



BYU College of Fine Arts and Communications
Department of Theatre and Media Arts

Shakespeare's

KING LEAR

Directed by Rodger Sorensen
with Barta Heiner as Lear

March 27–April 13, 2002
Pardoe Theatre
Harris Fine Arts Center

Jamba Juice

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The Cast

King Lear	BARTA HEINER*
King of France	CARL SCHMEIL
Duke of Burgundy	DEREK WILLIS
Duke of Cornwall	BEN SANSOM
Duke of Albany	CLAY BUNKER
Earl of Kent	CADE KRUEGER
Earl of Gloucester	JON LIDDIARD
Edgar	PETER BIGGS
Edmund	CAMERON HOPKIN
Oswald	ERIC "C" HEAPS
Old Man	JEFF TAYLOR
Doctor	CARL SCHMEIL
Officer	BEN SANSOM
Gentleman	CORT KIRKSEY
Captain	CARL SCHMEIL
Herald	JEFF TAYLOR
Soldier	CORT KIRKSEY
Messenger	DEREK WILLIS
Servant	CARL SCHMEIL
Fool	CYNDI BALL SELIM
Goneril	EVE SPEER
Regan	KRIS JENNINGS
Cordelia	CYNDI BALL SELIM
Gentlewoman	SARAH CLEMENT

*Barta Heiner appears through the courtesy of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

Production Staff

Director	Rodger Sorensen
Vocal Coach	Shelly Graham
Dramaturg	Lindsay Adamson
Scenic Designer	Doug Ellis
Costume Designer	Mary Farahnakian
Lighting Designer	Michael G. Handley
Sound Design	Mark Nuttall
Makeup and Hair Co-designers	Sarah Nielson, Sarah Shefchik
Production Stage Manager	Julia Palmer
Assistant Stage Manager	Kenna Dalley, Celestia Frei
Sound Engineer	Mark Nuttall
Assistant Costume Designer	Sarah Lock
Assistant to Lighting Designer	Marianne Ohran
Technical Crew	Teresa Easton, Emily George, Kathy Bruderer, Curt Jensen, Andrea Cottam, Sara Crabb
Makeup and Hair Crew	TMA 267 and 367 students
Fight Choreographer	Ward Wright
Music Historians	Sarah Clement, Camille Jolley

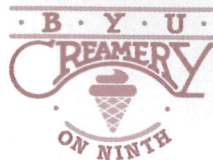
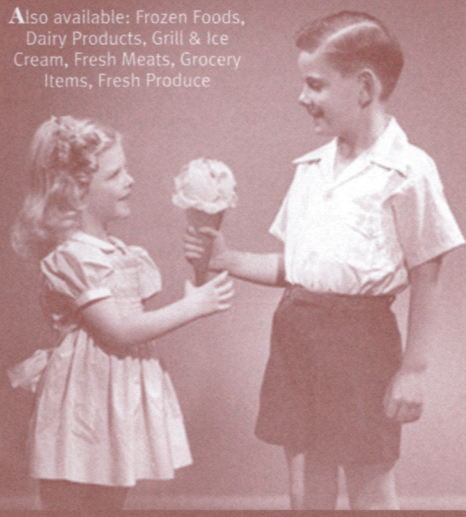
The Setting

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The Crucible of Transformation: An Alchemical Lear by Rodger Sorensen, Director

Alchemy informs our production of *King Lear*. The Medieval process by which magicians tried to turn base metals into gold, alchemy forms the basis of modern chemistry. But Medieval and Renaissance alchemy was also the medical, philosophical, and even theological art of transformation. Alchemy taught that Nature was the "womb of life," the "mother of generation," and that all matter—human, animal, vegetable, flower, metal, stone—was alive and had the potential for growing to perfection. Alchemy assisted Nature in perfecting her creations through physical, emotional, and spiritual transformations. Alchemists sought to change lead into gold, but also believed the process could heal the body, enlighten the mind, and exalt the soul.

Many practiced the esoteric art of alchemy. Recent research further suggests that poets and playwrights of the period employed images and principles of alchemy. Lyndy Abraham's *Marvel and Alchemy* observes that Renaissance English alchemy was "part of the intelligent explanation of the world, and to a remarkable extent the material of poetic figuration" (ix).

Patterns of alchemy illuminate our *King Lear*, set in a post-apocalyptic world. Alchemical operations invariably included a cyclical pattern of destroying matter, and then regenerating it into a more refined state. This alchemical process, *solve et coagula*, was also known as "death and rebirth," "corruption and regeneration," and "death and resurrection."

The complex alchemical process included three to fifteen steps or "gates," depending on the alchemist. Our *King Lear* "alchemical" process consists of three steps:

1. Destruction—breaking and crushing unrefined matter, dissolving it in water, and heating the concoction to "putrefaction," a bubbling, black chaos.
2. Planting—infusing perfected matter, called the "Philosophers Stone," into the crucible—potentially "exalting" the substance with which it is merged.
3. Rebirth—a cooling-down period in which the matter, refined in fire and conjoined with the "Stone," becomes a new and exalted substance.

Our *King Lear* is set in a crucible-like world, the kingdom precariously balanced after apocalyptic destruction. Lear rushes into destruction by abdicating the crown and by vainly and foolishly dividing the kingdom between her daugh-

ters. Further devastation follows the banishment of the loyal Kent and faithful daughter Cordelia. Step by step, elder daughters Goneril and Regan break Lear apart, stripping her of her attendants, challenging her authority, and altering her identity. Lear asks, "Who is it that can tell me who I am?" "Lear's shadow," the Fool answers (1.4.230-31). "Thou art an O without a figure, . . . thou art nothing" (192-94).

Lear descends into madness, into the bubbling, black chaos of putrefaction. She rages against the storm, hallucinates at "Dover Cliffs," and finally sinks into the death of sleep. Cordelia, the refined "Stone," enters the crucible, conjoins with Lear's chaotic matter, and sings her back to life. Lear awakens, regenerated and transformed.

Gloucester suffers a similar alchemical trial. Betrayed by his son Edmund and stripped of his lands and title, he is plunged into despair and darkness by Cornwall, who tears out his eyes and thrusts him into the chaotic storm. There he meets his exiled son Edgar, transformed into Mad Tom, who guides him to the edge of "Dover Cliffs," where Gloucester plunges to his "death." Awakened by Edgar, he is newborn, determined that henceforth he will "bear/ Affliction till it do cry out itself/ 'Enough, enough,' and die" (4.6.75-77).

These are but two of many "poetic figurations" which mark the landscape with a universal pattern of "death and resurrection," inviting us to stand in our own crucibles, recognizing with Lear that "I am bound/ Upon a wheel of fire, that mine own tears/ Do scald like molten lead" (4.7.45-7). Yet in the depths of dark chaos, at the nadir of the wheel, Edgar-like, we remember that the next motion of the wheel raises us. Our circumstances may "be worst./ [But] the lowest and most dejected thing of Fortune/ Stands still in esperance, lives not in fear:/ The lamentable change is from the best:/ The worst returns to laughter" (4.1.2-6).

The tragedy of *King Lear* is that Lear, Cordelia, and Gloucester all die. The marvel is that they are conjoined together in death, transformed, and exalted in another life. *K/L*

Sources:

Abraham, Lyndy. *Marvel and Alchemy*. Brookfield, Vermont: Gower Publishing, 1990.

The Riverside Shakespeare. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1974.



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Meet the Company

PETER BIGGS (*Edgar*), Ipswich, England, is an MA student in theatre history and criticism. Recent credits include Christian in *Cyrano*, Anthony in *Lady in Waiting*, Dr. Oakley in *Shadow-lands* at Provo Theatre Company, and William Shakespeare in ARTE's production of *March Tale*.

CLAY BUNKER (*Albany*), Stillwater, OK, is a freshman majoring in theatre studies. He has appeared in *The Love's Promise*, a Mask Club production, and *Would I Follow Him*, a BYU film.

SARAH CLEMENT (*Gentlewoman / Music Historian*), Mesa, AZ, is majoring in German with a music minor. She plays the violin in BYU's Symphony Orchestra, fiddle and mandolin in Folk Ensemble, and recorder and lute in the Medieval Club's Music Ensemble.

KENNA R. DALLEY (*Assistant Stage Manager*), Logandale, NV, is a theatre education major and has appeared in the Mask Club's production of *Thieve's Carnival* and *After Magriet*.

DOUG ELLIS (*Set Designer*), Salt Lake City, UT, is the technical director for the Division of Arts Production. He received an MFA in design from New York University and has been the art director for feature films, commercials, and episodic television. He was the art director for four network television sitcoms, including four years on *Spin City*, starring Michael J. Fox.

MARY FARAHNAKIAN (*Costume Designer*), a native of Iran, is an associate professor of theatre. She teaches costume history and costume speciality design. Recent costume designs include *La Traviata* and *The Philadelphia Story*.

CELESTIA FREI (*Assistant Stage Manager*), Provo, UT, is majoring in theatre education

and has coached theatre students at Timpview, Lonepeak, and Pleasant Grove High Schools. Credits include Julia and the wife in Neil Simon's *The Good Doctor* at Salt Lake Community College.

ERIC "C" HEAPS (*Oswald*), Alpine, UT, is majoring in theatre education with a minor in Latin. Credits include *Greater Tuna* (twice) and a number of independent films.

BARTA HEINER (*King Lear*), Ogden, UT, is an associate professor of theatre and coordinates the acting program. Credits include Eleanor in *Lion in Winter*; the title role in *Hello, Dolly!*; the nurse in *Romeo and Juliet*; and Clara in the film *Brigham City*. She was the acting coach for *The Testaments of One Fold and One Shepherd*. She is a graduate of BYU and the American Conservatory Theatre, San Francisco.

CAMERON HOPKIN (*Edmund*), Fort Worth, TX, is an acting major. Recent credits include Sandy Lord in *Philadelphia Story*, the title role in *Cyrano*, and a guest role in *Touched by an Angel*.

KRIS JENNINGS (*Regan*), Orem, UT, is majoring in theatre education. Credits include Lady Macbeth in *Macbeth*, Liat in *South Pacific*, and Ruth in *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers*.

CORT KIRKSEY (*Gentleman, Soldier*), Modesto, CA, has appeared in *All My Sons*, *California Suite*, *The Passing of the Third Floor Back*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

SARAH LOCK (*Assistant Costume Designer*), Bristol, England, is working on an MFA in theatre design and technology. Previous work includes BYU's costume studio, Crucible Theatre in Sheffield England, and Swan Theatre in Worcester England.

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CAMILLE JOLLEY (*Music Historian*), Mentor, OH, is majoring in archeology with a minor in music. She was a musician for *Time Vindicated* and was a member of the BYU Symphony Orchestra, Folk Ensemble, and is currently a member of the musician's guild of the Quill and the Sword.

CADE KRUEGER (*Earl of Kent*), Eagan, MN, is a freshman and plans to major in broadcasting and journalism major. He will serve a mission for the LDS Church this spring.

JON LIDDIARD (*Earl of Gloucester*), Springville, UT, is majoring in acting. Credits include Andrei in *The Three Sisters*, Phipps in *An Ideal Husband*, and nine different characters in *Caucasian Chalk Circle*.

SARAH NIELSEN (*Makeup Designer*), Campbell, CA, has a double major in theatre studies and music with an emphasis in voice. Previous makeup work includes BYU's production of *La Traviata* and student films. She has also worked as a choreographer and stage manager for Peninsula Youth Theatre in California. Additional credits include *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dream Coat*; *Crazy for You*; *Singin' in the Rain*; *Hello, Dolly!*; *Fiddler on the Roof*; and *West Side Story*.

JULIA PALMER (*Stage Manager*), Ventura, CA, is a theatre major with an emphasis in stage management. She stage managed *Time Vindicated*, was the assistant stage manager for *My Fair Lady*, and a dresser for *Much Ado About Nothing*.

BENJAMIN A. SANSOM (*Duke of Cornwall*), Hilbert, WI, is a theatre education major. Credits include *Cyrano*, *The Clearing*, *Great Expectations* at the Castle Theatre, *The School for Wives*, *Richard III*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, and *The Trial of God*.

CARL SCHMEIL (*King of France / Doctor / Captain / Servant*), Tacoma, WA, is studying

theatre at BYU and has appeared in *The Three Sisters*, *Insanity of Mary Girard*, *The Odd Couple*, and he is a member of The Black Swan Company.

CYNDI BALL SELIM (*Cordelia / Fool*), Houston, TX, is an acting major with appearances in *Richard III*; *Goodbye, Marianne*; and *You're a Good Man Charlie Brown* at Provo Theatre Company,

SARAH ABIGAIL SHEFCHIK (*Makeup Designer*), American Fork, UT, is majoring in theatre education. Previous experience includes assistant stage manager for *The Magic Flute*, makeup supervisor for *An Ideal Husband*, makeup designer for *A Doll's House* and several student films. She is currently designing makeup for *Wit*.

RODGER SORENSEN (*Director*), Provo, UT, is associate chair of the Department of Theatre and Media Arts and coordinates the directing program. He recently was seen as Arnolphe in *The School for Wives*. His directing credits include *The Hill Cumorah Pageant*, *The Magic Flute*, and *Rashomon*. Other Shakespeare plays he has directed include *The Winter's Tale*, *Henry V*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

EVE SPEER (*Goneril*), Tremonton, UT, an acting major. Credit include Natasha in *The Three Sisters*, Sonya in *Uncle Vanya*, Nille in *Erasmus Montanus*, and Allison in *Xann's Place*.

JEFFREY C. TAYLOR (*Old Man, Herald*), Alpine, UT, is a pre-management major with a theatre studies minor. He appeared as Marcade and Armado in ARTE's production of *Love's Labors Lost*.

DEREK WILLIS (*Duke of Burgundy / Messenger*), San Antonio, TX, is a theatre studies major. Credits include a number of productions at Ricks College (now BYU-Idaho), including Camillo in *The Winter's Tale*.