

William Shakespeare's

Richard III

Directed by Steve Scott

[Image of a gold metallic crown and red dripping blood on a black background]

Produced by Promethean Theatre Ensemble

www.prometheantheatre.org

Performed at The Factory Theater

1623 W. Howard Street

Chicago, IL 60626

Running time

2 hours and 30 minutes, including one 10-minute intermission

Please silence all cell phones.

Staff and Creatives

Producing Associate ----- Anna C. Bahow
Covid Compliance and Technical Director ----- Jeremiah Barr
Production Manager ----- Alexa Berkowitz
Props Designer ----- Tristan Brandon
Lighting Designer ----- Benjamin Dionysus
Text Coach ----- Paulette Hicks
Associate Director ----- Lauren Katz
Costume Designer ----- Rachel Lambert
Scenic Consultant ----- Therese Ritchie
Director ----- Steve Scott
Dramaturg ----- Kevin Sheehan
Stage Manager ----- Becky Warner
Sound Designer ----- Sebby Woldt
Fight and Intimacy Director ----- Maureen Yasko
Production Sponsor ----- The Hampton Social

Cast

Gunner Bradley -----Catesby
Simmery Branch ----- Lady Anne, Duke of York, Messenger
Elaine Carlson ----- First Murderer, Duchess of York
Andres Coronado ----- Queen Margaret
Jared Dennis ----- Stanley
Cameron Feagin ----- Richard III
Brendan Hutt ----- King Edward IV, Bishop of Ely, Sheriff, Tyrell
Barry Irving ----- Brakenbury, Archbishop, Norfolk, Dorset
Darren Jones ----- Lord Mayor, Rivers, Oxford, Ghost of Henry VI
Jack Morsovillo-----Second Murderer, Cardinal, Ratcliffe
Michael Reyes -----Clarence, Herbert
Kevin Sheehan ----- Hastings, Blunt
Heather Kae Smith ----- Queen Elizabeth
Destin Lorde Teamer ----- Richmond, Grey, Lovell, Prince Edward
Mark West ----- Buckingham

Understudies

Joseph Beal ----- Stanley, Rivers, Ratcliffe, Sheriff, Herbert,
Ghost of Henry VI, Oxford, Norfolk

Gunner Bradley ----- King Edward IV

Ryan Cason ----- Buckingham, Richmond, Dorset, Grey,
Brackenbury, Blunt

Andres Coronado ----- Cardinal

Jessica Goforth ----- Queen Margaret, Duchess of York,
First Murderer, Second Murderer,
Hastings, Catesby

Heather Jencks ----- Richard III

Darren Jones ----- Archbishop

Jack Morsovillo ----- Bishop of Ely, Lovell

Andi Muriel ----- Lady Anne, Queen Elizabeth,
Duke of York, Prince Edward

Michael Reyes ----- Lord Mayor, Tyrell

Director's Note

Why are we fascinated with demagogues? Is it their charisma, their ability to seduce us with wit, charm, and enviable certainty as they chart their course (and ours)? Is it their uncanny pinpointing of our greatest fears and their comforting pledge to fight to rid us of those fears? Is it their refreshingly simple view of right and wrong, of good and evil, their refusal to let the pesky nuances of life alter their vision? Or is it their unstoppable confidence in themselves, a certainty that they alone can lead us to the happiness and security we so desperately need?

Although it was written more than four centuries ago, Shakespeare's *Richard III* is a casebook study of the many demagogic icons of the modern era, from Hitler and Joe McCarthy to Vladimir Putin, Boris Johnson, and a few current leaders in our own country. Intensely savvy, seductively funny, outlandishly theatrical, and meteorically unpredictable, Richard is the ultimate seducer, the longed-for savior that his

Director's Note (continued)

followers crave and enable—until they realize, perhaps too late, that there's venom under the easy smile and humble piety. And although he's one of Shakespeare's most compelling tragic figures, the real tragedy falls on those enablers: the politicians, the followers, the reluctant skeptics who allow and encourage his zealous monstrosities.

At the end of the day, Richard III is not just a deliciously compelling portrait of literature's most alluring villain. It is a charge to all of us – the disaffected, the trusting, the complacent or the fearful – to look beneath the swaggering allure and confident poise of the would-be savior and root out the incipient tragedies that will befall us all.

Steve Scott

Director

The Setting

England in the mid- to late-1400s

As the play opens, the Wars of the Roses are winding down. For generations, this series of civil wars had pitted two branches of the Royal House of Plantagenet, the Lancasters and the Yorks, against each other. Finally, peace is dawning. The Yorks are on top. But the new King Edward IV is ailing. Upon his death, one would think the crown would go to his eldest son, the 12-year-old Prince Edward, or maybe to the king's next oldest brother, George, the Duke of Clarence, right? Edward IV's younger brother, Richard, the Duke of Gloucester, has other ideas. It's important to note that, in *Richard III*, Shakespeare compressed approximately fourteen years of history into about a week. Scholars refer to this as "telescoping" and it's a technique that allowed him to focus only on the bits he found most interesting and ignore stuff that he feared might bore his audience – or not serve the purpose of the story as he wished to tell it. Shakespeare's histories resemble history, but they're not history. They're way more fun.

Cast and Understudy Bios

Joseph Beal (Understudy: Stanley, Rivers, Ratcliffe, Ghost of Henry VI, Sheriff, Herbert, Oxford, Norfolk) Joe is pleased to return to Promethean, having understudied and performed as Crofts in Mrs. Warren's Profession. He is a founding member of Invictus Theatre and has appeared in many Invictus productions including Hamlet, Infinite Jest, The Merchant of Venice, Oh, Villain!, Love's Labours' Lost, Othello, and Betwixt These Sheets. In addition, he undertook casting, sets, and props for Invictus' virtual production of 'Night, Mother. (he/him/his)

Gunner Bradley (Catesby, Understudy: King Edward IV) Gunner is an actor/artist transplant from Texas currently still adjusting to the midwestern winters and endless traffic. This is his first show back since...you know... and he has loved working with this cast and crew to bring to life such a poignant piece. (he/him/his)

Cast and Understudy Bios (continued)

Simmery Branch (Lady Anne, Duke of York) A graduate of University of Memphis Department of Theatre and Dance, Simmery earned her B.F.A. in Performance Theatre. Credits include Secret in the Wings, The Fairytale Lives of Russian Girls, Romeo and Juliet, Coriolanus, Elephant's Graveyard, A Raisin in the Sun, and American Idiot. Chicago credits include Hamlet and Ruined. Love and gratitude to all who support her: friends, family, colleagues, and her Soror's Of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority Incorporated who continue to inspire her to work hard, be happy, and dream big. (she/her/hers)

Elaine Carlson (First Murderer, Duchess of York) As a Promethean ensemble member, Elaine has been in Mrs. Warren's Profession, The Madwoman of Chaillot, The Lion in Winter, and more. Other Chicago stage credits include Why Torture is Wrong and the People Who Love Them, A Perfect Ganesh, and The Rimers of Eldritch (Eclipse); J.B., At Home at

Cast and Understudy Bios (continued)

the Zoo, and The Haunting of Hill House (City Lit). She's been around a while so if you think you've seen her in something, you probably have. Elaine is represented by Lily's Talent.

More at elaine-carlson.com. (she/her/hers)

Ryan Cason (Understudy: Buckingham, Richmond, Dorset, Grey, Brackenbury, Blunt) Ryan is a graduate of New Trier High School and Bard College, NY. Credits include Brutus in Julius Caesar, Edmund in King Lear, King Edward in Richard III, and Solyony in Three Sisters (Bard College), and Ed in Life and Times of Tulsa Lovechild (Oakton Community College). His film career includes lead roles in Bennett's Cow-Eyed Girl, Until Sunrise, and Everlasting. This is Ryan's first appearance with Promethean. (he/him/his)

Andres Coronado (Queen Margaret, Understudy: Cardinal)
Andres is an actor, director, writer, and occasional dramaturg. Before the pandemic, they worked as an actor with Odd's

Cast and Understudy Bios (continued)

Bodkins Ensemble, Runaways Lab Theatre, and Connective Theatre Company. Andres was an assistant director for productions with The Conspirators and Valiant Theatre Company, the latter of which he also worked as dramaturg, and directed a staged reading at Chicago Dramatists. Andres received his B.F.A. from Texas State University, and currently works in museum administration. (he/him/they/them)

Jared Dennis (Stanley) Jared holds an M.F.A. from the Theatre School at DePaul and a certificate from The National Theatre Studio, London. Past performances include Henry V, The Winter's Tale, Tiger at the Gates, and Bronte (Promethean) Antigone, Twelfth Night, and Hamlet (First Folio) Much Ado About Nothing, Richard II, and Henry IV Parts 1 and 2 (Chicago Shakespeare Theatre), and The Voyage Inheritance (Remy Bumpo). Jared is proud to be a member of Promethean Theatre Ensemble. (he/him/his)

Cast and Understudy Bios (continued)

Cameron Feagin (Richard) Cameron is a proud member of Promethean Theatre Ensemble where she has performed in Blue Stockings, Gross Indecency: The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde, Arcadia, The Winter's Tale, and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead. Recent credits include Thirteen Days (City Lit), playing JFK, and King Lear (Redtwist), directed by Steve Scott. Cameron has also worked with Victory Gardens, City Lit, Lifeline, Boho, and Chicago Dramatists, among others.
(she/her/hers)

Jessica Goforth (Understudy: Queen Margaret, Duchess of York, Clarence, First Murderer, Second Murderer, Hastings, Catesby) Jess is delighted to work with Promethean Theatre Ensemble. Recent credits include The Tempest (Shakespeare All-Stars), Twelfth Night (Unrehearsed Shakespeare), Why Torture Is Wrong and the People Who Love Them (Eclipse Theatre Company), The Tempest (Midsommer Flight) and May

Cast and Understudy Bios (continued)

the Road Rise Up (The Factory Theater). Thank you to Promethean and to Dennis for their support. (she/her/hers)

Brendan Hutt (King Edward IV, Bishop of Ely, Sheriff, Tyrell)

Brendan is a proud member of Promethean Theatre Ensemble and is thrilled to be a part of Richard III, his twelfth show on stage with the company. He made his stage return recently as Pericles in Idle Muse's Upon This Shore and you can see a full list of his past work at brendanhutt.com. Brendan is represented by BMG Talent. Thanks and love to his amazing family and to his incredible wife Jennifer. (he/him/his)

Barry Irving (Brakenbury, Archbishop, Norfolk, Dorset)

Promethean debut! Most recently Barry appeared in both Hamlet and Ruined at Invictus Theatre. Other credits include Benedick in Much Ado About Nothing and Lysander in A Midsummer Night's Dream. He is a Columbia College Chicago graduate with a B.A. in acting, and a company member at

Cast and Understudy Bios (continued)

Playmakers Laboratory Theatre. Thanks as always to his family for their unwavering support and to you for preserving the tradition of live theatre. (he/him/his)

Heather Jencks (Understudy: Richard) Heather is a Chicago-based actor. Previous credits include Top Girls understudy (Remy Bumppo), Not One Batu (Nothing Without a Company), Nanay (Free Street Theatre), King Lear (Eleusis Collective), Patria Libre (Prologue). Heather is an alumnus of Black Box Acting Studio, Second City TC, Annoyance, and iO Chicago; and briefly studied with L'Ecole Internationale de Théâtre Jacques Lecoq and the summer Shakespeare Conservatory at RADA. She's thrilled to be working with Promethean and getting into the mind of Richard III! (she/her/hers)

Darren Jones (Lord Mayor, Rivers, Oxford, Ghost of Henry VI, Understudy: Archbishop) Darren is celebrating his 30th year as a stage, television and film actor born and based in Chicago. His

Cast and Understudy Bios (continued)

recent stage credits include Wellesley Girl (Compass Theatre); Hamlet (Invictus); American Son (Beverly Arts Center); Labyrinth (Broken Nose Theatre); King Lear (Redtwist); One 4 the Road and Never the Milk and Honey (MPAACT); Crime and Punishment and The Heavens are Hung in Black (Shattered Globe), where he is an Artistic Associate. Darren is represented by Lily's Talent Agency. (he/him/his)

Jack Morsovillo (Second Murderer, Cardinal, Ratcliffe, Understudy: Bishop of Ely, Lovell) Jack is thrilled to be a part of this incredible group. He was last seen as Rosencrantz/Gravedigger in Hamlet (Invictus Theatre). Other productions include Hershel and the Hanukkah Goblins (Strawdog), The Merchant of Venice (Invictus), and Two Gentlemen of Verona (Midsommer Flight). Jack would like to thank the amazing artists at Promethean and the audiences who support live theatre. Most notably, he would like to thank his family and Ebby for keeping him in the light. Always. (he/him/his)

Cast and Understudy Bios (continued)

Andi Muriel (Understudy: Lady Anne, Queen Elizabeth, Duke of York, Prince Edward) Andi is a graduate of the University of Illinois at Chicago's School of Theatre and Music. University credits include Three Sisters, Glengarry Glen Ross, and the Q Brothers' rap opera adaptation of the Julius Caesar story: Rome Sweet Rome. Since graduating, Andi has performed in Theatre of the Beyond's new play Circles, Forest Park Players' production of Shakespeare's As You Like It and understudied in The Tasters at Rivendell. (she/her/hers)

Michael Reyes (Clarence, Herbert, Understudy: Lord Mayor, Tyrell) Michael first played with Promethean back in 2010 as El Gallo in The Fantasticks, and again as Chater in the 2018 production of Arcadia. He appeared with Strawdog (where he is an ensemble member) as Braddock in Masque Macabre, an immersive experience inspired by Poe. Other credits: Anna Karenina and Neverwhere (Lifeline); Gary in Night Season

Cast and Understudy Bios (continued)

(Strawdog); Nick in Mutt (Stage Left); and Sebastian in Animals Commit Suicide (First Floor). (he/him/his)

Kevin Sheehan (Hastings, Blunt) As a Promethean ensemble member, Kevin has appeared in Blue Stockings and Gross Indecency: The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde. He has worked with Piccolo Theatre, Strawdog, The Circle Theater, The Side Project, The Waltzing Mechanics, 20% Theatre, The Accidental Shakespeare Company, Prologue, Strange Bedfellows, The State, and Pride Films & Plays. Kevin hails from Greenwood, IN and knows more about early-modern Tudor history than he probably should. He earned his B.A. in Theater and Creative Writing at Indiana University, on a date which will remain undisclosed. (he/him/his)

Heather Kae Smith (Queen Elizabeth) Heather is a Promethean ensemble member. Her past credits with the company include Blue Stockings, Gross Indecency: The Three Trials of Oscar

Cast and Understudy Bios (continued)

Wilde, Arcadia, Tiger at the Gates. Other credits: Frost/Nixon (Redtwist), Midnight Cowboy (Lifeline), Loose Knit (The Public House). Heather holds B.A.s in Performing Arts and Music from Iowa State University, and has trained at Black Box, Vagabond, and Green Room in Chicago. She is represented by Grossman & Jack Talent. (she/her/hers)

Destin Lorde Teamer (Richmond, Grey, Lovell, Prince Edward)

Destin hails from North Chicago. He is a recent graduate of The Theatre School at DePaul. Credits include Tad in 5th City (Ma'at Production Association for Afrikan Centered Theatre), The Little Prince (Bowen Park Theatre), and American Storm (Theatre Seven of Chicago). He is also a dialect coach and a proud new member of the Voice and Speech Trainer's Association (VASTA). Coaching credits include Relentless (TimeLine), Songs for Nobodies (Northlight), and Doctor Faustus (The Theatre School at DePaul). He is represented by NV Talent. (he/him/his)

Cast and Understudy Bios (continued)

Mark West (Buckingham) Mark is excited to be back onstage with Richard III. He was last seen in King Lear at Redtwist Theatre, where he worked alongside Cameron and Steve. Before The Flash he was seen onstage in Girl in the Red Corner at Broken Nose Theatre. Offstage he uses his voice and love of storytelling to produce audiobooks, his podcast Real Talk with Mark West, and hosts storied dinner parties at Chicago restaurants. @ibmarkwest | www.hey-markwest.com.
(he/him/she/hers)

Staff and Creatives Bios

Anna C. Bahow (Producing Associate) A member of Promethean Theatre Ensemble, Anna is an award-winning Chicago-based theatre director committed to the development of new work and a diversity of voices. She is an Artistic Associate with Silk Road Rising and an Associate Artist with The International Voices Project. Her productions have received JEFF Awards for New Work and Use of Multimedia. Learn more at AnnaBahow.com. (she/her/hers)

Jeremiah Barr (Covid Compliance and Technical Director) Technically inclined, Jeremiah is a jack of all trades: technical director, scenic designer, props, puppets, masks, carpentry, rigging, stage and production management. He works with some of the coolest people around including Promethean Theatre Ensemble, City Lit Theater, Northlight Theater, Black Button Eyes, Midsommer Flight and Astonrep, of which he is a founding member. Jeremiah is also a technical director for Dominican University's theater department. He wishes to send

Staff and Creatives Bios (continued)

warm wishes to everyone with PTE and to his lovely and most talented wife, Samantha. (he/him/his)

Alexa Berkowitz (Production Manager) Alexa has held many positions during her time as an ensemble member with Promethean. She is most often working as the resident production manager, and recently held the positions of Executive Director and resident stage manager. She graduated from the University at Buffalo, SUNY with a B.A. in Dance and a B.A. in Theatre. She is currently pursuing her M.A. in Women and Gender Studies at Loyola University. Since moving to Chicago, she has worked with a number of theatre companies including City Lit, Promethean, Strawdog Theatre Company, The Factory Theater, and Black Button Eyes.
(she/her/hers)

Tristan Brandon (Props Designer) is thrilled to smithereens to get to work with Promethean after so many years as a fan!

Staff and Creatives Bios (continued)

Tristan is a founding member and Literary Director at Idle Muse Theatre Company and loves working with all of Chicago's magnificent Fringe Theatre scene! (he/him/his)

Benjamin Dionysus (Lighting Designer) Benjamin is but a word that cowards use, devised at first to keep the strong in awe. After lighting Nazis and babies, for Lifeboat and City Lit respectively, Benjamin is delighted to cut to the chase and light the Formal Vice, Iniquity. He was a founding member of the Accidental Shakespeare Theatre, and in his spare time he is a mask maker, a composer, a pianist, and a software engineer. (he/him/his)

Paulette Hicks (Text Coach) This is Paulette's first production with Promethean. She has worked as a text coach with Redtwist, Invictus, The Dunes Summer Theatre, and City Lit. Productions include King Lear, The Merchant of Venice, Loves Labours Lost, Macbeth, and A Midsummer Night's Dream. As an

Staff and Creatives Bios (continued)

actor she has worked with Strawdog, Piven Theatre, Route 66 Theatre, About Face, Redtwist, Akvavit Theatre, Linchpin Theatre, Chase Park Theatre, Oak Park Village Players, W. Shakespeare & Co., and The Human Race Theatre Company. (she/her/hers)

Lauren Katz (Associate Director) Lauren is a Chicago-based director and teaching artist. Favorite directing credits include Legally Blonde the Musical, (Beverly Theatre Guild), The Christmas Five (Mudlark Theater), Hershel and the Hanukkah Goblins (Strawdog Theatre), This is a Chair (Haven Theatre), and Women of 4G (Babes with Blades Theatre). As an assistant director, Lauren's Chicago collaborations include About Face Theatre, Goodman Theatre, Theater Wit, Steppenwolf Theatre, Victory Gardens Theatre, Writers Theatre, and Windy City Playhouse. Lauren was the 2016/2017 Artistic Apprentice at Steppenwolf Theatre, and a 2018/2019 Directors Inclusion Initiative Fellow at Victory Gardens Theatre. (she/her/hers)

Staff and Creatives Bios (continued)

Rachel Lambert (Costume Designer) Rachel is happy to be working with Promethean Theatre Ensemble for the first time. Her other Chicago design credits include work with The Goodman, Second City, Northlight, Remy Bumppo, First Folio, The Gift, Buffalo Theatre Ensemble, American Blues, Redtwist, Eclipse Theatre, BoHo, DePaul School of Music and others. Regionally she has designed for Peninsula Players and the Texas Shakespeare Festival. (she/her/hers)

Therese Ritchie (Scenic Consultant) Credits include scenic design for Blue Stockings (Promethean); Neither (Lifeline); Labyrinth and Girl in the Red Corner (Broken Nose); Now or Later and The Truth About Santa (Intrinsic); Annie KIDS (Wilmette Children's Theatre), and No Child (Definition Theatre). Therese also did props design for The Moors (A Red Orchid Theatre), and Ethiopian America (Definition Theatre). She received the 2019 Ed Burbridge Award for her scenic design of No Child and the 2018 John Murbach Prize for Collaboration

Staff and Creatives Bios (continued)

in Design after completing her undergraduate degree at Columbia College Chicago. (she/her/hers)

Steve Scott (Director) Over a career that spans nearly fifty years, Steve Scott has directed more than 300 productions for local, national, and international theaters, including Northlight, Red Orchid, Porchlight, Eclipse, Redtwist, Shattered Globe and Goodman, where he served as producer from 1986 to 2017 and is now a member of the Artistic Collective and the Board of Trustees. He serves on the faculty of the Theatre Conservatory of the College of Performing Arts at Roosevelt University and on the board of Season of Concern. In 2017 he won a special Jeff Award for his service to the Chicago theater industry, and in 2018 received the League of Chicago Theaters' Lifetime Achievement Award. He is now the Artistic Director of the Dunes Summer Theatre in Michiana Shores, Indiana.
(he/him/his)

Staff and Creatives Bios (continued)

Becky Warner (Stage Manager) Becky is excited to be working with Promethean! She recently stage managed Upon This Shore with Idle Muse. She is a company member with TUTA where she's worked on Hedda Gabbler and Radio Culture. Other credits include Equivocation (Idle Muse) Maker of Worlds as part of the Dream Up Festival (Theater for the New City), Non-Player Character (Red Theater Chicago), Sickle (Red Theater Chicago), Hitler on the Roof (Akavit), Yizkor (Anaemic), Waiting for Godot (Tympanic), and Robin Hood and Maid Marian (Strawdog). (she/her/hers)

Sebby Woldt (Sound Designer) Sebby has designed sound for almost 100 productions in Chicago and is happy to be working with Promethean again. Previous credits include Arcadia (Promethean), Collected Stories (Redtwist), and The Deckchairs (The Conspirators). Sebby is head of sound for the Bristol Renaissance Faire. Learn more at acousticphilosopher.com. (he/him/they/them)

Staff and Creatives Bios (continued)

Maureen Yasko (Fight and Intimacy Director) After providing fight direction for Blue Stockings, Maureen is thrilled to be working with Promethean again! Recent projects: I Build Giants (The Plagiarists), The Secret Council (First Folio), Women of 4G (Babes With Blades), and Non-Player Character (Red Theater). Maureen serves as Resident Intimacy Director and Associate Fight Director of Midsommer Flight and is an Artistic Associate of Babes With Blades Theatre Company. When not creating theatre, you'll often find Moe teaching as a Certified Yoga Instructor. (she/her/hers)

Special Thanks

- Marketing image adapted from a royalty-free photo by Lians Jadan on Unsplash.
- Production photography by Steven Townshend.

Promethean Theatre Ensemble

In the Community

PTE is proud to partner with Chicago Votes during our production of Richard III.

Chicago Votes is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization building a more inclusive democracy by putting power in the hands of young Chicagoans. They're engaging and developing a new generation of leaders by opening the doors of government and politics to young people from all corners of the city. They're changing laws to make Chicago and Illinois a better place to be young, and in the process, they're making democracy fun! Learn more and donate at chicagovotes.com.

Previous community partners include Southside Blooms, Greater Chicago Food Depository, Black Lives Matter Chicago, Brave Space Alliance, Chicago Alliance Against Sexual Exploitation, Women & Children First Bookstore's Women's Voices Fund, American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, and

Howard Brown Health. When you're looking around for charitable giving opportunities, we hope you'll consider supporting these worthwhile organizations.

Wonderstudies

Producing a large-cast play (15 people playing over 30 roles!) during what is hopefully the tail-end of a pandemic, is possible thanks to the hard work and dedication of understudies.

They truly are the bedrock of the theatre.

Some Richard III understudies have agreed to prepare roles in addition to their main assignment; some actors have devoted themselves entirely to understudying for this production. These dedicated professionals work alongside the cast to develop characters and fulfill the promise that the show will go on. The entire Chicago theatre community – producers, performers, and audiences – is and always has been indebted to understudies and the directing/stage management teams that help them prepare.

About Promethean Theatre Ensemble

Our Mission Statement - Promethean Theatre Ensemble

produces and develops ensemble-focused theatre that uses vibrant language with dynamic and purposeful storytelling. We select a service organization to support and promote with each production, bridging ideas within the play to real-world efforts to address challenges within our communities.

We at Promethean Theatre Ensemble believe that to be silent is to be complicit. To the people of color we work with, work for, and love – and to those we may never even meet – we express our heartfelt support. #BlackLivesMatter. We join with arts organizations worldwide to call for an end to racialized violence and the cycle of loss and grief they perpetuate in our families and our communities #StopAsianHate. We are working at being better. Here are some resources we are spending time with: Black Lives Matter Chicago, Brave Space Alliance, WSYWAT, Anti-Asian Violence Resources, and Hollaback. Visit our website to read about our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Initiatives.

Promethean Theatre Ensemble Members

Anna Bahow

Jeremian Barr

Alexa Berkowitz

Janeane Bowlware

Jamie Bragg

Elaine Carlson

Jared Dennis

Cameron Feagin

Nicole Hand

Brian Hurst

Brendan Hutt

Xavier Lagunas

Anne Lentino

Brian Pastor

Kevin Sheehan

Heather Kae Smith

Meghann Tabor

John Walski (forever in our hearts)

Promethean Artistic Associates

Kaci Antkiewicz

Carrie Campana

Catherine Gillespie

Nick Lake

John Arthur Lewis

Tom McGrath

Tom Murphy

Brian Perry

Ed Rutherford

Rachel Watson

Alice Wu

Board of Directors

Tony Fiorentino ----- Interim President & Treasurer

Twilia Meeks -----Secretary

Jared Dennis ----- Director

Tia Lantzy ----- Director

James D. Mackey ----- Director

With Sincere Thanks to Our Sponsors and Donors

Promethean is incredibly grateful for our sponsors, grantors and donors who allow us to continue our mission of storytelling in this great city. We would like to particularly thank these sponsors:

- Promethean Theatre Ensemble is partially supported by a grant from the **Illinois Arts Council Agency** through federal funds provided by the **National Endowment for the Arts**.
- And **The MacArthur Funds for Culture, Equity, and the Arts** at the **Richard H. Driehaus Foundation**.

Donors

The following list is inclusive of donors who made contributions between January 1, 2021 and December 31, 2021.

Titans (\$1,000+)

Bob & Marjorie Feagin

Fire Givers (\$500-999)

Les & Michelin Lentino

Paul Levy

Kay Stevenson

The Korajczyk Family Fund

Storytellers (\$250-499)

JAL Dennis Group

Collaborators (\$100-249)

Jerry Bloom

Gerald Ciresi

Donors (continued)

Collaborators (\$100-249) continued

Joseph Cozza

Gary Forbess

Steve & Devon Gensler

Helen Hand

Clifford Miller

Jeanne Sheehan

Jim & Kathy Smith

David & Ellen Tuchler

Jeff & Rowie Wolf

Friends (\$1-99)

Charles Doe

Terrence Donahue

Anthony Fiorentino

Delia Ford

Anne Lentino

Brian Pastor

Donors (continued)

Friends (\$1-99) continued

Oliver Sava

Laura Starr

Tom Sutton

...and to all of our donors who have chosen to give anonymously.

Promethean Theatre Ensemble is a 501(c)3 corporation.

All donations are tax deductible.

Want to see your name here?

Visit www.prometheantheatre.org

PTE Production History

Season 16 (2021-22) Richard III

Season 15 (2020-21) Online reading of Take the Rubbish Out, Sasha (with The International Voices Project); Online reading of Sketchtopia 2021 (Artist Development Workshop, co-produced with Shattered Globe Theatre); Online reading of Lucid

Season 14 (2019-20) Online reading of Spring Breakdown: A Virtual Evening of Shakespeare; Mrs. Warren's Profession; Blue Stockings

Season 13 (2018-19) An Evening of Shakespeare: Good Scenes from "Bad" Plays; Mad Beat Hip & Gone; Gross Indecency: The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde; Arcadia

Season 12 (2017-18) BLISS (or Emily Post is Dead!); An Evening of Shakespeare: A Night of Tudor Propaganda; The Madwoman of Chaillot; Marisol

PTE Production History (continued)

Season 11 (2016-17) An Evening of Shakespeare: Scenes from the Roman Plays; The Liar; Eurydice; Gross Indecency: The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde

Season 10 (2015-16) The Lion in Winter; An Evening of Myths and Fables a.k.a. Myths Untold; Brontë

Season 9 (2014-15) Tiger at the Gates; An Evening of Shakespeare: Lonely Hearts & Twisted Love; The Winter's Tale

Season 8 (2013-14) Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead; An Evening of Shakespeare: Something Wicked This Way Comes; The Lark

Season 7 (2012-13) A Study in Scarlet; Caucasian Chalk Circle; An Evening of Shakespeare: Black Magic

Season 6 (2011-12) Henry V; An Evening of Shakespeare: On Love & Seeming; Seascape with Sharks and Dancer

PTE Production History (continued)

Season 5 (2010-11) Bury the Dead; Kennedy's Children; An Evening of Shakespeare: You-Call-It Shakespeare

Season 4 (2009-10) Spring Awakening; The Fantasticks; The Last Unicorn; Department of Cultural Affairs: A Month of Development

Season 3 (2008-09) Measure for Measure; An Evening of Shakespeare: Mad World, Mad Kings; The Illusion

Season 2 (2007-08) Six Characters in Search of an Author; An Evening of Shakespeare: Dark Side of the Bard; The Light of Love

Season 1 (2006-07) Our Country's Good; An Evening of Shakespeare: Shakespeare in the Garden; Beyond Therapy

William Shakespeare's

Richard III

Appreciation Guide

By Promethean Theatre Ensemble

Learn stuff. Because it's not enough to be entertained.

The Wars of the Roses began in 1455 and ended in 1487, when Henry VII married Elizabeth of York. Richard III died in 1485. Shakespeare probably wrote his play around 1592-93.

“...he could gnaw a crust at two hours old...”

In Shakespeare's time, sources emphasize the idea that Richard III was “unnatural” in both body and spirit. Holinshed's Chronicles, the popular source of Shakespeare's history plays, strengthened this assumption by claiming that his mother's pregnancy lasted two full years, that Richard had to be cut from her womb, and that he was born with a full set of teeth. This is now recognized as being almost entirely Tudor propaganda. (Queen Elizabeth's grandfather didn't steal the throne for the Tudors and crown himself King Henry VII. No no, he saved England from an evil, “deformed” and murdering monster!)

The discovery of Richard III's remains in 2012 confirmed that he did suffer from a severe curvature of the spine, most likely as a result of adolescent-onset idiopathic scoliosis. Forensic specialists confirm this would have made his right shoulder higher than his left, but that “a good tailor and custom-made armour could have minimized the visual impact.” Additionally, there were no indications of a limp, a “withered arm,” or any

“...he could gnaw a crust at two hours old...”

(continued)

other physical details often ascribed to Richard by later propagandists.

[Portrait of Richard III of England, painted c. 1520

Public domain. Wikimedia Commons.]

Blank verse, iambic pentameter, poetry and prose

Poetry and Prose - Prose is the language of everyday speech. In Shakespeare's plays, servants and rustics often speak in prose. Nobility speaks poetry. That is, their lines have prescribed rhythms.

Blank Verse - When we think of poetry, we usually think of rhythm and rhyme. Shakespearean text is mostly blank verse, which means it has a rhythm but doesn't rhyme.

Couplet - A scene or speech written in blank verse might include two rhyming lines for extra "punch." These two lines are called a couplet. Listen for them.

Iambic Pentameter - Iambic pentameter mirrors English speech and that's why it can be poetry and still sound so natural and understandable. In iambic pentameter, each line of blank verse is composed of 5 "feet" (or pair of syllables). The most common

Blank verse, iambic pentameter, poetry and prose (continued)

type of foot is an iamb, an unstressed followed by a stressed: da-DUM. But because iambs are mixed with other stress combinations, Shakespearean verse rarely gets so rhythmic that it puts you to sleep!

Cool Facts - Sometimes one actor starts a line of verse and their scene partner finishes it. And sometimes syllables are missing, giving the actor permission to pause.

Ye Olde Glossary

Son of York (I.i) Richard's brother, King Edward IV, is the head of the House of York, and has just won a grueling series of civil wars against their royal cousins, the House of Lancaster.

Lady Grey (I.i) Queen Elizabeth's first husband was Sir John Grey. We're being reminded that Elizabeth is not of royal birth; she married into royalty and her family is benefitting from it.

Corse (I.ii) Corpse

Lancaster (I.ii) The former ruling family of England, including Queen Margaret's late husband and son, whom Richard and his brothers have overthrown.

Plantagenet (I.ii) The family name of the dynasty that ruled England from 1152-1485.

Ye Olde Glossary (continued)

Tewkesbury (I.ii) A huge battle in the Wars of the Roses. The Yorks, Richard and his brothers, killed a lot of Lancasters at the Battle of Tewksbury and reclaimed the throne.

Crosby Place (I.ii): Richard's London home

Protector (I.iii) Lord Protector of the Realm; an official position that effectively serves as temporary Head of State when a child sovereign is in their minority.

Forsooth (I.iii) Indeed. Sometimes used sarcastically as in “Oh really?”

Holy Writ (I.iii) The Bible

Holy Rood (I.iii) Holy Cross; an oath

Zounds (I.iv) A medieval curse word; short for “Christ’s wounds”

Ye Olde Glossary (continued)

Malmsey Butt (I.iv) A barrel of Malmsey wine. Historians are still debating whether this happened or if it was just a cruel joke in reference to Clarence's reputation as an alcoholic.

Peers (II.i) Nobles holding hereditary titles like Dukes, Earls, Marquesses, etc.

Ludlow (II.ii) Ludlow Castle, the traditional home of the Princes of Wales

Pomfret (II.iii) Oh, another castle. Also known Pontefract Castle.

Sanctuary (II.iii) A form of legal asylum whereby any Christians in danger of violence, persecution, or prosecution would be considered immune from arrest or prosecution as long as they stayed within the church complex

Ye Olde Glossary (continued)

“I want more uncles to welcome me...” (III.i) The prince grew up with and was close to his mother’s family. Richard would have been a virtual stranger to his nephew.

“...and from her jealous arms, pluck him perforce.” (III.i) This is a major crime which a leading nobleman has ordered in public. In participating, both Hastings and the Cardinal are not just breaking norms, they’re breaking the law.

“Tell [Hastings] his...adversaries tomorrow are let blood at Pomfret.” (III.i) Again, this is a major crime; Rivers and Grey are noblemen entitled to due process and Richard has neither the authority nor the approval of the Council to execute them.

The Boar (III.i) Think of this as a form of medieval branding, where Richard’s logo was a boar.

Ye Olde Glossary (continued)

Lady Lucy (III.v) A woman King Edward allegedly agreed to marry before he met Elizabeth Woodville. Edward was a notorious womanizer, and it was suggested that he made offers of marriage to trick women into bed. Did he? Who knows. But men were pigs back then, so [shrug].

Baynard's Castle (III.v) London home of the Dukes of York

Abraham's Bosom (IV.iii) Here, a euphemism for death.

Breton Richmond (IV.iii) Breton is a term for someone from the Brittany region of France. After the Battle of Tewkesbury, The Earl of Richmond was the last surviving male member of the House of Lancaster, and therefore a threat to Edward IV. To avoid execution, Richmond (aged 14) escaped to Brittany, where he lived in exile for 14 years.

Ye Olde Glossary (continued)

Cousin/Cozen (IV.iv) Cousin was used as a more general term to describe extended family relationships; Shakespeare often has uncles, aunts, and even grandparents refer to younger family members as cousin. Cozened is a medieval term for tricked, deceived, or cheated.

Vail (IV.iv) To take off one's hat as a token of respect or submission

Puissant (IV.iv) Powerful; influential

Vaunt (V.iii) To make a vain display of one's own worth or attainments; to brag

Caparison (V.iii) To deck out a horse in rich decorative coverings

Ye Olde Glossary (continued)

“...ta’en the sacrament...” (V.v.) “Taken the sacrament,” or the Christian rite of communion (i.e. eating the Eucharist). Religion was at the center of medieval life; taking communion after a battle could be a sign of thanksgiving to God for a victory and taking it with the defeated party could be a sign of forgiveness and unity.

“We will unite the white rose and the red...” (V.v) Much like the boar was Richard’s personal badge, the rival houses in the Wars of the Roses each had their own floral badge; red roses represented the house of Lancaster, and white roses represented the House of York. When Richmond, the Lancastrian heir, took the crown as Henry VII and married Princess Elizabeth, the Yorkist heir, he combined their emblems into the Tudor Rose. Consisting of a white rose inside of a red rose, the Tudor Rose became a symbol of national unity.

Stuff to think & talk about

during intermission, with your friends after the show, or while tossing and turning in bed tonight

[Three images: a woman pensively looking out a window; a man and woman discussing something over coffee; an older man reading something while deep in thought]

Richard is described as “deformed” and unattractive. Do you think that makes him less sympathetic or more sympathetic?

What do you think Shakespeare intended?

Why do you think Shakespeare has Richard confide in the audience in the very first scene?

If you wanted to manipulate people, which of Richard’s strategies might you use: charm, demonstrations of piety, skillful language, false modesty, starting rumors, intimidation/violence, or encouraging people to act on emotion rather than logic? Do you think it might work?

Stuff to think & talk about (continued)

If you could cast the play Richard III using anyone in the world, actor or not, who would you cast? How would you help audiences understand your choices? How much does casting even matter?

Some scholars have claimed that Richard is the only fully developed character in this play. Do you think that's true? Could you relate to any other characters?

How much free will do these characters have? What outcomes might be predetermined before the play even starts? What makes you think that?

Which characters talk about strong connections to friends or family? Which ones don't? Why do you think Shakespeare did that?

Stuff to think & talk about (continued)

Look for all the ways characters indicate their status: how they speak to each other, what they call each other, how they physically relate, etc. Statuses change during the course of the play – often during the course of a single scene. Did any of these changes surprise, please, amuse, or disappoint you?

How often do you, as an audience member, know something that the characters onstage don't know? How does that make you feel?

Shakespeare's plays continue to be relevant because people haven't changed that much in the last 400 years. Which of these themes do you think are still worth thinking about today?

- There is something downright alluring about true evil.
- People often believe what they want to believe, despite the evidence.

Stuff to think & talk about (continued)

Which of these themes do you think are still worth thinking about today? (continued)

- A clever communicator can get away with a lot.
- A leader's morality influences ordinary people's lives.
- When things get bad enough, deep down inside we all hope that maybe someone will just come along and fix everything.

Most modern audiences know that the events described in this play are not historically accurate. How do you think that affects our appreciation of the story?

Is it possible to appreciate a Shakespearean history play if you don't understand the history? Is there anything wrong with just enjoying the poetry, staging, and clever language?

The Woodville Family

Or: Why's everyone so down on Elizabeth?

Elizabeth's marriage shocked England. Kings were expected to marry well-connected and wealthy nobles who could ally them with foreign countries. Elizabeth was smart, beautiful, and apparently beloved by Edward IV, but these were the only assets she brought to the marriage.

Additionally, she was the eldest of 14 siblings who were now the in-laws of the King, and therefore needed to be elevated to appropriate status. Her father and brothers were promoted to titles and offices, and her siblings were married into the richest and most noble families in England. This enraged the existing nobles of England who bitterly resented how much power the Woodvilles achieved.

[Portrait of Elizabeth Woodville, Queen. Wife of Edward IV.
Public domain.]

Margaret of Anjou

Margaret defied many of the societal gender norms placed on women in the 15th century. Several of her contemporaries remarked on her courage, with one even stating she "... was of stomach and courage more like to a man than to a woman." She was smart, strong, energetic, and confident. She could also be proud, stubborn, vindictive, and even violent.

These traits may have contributed to the depiction of Margaret we receive via Shakespeare. In Margaret's time, women were marginalized. What legal rights they had were very few, and the societal expectations placed on them were exclusively matrimony and motherhood. When faced with a woman who was capable of ruling, her male contemporaries resorted to the medieval standards for discrediting women: allegations of witchcraft and adultery.

Margaret of Anjou (continued)

Shakespeare's interpretation of Margaret of Anjou translates her strengths into supernatural powers. The unflattering implication is that a woman could not possibly be capable of such actions without preternatural advantages that transcend those of a "normal" human being.

Watch, however, as Margaret's curses evolve into something far less sinister over the course of the play; her penchant for cursing is redirected into a channel for empowerment. While Shakespeare's depiction of Margaret can by no means be described as feminist-friendly, the ultimate outcome recognizes the fact that Henry VII and all the Tudors owed their throne as much to the bravery of the women of the family as that of the men.

[Portrait of Margaret of Anjou, wife of King Henry VI. A scan of the manuscript illuminated by the Talbot Master. Public domain.]

The Tower of London

Built by William the Conqueror in 1078 as one of the first stone castles in England, the tower was an architectural power play; at three stories tall (the fourth was added later), the iconic White Tower was the largest structure in 11th century England and was a visual intimidation tactic to keep William's newly conquered subjects in line.

The association of the Tower as a place of tragedy and bloody executions began around the time of Richard III, but it was really his Tudor successors who cemented its current reputation as the most sinister site in the UK.

The last execution at the Tower of London was carried out more recently than you'd think. 11 people were executed at the Tower throughout the first half of the 20th century; all were charged with espionage and died by firing squad rather than beheading. The final execution took place on August 15, 1941.

References for further exploration

Contemporary or Near-Contemporary Sources

- Holinshed's Chronicle (1587)
- The Paston Letters
- The Rous Roll (1483-1485)
- The Croyland Chronicle (1486)
- Commine's Memoires
- The Occupation of the Throne of England by Richard III,
Dominic Mancini

Modern Sources

- The Wars of the Roses, Alison Weir
- The Last Plantagenets, Edward Costain

References for further exploration (continued)

Just for Fun

- **Richard III Rebothered** by the Penny Dreadfuls

A wildly irreverent, tongue-in-cheek radio play taking an alternative view of Richard III; influenced by historical research and delightfully bonkers.

- **Britain's Bloody Crown** by Dan Jones

A 4-part documentary series by pop historian Dan Jones about the Wars of the Roses, featuring historical documents, archaeological sites, and campy re-enactments.

- **Henry VII: The Winter King**

This documentary sheds some light on the shrewd, secretive figure of King Henry VII.

References for further exploration (continued)

Just for Fun (continued)

- **In the Shadow of the Tower, BBC**

A historical miniseries c.1971 examining what England may have been like in the immediate aftermath of the Battle of Bosworth and the early days of King Henry VII's reign; the production values are dated, but the characterization is based on historical records and is spot-on.

- **Richard III Society - American Branch**

The mission of the American Branch of the Richard III Society is to bring forward a historically accurate, balanced, and fair assessment of a controversial English king, and to support educational initiatives to interpret his times. The Branch connects Americans with the global Ricardian community through joint membership with the Richard III Society (CLG) in the UK, and with one another

References for further exploration (continued)

Just for Fun (continued)

- **Richard III Society - American Branch (continued)**
by organizing events that expand on our knowledge of medieval history. Visit them at <https://r3.org/>
- Learn more about **Promethean Theatre Ensemble** at www.PrometheanTheatre.org

Next for Promethean Theatre Ensemble

Coming in 2023

A Town Called Progress

By Trina Kakacek

Directed by Promethean Ensemble member Anna C. Bahow

Stay In Touch

Want to hear about PTE's upcoming readings, workshops and special events? Of course you do.

Follow us on Instagram – @prometheanensemble

Like us on Facebook – www.facebook.com/prometheantheatre

Follow us on Twitter – @PrometheanThtr

Visit us online – www.prometheantheatre.org

Richard III Production Sponsor

We're grateful to The Hampton Social for their generous sponsorship. Inspired by the feeling of long summer days spent on the coast, The Hampton Social is the perfect place to imbibe and relax. Their "Rosé All Day" lifestyle, coastal-inspired cuisine and hand-crafted cocktails creates the perfect social atmosphere. Five Chicagoland locations. Visit them soon.

Learn more at www.thehamptonsocial.com.

Would you like information about sponsoring a Promethean Theatre Ensemble production or season? Reach out to development@prometheantheatre.org.