

The story of Lear is so horrific and tragic that it can hardly be faced. We want to be able to say that the story is only an isolated example, a freak, a chance in ten million, but the same story is happening to Gloucester and so is happening everywhere, and for all time. It is the hardest, cruellest, most uncompromising message that any dramatist has ever presented to his audience. *Trevor Nunn at rehearsal*

The medieval world with its communal tradition was dying, and the modern individualist world was bringing itself to birth. Shakespeare lived in that violent period of transition. The old world still echoed in his ears: he was aware of the new as we are aware of the future, that is as an inchoate, semi-prophetic dream. Now it seems to me that that dream, those echoes, fill *King Lear* and account for the sense of vastness which it gives us, the feeling that it covers a far greater stretch of time than can be explained by the action. The extreme age of the King brings to our minds the image of a civilisation of legendary antiquity; yet that civilisation is destroyed by a new generation which belongs to Shakespeare's own time, a perfectly up-to-date gang of Renaissance adventurers. *Elvin Muir (1946)*

Power flows from King Lear, the apex of the pyramid, down through the entire structure. It is a perfect shape; everything is in order. Then he abdicates, intending to divide his kingdom, and his power, into three. Critics have for generations bewailed that the first scene of the play is focussed on an act which is inexplicable and ludicrous. Unfortunately, that is the whole point. Lear's action is irrational, it is without reason, it is virtually a denial of reason, and so the perfect pyramid, which is only held together by reason, tumbles and collapses, and each individual thereafter is stumbling in anarchy, being faced constantly with the question: what is nature, now that what we thought it was has collapsed? From the moment of Lear's abdication, anything can happen. Man might be an angel, he might be a beast, the gods might intervene and restore perfection, the gods might be laughing, there may not be any gods at all. *Trevor Nunn at rehearsal*

the maskers



FORTHCOMING EVENTS IN "the maskers" 1976 SEASON

AT THE NUFFIELD THEATRE....

IN OCTOBER "HABEAS CORPUS"

IN DECEMBER "MASKERS MUSIC HALL"

AT THE "maskers theatre"

IN SEPT. "THE HOSTAGE"

IN OCT. "THE SEA...."
an anthology.

IN NOV. "HEDDA GABLER"

....and of course "OPEN AIR THEATRE" AT SOUTHAMPTON SHOW

KING LEAR

by
William Shakespeare

Lear, King of Britain JIM SMITH
 King of France JOHN TURNBULL
 Duke of Burgundy DAVID BARTLETT
 Duke of Cornwall PHILIP DE GROUCHY
 Duke of Albany DAVID PIKE
 Earl of Kent BRIAN WHITTAKER
 Earl of Gloucester KENNETH SPENCER
 Edgar, son to Gloucester JOHN CARRINGTON
 Edmund, bastard son to Gloucester AL SENTER
 Fool GRAHAM BUCHANAN
 Oswald, steward to Goneril ALAN NEWELL
 Old Man, tenant to Gloucester PETE WHITE
 Doctor DAVID BARTLETT
 Knight, attendant on Lear JOHN TURNBULL

Goneril } daughters to Lear ANN ARCHER
 Regan } JENNY McCONNELL
 Cordelia } MARY ELLIOTT

Knights, soldiers & servants ALAN WATSON
 STEVE LANGE
 HUGH LEWIS
 PETER WHITE
 PAUL ELLIOTT
 GEOFFREY WHARAM

Directed by RON STANNARD

Designed by KENNETH SPENCER
 Lighting by DEREK JONES

Production Assistant JENNI WATSON
 Wardrobe SERENA BROWN
 Costume Hire
 BETTY & SHEILA ROBBINS (OXFORD)

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR RON TILLYER
 STAGE MANAGER JOY WINGFIELD
 SET CONSTRUCTION { ALAN BAKER
 JOHN RIGGS
 SOUND { ADRIAN WHITTAKER
 CLIVE WEEKES
 PROPERTIES { MOLLIE MANN'S
 SHEILA CLARK
 STAGE CREW { ROGER LOCKETT
 MIKE JOHNSON
 & THE MASKERS

HANDBILL GRAPHICS JOHN HAMON

MANY THANKS, AS ALWAYS, TO H.B.A. (HOSPITAL BROADCASTING ASSOCIATION) FOR AVAILABILITY OF RECORDING MATERIAL. H.B.A. IS THE VOLUNTARY ORGANISATION THAT PROVIDES A DAILY RADIO SERVICE TO NINE HOSPITALS IN THIS AREA

NUFFIELD THEATRE

licensee: A. de R. Davis

JEAN ADAMS
 BILL DUNN
 PHYLLIS EDEN
 ROBERT ENGLISH

GILL FISHER
 GREG HEAD
 JANET HUMBY
 DEREK JONES
 GERDA KELLNER
 ROGER McCANN
 BETTY RIGGS
 STANLEY RIXON
 JOHN C. SMITH
 RALPH STEVENS
 MOLLY WILSON

secretary
 stage door keeper
 box office
 leverhulme fellow
 in drama
 box office
 electrician
 box office
 chief electrician
 box office
 administrator
 box office
 technical manager
 chairman
 house manager
 box office

The Nuffield Theatre acknowledges financial assistance from the Southern Arts Association and the Leisure Committee of the City of Southampton towards the costs of maintaining this theatre.

In accordance with the requirements of the licensing authority:

- 1 The audience may leave at the end of the performance by all exit doors.
- 2 All gangways, corridors, staircases and passageways which afford a means of exit shall be kept entirely free from obstruction.
- 3 Persons shall not be permitted to stand or sit in any of the gangways except in positions authorised by the licensing authority and in the numbers indicated in the notices exhibited in those positions.
- 4 The safety curtain shall be lowered and raised at each performance in the presence of the audience.

The Nuffield Theatre would like to thank the ushers for giving their services voluntarily.

The use of cameras or tape recorders in the theatre is forbidden.

The management reserves the right to refuse admission, also to make any alteration in the cast which may be rendered necessary by illness or other unavoidable causes.