

NOTES FROM THE NUFFIELD THEATRE

Please note that the use of cameras, tape recorders or mobile phones in the theatre is forbidden. The management reserves the right to refuse admission, and to make any alterations to the cast which may be rendered necessary by illness or other unavoidable causes.

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 gangway except in positions authorised by the licensing authority and in 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.

With thanks to the Nuffield Theatre staff:

Artistic Director
Administrative Director
Production Manager
Technical Manager
Chief Electrician
Deputy Chief Electrician
Marketing Manager
Marketing Officer
Management Occountant
Accounts Manager
Front of House Manager
Assistant Front of House Manager
Box Office Team

Patrick Sandford
Kate Anderson
Graeme Whiteside
Stuart Harrison
Greg Head
Peter Gibson
Gillian Allmark
Lucy-Jane Fitzpatrick
John Auger
Julia Jaggard
Daniel O'Neill
Elizabeth King



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Address:.....

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You can also return to Maskers Theatre,
c/o 29 Lime Gardens, West End, Southampton, S030 3RG

MASKERS FORTHCOMING PRODUCTIONS

23rd – 28th April 2007
Maskers Studio
Our Lady of Sligo
by Sebastian Barry
Director Ron Stannard
Box Office : 023 8055 1489

The Maskers Theatre

Celebrate their 25th Anniversary production
In the open air
at
Mottisfont Abbey, Nr Romsey

Pride and Prejudice

A special adaptation of Jane Austen's classic
Adapted and directed by Meri Mackney

18th – 28th July 2007

Box Office : 023 8071 1818
www.ticketsouth.com

January 2008
The Nuffield Theatre
An Ideal Husband
By Oscar Wilde
Director Moyra Allen
Box Office : 023 8067 1771

To receive details of productions you can leave your details on our website: www.maskers.org.uk or complete the slip in the foyer or at the back of this programme.

King Lear is an amateur production
The Maskers Theatre Company is a Registered Charity – No 90067

The Maskers Theatre Company presents

THE TRAGEDY OF KING LEAR

By William Shakespeare
Director Ken Hann

NUFFIELD THEATRE Southampton
13 - 17 February 2007 at 7.30pm



PROGRAMME NOTES FROM THE DIRECTOR

The relevance of King Lear transcends time. A story of a pagan Britain where kingdoms are divided, alliances made and broken, violence and family breakdown must have had a deep resonance for the Jacobean audience of four hundred years ago.

The new King of England, King James, had recently united England and Scotland and there was much debate about the wisdom of this and particularly as to whether there should be a single parliament governing both countries. Deep wounds from the Protestant/Catholic divisions still remained to be healed between areas of the country, within towns and, indeed, families. Today the story is just as relevant. We are, at this very moment, discussing whether the union should be broken up and maybe England should have its own parliament. We are warned almost every day about the effects of the breakdown of the traditional family unit, riddled with guilt and betrayal. The Royal Family is in a state of flux. Our own "King", Tony Blair, is about to retire but won't make clear his succession thus leading to infighting and mistrust.

One of the fascinating things about the play is that there is no "back story". We don't know why Lear has decided to divide his kingdom and retire. Is it because he feels illness creeping on? Is it because his wife has just died and he is grief stricken? Why do two of his daughters hate him so? Shakespeare provides us with no solutions. The audience has to take this snapshot in time and provide its own answers. This can be compared with modern plays in the style of Becket and Pinter. No tidy story where everything is explained and resolved.

It is also a wonderfully human story. Everyone is desperate for a declaration of love; Lear from his daughters, his daughters from their father, Gonerill and Regan from Edmond, and Edmond from anyone who will love him. Edmond's dying words are, "Yet Edmond was beloved." In other words, "It was worth it!" Blindness is a recurring theme throughout the play. Lear and Gloucester cannot see what they are doing is destroying their families whilst Gloucester quite literally loses his sight, which is still one of the most uncomfortable moments in theatre.

It is a truly great play, written in the most beautiful language by a man at the height of his powers that is open to so many interpretations and leaves the audience with a myriad of questions.

Why do we sympathise with the daughters to begin with, feel that Lear has it coming to him, and yet feel sorry for him in the end?

Why do we feel empathy towards Edmond, a particularly nasty piece of work?

Why do we feel sorry for Gloucester who brought his demise upon himself?

What sort of hero is Edgar?

Why couldn't Cordelia just humour her old father?

We hope that at the end of the play you will have found some of your own answers to these questions.

Ken Hann

THE TRAGEDY OF KING LEAR BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

CAST

Lear, <i>King of Britain</i>	John Souter
Gonerill	Maria Head
Regan	Sarah Spencer
Cordelia	Rachael Courage
} <i>his daughters</i>	
The Duke of Albany, <i>husband to Gonerill</i>	Ian Morley
The Duke of Cornwall, <i>husband to Regan</i>	Steve Clark
The Earl of Gloucester	Philip de Grouchy
Edgar, <i>his elder son</i>	Rob Praine
Edmond, <i>his bastard son</i>	Matt Avery
The Earl of Kent	Alan Watson
Fool, <i>in Lear's service</i>	Graham Buchanan
The King of France	Adam Taussik
The Duke of Burgundy, <i>suitors for Cordelia</i>	David Collis
Oswald, <i>Gonerill's steward</i>	Brian Stansbridge
Old man, <i>in Gloucester's service</i>	David Collis
Captain	Adam Taussik
Messenger	Joanna Iacovou
Knights, attendants and servants	Adam Taussik
	David Collis

The play takes place in Britain, in the Kingdom of King Lear

**There will be one interval of 15 minutes
Patrons are advised to pre-order their
interval drinks**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Manor Farm Country Park
Pollxprops Argyll
Michael Mulvey
Loo Stonehill
Volumes Bookshop, Romsey
Grateful thanks to Peter Hackston and Mike Bailey for their generous musical contribution to this production. Peter and Mike are both members of the very popular folk band "The Madding Crowd".



PRODUCTION TEAM

Director	Ken Hann
Assistant to the Director	Avril Woodward
Production Manager	Graham Buchanan
Assistant Production Manager	Joanna Iacovou
Stage Manager	Kathryn Salmon
Assistant Stage Manager	David Jupp
Lighting Design	Clive Weeks
Lighting Operation	David Illsley
Sound Design	Geoff Grandy
Sound Operation	Sarah-Jane Wareham
	Geoff Grandy
Properties	Gill Buchanan, Ella Lockett
	Alison Tebbutt
Costume Design	Kay Hann
Seamstresses	Helen Officer, Christine Baker
	Jane Weeks, Enid Mulholland
	Kay Hann
Set Design	John Hamon
Set Construction	David Jupp, Graham Buchanan
	John Hamon
Stage Crew	Jonny Hearn, Jamie McCarthy
	David Fancett, Geoff Cook
	Ben Sillifant, Shaun Moncaster
	Carl Wyatt
Marketing	Angela Stansbridge
Publicity Design	John Hamon
Fight Arranger	Paul Benzing
Music composed and performed by	Chris Hann
Vocals	Dom Meacher
Logo and Programme Design	John Hamon
Photography	Clive Weeks
Make up advice	Lara Duncan
Make up	Moyra Allen
Front of House Coordinator	Julia Jupp

Why not join the Maskers as a Full Member or a Friend?

The Maskers Theatre Company is keen to welcome new members. If you are interested in joining please contact us for further information. Or you can sign up to become a Friend of Maskers to receive regular updates on Maskers productions

**Just post your details in the box in the
foyer of the theatre**

Contact Julia Jupp our Membership Officer
Telephone: 023 8044 6600

www.maskers.org.uk