avoid confusion with the more famous James Bond.

This uniquely funny play should be attempted by any company with professional talent worthy of producing it. The world needs such laughter as this excitingly balanced cornucopia of delicious delirium offers.

Surprises grow in *The Foreigner* from the foolishness and foibles of the human Animal... It was a major loss for American theatre that he was killed in a plane crash in 1985 at age 39. He would have been pleased with this production so imaginatively directed and performed.

Laughter is good for both mental and physical health. If you're lucky, you'll obtain tickets by calling 860-486-4226. A healthy diet must include generous helping of hearty roars, chuckles, giggles, guffaws, snickers (I had a real one at intermission), sniggers and rolls in the aisle. *The Foreigner* offers a full-course meal of merriment. If you miss this one, call a doctor.



Total Recall

The Hollywood Boulevard Theatre treads safe, familiar territory with *I Remember You*.

John Hanan. Entertainment Radio/Front Row Review

... this romance with music provided on of the most enjoyable nights of theatre I've ever experienced.

The very small theatre provided an up close and personal flavor that complemented the theme of the play to a perfection that becomes almost existentially tangible. Invoking emotions and passions that border on the universal, the production of *I Remember You* at the Hollywood Boulevard Theatre creates the illusion that the story is not just happening around you, it's happening to you.

With an ingenious script, excellent acting and the impeccable direction of James Alexander Bond (timely), *I Remember You* is a fantastic gift ... lovers of drama and romance should act immediately if they want to enjoy this thought and emotion provoking masterpiece.



I Remember You

***I Remember you* is an unconventional romantic comedy**

Al Price. Broward Jewish Journal

The Hollywood Boulevard Theatre has an interesting hit on its hands in *I remember you*, written by Bernard Slade. He's the prolific playwright who charmed us with *Same Time Next Year*, *Tribute* and *Romantic Comedy*.

In this romantic comedy – which included the fine piano tinklings of the show's producer, Jerry Waxman—you'll be intrigued by a love triangle rarely seen. The twists and turns of the pot will keep you zeroed in and attentive up to the very clever surprise ending.

Author Slade's characters are well written and believable in this play, and the performances are individually outstanding... Director James Bond keeps a tight reign on this production in which every nuance is revealed.



***The Art of Dining* at The Florida Playwright's Theatre**

Jim Tommaney. SunPost

Directed by James Alexander Bond wit pace and panache, the evening is replete with wonderful flavor and savory experiences...

This production is so polished and well acted that one yearned only for a more substantial menu then this charming but lightweight play. But not all meals can be roast beef, and it would be a shame to miss such a succulent and savory feast as served up by the small but distinguished Florida Playwright's Theatre.



EAT DRINK MAN WOMAN

Florida Playwrights' Theatre's talented, hilarious cast outshines the standard fare served up in *The Art of Dining*.

Paul Gallotta. City Link.

The physicality of the comedy was well-timed and James Alexander Bond's direction kept the tempo moving apace.

Most of the laughs are a product of the cast, not the script. Down to the smallest role, each cast member had the ability to take something as droll as toilet paper sticking to shoes or trying to ignore a loud fellow diner and turn it into a hilarious sight gag.

What Florida Playwrights' needs to do is next time, read the menu more carefully and select something more palatable.

SELECTION OF PRODUCTION NOTES

ADDITIONAL WRITING SAMPLES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

Cabaret

Since Christopher Isherwood first met Jean Ross (his inspiration for the fictional Sally Bowles) in 1931, their story has been told countless times in print, on stage and screen. The first musical of *Cabaret* opened on Broadway in '66 in the midst of a political and cultural revolution – Jim Crow and segregation laws were being shattered, opposition to Viet Nam was on the rise and “sex, drugs, and rock & roll” was the mantra of the ‘Boomers coming of age. With its depiction of individualistic taboo-smashing, *Cabaret* became an artistic representation of our turbulent national identity crisis.

In 1993, when *Cabaret* had lost much of its shocking impact and seemed destined to join the ranks of the ‘charming classics’ like *My Fair Lady* and *Sound of Music*, it was reconceived in a production directed by Sam Mendes for the Donmar Warehouse in London, creating a darker, edgier, more highly sexualized production, breathing new life into the show during a time of political uncertainty, with traditional alliances and barriers shifting ominously, as the IRA and UK suddenly enter deal-making mode while the US and China play a sinister game of ‘nuclear chicken’.

Our world continues to evolve, redefining the allowances and constrictions on our liberties. Our neighbors in Colorado and California are free to toke up, and in seventeen states citizens may legally marry whomever they choose, regardless of race, religion, or gender. At the same time, those that would do away with the separation of church and state continue to gain financial support and political influence, and a Coca-Cola spot aired during the Super Bowl with a soundtrack of “America the Beautiful” in a variety of languages—celebrating our multiculturalism in the vein of the 1971 and 1990 ‘Teach the World to Sing’ ads—receives vicious and widespread backlash for being “un-American”.

While honoring previous versions of *Cabaret*, this Off Square production does not strictly follow any one of them, but pulls inspiration from several to tell the story we believe needs to be seen today.

Though there are many differences in every incarnation of Isherwood’s story, one theme seems to be constant: a warning against complacency. While we enjoy the comfort of our privileges in this country, vigilant protection of our precious liberties is as critical as ever. The warning of *Cabaret* is to remain awake, be aware, and take action, while you still can. This is a warning that has never been better stated than by Pastor Martin Niemöller who was imprisoned in a concentration camp in 1937 when he wrote:

First they came for the Socialists, and I did not speak out-- Because I was not a Socialist.

Then they came for the Trade Unionists, and I did not speak out-- Because I was not a Trade Unionist.

Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out-- Because I was not a Jew.

Then they came for me--and there was no one left to speak for me.

King Lear

King Lear is Shakespeare's greatest play and possibly the greatest work of English literature. Its themes are of the most profound nature: self realization, the myth of universal justice, fortuitousness in the battle between good and evil, the nature of depravity, and the journey to discover one's potential and identity. The epic fights and magnificent struggles against overwhelming turmoil are not outward but within.

We all live by a social contract made up of rules established by government, family, religion, and civilizations that create our world. What happens when the rules defining that world are cast aside? Chaos will flourish until a new form of order emerges.

Quite simply, each of our lives is a journey. How would our journey change if we suddenly made up our own rules? In Lear's world those around him spiral in adverse directions. Some (like Edmund) would become aggressive, pulling on their basest qualities for selfish advancement. Others (like Edgar) might face life's harshest challenges emerging as more compassionate, self aware, stronger persons than they ever thought they could be. Moreover, some truly unfortunate souls (like Lear) would be trapped by their own arrogance and pride, unable to progress. [Ironically, Lear is the one who initially broke the social contract creating the chaos in *The Tragedy of King Lear*.]

Lear makes one bad decision out of arrogance fueled by blind rage that shreds the fabric of his world, sending him on a painful journey to self-actualization, redemption, enlightenment, and salvation. He makes choices he cannot accept – choices that become his hell, his madness.

We make choices every day that move us through the journeys of our lives. The experience appears to each of us differently, sometimes in the form of enlightenment, rapture, peace, chaos, and yes, even madness. All journeys end, some with fulfillment, some without. Nevertheless, the end of the journey is the same for all. No one gets out alive.

The choices we make along the way are our personal responsibility, not only because they affect us, but also because they impact those who happen to brush against our lives.

Since Shakespeare wrote *King Lear* in 1604 our world has changed many times—countries, governments and religions have been born and died. What was once paramount has become irrelevant or even forgotten. Yet we still stage the play *King Lear*. Above all else, we still need to be reminded that the journey is brief but precious.



Richard III

People are complicated. Shakespeare's characters are delicious to us because, more than any other playwright, he holds up a crystal clear mirror to humanity's many facets.

I believe that to simply vilify Shakespeare's 'villains' is to produce boring Bard. Macbeth is a good man who does one bad thing for self advancement and it consumes him; Iago pulls a vicious prank against a man who wrongs him and it snowballs into tragedy; Angelo is an academic, reluctantly thrust into power, who cannot apply his black-and-white book smarts to a complicated real world of grays. The complexities of these men allow us to connect with them and find them fascinating.

And then there is Richard. I have looked for the good man that surely must be found in all of us. But having thoroughly examined his heart, I have to accept that it is black. That isn't to say he is completely unjustified in his actions; the physically challenged surely feel the collective wince when they enter a room of those uncomfortable with their deformities. Or, perhaps Richard feels he has been denied motherly love and affection—but it is an impossible leap from pitying those personal setbacks to justifying his crimes.

Still, there's something infectious and appealing about this hunchback King. He's ambitious, wickedly funny and looks us in the eye and speaks to us. It's not until we are faced with the immense despair and destruction left in his wake that it becomes so painfully clear: a leader without a conscience can be a dangerous thing, indeed.

Perhaps Richard III does hold up a mirror to our own humanity, but it is a pitted and smoky one. Still, I always believe Shakespeare to be an optimist, even when telling the story of a bad seed.

Terror may reign briefly, but in the end, a true hero will rise to the challenge and save the day - and appropriately for us, in this story, hope lies in the man who will become Henry VII, also known as ... Richmond.



Devil Boys from Beyond

In 1964, while studying Dramatic Literature at Hofstra University, Charles Ludlum was told that he was a terrible playwright and would never make it in the theater. By 1967, he had founded the Ridiculous Theatre Company and a new genre of gay theatre was born. Today, the unquestionable "queen" of this genre is Charles Busch, with whom I have worked several times, and whose *Vampire Lesbians of Sodom* was RTP's first smash hit way back in 1993.

Devil Boys From Beyond, which just closed in New York earlier this year, is the very latest in this long tradition of wacky, gay, camp spoofs. Currently, these playwrights are produced in theaters all over the world, but they have always worked best on little stages in West Village dive bars. This is the kind of production we have tried to recreate.

If you have come out to see message-driven theatre poignantly exploring homosexual issues, I'm sorry. This month you won't find that here. But, if you are looking for a send-up of 50's alien films (which took themselves far too seriously anyway) -- if you like to see boys in bikinis -- and if you think you don't really know a man until you have walked a mile in his come-fuck-me sling-back pumps -- you've come to the right place!



Henry IV, Part 1

Fathers & Sons

Shakespeare tells grand stories, the essence of which are simple things that speak to everyday elements of our lives. And what is more essential than fathers and sons? Henry IV and his son Hal have the strained relationship familiar to so many: sons striving to define themselves against the impossible standard of dads seen through their sons' eyes. Emerging from the turbulent biochemical cauldron of adolescence, boys try so hard to be men, and inevitably at first must fail. Many a son manifests this in rebellion and wild living, like young prince Hal.

The mighty Hotspur of the Percy clan, by contrast, appears the son any father could want. He does what is expected of him and earns the praise and respect of allies and enemies alike. From the outside looking in, he is a son for Henry IV to envy. Yet at the end of the day Hotspur is incomplete as a rational, autonomous, compassionate man. This failure to be a complete man ultimately leads to Hotspur's demise. And in contrasting him with the populist Hal, living life at the edge, we have some hope for the man that Hal may yet become.

After some childish petulance, Hal recognizes the man his father strives to be and endeavors to shoulder the burden of his father's expectations. He gleans that Henry IV must be hardened to deal with aggression from all sides whilst struggling to be the best king he can be of a harsh and fractured land. Henry is also determined to raise a good, strong man to succeed him.

As are all heroes and all humans, Henry IV is flawed—indeed, tragically so. Yet in at least one way he triumphs—he gives us Hal who grows into Henry V, a strong, charismatic, kindhearted man, a great warrior with compassion for his people—the standard against whom all monarchs who come after him will be measured. A transformation the beginning of which we see clearly by the end of this play. Whatever Henry IV's failures as father and king—he got something essential right.

My own father died when I was in college and we never knew each other as two adults. Like many fathers beset by life and dealing with their own issues, he wasn't around as much as he could have been when I was growing up. I used this as my excuse to be an angry teen. In actuality, I had a really good, safe upbringing and that was the only outlet for rebellion offered to me. When my dad died I was still in that ignorantly arrogant place we find Hal at the beginning of this play—brash and foolishly confident, certain of everything, including how much more I knew than everybody, particularly my father.

In the years since life has, as it will, forced upon me humility and knowledge of how little I know. I have grown up some and in doing so have found more of my father in myself than I would have ever acknowledged during his life. He was a strong, proud man with a sense of humor and a lot of love. Hopefully as Henry IV takes the stage my father will be watching and know that I understand fathers and sons must, to some degree, fail each other's expectations, but that it's not for lack of trying, or lack of love, and there is always hope.

Shakespeare's universal tales can't help but touch the lives of us groundlings on life's grand stage. That's the beauty. Thanks, Bill. And thanks, too, Dad.



Henry IV, Part 2 *

Even Princes Hurt. And Fart.

At the end of Henry IV, Part 1, the King has triumphed over revolting lords which should have given rise to a new age of unity and prosperity. However, the scars of war linger and the quarrelsome nobility won't let Henry be. Young Prince Hal is transformed however, bests the noble warrior Hotspur, Henry Percey. In Part II, we find that he has returned to London's seedy districts with his old friends, but the horrors of war have greatly changed him.

When Henry IV schemed to take the crown from Richard II, he envisioned a better England under his rule. He never had the chance to create it. Power hungry foes kept waging petty wars, diverting the king's focus from nobler goals. Now, preparing for death, Henry feels he has failed at life but holds on to make sure his country will be left in capable hands. The King wants to be succeeded by someone to heal England as he never could, perhaps giving meaning to his life and reign. Unfortunately, rather than one of Henry's dutiful sons, Hal is next in line.

The long and the short of Shakespeare's history plays is that he is, at least in part, paying homage to the antecedents of his patron, Queen Elizabeth I, while commenting on her reign metaphorically and sometimes specifically. As stories about royalty want to be, these plays are full of important personages doing important things in beautiful elevated language.

But here's the thing. Shakespeare also loved crass jokes about bodily functions and his plays are filled with sexual double entendre. The Bard would have loved *Animal House* and *Dumb and Dumber*. Some of the reference may not be clear—imagine hearing the jokes from *Saturday Night Live* one hundred years from now. Yet Shakespeare transcends place and time with both his high ideas and base humor.

There's a lot of that in Henry IV Part 2, much of which is set in a cheep street tavern, home to pickpockets, whores and highwaymen—you know, ordinary working class folk. And as it happens, these are the friends of young Prince Hal, heir apparent to the throne, son of King Henry IV, thought by many to be a usurper who stole the crown from Richard II.

Life is not as much fun for either Hal or his buddy Falstaff as it was in Part I. Falstaff's drinking in this play is more that of a lost alcoholic than of a hail-fellow-well-met-party boy. Hal drinks more from guilt than for fun, and his crew is a little rougher, more dangerous, more desperate. Hal and Falstaff have no tender scenes in this play because the war has taken its toll on relationships. Everything is strained.

Henry Part 2 explores the cost of duty, as friendships and loyalty are sacrificed to a higher calling. Just as Elizabeth betrayed her lover to take her crown, Hal finds he too must sacrifice his friendships. This play shows that we don't always like who we trust, and we can't always trust who we love—Hal trusts the chief justice yet loves Falstaff. In keeping the first and banishing the second, Hal understand that to become king he must make choices and sacrifices, that his personal sentiment is almost irrelevant.

As the play wanes, Hal convinces his father he does not covet the crown. Having watched the position break his father, Hal respects the throne but realizes that it comes with immense responsibility. King Henry sees that his war-ravaged lands may finally heal... and he chooses to die.

Rather than mourn the king or consider Hal's pain, Falstaff only envisions the growth of his own power and sees himself as the father of a king. His crude followers behave like the peers of the king and at the coronation they publicly behave badly. King Hal, who needs to prove he will be a strong, honest and just king, is given no choice but to reject them publicly. Falstaff is banished, but he will also be taken care of.

Under Hal the people will be considered more rather than be pawns. England will be reunited. In his final conversation with his father, Hal faces his demons rather than running from them. By healing himself, he prepares himself for healing the country. Finally, England looks to her future with hope.

This play like so much of Shakespeare is about our common humanity. King or barmaid, noble lord or highwayman, we are first, last and foremost human. We are each capable of the basest and most honorable behaviors. And we all fart. And we all hurt.

* *Henry IV, 2* is perhaps Shakespeare's most crass play. While many of the references are now archaic, I planned to bring as much of the bawdiness as possible to light, creating for my audiences what I believe Shakespeare intended for his. One goal for this set of notes was to prepare my audience for what they were about to see. Particularly for those who simply anticipated a continuation of my *Henry IV, 1*, this would not be what was expected.



Henry V

Henry V is not just the story I have been invited to tell this summer, but the final installment of a story I've been fortunate enough to share for three years. The familiarity and comfort that comes with completing a project like this is both awesome and humbling. For this experience, I must thank Artistic Director Grant Mudge and everyone at Richmond Shakespeare who has been a part of the *Henry IVs & V*. They have given me a chance to grow with Hotspur, Bolingbroke, and Prince Hal, who became Henry V, the warrior king with a feel for the common man.

Together with the theatregoers of Richmond, I met young Hal, the bar rat and scalawag, in *Henry IV, Part 1*. His father usurped the English throne from Richard II, and then built in his realm a fragile peace. Henry IV sought to absolve himself of his wrongdoing and legitimize his rule by making a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and engaging in the Crusades. Before embarking on his holy journey, he needed to deal with rebels who challenged his throne. By taking power wrongfully from Richard, Henry IV had emboldened others who might seize power. Then, in an effort to justify his rule, he alienated allies who had thought to share the spoils of the kingdom. His former allies became his greatest danger.

Henry could not go warring in foreign lands until he had secured the place of his heir. Not only was Henry the younger (Hal) a callow teen, he was an incorrigible reprobate given to the company of thieves and whores in the bawdy taverns of London's seedy Cheapside district. He turned for company and guidance to the completely immoral and self-serving Sir John Falstaff. Hal's behavior lent credence to those who claimed the family Bolingbroke was unfit to rule. But there was method to Hal's choices: not only was he enjoying life and getting to know the common people of the kingdom, but he knew once he became king, he would be able to achieve so much more if his opponents expected little of him, and therefore

underestimated him.

Henry and Hal stare at each other across the chasm that can only be created by a demanding father and strong willed son. When Henry IV's enemies make their move, young Hal comes to his father's aid, stands up and delivers. He defeats the enemy's champion, the mighty Harry Percy, Hotspur, in hand to hand combat. By his father's side against the enemies of the crown, Hal proves himself to be a young man of conscience, compassion, and strength – in short a son to make any father proud and a prince worthy of safeguarding the future of England.

In *Henry IV, 2*, England has fallen on hard times. Crime is up, hope is down. Hal's hangout, the tavern of Mistress Quickly, has deteriorated into a cheap brothel. Hal has slid back into his old hedonistic ways. The seedy underbelly reigns supreme and the king's ailing body decays as rapidly as the country's moral fiber. Falstaff and his followers hungrily await their pal's ascension to the throne so they can have the keys to the kingdom. Having ruled over a country almost constantly at war, Henry IV has not achieved any of his goals for England. He has failed as king. His one hope is to leave the country in good hands. Unfortunately, his heir is the selfish, morally sloppy Hal.

Henry clings to life in hope of making one last attempt to reach his heir. After the ultimate clash between father and son, Harry sees who his son is, who he has always been and who he can one day be. He asks Hal to help him into the next chamber, a room called Jerusalem. In Henry's youth it had been foretold that he would die in Jerusalem. He had always believed that meant on a Crusade battlefield, dying as he lived, a strong and powerful warrior. But his Jerusalem was a soft chamber he could not reach without assistance.

Hal entered Jerusalem a grieving son with an invalid father, but emerged Harry, the new king of England. During his father's final hours, Harry proved to his father that he was compassionate and just, but it would take longer to convince the country. At his coronation, Falstaff's entourage burst forth to claim their due. Harry lets them know that, as they are, there is no place for them by his side while he ushers England into a new age. However, should they change their ways and learn to show a little restraint, he would eagerly welcome them back. From this, his brother lords sense a change that could bring about a new age for England.

And so we come to the man of tonight's performance. *Henry V*. Young Hal has grown into King Harry. Falstaff, one of the most popular characters of the Shakespearean era, dies. (Shakespeare had a falling out with the actor who played him, and had to write Falstaff out of the script.) But his role as foil, and representative of the earthy, the profane, the side man, is taken by the sometimes tragically comic triumvirate of Bardolph, Pistol and Nym, who could give Larry, Curly and Moe a run for their money.

Convinced by Church elders with their own agendas that he is, by operation of technical and arcane laws relating to the rights of succession, the rightful heir to the throne of France, and fueled by insults from the French prince, Henry invades his neighbor to claim his birthright. Though his forces are often outmanned, he nonetheless succeeds gloriously. In his St. Crispin's Day speech before the victory of Agincourt, he coins the 'band of brothers' concept which, to this day, bonds those who serve and suffer together in battle. "We few, we happy few, we band of brothers..."

As king, Hal demonstrates the strategy, strength, and sometimes the temper of his father, mixed with whimsy, compassion, and understanding of the plight of the common man. He and his soldiers embody the peculiar combination of traits of Britishness which grow to serve an empire that lasts 400 years, an empire in which the rule of law matters, where might does not make right, and the interests of all the people of the nation count, not just the interests of the landed ruling class. We can recognize the doughty doughboys of the Raj and Flanders in Bardolph, Pistol, Nym, Williams, Gower and Fluellen.

King Henry is master of nearly every situation that confronts him. Strength empowered by compassion rules the day. Eventually, however he faces an adversary he cannot match—the beautiful Catherine of Valois, daughter of the King of France. Years of consorting with bar wenches left him unprepared for such a woman of beauty and class. Henry wins France, but the heiress of France wins Henry.

In writing his history plays Shakespeare served a political and commercial agenda. He quite intentionally wrote in ways that played to those who sponsored his work, and to Queen Elizabeth. *Henry V*, was at its core, a paean to Elizabethan values, and King Henry himself, a paragon of what it is to be British—a warrior who doesn't back down, but knows what it is to chase a pretty girl, and have a beer with the boys.

As all of the Elizabethan world knew, English men can achieve anything, but are eagerly conquered by the beautiful, virginal princesses who will forever have their hearts.



The Foreigner

The hilarity of Larry Shue's plays revolves around three constants in human experience: the anguish of shyness, the liberating power of disguise, and the pitfalls of language. An excruciatingly shy man by all reports, Shue used his plays to stamp out ignorance, pomposity, cruelty, intolerance, and prejudice. He waged wars where good prevails over evil. On stage he could confront infuriating issues he was too timid to tackle in his own life.

In *The Foreigner*, Shue's hero discovers the affirmative power of the imagination with its ability to awaken thoroughly unpredictable and creative responses in people. As he grows, he unwittingly fosters an environment enabling others around him to blossom as well. Suddenly the misunderstood, the elderly and the shy no longer feel so hopeless or alone. The misfits band together, becoming a force with which to be reckoned.

When Shue died in 1985 more than sixty-five productions of *The Foreigner* were either running or preparing to open around the United States and England. He may be gone, but the social injustices that intimidated him remain under the attack of his impromptu commando group. His unlikely crew of characters will continue taking to the boards in *The Foreigner* to fight the good fight.



The Tempest

Most of us consider ourselves rational, good people and, as such, believe there are lines we are scrupulously incapable of crossing.

Royal ships returning from the princess' wedding in Africa pass by Prospero's isle, giving him one slim chance at freedom from exile. It's a long shot, but if he works it right he can use the power afforded him by his books and the magic of the island to marry his daughter to Prince Ferdinand, assuring their return home and restoration of his position and property.

His intentions begin nobly. But from the moment Prospero first hears his devious brother Antonio referred to by his own former title 'the Duke of Milan', a dormant animosity surges and fervor for retaliation against those who betrayed him begins. Prospero loses focus as vengeance consumes him, causing him to disregard promises made to Ariel, his faithful servant and only friend; frighten Miranda, the daughter he dearly loves; and allow his loyal ally, Gonzalo to become collateral damage to his retribution. The worthier goal of providing for his family almost forgotten, he hurts the people he truly loves.

Once vengeance begins it spirals like an addiction until it devours. Soon Prospero becomes more iniquitous than those he wishes to punish. They at least had the excuse of personal gain; Prospero's only ambition now is malevolence. Even though Prospero has let him down, Ariel intervenes to save his friend from the self-destruction he sees as imminent. Barely stopped before doing irreparable harm, the experience humbles Prospero and he returns to Milan a changed man -- aware that even he is susceptible to base desires and the trappings of power.

More than the storm that brings a ship to an island, the tempest is the storm within each of us that, if we are not careful, can grow out of control and destroy us. We may keep it in check, but we all have the desire for revenge somewhere inside. Let's hope that when we begin to step over that line, we have people that love us enough to guide us back.



The Taming of the Shrew

The Taming of the Shrew is often dismissed as a misogynistic play, embodying old-fashioned ideas about men and women. But Shakespeare is slicker, more subtle, more sophisticated than that. The play is indeed about power struggles between men and women. But Petruchio does not merely bludgeon Kate into submission. Rather he re-molds himself, and her, and their small world to accommodate a partnership between them—the task takes its toll on him. It changes him as well as her. Kate's conquest of his boorish sexism and materialism is as important to the play as his conquest of her shrewish disposition.

At its core *Shrew* is about the imperfections in us all. It shows that for us to come together—especially in the life partnership of marriage—each must accommodate. At the end of the play Kate is not a beaten woman, but rather one empowered, even joyous, in her new-found sense of self. And Petruchio, who sought wealth and a wife as chattel, has an equal with whom

to share his life. Her speech about a woman's duty is really about all our duty to each other, a primer for humanhood, not just womanhood.

How is anyone tamed? With respect and Love. As it has always been.



SHREK, The Musical

ONCE UPON A TIME ...

For 100's, and in some cases 1000's of years, children across the globe have been entertained and guided by fairytales. Some are scary, some are silly, but all have morals and lessons. They are playful, instructional guides usually teaching youths to be respectful, mindful of their parents, and to conform to societal norms. If Red Riding Hood stays on the path, if Beauty accepts the arranged marriage, if Cinderella endures hardship without complaint, everything will turn out fine. Girls have one role, boys another, the community has expectations, and if you follow the rules, you will live happily ever after.

And then we have *SHREK*. The prince isn't charming, this princess isn't helpless, the hero is an ogre, and his sidekick is an ass. Sure, there are still morals and lessons, but they are atypical of the traditional.

Don't stress over physical perfection. If you are beautiful on the inside, you are beautiful; and you will always be beautiful in the eyes of the one who loves you.

You don't need to conform. Embracing who and what you are is the first step to happily ever after. Once you do, you will find your community, one that welcomes diversity and supports you for being you.

The important thing is that we love ourselves and each other. Only then will we be able to live happily ever after, which actually is an ongoing journey together, not The End.

THE END



Forever Plaid

Forever Plaid tells the story of a dead doo-wop group that returns to earth to do the concert they never performed in life, giving them one last shot to get it right. It's a clever premise for some comedy and great performances of classic songs we have all loved for decades. Through it the guys mature and become the best versions of themselves, so they may move through limbo to the Great Beyond. They realize that, while they may not have accomplished what they wanted to in their short time on earth, achieving one truly perfect moment is more than anyone has a right to hope for, and if you can manage that, you have had a life well lived. As you leave the theatre tonight, besides singing one of the many catchy tunes, I hope you will take that with you. Like so many jukebox musicals, *Forever Plaid* is more than a vehicle for beloved songs ... it has heart and soul.



Measure for Measure *

We are each responsible for all the consequences of all our actions, even the unforeseen ones. Self-understanding enables us to both deserve and give mercy and forgiveness.

We are too often blame-oriented, looking only outside ourselves for the causes of our travails. McDonalds is responsible if you spill hot coffee on yourself and your government is responsible if your life sucks. Men blame the way they treat women on the women – and women blame the way men treat them on the men. Perhaps in all these cases, those who seek to lay blame outside themselves are in some degree right. But perhaps they are not blameless either.

Shakespeare tends not to define the world in absolutes. His world is a palette of subtle grays. *Measure for Measure*'s Angelo is indeed a rapist, and is generally played as a through-and-through villain. It is quite easy to demonize the man of power who forces himself on the virginal Isabella. But not everything is that simple, nor would such simplicity make for engaging theatre.

Angelo is not totally at fault merely because he has more power and he is the aggressor. Nor is Isabella blameless just because she is inexperienced and naïve. She may not realize that she encourages Angelo as she sued for her brother's life, but once she does she must take responsibility for her part in what ensues.

Rape is the most among the heinous of crimes, an exercise of power and control and force more than a sexual act. So how can Angelo be deserving of Isabella's forgiveness? However "un-PC" and unpopular, I think that Shakespeare intended us to see Angelo as a flawed human being – it is too easy to cast him in the role of monster, and Shakespeare just didn't do easy. The drama is more powerful if somehow the audience can see the world through Angelo's eyes, believe just a little in his justification. And Shakespeare certainly would go for the more powerful drama!

Whatever the rules, mores, laws of a society may be, each case arises from the infinite complexity of human motivations, and thus each case must be judged on its own merit. The same act by different individual or under different circumstances leads to a different conclusion of justice. Universal judgment without regard for circumstances is inherently unfair. One size does not fit all. And so it is with Angelo and Isabella – to some degree each of them must share responsibility. Only then can they deserve and give mercy and forgive.

Isabella and Angelo are each responsible for all the consequences of their actions, even the unforeseen ones. As are we.

* I anticipated audiences' preconception that Angelo was an Iago-like villain, which dilutes the complicated moral issues in *Measure for Measure*. With these notes I hoped to diminish this bias and open audiences to the deeper issues that I believe Shakespeare intended for them to contemplate.



The Merry Wives of Windsor.

A preview article in The Pearl Theatre Company's *A Playgoer's Supplement*

As the story—a tale perhaps more interesting than accurate—goes, Queen Elizabeth commanded Shakespeare to produce a work showing Falstaff in love. She wanted this play to be presented at the St. George's Day festivities honoring the Knights of the Garter, in April of 1597. Five men would be knighted that day, one of whom George Carey, the second Lord Hunsdon, knew he soon would be appointed Lord Chamberlain of England. A political heavyweight, The Lord Chamberlain was an important patron of the theatre, as well as the government's official censor. The bard had two weeks to write the play and prepare it for performance, and he had better well produce a work that would please. The end result, reportedly, was the Queen's favorite comedy, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*.

The late 16th century was a fine time to be an Englishman. Furs and produce and timber and rents and royalties poured new wealth from the American colonies into the motherland. Troubles between Catholics and Protestants had temporarily subsided. The Spanish Armada had been defeated and Sir Francis Drake ruled the seas. There was a somewhat uneasy peace with France. There was a developing philosophy of social justice. A Dutch traveler of the time observed that English wives had more freedom than in Italy and other European countries, although the English common law idea of wives as property still prevailed. Women of the middle and upper classes had leisure time, went riding, gathered to gossip. It was an era of a new materialism with those outside the landed gentry having accumulated possessions—possessions which needed to be protected from the Sir John Falstaffs out there.

A stranger has come to town as the play begins. A frayed-at-the-cuff, down-on-his-heels aristocrat, Sir John, arrives in Windsor, a settled and prosperous village outside of London and home to a Royal palace. Folk have gathered for the investment of the Knights of the Garter, but that has little to do with the people we meet in *Merry Wives*. Most of this lot has no expectation of ever being seen at court, even though they see the castle every day of their lives. Falstaff tries to seduce Mistress Page and Mistress Ford, the wives of two leading Windsor citizens, hoping to take them for all he can. The wives recognize Falstaff for what he is, but play along, planning to expose him. Falstaff's disgruntled men reveal the plot to the women's husbands to revenge the dismissal of their buddy Bardolph. While Mr. Page laughs at the lunacy of his wife returning the rusty knight's favors, the wildly jealous Mr. Ford takes exception. Thinking to unveil his wife's infidelities Ford disguises himself and hires Falstaff to procure Mrs. Ford. Thus, the knight is set up for the wives to confound again.

In the secondary plot, *Merry Wives* follows a traditional Shakespearean model for comedy, borrowed from Italian antecedents: the young Anne Page cannot obtain parental permission to marry her love Fenton. Mistress Quickly is a go-between. Mistress Anne has multiple suitors her parents prefer, one of whom is a grotesque character. In High Shakespearean style, the French suitor Dr. Caius, and the Welsh Hugh Evans—who pursues fair Anne Page on behalf of his shy friend—mangle the Queen's English in their amorous race for the maid.

For the first time, Shakespeare here writes a play not set in the annals of history or in far-off fantastic lands, but rather in the time and place his audience lived, and about people who could be their neighbors. Many of the jokes in the play are related to the news of the day. It's set in local parks and inns (The Garter Inn of the play still stands in Windsor) and landmarks

such as the old oak. To those in 1597, these references were as common as a Pearl-regular saying he parked by Tompkins Square, dined at Lanza, and caught the Wednesday matinee.

Everyone in this play is pulling a scam. In the end even the most cocksure scammers find themselves at the mercy of someone else's prank. Everyone has had such a good time it hardly matters that some won and some lost. The seeming extreme injustices are laughed off, the downtrodden are invited back into the fold, and the little community of Windsor, merry wives, husbands, et al., prepare to sit down to one table together to laugh, eat, and drink...

I grew up as the youngest of five kids in a big house with an open door and full refrigerator. Drawn by my mother's kindness and generosity, dozens of odd strays wandered into my home throughout my youth. They and their pets, lovers, children and various other hangers-on stayed—and ate—for days, weeks, and even years. One arrived for lunch in 1977, stayed until 1998. Some of the people I loved as if they were my own, and indeed became part of our family. Others, well...they took advantage. Indeed, they might have given Falstaff a run for his money in the hustle department. But for better or worse, on any given day they were part of the eccentric collection which defined our little Community.

There are many reasons I am eager to direct *Merry Wives*, but mostly it is my joy and pleasure to explore communities and what it means to be a part of one. Maybe the merry wives and my mother's strays had a little too much time on their hands, but at the end of the day all are accepted into the fold, faults and all. And that's as it should be. It's a good message, I think, to send from The Pearl Theatre Company, my mom, and Shakespeare for the queen's Feast of the Garter.



Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

-James Alexander Bond