



# **SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL 2010**



## **PRESS HIGHLIGHTS**



# REVIEWS



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- Politics
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## Globe's Shakespeare Festival revives spirit of Bard with aplomb

Posted by admin on 8/02/10 • Categorized as Arts & Entertainment, Theater



Robert Foxworth as King Lear  
and Emily Swallow as Goneril in  
the 2010 Shakespeare Festival  
production of King Lear  
(Courtesy Craig Schwartz)

**By Cuauhtémoc Q. Kish/GSD Theatre Critic**

### Old Globe Theatre's 2010 Shakespeare Festival

**"King Lear," "The Taming of the Shrew" and "The Madness of George III"** in repertory through September  
*theoldglobe.org*

(619) 234-5623

Check theatre for full schedule

### **"King Lear"**

Adrian Noble directs Shakespeare's "King Lear" with a coherent ensemble of actors that radiate their strengths incrementally and feed the audience well for three hours of solid acting.

The overall plot of "King Lear" is a simple one. A king asks each of his three daughters to tell him how much she

loves him. The two older daughters, Goneril and Regan, chose to respond with flattering answers while the youngest daughter, Cordelia, Lear's favorite, says she has no words to describe how much she loves her father. Lear overreacts and disowns Cordelia, thus allowing his other two daughters to ruthlessly plot against him for his land and wealth. Shakespeare, never content to leave things simple, devised a sub-plot, allowing a nobleman named Gloucester to experience family problems that collide with the main story.

Expectations are always high for anyone playing the part of King Lear and they will not be disappointed with Robert Foxworth's portrayal of the irrational and then heart broken king. He learns all too late that he's made a bad decision, after being flattered by the empty praise of his two daughters. Foxworth deftly employs less fire and bluster in the part of the king, moving towards incredulity and studied introspection. Even in the crescendo of emotion, his dramatic measures are well balanced and consistent, minimizing his rage that most actors all-too-often push to a melodramatic limit. This subtle downplay seems to work well, allowing for grief to take precedence over uncontrolled rage.

Adrian Noble assigns an indeterminate period for the play and employs his actors in a broad setting well designed by Ralph Funicello, who has provided a main boardwalk and a second-story playing field on both sides. This production is character-driven, providing many opportunities for the actors to command the spotlight.

Of note, Bruce Turk's Fool is sensitive and endearing, especially in the haunting musical interludes. Charles Janasz plays the Earl of Gloucester with competent execution, holding his own, even when his eyes are unceremoniously plucked out and thumped to the ground (the crowds reactive groans were audible). Joseph Marcell does a very fine turn as the Earl of Kent, Lear's loyal nobleman.

All three daughters (Emily Swallow, Aubrey Saverino and Catherine Gowl) managed their parts well, as did those who play their respective spouses. Jonno Roberts' Edmund, the bastard son, assigned sufficient cunning and a restrained vileness to his part, while a standout performance was executed by Jay Whittaker, who morphed from legitimate son to a half-crazed beggar and back.

The play's visual displays constantly delighted (most especially, that magical storm), but the words of Shakespeare proved mightier. I can't remember a King Lear that has been so well and consistently spoken. You can't go wrong with Shakespeare's "King Lear" under the stars this summer.

### **"The Taming of the Shrew"**

Ron Daniels' "The Taming of the Shrew" is a joyous, accessible production with sharp enunciation, audience







Emily Swallow as Katherine in the 2010 Shakespeare Festival production of "The Taming of the Shrew," directed by Ron Daniels, at The Old Globe through Sept. 26. (Courtesy Craig Schwartz)

interaction and near perfect staging. The director even allowed 14 audience members to share the stage.

This "Taming" is a non-stop party where everyone has a good time. The play begins with a song and dance routine from the ensemble that sets up the cheerful mood for the three-hour production. It goes by in a flash, and that's a sign that Shakespeare is still the king of storytelling, and that Daniels has done his job well.

There are few theatergoers who don't know the story of "The Taming of the Shrew." Baptista's youngest daughter, who has suitors galore, can't accept a marriage proposal until her older sister, Katherine, is wed. There is one problem: no one wants to wed Katherine due to her reputation as a shrew. After assigning a husband to Katherine, the play suggests that a wife should be blindly obedient to her husband, in all matters matrimonial.

Jonno Roberts is a charming and disarming Petruchio. He plays off his nemesis, Katherine (Emily Swallow), in such a likable fashion, that it's easy to see why Katherine would shrug-off her bad-tempered ways. Roberts plays his part with a refreshingly light touch and Swallow is not your typical bellowing Kate, ranting about the stage in a hot temper tantrum. She plays her part with an infectious, overt incredulity, that allows us to buy into her allegiance to her new husband.

Ralph Funicello's scenic design offered plenty of open space for the actors to come and go with ease, many entering and exiting from behind the audience. Deirdre Clancy's costume design was a mix and match of everything in the shop, but it seemed to complement the comedic nature of the play, underscored by plenty of bawdy innuendo.

The cast was uniformly accomplished (especially in their musical harmonies), from the servant lads to the royal dads. Of special note, Adrian Sparks was comically commanding in his role of Baptista Minola, Jay Whittaker's Lucentio was an energetic rendition of young love, while Joseph Marcell (Gremio), Bruce Turk (Grumio), and Michael Stewart Allen (Tranio) did especially well in their supporting roles.

### **"The Madness of George III"**

During his reign, King George III suffered from a physical malady that was the result of a genetic disease that baffled his personal medical team.





(l to r): Robert Foxworth as Dr. Francis Willis, Miles Anderson as King George III and Emily Swallow as Queen Charlotte in the 2010 Shakespeare Festival production of Alan Bennett's "The Madness of George III," directed by Adrian Noble, at The Old Globe through Sept. 24. (Courtesy The Old Globe)

Alan Bennett's play focuses attention upon this strange and puzzling disease—now defined as porphyria—while writing a play about the constantly shifting struggle for power.

Miles Anderson leads a large cast of characters in his well-defined role of King George; he's benevolent, vulnerable, and deathly afraid of losing his mind. His struggles with porphyria resemble those suffering their first uncomfortable moments with Alzheimer's. But George ruled for 60 years without giving up the throne, thanks in part to his loyal team of competent legislators, especially his Prime Minister.

Part of the heartache—and the fun—of this play is the comical display of primitive medicine practiced during this time period. The President of the Royal College of Physicians (Sir George Baker/Joseph Marcell) along with two other incompetent medical practitioners (Bruce Turk and Adrian Sparks), recommend and execute remedies—such as bleeding and blistering—to cure the King's mental ailment, with dire results. Almost downplayed by Robert Foxworth—to offset the three medical frauds—is the therapist who actually cures the King, Doctor Francis Willis.

Anderson is supported by a competent group of actors. Emily Swallow does fine work as the queen; she is all grace, warmth and wifely protection. Andrew Dahl (Prince of Whales) is adequately stuffy, bored and infantile. Jay Whitaker does splendid work as the overly-focused Prime Minister Pitt.

Noble's staging, assisted by a half-circle of mirrored doors, works well with this large cast who come and go with steadfast regularity, until at some point it becomes annoying. Deirdre Clancy's period costumes fit the play nicely.

"The Madness of George III" works quite well with "King Lear," another production about the struggle for royal power, and is a fine balance with the entertaining "The Taming of the Shrew."

Tool Box:

## Leave a Response



## PERFORMING ARTS

### The Old Globe: The dilemma is selecting a production

By CHARLENE BALDRIDGE | DOWNTOWN NEWS

Readers may be aware that The Old Globe is celebrating its 75th anniversary, and have they got a summer festival season for you! Selected by Shakespeare Festival artistic director Adrian Noble, former director of the Royal Shakespeare, two works by William Shakespeare and another more recent work by Alan Bennett play in alternating repertory nightly except Mondays on the Globe's outdoor stage. Which to see if you haven't time for all three? It depends upon your taste.

Playing through Sept. 23, "**King Lear**" is Shakespeare's great tragedy about an aged ruler (played by television and film actor Robert Foxworth), who intends to divide his kingdom between his three daughters, Goneril, Regan and Cordelia. All they must do is say how, why and how much they love him. By the time the two eldest have spoken in glowing, flowery and most likely insincere terms, the youngest, Cordelia, who truly reveres and loves her father, is at a loss to express her feelings; and so she is disinherited and exiled to France. Lear goes mad, gloriously and inexorably, and with only his Fool (Bruce Turk) for company, he wanders the English moors, encountering benevolent and not so benevolent others, until at last he is reunited with Cordelia. Alas, it is too late.

Playing through Sept. 24, Alan Bennett's "**Madness of George III**" is a companion piece of sorts for "Lear" in that it, too, concerns a mad monarch, in this case George III of England, who ruled at the time of the American Revolution. King George is brilliantly played by British star Miles Anderson in his Old Globe debut. Foxworth portrays Dr. Willis, who cures his madness, at least temporarily. The contrast between Lear and Willis is extraordinary and this



Robert Foxworth (from left) as Dr. Francis Willis, Miles Anderson as King George and Emily Swallow as Queen Charlotte in the 2010 Shakespeare Festival production of "The Madness of George III" at The Old Globe through Sept. 24. COURTESY PHOTO



Robert Foxworth as King Lear and Bruce Turk as the Fool in the 2010 Shakespeare Festival production of "King Lear," running through Sept. 23 at The Old Globe. Photo by CRAIG SCHWARTZ

play's resonance with "Lear" is truly a joy. Emily Swallow, who plays the title role in Shakespeare's "**The Taming of the Shrew**," plays Queen Charlotte. Scenes between the king and queen, from whom he is unwillingly separated,

are among the best.

Playing through Sept. 26 is the comedy with which this season's festival leavens the tragedy of "Lear" and the medical torture of "George III." Among the Bard's most popular comedies, the play pits the Shrew (Swallow, a most intelligent and attractive woman) and a young man named Petruchio (Jonno Roberts, a fine actor, a magnificent hunk and portrayer of the murderous Edmund in "Lear"), who "comes to wive [sic] it wealthily in Padua." The chemistry between this sparring pair is palpable indeed. Festival costume designer Deirdre Clancy attires the lovers beautifully. Her production-spanning concept evinces high standards. Sound designer Christopher R. Walker provides a terrific a cappella chorus for the servants. Ron Daniels, formerly associated with the Royal Shakespeare's experimental company and who staged the Globe's hip-hop "Kingdom" last season, directs the

SEE **GLOBE**, Page 27

# GLOBE

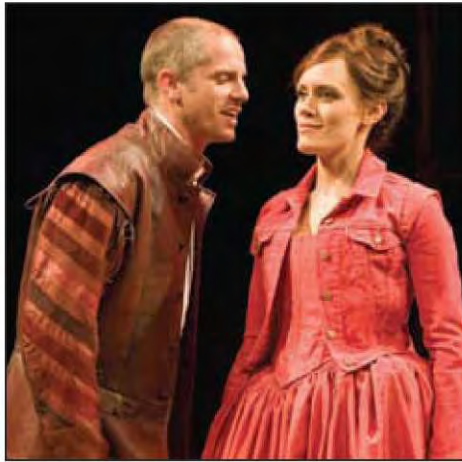
CONTINUED FROM **Page 23**

comedy. Noble stages "Lear" and "George III."

The joy of a repertory season is watching the extraordinary "stretch" an actor like Roberts makes when he moves from one role to another, playing a villain one night and a testosterone-filled lover the next. It's also great fun to see the modifications made to Ralph Funicello's scenic design from one show to another.

Each production has its virtues. No matter which one chooses, the pay off includes a glorious outdoor theatrical experience at the Lowell Davis Festival Theatre in Balboa Park, where the animals in the nearby zoo add unexpected sound and the stately trees are the real McCoy.

A complete schedule of performances may be found at [www.theoldglobe.org](http://www.theoldglobe.org) or phone (619) 23-GLOBE.



Jonno Roberts as Petruchio and Emily Swallow as Katherine in the 2010 Shakespeare Festival production of "The Taming of the Shrew" at The Old Globe through Sept. 26.  
Photo by CRAIG SCHWARTZ





**Author:** [Robert Machray](#) — **Published:** [Aug 21, 2010 at 9:14 pm](#)

2010 is the 75th anniversary of the founding of the Old Globe Theatre in beautiful Balboa Park in San Diego, California. Given several fires, the death of legendary founder Craig Noel last April, and a succession of Artistic Directors who have departed for other work possibilities, Executive Director Louis G. Spisto was faced with a dilemma: how to bring about a thrilling Shakespeare Festival to celebrate the 75th Anniversary.

Adrian Noble, the former head of the Royal Shakespeare Company, was brought on board to give the Festival new excitement. The results bear out Spisto's choice. The productions have a new dynamism and scope. 2010 Festival seems new and fresh; Noble directed *King Lear*, a grand task by any reckoning, and continued the trend to showcase non-Shakespearean works, in this case *The Madness of George III*. Ron Daniels, the former director of the RSC's Experimental Theatre, The Other Place in Stratford on Avon, directs *The Taming of The Shrew*. The first thing you notice as you enter the Lowell Davies Festival Theatre is a new stage designed by Ralph Funicello. This magnificent new structure offers increased opportunities for variety and theatricality, with a huge back gate and long ramps on the side of the stage for entrances. In *The Madness of George III* Funicello has placed a series of mirrored doors in front of an open area in the back which is sometimes covered with huge doors and at other times is open to a background of trees in Balboa Park. For *King Lear* Funicello covers the ground with autumn leaves and uses a wide and long platform that comes from the back and acts like a tongue, thrusting the action into the space. In the first scene Lear's throne sits on top and reminded me of the isolation he feels at the top of the play. For *Shrew* we find a large neon sign spelling out *The Taming of The Shrew* with one letter askew. Seated onstage were two rows of the audience, and the cast mingled before the play and at intermission with the gathered spectators. Though I had some qualms about parts of these designs, they did open the space up. Noble is a director of theatrical spectacle who gives his productions a sort of grandeur. He also makes sure the audience understands the language by having the actors speak clearly, at a proper pace, but nevertheless providing them with individual microphones, which give tremendous clarity, and words aren't lost when the actors face upstage. Noble used the space extremely well and kept a theatrical tension going at all times.

I was a bit disappointed in *The Madness of George III* as a play. Though beautifully directed and acted, the play at times seemed a bit silly when it should just be humorous. Some of the characters and situations were exaggerated to the point of absurdity; then an occasional serious line was said about the nature of humanity, governance, and the human condition, but these moments were fleeting. The acting was superb, with Miles Anderson giving a bang-up performance as George, alternating between wild madness, pathos, and humor—truly wonderful work. Kevin Hoffman as the Prince of Wales and Emily Swallow as Queen Charlotte offered outstanding performances as well. George's trio of doctors were amusing (Adrian Sparks, Bruce Turk, and Joseph Marcell), and Robert Foxworth provided sober support as the doctor who eventually helped George through strict discipline.

Foxworth is really at the Festival to play King Lear. He is a bit vigorous to play an 80-year-old King, but he aged throughout to the point where he was quite frail and defeated at the end. Foxworth has a great command of the language and can be a force to be reckoned with. His daughters were very good as played by Emily Swallow as a secretive and plotting Goneril, Audrey Saverino as a nasty and snide, smiling Regan, and Catherine Gowl as a straightforward Cordelia. Bruce Turk made an interesting Fool, given to singing and prancing about. Charles Janasz, also a bit young for his part, was an effective Gloucester. Jay Whittaker played the stalwart Edgar and a Janno Roberts was a sinister Edmund.

Having seen two productions of *Lear* recently in Los Angeles by Antaeus Theatre, I found myself disappointed in this Lear. The Antaeus' productions were funnier, more moving, clearer, and altogether more effective. I think the intimacy of the productions there are part of the reason, though the performances by Dakin Mathews and Harry Groener and the rest of the casts were revelatory. I usually lose interest in any production of *Lear* when Poor Tom, Edgar in disguise, appears and begins his ravings. I had this experience again in San Diego but not so in Los Angeles. What Noble's production did have was extraordinary special effects and lighting. I have never seen such an effective storm. The center platform worked sometimes extremely well but at others seemed to limit the action, such as in the Poor Tom scenes or the final moments of the play.

*The Taming of the Shrew* can be a controversial play because of the political incorrectness of Katherine's submission to her husband and her final conciliatory speech. The production by Ron Daniels only made things worse. His concept seemed to be to avoid the "problem" of the play at all costs. His comedy scenes were often outside the text and involved Morris dances, Samba music, and a long pantomime when Petruchio asks for food. The two leads were excellent; Jonno Roberts and Emily Swallow seemed to have real chemistry, but they were hampered by the concept of having no taming and no shrew in the play. It all seemed so reasonable, and Katherine seemed to acquiesce in the first meeting.

As good as the two leads were, the secondary characters were for the most part a disaster. It is always troublesome to have non-comedic actors play comedy parts or comic actors who feel they must exaggerate to be funny. The Lucentio of Jay Whittaker was really awful, unfunny and hard to listen to, seeing as he put on a fake squeaky voice. Clown Bruce Turk was over the top as Grumio. Joseph Marcell was just boring as Gremio. I finally realized after he played each part this summer basically identically that He was the same actor I knew from *The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air* and was playing a variation on that character. He did speak very well, and was quite elegant, but that doesn't really fit Kent, his character, in *Lear*. Charles Janasz acquitted himself well again as the Pendant and overall had a very good summer. The costumes by Deidre Clancy were very good and showed a real sense of humor.

Considering it is his first summer as Artistic Director of the Festival, Adrian Noble did a brilliant job despite my various qualms. He brings energy and a new sense of purpose to the Festival and is a very welcome addition. The 2010 Shakespeare Festival at [The Old Globe](#) plays through Sept. 23.





# KING LEAR



THEATER REVIEW

## Minds wrapped around Lear



ED KRIEGER



CHRISTINA HOUSE For The Times



ED KRIEGER

**SOUTHLAND LEARS:** Dakin Matthews, from top, Robert Foxworth and Harry Groener.

Three actors burrow into different parts of a psyche written in shades of sorrow.

**CHARLES McNULTY**  
THEATER CRITIC

"King Lear" tests the limits of how much human suffering can be encompassed in a drama. The eminent scholar A.C. Bradley called the play "the most terrible picture that Shakespeare painted of the world." Dr. Johnson was so shattered by Cordelia's death that he said he was unable to reread the work until he later undertook to revise Shakespeare's works as an editor.

I've just seen the play three times in as many nights with three different casts. The first two were by the Antaeus Company at Deaf West Theatre in North Hollywood with Dakin Matthews and Harry Groener alternating in the title role. The third was at San Diego's Old Globe with Robert Foxworth getting his turn to rail and wail as the tragic king.

One would think after so much pity and fear that I'd be writing this review from a sanitarium, my mind a World Cup stadium of horrific vuvuzela buzzing. Fortunately, I survived my marathon with my wits intact. (Where's my T-shirt?)

I can't recommend the experience to a civilian, but allow me to make a suggestion. [See 'Lear,' D9]

## 'Lears' large and small

['Lear,' from D1] tion: Choose one "Lear," preferably one of the two directed by Bart DeLorenzo for Antaeus. DeLorenzo's staging isn't one for the ages, but you're not likely to see such high-caliber thespians perform this masterpiece in a pocket space that gives a harrowing close-up of the devastation.

Matthews' Lear is the most colorful of the three, a prismatic portrait of royal entitlement and elderly exasperation broken by cruelty into humility. His anger, as revealed in the opening act after Cordelia (Rebecca Mozo) refuses to flatter him for her inheritance, is self-fueling: The more he roars, the more incentive he has to roar louder. How dare anyone provoke this dragon's wrath? Matthews understands just how thoroughly Lear has confused his position as a monarch with his identity as a man.

Groener takes a softer, slower and more painstaking approach, his reactions more internal, his fury less rash though no less titanic once it's released. If his Lear is ultimately more affecting than Matthews', his performance has the advantage of a more cohesive ensemble. (One has a sense that both casts will get stronger deeper into the run.)

This is the first full production of a Shakespeare play in Antaeus' 19-year history, and one has the sense that the classical theater ensemble's practice of providing two sets of actors for each play (devised to accommodate stage actors with unpredictable Hollywood schedules) probably isn't an ideal fit for a behemoth such as "Lear."

The directorial task is formidable enough without compounding it with logistical complexities, and the performers would have benefited from more concentrated rehearsal time. Much as it's a pleasure to see such distinguished veterans as Matthews and Groener assume the Lear challenge, it's overreaching to try to cultivate separate Shakespeare acting companies when even the very best American

### 'King Lear'

**Where:** The Antaeus Company at Deaf West Theatre, 5112 Lankershim Blvd., North Hollywood  
**When:** Contact theater for schedule. Ends Aug. 8.  
**Admission:** \$30 and \$34  
**Contact:** (818) 506-1983 or [www.Antaeus.org](http://www.Antaeus.org)  
**Running time:** 3 hours

### 'King Lear'

**Where:** Old Globe's Lowell Davies Festival Theatre, Balboa Park, San Diego  
**When:** Contact theater for schedule  
**Admission:** \$29 to \$78  
**Contact:** (619) 234-5623 or [theoldglobe.org](http://theoldglobe.org)  
**Running time:** 3 hours

theaters have difficulty coming up with one.

DeLorenzo's job is first and foremost to support the ensemble. This isn't an occasion for auteurial strutting, although he does take directorial liberties in his handling of the Fool (a role upon which both JD Cullum and Stephen Caffrey put their own inventive stamp), and his staging doesn't flinch from the escalating violence and warfare. (Jacobean drama, it turns out, has quite a lot in common with horror movies.)

The Matthews team, featuring Morlan Higgins' stalwart Kent, Kirsten Potter's villainous Goneril, Francia DiMase's vindictive Regan and Drew Doyle's sly Oswald, ultimately had a larger intellectual impact on me — the play administering a lesson on the dangers of dividing language from truth.

The Groener crew, with Allegra Fulton's sinister Goneril and Jen Dede's hateful Regan balanced by Gregory Itzin's noble Kent and Robert Pine's sorry Gloucester — allowed me to see (and feel) the instinct of goodness at work in a malignant universe. Dark as

"Lear" undeniably is, there is light — and poetry — in the basic human need for justice to triumph over our baser selves.

After back-to-back nights of the small-scaled Antaeus versions, I looked forward to a more monumental "Lear." The Old Globe production, directed by Adrian Noble, the former Royal Shakespeare Company leader who is now heading the San Diego theater's Shakespeare Festival, is certainly an elaborate (and often eye-catching) spectacle. And just as oversized is Foxworth's robust Lear.

Could it be a tad too robust? One of the problems I have with Foxworth's rendition is that he seems too hale and hearty for a king "four score and upward." Although Lear calls himself "a very foolish fond old man" as the play nears its climax, Foxworth has the foppish air of an ex hippie. In his scene with the blinded Gloucester, the mad royal has an expensive haircut and a bohemian outfit that would fetch a steep price on Abbot Kinney Boulevard.

It's an otherwise solid and intelligent (if a touch too declamatory) portrayal. In short, the interpretation is of a piece with a production that, in keeping with the tradition of alfresco Shakespeare, would rather be vivid than subtle. Everything, in other words, is writ large. Poor Cordelia (Catherine Gowl) not only gets disinherited but one of her nasty sisters pulls her hair as she weepingly departs. The storm that buffets Lear as he curses Goneril (Emily Swallow) and Regan (Aubrey Saverino) for their ingratitude suggests a wintry impressionistic wonderland. The acting company strains (passion inevitably means volume) but manages to convey the tale with clarity and vigor. Yet the play manifestly exceeds the depiction. This will always be the case, but better productions tempt us to uncover more of the hidden layers of this inexhaustible parable.

[charles.mcNulty@latimes.com](mailto:charles.mcNulty@latimes.com)

# Los Angeles Times

## Theater review: 'King Lear' times 3

June 28, 2010 | 6:22 pm



“King Lear” tests the limits of how much human suffering can be encompassed in a drama. The eminent scholar A.C. Bradley called the play “the most terrible picture that Shakespeare painted of the world.” Dr. Johnson was so shattered by Cordelia’s death at the end that he said he was unable to reread the work until he later undertook to revise Shakespeare’s works as editor.

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One would think after so much pity and fear that I’d be writing this review from a sanitarium, my mind a World Cup stadium of horrific vuvuzela buzzing. Fortunately, I survived my marathon with my wits intact. (Where’s my T-shirt?) I can’t recommend the experience to a civilian, but allow me to make a suggestion: Choose one “Lear,” preferably one of the two directed by Bart DeLorenzo for Antaeus. DeLorenzo’s staging isn’t one for the ages, but you’re not likely to see such high-caliber thespians perform this prodigious masterpiece in a pocket space that provides a harrowing close-up of the devastation.





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Groener takes a softer, slower and more painstaking approach, his reactions more internal, his fury less rash though no less titanic once it's released. If his Lear is ultimately more affecting than Matthews', his performance has the advantage of a more cohesive ensemble. (One has a sense that both casts will get stronger deeper into the run.) Yet Groener wears his character's grief like a familiar patchy garment, and as his sorrow grows more acute, the mission of John Sloan's sure-footed Edgar to revenge the evil that has overtaken the kingdom becomes more urgent.

This is the first full production of a Shakespeare play in Antaeus' 19-year history, and one has the sense that the classical theater ensemble's practice of providing two sets of actors for each play (devised to accommodate committed stage actors with unpredictable Hollywood schedules) probably isn't an ideal fit for a behemoth such as "Lear." The directorial task is formidable enough without compounding it with logistical complexities, and the performers would have benefited from more concentrated rehearsal time. Much as it's a pleasure to see such distinguished veterans as Matthews and Groener assume the Lear challenge, it's overreaching to try to cultivate separate Shakespeare acting companies when even the very best American theaters have difficulty coming up with one.

As for the performance style, a compromise is struck between the contemporary and the classical. (There's no attempt to neutralize those qualities of the actors that may not seem traditional.) A unique theatrical universe is created without concern for historical period. The design is minimal and a bit monotonous, the result no doubt of a shoestring budget and a primary focus on the actor.

DeLorenzo's job is first and foremost to support the ensemble. This isn't an occasion for auteurial strutting, although he does take directorial liberties in his handling of the Fool (a role upon which both JD Cullum and Stephen Caffrey put their own inventive stamp), and his staging bravely doesn't flinch from the horror of the escalating violence and warfare. (Jacobean drama, it turns out, has quite a lot in common with horror movies.)

The Matthews team, featuring Morlan Higgins' stalwart Kent, Kirsten Potter's villainous Goneril, Francia DiMase's vindictive Regan and Drew Doyle's sly Oswald, ultimately had a larger intellectual impact on me — the play administering a lesson on the dangers of dividing language from truth. The Groener crew, with Allegra Fulton's sinister Goneril and Jen Dede's hateful Regan balanced by Gregory Itzin's noble Kent and Robert Pine's sorry Gloucester — allowed me to see (and feel) the instinct of goodness at work in a malignant universe. Dark as "Lear" undeniably is, there is light — and poetry — in the basic human need for justice to triumph over our baser selves.

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It's an otherwise solid and intelligent (if a touch too declamatory) portrayal. In short, the interpretation is of a piece with a production that, in keeping with the tradition of alfresco Shakespeare, would rather be vivid than subtle. (The assumption seems to be that outdoor theater is largely a groundling phenomenon.)

Everything, in other words, is writ large. Poor Cordelia (Catherine Gowl) not only gets disinherited but one of her nasty sisters pulls her hair as she weepingly departs. The storm that buffets Lear as he curses Goneril (Emily Swallow) and Regan (Aubrey Saverino) for their ingratitude suggests a wintry impressionistic wonderland. The dead leaves covering Ralph Funicello's set are not just a handy symbol but a great hideaway for Bruce Turk's capering Fool.

The acting company strains (passion inevitably means volume) but manages to convey the tale with a good deal of clarity and vigor. Yet the play manifestly exceeds the depiction. This will always be the case, but better productions tempt us to uncover more of the hidden layers of this inexhaustible parable.

-- Charles McNulty

**"King Lear,"** Old Globe's Lowell Davies Festival Theatre, Balboa Park, San Diego. Contact theater for schedule. \$29 to \$78. (619) 234-5623. Running time: 3 hours

# SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE

June 28, 2010

## THEATER REVIEW

# Bard's magic comes in loud and clear in 'King Lear'

Crisp staging brings mad monarch to life

**By James Hebert**  
THEATER CRITIC

The famously heinous eye-gouging scene in "King Lear" rarely fails to horrify. In Adrian Noble's Old Globe staging, though, what really gets the stomach jumping is the sound of the resulting "vile jelly" being flung to the ground with a very audible splat.

Noble, the new artistic director of the Globe summer Shakespeare festival, comes to the theater with an expressed passion for making audiences hear Shakespeare — with a belief that when it comes to the Bard, the ear trumps the eye.

Who knew he meant it quite so literally?

Noble's lucid and moving "Lear," the 2010 festival opener, does have its striking visual touches, including a fairly magical evocation of the storm that the mad old monarch rages against. But the production draws much of

its power from the clarity and care with which the cast speaks the poetry of the classic tragedy.

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SEE 'King Lear,' E4

## DETAILS

### "King Lear"

Old Globe Theatre's 2010 Shakespeare Festival

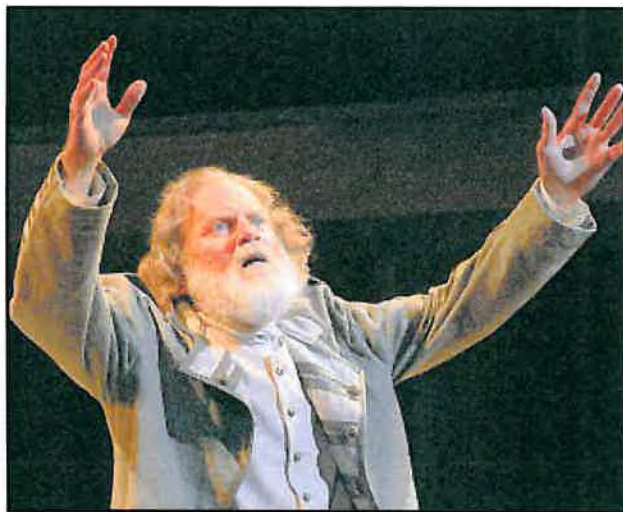
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**Where:** Old Globe's Lowell Davies Festival Theatre, Balboa Park.

**Tickets:** \$29-\$78

**Phone:** (619) 234-5623

**Online:** [theoldglobe.org](http://theoldglobe.org)



Robert Foxworth stars in the title role of "King Lear" at The Old Globe's Shakespeare Festival at the Lowell Davies Festival Theatre. *The Old Globe*

## 'KING LEAR'

CONTINUED FROM E1

### Foxworth last seen in 2009's 'Cornelia'

the satisfying snap of a map that Lear (Robert Foxworth) unrolls at the top of Act 1, when he's about to divide his kingdom among his three daughters — and unwittingly bring pretty much everything around him to ruin.

Foxworth, a Globe associate artist last seen as another study in warped power, Alabama Gov. George Wallace (in 2009's "Cornelia"), is not a fire-and-brimstone style of Lear. He conveys the character's torment more with a sense of epic sadness.

Though his portrayal could use a bit more raw agitation to match the storm in that pivotal scene on the heath, the payoff of Foxworth's approach comes in scenes where he quietly takes in the crushing immensity of events, widening his eyes as if trying in vain to make them big enough to see his misdeeds.

Seeing (or its absence) is everything



**From left: Bruce Turk as the Fool, Robert Foxworth as King Lear and Jay Whittaker as Edgar in The Old Globe's "King Lear." Craig Schwartz**

in "Lear." The play's parade of fumbling souls have so many vision issues that you wonder if they're overdue for a little

Lasik to the brain.

They fail to recognize (thinly disguised) close friends and relatives; they shut their eyes to clues that they're being played by others; most critically, they can't look ahead to the disastrous consequences of their own rash actions.

When the Earl of Gloucester (versatile fest returnee Charles Janasz) winds up getting his eyes plucked, it's almost beside the point: He's been in a blind fury for most of the first act, tricked by his bastard son Edmund (Jonno Roberts, who revels infectiously in his villainous ways) into warring against his noble and loyal son Edgar (Jay Whittaker).

That subplot mirrors the agonies of Lear, who has split his kingdom among daughters Goneril (Emily Swallow) and Regan (Aubrey Saverino), a pair of royal wheedlers.

The youngest and only caring daughter, Cordelia (Catherine Gowl), has been cut out for daring not to suck up properly, and now has been married off dowryless to the king of France.

Saverino, part of the festival's strong ensemble of USD/Globe grad-student actors (and a standout of last year's

Shakespeare lineup), takes a plum role and runs with it. Her Regan seems to have arrived in 18th-century England (where Noble has reset the play) straight from Osage County — swigging from a flask and engaging in dangerous liaisons to match anything from a Tracy Letts carnival of dysfunction.

Swallow is also good as her more reserved but equally murderous sibling, while Gowl (another USD/Globe actor) nicely conveys a blend of strength and sweetness in the somewhat one-note part of Cordelia.

Michael Stewart Allen radiates menace as the Duke of Cornwall, the cocky bantam who is married to Regan and who performs the eye-gouging on Gloucester. By contrast, the duke of Albany, Goneril's husband, is one of the play's few heroes, and is portrayed with a dignified outrage by Donald Carrier.

His eldest daughters' increasing cruelty drives Lear to madness, which turns out to be a comparatively happy state of being. He's accompanied by the Fool (in a sublimely creepy, affecting performance by fest veteran Bruce Turk, singing melancholy songs); by

Edgar, posing as a fellow madman in Whittaker's often riveting portrayal; and by the Earl of Kent (a fierce and funny Joseph Marcell), a once-trusted adviser now disguised as a poor wanderer.

Ralph Funicello's spare set is dominated by a kind of wharf that serves well as a platform for most of the action; two huge gates open at rear stage, presenting some dramatic actor entrances.

Deirdre Clancy's costumes are sumptuous and detailed, although the sudden shift from 1780s coats and gowns to a vaguely 20th-century military look in the second act is puzzling. Christopher R. Walker's sound design skillfully encompasses the rumble of thunder and other effects; Shaun Davey also contributes some effective original music, although a recurring instrumental theme in scenes with Lear and Cordelia turns cloying.

It probably will not be spoiling any suspense to say that things end less than well for the king.

Kent warns the doomed monarch at the start: "See better, Lear." Lear doesn't. But in this production, what happens after is a sight to hear.



## Theater review: A crystal-clear "Lear"

[James Hebert](#)

Sunday, June 27, 2010 at 8:08 p.m.



By James Hebert, Theater Critic

The famously heinous eye-gouging scene in "King Lear" rarely fails to horrify. In Adrian Noble's Old Globe staging, though, what really gets the stomach jumping is the sound of the resulting "vile jelly" being flung to the ground with a very audible splat.

Noble, the new artistic director of the Globe summer Shakespeare festival, comes to the theater with an expressed passion for making audiences hear Shakespeare -- with a belief that when it comes to the Bard, the ear trumps the eye.

Who knew he meant it quite so literally?

Noble's lucid and moving "Lear," the 2010 festival opener, does have its striking visual touches, including a fairly magical evocation of the storm that the mad old monarch rages against. But the production draws much of its power from the clarity and care with which the cast speaks the poetry of the classic tragedy.

That close attention to the aural gives this telling of the sprawling story a crispness that informs nearly all the other aspects of the show, which runs in nightly repertory with Shakespeare's "The Taming of the Shrew" and Alan Bennett's "The Madness of George III." (Noble, former artistic director of England's Royal Shakespeare Company, also is directing the latter.)

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# NORTH COUNTY TIMES

July 1 2010

PREVIEW SECTION

## THEATER REVIEW

# Globe's kingly 'Lear' a rich, robust and Noble effort

BY ANNE MARIE WELSH

For the North County Times

The greatest English tragedy "King Lear" may also be, as the revolutionary stage director Peter Brook contends, "a mountain whose summit has never been reached."

How lucky we are, then, that the Old Globe and its new artistic director for the Summer Shakespeare Festival, Adrian Noble, have produced a "Lear" that takes us so near to this daunting mountain's peak.

With an emotionally nimble, vocally confident Robert Foxworth as the irascible, then ruined and finally transfigured old king, Noble's expansive production has the hallmarks of artistic authority: coherence, balance, directorial modesty.

The former Royal Shakespeare Company director and his well-chosen, clear-speaking American cast humanize this profound work, which depicts the thorough devastation of two fathers, two families, a kingdom and — for a time, it seems — the moral universe. No Shakespeare play is crueler. And though his Globe staging includes realistic, gasp-inspiring violence, Noble counterpoises the nihilism (as any fair reading of the play must) with tenderly tearful redemption.

If the ripeness is all for these tragic characters, Shakespeare's text is all for Noble.

Foxworth creates a Lear sympathetic and complex from the start — still vigorous as he struts onstage to proudly, if capriciously, divide his kingdom, a man worthy of the love and loyalty displayed by Kent, Gloucester, his Fool and daughter Cordelia. This Lear's sudden bouts of irrationality seem as much the

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When Foxworth's Lear beats his forehead with his fists, as the truth of his foolishness dawns on him, the gestures convey frustration with his own impetuosity, his forgetfulness, the unpredictability of his moods. Above all, this is a human Lear, flattered by sycophancy, funny at times, fearfully mad on the heath, dirty-minded here and there, heartbroken when he recognizes the blind Gloucester, and truly noble when his compassion for all of us "poor, bare forked animals" restores his humanity at the end.

With so much actorly and directorial authority at the top, it's little wonder the dozen roles plus many minor speaking parts feel transparently alive at the Globe.

Just a few of those actors are returnees from Shakespeare Festivals past. Still, they and Noble seem accustomed already to the Globe's outdoor Festival stage, making especially good use of its depth and greatest asset, the beauty of the eucalyptus grove behind it. Set designer Ralph Funicello created the flexible multi-tiered, oak-hued set. Major scenes and speeches in "Lear" unfold on a long platform jutting



Robert Foxworth, above, plays the title role in the Old Globe's "King Lear." The production is also shown below. Photos courtesy of Craig Schwartz



like a dock toward the audience. The main playing area beneath is covered in fallen autumn leaves.

The action occurs at a brisk pace with just one intermission. In this age of short attention spans, it may seem absurd to complain of what felt like a too-swift transition to the

storm on the heath. But given the climactic nature of that scene, which introduces Lear's soul-altering madness, a slower buildup might have been more effective than a scenic jump cut. Howling winds and swirling fog for this tempest proved viscerally effective, though beautifully



drifting snowflakes were one of two excesses.

The other came in Shaun Davey's score. The Irish composer, who created the ravishing songs for the musical staging of James Joyce's "The Dead," sometimes veered into old-time romantic movie music; in Lear's great reconciliation scene with Cordelia, here acted with melting tenderness, the music swelled with distracting crescendos of added emotion.

Otherwise, Davey's tense ostinatos for the opening, various fanfares, action music, and the bleak lyricism of the songs for the Fool underscored the doom-laden atmosphere.

Deirdre Clancy's costumes are of a piece with the production, set in a timeless era ranging evocatively from the 18th century to perhaps an early 20th century battlefield. The silks of the women's gowns shimmer in metallic shades of pewter, copper, steel blue and old gold with perhaps the strongest design element, Alan Burrett's supple lighting, ranging rhythmically and unobtrusively from scene to scene, group to group, which Noble has arranged with such eye-filling variety.

Top to bottom, the acting goes from strength to strength. Globe newcomer Joseph Marcell created a brave and vivid Kent, his mesmerizing voice and vivacity impressive throughout. The reliable Festival veteran Charles Janasz found surprising facets in the credulous, savagely used Gloucester, whose bastard son Edmund became a studly study in smiling, sexually charismatic villainy, thanks to actor Jonno Roberts.

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## THEATER REVIEW: Globe's kingly 'Lear' a rich, robust and Noble effort

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By ANNE MARIE WELSH - For the North County Times | Posted: June 30, 2010 9:26 am | No Comments Posted | Print

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[Buy this photo](#) Craig Schwartz Robert Foxworth as King Lear in the Old Globe Summer Shakespeare Festival production of "King Lear" directed by Adrian Noble. Photo courtesy of Craig Schwartz





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## Other Stories

- Escondido arts center unveils diverse 2010-2011 season

## Words Like Arrows

*Unlike more tasteful productions of Lear, Noble doesn't couch the suffering behind an arras.*

**A**drian Noble has written a valuable book: *How to Do Shakespeare*. In it, the former artistic director of the Royal Shakespeare Company teaches a master class on the subject. He sums up the objective behind his lucid prose when he says Shakespeare's words "should engage with the imagination of the audience and not just be consumed by them as a commodity." In *King Lear* at the Old Globe, Noble puts his teachings into practice, with impressive results.

Shakespeare's characters don't think, pause, and then speak. Words and thoughts are one; they "rub together," as if "coined" on the spot. Thus when a character speaks, the bow's already drawn back: the idea/word is an unleashed arrow.

This is especially true of Lear. Who knows why he chose to break up the kingdom King Arthur fought so hard to unify 200 years earlier? Lear acts with the godlike authority of a pharaoh. He speaks gold, he's sure. Then he admits to a "darker purpose," which suggests some vague, preconceived notion, and things — families, castles, nations, nature — fall apart. Lear's foolish hubris changes the nature of speech. Where "degree" once governed the universe, and everything had a fixed place, words included, now disorder rules: all is up for

grabs, and speech becomes improvisational, off the top of one's head.

Noble's cast reflects the change in line after line. When Goneril (Emily Swallow) realizes she could have more than a third of the kingdom, she speaks as she thinks, ad-libbing her alleged love; same with Regan (Aubrey Saverino). And Jonno Roberts's excellent Edmund (as funny as he is vile) shares his schemes with the audience unedited, which, you sense, he wouldn't dare before Lear unfurled the map of Britain.

Those who still follow the King, and the old order he represents, suffer. Cordelia, Kent, Edgar, Gloucester become tormented for their fidelity. And Lear becomes a Job without divine intervention. He begins by having it all but then spirals, downward and inward, divested of every trapping, every "accommodation." He goes beyond Job, discovering time and again that "the worst" is only a harbinger of even worse to come. In the end, his soul seared, he crumples, divested, finally, of his mortality.

Lear's a mighty and tragic figure. But when he dies, amid the play's cathartic ramifications, one can't help muttering, "finally." Like Oedipus, Lear's demise is a long-belated blessing.

### THEATER REVIEW

JEFF SMITH



"Things get so tough that the monarch flips his skimmer."

**King Lear** by William Shakespeare

**Old Globe Theatre**, Lowell Davies Festival Theatre, Balboa Park

**Directed by Adrian Noble**; cast: Robert Foxworth, Emily Swallow, Aubrey Saverino, Catherine Gowl, Donald Carrier, Michael Stewart Allen, Ben Diskant, Christian Durso, Charles Janasz, Jay Whittaker, Jonno Roberts, Joseph Marcell, Bruce Turk, Andrew Dahl; scenic design, Ralph Funicello; costumes, Deirdre Clancy; lighting, Alan Burrett; sound, Christopher R. Walker; original music, Shaun Davey  
**Playing through September 23.** Runs in repertory with *The Taming of the Shrew* and *The Madness of George III*. 619-234-5623

The director has set the play in semi-neutral territory. Deirdre Clancy's costumes begin up-scale, in the 18th Century, and then come forward, fanning out as they do. Ralph Funicello's spare set

includes dark, castle-high walls and autumn leaves covering the floor (swept away, in the wintry second act). A wooden platform comes down center stage. It serves as a royal walkway, a hovel, one of

### Calendar THEATER

Dover's white cliffs, and "this great stage of fools." Shaun Davey's original music handles the entrances well but is absolutely unnecessary when Lear and Cordelia reunite. At this point the audience doesn't need music to tell them how to feel!

Unlike more tasteful productions of *Lear*, Noble doesn't couch the suffering behind an arras. Regan, allegedly the kinder of the two daughters, grabs Cordelia's hair (but why does the king of France just stand there and let it happen?). When he attempts suicide, blind Gloucester doesn't step from one part of the floor to another: he drops three feet, enough to inspire trepidation for a blindfolded Charles Janasz, who makes the "leap." The director sets Gloucester's blinding downstage, the dripping blood and "vile jelly" ocular proof of the deed. In his book, Noble justifies his choices: "The English tradition of tragedy is fairly full-blooded.... In the Greek Theatre, bloodshed and mur-

der took place offstage.... In Shakespeare, we tend to see it all."

I have never heard the *Lear* story told better. Like Coriolanus, whose "heart's his mouth," the cast turns speech into action. Bruce Turk's nimble Fool (who dies from an accident), Catherine Gowl's firm Cordelia (more human and less saintly than most depictions), and especially Jay Whittaker's multivoiced Edgar play each moment as if brand new, with no idea what'll come next.

"Things get so tough," someone once summarized the play, "that the monarch flips his skimmer." Robert Foxworth's Lear begins puffed up and regal and ends at least 20 years older, like a dying candle extinguished by its wax. Foxworth traces the King's downfall with a resonant (if at times too speedy) voice. His always-competent performance wavers nicely between madness and dotage.

What's missing is size. During the famous storm scene, where Lear calls down the apocalypse ("thou, all-shaking thunder/ Strike flat the thick rotundity o'the world, Crack

nature's moulds..."), the special effects often drown out his words. Snow flurries, flecked with lightning, upstage them as well. The scene's a genuine eye-catcher: howling in a winter wonderland. But its meaning — he wants the storm to kill us all — gets lost. Elsewhere, Foxworth could tweak Lear's narcissism and suggest that it masks a profound instability at his core.

Adrian Noble is the new artistic director of the Old Globe's summer Shakespeare Festival. Judging from his *Lear* alone, Noble was an excellent choice. May he continue his master class in San Diego for a long time to come. ■



## Words Like Arrows

By [Jeff Smith](#) | Published Wednesday, July 7, 2010



Adrian Noble has written a valuable book: *How to Do Shakespeare*. In it, the former artistic director of the Royal Shakespeare Company teaches a master class on the subject. He sums up the objective behind his lucid prose when he says Shakespeare's words "should engage with the imagination of the audience and not just be consumed by them as a commodity." In *King Lear* at the Old Globe, Noble puts his teachings into practice, with impressive results.

Shakespeare's characters don't think, pause, and then speak. Words and thoughts are one; they "rub together," as if "coined" on the spot. Thus when a character speaks, the bow's already drawn back: the idea/word is an unleashed arrow.

This is especially true of Lear. Who knows why he chose to break up the kingdom King Arthur fought so hard to unify 200 years earlier? Lear acts with the godlike authority of a pharaoh. He speaks gold, he's sure. Then he admits to a "darker purpose," which suggests some vague, preconceived notion, and things — families, castles, nations, nature — fall apart. Lear's foolish hubris changes the nature of speech. Where "degree" once governed the universe, and everything had a fixed place, words included, now disorder rules: all is up for grabs, and speech becomes improvisational, off the top of one's head.

Noble's cast reflects the change in line after line. When Goneril (Emily Swallow) realizes she could have more than a third of the kingdom, she speaks as she thinks, ad-libbing her alleged love; same with Regan (Aubrey Saverino). And Jonno Roberts's excellent Edmund (as funny as he is vile) shares his schemes with the audience unedited, which, you sense, he wouldn't dare before Lear unfurled the map of Britain.

Those who still follow the King, and the old order he represents, suffer. Cordelia, Kent, Edgar, Gloucester become tormented for their fidelity. And Lear becomes a Job without divine intervention. He begins by having it all but then spirals, downward and inward, divested of every trapping, every "accommodation." He goes beyond Job, discovering time and again that "the

worst” is only a harbinger of even worse to come. In the end, his soul seared, he crumples, divested, finally, of his mortality.

Lear’s a mighty and tragic figure. But when he dies, amid the play’s cathartic ramifications, one can’t help muttering, “finally.” Like Oedipus, Lear’s demise is a long-belated blessing.

The director has set the play in semi-neutral territory. Deirdre Clancy’s costumes begin upscale, in the 18th Century, and then come forward, fanning out as they do. Ralph Funicello’s spare set includes dark, castle-high walls and autumn leaves covering the floor (swept away, in the wintry second act). A wooden platform comes down center stage. It serves as a royal walkway, a hovel, one of Dover’s white cliffs, and “this great stage of fools.” Shaun Davey’s original music handles the entrances well but is absolutely unnecessary when Lear and Cordelia reunite. At this point the audience doesn’t need music to tell them how to feel!

Unlike more tasteful productions of *Lear*, Noble doesn’t couch the suffering behind an arras. Regan, allegedly the kinder of the two daughters, grabs Cordelia’s hair (but why does the king of France just stand there and let it happen?). When he attempts suicide, blind Gloucester doesn’t step from one part of the floor to another: he drops three feet, enough to inspire trepidation for a blindfolded Charles Janasz, who makes the “leap.” The director sets Gloucester’s blinding downstage, the dripping blood and “vile jelly” ocular proof of the deed. In his book, Noble justifies his choices: “The English tradition of tragedy is fairly full-blooded.... In the Greek Theatre, bloodshed and murder took place offstage.... In Shakespeare, we tend to see it all.”

I have never heard the *Lear* story told better. Like Coriolanus, whose “heart’s his mouth,” the cast turns speech into action. Bruce Turk’s nimble Fool (who dies from an accident), Catherine Gowl’s firm Cordelia (more human and less saintly than most depictions), and especially Jay Whittaker’s multivoiced Edgar play each moment as if brand new, with no idea what’ll come - next.

“Things get so tough,” someone once summarized the play, “that the monarch flips his skimmer.” Robert Foxworth’s Lear begins puffed up and regal and ends at least 20 years older, like a dying candle extinguished by its wax. Foxworth traces the King’s downfall with a resonant (if at times too speedy) voice. His always-competent performance wavers nicely between madness and dotage.

What’s missing is size. During the famous storm scene, where Lear calls down the apocalypse (“thou, all-shaking thunder/ Strike flat the thick rotundity o’the world, Crack nature’s moulds...”), the special effects often drown out his words. Snow flurries, flecked with lightning, upstage them as well. The scene’s a genuine eye-catcher: howling in a winter wonderland. But its meaning — he wants the storm to kill us all — gets lost. Elsewhere, Foxworth could tweak Lear’s narcissism and suggest that it masks a profound instability at his core.

Adrian Noble is the new artistic director of the Old Globe’s summer Shakespeare Festival. Judging from his *Lear* alone, Noble was an excellent choice. May he continue his master class in San Diego for a long time to come. ■



**King Lear** by William Shakespeare

**Old Globe Theatre**, Lowell Davies Festival Theatre, Balboa Park

**Directed by Adrian Noble**; cast: Robert Foxworth, Emily Swallow, Aubrey Saverino, Catherine Gowl, Donald Carrier, Michael Stewart Allen, Ben Diskant, Christian Durso, Charles Janasz, Jay Whittaker, Jonno Roberts, Joseph Marcell, Bruce Turk, Andrew Dahl; scenic design, Ralph Funicello; costumes, Deirdre Clancy; lighting, Alan Burrett; sound, Christopher R. Walker; original music, Shaun Davey

**Playing through September 23.** Runs in repertory with *The Taming of the Shrew* and *The Madness of George III*. 619-234-5623

# Two Kings Make a Winning Hand

• By **TERRY TEACHOUT**

*San Diego*

Some plays, including most of the best ones, are all but impossible to film, but a handful of memorable stage shows have been filmed so well as to discourage subsequent revivals. Nicholas Hytner's 1994 film of Alan Bennett's "The Madness of George III" is a case in point, for it was so effective that productions of the play in this country have since been few and far between. That's what lured me to San Diego to see the Old Globe's outdoor version, directed by Adrian Noble as part of the company's 2010 Shakespeare Festival. It appears to be the play's first American staging of any consequence since the National Theater's production (on which Mr. Hytner's film was based) toured the U.S. in 1993. All praise to the Old Globe for mounting it so stylishly—and proving that fine though it was on screen, "The Madness of George III" is even better on stage.

[View Full Image](#)



*The Old Globe*

Miles Anderson as King George III in 'The Madness of George III.'

## **THE OLD GLOBE**

Lowell Davies Festival Theatre, Balboa Park,  
1363 Old Globe Way,  
San Diego, Calif.  
(\$29-\$78), 619-234-5623

## THE MADNESS OF GEORGE III

*closes Sept. 24*

## KING LEAR

*closes Sept. 23*

If you haven't seen it in either form, here's a quick refresher course in 18th-century British history: King George III (played at the Old Globe by Miles Anderson) was stricken in 1788 with a mental disorder that left him incapacitated and triggered a political crisis. Seeing a chance to force William Pitt, the Tory prime minister, out of office, Charles James Fox, the leader of the Whig opposition, sought to ram a bill through Parliament authorizing the Prince of Wales to act as Prince Regent and replace Pitt with Fox. It was only when Dr. Francis Willis succeeded against all odds in restoring the king to his senses that the regency was forestalled and the crisis defused.

Out of these grim events, Mr. Bennett has spun a sparkling play whose sober subject is the corrupting effect of power on those who attain it—and, by extension, the corrupting effect of the British class system on those who profit from its privileges. The moral is put in the mouth of Dr. Willis: "Who is to say what is normal in a king? Deferred to, agreed with, acquiesced in. Who could flourish on such a daily diet of compliance? To be curbed, stood up to, in a word thwarted, exercises the character, elasticates the spirit, makes it pliant. It is the want of such exercise that makes rulers rigid."

For all the gravity of his theme, Mr. Bennett never stoops to preaching, instead making his points through high comedy tinged with pathos. The result is a fast-paced pageant that moves even more briskly when performed, like this production, on an Elizabethan-style open stage. Ralph Funicello's set is dominated by a back wall full of mirrored doors through which the players, richly costumed by Deirdre Clancy, charge as though they were taking part in a farce. The emphasis throughout is not on the décor but the acting: Mr. Anderson enacts with frightening exactness the stages of King George's descent into derangement, and Jay Whittaker, a familiar face on the stages of Chicago, is a marvelously urbane and blasé Pitt.

\*\*\*

The Old Globe has fielded a cast of 26 for "The Madness of George III," which is another reason why the play has all but vanished from the stage: Few American companies can now afford to put on so labor-intensive a show. To perform it in rotating repertory with "King Lear," also directed by Mr. Noble, is a feat still further beyond the reach of most regional theater companies, but the Old Globe is bringing it off with seeming effortlessness—and throwing in "The Taming of the Shrew" for good measure! I've seen two other productions of "Shrew" in recent weeks, so I passed this one up, but the Old Globe's "Lear" is a splendid piece of work that no one in or near southern California should miss.

What is most surprising about Mr. Noble's "Lear" is his unexpected avoidance of the grand manner. His program note, in which he speaks of presenting the play in a "language-based" style that embraces "the American accent and cadence of speech," gives the clue: This is a text-driven, eloquently plain-spoken "Lear" that strives at all times to be clear and comprehensible, leaving the heavy lifting to Shakespeare instead of trying to do it for him. Mr. Foxworth's Lear, for instance, is not a giant brought low by his flaws but a weak, snappish, small-statured ruler (he is shorter than all three of his daughters) whose pettiness destroys him.

While Mr. Noble and Mr. Funicello have not stinted on spectacle—including an amazingly vivid snowstorm—they have once again kept the spotlight on the actors, who respond with bold and resourceful performances. In addition to Robert Foxworth's beautifully realized Lear, I was struck by the warm, intelligent Cordelia of Catherine Gowl, the anguished Fool of Bruce Turk and Mr. Whittaker's furious Edgar, but everyone in the cast rises to the occasion with similar aplomb. Shaun Davey's obtrusive Hollywood-style incidental music is the only flaw in a production that is otherwise greatly rewarding.

The resemblances between "Lear" and "The Madness of George III" are, of course, self-evident, and seeing the two plays performed back to back by the same ensemble, as I was able to do, sheds much light on them both. All the more reason, then, to revel in the results. This is a theatrical event of which San Diego should be proud.

—Mr. Teachout, the Journal's drama critic, blogs about theater and the other arts at [www.terryteachout.com](http://www.terryteachout.com). Write to him at [tteachout@wsj.com](mailto:tteachout@wsj.com).



# SAN DIEGO CITY BEAT

June 30, 2010

## THEATER

### Full circle

NOBLE, FOXWORTH START ANEW IN GLOBE'S VERY GOOD *KING LEAR*

BY MARTIN JONES WESTLIN

Despite what he'd have you think, *King Lear*'s worst enemy is *not* daughter Cordelia, whom the eponymous ruler disowns in a world-class hissy-fit. It's William Shakespeare, of all people. The story—about an aging, sloppily sentimental, mentally sketchy English regent who seeks to bequeath his kingdom to his three girls in return for their vows of love—isn't exactly the playwright's best, because the secondary characters' richness almost scuttles the plot en route to a life of its own. The greatest flaw in this thing (and it's a genuine one) is that Bill wrote it too well.

Adrian Noble, late of Britain's Royal Shakespeare Company and now The Old Globe Theatre's Summer Shakespeare Festival artistic director, is too smart to let an upstart under-story sabotage his debut. His prudent use of the stage, his eye for spectacle and his lead actor's first-rate performance hold Shakespeare's train of thought, marking this *King Lear* as among the best entries of the festival's modern history. The irony is that the actor playing its central figure is returning after a stint in one of the worst Globe Shakespeares of the last seven years.

We have here a Lear (Robert Foxworth) who tempers his iron hand with an open heart. He's thoroughly exhausted amid his lifelong conflict between fatherhood and leadership—but instead of crankily hiding behind his legacy, he's downright approachable, even vaguely convivial, with most of those around him. We're thus more sympathetic as he strays into madness and hysterically mourns the death of Cordelia (Catherine Gowl), who's returned to help him in his misfortunes. The subplot may be a little beefy, but it's vital to Cordelia's tragedy—she's hanged by renegade Edmund (an excellent Jonno Roberts), who underscores Lear's



**King Lear (Robert Foxworth, left) begins his descent into madness as his Fool (Bruce Turk), chastened for once, looks on.**

instability with some shakiness of his own.

The play's traditional storm sequence is a force of nature (pun intended), ushering Lear off the deep end. It whips blinding autumn rains across Ralph Funicello's stark set and sets up Deirdre Clancy's catchy shift in costume design, the most capricious element in the show.

Globe associate artist Foxworth played the festival in 2003, appearing as the traitorous Marcus Brutus in *Julius Caesar*. The show, first in the theater's latest string of summer Shakespeare pieces, was among the most horrendous in the annals of performance artistry, and I left the theater then hoping Foxworth might command a better vehicle down the road. His performance marks that point—the conflict that eventually drives his Lear mad is eminently believable, and Noble and the creatives outfit the show with just the right visuals to illustrate it. Very, very good.

*This review is based on the opening-night performance of June 26. King Lear runs through Sept. 23 at The Lowell Davies Festival Theater, 1363 Old Globe Way in Balboa Park. \$29-\$56. [oldglobe.org](http://oldglobe.org)*

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Wednesday, Jun 30, 2010

# Full circle

**Noble, Foxworth start anew in Globe's very good King Lear**

By Martin Jones Westlin



King Lear (Robert Foxworth, left) begins his descent into madness as his Fool (Bruce Turk), chastened for once, looks on.

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### **KING LEAR at the Old Globe Theatre**

*By Welton Jones*

Posted on Sun, Jun 27th, 2010

Last updated Sun, Jun 27th, 2010

KING LEAR is most accessible for audiences which see it as an enriched parable. The moral is a matter for each individual's opinion. Shakespeare just provides an awesome atmosphere.

The story is simple and straightforward. The old king, ready to retire, divides his kingdom into three parts, one for each daughter to rule. He will retain his title and his cronies, the girls and their royal husbands will take care of the details. All he asks is an elaborate pledge of love from each of them.

Goneril and Regan, the older sisters, respond with volleys of rhetoric. The sweet Cordelia will say only that she loves him as she should. In a rage, Lear banishes her and trips the fuse that will annihilate his world, leading him to madness and death and his kingdom to destruction.

But this plotline has nowhere to go but down. So Shakespeare added a second story, family, the Earl of Gloucester and his two sons, the naive Edgar and the blithe villain Edmund. As a result of Edmund's intricate scheming, his brother is turned into a hunted fugitive, his father is judged traitor and blinded and Edmund gets the title.

At the end, only three of the 11 main characters are still alive and the kingdom is decimated. The line from a old man's foolish fantasy to howling chaos is straight and inexorable.

Treated as a realistic drama, both Lear and Gloucester seem more ridiculous than tragic. Staged as a fantasy, there's no bite to the cruelty. And presented as a confirmation of nihilist despair, the play becomes pompous and annoying.

What saves LEAR in every case is the characters themselves. The fatal conflict between king and father ruins Lear. Goneril and Regan are not just wicked sisters but two different faces of evil while the blithely bloody Edmund is another. Cordelia is sweet, yes, but it's her stubbornness, so like her father's, that starts the trouble. Gloucester pays the price for bending to the expedient. The faithful Kent, the nervous servants, the beastly savagery of one son-in-law and the wimpy passivity of another: These all are living, knowable people.

The fascination of KING LEAR draws equally from the overwhelming momentum of the story and the humanity of the characters. And that's what Adrian Noble has realized in his production of the tragedy opening the Old Globe Theatre's summer Shakespeare season.

This is large and emphatic LEAR. The diction is crystal-clear, the declaration thoughtful and illuminating. With all of the words present, the characters come alive and start to fascinate.

The stage of Ralph Funicello's dark, wooden set is covered with autumn leaves, whipped into the air by a truly dandy tempest when Lear shouts his lines against the vigorous crashes of Christopher R. Walker's storm sounds. High marks to the wind people and to composer Shaun Davey, whose doleful accompaniment is another thread holding the production together. It's canned music, true, but the results justify the means.

Costumer Deirdre Clancy is set free by the indeterminate period of the production and the outfits get progressively whimsical until the three sisters go to war in saucy uniforms butch enough for science fiction.

It's a fine troupe of actors, too, led by Robert Foxworth, polished in the title role, steering a confidant arc from the omnipotent to the pathetic. Charles Janasz's appalled Gloucester and Joseph Marcell's rowdy, stalwart Kent help illustrate the play's generational split.

Jonno Roberts smiles and struts as Edmund, a real bastard, and Michael Stewart Allen is only a step behind as the Napoleonic Duke of Cornwall, who presides over the very realistic blinding of Gloucester.

Emily Swallow is the steamy Goneril, seething with ambition; Aubrey Saverino makes Regan a horrifyingly enthusiastic torturer; and Catherine Gowl separates herself from the siblings with an ethereal grace supplemented by her lovely alto voice placement.

Bruce Turk's Fool (who apparently gets stabbed to death during some horseplay instead of being reported hanged) is as usual a cipher but he's consistent and solemn in his ability to see reality better than anybody else in the play. Jay Whittaker plays Edgar as a stunned nice guy when clothed and a Tom-of-Bedlam fresh from the gym when stripped down.

Altogether, this probably is the most coherent LEAR done at the Globe in 40 years. Many thanks to Adrian Noble, late of the Royal Shakespeare Company, who is heading the Globe's summer program for the first time.



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## 'King Lear,' 'Surf Report' plus more theater reviews

### Productions at Globe, Playhouse, Talent to aMuse

By [Pat Launer](#), [SDNN](#)

Wednesday, June 30, 2010

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Robert Foxworth (as King Lear) and Bruce Turk (as the Fool) in the Old Globe's Shakespeare Festival production of "King Lear." (Photo by Craig Schwartz)

### The Vision Thing

**THE PLAY: “King Lear,”** Shakespeare’s masterwork, at the Old Globe

The eyes have it in “King Lear.” The dazzling play of parallels features innumerable references to sight and vision. One myopic father, Gloucester (the formidable Charles Janasz), has his eyes plucked out. The titular King (robust Robert Foxworth), a more figuratively blind paterfamilias, loses his most beloved daughter, choosing instead to fall for the barren flattery of her more malevolent sisters. Gloucester is duped by his wicked, malicious bastard son, Edmund (Jonno Roberts, nasty in his nefarious plotting, with less oily charm than might be desired). Edmund also goes after his brother, Edgar (Jay Whittaker, wonderful in his various personae), who’s robbed of everything, and becomes one of the play’s madmen. Lear goes mad in a wild storm and Gloucester isn’t far behind.

The filial ingratitude is matched only by the patriarchal pig-headedness. It all stems from Lear’s desire to go into semi-retirement, dividing up his kingdom among his three daughters. He saves the largest portion for his youngest and best loved, Cordelia (USD/Old Globe MFA student Catherine Gowl). But when she refuses to produce lavish protestations of love like her two-faced sisters, he casts her off with unreasoned fury. When he finally realizes the error of his ways, his arrogance and bitterness turn to humility and forgiveness. But alas, it’s too late – for Cordelia or his faithful Fool (Bruce Turk, solid), who’s accidentally stabbed in a playful accident, rather than being hanged as in the text.



Pat Launer

Adrian Noble, former artistic director of England’s Royal Shakespeare Theatre, has taken some surprising liberties with time, place and action: the costumes (Deidre Clancy) are of indeterminate period; middle daughter Regan (Aubrey Severino), here a brutal alcoholic, vomits onstage; Cordelia’s hair is ruthlessly pulled by Regan and her equally vicious sister, Goneril (Emily Swallow). The raging gale in which Lear rails at his fate is a loud, swirling snowstorm (though the Fool sings famously of the rain that “raineth every day”). And in a moment of what can only be termed gratuitous gore (it gave rise to a gasp of revulsion on opening night), when Gloucester has his eye gouged, the slimy orb drips through the attacker’s fingers.

Moments of beauty offset the violence, like the splendid opening scene, with fallen leaves heaped around the stage (Lear in the autumn of his years?). But the set (Ralph Funicello) is a sometimes dangerous affair; the long, jutting, dock-like wood platform is so high that actors must either leap onto it or be carried off it. The lighting (Alan Burrett) and sound (Christopher R. Walker) are excellent, but also faltered at times at the opening, a rare occurrence at the Globe. The original music (Shaun Davey) is aptly majestic, but at emotional high-points, it has its schmaltzy, movie moments.



And so it goes in this production: some wonderful elements, some questionable. The language is well spoken but in the seminal mad scene, the storm is so loud, even bellowing his wrath and despair, Foxworth has a hard time being heard above the din. His performance, like the character’s character, grows in stature and grandeur over the course of the play. His late scenes are stunning and heartbreaking.

This is a good “Lear,” not a great one. But it’s always worth the opportunity to spend time with the sadly broken families in this gut-wrenchingly brilliant play.

**THE LOCATION:** The Old Globe’s Festival Stage in Balboa Park. (619) 234-5623; [www.theoldglobe.org](http://www.theoldglobe.org)

**THE DETAILS:** Tickets: \$29-\$78. “King Lear” runs in repertory (on selected evenings, Tuesday-Sunday), alternating with “The Taming of the Shrew” and “The Madness of George III,” through September 23

**Bottom Line: GOOD BET**

**Low Tide**

## SAN DIEGO

Regional Reviews by Bill Eadie

### *King Lear* Old Globe

San Diego is *the* place for Shakespeare this summer. That much remains clear from viewing *King Lear*, the centerpiece of the Old Globe's Shakespeare Festival. Artistic director Adrian Noble has mounted a splendid production featuring a large company with no weak links.

Authenticity seems to be the theme for this production. Lear (Robert Foxworth) begins the play as an inauthentic king, wanting to appear regal, generous and wise, the perfect father of a perfect family. His actions, however, belie his posturing and encourage those who surround him to be inauthentic and duplicitous. In fact, Lear pushes away those who would be honest with him, including his beloved daughter Cordelia (Catherine Gowl) and his trusted adviser the Earl of Kent (Joseph Marcell). Only the Fool (Bruce Turk) can tell Lear the truth, and he can only do so by making the truth into a joke. Lear's journey takes him at last to authenticity, even though he falls into madness en route.



**Robert Foxworth**

Duplicity abounds in Lear's court. Edmund (Jonno Roberts), the bastard son of the Earl of Gloucester (Charles Janasz), is more than willing to throw his loving father and brother Edgar (Jay Whittaker) under the train in order to obtain the power he believes he is due. He's also willing to woo both of Lear's dishonest daughters, Goneril (Emily Swallow) and Regan (Aubrey Saverino), simultaneously if that's what it will take to succeed. Meanwhile, Lear is so deluded that he can't recognize the loyal supporters who hover nearby ready to help him.

Of course, all of this dishonesty and posturing presages a story that is bound to end in tragedy, though not before Shakespeare characterizes the authenticity that might have led to a happier ending.

This is a big story with a big cast. As director, Mr. Noble has played against the size by finding ways to keep the scale as intimate a one as possible. A platform running downstage bisects the playing area and serves alternately as the king's throne, a banquet table, and a hovel in which Lear seeks shelter from the storms, both of the moor and of his mind. The rest of the stage is heavy with dead leaves, suggesting the rot that has invaded Lear's kingdom. The rear of the stage opens to allow snow to blow, thunder to sound, and trumpets to announce the arrival of invading French forces.

Mr. Noble has drawn vivid portrayals from his principals, most of whom also play major roles in the festival's other productions, *The Taming of the Shrew* and *The Madness of George III*. To single out a few of the notable performances, Ms. Swallow, who made for such a doe-eyed Kate and such an understanding and supportive Queen Charlotte, is quite the schemer as Goneril; Mr. Whittaker is positively heroic as Edgar, as well as being head over heels in love as Lucentio and constantly distressed as William Pitt the Younger; and



Old Globe Associate Artist Charles Janasz contributes a heartbreaking, gut-wrenching portrayal of the Earl of Gloucester, complete with a gory scene where his eyes are plucked out.

Of course, no production of *King Lear* succeeds without a monumental performance in the title role, and Mr. Foxworth's performance meets the challenge. Subtle, completely thought through and under control, Mr. Foxworth demonstrates a clarity of understanding and an emotional resolve that makes Shakespeare's greatest monarch divinely human. It is a performance not to be missed.

This year's Old Globe Shakespeare Festival is overall the strongest in several years and a fitting way of celebrating the Globe's 75th anniversary season. Performances continue through September, and the plays are arranged so that one might see all three in three bucolic outdoor evenings. While *Lear* may be the festival's calling card, all three plays are worthy of your patronage.

The Old Globe presents *King Lear*, by William Shakespeare through September 23 in repertory with *The Taming of the Shrew* and *The Madness of George III* at the Lowell Davies Festival Theatre on the Old Globe campus in San Diego's Balboa Park. Tickets (\$29 - \$78) are available by calling (619) 23-GLOBE [234-5623], or by visiting [The Old Globe's website](#).

*King Lear*, Directed by Adrian Noble with Ralph Funicello (Scenic Design), Deirdre Clancy (Costume Design), Alan Burrett (Lighting Design), Christopher R. Walker (Sound Design and Original Music), Shaun Davey (Original Music), Steve Rankin (Fight Director), Claudia Hill-Sparks (Vocal and Dialect Coach) and James Latus (Stage Manager).

The cast includes Michael Stewart Allen (Duke of Cornwall), Donald Carrier (Duke of Albany), Andrew Dahl (Oswald), Ben Diskant (King of France), Craig Dudley (Doctor), Christian Durso (Duke of Burgundy), Robert Foxworth (King Lear), Catherine Gowl (Cordelia), Charles Janasz (Earl of Gloucester), Joseph Marcell (Earl of Kent), Steven Marzolf (Curan, Herald), Jonno Roberts (Edmund), Aubrey Saverino (Regan), Adrian Sparks (Old Man), Emily Swallow (Goneril), Bruce Turk (Fool), Jay Whittaker (Edgar), with Shirine Babb, Kevin Hoffmann, Andrew Hutcheson, Grayson DeJesus, Jordan McArthur, Brooke Novak, Ryman Sneed and Bree Welch (Ensemble).

*Phot: Craig Schwartz*

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THEATRE REVIEW

Two Bards same but different



Robert Foxworth plays King Lear in the production of "King Lear" running June 12-Sept. 23 at The Old Globe. (Courtesy Craig Schwartz)

By Patricia Morris Buckley  
SDUN Theatre Critic

Shakespeare in the park is a wonderful San Diego tradition thanks to the Old Globe Theatre, which is presenting a comedy and a tragedy this summer. These two productions, despite a common cast and set of designers, couldn't be any more different.

"King Lear" has often been called the Bard's greatest tragedy, one where all the main characters are dead by the end. It's filled with dark themes, one of history's most dysfunctional families, bold deceptions and—worst of all—foolish actions that lead to an ominous ending.

On the other hand, "The Taming of the Shrew" is a lively comedy where no one perishes, true love prevails and everything ends on a festive note. Of course, there is that pesky problem of it being misogynistic to the extreme, as the title character is starved and bullied into submitting to her new husband.

As different as these plays are in tone, the two productions vary in success as well. "Lear" has a few inspired moments, but they are few and quite

see Shakespeare, page 15

FROM PAGE 12

SHAKESPEARE

far apart. While the show comes in at just three hours, it feels like a full five-hour production of "Hamlet." On the other hand, "Shrew" is played for as many laughs as possible and the results are light-hearted and entertaining.

"Lear" is directed by the artistic director of the Old Globe's Shakespeare Festival, Adrian Noble. Noble is best known as the former artistic director of the Royal Shakespeare Co. and as the author of "How to do Shakespeare." So it seems odd that this "Lear" is so laborious to watch.

Part of the problem is that so many of the production elements are pushing the play's subtext squarely in our faces. For instance, the set is a single platform surrounded by a sea of autumn leaves. And King Lear is in the autumn of his life—get it? Or that the storm in the third act is a snowstorm, when Lear is now in the winter of his life. Not exactly subtle. Neither are the costumes, which transition from the soft Georgian looks into WWI military uniforms as the different factions battle each other.

To Noble's credit, he hasn't neutered the play's visceral elements in a way many theaters do. When the Earl of Gloucester's eyes are removed, we get bloody eyeballs dripping from another characters hand—just as they would have

been in the Bard's time. When a character is pierced with a sword, there's plenty of blood.

The performances are much more subtle, thank goodness. Robert Foxworth's Lear is arrogant and entitled, then broken down to a bag of hollow bones by the end. This is one of the great roles in theatre and while Foxworth's Lear isn't a crowning performance, he captures many of the role's nuances with admirable skill.

Also worthy of mention is Bruce Turk as the Fool who is heartbroken in his love for the King, which ultimately leads to his character's demise. As the Earl's sons, Jay Whittaker and Jonno Roberts are both razor-sharp as opposing brothers, one the victim, the other a devious villain.

Roberts returns as Petruchio, the male lead in "Shrew," and he certainly has the charisma, sex appeal and unflagging energy to carry the show. Director Ron Daniels keeps the lusty heat boiling between Roberts and his co-star, Emily Swallow (who also plays Goneril in "Lear"). Swallow gives Kate an Angelina Jolie air of strength, superiority and deep passion. Watching Roberts and Swallow in a courtship dance is like a heavyweight match. Highly enjoyable.

Daniels directs the whole thing as a wink-wink, nudge-nudge comedy, complete with bawdy turns, double takes and even pants that expose an actor's



Emily Swallow plays Katherine and Jonno Roberts is Petruchio in "The Taming of the Shrew" at The Old Globe. (Courtesy The Old Globe)

behind. There's definitely a feeling that the audience is in on the tongue-in-cheek as a few audience members are seated on stage and the actors include them in a few scenes. And before the show, actors mingle with the audience.

As most directors do with this comedy, Daniels has to deal with the "taming" part of the story. He puts the emphasis on Kate's impulsive and belligerent behavior, as if she were a spoiled brat who must learn to treat others with more respect and dignity. And this fits the show's light and bouncy tone until the very end, which

is when every director cringes because Kate has a speech where she swears her undying obedience to her husband as lord and master. Yuck.

The problem of adopting the breezy tone is that the audience leaves feeling as if they just saw a rom-com film. It's fun, but there's no depth to it. But in the end, it's the heat between the lead characters that makes the text's message somewhat bearable.

The same can be said for Ralph Funicello's set design, which is really more of a stage design. The stage is bare in both (except for the leaves in "Lear")

KING LEAR

Until Sept. 23

TAMING OF THE SHREW

Until Sept. 26

Old Globe Theatre  
Balboa Park  
234-5623  
theoldglobe.org

with a few small additions.

"Shrew" has a large, lit sign with the title of the show attached to high scaffolding. The best feature of Deirdre Clancy's costumes is the materials she uses, constructing tailored coats from leather and mixing periods in a satisfying fashion.

Alan Burrett's lights in "Lear" are stark and glaring, which is a great idea, but tires the eyes over a three-hour production. But his rosy designs for "Shrew" fit the show's tone perfectly. Kudos also to the team that created the stunning snowstorm in "Lear." The image of Lear glowing as he stands in the torrential swirl of white flakes is one of the most memorable I've ever seen in San Diego theatre.

Theatre can show all sides of the human character and many of those faces can be seen in these two vastly different productions. It just depends on whether you prefer comedy or tragedy. Or both. ♦



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**By Patricia Morris Buckley**

**SDUN Theatre Critic**



Robert Foxworth plays King Lear in the 2010 Shakespeare Festival production of King Lear, running June 12-Sept. 23 at The Old Globe. (Courtesy Craig Schwartz)

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**"King Lear" until Sept. 23**

**"Taming of the Shrew" until Sept. 26**

**Old Globe Theatre**

**Balboa Park**

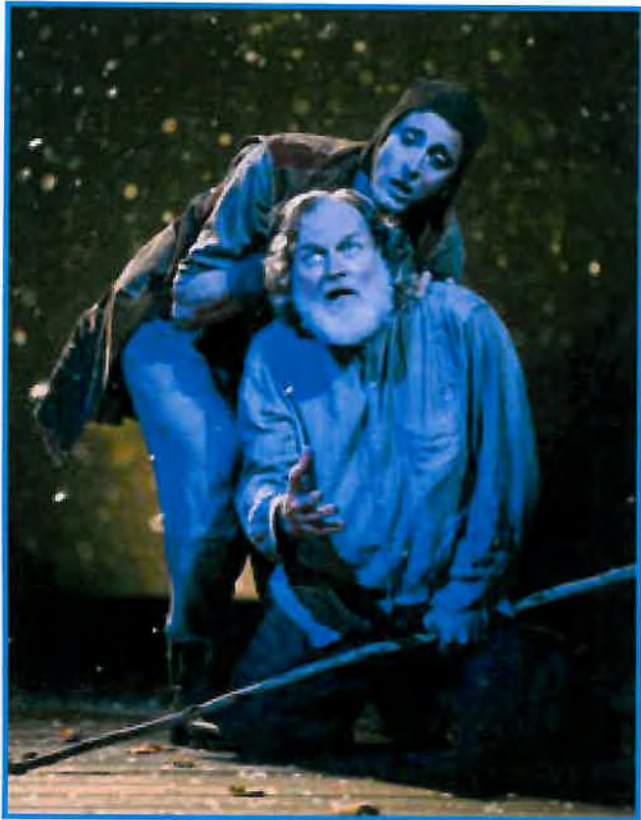
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## Great performances and special effects stand out in Globe's 'King Lear'



Robert Foxworth (Lear) and Bruce Turk (the Fool) star in *King Lear*. Photo Credit: Craig Schwartz.

Review by K. Foster  
and L. O'Brien

**K**ing Lear, the opening play in The Old Globe Theatre's 2010 Shakespeare Festival, represents the directorial debut of Adrian Noble, the new Globe Artistic Director, and former head of the Royal Shakespeare Company.

The theme of madness is highlighted by Shakespeare's dialog with many descriptions of Lear's aging mind – "Infirmity of his age," "Old Fools are babes again" "Such a King should play Bo-Peep" – which describe the form of dementia we now call Alzheimers. Lear demands the heirs to his kingdom, his daughters Goneril (Emily Swallow), Regan (Au-

brey Saverino) and Cordelia (Catherine Gowl), to publicly state their love for him. The elder two flatter him to get their portions of his kingdom. Cordelia, the youngest and Lear's favorite, truthfully and

plainly states her love and allegiance, but her words are so plain and unflowery that her father

mistakes her meaning, and she is banished. Her sisters and their husbands plot to usurp the throne, but as Lear recognizes his mistake, he reconciles with Cordelia.

Noble's direction is a refreshing return to elemental Shake-

speare. His goal – as stated in his program letter – is "to make the stories vital and contemporary, without pandering to fashionable relevance and to make beautiful language fall readily upon your ear."

### THEATER - TO GO

What: *King Lear*

Where: The Old Globe's Lowell Davies Theatre, Balboa Park

When: now – Sept 26.

Tickets: (619) 234-5623,  
[www.TheOldGlobe.org](http://www.TheOldGlobe.org)

Robert Foxworth (TV's *Falcon Crest*) plays the aging monarch Lear with quiet dignity. He

avoids the trap of over-the-top dramatics that has been the mold of his predecessors. Foxworth easily transforms Lear from a commanding ruler to a feeble old man.


The climax of *King Lear* is like a thunderstorm. "Blow

winds and crack your cheeks," Lear rails to the heavens, amidst wind, thunder, lightning and snow. The storm scene alone is worth attending this classic production. The special effect of Lear and the Fool backlit in swirling snow is one of the best effects yet on the Globe Festival stage. In addition to Foxworth, there are

two returning actors of note in this production, Bruce Turk as The Fool and Charles Janasz as the Earl of Gloucester, each who bring fullness to the production.

*King Lear*, *The Taming of the Shrew* and *The Madness of George III* are performed in repertory through September 26.

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## King Lear

By William Shakespeare

Directed by Adrian Noble

Lowell Davies Festival Theatre

The Old Globe, San Diego

June 12 – September 23, 2010

<http://theoldglobe.org/tickets/production.aspx?performanceNumber=7997> (<http://theoldglobe.org/tickets/production.aspx?performanceNumber=7997>)



Left to right: Aubrey Saverino as Regan, Catherine Gowl as Cordelia and Emily Swallow as Goneril in "King Lear" at The Old Globe.

*Photo courtesy of The Old Globe*

I once heard an English professor tell his class that, for him, "King Lear" was the most "real" of Shakespeare's tragedies. "I will never be prince of Denmark," he said, "but I do have three daughters." I hope he came out better than Lear.

The Old Globe's production of the iconic "Lear" is solid, if not spectacular. The play opens as a retiring Lear (Robert Foxworth) seeks to divide his kingdom among his daughters—they need only express their love for him to receive this bounty. Goneril (Emily Swallow) and Regan (Aubrey Saverino) have no trouble meeting this simple test, expressing their love with ad-agency hyperbole. Cordelia (Catherine Gowl), Lear's youngest and favorite daughter, is less effusive but more genuine. This subtlety is lost on Lear. Enraged, he sends her away. When the Earl of Kent (Joseph

Marcell) protests, he is also banished by the king. For the rest of the play, Lear and everyone he loves are punished for these errors in judgment.

Meanwhile, the Earl of Gloucester's (Charles Janasz) bastard son, Edmund (Jonno Roberts), uses trickery to usurp his father and half-brother Edgar (Jay Whittaker). As is so often the case, the villains steal the show. Edmund is downright gleeful as each deceitful turn bears fruit. Likewise, the fiery Goneril and chilly Regan, though less calculating than Edmund, are equally riveting as they continually dishonor their father. The performances of Roberts, Swallow and Saverino hold this production together.

While Foxworth takes a nice turn as Lear, he does rush his lines from time to time, particularly when angry, and Lear is often angry. Whittaker's Edgar is naïve by design, but Edgar's alter ego, Mad Tom, is a bit over the top. However, Janasz plays Gloucester with understated terror.

Adrian Noble's direction is fast-paced and mostly on the money, and the set is functional in its minimalist style. The fights and Gloucester's torture scene are nicely rendered, though the latter might be a bit realistic for the squeamish. The costumes work, though the military uniforms are a bit discordant, seemingly ripped from Soviet propaganda posters.

When Shakespeare is done exceptionally well, it gives you chills. The Globe's rendition of "Lear" doesn't quite get there, but is a worthy performance.

**Joshua Baxt**

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## Robert Foxworth sparkles in "King Lear" at Old Globe

Jean Leverison - SDGLN Theater Critic | Tue, 06/29/2010 - 10:15am | [Login to bookmark or comment](#)

SAN DIEGO -- Poor old King Lear learned too late what every rookie spouse knows: Never ask anyone (especially anyone in your family) how much they love you, especially if money and property are in the balance.

Adrian Noble, new artistic director of The Old Globe's summer Shakespeare Festival, takes the director's chair for "King Lear," the late tragedy of age, infirmity, pride and treachery.

Robert Foxworth (of TV's "Six Feet Under" and Broadway's "August: Osage County") plays Lear, the foolish old buzzard who decides to retire and divide his kingdom among his three daughters, the portions to be dependent on the effusiveness of their responses to the "How much do you love me?" question trap.

Sure enough, this brings out greed and inspires exaggeration (to put it mildly), as first and second daughters Goneril (Emily Swallow) and Regan (Aubrey Saverino) jockey for real estate.

But the tactic backfires because Cordelia (Catherine Gowl), Lear's favorite and youngest daughter, refuses to play the game, asserting that she loves him only as much as a daughter is obligated to love and honor the father who "begat me, bred me, loved me."

Infuriated, Lear disinherits her, marries her off to the King of France (Ben Diskant) – the only suitor who will take her without a dowry – and sets up the tragedy to come, muttering about filial ingratitude ("how sharper than a serpent's tooth it is to have a thankless child").

Lear's slash-and-burn tactic casts a wider net than just his children; he even banishes the loyal Earl of Kent (Joseph Marcell) for speaking up on Cordelia's behalf.

Meanwhile, the Earl of Gloucester (Charles Janasz), has his own kid problems: his bastard son Edmund (Jonno Roberts) schemes to destroy both father and legitimate brother Edgar (Jay Whittaker) for his own gain; these converging stories of willful parental blindness will lead to tragedy for both families.

Noble directs this somber piece smartly, with only one instance of gratuitous gore. The neutral set (which will serve for all three plays) features a large rectangular platform in the center, huge doors at the rear and – for this production – quantities of fall-hued leaves all over the playing area. And Noble directs a wonderfully dramatic storm.

Foxworth convinces as the sad and foolish king, and is especially effective in the descent into insanity which paradoxically makes him whole.

Swallow and Saverino are excellent as the scheming sisters, Gowl touching as the wronged Cordelia, who will pay for her father's folly with her life.

Festival regular Janasz turns in another fine performance as Gloucester, another victim of familial perfidy.

My favorite players are Marcell's rock-solid Kent and Bruce Turk's surprisingly prescient Fool, who sings sad songs and nails the point with this comment: "Thou shouldst not have been old till thou hadst been wise."

### The details

"King Lear" plays through Sept. 26 at the Old Globe's Festival Theatre in Balboa Park in repertory with "The Taming Of The Shrew" and Alan Bennett's "The Madness Of George III."

Tuesdays through Sundays at 8 p.m. Some 7 p.m. start times in September.

[ENLARGE](#)



Photo credit: Craig Schwartz

Robert Foxworth plays title role in "King Lear."



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## A Noble Lear Graces Old Globe NEW!



by [Melissa Crismon](#)

July 19, 2010

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### King Lear

by William Shakespeare

### The Old Globe

June 12 - September 26, 2010

Acting



Costumes



Sets



Directing



**Overall**

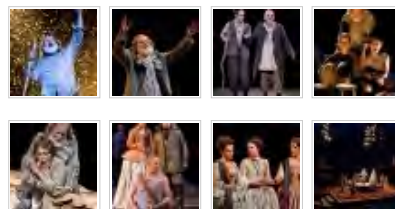


The Old Globe brings class and culture to San Diego; Director Adrian Noble creates something with something... a lot of experience and aptitude for The Old Globe's 2010 Shakespeare Festival that steps it up a notch with this production of *King Lear*. Being that *King Lear* is Shakespeare's most acclaimed play it seems that any production would be a challenge and requires a cast and staff of veterans.

Tony Award-winner Adrian Noble wants the audience to hear the play by experiencing it with the language as the focus. Noble has channeled Shakespeare by producing something as it is intended, but also contemporary with differences like American accents and women. His dedication attracts a passionate cast.

King Lear is prideful, but loving, rash then regretful; in his denial becomes crazy and mad. Robert Foxworth as King Lear meets every expectation with energy. In the very first scene he walks out after Kent, performed by Joseph Marcell, and the two exude vigor. It is at that initial moment the audience knows this is going to be great entertainment.

One particularly noteworthy scene includes Foxworth, Bruce Turk as the Fool and Jay Whittaker as Edgar. Foxworth is like a homeless drunkard and meets up with Whittaker who isn't recognizable from his healthier days as Edgar. Edgar, now calling himself Tom or "Poor Tom" the



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Edward III  
Hamlet  
Henry IV, Pt. 1  
Henry IV, Pt. 2  
Henry V  
Henry VI, Pt. 1  
Henry VI, Pt. 2  
Henry VI, Pt. 3

more insane he becomes, is estranged from his family much like Lear. Whittaker surprises the audience with his growth from a normal son to someone unrecognizable on the streets, not just through costuming, but from pure acting; he completely surrenders to the character and is uninhibited.

The Fool, performed by Bruce Turk, also goes through many changes as he dwells in the King's darkness. The Fool becomes the fool. As Turk's mood loyally changes with the king, he isn't even recognizable once his makeup is off and his demeanor changes— but he still wears the calico vest.

The complete transformations of Foxworth, Whittaker, Turk and also Charles Janasz as Earl of Gloucester are extreme and may seem to bend toward unbelievable, but Marcell is our voice of reason—saying everything a sane person would say or the audience is thinking. Marcell's Kent has the King's best interest while being jolly, funny and concerned. Even though he is serving the wealthy in King Lear, as he did as Geoffrey in "Fresh Prince of Bel-Air," Marcell is wholly Kent and lends a fast pace to *King Lear*—his character not exuding a stereotype at all. The younger audience was very pleased to see Marcell and called out to him with the name he is best known, "Geoffrey." Marcell graciously looked up with a smile and made his fan's day.

Set Designer Ralph Funicello describes the set as neutral to allow variety from play to play. There are a variety of ways the actors can enter the stage through hallways, stairs, hanging from balconies, and the back part of the stage that slides open with doors that look like rice paper for King Lear to make a grand entrance as the beautiful eucalyptus trees fall back that are unique to San Diego and the Balboa Park.

Costume Designer Deirdre Clancy uses a neutral palette and solid colors of white, beige and brown with an occasional added color on Regan, performed by Aubrey Saverino, adds a peach satin jacket over her waist flattering satin dress in a bone hue inspired from the George III period. Goneril, performed by Emily Swallow, adorns a deep steel blue gray long jacket over her militant uniform inspired by World War I in the latter half of the play. The women's fabrics with textured sheen against the cotton fabrics of the men pop in the flattering lighting by Alan Burrett. The clothing is inspiring and the boots alone will make a woman envious.

Shaun Davey adds original music with acoustic guitar. Turk as The Fool and Whittaker as Edgar sing some of the poetry.

The set design, costume design and music has a less is more approach not over shadowing the language and brilliant performances in the end generating a standing ovation. Though *King Lear* has family drama and is emotional, The Old Globe's *King Lear* is stimulating and engaging.



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## Globe's Shakespeare Festival revives spirit of Bard with aplomb

Posted by [admin](#) on 8/02/10 • Categorized as [Arts & Entertainment](#), [Theater](#)



Robert Foxworth as King Lear and Emily Swallow as Goneril in the 2010 Shakespeare Festival production of King Lear (Courtesy Craig Schwartz)

By Cuauhtémoc Q. Kish/GSD Theatre Critic

### Old Globe Theatre's 2010 Shakespeare Festival

**"King Lear," "The Taming of the Shrew" and "The Madness of George III"** in repertory through September

*theoldglobe.org*

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### **"King Lear"**

Adrian Noble directs Shakespeare's "King Lear" with a coherent ensemble of actors that radiate their strengths incrementally and feed the audience well for three hours of solid acting.

The overall plot of "King Lear" is a simple one. A king asks each of his three daughters to tell him how much she loves him. The two older daughters, Goneril and Regan, chose to respond with flattering answers while the youngest daughter, Cordelia, Lear's favorite, says she has no



words to describe how much she loves her father. Lear overreacts and disowns Cordelia, thus allowing his other two daughters to ruthlessly plot against him for his land and wealth. Shakespeare, never content to leave things simple, devised a sub-plot, allowing a nobleman named Gloucester to experience family problems that collide with the main story.

Expectations are always high for anyone playing the part of King Lear and they will not be disappointed with Robert Foxworth's portrayal of the irrational and then heart broken king. He learns all too late that he's made a bad decision, after being flattered by the empty praise of his two daughters. Foxworth deftly employs less fire and bluster in the part of the king, moving towards incredulity and studied introspection. Even in the crescendo of emotion, his dramatic measures are well balanced and consistent, minimizing his rage that most actors all-too-often push to a melodramatic limit. This subtle downplay seems to work well, allowing for grief to take precedence over uncontrolled rage.

Adrian Noble assigns an indeterminate period for the play and employs his actors in a broad setting well designed by Ralph Funicello, who has provided a main boardwalk and a second-story playing field on both sides. This production is character-driven, providing many opportunities for the actors to command the spotlight.

Of note, Bruce Turk's Fool is sensitive and endearing, especially in the haunting musical interludes. Charles Janasz plays the Earl of Gloucester with competent execution, holding his own, even when his eyes are unceremoniously plucked out and thumped to the ground (the crowds reactive groans were audible). Joseph Marcell does a very fine turn as the Earl of Kent, Lear's loyal nobleman.

All three daughters (Emily Swallow, Aubrey Saverino and Catherine Gowl) managed their parts well, as did those who play their respective spouses. Jonno Roberts' Edmund, the bastard son, assigned sufficient cunning and a restrained vileness to his part, while a standout performance was executed by Jay Whittaker, who morphed from legitimate son to a half-crazed beggar and back.

The play's visual displays constantly delighted (most especially, that magical storm), but the words of Shakespeare proved mightier. I can't remember a King Lear that has been so well and consistently spoken. You can't go wrong with Shakespeare's "King Lear" under the stars this summer.



## Review: Old Globe's 'King Lear' not for the squeamish

**José A. López**

Published 06/30/2010 - 2:50 p.m.

Despite its reputation as a violent film, when it came to the shearing of an ear, director Quentin Tarantino spared the audience of his first feature, "Reservoir Dogs," from the gruesome act, panning away to let the act happen off-camera.

Audiences of The Old Globe's "King Lear" are afforded no such luxury when the Earl of Gloucester, betrayed by his bastard son, has his eyes gouged out near the end of the first act.

Instead, they are treated to the display in all of its stomach-turning glory. Looking away is not enough; this is a gouging so extreme you can hear it.

The explicitness of the act is one of several bold turns of this production, directed by Adrian Noble, who is the artistic director of the Globe's 2010 Shakespeare Festival.

Noble is also directing Alan Bennett's "The Madness of George III," which along with "The Taming of the Shrew," will play in repertory through Sept. 26 at the Balboa Park outdoor theater. (The other two productions will be reviewed in next week's issue.)

Considered one of Shakespeare's great tragedies, "King Lear" is also one of his most cerebral and philosophic.

In old age, Lear decides to give up his rule, so he summons his three daughters and — out of vanity — makes them declare their love for him. Goneril and Regan embellish. Cordelia does not. The first two get to split the kingdom, the third one is exiled.

No longer king, Regan and Goneril show their disdain for his father, throwing him out from their homes, where he goes mad and realizes that Cordelia loved him best. Despite her return, things are not turning out well in the tragedy.

The play focuses on the myriad of ways that people can suffer in this "great stage of fools." Characters descend into madness; they are betrayed and spurned by their families and friends; sent into exile; ridiculed; plotted against; and in the case of Gloucester, blinded.

And yet, before the eye-gouging, a lot of these affronts — what Hamlet called "the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune" — remain largely theoretical, spoken.

It is in the act of the blinding that the magnitude of what's at stake comes into view. With the visceral and violent act, this production brings us away from the theoretical. It is sobering and shocking and oddly refreshing.

Noble's staging appears to be bare-bones at first, but as the play progresses, it features several surprises, the most delightful of which is the storm, which begins slowly but soon builds up to a bluster.

The costumes, too, change as the play progresses. King Lear's conniving daughters (Goneril is played by Emily Swallow, Regan by Aubrey Saverino and Cordelia by Catherine Gowl) start out in corsets and end up in stylish militaristic-looking trench coats (designed by Charlotte Devaux).

As Lear, Robert Foxworth — known for his roles in "Falcon Crest" and "Six Feet Under" and recently from his Broadway turn in "August: Osage County" — gives a solid performance that highlights the tragic elements of the plot.

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King Lear (Robert Foxworth) and the Fool (Bruce Turk) endure the storm during William Shakespeare's "King Lear" playing at the Old Globe Theatre through Sept. 23.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR



**José A. López**

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Edmund, Bruce Turk as the Fool and Joseph Marcell as the Earl of Kent.

For more information on the festival, go to [www.TheOldGlobe.org](http://www.TheOldGlobe.org).

# POWAY NEWS CHIEFTAIN

July 1, 2010

## Globe's 'King Lear' not for the squeamish

BY JOSÉ A. LÓPEZ

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King Lear (Robert Foxworth) and the Fool (Bruce Turk) endure the storm during William Shakespeare's "King Lear" playing at the Old Globe Theatre through Sept. 23.

PHOTO PROVIDED BY CRAIG SCHWARTZ

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For more information on the festival, go to [www.TheOldGlobe.org](http://www.TheOldGlobe.org).



# RANCHO BERNARDO NEWS JOURNAL

July 1, 2010

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For more information on the festival, go to [www.TheOldGlobe.org](http://www.TheOldGlobe.org).

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## Shakespeare's 'Lear' a blockbuster opener for Outdoor Festival Stage

Posted on July 2, 2010 by [dhharrison](#)

[0](#)

By Carol Davis



Carol Davis

SAN DIEGO (Press Release)—What a better way to kick off the Old Globe's summer outdoor Festival than to mount a stunning production of William Shakespeare's classic tragedy *King Lear* starring Robert Foxworth and directed by Adrian Noble formally of the Royal Shakespearean Company? None that I can think of thank you.

Now in a striking production on the Festival Stage at the Old Globe Theatre, *King Lear* poses the question, "Is humble, honest and straightforward filial love enough to sustain and convince the rich and powerful without having to suck up?" Evidentially not for the aging King (Robert Foxworth) who needs to hear more than just pledged love from his three daughters Goneril (Emily Swallow), Regan (Aubrey Saverino) and Cordelia (Catherine Gowl).

The powerful and egotistical Lear is ready to divide his land holdings equally three ways amongst his three daughters. The caveat however they have to fawn, grovel and say all the right things their father wants to hear. Besides that they have to divide their time with him by letting him live with them (he and one hundred of his closest followers), alternatively.

The two eldest, Goneril and Regan and their greedy mates have learned over the years that empty promises and compliments, especially those the King wants to hear, will get them everything they want including a great piece of the kingdom.

Unfortunately for his youngest, Cordelia, she doesn't have it in her to pander. She claims, "She loves him only as a daughter should". Lear, who truly loves her best, is so angered by her not willing to compliment and flatter him as the others, foolishly disinherits her from the kingdom.

Lear banishes his confidant the Earl of Kent (Joseph Marcell) for standing up for Cordelia, but later he returns disguised as a peasant so he can continue serving his king. Lear then marries Cordelia off to the King of France (Ben Diskant) who doesn't seem to care if she has a dowry or not.

If that weren't enough in the sub plot, the Earl of Gloucester loyal friend of Lear, (Charles Janasz) and his sons Edgar (Jay Whittaker) and Edmond (Jonno Roberts a charming and appealing SOB) are having their own set of problems that run parallel to Lear's except his involve his two sons, one legitimate the other the bastard (Roberts).

With the same themes of greed, suspicion, deception, son against father and father against son both kings fall victim to their heirs and their own misdeeds until both find themselves outcasts and wandering in the no man's land of insanity blinded by their own nearsightedness.

Foxworth, an associate artist at the Globe has his fair share of successes here over the years, his last playing the racist governor of Alabama, George Wallace in the 2009 production of "Cornelia".

In a production that satisfies all the senses, Foxworth takes command from the moment he comes on stage looking regal and smug announcing his intent to divide his lands. Unfortunately he is blindsided by his own sense of worth, which ultimately leads to his destruction. While everyone knows his foolish folly and may object to his stubbornness, Foxworth makes Lear more of a sympathetic character than a tyrannical one.

His supporters and those who would see him ruined surround him, cheer him on and give him the bravado he needs. But it is heartbreaking as his daughters malign him and his station weakens his transformation from mighty king and warrior to broken old man. Foxworth is more than up to the task as we watch his agony unfold and listen to the downward struggle he faces, with a clarity every Shakespeare aficionado will embrace.

With the Old Globe celebrating its 75<sup>th</sup> year anniversary this 2010 Shakespeare Festival is full of surprises not the least of which is the colorful collection of fall leaves covering the stage (a wooden platform that juts out almost to edge of the stage and reaches back into the wooded grove in back of the theatre) on which Lear begins his journey into Hell. (Ralph Funicello). The ferocious storms with thunder and lightning clapping and snow falling and swirling (Alan Burnett, lighting, Christopher R. Walker, sound and Shaun Davey, music) adds to the madness felt by Lear as he shouts against it all in rage.

Blood and gore and plucked out eyes (Regan's husband, the duke of Cornwall) dripping with the red stuff have been a rarity in past Shakespeare Festivals under the tutelage of Darko Tresnjak, who had been at the helm of the Shakespeare Fest these last five or so years. (Frankly, yours truly could do without the gore). But when Lear comes across his old friend Gloucester who by now has had his eyes plucked out and is wandering senseless and blind, the agony of the two men comes full circle.

Kudos to Adrian Noble for bringing a compassion and understanding to these tragic figures making them as real human beings rather than larger than life despotic untouchables.

Special mention to Charles Janasz a regular at these festival events, for another fine performance as Gloucester. Janasz is one of the more versatile returnees who will be performing in all three plays this summer. Bruce Turk is another favorite playing the fool with his amazing body language and facial expressions that always provide a welcome face in the crowd. As usual it's the fool who sees the reality of the tragedy, babbles while predicting it but can't stop it from happening. For all his truth and folly, he gets his in the end as well.

Emily Swallow is hard as nails as Goneril leading the pack to the ultimate destruction of the King's reign. Aubrey Saverino is equally menacing as Regan following in her sister's footsteps as if she had no mind of her own. Both personify the evil that ultimately gets 'um.

Catherine Gowl's Cordelia is blindly devoted to her father even though it leads to exile. She is heartbreakingly troubled by her father's actions and her own inability and stubbornness to stop the inevitable. When she finally comes, with her own army, to rescue him forgiveness and reconciliation comes, but late.

Deidre Clancy's costumes set the action in the 18<sup>th</sup> century in Act I but shift dramatically to some futuristic time in Act II that didn't seem to make sense. The early period gowns are outstandingly beautiful and quite a contrast to the bullet colored military outfits of the women in the second act.

Madness, death, good and evil, hope and despair, cruelty and humanity, betrayal and chaos, justice and injustice are all underlying themes in "Lear". That they all merge and set the tone for another of life's tragedies is evident. That anything is solved after sitting through this amazing production is in the eye of the beholder.

In the scheme of things, the good die with the bad. Justice might prevail but no one lives happily ever after, not in this one anyway. Don't miss it though. Nobel and friends have done themselves proud. It's Shakespeare at its best.

See you at the theatre.

Dates: July 26<sup>th</sup>-Sept. 23, 2010 (Check times and dates)

Organization: Old Globe Theatre

Phone: 619-234-5623

Production Type: Tragedy

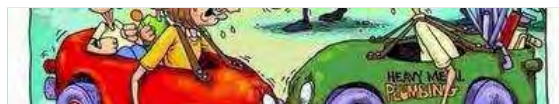
Where: Old Globe Theatre 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park

Ticket Prices: \$29.00-\$78.00

Web: [theoldglobe.org](http://theoldglobe.org)

Venue: Lowell Davies Festival Theatre

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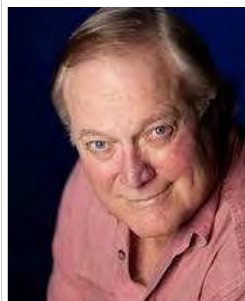


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## A NOTE FROM DALE



I just heard some great news! Moxie has gotten a year's extension on their Rolondo Space. Good for them! Can't wait to see Eurydice.

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## KING LEAR'S NEWS

### Lear opens summer festival

By Charlene Baldridge



The story: Shakespeare's great tragedy, *King Lear*, apposes two extended families: one, that of Lear and his daughters Goneril, Regan and Cordelia; and the other, that of the Earl of Gloucester and his two sons, the rightful heir, Edgar, the acknowledged bastard, Edmund. The play explores old age and parent-child and sibling relationship as pertains to inheritance/love.

In the play's first scene, Gloucester introduces his bastard son, Edmund, to the Earl of Kent, while in the background the court is made ready for the entrance of Lear and his family. Lear feels the weight of his age, infirmities and responsibilities, and feels it is time to divide his kingdom, spending time, in turn with each of his daughters, Goneril, married to the Duke of Albany; Regan, married to the Duke of Cornwall; and Cordelia, who is wooed by two men, the King of France and the Duke of Burgundy.

In a fit or pique over Cordelia's inability to bespeak her love eloquently enough to suit him, Lear disinherits his youngest, most ardently devoted daughter. Burgundy declines to take her without property and title, but France declares that Cordelia herself is dower enough, and takes her away with him; at the same time, criticized by his trusted adviser, Kent, Lear sends him into exile. Lear's fool suffers from all these changes, follows Cordelia for a few days, and then returns to serve Lear. In disguise, Kent joins Lear's retinue.

Meanwhile, in order to reclaim the land left to Edgar by their father, Gloucester, Edmund forges a letter, purportedly from Edgar, making it appear that Edgar is trying to kill their father. Then Edmund warns Edgar that Gloucester is trying to kill him, so Edgar flees to the heath, disguised as Poor Tom, a madman.

Rejected by Goneril and Regan, the increasingly mad Lear exiles himself on the heath, accompanied by Kent and the Fool. There he encounters Poor Tom (Edgar), who ultimately meets his own father, blinded by Cornwall, Regan's husband, for his defense of Lear. Meanwhile, Edmund ingratiates himself at the courts of Cornwall and Albany, bedding both Regan and Goneril. Cornwall is killed and Albany discovers Goneril's infidelity and sides with Lear and Cordelia.

All this comes to a head when Lear and Cordelia (who has raised a French army to save her father) are captured by Edmund's forces. Lear is very weak, but they reunite and he recognizes her as his own true daughter. Cordelia is hanged, and Lear dies holding her lifeless body, lamenting his foolishness.

THE PRODUCTION plays in rotating repertory with Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew* and Alan Bennett's *The Madness of George III* during the Old Globe Summer Shakespeare Festival (through September 26).

Because *The Madness of George III* is set soon after the American Revolutionary War, director Adrian Noble decided to set *Lear* in the same era, underscoring the remarkable and resonant relationship between the two works. In a stunning artistic collaboration with Old Globe Associate Artist/scenic designer Ralph Funicello, Noble fully utilizes the environment behind the Lowell Davies Festival Theatre. Forming the backdrop for most scenes, enormous wooden doors slide open to reveal the forest, a stupendous storm with lightning and thunder, and what looks like a mixture of windblown snow and sleet. Winter and madness obviously arrived simultaneously, because the stage in the first scenes is filled with leaves in all shades of autumn. Most of the action takes place on a long platform that extends from the upstage entry ramp downstage. Funicello utilizes the entire theatre by doing away with the "over above" and by creating sloping balconies in either side, allowing action up there as well and giving one a decided feeling of distance. Alan Burrett's lighting design, Christopher R. Walker's sound design, and Shaun Davey's affecting music (love the duet between Poor Tom and the Fool) enhance the evening,



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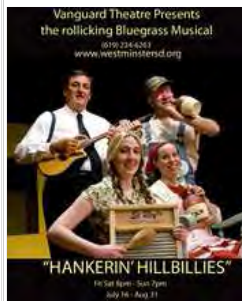


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creating something beautiful to gaze upon and hear, but also something that's astonishing and ominous all at once.

Noble also gives new interpretation of character and action as well; for instance he provides an unusual and plausible answer to the question of the Fool, who is not seen again after Lear and company take cover in a hovel on the heath. Bruce Turk is an amazing Fool, so sweet of voice, tender and affectionate with Lear. And of course, there is that wisdom and calmness with which Shakespeare imbues him throughout the play, but more so as Lear begins to fall apart.

Associate Artist Robert Foxworth (at top left) is not a towering, raging Lear, but a more frightened and disintegrating, confused and lost Lear than usual. The rage is there, but so, at the end, is the piping voice of an extremely sad and aged father. It's a quietly powerful, magnificent, imaginative and touching performance. Somehow, the actor appears to shrink before our very eyes.

Noble paints some pictures with Lear and his Fool that truly will remain in memory no matter how many more Lears and Fools enter and exit one's life.

The company has great depth owing to the excellent Gloucester of Associate Artist Charles Janasz. The men's ranks are especially impressive, with auspicious debuts by Joseph Marcell as Kent, the Jonno Roberts as Edmund, and Jay Whittaker as Edgar. Also worthy are fine performances by David Carrier as Albany and Michael Stewart Allen as Cornwall. Adrian Sparks lent some age and interest to the ensemble and also played the Old Man that is Gloucester's tenant.



The Goneril of Emily Swallow and the Regan of Aubrey Saverino are not as sexy or detestable or as combative as usually experienced in this play. I was impressed, however, with Catherine Gowl's Cordelia, imbued with mettle and courage as well as compassion.

Other supporting roles were played by Craig Dudley as Lear's Doctor and students enrolled in the Old Globe/University of San Diego Master of Fine Arts Program.

A complete calendar of the repertory may be found at [www.theoldglobe.com](http://www.theoldglobe.com) and tickets may be purchased at (619) 23-GLOBE.

I'll report on the other plays and more July 8.

*Photos courtesy of The Old Globe*

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 Intrepid Shakespeare Co.  
 ion theatre  
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Crazy For You



Song of Extinction

## BEHIND THE SCENES

with Jenni Prisk

Email Jenni



August 5, 2010

Hello everyone! A very mixed bag of summer these days. Perhaps we'll have a hot Holiday season!

We lost another giant in our community on Saturday, with the death of Donald P. Shiley, after a long illness. Shiley co-invented the Bjork-Shiley heart valve which gave renewed life to thousands of people, however, he also gave new life to our healthcare, sciences, and theatre community, especially The Old Globe. Our hearts and sympathy go out to Shiley's widow, Darlene, who was married to the love of her life for 32 years. Donald Shiley was 90 years at the time of his passing.

### My 2 Cents

The colorful, and familiar *Oklahoma* has closed at Moonlight now, however it warmed many hearts as it rekindled the memories of those favorite musical numbers. Kathy Brombacher directed a very talented cast, headed by Brent Schindele as Curly McClain and Michaelia Leigh as Laurey Williams. Jason Maddy put in a star turn as Ali Hakim. Next up for Moonlight, is *Crazy for You*, opening on August 11 and running through August 28.

*King Lear* continues on the Lowell Davies Festival Stage at The Old Globe Theatre through the end of September. This Shakespeare masterpiece has been given fine direction by aficionado Adrian Noble, set in the fall of Lear's life aptly conveyed by autumn leaves covering the stage. Robert Foxworth is a wise and stately king until his familiar demise in the cold and rain (a spectacular storm with snow that covered the audience too) when he becomes a sad and lost old man, grieving for his beloved younger daughter, Cordelia. Bruce Turk is Lear's fool, yet he is not all fool, but offers guidance and counsel to his master with warmth and love. The three daughters, Goneril, Regan, and Cordelia are played by Emily Swallow, Aubrey Saverino and Catherine Gowl respectively. Their characters are not drawn as fully as they could be, considering the two older sisters propel Lear's downward spiral through their conspiracy. Jonno Roberts is the dastardly Edmund whose sneering scheming makes us squirm. Jay Whittaker as Edgar is amazing in his madness, his lithe body twisting and turning with the agony of betrayal.

As you may know by now, I am not a huge musical fan, but I am a real fan of *Robin and the 7 Hoods* playing on the Old Globe stage through August 22. This production which is not surprisingly Broadway-bound, is a blast from start to finish. The book by Rupert Holmes, lyrics by Sammy Cahn and Music by Jimmy Van Heusen is directed and choreographed by Casey Nicholaw. Suave, debonair Eric Schneider plays Robbo Ortona the scoundrel of the title. He positively shines on stage as he robs from the rich to pay...his henchmen. Will Chase is a delectable Little John Dante, and Rick Holmes dances his feet off in many a spirited number. Adam Heller is the master of comic timing as Lieutenant Nottingham and Kelly Sullivan is beautiful as Marian Archer. The ensemble, especially the women in their cat suits, are fabulous and the songs will stir up memories (My Kind of Town, Call Me Irresponsible, All the Way.)

### Theatre News

You may have noticed that we are a bit behind in our columns recently and we plan to change all that! Dale has been very busy performing in The Pajama Game, and now that it's closed we will meet to discuss San Diego TheatreScene and how it can grow and flourish. Watch this space!

Everyone is raving about Hairspray on the Lyceum stage through August 15. This is sterling holiday fun.

Sadly I had to miss The 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee running at North Coast Rep through August 14, but Kim saw it and absolutely loved it! He spoke with David Ellenstein who said there are only a few seats available for the rest of the run, so get yours now! Phil Johnson "owns" this very funny show, however the supporting cast is up to scratch and more. It's a load of laughs!

North Coast Rep is staging a Benefit on August 22 at a private home. Please call the box office at 858-481-1055 for ticket information. There will be live critters and libations among the celebrations.

Join Mo'olelo on August 17 for a sneak peak of Yellow Face, at the 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue Theatre, commencing at 5:30pm Call 619-342-7395 for your reservation (it's free!)

On Friday August 20 you can attend a FREE 2010 Arts and Culture Election Mixer at the Mingei International Museum in Balboa Park, commencing at 5pm. RSVP to



D'ann Paton urges you to see a new play by Steven Oberman (formerly of Moonlight) which opens on August 19 at Diversionary. *Mozu* is a new musical about monkeys, inspired by a real macaque or snow monkey.

The Old Globe's third annual Summer Shakespeare Intensive for teens will conclude on Monday, August 16 at 8:00 p.m. with a bilingual (English/Spanish) performance of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* and *As You Like It*.

Ion Theatre Company opens *Song of Extinction* by EM Lewis on August 11 in previews, with official opening August 14, at their space on 6<sup>th</sup> at Penn. Claudio Raygoza directs. If any of their past productions are to go by, this one will not disappoint, ion goes from strength to strength.

La Jolla Playhouse is staging a spectacular new version of *A MidSummer Night's Dream*, directed by Christopher Ashley. Looking forward to seeing next week. In tandem they are presenting *Cankerblossom*, a page to stage workshop, from August 12 through 15.



## An Online Entertainment Magazine

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### King Lear



Foxworth, Turk  
Photo by Craig Schwartz

By January Riddle

The Bard is back, and his king is governing the Old Globe Theatre's Festival Stage as if he owns it. With this latest production of Shakespeare's ultimate tragedy, *King Lear*, the Globe's 75th summer festival season takes the boards by storm with superb performances by a dedicated cast with Robert Foxworth in the title role and Adrian Noble in the titular director's chair.

Every director needs to put a mark on this play. It begs for interpretations. Assuming most of the audience members have seen it before, a director wants to do something different, personal, and unique.

Adrian Noble, in his first production opening since assuming the role of Artistic Director of the 2010 Shakespeare Festival, is no different in that way. Yet, he is unique in the ways he put his several marks on William Shakespeare's most important tragedy.

Not all Noble's marks are equal. One is innovative; another is somewhat silly and overblown; and one is simply icky. But this director's way of bringing the elegant Elizabethan language to American playgoer's ears makes up for that one sickening scene and more.

This is Shakespeare sans British accents and affectation, sporting crisp rhythm, staccato enunciation, and all-inclusive intelligibility. That involvement is as it should be, Noble would say. Speaking weeks ago at a special Old Globe promotion for his book, "How to do Shakespeare," Noble traced his fascination with the playwright's work to his 17-year-old self's intoxication with the language, the sound of the words. "You put on the language like a garment," he said. "It fills you from the outside in."

Although cloaked in Shakespearean language, the story of *King Lear* is not a Bard original. Both Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Celts spun earlier versions of the arrogant high and mighty monarch brought down to pauper's level by his egotism and his ungrateful child heirs. It could be a dark fairy tale whose moral is "What goes around, comes around." Evil abounds amid wars and nature's chaos, but neither evil nor chaos can continue unabated forever.

Shakespeare's plot concerns a king with three daughters, and the tale begins with Lear preparing to retire, dividing his kingdom among his progeny, according to their declarations of love for him. Goneril, the eldest

(a regally malevolent Emily Swallow) and Regan , the second (played by Aubrey Saverino as the compliant middle child) , profess their adoration and are amply rewarded. When Cordelia "Although the last, not least," proclaims that she loves him according to her bond, her enraged father disowns her without dowry despite the pleas of his friends, the Earls of Kent (a zany and physical Joseph Marcell) and Gloucester. His favorite daughter, now penniless, is nevertheless claimed by the King of France, who takes her off to be his queen bride.

MFA student Catherine Gowl works the difficult role of Cordelia capably, but she is outshined by her elder sisters, who push her part to a lesser significance than it could be. Robert Foxworth is faultless as Lear, as he moves through the levels of the dying, from the disbelief of an arrogant man to the full-blown rage of a conquered ruler and, ultimately, to the acceptance of an integrated person.

Meanwhile, the wicked, now wealthy, daughters conspire to eliminate the old man from their lives and their kingdoms. Eventually, the deposed monarch will learn who his true friends are. He will learn that redemption is eternally elusive and that its pursuit extracts an extremely high price.

That resolution will take time and the course of nature, after the king and his fool wander from place to place, deprived of protection and sustenance, after the dark and stormy night that is Lear's soul, as well as his environment, brews to a crescendo. To disown your children is a crime against nature, and nature will retaliate.

A parallel plotline involves Gloucester and his two sons, Edgar, the good (mindfully played by Jay Whittaker, whose Poor Tom interpretation is spellbinding) and Edmund, the evil bastard (a deliciously evil Jonno Roberts). Veteran Globe actor, Charles Janasz, captures the complex Earl of Gloucester, perceptive throughout, and, at the end, pitiable without being pathetic. Gloucester, once the king's trusted advisor, is a father who believes the lies of his evil son and banishes the son who truly loves him. In that way, his role duplicates that of Lear, who allows his two wicked daughters to capture his fortune, yet exiles his one true-hearted descendent.

Like his former king, Gloucester, too, will suffer for his ignorance, even being blinded by Edmund and his cohorts, who include Lear's two nefarious daughters.

That particular scene is never easy to watch, but Noble has heightened the violence with an especially gory eye-plucking that culminates with Regan's husband, the Duke of Cornwall (an adept Michael Stewart Allen), holding an eye by its optic nerve before flinging it to the ground. The audible smack as it lands elicited an audience reaction that says it all. Ick. Note to director: Gruesome effects are not as cool on stage as in film.

Innovation, however, is always welcome. Herein lies the rubbing out of Lear's fool (played with spot on comic and tragic timing by Bruce Turk), whose disappearance in Act III has long been a subject of critical speculation. Is the fool symbolic of his master's alter ego, no longer needed when Lear begins to integrate his troubled psyche? Or, is the fool simply unnecessary after the appearance of Poor Tom, Edmund's naked persona, whose rants contain a fool's wisdom?



Usually, the director lets the fool simply slip away after he utters his last line, "And I'll go to bed at noon." In Noble's novel interpretation, Lear murders his fool, madly mistaking him for Regan, as he wonders aloud "...what breeds about her heart."

What breeds is a burgeoning English army, with Regan, Goneril and Edmund in the lead, ready to battle France, now united behind Lear and Cordelia. What is ill-conceived are the distracting Nazi-like uniforms, worn by the sisters, as well as by their armies. This costuming is overblown, reaching too far to make a point about the warring forces of good and evil.

The battle ensues, but the scene highlights the two sisters' rivalry for Edmund's affections. A manipulator to the end, Edmund refuses to commit to either, conniving instead to take one of them and his father's title, too.

The final scenes offer a typical Shakespearean turn-about. Edmund learns that his plots were foiled by his mistresses' murder-suicide. Edgar's reappearance gives him a change of heart, but Edmund's attempt at redemption comes too late.

So, too, does Lear's. His realization and the reunion with Cordelia offer him only a brief respite from the chaos wrought by his arrogance. Before he dies, he learns that all his daughters are dead, the youngest murdered in her cell. The final tableau reveals the now lowly king pitifully attempting to revive his child as he takes his last breath.

Yet, hope lives in Edgar, a symbol of the potential for good and humility to triumph, eventually, and at great cost, over evil and arrogance. Even so, what was done cannot be undone, as Edgar's last speech proclaims. The burden has been shifted, not purged. "...we that are young shall never see so much, nor live so long."

Long live "King Lear," a magnificent play, especially in this production, well-wrought and worthy of both its king and its director.

*William Shakespeare's King Lear plays in repertory with The Taming of the Shrew and Alan Bennett's The Madness of George III through September 23. Most performances on the Old Globe Lowell Davies Festival outdoor stage are at 8 pm, Tues-Sun. Tickets are \$29-\$78. Reservations at (619) 23-GLOBE or [www.TheOldGlobe.org](http://www.TheOldGlobe.org)*

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## A NOTE FROM DALE



If you can pay full price for your theatre tickets you are helping to fund the theatre you're visiting, but if you can only afford 1/2 price - Who do you call? Read the Op-Ed below right from SDPAL.

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## TEEN PERSPECTIVE ON KING LEAR'S NEWS

### Teen Perspective with Kirstin Perkins

#### King Lear at The Old Globe

With Shakespeare, it's very easy to mess up. The actors have to be able to convey emotions to the audience that sometimes the dialogue itself doesn't. In a good Shakespearean production, the audience is able to understand the plot by emotion and careful listening to the dialogue. In a great Shakespearean production, though, the audience is able to understand the plot by the sheer energy and intensity the actors put forth. The latter is a production that even the undereducated can appreciate. It makes the difference between enjoying a Shakespearean play because it makes you feel intelligent and cultured and simply enjoying a Shakespearean play.

Of course, from the beginning there was no doubt that Old Globe's Shakespearean Festival would be magnificent. This is Shakespeare at it's finest in the capable hands of top-notch directors, actors, designers (scenic, costume, lighting, sound), fight directors, dialect coaches, stage managers, and, of course, the Bard. The combined effort of all of these is why Saturday night's performance of King Lear received a standing ovation.

With such an introduction, the rest will seem perhaps unnecessary except to tell you where to buy tickets, nevertheless its my obligation to continue in order to praise a few of the most impressive performances.

One of these, which has the distinction of being mentioned first, is Bruce Turk's portrayal of the Fool. Shakespeare's fools are always some of his best characters, providing funny comic relief but also offering some of the deepest insights into the story. The appeal of the Fool though was more than just a cleverly written character. Bruce Turk's performance was brilliant; he was the character you wanted to see. When he made his appearance, there was rejoicing and he was watched throughout most of the dialogue. Expressive and relatable, Bruce Turk's performance can't be forgotten; I haven't forgotten last year's performance in Twelfth Night.

It would be immensely unfair not to mention Jay Whittaker who played Edgar. During intermission I heard several awed whispers about his performance. Indeed it was remarkable in the representation of a madman calling himself poor Tom, haunted, and lost. The best part of his performance though came after intermission where he recovers his senses, becoming dark, brooding and much less naive than he was at first. This new character was not more extraordinary than the madman but rather the immense difference both so well acted that one never doubts the complete transformation. Singing childish songs and giving the air of complete insanity in one scene and then helping his blind father with a self confidence and sensibility in another scene takes a very special actor. That the change never feels forced or false is perhaps even more fantastic.

Speaking of realistic character bridges done properly one must mention, at last, Robert Foxworth as King Lear. Foxworth is an actor that clearly deserved the title role, with a powerful stage presence and abounding energy; he created and maintained the story. Charles Janasz as the Earl of Gloucester along with Michael Stewart Allen as the Duke of Cornwall performed the most gruesome scene with vicious relish. Jonno Roberts as Edmund, the brother of Edgar, plays his role with intensity and brutality -- when he smiles it's always evilly intentioned and can give you goose-bumps. Emily Swallow and Aubrey Saverino as Goneril and Regan, the two older daughters of King Lear, connive while Catherine Gowl playing Cordelia is believably sweet without any sappiness. The relationship between the three sisters is genuine and heartbreaking. Finally, as the Earl of Kent, Joseph Marcell endows the role with the proper mix or wisdom and humor.

The play itself calls for grandness and the effects, including a storm and the gouging of eyes were realistic when necessary for the integrity of the plot and stylized with subtlety when useful to give a unique feel to this production. The entire set, designed by Ralph Funicello, was stylized, stripped of any extravagance and matched the mood of the play. The minimalist approach worked well with the scene changes. An interesting point: the costuming, Deirdre Clancy designed, added to the plays progression starting with an early 1800's look and ending in WWI uniforms. It was subtly changed and inventive, each time period imbuing the play with a different and fitting mood.

Directed by Adrian Noble, King Lear is a tragedy worth exultation for the brilliance of the production. It is with a conscience completely clear that I implore all theatre goers to see King Lear and with anticipation I look forward to the other two shows that are part of Old Globe's Shakespeare festival.

For more information and to order tickets go to [www.theoldglobe.org](http://www.theoldglobe.org).

Photo Credit Craig Schwartz.

*Surveying the landscape of aging with wit, insight, and compassion.  
And wit.*

Thursday, July 1, 2010

## Madness, Fine and Otherwise



King Lear Weeping over the Death of Cordelia by James Barry

For the five years that we've been spending time San Diego, I've been meaning to catch a play at the marvelous Old Globe Theater in Balboa Park.

Thanks to the generosity and kindness of local friends Bobbi (a Globe docent who offered free tickets) and Jo (event planner and coordinator extraordinaire), I got to see *two* productions of the 2010 Shakespeare Festival in one week.



Both *The Madness of King George III* and *King Lear* were presented by the Old Globe Summer Repertory group, staged at the unique outdoor Lowell Davies Festival Theatre adjacent to the Globe, and directed by Adrian Noble.

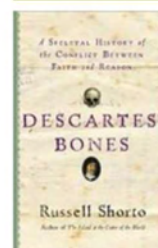
The Lowell is modeled on the outdoor theaters common to Elizabethan England, but with much better, modern stadium seating. The plays were not exactly lightweight fare in either case--quite painful in both, to be candid, which is a tribute to the power of the productions. Simple but highly functional staging, creative costuming...I could go on and on about how wonderfully these plays were presented, but there were some unique aspects to the experience that made them even more memorable.

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### Addicted To Words



Descartes' Bones: A Skeletal History of the Conflict Between Faith and Reason  
by Russell Shorto

My rating: 5 of 5 stars How did I miss this in hardback? Absolutely beautiful!

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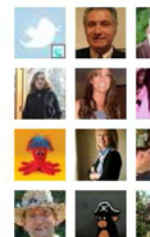
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too young and  
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John McCain  
"began his career  
in Washington as  
a lobbyist when he  
was appointed in  
1976 as the  
Navy's liaison to t  
States Senate." —  
**Hayworth**

"Today, we have  
more boots on the  
ground near the  
Southwest border  
than at any time in  
our history." —  
**Barack Obama**

On the use of  
presidentially





For a visitor to San Diego, and I am still a visitor despite part-time residence for the last three years, there were exotica to be savored that couldn't have been directed nor produced by the Old Globe's company. For example, take the temperature. Both attendance dates, a Thursday and the following Sunday, were warm Southern California days; typically, in late June, a low overcast and some lower temperatures are common, but the two days in question were warm and warmer. In fact, it was hot in the sun and, on the second day, I was wearing shorts during the day.

So I was blown away when one of my friends said to dress warmly and she would bring blankets to cover us. The other said she wears long johns under her slacks, furry boots, gloves, and a heavy jacket to performances at the outdoor Festival Theatre! In June, I felt like an idiot digging out my few winter items to attend a stage play at a fine venue, but I was so glad I did. By about fifteen minutes into *The Madness of King George*, I was covered neck to ankles in the heaviest blanket I've ever seen (thanks, Jo!) and recalling that folks die of hypothermia in the deserts of the Southwest! Looking around, I saw that almost everyone was similarly snuggled down.



Looking around, I also saw that the audience was very old! Maybe that reflects the ticket cost. Or, maybe, the more sophisticated level of culture and entertainment offered at the Globe. Or, maybe, the aged audience is drawn to a Shakespearean tragedy about aging, dementia, and the losses inherent--it hardly gets grimmer than *Lear*, unless it's the modern *Madness*--and to another performance that's about physical and mental

Allow Me To

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## Tim Akers And The Smoking Section: Wh



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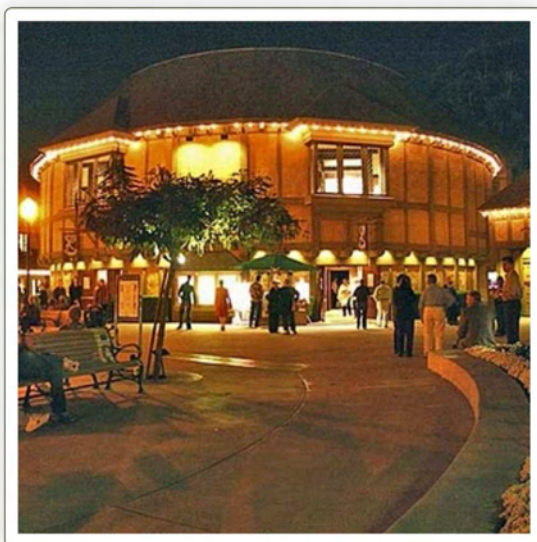
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suffering made worse by what passes for medical treatment. Poor George III, a pretty decent human and a better monarch than most in England's history, suffers from porphyria which attacks his mental capacities and debilitates his body. (Or is it mercury poisoning?) Then, the physicians and quacks who treat and torture him according to Aristotelian medical traditions, including blistering, bleeding, starving, and purging, nearly kill him while the younger generation and the political sharks wait to divide up the remains. It's hard to watch, but I imagine that the elderly tolerate it better than the young. Not sure why I think that. Would you think so?

So, there we are, this old audience (there were some young people, of course and many in middle-age, but primarily we were the young-old and middle-old...whatever all that means), bundled to our ears, freezing anyway, and watching marvelous actors portray the depths of human suffering, age-related humiliation, and general human sorrow. There was fine wit on display, too, and beautiful language, but there were some scenes where those salves did not relieve the pain for the audience. Now, don't that sound like a good time?



And, yet, it was; I was so thrilled to see such quality onstage. And there was a comic relief peculiar to San Diego's Old Globe: the theater is adjacent to the San Diego Zoo and, at the oddest and best moments during those cold nights, the zoo's inhabitants offered special audio contributions. So, come the lines,

"How fearful  
And dizzy 'tis to cast one's eyes so low!  
The crows and choughs that wing the midway air  
Show scarce so gross as beetles; half way down  
Hangs one that gathers samphire, dreadful trade!"

...and the exotic birds of the Zoo's Aviary squawk loudly right on cue!

Running After My Hat

PoliPsych.com

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 We're Only Human...

Self-Sufficient Steward

 whiskey river

James Thurber

***With sixty staring me  
in the face, I have  
developed  
inflammation of the  
sentence structure  
and definite  
hardening of the  
paragraphs.***



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King George struts across the stage at the peak of his power, showing off his knowledge of every appointment in his court and the family history of each courtier,

...and a lion's roar booms out and vibrates the cold night air.

One play is old and contains more quotable lines than the other, but they make a good pair to watch back to back. Especially if you are old in America at this time, old on the planet at this time. I will leave you with a quotation from each that is pertinent to the news this week.

**This is the excellent foppery of the world, that,  
when we are sick in fortune,--often the surfeit  
of our own behavior,--we make guilty of our  
disasters the sun, the moon, and the stars: as  
if we were villains by necessity. --Lear**

And, from *Madness*, George III speaks,

**Peace of mind! I have no peace of mind. I have had no peace  
of mind since we lost America. Forests, old as the world  
itself, plains, strange delicate flowers, immense solitudes.  
And all nature new to art. All ours. Mine. Gone. A paradise  
lost.**



Labels: aging, King George III, Lear, Old Globe





# **THE TAMING OF THE SHREW**

# LOS ANGELES TIMES

July 18, 2010

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## Critics' Choices

**The Taming of the Shrew** retching leads Jonno Roberts and Emily Swallow bring real chemistry and imaginative empathy to this agreeable revival of the Bard's un-PC crowd-pleaser, creating a genuine romance that carries the show. Director Ron Daniels simply presents unsavory thematic elements as factors of Shakespeare's era while keeping one eye on our own, which goes double for the cast (D.C.N.). The Old Globe, 1383 Old Globe Way, San Diego. Tue., Fri. and next Sun., 8 p.m.; ends Sept. 26. \$29-\$67. (619) 234-5623.



# LOS ANGELES TIMES

July 9, 2010

## THEATER BEAT

### Love will lead the way

The defining moment in the Old Globe's agreeable production of "The Taming of the Shrew" comes at the initial meeting of fetching leads Jonno Roberts and Emily Swallow, who bring real chemistry and imaginative empathy to William Shakespeare's problematic yet crowd-pleasing pair.

Before that, director Ron Daniels' open-air, venue-encompassing staging has been content to turn cast members loose on the audience before the performance, including attendees seated onstage. Following a well-executed, faintly extraneous opening dance (movement sequences courtesy of Tony Caligagan), the exposition transpires in straightforward fashion, wrapping the Bard's meter within a modern conversational attack that flirts with glibness, if not sitcom.

However, when Roberts' Petruchio and Swallow's Katherine see each other for the first time, they freeze, totally transfixed, and you can



CRAIG SCHWARTZ The Old Globe

**HARD TO GET:** Emily Swallow is the unwilling Katherine to Jonno Roberts' suitor Petruchio in the Old Globe's production of "The Taming of the Shrew."

almost hear their heart-strings plunk. Despite the play's un-PC aspects — Petruchio's diabolical degrading of his peevish bride, Katherine's ire at her powerless status giving way to submission — a genuine, albeit unconventional romance is upon us, and it carries the show.

Early on, Swallow relies a tad heavily on her (often priceless) visual reactions, while Roberts comically points words and pauses to the edge of calculation. Yet as the plot unfolds, this attractive duo reveals sensitively layered details of their evolving characters to intelligent, hilarious and finally touching effect.

Daniels' take on "Shrew" neither ignores nor attempts to dissect its unsavory thematic elements, simply presenting them as a factor of Shakespeare's era while keeping one eye on our own. That goes double for the cast that surrounds Roberts and Swallow, everyone clearly enjoying his or her duties and on the same page.

Jay Whittaker's Lucentio, at first over-chirpy, achieves a winning wryness as he woos Bree Welch's tactitly cunning Bianca in disguise. Joseph Marcell's Gremio has old-school declamatory prowess, countered by

Donald Carrier's agitated, hangdog Hortensio. Adrian Sparks as Baptista, father of the sisters, deftly balances affection and perturbation. Charles Janasz has a double-cameo ball as Lucentio's fake dad and Petruchio's servant Curtis.

All the menial characters register strongly, the group of loopy servant lads making Petruchio and Kate's wedding-night return arguably the play's funniest scene. Bruce Turk's deadpan Gremio and Jordan McArthur's adept Biondello score high marks throughout, and Michael Stewart Allen's wonderfully assured Tranio is a find.

Scenic designer Ralph Funicello keeps things bare, barring a repeated mini-coup involving trap door and table, and his and lighting designer Alan Burrett's handling of the giant neon title sign hanging upstage. That starkness, however, emphasizes Deirdre Clancy's brilliant costumes, which weave Elizabethan silhouettes, Day-Glo textures, color coordination and wild card motifs into a gorgeously quirky palette.

Not all of the show's notions work as well, but even lowbrow bits, such as a horse costume that deposits droppings behind it, are in the spirit of good-natured bawdiness, and the various adlibs throughout are tickling. If not quite a "Shrew" for the ages, this fun-filled reading nonetheless seems certain to fill the Festival Theatre for the summer's duration.

— DAVID C. NICHOLS

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**"The Taming of the Shrew,"**  
Old Globe's Lowell Davies  
Festival Theatre, Balboa  
Park, San Diego. Contact  
theater for schedule. \$29 to  
\$78. (619) 234-5623. Running  
time: 2 hours, 45 minutes.

# Los Angeles Times

## Theater review: 'The Taming of the Shrew' at the Old Globe

July 9, 2010 | 6:45 pm



The defining moment in The Old Globe's agreeable production of "The Taming of the Shrew" comes at the initial meeting of fetching leads Jonno Roberts and Emily Swallow, who bring real chemistry and imaginative empathy to William Shakespeare's problematic yet crowd-pleasing pair.

Before that, director Ron Daniels' open-air, venue-encompassing staging has been content to turn cast members loose on the audience before the performance, including attendees seated onstage. Following a well-executed, faintly extraneous opening dance (movement sequences courtesy of Tony Caligagan), the exposition transpires in straightforward fashion, wrapping the Bard's meter within a modern conversational attack that flirts with glibness, if not sitcom.

However, when Roberts' Petruchio and Swallow's Katherine see each other for the first time, they freeze, totally transfixed, and you can almost hear their heartstrings plunk. Despite the play's un-PC aspects -- Petruchio's diabolical degrading of his peevish bride, Katherine's ire at her powerless status giving way to submission -- a genuine, albeit unconventional romance is upon us, and it carries the show.

Early on, Swallow relies a tad heavily on her (often priceless) visual reactions, while Roberts comically points words and pauses to the edge of calculation. Yet, as the plot unfolds, this attractive duo reveals sensitively layered details of their evolving characters, to intelligent, hilarious and finally touching effect.

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-- David C. Nichols



# SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE

July 8, 2010

NIGHT & DAY

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## CRITIC'S CHOICE

**'Harvey'** Even though it's a laugh-filled comedy about a man whose best friend is an invisible white rabbit, "Harvey" won a Pulitzer Prize for drama, and Lamb's staging of the Mary Chase classic makes you understand why. Director Robert Smyth and a gem of a cast, led by David Cochran Heath and Kerry Meads, get to the heart of the play, about a sort of holy fool versus a world that wants him to act "normal." Not, thank goodness, that anyone is 100 percent normal here; just look at costumer Jeanne Reith's delightfully daffy hats! (Janice Steinberg) *Lamb's Players Theatre*, 1142 Orange Ave., Coronado. Through July 25. (619) 437-6000, [lambplayers.org](http://lambplayers.org). \$28-\$58.

**'King Lear'** In Adrian Noble's lucid and moving production for the Old Globe Shakespeare Festival, a fine ensemble cast speaks the classic tragedy's poetry with a crispness that informs nearly every aspect of the show. Robert Foxworth is an understated but achingly tormented Lear, and the staging has a spare but sometimes magical visual sense. (James Hebert) *Lowell Davies Festival Theatre*, 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park. Through Sept. 23. (619) 234-5623, [oldglobe.org](http://oldglobe.org). \$29-\$78.

**'Smoke on the Mountain'** the comic saga of the singin' Sanders family returns to Lamb's for the sixth (!) time; Connie Ray's musical revue is as light as a turkey feather, but the cast's strong performances make the most of the folksy fun. (Hebert) *Horton Grand Theatre*,

444 Fourth Ave., Marina. Through July 18. (619) 437-6000, [lambplayers.org](http://lambplayers.org). \$28-\$58.

**'The Taming of the Shrew'** Go to see the crackling performances of Emily Swallow as Kate and Jonno Roberts as Petruchio -- and grit your teeth, if you must, over the problematic gender politics of Shakespeare's much-debated romcom. Director Ron Daniels doesn't totally solve the play's thorny thematic issues (nor the somewhat wandering feel of the second act), but his inventive and loose-limbed staging brings the fun nonetheless. (Hebert) *Lowell Davies Festival Theatre*, 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park. Through Sept. 26. (619) 234-5623, [theoldglobe.org](http://theoldglobe.org).

**'The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee'** Rick Simas directs a crackerjack ensemble in the local premiere of William Finn and Rachel Sheinkin's Tony-winning musical comedy. What makes the "Bee" a delight is its compassion for the young misfits in the spelling contest, and the moments when they realize life isn't fair and begin to grow up. (Steinberg) *North Coast Repertory Theatre*, 987 Lomas Santa Fe Drive, Solana Beach. Through Aug. 1. (858) 481-1055.

# SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE

July 2, 2010

## THEATER REVIEW

### Nothing tame about Globe's 'Shrew'

By James Hebert

THEATER CRITIC

One way to be sure you've walked into The Old Globe's festival staging of "The Taming of the Shrew" instead of, say, "King Lear": The frequency of the jokes. Also, the huge neon sign above the stage that reads "The Taming of the Shrew."

The marquee message seems clear: What we've got here is A Show. And considering the dicey (and endlessly debated) gender politics of Shakespeare's marital fantasy, who wouldn't want to put a little ironic dis-

tance between tale and the teller?

The "w" even dangles shoddily off the last word — a further wink (me-thinks) that there's something askew about "Shrew."

Director Ron Daniels has slathered the Globe production with a king-size fun brush, playing up the work's absurdities, and his show is acted with verve and shot through with satisfying surprises.

Those charms ultimately aren't quite enough to propel it past the play's troublesome second half,

SEE 'Shrew,' E2

## DETAILS

### "The Taming of the Shrew"

**When:** Running in nightly repertory with "King Lear" and "The Madness of George III." (Check theater for schedule.)

**Where:** Lowell Davies Festival Theatre, Balboa Park.

**Tickets:** \$29-\$78 (\$19 for onstage seats)

**Phone:** (619) 234-5623

**Online:** [theoldglobe.org](http://theoldglobe.org)



Emily Swallow as Katherine and Jonno Roberts as Petruchio in The Old Globe's "The Taming of the Shrew." *The Old Globe*

## 'SHREW'

CONTINUED FROM E1

## Roberts and Swallow light up the stage

when shrewd Petruchio refuses to get shrew'd and instead head-trips the defiant Paduan bachelorette Katherine into becoming a pliable wife. (The Stockholm syndrome apparently summers in Italy.)

But the irresistible language of the play (running in summer Shakespeare Festival repertory with "Lear" and "The Madness of George III") and Daniels' taste for the irreverent still give the inventive staging a game go of it.

The director's loose-limbed conception includes a posse of costumed young rowdies who blur the lines between show and audience — getting into the action at times but also watching it unfold, and pestering playgoers (14 of whom sit onstage) at one point about what happened to the broken sign.

Daniels (who directed the hip-hop drama "Kingdom" for the Globe last year) also dumps the "induction," Shakespeare's original play-within-a-play notion that presented "Shrew" as a piece being performed for a drunkard who's been punk'd into thinking he's a nobleman. Good move; that bit would've given this show more frames than a poster boutique.



**Bruce Turk as Grumio and Donald Carrier as Hortensio.**

Given the complexities of its central romance, "Shrew" can live or die by its dual leads, and here Daniels (and Globe casting chief Samantha Barrie) have come up with a couple of live wires. Squint and you might even think it's the friction between Jonno Roberts (as Petruchio) and Emily Swallow (Katherine) lighting up that sign.

Roberts has a crocodile smile and a vaguely off-kilter John Malkovich vibe; his character conveys a sense that even he's not sure what's going on in that ever-clever brain of his. This is a Petruchio whose plotting in some ways also seems a fortress wall against the raw affection and awe he clearly experiences around Kate, a woman he originally sought only for her money.

Awe is absolutely what Roberts' Petruchio inspires among other men in Padua, several of whom are there to woo Katherine's sweet-tempered younger sister, Bianca (Bree Welch). She can't be married off until Kate weds first, but the infamous

Miss K tends to scare off suitors. Along with everybody else.

It might be the way she blithely hogties her own sister, or struts around the stage as if she's about to box her exasperated dad Baptista (Adrian Sparks), but in any case, she has an image problem.

When Tranio (Michael Stewart Allen), servant to Bianca's suitor Lucentio (an almost cartoonishly goofy Jay Whittaker), praises Petruchio for taking on the challenge of "taming" Katherine, his sly shift of line emphasis puts a modern twist on the dialogue: "You are the *man*," he praises, pausing for admiring effect before finishing with "must stead us all."

Another suitor, Hortensio (winningly witty Donald Carrier) puts an amusing spin on his description of Kate to Petruchio, saying "her *only* fault ..." in the same way a real-estate agent might preface the revelation that someone's dream house-to-be sits astride an active volcano.

Swallow lives up to Kate's reputation with a steely grace and an exceedingly expressive face whose mobile features seem able to convey outrage, boredom and bemusement all at once. She has the very tough task of turning this fiercely independent character into one who extols the beauties of obedience in the last scene. The fact she gives an audience at least some reason to buy that seismic shift is a tribute to Swallow's deft way of tracing the arc of Kate's change.

It's still hard not to wonder, though, what's in it for Kate, and why she succumbs to Petruchio's cruel-to-be-kind jujitsu. In her talk of how a husband "commits his body" to the work of marriage, there's more than a hint that the bond is deeply about the physical, maybe topped by some master/servant complex.

But Swallow's Kate also seems simply to prize a man who matches her level of ferocity, who doesn't flinch at the primal roar of her soul.

Whatever the appeal, deep analysis doesn't necessarily become a show that at one point has Petruchio wearing strappy leather chaps like some butch midnight cowboy, and a Tranio (Allen is endless fun in this part) who struts around like Bono in giant black shades and a get-up that makes him look like a peach with legs. (Deirdre Clancy's costumes are a wonder of exuberant wit and color).

After the snappy first half, the three-hour show begins to wander. Pop and passion give way to clowning and mugging and those mortifying Kate brainwash sessions.

## Tricky to tame: A review of "Shrew"

[James Hebert](#)

Thursday, July 1, 2010 at 3:08 p.m.



By James Hebert, Theater Critic

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But Swallow’s Kate also seems simply to prize a man who matches her level of ferocity, who doesn’t flinch at the primal roar of her soul.

Anyway, deep analysis doesn’t necessarily become a show that at one point has Petruchio wearing strappy leather chaps like some butch midnight cowboy, and a Tranio (Allen is endless fun in this part) who struts around like Bono in giant black shades and a foppish outfit that makes him look like a peach with legs. (Deirdre Clancy’s costumes are a wonder of exuberant wit and color).

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Petruchio hands his new wife one wilted bouquet of words when he calls Kate “my anything.” Only a few letters separate that phrase from “my everything.” But the difference between their meanings is as clear as a blinking neon sign.

DETAILS “The Taming of the Shrew” When: Running in nightly repertory with “King Lear” and “The Madness of George III.” (Check theater for schedule.) Where: Lowell Davies Festival Theatre, Balboa Park. Tickets: \$29-\$78 (\$19 for onstage seats) Phone: (619) 234-5623 Online: [theoldglobe.org](http://theoldglobe.org)

## THEATER REVIEW

# Sincerity, chemistry make Globe's 'Shrew' go down easy

BY ANNE MARIE WELSH  
For the North County Times

What to do about Shakespeare's "Shrew"? The spirited heroine, Katherine, of "The Taming of the Shrew," is starved, sleep-deprived and humiliated into marriage on male terms; but if you're director Ron Daniels, you nonetheless play the script straight.

Other contemporary directors here have taken big liberties to bend and twist the play's message. We've seen the taming of headstrong Katherine by the boisterous Petruchio treated farcically as a lusty Dick-and-Liz sex comedy, ironically with a twinkling, winking Kate actually subduing her new husband, and sardonically with a gender-reversed couple underscoring the sourness of the wife-buying and woman-bullying themes.

In his lively, lucid and effective staging for the Old Globe's Summer Shakespeare Festival, Daniels doesn't deconstruct, emphasize or downplay the distasteful themes. They're just there, along with the fun.

Though he drops the Induction that frames the play as the dream of a drunken beggar, Daniels retains the sense that "Shrew" unfolds as performance. Before the show, actors hang out talking to the audience. Some patrons sit onstage, the actors cheekily addressing speeches to them. And throughout, the players get a workout, running up and down aisles of the Globe's outdoor theater.

Yet the cast — most of whom appeared in Adrian Noble's mighty "King Lear" that preceded it on the same stage — often slows the action so we can



**Jonno Roberts and Emily Swallow are Petruchio and Katherine in "The Taming of the Shrew" at the Old Globe.** Photo courtesy of Craig Schwartz

## "The Taming of the Shrew"

**WHEN** 8 p.m. Thursday, Sunday and July 17, 20, 23, 25, 27, Aug. 4, 6, 7, 12, 13, 17, 20, 22, 27, Sept. 1, 2, 9, 10, 15, 18 and 25; also 7 p.m. Sept. 19, 21 and 26

**WHERE** Lowell Davies Festival Theatre, Old Globe complex, 1353 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park, San Diego

**TICKETS** \$29-\$78 (there are also 14 seats onstage priced at \$19)

**INFO** 619-234-5623  
[www.theoldglobe.org](http://www.theoldglobe.org)

hear the words and exactly what they mean as these particular actors shade them. Petruchio's solo comparing his taming technique with falconry ("Thus have I politically begun my reign") becomes a carefully calibrated, logical argument. The virile actor Jonno Roberts sits at a table and talks directly to the audience, asking "He that knows better — Now let him speak."

Similarly, actor Emily Swallow's changed Katherine presents her grand "instructions" to disobedient

wives so sincerely at the end, the character's words both make sense as argument and also seem a kind of foreplay.

There's no getting round that this is a patriarchal world that stings women of talent and spirit. But in context, the romance feels real, not smirky, for eyes lock when Roberts' Petruchio first sees Swallow's Katherine and she him. This vigorous pair leave little doubt their sexual curiosity has been roused, their chemistry ignited and something special may result. Like Romeo and Juliet without the tragedy, they bond at first sight.

With its multiple disguises and mistaken identities, its travels, tamings and teasings, the plot is complicated, but Daniels and company clarify character and action, without resorting to the visual frou-frou or insistent slapstick that marked the Globe's 2002 staging by John Rando. In equal measure because of his direction, Deirdre Clancy's costumes and the actors' physical attitudes, we always know who's noble, who's not, who's a fool or a fop.

The cast is solid, if not dazzling. Roberts fills the bill in the juicy role of Petruchio, the swaggering bachelor come to "wive it wealthily in Padua." His disarming smile ever at the ready, he shares the character's fun teasing friends, servants, and Katherine whom he presents with images of her own bad behavior. In the early scenes on opening night, Roberts seemed overcareful, almost insistent about diction, but by evening's end, he gained fluency and combined na-

## 'Shrew'

Continued from Page 21

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The vocally gifted actor Adrian Sparks makes Baptista Minola, father of the marriageable sisters, more than an exasperated dad or simple Renaissance tyrant. He's a wealthy man of substance, unsure what to do about Kate. His daughters may be his property, but he treats them lovingly, too.

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As Kate's feminine sister Bianca, the shrill-voiced Bree Welch keeps to the middle of the road, creating something more than a total airhead.

As ever with the Festival, it's a pleasure watching actors take on opposite parts from those in which we first meet them. Charles Janasz morphed from the credulous, cruelly blinded father Gloucester in the tragedy of "King Lear" to the faux father of Bianca's suitor, Lucentio, in "Shrew."

Best of all in a secondary role, though, was Michael Stewart Allen, whose sadistic Cornwall in "Lear" was the stuff of nightmares. In "Shrew," he's the wily Tranio, a servant become so comically adept at play-acting as his master you may not want to see him unmasked at the end.



Home / Entertainment / Arts-and-theatre / Theatre

## THEATER REVIEW: Sincerity, chemistry make Globe's 'Shrew' go down easy

- Story
- Discussion

By ANNE MARIE WELSH - For the North County Times | Posted: July 7, 2010 9:31 am | No Comments Posted | Print

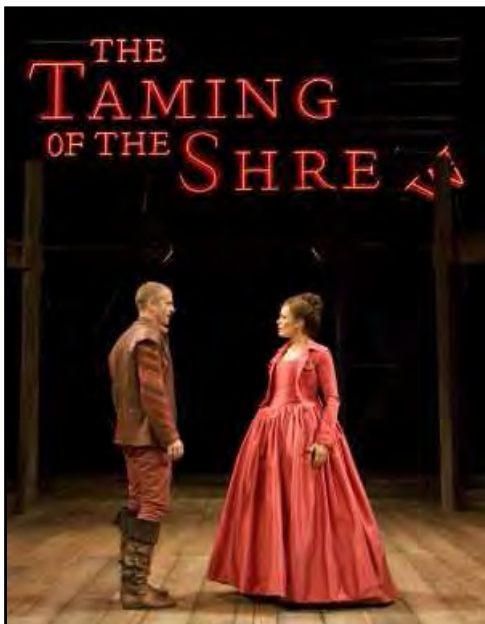
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[Buy this photo](#) Craig Schwartz Jonno Roberts as Petruchio and Emily Swallow as Katherine in the 2010 Shakespeare Festival production of "The Taming of the Shrew" at the Old Globe. Photo courtesy of Craig Schwartz

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As Kate's feminine sister Bianca, the shrill-voiced Bree Welch keeps to the middle of the road, creating something more than a total airhead.

As ever with the Festival, it's a pleasure watching actors take on opposite parts from those in which we first meet them. Charles Janasz morphed from the credulous, cruelly blinded father Gloucester in the tragedy of "King Lear" to the faux father of Bianca's suitor, Lucentio, in "Shrew." Best of all in a secondary role, though, was Michael Stewart Allen whose sadistic Cornwall in "Lear" was the stuff of nightmares. In "Shrew," he's the wily Tranio, a servant become so comically adept at play-acting as his master you may not want to see him unmasked at the end.

"The Taming of the Shrew"

When: 8 p.m. Thursday, Sunday and July 17, 20, 23, 25, 27, Aug. 4, 6, 7, 12, 13, 17, 20, 22, 27, Sept. 1, 2, 9, 10, 15, 18 and 25; also 7 p.m. Sept. 19, 21 and 26

Where: Lowell Davies Festival Theatre, Old Globe complex, 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park, San Diego

Tickets: \$29-\$78 (there are 14 seats onstage, priced at \$19, for each performance)

Info: 619-234-5623

Web: [theoldglobe.org](http://theoldglobe.org)

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**REVIEWS**

&gt;&gt; ARCHIVES

## Robin and the 7 Hoods

 Reviewed By: **Rob Stevens** · Aug 2, 2010 · San Diego

"Ring-a-Ding-Ding" is not only the 19th and final Sammy Cahn/Jimmy Van Heusen song heard in the new musical *Robin and the 7 Hoods*, now getting its world premiere at San Diego's Old Globe Theatre, it also perfectly sums up the audience's feeling for this delightful show. Playwright Rupert Holmes and choreographer/director Casey Nicholaw seem to have struck gold with this new musical, which is based oh-so-loosely on the 1964 film of the same name starring Frank Sinatra and the members of the so-called Rat Pack.

Holmes has wisely set the action in the now-popular *Mad Men* era of 1962. Robbo (Eric Schneider) is a likable gangster who is trying to go legit with a string of nightclubs; but he and his gang are forced to go back to their safecracking ways when crime boss P.J. Sullivan (Rick Holmes) tries to put them out of business by bribing cop Lieutenant Nottingham (Adam Heller). Crusading TV reporter Marian Archer (Kelly Sullivan) doesn't help matters when she proclaims Robbo as a modern day Robin Hood, stealing from gangsters and giving to the poor.

Schneider possesses Sinatra's suave and sophisticated coolness as Robbo, while putting his own stamp on the role. Among the gang members are Will Chase as Little John, Robbo's number two, who gives a hint of the insouciant and lubricated nature of Dean Martin without ever lapsing into parody. Jeffrey Schecter as Willie Scarlatti retains Sammy Davis' stellar tap dancing style. The major change here is now the character of Alana O'Dell is played by Amy Spanger -- who obviously bears no resemblance at all to the film's co-star, Bing Crosby.

The true joy of the show, though, is in hearing these pop songs used to advance plot and delineate character. "Call Me Irresponsible" is turned into a fun duet between the marriage-minded Alana and the footloose Little John. "I Like to Lead When I Dance" is a delightful male/female tussle for the top position in a budding romantic relationship between Robbo and Marian.

"Walkin' Happy" turns into a tour-de-force tap number by Schecter as he merrily distributes stolen money to Chicago's down-and-out citizenry; "Come Fly With Me" becomes a whirlwind number by Little John and Alana; "All the Way" is Marian's declaration of love; and perhaps the show's funniest and most endearing number comes when Lt. Nottingham encourages Robbo to keep up the good fight with "High Hopes."

Nicholaw's direction is assured and deft, and his choreography is superb. Even though the chorus girls whipping their cat tails in "Life is for Livin'" is reminiscent of the cows in *The Will Rogers Follies*, and the hoods cavorting through "Come Blow Your Horn" resemble the gamblers in *Guys and Dolls*, these numbers are done with such élan and style that they come across as more homage than knockoff. And his *Jailhouse Rock* spin on "(Love Is) The Tender Trap" is truly show-stopping.

Robert Brill's two-level open paneled scenic design perfectly fits all locales, while Kenneth Posner's pinpoint lighting design and Gregg Barnes' costumes are period perfect. And John McDaniel, Bill Elliott, Mark Hummel and David Chase have all contributed their considerable talents to making the songs sound sparkling fresh.


 Will Chase and Eric Schneider  
 in *Robin and the 7 Hoods*  
 (© Craig Schwartz)

**A Little Night**
**Glee Wins Top**  
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**Stage!** FEATURE

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**Warren, et al.**  
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**Quiet Please:**  
 Kristin Chenoweth  
 Neuwirth, Marin



## Icon or Abusive Swine?

*He's money mad ("wealth is the burden of my wooing dance") and regards Kate as an investment.*

The males in Shakespeare's original audience for *Taming of the Shrew* probably saw Petruchio as a Hercules and Katherine Minola as his 13th labor, far graver than swabbing down the Augean stables or slaying the man-eating mares of Diomedes. At a time when women began to question their fixed place in society — there was even a woman on the throne — most males must have sighed deep relief at the end when Kate, tamed like an erstwhile bucking bronco, tells other wives to put their hand beneath their husbands' feet and be dutiful.

The males who footed the bill for tickets to the Globe probably roared like pirates when Petruchio tamed "cursed Kate," the "fiend of hell." Some among them may have applauded the means: various deprivations from fashion choices to food and sleep. And a majority must have felt that, above all else, order had been restored.

It's also likely that they didn't hear bedraggled Grumio describe his master as "a devil" and "mad-brained" and more cursed than Kate (who calls Petruchio a "mad-brain rudesby"). They probably gave these remarks as little heed as people give TV commercials listing the nega-

tive side effects of a medication. And when Curtis, one of his servants, says Petruchio is "more shrew than she," they turned a deaf ear.

Come forward in time and two Petruchios emerge: an icon of male dominance or an abusive, sexist swine. For the Old Globe Theatre, inventive director Ron Daniels negotiates a third possibility. This Petruchio talks the talk, sure: he'll "wife wealthily in Padua." But when he walks the walk, he ain't no colossus.

He's money mad ("wealth is the burden of my wooing dance") and regards Kate as an investment, no more human than his house, horse, or ox. Until he sees her. In act 1, Tranio and Lucentio argue about love at first sight. A flower, called "love-in-idleness," can induce it in fiction, says Lucentio (alluding to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*). At the Old Globe, when Petruchio first sees Kate, and she him, time skips a tick; their eyes laser-lock. From this point on, both spin a tad sideways. They perform Shakespeare's play dutifully, scene for scene, while something like the *Real Thing* grows on the margin.

It's almost as if they see and see through each other. And the strategy works, at least until

tact throughout suggests not that he's a seasoned wooer but that he's never woo'd before.

Neither has Emily Swallow's Kate. There's civility and taste in her gorgeous, petticoat-puffed red dress (Deirdre Clancy's color-rich costumes always a plus) but none in her demeanor. She's as raw as Petruchio and, until now, had no reason to be otherwise. Although she often over-indicates disbelief with her eyes, Swallow conveys the sense that Kate will go along with the charade, to see if there's anything behind it.

In the production's best scene, Petruchio, Kate, and an armada of servants have a dinner from hell. In near slow-motion, things fall apart, and Petruchio, whom Roberts gives a dash of the commedia, becomes more spoiled and shrewish than anything Kate has done. Curtis was right. But why does Kate — mud-caked, dead tired, starving (for food and sexual consummation) — continue the game?

Given *Shrew*'s inherent misogyny, Roberts and Swallow trod a tricky path. They undercut familiar lines with telling gestures and physicality. It's almost a play-within-the-play, or opposed stories vying for the spotlight. And it's always entertaining. But as in the cruel dinner scene, it's hard at times to think that even love at first sight could overcome Petruchio's boot-camp tactics.

As he infiltrates the text



*Taming of the Shrew: It's almost as if they see and see through each other.*

**The Taming of the Shrew** by William Shakespeare  
**Old Globe Theatre**, Lowell Davies Festival Theatre, Balboa Park  
**Directed by Ron Daniels**; cast: Emily Swallow, Bree Welch, Michael Stewart Allen, Charles Janasz, Jay Whittaker, Jonno Roberts, Bruce Turk, Adrian Sparks, Craig Dudley, Joseph Marcell, Donald Carrier, Shirine Babb; scenic design, Ralph Funicello; costumes, Deirdre Clancy; lighting, Alan Burrett; sound, Christopher R. Walker  
**Playing through September 23.** Runs in repertory with *King Lear* and *The Madness of George III*. 619-234-5623.

the curtain comes down.

In *King Lear*, Jonno Roberts makes the Bastard Edmund an assertive, evil, and funny interloper, sharing schemes with the audience as if we, like he, were social outcasts. Roberts gives Petruchio the same forthright assertiveness,

but with a difference. Beneath the bluster, this crimson-caped, jut-jawed smiler is a "rudesby." He stumbles, he bumbles. That the courtiers of Padua believe he's in control says tons about their sophistication. Roberts seems half-surprised when a strategy succeeds; and his lack of

with a second story, the director sneaks glimpses of today into the period. He has audience members seated onstage (contemporary clothes jarring with late-Renaissance finery) and includes sunglasses and "you the man" fist bumps. The actors come onstage for the pre-show and, as in performances at the Globe, they perform a hearty dance after.

Bruce Turk, an annual mainstay of the summer season, plays the Fool in *Lear* and Grumio in *Shrew*, and wonderfully well. It's hard to say which character's more put upon. Of the strong supporting cast, Donald Carrier's Hortensio stands out; though Jay Whittaker, terrific as Edgar in *Lear*, goes hyper-over-the-top as young Lucentio, human jumping-bean. Bree Welch and Shirine Babb, as Bianca and a rich widow, suggest that marriage to these newlyweds will be no honeymoon. ■



## San Diego Arts

(<http://www.sandiego.com/arts/archive>)

THE TAMING OF THE SHREW by the Old Globe

*And the solving of a dilemma*

**By Don Braunagel**

Posted on Thu, Jul 1st, 2010

Last updated Thu, Jul 1st, 2010

Staging Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew* — like his *The Merchant of Venice* — presents a tricky problem for today's audiences. *Merchant* centers on the venal Jew, Shylock, and is frequently considered anti-Semitic. *Shrew* centers on the subjugation of a woman, transformed by a husband's cruel treatment from sharp-tongued and spirited to docile and obedient. The play even climaxes with that woman, Katherine, philosophizing that the only way to true happiness is through submission to a husband.

So what's a director to do? Honor the text and play it straight, or play it for laughs — as in "nudge, nudge, wink, wink, we don't really believe all this. And Shakespeare probably didn't either."

Ron Daniels, on the Old Globe's Festival Stage, has gingerly walked a tightrope and accomplished both. He's faithful to the text, presenting it almost in its entirety, crisply spoken and excellently acted. Yet it's obviously presented as a show within a show, full of comedy and definitely not to be taken seriously.



Emily Swallow, Jonno Roberts

Photo courtesy of the Old Globe

Shakespeare, possibly wanting to make that point, wrote introductory scenes making *Shrew* part of a tinker's drunken dreams. But, because the Bard wrote no finish to that frame, those scenes are rarely done. Instead, Daniels has used visuals to underscore the unreality. Some audience members sit on both sides of Ralph Funicello's platformed and adaptable Festival set, and looming over the middle of that set, in Vegas-type red neon letters, is the show's title — with an askew W. In short, Daniels is illustrating, don't get upset by the play's misogynist message — we're just here to have fun.

And fun it is. Primo performances by Emily Swallow as Katherine and Jonno Roberts as Petruchio, Kate's tormentor-lover, anchor a top-to-bottom fine cast. Swallow relies heavily on her expressive face to convey a range of emotions from anger through exasperation to devotion. Roberts makes good use of his charismatic smile and fluidity of movement to make Petruchio a charmer, almost forgivable even when he's heartlessly depriving his wife of food and sleep.

Petruchio's such a meanie because, after wedding the harridan Kate for her dowry, he wants a happy marriage with a peaceful wife. He took on that challenge because

Kate's father had rebuffed the many suitors of her beauteous younger sister, Bianca, saying that she couldn't wed until Kate had a husband.

The subplots involving the various swains, with much conniving and disguising, provide ample opportunities for comic behavior, and Daniels uses their physical and verbal jousting to advantage. Notable among the players were Jay Whittaker, Donald Carrier, Bruce Turk and Joseph Marcell. (Turk plays Grumio, a servant, and Marcell is Gremio, a rich merchant. Shakespeare may have been an immortal writer, but he wasn't terribly diverse in naming his characters. These two are particularly strange, unless he was ironically saying that just a letter's difference might determine one's lot in life.)

Daniels spreads the action and cast into the audience, and seasons the proceedings with Christopher R. Walker's original music, supplementing some choral singing and much dancing. Walker also did the distinct sound design, with vocal and dialect coaching by Claudia Hill-Sparks. The lively movement sequences are by Tony Caligagan, with fight direction by Steve Rankin.

Alan Burrett's lighting is superbly varied, particularly effective in evoking a thunderstorm. Still, the tech honors go to Deirdre Clancy for her costumes, instantly defining a character's station, from the luxurious garments and bejeweled shoes of the wealthy to the drab garb of the servants. Particularly clever is the gown given to Kate, then removed, piece by piece, by Petruchio.

Clancy also presumably designed the wonderful horses, worn over the "rider's" clothing with shoulder harnesses, in several scenes. Most dazzling is Petruchio's, shaped from wood (or plastic) pieces and controlled like the animals in *Lion King*. It's so realistic it even defecates.

**Cast** (<http://static.sandiego.com/articlefiles/217019bd-eee9-4c1f-b98d-19358a69be62/shrewcast.jpg>)

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## SAN DIEGO

Regional Reviews by Bill Eadie

### *The Taming of the Shrew* Old Globe Theatre

Also see Bill's review of [Surf Report](#)

Virgil's dictum that "Love conquers all" was a common theme in Shakespeare's plays, but *The Taming of the Shrew* is not an obvious candidate for this meme. And yet, that's exactly the tack taken by Ron Daniels' funny and sure-to-be-discussed production for the Old Globe's annual summer Shakespeare Festival.

Contemporary directors and audiences generally think of *The Taming of the Shrew* as a "problem play" to stage, mainly because of its grating misogynist language and its seeming glorification of women's submission to men. Directors have tried different approaches to this problem, from showing Kate the Shrew with her fingers crossed as she submits to her lover Petruchio, to emphasizing the physical humor in the style of Italian commedia dell'arte, to making Petruchio and Kate into early 17th century versions of George and Martha from *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*. Companies often turn this play over to women directors, many times with insightful and surprising results: director Rebecca Bayla Taichman's 2007 production for the Shakespeare Theatre of Washington, D.C., featured Petruchio wearing a wedding dress during the marriage ceremony.



**Jonno Roberts**

Mr. Daniels and Deirdre Clancy, his crack costume designer, have kept the period of the play roughly within 100 years of when it was written. It is a man's world, where all of the servants are male, and Mr. Daniels' production emphasizes that world through macho choreography (by Tony Caligagan) and at one point turning the servers into a glee club (fun, but watch the sagging pitch on the interior parts, guys).

It is also a world where marriages are arranged between families primarily for financial considerations. There are rules, though: a man in Baptista Minola's (Adrian Sparks) position must marry off his less-than-desirable elder daughter Katherine (Emily Swallow), who delights in scaring away potential suitors, and provide her with a substantial dowry before allowing his beautiful younger daughter Bianca (a very lovely Bree Welch) to marry and provide *him* with a dowry in return. Women such as Kate didn't have much choice: if her father came to an agreement with a man, she was obliged to marry that man. So, becoming a scary shrew was a logical reaction to this dilemma. Women such as Bianca, whose beauty could attract multiple suitors, rich ones such as Gremio (Joseph Marcell) and Lucentio (Jay Whittaker) and poor ones such as Hortensio (Donald Carrier), had much more leeway to be courted and marry for love.

Mr. Daniels imagines that Kate is taken with the handsome, well-spoken, but impoverished Petruchio (a sexy Jonno Roberts) at their first meeting. She gets that Petruchio is trying to save his estate by marrying her, and she's impressed that he may sound domineering but actually woos her with more kindness than sharp words. She willingly endures the torments of making the journey from her father's home to Petruchio's estate and though old habits die hard she puts up with his post-wedding "initiation" ceremony of food and sleep deprivation.

She's able to make these sacrifices because of her unyielding love for Petruchio, and doing so ends up putting her on a much more favorable (and equal) footing with him in their marriage.

Because Kate's story has been de-emphasized somewhat, more of the action focuses on the wooing of Bianca, and the audience gets to see why Kate decided to scare away potential suitors, as Bianca's are too old, too unattractive, or too weak. Even the one she eventually marries is on the run from his family obligations, not a great position from which to start a marriage.

Adrian Noble, who is serving as Artistic Director for this summer's Festival, has stated that he wants audiences to hear the plays rather than see them, and Mr. Daniels, who served as Mr. Noble's associate at Britain's Royal Shakespeare Company, has taken this admonition to heart. His staging invariably complements the play's text, and the acting company invariably speaks that text with a clarity that is rare in U.S. productions of Shakespeare.

Ms. Swallow embraces Mr. Daniels' vision of Kate, even though it means that her role in is a diminished one. Mr. Roberts is lively at every turn, and Ralph Funicello's scenic design, which includes on-stage audience seating, allows him to bounce off of everyone, including audience members, with great spontaneity. The large supporting cast turns in high quality, energetic performances. No matter whether you believe that Mr. Daniels has made his case, *The Taming of the Shrew* is a delight to hear—and watch.

Performances continue through September 26 at the outdoor Lowell Davies Festival Theatre on the Old Globe campus in San Diego's Balboa Park. The repertory also includes *King Lear* and *The Madness of King George III*, both of which are directed by Mr. Noble. Performances are arranged so that audiences can see all three plays across a three-day period. Tickets (\$29 - \$78; \$19 for onstage seating) are available by calling (619) 23-GLOBE [234-5623], or by visiting [The Old Globe's website](#).

The Old Globe presents *The Taming of the Shrew* by William Shakespeare. Directed by Ron Daniels with scenic design by Ralph Funicello, costume design by Deirdre Clancy, lighting design by Alan Burrett, sound design and original music by Christopher R. Walker, fight director Steve Rankin, movement sequences by Tony Caligagan, and vocal and dialect coaching by Claudia Hill-Sparks. The stage manager is James Latus, with assistance from Erin Gioia Albrecht, Moira Gleason, and Annette Yé. Samantha Barrie, CSA, did the casting.

With Michael Stewart Allen (Tranio), Shirine Babb (Widow), Donald Carrier (Hortensio), Craig Dudley (Tailor, Vincentio), Charles Janasz (Pedant, Curtis), Joseph Marcell (Gremio), Jordan McArthur (Biondello), Jonno Roberts (Petruchio), Adrian Sparks (Baptista Minola), Emily Swallow (Katherine), Bruce Turk (Grumio), Bree Welch (Bianca) and Jay Whittaker (Lucentio) and including Andrew Dahl, Grayson DeJesus, Ben Diskant, Christian Durso, Kevin Hoffmann, Andrew Hutcheson and Steven Marzolf (Ensemble).

*Photo credit: Craig Schwartz*

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## Old Globe 'Madness,' 'Shrew' plus arts news

News includes Comic-Con, George Steinbrenner, Trolley Dances

By [Pat Launer](#), [SDNN](#)

Wednesday, July 14, 2010

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(From left) Robert Foxworth (as Dr. Francis Willis), Miles Anderson (as King George III) and Emily Swallow (as Queen Charlotte) in the 2010 Shakespeare Festival production of Alan Bennett's "The Madness of George III" at The Old Globe. (Photo courtesy of The Old Globe)

**By George!**

**THE PLAY:** "The Madness of George III," the only non-Shakespeare part of the Old Globe's Summer Shakespeare



## Festival

When a film version was in the works for Alan Bennett's marvelously imaginative and disturbing 1991 drama, "The Madness of George III," about Britain's 18<sup>th</sup> century monarch, there was a serious concern that if American audiences saw "George III" in the title, they'd think it was a sequel, and would be unlikely to attend, assuming they'd missed the first two parts. Ah, those wacky English. They still don't trust the Colonies! But they got their way; the 1994 movie was called "The Madness of King George."

The United States was famously formed during George's reign, and if Bennett can be believed, that loss stuck in his craw for life. But he had plenty of other problems during the 1780s, when the play is set. (Side note: George died in 1820, at age 81. He was monarch for 59 years, longer than any of his kingly predecessors. Only his granddaughter, Queen Victoria, exceeded his record, though Elizabeth II has lived longer.)

The Whigs and Tories were at each other's throats. It was Fox against Pitt, father vs. son. George's overweight, overindulgent eldest offspring, the Prince of Wales (fat-suited Andrew Dahl) was aligned with Whig leader Charles Fox (Michael Stewart Allen), aiming to wrest power and be declared Regent. George was advised by his austere Prime Minister, William Pitt (outstanding Jay Whittaker, the most versatile performer in the whole Summer Festival). The problem for all was, the King seemed to be losing his mind.

Two centuries of conjecture have reflected on the possible causes of George's blue urine, coupled with his ranting, raving and rambling (during Christmas 1819, in the last weeks of his life, he reportedly blathered incoherently for 58 hours straight). The consensus has been porphyria, a genetic neurological disease. But a recent paper by two Englishmen, published in the March 2010 issue of the journal *History of Psychiatry*, claims otherwise. The debate, like the King himself, rages on.



Pat Launer

Though the play has an upbeat ending, King George actually descended further into lunacy and delirium toward the end of his life, and never regained his sanity. But during the 1780s, the Regency Bill authorizing the Prince of Wales to act as Prince Regent actually was passed in the House of Commons. Fortuitously, George recovered before the House of Lords could vote.

And so – or, "what what!" as the King would say – he kept his crown. But he descended repeatedly into the depths of mental illness, and was treated by all manner of self-serving medical quacks. The smart, witty play provides not only a history lesson about leadership and governmental machinations; it's a metaphor for an unhealthy political system and a broken medical system.

Adrian Noble, artistic director of the Globe's Summer Shakespeare Festival (already invited back for next year), helms a magnificent ensemble, centered by Miles Anderson's sensational performance as the King. He is by turns tender, furious, foul-mouthed, contrite, impatient and mad as a hatter. Spectacular work. All those around him are excellent, too, especially Emily Swallow as his Germanic Queen Charlotte, the aforementioned Whittaker as his chief adviser, and Robert Foxworth as Dr. Francis Willis, the only physician who achieves any results, but it's through a highly unconventional, rather punishing treatment. Though the acting is superb throughout, the repeated ceremonial posing and door-closing becomes tiresome over time.



The set (Ralph Funicello) is backed by a wall of mirrors (it's *all* about appearances and self-aggrandizement in court), and the costumes (Deirdre Clancy) provide the pomp and ceremony to match.

Some of the mad scenes are unsettling. But one of the delicious moments of the evening comes when the King (Anderson)

and the Doctor (Foxworth), in an effort to keep the ruler's emotions in check, read "King Lear" ("I had no idea what it was about," claims Dr. Willis, surprised by the story of another mad monarch). That moment is priceless; it's Foxworth who plays Lear on alternating nights. Noble certainly knew what he was doing this summer. The three-play cross-referencing is a piece of planning genius.

*See Pat Launer's review of "King Lear" [here](#).*

**THE LOCATION:** The Old Globe's Festival Stage in Balboa Park. (619) 234-5623; [www.theoldglobe.org](http://www.theoldglobe.org)

**THE DETAILS:** Tickets: \$29-\$78. "George III" runs in repertory (on selected evenings, Tuesday-Sunday), alternating with "The Taming of the Shrew" and "King Lear," through September 24

**Bottom Line: BEST BET**



Jonno Roberts (as Pretruchio) and Emily Swallow (as Katherine) in the 2010 Shakespeare Festival production of "The Taming of the Shrew" at The Old Globe. (Photo by Craig Schwartz)

**That's Funny; you don't look Shrewish!**

**THE PLAY:** "The Taming of the Shrew," the comic relief in the Globe's Summer Shakespeare Festival

Shakespeare's most knotty comedy (one of his so-called "problem plays") originally began with an Induction, a framing device that offers the action as a kind of historical diversion for a drunken tinker. It's usually omitted. Here, under the direction of Ron Daniels (former artistic director of the Royal Shakespeare Company's experimental theater, The Other Place, at Stratford-upon-Avon), it all starts with the players romping through the house (audience members even sit onstage), then ridiculing the obligatory cell phone announcement. The young men come up onstage for chest-bumps and (an overlong) dance. These guys, attractive and spirited as they may be, make repeat dancing/cavorting appearances that wear out their welcome.

But the mood of the production is set even before that. The first thing we see is the title of the play, screamed out in neon lights, with the final "W" dangling off, alerting us to the fact that things will continue to be slightly askew. The message is clear: this isn't gonna be your grandma's "Shrew."

There are a few excesses in the production. A good deal of silliness, for one thing. There's a marvelous cane horse, strapped on a man and able to do all manner of things (from wiggling its ears to expelling gas and dropping a load. The show could

definitely do without the potty humor). But where it's most important, Daniels gets it superbly right.

His central lovers, the opportunistic Petruchio and the harridan Katherine, are magnificent together. What has made this play a "problem" for four centuries is the apparent misogyny of its conceit.

Petruchio has come from Verona to "wive it wealthily in Padua." He hears about the well-heeled Minola daughters, the fair and docile (if vapid) Bianca and the ill-tempered hellion Kate. Their father, Baptista, will not marry off the younger sib, who has many fawning (and identity-swapping) suitors, until the elder is wed. That's a tall order for any man in town; they're all cowed by the hellcat with the whip-sharp tongue. But the swaggering braggart Petruchio is undaunted.

When he first meets Kate, we see instant chemistry, and for nearly every minute they're onstage together, they never take their eyes off each other. They both realize that this is a mating of peers – equally clever, witty, stubborn, intractable, emotional and sexual. In the text, Petruchio seems to "tame" her; after the wedding, he keeps her from food and drink; he makes her say the sun is the moon. But there's the sense that she's in on his game, that she knows, as he does, that theirs is a very fine match indeed. And that makes her final words, the really tough-to-take speech to the other brides about "true obedience," easy to accept. She's not being sarcastic or subservient; her definition of "obedience" is elastic. Like King George III, she has learned (the hard way), the value of self-control – that is, once she drops her defensive veneer of irascibility. Like any good mate, she'll do what it takes to make a marriage work, and that's valuable advice to any newlywed.

In the riveting, passionate and forceful performances of Jonno Roberts and Emily Swallow, we are swept up in the relationship. We aren't made to feel queasy or uneasy in the difficult parts, and that's a triumph of acting and directing. Most of the rest of the cast is happily gamboling over the top. Jay Whittaker is a hoot as the foppish Lucentio, who finally gets the girl (Old Globe MFA student Bree Welch is a pleasant Bianca). Petruchio's wily servant, Grumio, is played by Bruce Turk, who's the Fool in "King Lear." At one point, he offhandedly sings "the rain it raineth every day," a Shakespearean Fool's song from another play ("Twelfth Night's" Feste), which somehow manages to make us think of "Lear" and his storm. The cross-referenced interweaving of the Festival plays is delightful.

Special mention must be made of the costumes (Deirdre Clancy) which are jaw-dropping gorgeous. The original music (Christopher R. Walker) is often effective, but swells like a film score at emotional high-points. There are up and down moments throughout the evening, but in sum, it's great, giddy fun. And beautifully realized. This Kate and Petruchio are a couple of winners, in every way.

**THE LOCATION:** The Old Globe's Festival Stage in Balboa Park. (619) 234-5623; [www.theoldglobe.org](http://www.theoldglobe.org)

**THE DETAILS:** Tickets: \$29-\$78. "The Taming of the Shrew" runs in repertory (on selected evenings, Tuesday-Sunday), alternating with "King Lear" and "The Madness of George III," through September 26

**Bottom Line: BEST BET**

## NEWS AND VIEWS

... **That OTHER George III: George Steinbrenner III**, who passed away this week, wasn't only interested in baseball, and **Yankees** games weren't all he attended in New York. The bombastic team Boss was also a theater producer. From 1967 to 1989, he was associated with six Broadway shows, including comedies ("Not Now, Darling"), dramas ("Abelard and Heloise") and musicals ("Applause," "Seesaw," "Legs Diamond"). Some productions didn't fare so well ("The Ninety Day Mistress" closed in 1967 after only 24 performances), but the musicals were all nominated for Tony Awards; "Legs" won two, and "Applause" was named Best Musical of 1970. "Now Not, Darling" didn't do so great on the Great White Way (21 performances), but it's had a expansive afterlife, recently seen, to excellent effect, at Scripps Ranch Theatre. So, Sports Fans, there *is* crossover. Try the theater some gameless Saturday night!

... **Speaking of Games:** Just in time for **Comic-Con**, "**GAM3RS**," the hilarious solo show about online gaming (of the conquer-the-world variety) is back. Having had a successful run at ion theatre, the high-octane, one-act comedy, delectably performed by **Brian Bielawski** (co-written with Walter G. Meyer), will have 15 extra performances, right near the site of the mega-Con. And since that's a bit much even for the tireless Bielawski (a USD alum), local actor **Steven Lone** will step in for some performances. This one's not just for your geek-friends; your gal-pals will get a big kick out of it, too. [Read my full review here](#). And check it out at the 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue Theatre, playing 2-3 times a day, July 20-25. "Gam3rs" forms the centerpiece of **Gam3rCon**, which will take over several floors of the 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue Theatre, offering game demos, gaming



Taming  
of the  
Shrew,  
San  
Diego

By William Shakespeare  
Directed by Ron Daniels  
Lowell Davies Festival Theatre  
Old Globe, San Diego  
June 16 – September 26, 2010

It only gets better. The merchant Baptista (Adrian Sparks) has two daughters—demur Bianca (Bree Welch) and his eldest, sharp-tongued Katherine (Emily Swallow). Naturally, the eligible gentlemen of Padua are



only interested in Bianca, but Baptista has rules. Bianca cannot wed before Katherine. Bianca's various suitors despair, until Petruchio (Jonno Roberts) appears. Unfazed by Katherine's reputation, Petruchio boldly pledges to subdue and marry her.

"Shrew" rises or falls on the interplay between Katherine and Petruchio, and Swallow and Roberts do not disappoint. Swallow's Katherine has a subdued rage that terrifies all but Petruchio, while Robert's Petruchio parries Katherine's anger with his own sly arrogance. "Taming" Katherine requires drastic, some might say torturous, methods. However, it's worth noting that the production tempers some of the more problematic (i.e., misogynistic) interchanges and the subdued shrew comes off as more of an equal than a subordinate.

Meanwhile, Bianca must also be won. Lucentio (Jay Whittaker) devises a plot in which he becomes the young lady's tutor, while his servant Tranio (Michael Stewart Allen) masquerades as him. Whittaker portrays Lucentio with a doltish charm, but Allen is excellent at caricaturing his lord.

Throughout the show, the informal style adds to the fun. A lord throws his cane to his servant and when the servant drops it, gives him a playful stink eye; a horse-like contraption makes several appearances; a gaggle of servants lament the broken "W." Ron Daniels' direction is spot-on and the costumes (Deirdre Clancy) range from appropriate to spunky. Go see it. Big fun.

**Joshua Baxt**

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## Shrew Shines Like a Star NEW!



by [Melissa Crismon](#)

July 28, 2010

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**Taming of the Shrew**  
by William Shakespeare

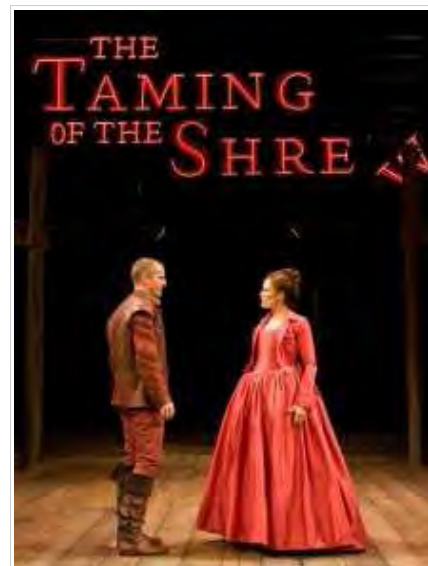
### The Old Globe

June 12 - September 26, 2010

Acting	★★★★★
Costumes	★★★★★
Sets	★★★★★
Directing	★★★★★
<b>Overall</b>	★★★★★

The Old Globe's merrymaking *The Taming of the Shrew* celebrates the theater's 75th year with surprises, a captive audience and a few stars.

Before the show begins, the servant lads talk to the audience. One explains to the front row that they might get spit on; the really good actors can spit as far as the fifth row. It turns out the front row has its advantages too. When Katherine (Emily Swallow) went to throw her shoe at her father, Baptista Minola (Adrian Sparks), it landed in a lady's hands almost hitting her face. With some quick thinking, Sparks took the shoe and said, as if to apologize, "You thought you had good seats." As the audience laughs, Michael Stewart Allen (Tranio, at this point is already dressed like his master Lucentio) makes a quirk about the shoe and has the audience roaring. There is seating on stage; a boy about thirteen is nibbled by Petruchio's (Jonno Roberts) horse. The horse goes out of control toward the front row as it lets out a few droppings. Petruchio's servant Grumio, audience favorite Bruce Turk, scoops up the droppings into a bucket. Turk looks into the bucket looking like he is going to throw it at the audience. Instead, out comes glitter. Other special effects include tiny bubbles that the audience tries to catch. The same bubbles create a storm in *King Lear* doing double duty in the Old Globe's concurrent production; everybody's on a budget these days.



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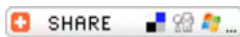
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Appearing not on a budget is Deirdre Clancy's costume design which is much more flamboyant compared to *King Lear*, in part thanks to Lonnie Gettman, owner of Designer Fabric, who collects exclusive fabric samples from big names in the clothing industry, graciously donating pieces for this show and others. The men are in knickers, high heels and hats. While Swallow and Bree Welch, as sweet Bianca, are in bell shaped wedding dresses with ornate detail.

The scenic design by Ralph Funicello is much like the set up of *King Lear* this time utilizing a bridge lift for a dining table. Unlike other San Diego theaters, the stage hands are never seen except for one exception. After intermission, one of the servant lads notices the "W" in the electric *Taming of the Shrew* sign is crooked and has a stage manager come out to look. A servant lad goes up the stairs to fix the "W" with a cracking, lights flash and a storm of bubbles float into the theater. Anyway, the servant lads played it off well and on went the show.

The chemistry between the leads Katherine (Emily Swallow) and Petruchio (Jonno Roberts) doesn't go unnoticed by the audience. Roberts is a charming and pompous Petruchio, always grinning, smiling and adding to the festive atmosphere. Swallow makes faces, grits her teeth or shows them to the audience like she's a horse, making fists and claws. Swallow and Roberts are likeable as an archetypal husband and wife. Persuasively, the best part—Kate's monologue at the end of the play—Swallow walks toward Roberts as she says, "Why are our bodies soft and weak and smooth," while Robert grins proudly, winning the bet and, best of all, Kate's affection. And off to bed they go.

Supporting actors Jay Whittaker, Michael Stewart Allen added some fun confusion. It's like a "Where's Waldo" picture when following Whittaker as Lucentio (and Edgar in *King Lear*) with his costume changes and character transformations. Allen is pimped out, pretending to be Lucentio, in yellow knickers and cape with sunglasses, high heel shoes and hair shaved in back with long bangs. He is a reminder of Elton John in his "I'm Still Standing" video and you won't get the "Ya, ya, ya!" song out of your head.

Joseph Marcell performs Gremio with high energy and is in on the game of finding a suitor for Kate. Marcell is often recognized for his role as "Geoffrey" on the 90s television hit *The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air*, but he is also an accomplished Shakespearean actor who has been on the Artistic Directorate and Council at Shakespeare's Globe for 25 years.

Celebrities were in the audience as well. Ben McKenzie, who played Ryan Atwood from the show *The O.C.* and now works on *Southland* (returning in January 2011).

Watching a production at the Old Globe always feels like you are watching a star in the making. This is definitely a show not to be missed.



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### The Taming of the Shrew

By January Riddle



Roberts, Swallow  
Photo by Craig Schwartz

Shakespeare's comedy, *The Taming of the Shrew* is, on its face, a troublesome play, not suited for our times. Its blatant misogyny is offensive to the relatively recent modern feminism and equality. But this comic "War of the Roses" is one of the Bard's most interesting character studies. The plot is rooted in the ideals of courtly love made fashionable by Sir Thomas Hoby's English translation of Count Baldassare Castiglione's 1528 *The Book of the Courtier*. Although Shakespeare meant this play as a satire, Hoby's book had become a serious self-help bible for the royal wanna-bes of the time.

So, what's a contemporary director to do? How about have fun with it, camp it up, do some silliness, and take the energy to another level? Director Ron Daniels does just that, and the current production at San Diego's Old Globe Theatre is better for it. The vigor of the production, beginning with a zany, noisy opening dance with serfs (the farmers, not the tide riders) wielding staffs (the stick, not the entourage), lessons the bump and grind of a Neanderthal dogma, elevating it to the ridiculous. Wonderfully performed by an enthusiastic troupe of student actors in the Old Globe/USD MFA Program, the dance is actually a take-off on the Elizabethan skimmington ride, a parade organized to publicly chastise those who flaunted convention.

Audience members, some sitting on stage, become villagers and part of some improvisational action, as characters race up and down aisles or climb over laps, some riding costume horses.

Ralph Funicello's scenic design includes the play's title in flamingly intense neon with a tilted W; Deirdre Clancy's brilliant, outrageous period costumes include a rip-apart gown and sunglasses. Olay! The stage is set for a madcap version of the play, and the production does not wane from its wild beginning, capitalizing on Shakespeare's penchant for role-switching and mistaken identities with a healthy dose of ridicule.

The story, in case you have missed the movie, "Kiss me, Kate," as well as any staging since, is about Katherine (Emily Swallow), an over-the-top assertive elder daughter of a backbone-lacking wealthy merchant, Baptista Minola (a convincingly pompous Adrian Sparks), eager to marry her off to any breathing male in the kingdom. Resisting the role of marketable



property, Katherine has her not-so-cutesy ways of discouraging suitors. She has no use for the fairytale of wedded bliss nor for dad's motives for encouraging it, so she makes his life nearly as miserable as her own. Not only does daddy-o want dauntless daughter out of his house, he has ulterior motives that include an increase of fortune. Papa wants to settle the bride-price for his younger daughter Bianca (an engaging Bree Welch), who has no dearth of moneyed and/or willing suitors. Due to courtly custom and daddy's spinelessness, the elder offspring must be wed before the younger is betrothed. (Is it any wonder than our heroine is a bit, shall we say, irritated at her culture's conventions?)

Nevertheless, it is a medieval Neverland that produces a fortune-hunter eager to take on the opportunity and the woman who controls it to bolster his sagging fortunes. Enter Petruchio (Jonno Roberts), the champion of the milquetoasts, who immediately wins her father's permission, then scores Kate's acquiescence. How he accomplishes the latter would require a super willing suspension of disbelief without the magnetic scene between the two principals. Accompanied by his foolish servant Grumio (an athletic and amusing Bruce Turk), Petruchio has come to increase his fortune, but he did not anticipate the intrigue of a beautiful woman at least as smart as he. In Petruchio, Katherine has met her match, and she is intrigued at the same time she is defending her pride and dignity. The rebel with a (financial) cause meets the rebellious woman without prospects. It is a priceless scene, full of sexual tension and foreshadowing a rocky, but never boring, relationship.

It wouldn't be such a successful satire without the risk-taking of the starring duo, Emily Swallow as the \_ \_ \_ \_ (rhymes with "witch") new wife Katherine and Jonno Roberts as the \_ \_ \_ \_ (rhymes with "pick") new husband Petruchio. Both actors are masters of the tiny facial twitch, the sly cast of eye, the significant smile that contemporizes the ancient dialogue into progressive patois. Roberts plays his radiant smile and intensely handsome face to crafty advantage, and the stunning Swallow captures Katherine's haughty elegance with the perfectly timed emotion-switching that her multifaceted character demands. Together, they show this sexual struggle as a campaign of wits, just as Shakespeare envisioned, but nearly half a millennium later. It's as if *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf* suddenly starred Mel Gibson and Whoopie Goldberg. Are you kidding? Would she really put up with his \_ \_ \_ \_ (rhymes with "lap")?

Adding comedic complexity is the trio of the younger sister Bianca's would-be beaus, who compete with each other for her attentions when they are not courting her father's alliance. There is Lucentio (a vigorous Jay Whittaker), a silly young man whose giddy, lovelorn antics emulate Tom Cruise's couch-bouncing. Attempting to get closer to his sweetheart, Lucentio masquerades as a tutor, switching places with his servant, Tranio, (an outrageous Michael Stewart Allen) to win the heart of his beloved.

Making the grade as the sexy senior citizen is Gremio (a dapper Joseph Marcell,) who has the Daddy Warbucks to take naive little Bianca to his pad, and the young impoverished imposter posing as land baron, Hortensio is an ultra campy Donald Carrier.

While Petruchio attempts to win Kate's heart by being nastier than she, employing sleep deprivation and starvation in his war to win her by breaking her down, the others stumble all over themselves to prove their devotion to her sweet younger sister and her greedy father. It matters not who is the

winner, for all will gain their just due in the end. Hortensio weds a wealthy widow (a stunning Shirine Babb); Lucentio marries his girl, Bianca, and the servants resume their raucous skimmington ride. Before that resolution, another place-switching between a traveling pedant (Charles Janasz) masquerading as Lucentio's father Vincentio (Craig Dudley), who shows up unannounced, prompts another Shakespearian set of hijinks involving Tranio disguised as Lucentio.

Never mind trying to figure it all out. In this early comedy of one-uppance and comeuppance Shakespeare made his critique of convention. True to comedic form, in the end all is forgiven, and the world continues revolving exactly as it should. Perhaps.

Petruchio may believe he has tamed his Katherine. Yet, there is a hint in Lucentio's final line that this domesticated heroine is simply biding her time. If only there were a sequel.

*William Shakespeare's "The Taming of the Shrew" continues in repertory with "King Lear" and "The Madness of George III" through September 26 on the Old Globe Theatre's outdoor Lowell Davies Festival stage. Performances are designated Tuesdays through Sundays at 8 pm. Tickets are \$29-\$78. Reservations at (619) 23-GLOBE or online at [www.theoldglobe.org](http://www.theoldglobe.org)*

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## THEATER REVIEW: Old Globe scores a winner with "Taming Of The Shrew"

Jean Lowerison - SDGLN Theater Critic | Sat, 07/03/2010 - 10:25am | [Login to bookmark or comment](#)

SAN DIEGO -- When I was young and impressionable, I read in a magazine article that Argentine dictator Juan Perón sometimes tortured his starving prisoners by eating sumptuous meals in front of them.

That image comes to mind every time I watch a Petruchio try to break his bride's will by denying her food and sleep in Shakespeare's "The Taming Of The Shrew."

Whether or not it worked for Perón, it certainly does for Petruchio, and though the notion of bending woman's spirit to man's will is not a cheery one to most women, that hasn't kept "The Taming Of The Shrew" from becoming one of the Bard's most popular comedies.

Ron Daniels directs the old favorite through Sept. 26 as part of The Old Globe Theatre's summer Shakespeare Festival.

You remember the plot of this rollicking carnival of desire, disguise and moneygrubbing. Wealthy old Baptista (Adrian Sparks) has two daughters: the headstrong, sharp-tongued Kate, aka "the curst" (Emily Swallow) and the lovely and sweet Bianca (Bree Welch).

Bianca has suitors galore, but Baptista wants to marry off the elder first. So when a gold digger from Verona named Petruchio (Jonno Roberts) shows up "to wive it wealthily in Padua," the plot is set. It doesn't hurt that Petruchio is also smart and handsome.

It's a battle of wills and words between Kate and Petruchio; in the subplot, it's a game of disguise and subterfuge for Kate's hand, and the audience gets to watch the craziness play out.

This production is a bit of a circus, complete with a row of audience members stage left and right and a red neon title sign with the "w" askew serving as a hint of what's to come.

The plot of "Shrew" invites excess, and though there's plenty of that in the stage business (one small example: Petruchio "rides" in on a bamboo-frame "horse" whose head action he controls mechanically), credit Daniels and the fine cast with playing the characters relatively straight so the comedy can speak for itself.

Speaking of the script, kudos to Festival artistic director Adrian Noble, Daniels and the casts of both "Lear" and "Shrew" for slowing down and savoring those amazing words in a way I have never seen here.

Roberts, supremely evil in "Lear" as Gloucester's bastard son Edmund, is a perfect Petruchio – cocky, self-assured, the kind you'd want to slug except for that dazzling smile.

Swallow's glowering Kate knows in their first encounter that she's met her match (maybe even her perfect match) and indicates with subtle expression and demeanor changes her growing (dare I say it?) respect for the man she will eventually come to call her lord.

Welch is a suitably pretty, sweet and psychologically malleable Bianca, who has somehow managed to attract a trio of losers as suitors: Marcell (so effective as Lear's wronged Kent) the ancient sugar daddy Gremio; the blob Hortensio (Donald Carrier) and Lucentio, played rather puzzlingly as a simpleton by Jay Whittaker.

Acting, staging and attitude: This "Shrew" has it all, including what another critic calls "garage sale costumes" that work wonderfully.

### The details

"The Taming Of The Shrew" plays through Sept. 26 at the Old Globe's Festival Theatre in Balboa Park in repertory with "King Lear" and Alan Bennett's "The Madness Of George III."

Tuesday through Sunday at 8 p.m.; some 7 p.m. start times in September.

For tickets, call (619) 23-GLOBE or visit [www.TheOldGlobe.org](http://www.TheOldGlobe.org).

[ENLARGE](#)



Photo credit: The Old Globe

Emily Swallow as Katherine and Jonno Roberts as Petruchio in the 2010 Shakespeare Festival production of The Taming of the Shrew



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## A *CurtainUp* California Review

*the Taming of the Shrew*

**By Jenny Sandman**



Scene from *The Taming of the Shrew* at the Old Globe (Photo: Craig Schwartz)

*Come, come, you wasp, i'faith you are too angry.*—Petrucio  
*If I be waspish, best beware my sting.*—Katherine  
*My remedy is then to pluck it out.*—Petruchio  
*—Ay, if the fool could find where it lies.* Katherine  
*Who knows not where a wasp does wear his sting? In his tail.*  
—Petruchio

*In his tongue.*— Katherine  
— *Whose tongue?* Petrucchio

*Yours, if you talk of tales, and so farewell. — Katherine*  
*What, with my tongue in your tail? — Petruchio;*

*The Taming of the Shrew* is the Old Globe's third repertory production this summer, rounding out *King Lear* and *The Madness of George III*. We're all familiar with the basic story which has been staged as the musical *Kiss Me Kate* and movies like *10 Things I Hate About You*. Katherine is a sharp-tongued, obdurate woman whose younger sister Bianca is desperate to marry, but at her father's insistence must wait until her older sister Katherine is married off. Enter smooth-talking rogue Petruchio, who marries Katherine and "tames" her through a series of psychological torments (like withholding food, sleep and sex), until she's as biddable and compliant as her giggly younger sister — who is now free to marry which she does promptly.

Yes, it's wildly misogynistic. But, also funny and one of Shakespeare's bawdier comedies. While there are plot holes you could drive a truck through, no one cares with all the raunchy jokes and pratfalls. It's a nice change of pace from the somber seriousness of *King Lear* and *The Madness of George III*.

Stylistically, this production is muddled. While ostensibly a period piece in the sense that



South Pacific



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the costumes and props are (mostly) sixteenth-century Elizabethan, there are several jarring touches, including a neon sign with *The Taming of the Shrew* blazoned across the stage. The male leads are all dressed like gaudy Renaissance pimps— one with designer sunglasses.— The male ensemble members all look like Gumby the Village Idiot from early Monty Python sketches. There are several strange dances involving the ensemble; also very long shticks and a couple of dumb shows involving a performer in a horse costume (with the horse character handily defecating onstage). Wink-wink slapstick comedy sustained Shakespeare's plebian audiences, so kudos to director Ron Daniels for at least upholding the play's brash comedic authenticity. While I appreciate the clever double-entendre wordplay, could have done without the fake horse poop, the slick dances and the neon sign.



Fortunately the actors know their stuff. With a lesser cast, this production might easily have devolved into a lot of sequined sound and fury, signifying nothing. This Petruchio and Katherine have a palpable chemistry together, and the cast overall is the most energetic of the three plays. Jonno Roberts as Petrucio is as happily charming and charismatic as you might expect; Emily Swallow's Katherine is strong and acerbic, almost too much so—her capitulation to Petrucio's charms seems forced, like she's waiting until they're alone offstage to kill him. I can't say that I'd blame her. But hey, it's not often we get to enjoy a strong Shakespearean female lead (or at least one that doesn't have to resort to cross-dressing somewhere in the play).

The Taming of the Shrew  
Written by William Shakespeare  
Directed by Ron Daniels

With Michael Stewart Allen (Tranio), Shirine Babb (Widow), Donald Carrier (Hortensio), Craig Dudley (Tailor, Vincentio), Charles Janasz (Pedant, Curtis), Joseph Marcell (Gremio), Jordan McArthur (Biondello), Jonno Roberts (Petrucio), Adrian Sparks (Baptista Minola), Emily Swallow (Katherine), Bruce Turk (Grumio), Bree Welch (Bianca) and Jay Whittaker (Lucentio) with Andrew Dahl, Grayson DeJesus, Ben Diskant, Christian Durso, Kevin Hoffman, Andrew Hutcheson and Steven Marzolf (Ensemble)

Set Design: Ralph Funicello

Lighting Design: Alan Burrett

Sound Design: Christopher R. Walker

Costume Design: Deirdre Clancy

Original Music: Shaun Davey

Running Time: Two hours and fifty minutes with one fifteen-minute intermission

The Old Globe; 1363 Old Globe Way, San Diego; 619-23-GLOBE

Tickets \$29 - \$78

Schedule varies

June 16 - September 26, 2010

Reviewed by Jenny Sandman based on July 11th performance

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- The review made me eager to see The Taming of the Shrew

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## The Taming of the Shrew at the Old Globe Theatre

Reviewed by Evan Henerson

AUGUST 12, 2010



That's quite a high-wire act Jonno Roberts and Emily Swallow are taking on, playing Petruchio and Katherine—arguably Shakespeare's most incendiary couple. The way it plays out under Ron Daniels' direction, Petruchio seems to be so first-sight gobsmacked by Kate's beauty and wit—mostly the former—that he's improvising his shrew-taming course on the fly, imposing capricious whims and penalties when they're not necessary. Or, Roberts' Petruchio has wandered in from "Hamlet," and the character is just plain insane.

Entire fields could be planted and cultivated during the silences between Kate and Petruchio—at the couple's first meeting and at Petruchio's dinner table where Kate will not be fed. Swallow's Kate is not a rager; she is bemused by her reputation as a hellcat and can do more with a well-lobbed arm gesture or raspberry than with her fists. Swallow also makes it clear almost immediately that this Kate will buy into Petruchio's agenda. Forced into marriage? Kidnapped from her own wedding? Anything but.

Truthfully, these two are clearly such neophytes in matters of love and courtship that they're struck dumb until something startles them—usually Petruchio's inept servants spilling water on his crotch. Indeed, the army of servant lads (seven actors who also do rousing dances and skimmington clatter) ramp up the lighthearted comic moments. Without them, one suspects this "Shrew" might bog down considerably.

The battle for the hand of younger sister Bianca (Bree Welch) has plenty of zing as well. Jay Whittaker's Lucentio is a scholarly nerd transformed instantly into a love-struck puppy, while Michael Stewart Allen's Tranio gets a serious charge out of impersonating his master (nice sunglasses!). The romping comedy and that thorny love story find a place side by side on the Globe stage. It's a delightful blend.

*Presented by and at the Old Globe Theatre, 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park, San Diego. June 16–Sept. 26. Repertory schedule. (619) 234-5623. [www.theoldglobe.org](http://www.theoldglobe.org).*

## 'Shrew' and 'George III' round out Shakespeare festival

BY JOSÉ A. LÓPEZ

William Shakespeare's "The Taming of the Shrew," and Alan Bennett's "The Madness of George III," along with "King Lear" make up the 2010 Shakespeare Festival at the Old Globe Theatre.

The productions run, in repertory, through Sept. 24. The following are the reviews for "Shrew" and "George III" ("King Lear" was reviewed last week).

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In any case, Minola decrees that no one will marry Bianca unless Katherine is married off first.

The younger sister's suitors engage the services of young playboy Petruchio (Jonno Roberts, who plays Edmund in "King Lear") to woo Katherine, clearing the way for them to engage Bianca.

His technique is to play it cruel, even though the double take he does when he first lays eyes on "Kate" suggests he's quite taken. Thus, he lays out to systematically build up Katherine's expectations and then crush them. It seems like a precursor to modern dating systems that suggest men hold off on calling women they like or point out their faults to exploit their insecurities.

Though the take on gender issues makes it a tough play to sell these days, the production mines the comedy for its full effect, making this an enjoyable production.

A lot of credit goes to the leads and the relationship they develop on the stage. It's a slow buildup to their first meeting, but the spark that ensues in that scene — and any time that Swallow and Roberts share the stage — is well worth the wait.

Swallow infuses Kate with the right blend of cynicism and beguilement, while Robert's Petruchio is more of Peter Pan than a calculating Casanova. Even his servants look like extras from the Lost Boys, one even clutching a stuffed teddy bear.

While taking full advantage of the Bard's fanciful language, director Ron Daniels also mines the unspoken — the action between silence — for laughs.

In all, the production — which has been whittled down from the traditional, eschewing the tale-within-the-play introduction — provides a solid addition to the festival.

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Like "King Lear," which anchors the Old Globe's 2010 Shakespeare Festival, "The Madness of George III," deals with a monarch losing his mind.

Watching both of the plays (which are directed by festival director Adrian Noble) allows one to see how they complement each other.

In both instances, the rulers lose not only their minds, but also their kingdoms and loved ones, suggesting that the loss comes when they're no longer useful for their purpose.

While more detailed in its take on the king's descent into madness, "George III," is satirical in nature, a dark comedy about power and how those around the king react to his erratic behavior.

Based on the novel by Alan Bennett, the play presents a likeable ruler — he prides in calling himself "farmer George" — who suddenly is struck with a disease that leaves him babbling nonstop (sometimes bawdily, it is implied), wandering the



Jonno Roberts as Petruchio and Emily Swallow as Katherine in the Old Globe Theatre's production of "The Taming of the Shrew" running in repertory through Sept. 24.

PHOTO PROVIDED BY CRAIG SCHWARTZ



**Miles Anderson (center) as King George III in the Old Globe's production of "The Madness of George III"**

PHOTO PROVIDED BY THE OLD GLOBE

palace walls in nothing but his nightshirt at 4 a.m. and soiling himself.

His world quickly spins out of control, and that is reflected on the set design by Ralph Funicello (the festival's scenic designer), which features four sets of metallic doors that give the impression of fun house mirrors.

The king is treated by a trio of physicians, each of whom have different takes on his condition, from checking his pulse, to getting rid of his bad "humors" by painful blistering or checking his stool (a joke that does wear a little thing after a while).

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Published 07/07/2010 - 7:26 p.m.

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### ABOUT THE AUTHOR



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## Misogynistic 'Taming of the Shrew' likely to insult some in Globe audience

Posted on July 5, 2010 by [dharrison](#)

[0](#)

By Carol Davis



Carol Davis

SAN DIEGO — The second of the two Shakespeare plays being mounted on the Lowell Davies Festival Stage is his comedy/farce *Taming of The Shrew* directed by Ron Daniels. Every now and then companies like to dust off this misogynist piece and see how funny they can make it by just being goofy about it.

Daniels has done just that up to and including having a rickety old horse that was being ridden by Petruchio (Jonno Roberts), to fetch his bride Kate (Emily Swallow) on his wedding day, stopping to take a poop in the middle of the stage. Funny? Not so much in this reviewer's opinion.

Shakespeare's "Shrew" made into the musical "Kiss Me Kate" by Cole Porter (a much better watch) made a big splash at the Old Globe in 1984 and in 1985 "Shrew" was on the roster of the Festival Stage as part of that year's Festival. Over the years, it had been produced many times, 1996 being the last until now. A 14-year lapse is a respectable amount of time. In the meantime yours truly managed to catch John Cranko's ballet, "Taming of The Shrew", in Boston while visiting friends. That was a treat.

This year's production has some kitsch, slapstick and rare funny moments but it's not easy trying to plug a 16<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> century point of view about subservient women in the 21<sup>st</sup> century by piling shtick on it so thick that the plot kind of vanishes and all that you remember are the laugh lines.

In fact what happens from the time Petruchio takes his shrew Katherine from Padua her home, to 'tame' her in Verona his home is glimpsed only when we see the two arriving at his home. Her wedding gown is mud soaked from walking (while he rides) and she is worn out and hungry. Petrucho's way of taming his shrew is through sleep and food deprivation. Anyway, you get the idea.

When the two do finally travel back to Padua to attend her sister Bianca's (Bree Welch) wedding to Lucentio (Jay Whittaker), Kate is a reformed woman who just about licks Petruchio's boots (for lack of another printable phrase). Somehow the battle of the sexes (Kate's strong and stubborn will vs. Petruchio's high testosterone level in bringing down his woman) is more implied than demonstrated. Rather, the goings on back at Padua between the two clowns courting Bianca is the main focus of this circus. Maybe it's better that way.

Remember, Bianca is the pretty sister with all the suitors and Kate is the petulant, feisty, quarrelsome and mean spirited one no one wants to marry. As custom has it, their wealthy father Baptista (Adrian Sparks) will not allow his youngest to marry before the eldest is married off. But who will marry her?

It seems that no amount of money is tempting enough to land a husband for poor old, proud Kate. The prospects are gloomy if not outright dismal for Kate when Petruchio who happens to be riding through Padua, learns from Hortensio (Donald Carrier) one of Bianca's suitors, that he can't marry his beloved until her sister is married off. There is money in the offer, but no one is taking the bait. Look no more. Once Petruchio hears the offer Kate's father is willing to make, we have a taker. Ah! The lure of money!

The sideshow between the wealthy and/or studious suitors who switch places with their servants is really where the fun and action kick in. With a few switches of costumes (Deirdre Clancy outfits her players with an array of colors to please the eye) the servants are turned into the masters and vice versa.

Mistaken identity, prancing around in, ahem, designer semi heels and acting more dandified (a running joke) than anything, Michael Stewart Allen (Lucentio's servant Tranio) is a hoot as he impersonates his wealthy master Lucentio.

Given the mistaken identity bit, the role reversals and with tons of buffoonery the farce is off and running, wonderfully acted and beautifully executed where every word can be heard and understood. All this is great. The play's the problem, however. Looking beyond the fact that the whole premise of the play aggravates the hell out of me especially the second act where Kate acts like milquetoast in Petruchio's hands, points are scored for the acting, directing and costumes.

Jonno Roberts (who played Edmond in "Lear") is the cunning Petruchio about to break his Kate. Roberts is a handsome guy whose Petruchio stakes out his territory like a bullfighter weighing his options when confronted with the bull staring him down. He is charming and beguiling. Meeting him eye to eye, Swallow's Kate is up to the task, and equally attractive, as they circle each other, weighing their options. At the end of their little dance of I won't blink first; Kate is dragged off to Verona only to return a tamed, if you will, shrew. Some things are stranger than fiction.

Bree Welch is as ditsy as she can be as Bianca trying to find the right balance of choice between Lucentio and Hortensio and those two guys are about as inept as they can get. It's all in the costumes and body language and it works well here.

It might be a rite of passage, but producing yet another "Shrew" seems to be on everyone's mind when looking for a Shakespearean comedy to mount. This one happens to be pretty decent with and without its flaws.

See you at the theatre.

Dates: June 16<sup>th</sup>-September 26<sup>th</sup> (Check dates)

Organization: Old Globe Theatre

Phone: 619-234-5623

Production Type: Comedy

Where" Old Globe Way, Balboa Park

Ticket Prices: \$29.00-\$78.00

Web: [theoldglobe.org](http://theoldglobe.org)

Venue: Lowell Davies Festival Theatre

\*

Theatre critic Davis is based in San Diego

Tagged: [Shakespeare](#), [Old Globe Theatre](#), [Emily Swallow](#), [Jay Whittaker](#), [Jonno Roberts](#), [Deidre Clancy](#), [Lowell Davies](#), ['Taming of the Shrew'](#), [Ron Daniels](#), ['Kiss Me Kate'](#), [Cole Porter](#), [John Cranko](#), [Bree Welch](#), [Adrian Sparks](#), [Donald Carrier](#), [Micheal Stewart Allen](#)  
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## **Old Globe Summer Shakespeare Theatre Season Begins**

**Wednesday, June 30, 2010**

**Old Globe Theatre**

**San Diego, California**

Review by *Palm Springs Guides* Theatre & Cinema Critic/Reviewer Jack Lyons

Photos by Craig Schwartz

Every year at this time The Bard of Avon makes his way onto the stage of The Old Globe's Lowell Davies Outdoor Festival Theatre to once again, charm and enthrall audiences. The Shakespeare Summer Festival is an eagerly awaited San Diego event that never fails to delight patrons and lovers of the arts.

This year's festival productions include: "King Lear" directed by the Globe's new Artistic Director Adrian Noble, "The Madness of George III (not a Shakespeare play), also directed by Noble, and "The Taming of the Shrew" directed by Ron Daniels. All three productions are performed in repertory, which is, as everyone understands unless one has been living in a cave for some time, productions that feature actors playing, perhaps, a minor role in one play and then performing as the star character in another. The convention is rewarding for the actors and gratifying for the audience. Case in point, Jonno Roberts who plays Petruchio, in "Shrew" takes on Edgar, to Robert Foxworth's "King Lear" during the Festival. Emily Swallow who plays Katherine in "Shrew," plays Goneril in "Lear" and Queen Charlotte in "The Madness of George III" on alternating nights. It's a win-win situation for audiences and actors alike.

I attended the press night performance of "Taming of the Shrew" Wednesday, June 30, and was treated to a fresh, inventive and creative performance of arguably the Bard's most popular romantic comedy play.

Under Ron Daniels' deft and seamless direction, which is visually spiced with clever, and attention-grabbing dance numbers performed by the ensemble group this "Shrew" is quickly embraced by the audience. They eagerly await the entrances of Petruchio (Jonno Roberts) and Katherine (Emily Swallow) in anticipation of the tug-of-war that will come as Petruchio and Kate vie for supremacy in this battle of wits and words between the sexes.

Shakespeare's tale of family life in the middle ages sets the story in Padua, Italy, where wealthy merchant Baptista Minola (Adrian Sparks) is wrestling with the problem of how to marry off his two daughters. Bianca (Bree Welch), the younger and much sought after by the men of the city

must observe the custom of waiting until her older sibling takes a husband. Her sister Katherine (Swallow), however, is not a great prospect for marriage. She is an intimidating beauty who possesses a sharp and independent mind, but also comes with the baggage of a biting tongue and a harridan's disposition, and worse yet, she's more than a match for any man of Padua. Actually she is the forerunner of the 21st century woman, and thus, her 16th century father's dilemma.



A couple of Bianca's suitors dream up a scheme to employ (Roberts), an out-of-town gentleman/rogue and womanizer, to remove this obstacle to their seeking Bianca's favors. Petruchio's task? Win the heart and hand of Katherine Minola, and the handsome dowry that comes with her. What single gentleman could resist such a challenge?

The fun and enjoyment in watching this robust production unfold is derived mainly from the performances of Roberts and Swallow, along with solid characterizations from the entire company, with standout portrayals by Adrian Sparks, Michael Stewart Allen, Craig Dudley, Charles Janasz and Bruce Turk.

I've seen several different interpretations of Petruchio over the years but I must say Jonno Roberts' take is one that seems to come from the modern era. Gone is the cliché bluster and swaggering by Petruchios of the past. In its place Roberts and director Daniels have come up with a Petruchio who is more contemporary and psychologically in tune with the how and look of male/female relationships of the here and now. He's still, however, very appealing and cunning in his strategy on how to woo and win this tempestuous and very independent woman, but he has the most "American look and personality" of recently seen Petruchio's. The boyish smile and charm, coupled with a sense of understanding his situation (he's one of the world's famous literary misogynist's after all) adds another dimension to Roberts' Petruchio, and is a departure from past traditional portrayals.

Does this approach diminish or alter the dramatic intention of Shakespeare's alpha male/alpha female romantic tussle in 16th Century Italy? I don't think it does. But then, that's the beauty of Shakespeare. He brings so many facets to his core stories, thus allowing the power of the narrative and the vision of the director and cast to enrich the values of the characters.



In the case of Swallow's Katherine, I think she makes her case for superiority over an alluded to list of inferior husband candidates dredged up by her father and his friends. She has the looks to tantalize and the steely personality to test the mettle of all of them, with the result being that only the cleverest of suitors will win her hand. Swallow, however, meets her match in Roberts. The dining table scene in Act I is exquisite in its timing and its understated performances. These two excellent actors exude, without saying a word, such cat and mouse tension and a growing attraction for one another that it becomes palpable and is felt by everyone in the audience. It's a sublime theatrical moment.

I'm sure most of the males in the audience would love to know the secret of how Petruchio can treat his wife so callously, as he goes about "taming the shrew", and getting away with it unscathed. Remember guys, it's just a fanciful and cautionary theatrical tale. As they say in the TV commercials, "Don't try this at home."

In the technical department, the Globe has few equals and the Davies Festival Theatre creative team, shines once again. The costumes by Deirdre Clancy have the Ralph Funicello designed stage awash in color. With lighting by Alan Burrett and sound by Christopher R. Walker, the audience can "feel" as well as see and hear the nuanced and inter-active performances (the actors engage audience member's during the play, some of whom are seated on stage), especially during the snow, rain, and thunderstorm scenes. And the on-stage "horse" proves a hit with the audience, despite "his accident" — the one that real-life horses so often do.

I don't know how the hard-core purists will take to this Ron Daniels directed "Shrew," but I certainly enjoyed it and heartily recommend it to everyone. The Old Globe Summer Festival, in repertory, runs through Sept. 26.

For more [about the Old Globe Theatre](#), click here.

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PHOTO PROVIDED BY CRAIG SCHWARTZ





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## **Globe's Shakespeare Festival revives spirit of Bard with aplomb**

Posted by [admin](#) on 8/02/10 • Categorized as [Arts & Entertainment](#), [Theater](#)

**By Cuauhtémoc Q. Kish/GSD Theatre Critic**

### **Old Globe Theatre's 2010 Shakespeare Festival**

**"King Lear," "The Taming of the Shrew" and "The Madness of George III"** in repertory through September

*theoldglobe.org*

(619) 234-5623

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### **"The Taming of the Shrew"**

Ron Daniels' "The Taming of the Shrew" is a joyous, accessible production with sharp enunciation, audience



Emily Swallow as Katherine in the 2010 Shakespeare Festival production of "The Taming of the Shrew," directed by Ron Daniels, at The Old Globe through Sept. 26. (Courtesy Craig Schwartz)

interaction and near perfect staging. The director even allowed 14 audience members to share the stage.

This “Taming” is a non-stop party where everyone has a good time. The play begins with a song and dance routine from the ensemble that sets up the cheerful mood for the three-hour production. It goes by in a flash, and that’s a sign that Shakespeare is still the king of storytelling, and that Daniels has done his job well.

There are few theatergoers who don’t know the story of “The Taming of the Shrew.” Baptista’s youngest daughter, who has suitors galore, can’t accept a marriage proposal until her older sister, Katherine, is wed. There is one problem: no one wants to wed Katherine due to her reputation as a shrew. After assigning a husband to Katherine, the play suggests that a wife should be blindly obedient to her husband, in all matters matrimonial.

Jonno Roberts is a charming and disarming Petruchio. He plays off his nemesis, Katherine (Emily Swallow), in such a likable fashion, that it’s easy to see why Katherine would shrug-off her bad-tempered ways. Roberts plays his part with a refreshingly light touch and Swallow is not your typical bellowing Kate, ranting about the stage in a hot temper tantrum. She plays her part with an infectious, overt incredulity, that allows us to buy into her allegiance to her new husband.

Ralph Funicello’s scenic design offered plenty of open space for the actors to come and go with ease, many entering and exiting from behind the audience. Deirdre Clancy’s costume design was a mix and match of everything in the shop, but it seemed to complement the comedic nature of the play, underscored by plenty of bawdy innuendo.

The cast was uniformly accomplished (especially in their musical harmonies), from the servant lads to the royal dads. Of special note, Adrian Sparks was comically commanding in his role of Baptista Minola, Jay Whittaker’s Lucentio was an energetic rendition of young love, while Joseph Marcell (Gremio), Bruce Turk (Grumio), and Michael Stewart Allen (Tranio) did especially well in their supporting roles.

## Neon Tommy - Annenberg digital news

### THEATER AND DANCE

## Hating To Love "Taming Of The Shrew"

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**Jason Kehe** | August 28, 2010

**Staff Reporter**

Fans of the teenpic classic [“10 Things I Hate About You”](#) — and frankly, who isn’t? — owe it to themselves to seek out a production of the Shakespeare play on which it’s based: the feisty, crazily problematic “Taming of the Shrew.”

Luckily, San Diego’s [Old Globe](#) is running a truly astonishing production right now that no one should miss.

But be warned: This is not the light-hearted stuff of bowdlerized Hollywood fare, with charming bad boys wooing self-righteous brats for kicks. Of course, we get all that in “Shrew,” but Shakespeare swam in a different sea, stormed-tossed and unnavigable. “Shrew” takes our breath away, but not with any notions of high romance. It’s one big tidal wave of woman-hatred and the outward pettiness of love.

Consider the plot: Petruchio (Jonno Roberts) schemes up inhuman machinations to turn the strong-willed, sharp-witted Katherine (Emily Swallow) into his obsequious love-object. Don’t expect Romeo-and-Juliet balcony scenes under soft moonlight here; instead, think freezing castle dungeons and starving maidens.



Actors Emily Swallow and Jonno Roberts (Courtesy of The Old Globe)

We might expect, then, that the central romance between Katherine and Petruchio, the “shrew” and her tamer, would be ugly, unpalatable and patently romance-less (certainly some productions take this route). But the miracle of the Old Globe’s production directed by Rob Daniels, is to read — correctly or not — a true love story into this shocking portrait of misogyny.

The success of this reading is owed in no small part to the talent of Daniels’ two madly mated principals. When they first meet there is real chemistry between them, even if Shakespeare didn’t intend there to be. Katherine, a master rhetorician, is won over Petruchio’s wit and words. He is her equal. Of course, the tragedy is that, by the end, she is in every way his inferior.

Swallow, physically striking in Deirdre Clancy’s stunning “period” costumes, is less the she-devil of townfolk lore than a devil-may-care young woman with a sharp tongue and a nasty uppercut. She is perfectly balanced by Roberts’ macho Petruchio, whose charisma and charm make it hard to stay mad at him, even though we should be seething throughout.

Once Petruchio “wives” Katherine, in one of the play’s rowdiest scenes, her sister Bianca (a pleasant Bree Welch) is finally free to marry. The subplot involving her many suitors provides welcome comedic relief to the troubling aspects of Katherine’s “taming.”

There isn’t a single weak link in the whole cast — a feat for any production and a miracle for Shakespeare. Jay Whittaker’s lovestruck Lucentio, who wins Bianca’s heart, is over-rambunctious at first, but his declamation of “I burn, I pine, I perish” is priceless. Joseph Marcell’s elegant Gremio, Bianca’s eldest suitor, is a treat, as is Adrian Sparks as Katherine and Bianca’s father. Michael Stewart Allen and Bruce Turk do great comedic work as two very different kinds of servants.

Scenically, the production is pretty bare, employing only a table, benches and a big neon sign. Christopher R. Walker’s original music lets scene transitions breathe and fits in well with the action.

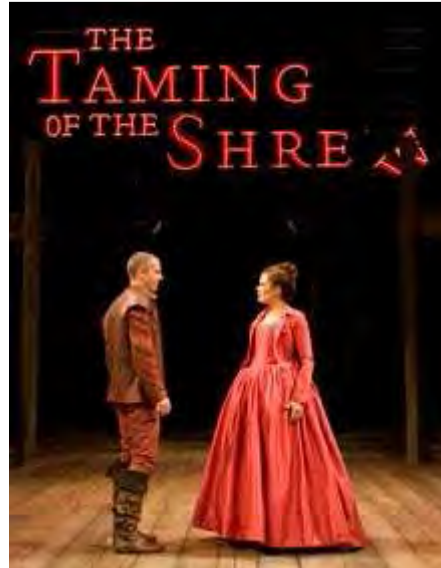
The introductory and concluding movement sequences by the ensemble (Tony Caligagan choreographed) are mostly fun but thematically insignificant. Horse body-puppets are rarely a good idea. Much funnier are the performer’s ad-libbed interaction with the audience.

The first act is nearly perfect; the start of the second drags a little. But not enough can be said of Swallow and Roberts, who revolutionize their parts in refreshing and wonderfully problematic ways. Once the play ends, with Katherine and Petruchio passionately upstage, there is a sense of total satisfaction, and not a little guilt, because we are rejoicing in a match made both heaven and in hell.



## Taming of the Shrew brings fighting, frivolity and fun

July 6, 3:59 PM • [San Diego Theater Examiner](#) • Erin Reiter



The Taming of the Shrew

*The Taming of the Shrew* is a clever comedy with a troublesome ending. So how does the Old Globe tackle this show without starting a debate over the political correctness of the show's ending? They do it by making sure that above all, you are having fun at this show and hope you won't notice.

*The Taming of the Shrew* opens with part of the ensemble hanging about while the audience comes in, and occasionally interacting with them. This blurring of the lines of audience and players is emphasized with some seats being placed right on stage and the actors sitting next to them at times throughout the show. During the show they interact with audience and when it arises, they take the time to watch the play's events along with us. They open and close the show with an infectiously upbeat dance, just in case you need the reminder that this was a comedy and that you should be leaving in high spirits. Which, thanks to the dance, you probably do.

But this show is dependent on the leads' ability to make us believe their antagonism turns to love and Emily Swallow and Jonno Roberts seem more than up to the challenge this provides. Robert's portrayal of Petruchio is light years away from his turn as Edmund in *King Lear*, and yet no less effecting. He plays Petruchio with a mad sense of spontaneity that gives the sense that he is making things up as he goes along. If what he just did worked well, then he'll do more of it. Swallow's Katherine is confident in her intelligence and the lack of it in everyone else around her and has no problem letting everyone know her opinion. It is praise to her portrayal that one buys her change in demeanor at the end of the play as much as one does. Yet, while both these could come off as unlikable one-note characters, it is the performers' interpretations that make them more fully fleshed out people. As much of the story that is told in the words, these characters are

at times the funniest in the silent drawn out moments between them.

Those to gain the most from Katherine's marriage are all of Bianca's suitors, especially Lucentio whose heart Bianca captured upon sight. In an effort to spend more time with her he disguises himself as a servant and has his servant Tranio play the master. Lucentio is played with a wide eyed and goofy by Jay Whittaker while Tranio is a marvelous cartoon depiction of a foppish nobleman.

While the ending is still a bit mystery to this sudden about face in Katherine's behavior, overall this show is a fun time at the theater. It is a high energy and farcical look at young love and courting, whether it is in Shakespeare's time or in ours.

*The Taming of the Shrew* is playing at the Old Globe in repertory with *King Lear* and *The Madness of George III*. Season Subscriptions offer substantial savings with special subscriber benefits. Subscriptions can be purchased online at [www.TheOldGlobe.org](http://www.TheOldGlobe.org) by phone at (619) 23-GLOBE [234-5623] or by visiting the box office at 1363 Old Globe Way in Balboa Park. Subscriptions to the Globe's Summer Season range from \$75 to \$372. Five-play packages range from \$146 to \$372. Four-play packages (Festival plus musical) range from \$117 to \$316. Shakespeare Festival packages (3 plays) range from \$75 to \$228. Discounts are available for full-time students, patrons 29 years of age and younger, seniors and groups of 10 or more.



# **THE MADNESS OF GEORGE III**

July 6, 2010

## THEATER REVIEW

# Sanity goes before a fall

A monarch's mental collapse speaks volumes on the state of the crown in the Old Globe's 'Madness of George III.'

DARYL H. MILLER  
FROM SAN DIEGO

"O, let me not be mad, not mad, sweet heaven!" King Lear cries as he begins to realize how dearly his rashness will cost him — leaving him without daughters, home or country.

Yet is Lear, perhaps, better off mad?

That question resonates among the psychological complexities of Shakespeare's "King Lear." It also resounds through Alan Bennett's 1991 play "The Madness of George III," about another troubled monarch.

In each play, the seeming loss of sanity is accompanied by a shutdown of social filters. Thoughts and emotions rush forth unrestrained. The kings become like children again; they are closer to their natural states, more truly themselves. They are free.

Such comparisons are invited this summer by the presence of both "King Lear" and "George" in the Old Globe's Shakespeare Festival. The third play, "The Taming of the Shrew," is also, in its way, about madness and social filters. All are performed on the Globe's outdoor stage.

"Lear" is already running and reviewed; "George" — more widely known in its 1994 film adaptation, "The Madness of King George" — opened Saturday.

The former perfectly sets up the latter, so it's too bad the occasion is spoiled by the choice to render most of "George's" historical personages as broad caricatures.

The approach — which diminishes the script to a sort of 18th century political cartoon — is entertaining in its own right but never approaches the sweetness or heartbreak of Nicholas Hytner's movie version.

As portrayed by Miles Anderson, Britain's King George (he of the breakaway Colonies) is a genial sort, if a bit full of himself. This latter quality is part of Bennett's — and Shakespeare's — point.

Wouldn't anyone be warped by the ego inflation inherent in a king's (or, for that matter, a politician's) life of power flexing and extravagant but empty ceremony?

Such hollowness is nicely indicated by the towering, vacuous mirrors that line Ralph Funicello's palatial set design and the sumptuously layered and padded period costumes by Deirdre Clancy. (A hint of this late-18th century look is seen, as well, in her designs for "Lear," creating a subtle visual connection.)

Bennett's gently humorous script gives us time to begin to like George before illness leaves him shuddering, gasping and rocking in pain.

The forthrightness with which Anderson conveys this suffering is touching, but it can't fully register because everything around him is false.

Both "George" and "Lear" are directed by Adrian Noble, head of the Royal Shakespeare Company from 1991-2003 and, this year, artistic director of the Globe's Shakespeare Festival.

In "Lear," he coaxes forth subtle shadings; here, he seems intent merely on squeezing out laughs.

Compared to the movie, the play provides a bit more context for the crisis in George's government.

In Parliament, we see deep division between parties. We see familiar forms of backroom maneuvering. And we see commentators put spin on it all.

This nicely sets up the play's most famous line, when the proto-psychiatrist Dr. Willis (portrayed, in a fun patient-to-physician turnaround, by the festival's Lear, Robert Foxworth) observes: "The state of monarchy and the state of lunacy share a frontier."

It's the madness observable in every politician: The fallacy of thinking that any of us, barely able to govern ourselves, could govern a country.

daryl.miller@latimes.com

## 'The Madness of George III'

Where: Old Globe's Lowell Davies Festival Theatre, Balboa Park, San Diego

When: In repertory, contact theater for schedule: Ends Sept. 24.

Admission: \$29 to \$78

Contact: (619) 234-5623 or [www.theoldglobe.org](http://www.theoldglobe.org)

Running time: 2 hours, 35 minutes





JEFFREY WEISER The Old Globe

**BREAKDOWN:** Miles Anderson's King George, center, loses his mind amid a sumptuous setting.

# Los Angeles Times

All the Arts, All the Time

## Theater review: 'The Madness of George III' at the Old Globe

July 5, 2010 | 1:47 pm



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-- Daryl H. Miller, from San Diego

**"The Madness of George III,"** the Old Globe's Lowell Davies Festival Theatre, Balboa Park, San Diego. In repertory through Sept. 24; contact theater for schedule. \$29 to \$78. (619) 234-5623 or [www.theoldglobe.org](http://www.theoldglobe.org). Running time: 2 hours, 35 minutes.

*Photo: Miles Anderson portrays "mad" King George. Credit: The Old Globe.*



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## Legit

Posted: Tue., Jul. 6, 2010, 2:08pm PT

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*Regional*

# The Madness of George III

**(Lowell Davies Festival Theater, San Diego; 612 seats; \$78 top)**

By BOB VERINI

An Old Globe presentation of a play in two acts by Alan Bennett.  
Directed by Adrian Noble.

George III - Miles Anderson  
 Queen Charlotte - Emily Swallow  
 William Pitt - Jay Whittaker  
 Prince of Wales - Andrew  
 Dahl Greville - Ben Diskant



*'The Madness of George III'*

**To celebrate our nation's independence, the Old Globe's outdoor summer season looks back at the real estate's former lessor in Alan Bennett's witty, suspenseful "The Madness of George III." Miles Anderson steps assuredly into the late Nigel Hawthorne's signature role in a pageant helmed smartly -- at times too smartly, but always excitingly -- by one-time RSC head Adrian Noble.**

A 1994 pic version clicked on the arthouse circuit, but Bennett's legit text has seldom appeared on this side of the pond. The explanation partly lies in budgetary considerations -- and the Globe has seemingly handed costume designer Deirdre Clancy its PIN number, so lavishly detailed are the accoutrements -- but mostly in America's allegedly limited interest in the details of its founding. (The screen retitling was "The Madness of King George," lest the U.S. market turn its back on a Roman-numeraled sequel.)



Undeterred, Noble never underestimates his audience's willingness or ability to follow the complex, multilevel affairs of a long-ago state. Both the personal drama of a mysteriously ailing monarch at the mercy of ignorant physicians, and the illness' political ramifications threatening to bring down a government, are lucidly played out. Nearly three hours fly by in a rush of delicious plotting and tart dialogue.

Anderson's turn is the production's anchor. Having established the king as a preening know-all whose authority is unquestioned -- and that unfortunate colonial business a decade ago is not to be mentioned, he thanks you -- Anderson brings him down by inches, Lear-like, into a gibbering wreck engaging our active sympathy. Even the rabidest opponents of inherited monarchy will be moved to pity as he's prodded and tortured by meddling medicos, who use everything but science to effect a cure.

As Anderson turns each appearance into another stunning transformation, the forces besetting him are drawn in bold, compelling strokes. Jay Whittaker, Charles Janasz and Craig Dudley keep the stakes high as the Tories in power, while Andrew Dahl's corpulent, corrupt Prince of Wales scratches at the throne room door (along with Grayson DeJesus' hilarious cameo of a boobish office seeker). Against Joseph Marcell, Bruce Turk and Adrian Sparks' sinister medical team, we welcome Ben Diskant's self-sacrificing aide-de-camp.

Noble's sole miscalculation is the sharply timed opening and slamming of designer Ralph Funicello's eight Mylar-treated doors to transition between scenes, a tiresomely self-conscious device eventually serving to undercut the mood. (It's difficult to appreciate a government's falling apart when its courtiers are every bit as crisply efficient in the depths of crisis.) Probably the blocking, too, could more profitably move from ritual formality to disorder, to parallel the disintegrating national health.

But any sameness in movement patterns is offset by the use of the entire playhouse to envelop us in the pageantry and intrigue. A rare entertainment, indeed.

Along with a "Taming of the Shrew," "George" runs in rep all summer with Noble's staging of the thematically linked "King Lear." Comic hay is made at the expense of its star Robert Foxworth, who on alternate nights tears his Britain apart while here, as the King's most implacable medical attendant, he endeavors to keep it whole.

Sets, Ralph Funicello; costumes, Deirdre Clancy; lighting, Alan Burrett; sound, Christopher R. Walker; original music, Shaun Davey, Walker; fight direction, Steve Rankin; stage manager, James Latus. Opened, reviewed July 3, 2010. Runs through Sept. 24. Running time: 2 HOURS, 40 MIN.

With: Michael Stewart Allen, Shirine Babb, Donald Carrier, Grayson DeJesus, Craig Dudley, Christian Durso, Robert Foxworth, Catherine Gowl, Kevin Hoffmann, Andrew Hutcheson, Charles Janasz, Joseph Marcell, Stephen Marzolf, Jordan McArthur, Brooke Novak, Aubrey Severino, Ryman Sneed, Adrian Sparks, Bruce Turk, Bree Welch.

Contact the Variety newsroom at [news@variety.com](mailto:news@variety.com).

Date in print: Wed., Jul. 7, 2010, *Gotham*

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## RECENT REVIEWS:

*The Madness of George III* - Tue., Jul. 6, 2010, 2:08pm PT

July 5, 2010

## THEATER REVIEW

# Crazy for 'Madness of George III'

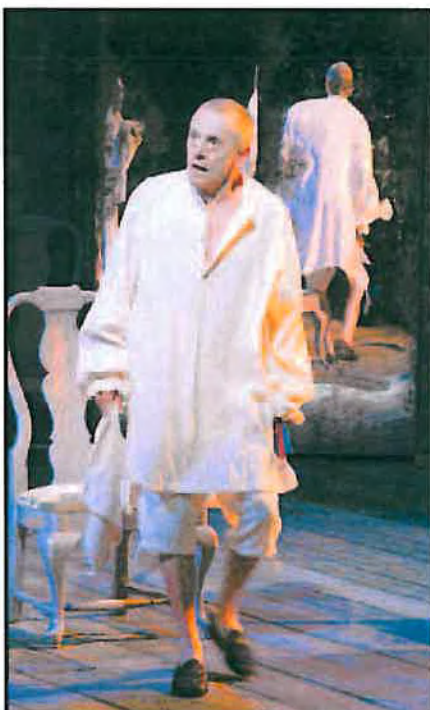
Fine performances and smart in-jokes give play its edge

**By James Hebert**  
THEATER CRITIC

The king of England may be off his rocker and just about deposed from his throne, but there's a method to "The Madness of George III," the lone non-Shakespeare interloper in this summer's Old Globe Shakespeare Festival.

That method, in Alan Bennett's fact-based play of 18th-century royal derangement, is a little loopy itself (though not nearly so far-out as the "cures" inflicted on the king by his pompous doctors).

Bennett goes for a deeply satirical tone in telling of the conflicted monarch who lost



**Miles Anderson as King George in the 2010 Shakespeare Festival production of Alan Bennett's "The Madness of George III."**  
*The Old Globe*

### DETAILS

#### **"The Madness of George III"**

Old Globe Shakespeare Festival

**When:** Running in nightly repertory with "King Lear" and "The Taming of the Shrew." (Check theater for schedule.)

**Where:** Lowell Davies Festival Theatre, Balboa Park.

**Tickets:** \$29-\$78

**Phone:** (619) 234-5623

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the American Colonies and then, for reasons still a puzzle to medicine today (some think he had a rare blood condition), began to lose his mind.

The friction between the suffering king and his largely insufferable royal court smartly propels the play, but the high comedy of his subjects' infighting and backbiting can gloss over the story's riveting glimpses of raw drama.

It seems apt that in the very first scene, George is attacked by a would-be assassin wielding a dessert knife. The Globe's eye-pleasing and expertly acted confection, directed with a brisk wit by festival artistic chief Adrian Noble, draws laughs but doesn't always draw blood.

What weight the staging does have, though, is thanks mainly to a committed and commanding performance by Miles Anderson as the king.

Anderson, a colleague of Noble's from the director's time at the helm of the Royal Shakespeare Company (and before), takes the audience on a scarifying tour of George's descent into hysteria and despair, abetted by such health-care horrors as

bloodletting and blistering. (The treatments make those mythical "death panels" sound like sweet relief.)

He's just "Farmer George" at the start, an earthy, no-nonsense monarch who'd seemingly rather be out in the country with "Mrs. King" (Queen Charlotte, played by a quietly soulful Emily Swallow) than tending the palace's crop of fops.

But American independence still weighs on his brain — less for its political import than the loss of all that pristine wilderness.

George talks wistfully of America as an Eden; letting it slip away has been, to him, like original sin all over again. He even refers to it as "a paradise lost."

So when the king starts stuttering and seeing things, it's assumed stress is to blame. And never mind, say a trio of fatuous physicians — Warren (Bruce Turk), Baker (Joseph Marcell) and Pepys (Adrian Sparks), all funny if too absurd for words — about George's curiously blue urine.

In short order, the king goes raving mad, bandaged and babbling. Anderson conveys his agonies with wrenching sobs and spasms and screams at his physicians. "I am the Lord's anointed!" he cries, as he's all but crucified with excruciating blister devices.

Meantime, the king's Whig rivals in the royal court — chiefly Fox (Michael James Allen) and Sheridan (Donald Carrier) — are maneuvering to put the Prince of Wales in power.

As Wales, Andrew Dahl — part of the festival's busy ensemble of USD/Globe grad-student actors — is one of the best things going here. He plays the portly prince as a vapid fashion plate who enthuses to his brother: "The throne, Fred; what fun!" When the enraged king rushes Wales at one point, he goes down with all the drama of a World Cup soccer diva.

Dahl also made a memorably snippy servant Oswald in the festival production of "King Lear."

And that play must be men-

tioned because of an in-joke for the ages during "George." As the king begins to recover, with help from a stern country doctor named Willis (why that happens is never completely clear), the two find themselves one night reading Shakespeare. "King Lear," to be precise.

"I had no idea what it was about," the mortified Willis admits of the epic tragedy about another English king gone mad.

It's an inspired tie-in by Bennett. What makes it particularly delicious in this production (and a beautifully sly move on Noble's part) is that Willis — chided by the king for "murdering" the part of Lear — is played by Robert Foxworth, who also is playing Lear for the Globe. (And not murdering the part by any stretch.)

That alone nearly makes up for the shortcomings of "George," along with Deirdre Clancy's wonderfully fussy pre-Regency costumes, Ralph Funicello's gilded scenic scheme, Alan Burrett's dynamic lighting and Christopher R. Walker's regal sonic flourishes.

You do worry for the endurance of the actors: Swallow, Carrier, Marcell, Turk, Jay Whittaker (as the prim prime minister) and Charles Janasz (as the smoothly opportunistic lord chancellor) all have meaty roles in each of the three plays.

"George" may not have the heft of the Bard, but it has brio and a certain blithe style. In the happy madness of the Shakespeare festival, it cuts like the edge of a feather.



# Crazy for ‘Madness of George III’

**Fine performances and smart in-jokes give play its edge**

By [James Hebert](#), UNION-TRIBUNE THEATER CRITIC

Sunday, July 4, 2010 at 8 p.m.

## *Details*

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As Wales, Andrew Dahl — part of the festival's busy ensemble of USD/Globe grad-student actors — is one of the best things going here. He plays the portly prince as a vapid fashion plate who enthuses to his brother: "The throne, Fred; what fun!" When the enraged king rushes Wales at one point, he goes down with all the drama of a World Cup soccer diva.

Dahl also made a memorably snippy servant Oswald in the festival production of "King Lear."

And that play must be mentioned because of an in-joke for the ages during "George." As the king begins to recover, with help from a stern country doctor named Willis (why that happens is

never completely clear), the two find themselves one night reading Shakespeare. “King Lear,” to be precise.

“I had no idea what it was about,” the mortified Willis admits of the epic tragedy about another English king gone mad.

It’s an inspired tie-in by Bennett. What makes it particularly delicious in this production (and a beautifully sly move on Noble’s part) is that Willis — chided by the king for “murdering” the part of Lear — is played by Robert Foxworth, who also is playing Lear for the Globe. (And not murdering the part by any stretch.)

That alone nearly makes up for the shortcomings of “George,” along with Deirdre Clancy’s wonderfully fussy pre-Regency costumes, Ralph Funicello’s gilded scenic scheme, Alan Burrett’s dynamic lighting and Christopher R. Walker’s regal sonic flourishes.

You do worry for the endurance of the actors: Swallow, Carrier, Marcell, Turk, Jay Whittaker (as the prim prime minister) and Charles Janasz (as the smoothly opportunistic lord chancellor) all have meaty roles in each of the three plays.

“George” may not have the heft of the Bard, but it has brio and a certain blithe style. In the happy madness of the Shakespeare festival, it cuts like the edge of a feather.

## THEATER REVIEW

# Brilliant lead performance makes 'George' a thrill ride

**BY PAM KRAGEN**  
[pkragen@nctimes.com](mailto:pkragen@nctimes.com)

When the original actor hired for the title role in the Old Globe's "The Madness of George III" dropped out two days before rehearsals began last spring, director Adrian Noble feared he might have to scrap the production. But he needn't have worried. It's hard to imagine any actor anywhere besting Miles Anderson's astonishing performance as the king brought low in Alan Bennett's smart and entertaining play.

"Madness" — running in repertory through September with Shakespeare's "King Lear" and "The Taming of the Shrew" on the Globe's outdoor festival stage — is engrossing, wickedly funny, surprisingly contemporary and impeccably directed by Noble, the festival's new artistic director. But the real story here is Anderson's jaw-dropping trans-

formation into the beleaguered George III. It's the sort of memory-making tour de force that audiences will talk about all year. It's easily the Globe's best performance since last summer's elegant Cyrano de Bergerac by Patrick Page, the very same actor whose shoes Anderson hastily filled this summer — and when you realize that Anderson learned the entire role in a few weeks during rehearsals, it's doubly impressive.

Bennett's 1991 play is inspired by the true story of how the English king's bouts with mental illness led to the Regency Crisis of 1788. Not long after George lost the colonies to American revolutionaries, he descended into madness — a possibly arsenic-fueled disease that rendered him both mentally deranged and in excruciating physical agony. Sensing a Tory power vacuum, the minority Whigs sought to install as regent the king's fop-

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**WHERE** Lowell Davies Festival Theatre, Old Globe complex, 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park, San Diego

**TICKETS** \$29-\$78

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pish, easily manipulated son, the Prince of Wales — a power grab avoided only by the king's apparent recovery several months later. Bennett's play documents the king's valiant struggle to both regain his wits and survive the often-barbaric "treatments" administered by his royal team of doctor/torturers.

As the play begins, the audience meets George in fine fettle. Anderson's elegant, charming king enters with a jaunty gait, a quick

wit, an elephant's memory, a wry smile and a cheerful speech pattern peppered with "what-whats" and "hey-heys." Then, ever so gradually, he slides down the slippery slope. Anderson's confident, peacock-chested king melts before your eyes into a wild-eyed, rambling, fragile, shrunken and unpredictable creature who foams at the mouth, soils his pants and jabbars incoherently. The transformation is so complete by intermission, your heart aches for him.

The play's much-welcome levity is provided by the incompetent physicians who seek to cure George with the few primitive tools available. The dandified pulse-taker Sir George Baker prescribes liberal bloodletting; the cartoonish Dr. Warren swears by blistering to re-



**Miles Anderson, left, plays the title role in "The Madness of George III" at the Old Globe's Summer Shakespeare Festival.** Photo courtesy of Craig Schwartz

lease the evil "humours" trapped under the skin; and the poop-obsessed Sir Lucas Pepys manipulates the king's "motions" with laxatives and constipating drugs. The doltish doctors give playwright Bennett the opportunity to skewer the modern medical establishment with well-landed jabs at exorbitant doctors' fees; physician snobbery over alternative therapies; and the never-ending debate over generalists vs. specialists.

The king's savior eventually arrives in the form of Dr. Willis, an ex-preacher-turned-shrink, whose mind-over-matter treatment uses physical restraints to teach the king self-control over his demons.

Ultimately, the king recovers, but it seems more an act of sheer willpower than a cure. In the end, Anderson's restored George is a ghost of his former self. His confident strut is restrained, his chipper speech is measured, his joie de vivre is gone and his famous benevolence (he pardoned two of his failed assassins) is replaced with such mistrust that he fires his long-loyal pages and (at first) denies compensation to Dr. Willis.

The play is a monster, with 18 fast-moving scenes and a good deal of political back and forth that could easily bog down if not for Noble's meticulous direction and his feel for ever-hurting pacing -- helped in great measure by a small

(but well-trained) troupe of pages, who continually sweep open and slam shut the doors in Ralph Funicello's hall-of-mirrors set with the synchronized precision of a Swiss clock (continually trapping the hapless George with his torturous doctors in this nightmarishly mirrored funhouse).

Other nice directorial touches are Noble's attention to personal space (the respectful bubble around the king shrinks as his power wanes); and his use of contradictory elements to highlight the king's off-kilter world (sweet Handel sonatas play while he writhes in pain). Even the closing bows are cleverly choreographed. The audience becomes instant royalty when the cast graciously backs off the stage (it was forbidden to turn your back on the king).

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## 'George'

Continued from Page 20

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See 'George,' 22



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## THEATER REVIEW: Brilliant lead performance makes 'George' a thrill ride

- Story
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By PAM KRAGEN - pkragen@nctimes.com | Posted: July 7, 2010 9:31 am | No Comments Posted | Print

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[Buy this photo](#) Craig Schwartz Miles Anderson (at left, in red) stars as King George III in the Old Globe's 2010 Shakespeare Festival production of Alan Bennett's "The Madness of George III." Photo courtesy of Craig Schwartz

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# Two Kings Make a Winning Hand

• By **TERRY TEACHOUT**

*San Diego*

Some plays, including most of the best ones, are all but impossible to film, but a handful of memorable stage shows have been filmed so well as to discourage subsequent revivals. Nicholas Hytner's 1994 film of Alan Bennett's "The Madness of George III" is a case in point, for it was so effective that productions of the play in this country have since been few and far between. That's what lured me to San Diego to see the Old Globe's outdoor version, directed by Adrian Noble as part of the company's 2010 Shakespeare Festival. It appears to be the play's first American staging of any consequence since the National Theater's production (on which Mr. Hytner's film was based) toured the U.S. in 1993. All praise to the Old Globe for mounting it so stylishly—and proving that fine though it was on screen, "The Madness of George III" is even better on stage.

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*The Old Globe*

Miles Anderson as King George III in 'The Madness of George III.'

## **THE OLD GLOBE**

Lowell Davies Festival Theatre, Balboa Park,  
1363 Old Globe Way,  
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## THE MADNESS OF GEORGE III

*closes Sept. 24*

## KING LEAR

*closes Sept. 23*

If you haven't seen it in either form, here's a quick refresher course in 18th-century British history: King George III (played at the Old Globe by Miles Anderson) was stricken in 1788 with a mental disorder that left him incapacitated and triggered a political crisis. Seeing a chance to force William Pitt, the Tory prime minister, out of office, Charles James Fox, the leader of the Whig opposition, sought to ram a bill through Parliament authorizing the Prince of Wales to act as Prince Regent and replace Pitt with Fox. It was only when Dr. Francis Willis succeeded against all odds in restoring the king to his senses that the regency was forestalled and the crisis defused.

Out of these grim events, Mr. Bennett has spun a sparkling play whose sober subject is the corrupting effect of power on those who attain it—and, by extension, the corrupting effect of the British class system on those who profit from its privileges. The moral is put in the mouth of Dr. Willis: "Who is to say what is normal in a king? Deferred to, agreed with, acquiesced in. Who could flourish on such a daily diet of compliance? To be curbed, stood up to, in a word thwarted, exercises the character, elasticates the spirit, makes it pliant. It is the want of such exercise that makes rulers rigid."

For all the gravity of his theme, Mr. Bennett never stoops to preaching, instead making his points through high comedy tinged with pathos. The result is a fast-paced pageant that moves even more briskly when performed, like this production, on an Elizabethan-style open stage. Ralph Funicello's set is dominated by a back wall full of mirrored doors through which the players, richly costumed by Deirdre Clancy, charge as though they were taking part in a farce. The emphasis throughout is not on the décor but the acting: Mr. Anderson enacts with frightening exactness the stages of King George's descent into derangement, and Jay Whittaker, a familiar face on the stages of Chicago, is a marvelously urbane and blasé Pitt.

\*\*\*

The Old Globe has fielded a cast of 26 for "The Madness of George III," which is another reason why the play has all but vanished from the stage: Few American companies can now afford to put on so labor-intensive a show. To perform it in rotating repertory with "King Lear," also directed by Mr. Noble, is a feat still further beyond the reach of most regional theater companies, but the Old Globe is bringing it off with seeming effortlessness—and throwing in "The Taming of the Shrew" for good measure! I've seen two other productions of "Shrew" in recent weeks, so I passed this one up, but the Old Globe's "Lear" is a splendid piece of work that no one in or near southern California should miss.

What is most surprising about Mr. Noble's "Lear" is his unexpected avoidance of the grand manner. His program note, in which he speaks of presenting the play in a "language-based" style that embraces "the American accent and cadence of speech," gives the clue: This is a text-driven, eloquently plain-spoken "Lear" that strives at all times to be clear and comprehensible, leaving the heavy lifting to Shakespeare instead of trying to do it for him. Mr. Foxworth's Lear, for instance, is not a giant brought low by his flaws but a weak, snappish, small-statured ruler (he is shorter than all three of his daughters) whose pettiness destroys him.

While Mr. Noble and Mr. Funicello have not stinted on spectacle—including an amazingly vivid snowstorm—they have once again kept the spotlight on the actors, who respond with bold and resourceful performances. In addition to Robert Foxworth's beautifully realized Lear, I was struck by the warm, intelligent Cordelia of Catherine Gowl, the anguished Fool of Bruce Turk and Mr. Whittaker's furious Edgar, but everyone in the cast rises to the occasion with similar aplomb. Shaun Davey's obtrusive Hollywood-style incidental music is the only flaw in a production that is otherwise greatly rewarding.

The resemblances between "Lear" and "The Madness of George III" are, of course, self-evident, and seeing the two plays performed back to back by the same ensemble, as I was able to do, sheds much light on them both. All the more reason, then, to revel in the results. This is a theatrical event of which San Diego should be proud.

—*Mr. Teachout, the Journal's drama critic, blogs about theater and the other arts at [www.terryteachout.com](http://www.terryteachout.com). Write to him at [tteachout@wsj.com](mailto:tteachout@wsj.com).*

## San Diego Arts

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### THE MADNESS OF GEORGE III at the Old Globe Theatre

*The British monarch was functionally insane; the play is majestic and thrilling*

**By Welton Jones**

Posted on Sun, Jul 4th, 2010

Last updated Sun, Jul 4th, 2010

King George III ruled the British Empire for 60 years, beginning before the American Revolution and ending after the Napoleonic Wars. But for whole stretches of his reign, the starchy monarch was functionally insane, now thought to be the result of porphyria, a genetic disease triggered by overdoes of arsenic in the medicine prescribed by his baffled doctors.

Alan Bennett's 1991 play THE MADNESS OF GEORGE III (later a popular film) uses this sad medical history to shape a wise and moving examination of the pressures of power. Adrian Noble has revived the play for the Old Globe Theatre's summer Shakespeare Festival, pairing it as footnote to his production of most mighty royal tragedy of all, KING LEAR.

As hereditary monarchs go, George III wasn't bad. A solemn, pious, formal man, he was curious about the world and serious about his duties to it. He met his queen on the day of their arranged marriage but remained faithful to her through 58 years and 15 children, two of whom would rule after him, George IV and William IV. Queen Victoria was his grand-daughter.

In the play, George is the victim not only of his mysterious ailment, exacerbated by primitive medical attention, but also of the power politics roused when an absolute monarch stumbles. The party out of power allies itself with the fatuous Prince of Wales and plots to dump William Pitt, George's cold but effective prime minister, and build a majority in Parliament while proclaiming the prince as regent to rule for his father.

The physicians brought in to cure the king aren't exactly part of the plot, but they do help it along with treatment such as bleeding, blistering and isolation. The eventual reversal of the madness is engineered by a flinty practitioner of tough-love who plainly states his approach is similar to breaking a wild horse.

There is sizeable satisfaction in contemplating the monarch restored and the plots confounded but the play is more useful as a contest between order and chaos, innocence and guile, steadfastness and opportunism.

Noble's staging is majestic and thrilling, a triumph of pageantry at the service of contemplation. Entrances explode through a semi-circle of mirrored doors amidst large bursts of George Frideric Handel, often the Fireworks or Water music. Splendid period costumes by Deirdre Clancy flavor the stage picture in exquisite detail and Alan Burrett's lighting seems to blossom or wither in exact time with the pulse of the piece.

The confident thrust of the entire production is evidence of Noble's masterful ability to balance all the show's elements and bind them into a glowing whole. The scene in which a recovering George presides at a reading of KING LEAR is a grand example of this: writing, performance, presentation and homage all smoothly converged.

Miles Anderson plays the title role with a vast range of effects all ordered and precise. He is equally as imposing as he is frail and vulnerable and he is always, in public or in private, plausible and consistent.

Many bits of vivid characterization stand out in the large cast. Andrew Dahl is fascinating as the bored and debauched Prince of Wales. Jay Whitaker rides the laser focus of Pitt while Charles Janasz coolly hedges as the Lord Chancellor determined to survive whoever rules.

Sneering Bruce Turk, suave Joseph Marcell and bubbly Adrian Sparks are effective as the trio of quacks, which the author might have made deeper and more complex given time, and Robert Foxworth is bracing as the down-to-earth therapist who deciphers the puzzle of kingly behavior.

Emily Swallow makes the queen touching and warmly supportive while Steven Marzolf, Ben Diskant, Christian Durso, Andrew Hutcheson and especially Jordan McArthur offer bits of humanity poking through the rigidity of household staff.

This play is most certainly worthy of an updated look. (Politics never change much.) But placed adjacent to KING LEAR, in a pair of productions not similar but most complimentary, it offers some real revelations. And serves as a tribute to Adrian Noble, the man with the plan.

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# SAN DIEGO CITY BEAT

July 14, 2010

## THEATER

### Nervous tics

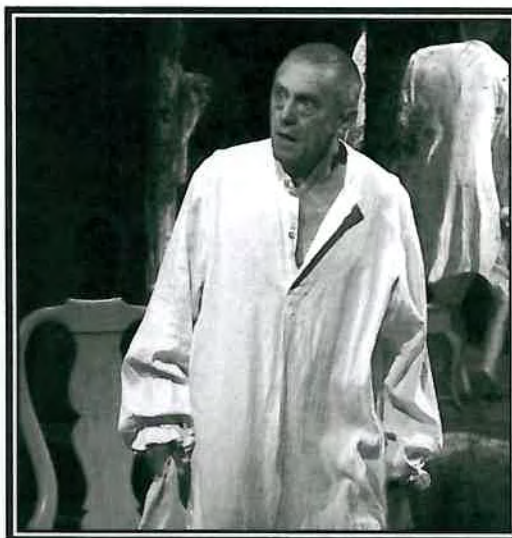
GEORGE III SUFFERED  
FROM THEM; SO DOES  
HIS NAMESAKE PLAY

BY MARTIN JONES WESTLIN

A 2005 analysis of a clump of hair from King George III, England's toppest of the top during the American Revolution, shows the regent probably suffered from chronic hepatic porphyria. That's your doc's way of saying he struggled with big-time bouts of madness and paranoia, ulcerated skin, spasms of the muscles and veins, fierce diarrhea and abdominal pain and a pesky tendency to discharge purple pee and poop. Against those odds, the war must've been a stroll through the vegetable aisle—as an abjectly terrified George wailed during one onset, “I’m not going out of my mind! My mind is going out of me!”

At least that's what it says in Alan Bennett's *The Madness of George III*, third entry in The Old Globe Theatre's 2010 Summer Shakespeare Festival. George has lots of lines like that, and Miles Anderson's outstanding performance is a marker for this season's shows. But this good cast fights a losing battle in a staging that can't decide what it wants to be. It bobs and weaves in search of its style of choice, which is fine if you're training for a fight. Problem is, you're trying to watch a play, one that seldom lights long enough for you to take it in.

George stared his legacy in the face as the war ended with the Treaty of Paris in 1783. “They’ll lay it at my door,” he laments of the colonists’ victory—and Anderson’s superb delivery leads us to believe that George, to the grief of his wife, Queen Charlotte (an excellent Emily Swallow in a thinly drawn part), is on the verge of insanity. What follows has less connection with history than with your choice of spectacle. This is a period play amid political intrigue in the wake of George’s illness; a farce amid the absurd situations and the requisite collection of working doors on the set; a dance hall piece amid Bennett’s bathroom humor; a grand



The rigors of war and physical and mental illness have cut King George III (Miles Anderson) down to size.

guignol amid George’s brutal medical treatments; a staged reading amid director Adrian Noble’s linear blocking; and an exorcism amid one doctor’s insistence that the king’s illnesses are in his head. (George recovers, but by now, it doesn’t matter.)

Festival artistic director Noble can point to a good *King Lear* (which he helmed), a spotty but fun *The Taming of the Shrew*, Ralph Funicello’s thoughtful sets and Deirdre Clancy’s first-rate costumes as the season moves into full swing. But as George quips near the end of *Madness*, “Style never immortalized anybody.” Ironically, amid rampant indecisiveness about that very element, he could’ve been talking about the show. **CB**

*This review is based on the performance of July 9. The Madness of George III runs through Sept. 24 at The Old Globe Theatre’s Lowell Davies Festival Theatre, 1363 Old Globe Way in Balboa Park. \$29-\$56. [oldglobe.org](http://oldglobe.org). Write to [marty@sdcitybeat.com](mailto:marty@sdcitybeat.com) and editor@[sdcitybeat.com](http://sdcitybeat.com).*



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Tuesday, Jul 13, 2010

# Nervous tics

The Old Globe's jittery The Madness of George III is all over the stylistic map

By Martin Jones Westlin



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A 2005 analysis of a clump of hair from King George III, England's toppest of the top during the American Revolution, shows the regent probably suffered from chronic hepatic porphyria. That's your doc's way of saying he struggled with big-time bouts of madness and paranoia, ulcerated skin, spasms of the muscles and veins, fierce diarrhea and abdominal pain and a pesky tendency to discharge purple pee and poop. Against those odds, the war must've been a stroll through the vegetable aisle—as an abjectly terrified George wailed during one onset, “I'm not going out of my mind! My mind is going out of me!”

At least that's what it says in Alan Bennett's *The Madness of George III*, third entry in The Old Globe Theatre's 2010 Summer Shakespeare Festival. George has lots of lines like that, and Miles Anderson's outstanding performance is a marker for this season's shows. But this good cast fights a losing battle in a staging that can't decide what it wants to be. It bobs and weaves in search of its style of choice, which is fine if you're training for a fight. Problem is, you're trying to watch a play, one that seldom lights long enough for you to take it in.

George stared his legacy in the face as the war ended with the Treaty of Paris in 1783. “They'll lay it at my door,” he laments of the colonists' victory—and Anderson's superb delivery leads us to believe that George, to the grief of his wife, Queen Charlotte (an excellent Emily Swallow in a thinly drawn part), is on the verge of insanity. What follows has less connection with history than with your choice of spectacle. This is a period play amid political intrigue in the wake of George's illness; a farce amid the absurd situations and the requisite collection of working doors on the set; a dance hall piece amid Bennett's bathroom humor; a grand guignol amid George's brutal medical treatments; a staged reading amid director Adrian Noble's linear blocking; and an exorcism amid one doctor's insistence that the king's illnesses are in his head. (George recovers, but by now, it doesn't matter.)

Festival artistic director Noble can point to a good *King Lear* (which he helmed), a spotty but fun *The Taming of the Shrew*, Ralph Funicello's thoughtful sets and Deirdre Clancy's first-rate costumes as the season moves into full swing. But as George quips near the end of *Madness*, “Style never immortalized anybody.” Ironically, amid rampant indecisiveness about that very element, he could've been talking about the show.

*This review is based on the performance of July 9. The Madness of George III runs through Sept. 24 at The Old Globe Theatre's Lowell Davies Festival Theatre, 1363 Old Globe Way in Balboa Park. \$29-\$56. [oldglobe.org](http://oldglobe.org). Write to [marty@sdcitybeat.com](mailto:marty@sdcitybeat.com) and [editor@sdcitybeat.com](mailto:editor@sdcitybeat.com).*

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**The Madness of George III**  
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Royal Madness

The Prince of Wales: a corpulent idler who strikes poses with his cane and dreams of kingship.

The Old Globe is staging two plays about monarchs gone mad: Shakespeare's *King Lear* and Alan Bennett's *Madness of George III*. Lear's is self-inflicted. A seemingly simple test of love has a "butterfly effect." Families fall, nature almost unravels, and the king's insanity scourges his being. They say the Lord gives us only suffering we can handle. Lear's epic plight questions that claim.

Great Britain's King George III (1738–1820) ruled when the 13 colonies won their independence (he called America "the place we mustn't mention"). In 1788, he experienced severe abdominal pain and aching skin that made linen feel like a hair shirt; he shivered, his urine turned blue, and he babbled nonstop, at one point for nine straight hours. Many in his court refused to believe he was ill. After all, when it came to eccentricity, monarchs had a King's X.

Bennett's play walks hand-in-hand with *King Lear*, but with a difference: Lear's madness was psychological. George showed all the symptoms of insanity, but his madness was physical (resulting, many say, from a "porphyria," a blood disease); he was actually a sane mind in an insane body. "I have always been myself," he

says, "even when I was ill." George's mania prompted the Regency Crisis of 1788. What to do? Keep the king as a blithering figurehead? Declare him unfit? But then what? His absence could topple a government and the majority his patronage created. Behind the scenes, Tories and Whigs — among them the Prince of Wales, William Pitt, and Richard Brinsley Sheridan (author of *The School for Scandal*) — jockey for power. "The King's illness," says Charles James Fox, "is a civil death."

A battery of doctors tries to heal the king, and 18th-century medicine looks as primitive as ours will two centuries hence (you can hear Bones of *Star Trek* shouting, "It's medieval!"). One doctor's obsessed with the pulse, another with stool samples, a third advocates "blistering": to let foul humors escape, he applies heated glass containers to the king's scalp. They actually mean well, though their methods result in Inquisition-strength torture. Bennett italicizes that point: while face down as if on a rack, the king shouts, "I'm the Lord's anointed!"

Ralph Funicello's set could host a royal farce: eight mirrored double doors semicircle the playing space. They make for courtly

entrances (along with puffy wigs, Deirdre Clancy's costumes include numerous red coats with gold trimmings) or farcical escapes. The director creates flurries of disorder onstage, but none compare to the king's.

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He was a sane mind in an insane body.

**The Madness of George III** by Alan Bennett  
**Old Globe Theatre,** Lowell Davies Festival Theatre, Balboa Park  
**Directed by Adrian Noble;** cast: Miles Anderson, Emily Swallow, Michael Stewart Allen, Charles Janasz, Jay Whittaker, Robert Foxworth, Andrew Dahl, Donald Carrier, Grayson DeJesus, Bruce Turk, Adrian Sparks, Craig Dudley, Joseph Marcell, Shirine Babb; scenic design, Ralph Funicello; costumes, Deirdre Clancy; lighting, Alan Burrett; sound, Christopher R. Walker  
**Playing through September 24;** runs in repertory with *King Lear* and *The Taming of the Shrew*. 619-234-5623.

George III was in many ways King Lear's opposite. He loved to go among the people and knew the names and genealogies of seemingly thousands. In *Madness* he experiences a Lear-like fall. If Great Britain were a single declara-



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## Old Globe 'Madness,' 'Shrew' plus arts news

News includes Comic-Con, George Steinbrenner, Trolley Dances

By [Pat Launer](#), [SDNN](#)

Wednesday, July 14, 2010

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(From left) Robert Foxworth (as Dr. Francis Willis), Miles Anderson (as King George III) and Emily Swallow (as Queen Charlotte) in the 2010 Shakespeare Festival production of Alan Bennett's "The Madness of George III" at The Old Globe. (Photo courtesy of The Old Globe)

**By George!**

**THE PLAY:** "The Madness of George III," the only non-Shakespeare part of the Old Globe's Summer Shakespeare



## Festival

When a film version was in the works for Alan Bennett's marvelously imaginative and disturbing 1991 drama, "The Madness of George III," about Britain's 18<sup>th</sup> century monarch, there was a serious concern that if American audiences saw "George III" in the title, they'd think it was a sequel, and would be unlikely to attend, assuming they'd missed the first two parts. Ah, those wacky English. They still don't trust the Colonies! But they got their way; the 1994 movie was called "The Madness of King George."

The United States was famously formed during George's reign, and if Bennett can be believed, that loss stuck in his craw for life. But he had plenty of other problems during the 1780s, when the play is set. (Side note: George died in 1820, at age 81. He was monarch for 59 years, longer than any of his kingly predecessors. Only his granddaughter, Queen Victoria, exceeded his record, though Elizabeth II has lived longer.)

The Whigs and Tories were at each other's throats. It was Fox against Pitt, father vs. son. George's overweight, overindulgent eldest offspring, the Prince of Wales (fat-suited Andrew Dahl) was aligned with Whig leader Charles Fox (Michael Stewart Allen), aiming to wrest power and be declared Regent. George was advised by his austere Prime Minister, William Pitt (outstanding Jay Whittaker, the most versatile performer in the whole Summer Festival). The problem for all was, the King seemed to be losing his mind.

Two centuries of conjecture have reflected on the possible causes of George's blue urine, coupled with his ranting, raving and rambling (during Christmas 1819, in the last weeks of his life, he reportedly blathered incoherently for 58 hours straight). The consensus has been porphyria, a genetic neurological disease. But a recent paper by two Englishmen, published in the March 2010 issue of the journal *History of Psychiatry*, claims otherwise. The debate, like the King himself, rages on.



Pat Launer

Though the play has an upbeat ending, King George actually descended further into lunacy and delirium toward the end of his life, and never regained his sanity. But during the 1780s, the Regency Bill authorizing the Prince of Wales to act as Prince Regent actually was passed in the House of Commons. Fortuitously, George recovered before the House of Lords could vote.

And so – or, "what what!" as the King would say – he kept his crown. But he descended repeatedly into the depths of mental illness, and was treated by all manner of self-serving medical quacks. The smart, witty play provides not only a history lesson about leadership and governmental machinations; it's a metaphor for an unhealthy political system and a broken medical system.

Adrian Noble, artistic director of the Globe's Summer Shakespeare Festival (already invited back for next year), helms a magnificent ensemble, centered by Miles Anderson's sensational performance as the King. He is by turns tender, furious, foul-mouthed, contrite, impatient and mad as a hatter. Spectacular work. All those around him are excellent, too, especially Emily Swallow as his Germanic Queen Charlotte, the aforementioned Whittaker as his chief adviser, and Robert Foxworth as Dr. Francis Willis, the only physician who achieves any results, but it's through a highly unconventional, rather punishing treatment. Though the acting is superb throughout, the repeated ceremonial posing and door-closing becomes tiresome over time.



The set (Ralph Funicello) is backed by a wall of mirrors (it's *all* about appearances and self-aggrandizement in court), and the costumes (Deirdre Clancy) provide the pomp and ceremony to match.

Some of the mad scenes are unsettling. But one of the delicious moments of the evening comes when the King (Anderson)

and the Doctor (Foxworth), in an effort to keep the ruler's emotions in check, read "King Lear" ("I had no idea what it was about," claims Dr. Willis, surprised by the story of another mad monarch). That moment is priceless; it's Foxworth who plays Lear on alternating nights. Noble certainly knew what he was doing this summer. The three-play cross-referencing is a piece of planning genius.

*See Pat Launer's review of "King Lear" [here](#).*

**THE LOCATION:** The Old Globe's Festival Stage in Balboa Park. (619) 234-5623; [www.theoldglobe.org](http://www.theoldglobe.org)

**THE DETAILS:** Tickets: \$29-\$78. "George III" runs in repertory (on selected evenings, Tuesday-Sunday), alternating with "The Taming of the Shrew" and "King Lear," through September 24

**Bottom Line: BEST BET**



Jonno Roberts (as Pretruchio) and Emily Swallow (as Katherine) in the 2010 Shakespeare Festival production of "The Taming of the Shrew" at The Old Globe. (Photo by Craig Schwartz)

**That's Funny; you don't look Shrewish!**

**THE PLAY:** "The Taming of the Shrew," the comic relief in the Globe's Summer Shakespeare Festival

Shakespeare's most knotty comedy (one of his so-called "problem plays") originally began with an Induction, a framing device that offers the action as a kind of historical diversion for a drunken tinker. It's usually omitted. Here, under the direction of Ron Daniels (former artistic director of the Royal Shakespeare Company's experimental theater, The Other Place, at Stratford-upon-Avon), it all starts with the players romping through the house (audience members even sit onstage), then ridiculing the obligatory cell phone announcement. The young men come up onstage for chest-bumps and (an overlong) dance. These guys, attractive and spirited as they may be, make repeat dancing/cavorting appearances that wear out their welcome.

But the mood of the production is set even before that. The first thing we see is the title of the play, screamed out in neon lights, with the final "W" dangling off, alerting us to the fact that things will continue to be slightly askew. The message is clear: this isn't gonna be your grandma's "Shrew."

There are a few excesses in the production. A good deal of silliness, for one thing. There's a marvelous cane horse, strapped on a man and able to do all manner of things (from wiggling its ears to expelling gas and dropping a load. The show could

definitely do without the potty humor). But where it's most important, Daniels gets it superbly right.

His central lovers, the opportunistic Petruchio and the harridan Katherine, are magnificent together. What has made this play a "problem" for four centuries is the apparent misogyny of its conceit.

Petruchio has come from Verona to "wive it wealthily in Padua." He hears about the well-heeled Minola daughters, the fair and docile (if vapid) Bianca and the ill-tempered hellion Kate. Their father, Baptista, will not marry off the younger sib, who has many fawning (and identity-swapping) suitors, until the elder is wed. That's a tall order for any man in town; they're all cowed by the hellcat with the whip-sharp tongue. But the swaggering braggart Petruchio is undaunted.

When he first meets Kate, we see instant chemistry, and for nearly every minute they're onstage together, they never take their eyes off each other. They both realize that this is a mating of peers – equally clever, witty, stubborn, intractable, emotional and sexual. In the text, Petruchio seems to "tame" her; after the wedding, he keeps her from food and drink; he makes her say the sun is the moon. But there's the sense that she's in on his game, that she knows, as he does, that theirs is a very fine match indeed. And that makes her final words, the really tough-to-take speech to the other brides about "true obedience," easy to accept. She's not being sarcastic or subservient; her definition of "obedience" is elastic. Like King George III, she has learned (the hard way), the value of self-control – that is, once she drops her defensive veneer of irascibility. Like any good mate, she'll do what it takes to make a marriage work, and that's valuable advice to any newlywed.

In the riveting, passionate and forceful performances of Jonno Roberts and Emily Swallow, we are swept up in the relationship. We aren't made to feel queasy or uneasy in the difficult parts, and that's a triumph of acting and directing. Most of the rest of the cast is happily gamboling over the top. Jay Whittaker is a hoot as the foppish Lucentio, who finally gets the girl (Old Globe MFA student Bree Welch is a pleasant Bianca). Petruchio's wily servant, Grumio, is played by Bruce Turk, who's the Fool in "King Lear." At one point, he offhandedly sings "the rain it raineth every day," a Shakespearean Fool's song from another play ("Twelfth Night's" Feste), which somehow manages to make us think of "Lear" and his storm. The cross-referenced interweaving of the Festival plays is delightful.

Special mention must be made of the costumes (Deirdre Clancy) which are jaw-dropping gorgeous. The original music (Christopher R. Walker) is often effective, but swells like a film score at emotional high-points. There are up and down moments throughout the evening, but in sum, it's great, giddy fun. And beautifully realized. This Kate and Petruchio are a couple of winners, in every way.

**THE LOCATION:** The Old Globe's Festival Stage in Balboa Park. (619) 234-5623; [www.theoldglobe.org](http://www.theoldglobe.org)

**THE DETAILS:** Tickets: \$29-\$78. "The Taming of the Shrew" runs in repertory (on selected evenings, Tuesday-Sunday), alternating with "King Lear" and "The Madness of George III," through September 26

**Bottom Line: BEST BET**

## NEWS AND VIEWS

... **That OTHER George III: George Steinbrenner III**, who passed away this week, wasn't only interested in baseball, and **Yankees** games weren't all he attended in New York. The bombastic team Boss was also a theater producer. From 1967 to 1989, he was associated with six Broadway shows, including comedies ("Not Now, Darling"), dramas ("Abelard and Heloise") and musicals ("Applause," "Seesaw," "Legs Diamond"). Some productions didn't fare so well ("The Ninety Day Mistress" closed in 1967 after only 24 performances), but the musicals were all nominated for Tony Awards; "Legs" won two, and "Applause" was named Best Musical of 1970. "Now Not, Darling" didn't do so great on the Great White Way (21 performances), but it's had a expansive afterlife, recently seen, to excellent effect, at Scripps Ranch Theatre. So, Sports Fans, there *is* crossover. Try the theater some gameless Saturday night!

... **Speaking of Games:** Just in time for **Comic-Con**, "**GAM3RS**," the hilarious solo show about online gaming (of the conquer-the-world variety) is back. Having had a successful run at ion theatre, the high-octane, one-act comedy, delectably performed by **Brian Bielawski** (co-written with Walter G. Meyer), will have 15 extra performances, right near the site of the mega-Con. And since that's a bit much even for the tireless Bielawski (a USD alum), local actor **Steven Lone** will step in for some performances. This one's not just for your geek-friends; your gal-pals will get a big kick out of it, too. [Read my full review here](#). And check it out at the 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue Theatre, playing 2-3 times a day, July 20-25. "Gam3rs" forms the centerpiece of **Gam3rCon**, which will take over several floors of the 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue Theatre, offering game demos, gaming

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## THEATER REVIEW: "The Madness Of George III" is a worthy production

Jean Lowerison - SDGLN Theater Critic | Tue, 07/13/2010 - 11:12am | [Login to bookmark or comment](#)

SAN DIEGO -- If "the state of monarchy and the state of lunacy share a frontier," as one of King George III's doctors puts it in Alan Bennett's "The Madness of George III," this king crossed it and went deep into the other side.

The first Hanoverian king to be born in England gets the rap for losing the North American colonies in that inconvenient little 18th-century war, but he is perhaps better remembered (at least by Bennett) as the victim of a rare and debilitating blood disorder that manifested in his later years, resulting in the king's insanity and the naming of son George as regent in 1811, nine years before his father's death.

The Old Globe Theatre presents "The Madness Of George III" through Sept. 24 as part of the theater's summer Shakespeare Festival. Adrian Noble directs.

As king, George wasn't the worst. An affable sort, though a tad censorious and given to indolence, he met his queen on their wedding day. Their union produced 15 children; the king's 59-year reign was exceeded only by that of his granddaughter, who became Queen Victoria.

Passionately interested in agriculture, the British Agricultural Revolution was at its peak during his reign. He left a book collection - the King's Library of over 60,000 volumes (including a copy of the Gutenberg Bible and Caxton's first edition of Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales"), now part of the British Museum.

But he also had a fat, power-hungry son in George (who would later take over as regent during his father's illness) and the usual assortment of political supporters and foes among the Whigs and Tories of the time.

So when the king was felled by illness (now thought to have been porphyria, a rare blood disorder characterized in this case by irrational behavior, pain and excessive talking), the floodgates were opened to both medical quackery and political intrigue.

Three quacks (wonderfully played by Joseph Marcell, Bruce Turk and Adrian Sparks) propose common but horrifying treatments that can only have made the king feel worse - and will make theatergoers glad to live in this century.

A fourth, Dr. Willis (Robert Foxworth, so fine as that other mad king - Lear - in another Festival offering), comes recommended by the king's mistress, Lady Pembroke (Shirine Babb). Dr. Willis tries the tough love approach, keeping the queen at a distance and strapping the gagged king into a chair resembling those later used for electrocution. It's "like breaking a wild horse," he notes.

The political machinations are both more familiar and more cookie-cutter; backstabbing and jockeying for position begin as the power shift becomes more likely.

Much about monarchy is a question of appearances, and Ralph Funicello's "wall" of Mylar-treated sections underscores that. And Deirdre Clancy's sumptuously layered costumes add to the opulent look.

Anderson inhabits the role of the king, making his disintegration seem all the sadder as he seems to visibly shrink, stoop and stammer into incoherence. And when he recovers for a short time, his comment is all the more poignant: "I have remembered how to seem."

Whittaker, Janasz and Dudley are effective as the Tory contingent, as are Michael Stewart Allen and Donald Carrier as Whigs and Andrew Dahl as the power-hungry Prince of Wales.

This is a lovely production to look at, and solidly played by all.

### The details

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Photo credit: The Old Globe

**Miles Anderson (center) as King George III with (from left) Steven Marzolf, Shirine Babb, Ben Diskant and Emily Swallow.**



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## A CurtainUp San Diego Review

### *The Madness of George III*

By [Jenny Sandman](#)

*What do you know of my mind? ...I'm not going out of my mind.  
My mind is going out of me!— George III*

*The state of monarchy and the state of lunacy share a  
frontier.— Dr. Willis*



Miles Anderson as King George III  
(Photo by Craig Schwartz.)

King George III would be a historical footnote, were it not for the fact that he caused the American Revolution. Best known for his short-sighted tax policies which sparked the Revolution (and the Boston Tea Party), he was also clinically insane for long stretches of his sixty-year reign. (Perhaps the Revolution was a direct result of his insanity?)

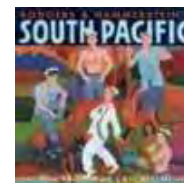
When not insane, or pissing off American colonists, he was a sober, steadfast monarch. He remained faithful to his queen during their long and arranged marriage, producing 15 children (Queen Victoria was his granddaughter). Alan Bennett's 1991 play *The Madness of George III* (which became an award winning film in 1994) chronicles George III's mysterious illness and dramatic mental decline five years after the end of the

Revolution (now thought to be the result of porphyria).

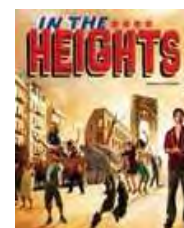
George fought tooth and nail to retain both his sanity and his throne. His son, the Prince of Wales, was waiting anxiously for his father to die, and made no attempt to hide his hunger to rule. George's court was ill-equipped to handle his mental instability, no policies having been made to handle a temporary transfer of power. England's government devolved into petty power struggles. The minority party allied itself with the Prince of Wales and plotted to overthrow George, his Prime Minister William Pitt, and their majority party while trying to get the Prince named as Regent. Meanwhile, Queen Charlotte brought in a host of ineffective doctors, laboring under the uninformed medical practices of the time. George was treated with blistering and purges and finally with an early form of behavior modification therapy, but nothing helped. Eventually the disease abated on its own, and George was able to return to the throne.

The play is less about George III specifically as it is about the boundaries between order and chaos, sanity and madness, good government and bad, and about the general human inability to control ourselves. How can we control millions if we can't control ourselves? It's also a thought-provoking companion piece to another of the Old Globe's repertory season, *King Lear* ([my review](#)). Both kings go mad; both lose power, at least temporarily; both are the subject of complicated plots to seize that power.

I found *Lear* is a more nuanced production; since the supporting players in *George II* are often little more than caricatures in a vintage political cartoon. Miles Anderson as the title character George is the best of an otherwise sadly one-dimensional ensemble. Even with *Lear* as a bookend, this *George III* is a victim of its own exaggeration. The subtleties of



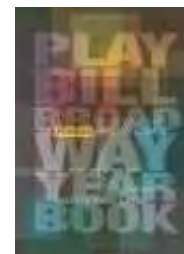
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the various power struggles are often lost. The Prince of Wales (Andrew Dahl) is a fat buffoon, the doctors are bumbling idiots, William Pitt (Jay Whittaker) is apparently incapable of any emotion outside ruthless efficiency.

That being said, this play is not often performed, and it's a fascinating look into a royal life few Americans are familiar with. While I'd recommend *Lear* over *George III*, it's worth it to see both for their overlapping views on the downfalls of absolute monarchy--and, by extrapolation, the downfalls of government in general.

I'll be reporting on the third play in this repertory line-up, *The Taming of the Shrew* early next week.

The Madness of George III  
Written by Alan Bennett  
Directed by Adrian Noble

With Michael Stewart Allen (Fox), Miles Anderson (George III), Shirine Babb (Lady Pembroke), Donald Carrier (Sheridan), Andrew Dahl (Prince of Wales), Grayson DeJesus (Ramsden), Ben Diskant (Greville), Craig Dudley (Dundas), Christian Durso (Braun), Robert Foxworth (Dr. Willis), Kevin Hoffmann (Duke of York), Andrew Hutcheson (Fortnum), Charles Janasz (Thurlow), Joseph Marcell (Sir George Baker), Steven Marzolf (Captain Fitzroy), Jordan McArthur (Papandiek), Brooke Novak (Margaret Nicholson), Ryman Sneed (Maid), Adrian Sparks (Sir Lucas Pepys, Sir Boothby Skrymshir), Emily Swallow (Queen Charlotte), Bruce Turk (Dr. Richard Warren), and Jay Whittaker (William Pitt) with Catherine Gowl, Aubrey Saverino and Bree Welch (Ensemble)

Set Design: Ralph Funicello

Lighting Design: Alan Burrett

Sound Design: Christopher R. Walker

Costume Design: Deirdre Clancy

Original Music: Shaun Davey

Running Time: Two hours and forty minutes with one fifteen-minute intermission

The Old Globe; 1363 Old Globe Way, San Diego; 619-23-GLOBE

Tickets \$29 - \$78

Schedule varies

June 19 - September 24, 2010

Reviewed by Jenny Sandman based on July 3rd performance

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## Globe's Shakespeare Festival revives spirit of Bard with aplomb

Posted by [admin](#) on 8/02/10 • Categorized as [Arts & Entertainment](#), [Theater](#)

By Cuauhtémoc Q. Kish/GSD Theatre Critic

### Old Globe Theatre's 2010 Shakespeare Festival

**“King Lear,” “The Taming of the Shrew” and “The Madness of George III”** in repertory through September

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### “The Madness of George III”

During his reign, King George III suffered from a physical malady that was the result of a genetic disease that baffled his personal medical team.



(l to r): Robert Foxworth as Dr. Francis Willis, Miles Anderson as King George III and Emily Swallow as Queen Charlotte in the 2010 Shakespeare Festival production of Alan Bennett's "The Madness of George III," directed by Adrian Noble, at The Old Globe through Sept. 24. (Courtesy The Old Globe)

Alan Bennett's play focuses attention upon this strange and puzzling disease—now defined as porphyria—while writing a play about the constantly shifting struggle for power.

Miles Anderson leads a large cast of characters in his well-defined role of King George; he's benevolent, vulnerable, and deathly afraid of losing his mind. His struggles with porphyria

resemble those suffering their first uncomfortable moments with Alzheimer's. But George ruled for 60 years without giving up the throne, thanks in part to his loyal team of competent legislators, especially his Prime Minister.

Part of the heartache—and the fun—of this play is the comical display of primitive medicine practiced during this time period. The President of the Royal College of Physicians (Sir George Baker/Joseph Marcell) along with two other incompetent medical practitioners (Bruce Turk and Adrian Sparks), recommend and execute remedies—such as bleeding and blistering—to cure the King's mental ailment, with dire results. Almost downplayed by Robert Foxworth—to offset the three medical frauds—is the therapist who actually cures the King, Doctor Francis Willis.

Anderson is supported by a competent group of actors. Emily Swallow does fine work as the queen; she is all grace, warmth and wifely protection. Andrew Dahl (Prince of Whales) is adequately stuffy, bored and infantile. Jay Whitaker does splendid work as the overly-focused Prime Minister Pitt.

Noble's staging, assisted by a half-circle of mirrored doors, works well with this large cast who come and go with steadfast regularity, until at some point it becomes annoying. Deirdre Clancy's period costumes fit the play nicely.

"The Madness of George III" works quite well with "King Lear," another production about the struggle for royal power, and is a fine balance with the entertaining "The Taming of the Shrew."



Summer’s best production not a Bard but a George

By Patricia Morris Buckley  
SDUN Theatre Critic

Is there anything worse than being the heir apparent? As the Prince of Wales says: “To be heir to the throne is not a position. It’s a predicament.” That quote is from “The Madness of George III,” the third, final and best offering of this year’s summer Shakespeare Festival at the Old Globe Theatre. But the quote is as timely today as it was then. That Prince of Wales had to wait until age 60 to inherit the throne, something Prince Charles, now a senior

THE MADNESS OF  
GEORGE III

Through Sept. 24  
Old Globe Theatre  
Tickets: \$29-\$62  
23-GLOBE  
theoldglobe.org

citizen, knows all too well.

While this show is not one of the Bard’s, it is a nice bookend to his King Lear as it deals with kings, legacies, madness and the many forms that greed for power can take. In fact, a bit of “Lear” is read during the show. To put a touch more irony in it, one character criticizes the performance of another’s reading of the king’s role—and the actor reading Lear actually plays Lear in the Globe’s production.

Most people know this show because of the 1994 Oscar-



(l-r) Robert Foxworth as Dr. Francis Willis, Miles Anderson as King George III and Emily Swallow as Queen Charlotte in the 2010 Shakespeare Festival production of Alan Bennett’s “The Madness of George III.” (Photos courtesy The Old Globe)

nominated film that starred Nigel Hawthorne and Helen Mirren (retitled “The Madness of King George”). The play looks at George III’s descent and recovery from madness at the end of his long reign. Today, the medical profession believed he suffered from a rare blood condition that led to this temporary madness and eventually to a permanent one at the end of his life.

It’s sad to watch as George,

a rather stoic and jovial ruler, starts to lose his mind—as he says, “I’m not going out of my mind, my mind is going out of me.” Even scarier are the practically medieval medical minds that surround him, recommending such horrifying treatments as bloodletting, boils and purgatives. In the end, it’s a very crude version of behavior modification that brings him back to himself.

What makes this production so enjoyable is the crisp direction of Adrian Noble, who also directed “Lear” (far less successfully). The action moves so quickly that one scene shifts to the next as the other clears the stage. Politics are handled with humor and speed, so they never slow the action. In the end, it’s humanity—and all that would

prevent it from a fruitful existence—that takes center stage.

It’s interesting that the second act, where George regains his mental function, is even better than the first. That’s due in great part to the actor in the role. This part requires great nuances and skill, both of which Miles Anderson (who plays no other role in the repertory of plays) shows in great abundance. We become so attached to the George we first meet that we can’t wait for him to be restored.

Other standout performances include Andrew Dahl as the pompous Prince of Wales, who cleverly walks the line between caricature and a man made to wait decades for his real life to begin. Jay Whittaker takes the quiet role of William Pitt the Younger and makes the audience

feel his fear of his own madness. And Robert Foxworth (who also plays Lear) is the calm and authoritative voice of reason as the doctor who cures the king.

Adding greatly to the play’s success are two design elements. Ralph Funicello’s curved wall of antiqued mirrors that are also doors allow for the show’s fast pacing and work as almost every setting the playwright intends. Costume designer Deirdre Clancy produces the usual colonial-era garb, but a few she has given an extra punch (see for yourself). That restraint is what makes the design work so well.

While many Shakespeare lovers will flock to see “King Lear” and “Taming of the Shrew,” the best production of the summer isn’t one by the Bard at all. But it’s not to be missed. ♦



Miles Anderson (center) as King George III with (l to r) Steven Marzolf, Shirine Babb, Ben Diskant and Emily Swallow.



Posted by [admin](#) on 7/22/10 • Categorized as [Arts & Entertainment](#), [Balboa Park](#), [Communities](#), [Theater](#)

**By Patricia Morris Buckley**

**SDUN Theatre Critic**



Miles Anderson (center) as King George III with (l to r) Steven Marzolf, Shirine Babb, Ben Diskant and Emily Swallow. (Photos courtesy The Old Globe)

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## SAN DIEGO

Regional Reviews by Bill Eadie

### *The Madness of George III*

Old Globe Theatre

Also see Bill's review of [\[title of show\]](#)

A traditional way of organizing a summer Shakespeare festival, such as the one now playing through the end of September at San Diego's Old Globe, is to present a tragedy, a comedy and a history. Interestingly enough, that's the way Adrian Noble has organized the 2010 festival that marks the Globe's 75th season. Except, the "history" play isn't Shakespeare at all but a contemporary playwright whose imagination runs to Shakespearean spectacle.

Alan Bennett's *The Madness of George III* turns out to be an excellent choice for a history play. Although contemporary (its 1991 premiere helped to open the newly constructed National Theatre complex in London), it sizzles with a combination of heraldry, politics and psychology. It contains the juiciest of leading roles, a prominent second leading role, and lots of potential for memorable performances in the featured roles. For American audiences (who may know Mr. Bennett's *The History Boys* better than this play), there is a lesson about the British king against whom the colonists rebelled that is rarely mentioned in the U.S. And, for the Old Globe, *Madness* features a large cast, so the entire repertory company, save Jonno Roberts who has large roles in the other two plays, appears in it.



**Miles Anderson (center) with (l. to r.) Steven Marzolf, Shirine Babb, Ben Diskant and Emily Swallow**

Like many of Shakespeare's histories, *Madness* starts slowly, focuses on personalities and the political and social milieu of the times, and doesn't really get chugging until later. The Globe's acting company follows suit, more or less slogging its way through the lengthy exposition, only to be energized by the appearance, just before intermission, of Robert Foxworth.

Americans know George III as a despotic ruler whose milking of the colonies' finances triggered the independence revolt he so richly deserved. Mr. Bennett portrays him as a strong and politically savvy monarch who won some degree of royal authority back from Parliament, who was served well by youthful and fiscally conservative Prime Minister William Pitt, and who deeply loved his wife, Queen Charlotte, and the music of George Frederic Handel (though, it was his grandfather, George II, who started the tradition of standing during the Hallelujah Chorus). George was devoutly religious and, politically, he resembled Margaret Thatcher, whose Tory government held sway during the time that Mr. Bennett was writing his play.

Later in his life, George developed what physicians now say was probably porphyria, a genetic blood disorder. The symptoms of the disease can resemble dementia. Because of his disability, George's son, the Prince of Wales, was appointed Regent and ruled in his stead until his death, when the son ascended to the throne as George IV. Mr. Bennett sets up a different telling, however, as he places the prince in league with leaders of the Whig



opposition, Charles James Fox and, interestingly enough, the satirical playwright Richard Brinsley Sheridan. The political showdown of the play comes as the prince's forces maneuver to garner the votes needed to install the prince as Regent, while a former cleric turned early-day psychiatrist (Mr. Foxworth) emerges from a country asylum to cure the King of his madness.

Mr. Noble's production features a funhouse of mirrors, which Ralph Funicello's unit design for all of the productions accommodates neatly. The mirrors double as doors that swing open and shut in formal ways as the scene moves from the ceremony of court, to the chambers of the political opponents, and to the King's private residence at Windsor Castle. It also features a towering performance from Miles Anderson as the mad monarch. Mr. Anderson goes from regal to demented and back again with both physical and psychological intensity, a performance all the more stunning considering that he replaced Patrick Page (who withdrew to honor his commitment to the Spiderman musical that opens this fall in New York) two days before rehearsals began.

Mr. Foxworth matches Mr. Anderson move for move, and electricity is in the air whenever the two are on stage together. The most touching scene comes late in the play. As the King is recovering, he takes up reading Shakespeare, and one scene has him portraying the mad King Lear while his Lord Chancellor (Charles Janasz, in a cunning performance) plays Cordelia, and the king's pages take on the other roles. Mr. Foxworth, who is playing Lear on other evenings this summer, sits on the sidelines watching with quiet intensity as one king recovers his sanity by discovering the madness of another. It is a beautiful moment and well worth the price of admission by itself.

Would that there were more such moments, however. The rest of the company plays the pomp and politics well enough (Mr. Noble keeps things moving splendidly), but sparks do not fly as they should. Fortunately, Deirdre Clancy's costumes make the proceedings endlessly interesting to look at, if not enjoy. And there are some standouts among the featured players, including Emily Swallow's Queen Charlotte, Jay Whittaker as the ever-worried Pitt, and Grayson DeJesus, who delivers a very funny turn as the nearly wordless Ramsden.

With Mr. Anderson's fascinating performance and Mr. Foxworth's carefully constructed counterweight, however, this flawed evening is still a must-see.

*The Madness of George III* performs in repertory June 19 – September 24, 2010, at the Lowell Davies Festival Theatre on the Old Globe campus in San Diego's Balboa Park. Tickets (\$29 - \$78) are available by calling the Old Globe box office at (619) 23-GLOBE [234-5623], or by visiting [The Old Globe's website](http://www.theglobe.org).

The Old Globe presents *The Madness of George III*, by Alan Bennett. Directed by Adrian Noble with Ralph Funicello (Scenic Design), Deirdre Clancy (Costume Design), Alan Burrett (Lighting Design), Christopher R. Walker (Sound Design), Steve Rankin (Fight Director), Claudia Hill-Sparks (Vocal and Dialect Coach) and James Latus (Stage Manager).

The cast includes Michael Stewart Allen (Fox), Miles Anderson (George III), Shirine Babb (Lady Pembroke), Donald Carrier (Sheridan), Andrew Dahl (Prince of Wales), Grayson DeJesus (Ramsden), Ben Diskant (Greville), Craig Dudley (Dundas), Christian Durso (Braun), Robert Foxworth (Dr. Willis), Kevin Hoffmann (Duke of York), Andrew Hutcheson (Fortnum), Charles Janasz (Thurlow), Joseph Marcell (Sir George Baker), Steven Marzolf (Captain Fitzroy), Jordan McArthur (Papandiek), Brooke Novak (Margaret Nicholson), Ryman Sneed (Maid), Adrian Sparks (Sir Lucas Pepys, Sir Boothby Skrymshir), Emily Swallow (Queen Charlotte), Bruce Turk (Dr. Richard Warren) and Jay Whittaker (William Pitt) with Catherine Gowl, Aubrey Saverino and Bree Welch (Ensemble).

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## The Madness of George III

By Alan Bennett

Directed by Adrian Noble

Old Globe Theatre, San Diego

June 19 – September 24

<http://theoldglobe.org/tickets/production.aspx?performanceNumber=7936> (<http://theoldglobe.org/tickets/production.aspx?performanceNumber=7936>)



Robert Foxworth (left) as Dr. Francis Willis, Myles Anderson (on the floor) as King George III with Jordan McArthur, Ben Diskant, Andrew Hutcheson and Steven Marzolf in "The Madness of George III" at the Old Globe.

Photo by Craig Schwartz

*Though this be madness, yet there is method in't.*  
 Polonius, "Hamlet"

"The Madness of George III," now playing at the Old Globe's Lowell Davies Festival Theatre, takes us amiably (though perhaps not boldly) to the point where insanity, ambition, medicine and sadism converge. In many ways, the story is less about madness than it is about our reactions to madness. That the afflicted person is a head of state adds layers of complexity as powerful men gauge the political winds and vie for greater influence.

The play illuminates the court of King George III, in all its cunning splendor, just a few years after America has won independence. At the start, George, played deftly by Myles Anderson, is a force to be reckoned with: intelligent, inquisitive, blistering in his opinions. He does not suffer fools, particularly his

foppish son and heir, the Prince of Wales (Andrew Dahl). He tolerates the stringent Tory Prime Minister, William Pitt (Jay Whittaker), adores his wife Queen Charlotte (Emily Swallow) and banters freely with his courtiers.

But something goes awry. George develops an unknown malady, which causes him great pain and drains him of his faculties. The play implies that the illness is somehow related to the loss of the colonies but, perhaps intentionally, never fully makes that connection.

Enter a series of physicians who are more intent on proving their own pet theories than improving the king's health. Sir George Baker (Joseph Marcell), the king's personal physician, is very keen on measuring the pulse. Sir Lucas Pepys (Adrian Sparks) sets great prize in a good bowel movement. Dr. Richard Warren (Bruce Turk), the Prince of Wales's personal physician, simply wants the king to die quickly so his boss can gain the throne. Together they provide a ghastly window into 18th century "medicine," relying on bloodletting, blistering and other treatments (tortures) to bring the cure. Oddly, the king gets worse.

While this amusing spoof of pre-empirical medicine continues, the real action takes place in the political circles surrounding the court. The Prince grasps that this is his moment to ascend to the throne, though his main interest in governance seems to be redecorating Windsor Castle and paying off his own debts. Whig leader Charles James Fox (Michael Stewart Allen) is eager for the Prince to ascend so his party can return to power after decades in the opposition. Pitt bitterly recognizes how the king's illness adversely affects his own fortunes and deftly delays the Prince as the King's condition worsens.

At the moment when the King's demise seems certain, a new doctor arrives. Dr. Francis Willis (Robert Foxworth), who runs an asylum in Lincolnshire, is either a visionary or a sadist, but at least he recognizes that the problem is in the King's head and not his bowels.

The play is briskly directed by Adrian Noble, and the costumes and set design are nicely executed. The supporting cast does a fine job, but the highlight is Anderson, whose quirky King George is a bit dotty, even when sane, but always retains his essential humanity—even when spiraling into madness.

**Joshua Baxt**

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*Madness* becomes you

Old Globe Shakespeare Festival Artistic Director Adrian Noble really knew what he was doing when he put Alan Bennett's *The Madness of George III* in repertory with William Shakespeare's *King Lear*. Viewed in order, *Lear* first and then *George*, they have a marvelous and amusing resonance. In one of Bennett's most affecting scenes, Dr. Willis (**Robert Foxworth**), King George (brilliant **Miles Anderson**), and the King's equerry, Greville (**Ben Diskant**), are joined by the duplicitous Lord Chancellor, Edward Thurlow (**Charles Janasz**), to read the scene from Shakespeare in which Lear awakens and recognizes Cordelia.

Willis has cured King George's madness, and the King George has reawakened to his full senses. The imminent full restoration of kingly power brings with it a certain poignancy, in that it re-establishes the regal distance that was of necessity broken down in caring for the mad king.

Medical treatments in the 1780s were barbaric and poor George grows weaker, more pathetic and less sane as he receives them. Dr. Willis, who is sent for by George's supporter, Prime Minister William Pitt (Jay Whittaker), maintains an unusual farm in Devonshire, where he puts his patients to work in animal husbandry, an innovative technique then that is common now. The only seemingly barbaric practice employed by Willis is physical restraint when George misbehaves and uses foul language, which he does frequently.



Miles Anderson as King George Photo: The Old Globe

There are those in power who would have Parliament declare King George mad. These include his heir and Prince Regent, the Prince of Wales (**Andrew Dahl**, a delightful fop), the Duke of York (**Kevin Hoffmann**), Richard Brinsley Sheridan (**Donald Carrier**), Sir Lucas Pepys



(**Adrian Sparks**) and Whig leader Charles James Fox (**Michael Allen Stewart**), who would become prime minister if the Prince Regent ascends. **Donald Carrier** portrays Sir Boothby Skrymshir, who controls three votes, including that of his idiot nephew (**Grayson DeJesus**). Other physicians attending on the king are the Prince Regent's personal doctor, Richard Warren (**Bruce Turk**) and Sir George Baker (**Joseph Marcell**), president of the Royal College of Physicians. All scoff at Willis, not a member, but a country bumpkin doctor. Willis bides his time and ever so subtly assumes control when the king is sent to the winter palace at Kew.

**Emily Swallow** is a marvel as King George's longtime wife, Queen Charlotte, who hails from Germany. The couple is devoted to one another and their intimate scenes are among the play's most touching. **Shrine Babb** is also excellent as Lady of the Bedchamber, Lady Pembroke, to whom the king owes an apology.

Bennett provides many knowing winks, such as the speech about the American Colonies, delivered by King George in throes of dementia, in which he talks about the revolution as only the beginning in the breakup of the British Empire. The other has to do with the London emporium known as Fortnum and Mason.

In addition to those already named, members of the Old Globe/USD Master of Fine Arts program, including **Christian Durso**, **Jordan McArthur**, **Steven Marzolf** and **Brooke Novak**, are showcased splendidly by Noble, to their credit and to his. One seldom thinks of so large an ensemble as tight. This one is the exception.



Queen Charlotte Photo: The Old Globe

Robert Foxworth as Dr. Willis, Miles Anderson as King George, Emily Swallow as

**THE PRODUCTION:** Designed by **Ralph Funicello**, the mirrored set serves as Windsor Castle, Westminster Palace, Carlton House, Kew Palace and Westminster Cathedral. King George and Queen Charlotte's bed appears from a large trap center stage, and, as in *Lear*, the ramps alongside the house are utilized, in this case largely for scenes in Parliament. **Deirdre Clancy** is costume designer, **Alan Burrett** lighting designer, and **Steve Rankin** the fight director. The music of George Frederic Handel was favored by the king, and sound designer **Christopher R. Walker** provides selections from *Messiah* and Music for the Royal Fireworks, among others.

**BOTTOM LINE:** Best Bet

*King Lear* and *The Madness of George III* play in rotating repertory with *The Taming of the Shrew*, which will be reviewed in next week's column. A complete calendar of the Shakespeare repertory may be found at [www.theoldglobe.org](http://www.theoldglobe.org) Tickets and tickets may be purchased at (619) 23-GLOBE.

# SAN DIEGO READER

July 29, 2010

CALENDAR

## Calendar THEATER

## THEATER LISTINGS



*The Madness of George III: Deep down, he's sane.*

### **The Madness of George III**

In Alan Bennett's drama, "mad King George" isn't. Unlike King Lear, whose mania sears his synapses, George only has the symptoms, but enough of them to prompt the Regency Crisis of 1788 (since his condition could topple the government). A battery of doctors, a hypochondriac's nightmare in powdered wigs, try to heal the king but only exacerbate the condition. At the Old Globe, Miles Anderson plays George III like an inverted iceberg: deep down, at the tip, he's sane. Everything else becomes a burden that Andrews, in an exceptional performance, overcomes, thanks to a man named Willis. Under Adrian Noble's inventive direction (the cast runs in and out of eight mirrored double doors with the speed of farce), the Globe's summer festival intersects in Willis: his authoritarian tactics recall Petruchio (in *Shrew*); and Robert Foxworth plays Willis and also King Lear (to whom George is often compared). Andrew Dahl's a kick as the Prince of Wales, a corpulent poseur, Emily Swallow gives the Queen a loving patience, and Jay Whittaker's William Pitt exudes an almost insane ferocity. Bruce Turk, Adrian Sparks, and Joseph Marcell make the attending physicians (and their medieval cures) eerily absurdist. But like the king, they only seem mad. (Note: *Madness* runs in reper-

tory with *King Lear* and *The Taming of the Shrew*.)

#### **Worth a try.**

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## The Madness of George III Review

Jul 25, 2010 [Carole Larson](#)

Like



The Madness of George III at the Old Globe - Old Globe Theater

The Old Globe in San Diego stages the first production of Alan Bennett's outstanding play since 1993.

One of the joys of summer is outdoor theater. And San Diego is lucky to have both gorgeous weather and the appealing Lowell Davies Festival Theater at the Old Globe in Balboa Park.

Every summer the [Old Globe](#) mounts its Shakespeare Festival, usually three plays performed in repertory. This year brings a slight change in plans by incorporating a non Shakespeare play into the mix: The Madness of George III by Alan Bennett.

Bennett is the acclaimed writer of the History Boys and has been delighting audiences for years with his witty, insightful and impeccably written prose. And the Madness of George III is no exception.

Premiered in 1991 in London, the play was an immediate success. Playing upon George's refusal to acknowledge the success of the colonists in creating a new country, combined with the mysteries surrounding George's odd behavior and the resulting power struggle in parliament, make for a lively story.

The last time the play was mounted in the US was back in 1993. So this is a real treat.

The Old Globe production shines under the able direction of Adrian Noble, and Miles Anderson as George gives a Tony-worthy performance, brilliantly capturing the conflict of a man who knows he is going crazy while knowing he is not completely crazy.

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San Diego is chock full of activities that will keep kids entertained, from Sea World to the Museum of Making Music.

Ably supported by Jay Whittaker as Mr. Pitt and a campy performance by Andrew Dahl as George's clearly overweight son, the story is even more absorbing thanks to the excellent performances. If there is any weakness in the production, it is the women: George's wife, Queen Charlotte, played by Emily Swallow, struggles with an accent that sounds like a cross between German, French and Swedish, although George speaks to her in German at one point. The other female characters are sadly one dimensional and mostly relegated to the equivalent of wallpaper. At one point, two servants enter the scene only to hold lanterns.

The set is simple: a mirrored row of doors constantly opening and closing, and perfectly coordinated. Chairs are brought on stage when needed, as is a podium with a large quill pen, which George uses to sign various proclamations.

The play is in it for the long haul. It runs approximately two and a half hours, including intermissions. The first act is clearly tighter and shows George at his most severely deluded. And while it is believed that George was suffering from a blood disorder called porphyria, it has also been discovered that his hair contained [toxic levels of arsenic](#), which may have triggered the porphyria.

Regardless of what caused the King's madness, this production is a tribute to a great playwright and magnificent story, with some of the finest performances in San Diego.

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# REVIEW ROUNDUP: Miles Anderson Opens in *The Madness of George III* at the Old Globe

By: **Andy Propst** · Jul 7, 2010 · San Diego

Adrian Noble's staging of Alan Bennett's *The Madness of George III* has officially opened at the Old Globe Theatre. The production will continue in the theater's repertory summer Shakespeare Festival season through September 24.

The production stars Miles Anderson in the title role, and features Michael Stewart Allen (Fox), Shirine Babb (Lady Pembroke), Donald Carrier (Sheridan), Andrew Dahl (Prince of Wales), Grayson DeJesus (Ramsden), Ben Diskant (Greville), Craig Dudley (Dundas), Christian Durso (Braun), Robert Foxworth (Dr. Willis), Kevin Hoffmann (Duke of York), Andrew Hutcheson (Fortnum), Charles Janasz (Thurlow), Joseph Marcell (Sir George Baker), Steven Marzolf (Captain Fitzroy), Jordan McArthur (Papandiek), Brooke Novak (Margaret Nicholson), Ryman Sneed (Maid), Adrian Sparks (Sir Lucas Pepys, Sir Boothby Skrymshir), Emily Swallow (Queen Charlotte), Bruce Turk (Dr. Richard Warren), and Jay Whittaker (William Pitt) with Catherine Gowl, Aubrey Saverino and Bree Welch (Ensemble).

The creative team includes Ralph Funicello (scenic design), Clancy Steer (costume design), Alan Burrett (lighting design), and Christopher R. Walker (sound design and music).

Critics from the dailies and *Variety* have weighed in on the production and there's unanimity to the praise of Anderson's performance and the show's visuals. But, reviewers are diverging on the success of Noble's overall production.

## Among the reviews are:

### Los Angeles Times

#### Theater review: *The Madness of George III* at the Old Globe

"As portrayed by Miles Anderson, Britain's King George (he of the breakaway Colonies) is a genial sort, if a bit full of himself."

-----

"The forthrightness with which Anderson conveys this suffering is touching, but it can't fully register because everything around him is false. Both "George" and "Lear" are directed by Adrian Noble, head of the Royal Shakespeare Company from 1991-2003 and [...] he seems intent merely on squeezing out laughs."

### San Diego Union-Tribune

#### Crazy for *Madness of George III*

"The Globe's eye-pleasing and expertly acted confection, directed with a brisk wit by festival artistic chief Adrian Noble, draws laughs but doesn't always draw blood."

-----

"Anderson, a colleague of Noble's from the director's time at the helm of the Royal Shakespeare Company (and before), takes the audience on a scariying tour of George's descent into hysteria and despair, abetted by such health-care horrors as bloodletting and blistering. (The treatments make those mythical "death panels" sound like



Miles Anderson in  
*The Madness of George III*  
(© Craig Schwartz)

**The Madness of  
George III**

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## [The Madness of George III at the Old Globe Theatre](#)

"Noble's staging is majestic and thrilling, a triumph of pageantry at the service of contemplation. Entrances explode through a semi-circle of mirrored doors amidst large bursts of George Frideric Handel, often the Fireworks or Water music. Splendid period costumes by Deirdre Clancy flavor the stage picture in exquisite detail and Alan Burrett's lighting seems to blossom or wither in exact time with the pulse of the piece."

----

"Miles Anderson plays the title role with a vast range of effects all ordered and precise. He is equally as imposing as he is frail and vulnerable and he is always, in public or in private, plausible and consistent."

# [Variety \[subscription required\]](#)

## [The Madness of George III](#)

"Noble never underestimates his audience's willingness or ability to follow the complex, multilevel affairs of a long-ago state. Both the personal drama of a mysteriously ailing monarch at the mercy of ignorant physicians, and the illness' political ramifications threatening to bring down a government, are lucidly played out. Nearly three hours fly by in a rush of delicious plotting and tart dialogue."

----

"Anderson's turn is the production's anchor. Having established the king as a preening know-all whose authority is unquestioned -- and that unfortunate colonial business a decade ago is not to be mentioned, he thanks you -- Anderson brings him down by inches, Lear-like, into a gibbering wreck engaging our active sympathy. Even the rabidest opponents of inherited monarchy will be moved to pity as he's prodded and tortured by meddling medicos, who use everything but science to effect a cure."

----

"Noble's sole miscalculation is the sharply timed opening and slamming of designer Ralph Funicello's eight Mylar-treated doors to transition between scenes, a tiresomely self-conscious device eventually serving to undercut the mood. [...] But any sameness in movement patterns is offset by the use of the entire playhouse to envelop us in the pageantry and intrigue. A rare entertainment, indeed."

For further information, visit: [www.theoldglobe.org](http://www.theoldglobe.org).



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# FEATURES



## BRITISH TV STAR STEPS IN TO RESCUE 'GEORGE III'

BY PAM KRAGEN  
[pkragen@nctimes.com](mailto:pkragen@nctimes.com)

When the star of the Old Globe's "The Madness of George III" dropped out two days before rehearsals were to begin in April, director Adrian Noble feared he might have to scrap the production altogether. But it turns out that another King George was waiting in the wings.

Longtime British television, film and stage star Miles Anderson — who's known Noble since they first worked together at the Bristol Old Vic 34 years ago — lived in Los Angeles and was not only available, he was also an avid history buff who was excited at the opportunity to play the historical character. (Alan Bennett's 1991 political satire is inspired by the true story of how the English king's bouts with mental illness led to the Regency Crisis of 1788. The play was made into a 1994 film titled "The Madness of King George.")



**Miles Anderson in the Old Globe's "The Madness of George III."** Photos courtesy of Craig Schwartz

Noble and Anderson worked closely together in the '70s and '80s at the Old Vic and Royal Shakespeare Company before Anderson left to do television and film. (His long career has included roles on ITV in "Ultimate Force" and "Soldier Soldier" and on the BBC's "EastEnders," "Waking the Dead" and "The Ruby in the Smoke.") The longtime colleagues lost touch in recent years, and Noble wasn't aware his old friend was now in L.A.

Then, when star Patrick Page pulled out of the Globe festival — Page will instead play the Green Goblin in the \$52 million Broadway musical "Spider-Man: Turn off the Dark" this fall — Globe casting director Samantha Barrie told Noble that his old friend Anderson was



**Miles  
Anderson**

just a few hours north and had a green card to work in the U.S.

"It really could have been a very serious situation, because you don't do plays like 'Madness of George III' without a George. But we had enormous

fortune in finding Miles Anderson," Noble said. "He's brilliant. He's a wonderfully gifted actor of both very serious roles and comedy."

Anderson — who was born in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) and moved to England in the 1970s — didn't know a line in Bennett's script before Barrie called him in April, but he said he was thrilled at the opportunity to work with Noble again in San Diego.

See 'George,' 14



## 'George'

Continued from Page 13

Anderson talked about the experience in an interview last week:

**Question: What brought you to L.A.?**

**Answer:** I moved there just over a year ago. It was a childhood dream of mine to live in America and it's rather late in life to fulfill it, but here I am. I always wanted to work in the States. I love working with American actors. They approach the craft with a great deal of zest and enthusiasm and they like to talk about acting. Here it's considered a proper job, not just a job for rogues and vagabonds, like it is in England. So it's nice to be amongst them.

**Q: What have you been working on since the move?**

**A:** I did an episode of "Criminal Minds" and I'm just about to direct a play up at UC Davis, so I keep myself pretty busy. It wasn't my intention to fall back into theater, but the great lure of

coming here was not only to play the role of George, but also the prospect of working with Adrian again. He likes to throw me a challenge, he knows me very well. And it's always a very enlightening and invigorating experience working with him.

**Q: What's he like in rehearsals?**

**A:** He is able to set up a working atmosphere in rehearsals where actors are not afraid to experiment and go out on a limb. The secret to great acting is not being afraid of being bad. In America there's this great myth that you have to succeed, but he allows for people to fail in rehearsals so they don't fail in front of the public. That's a great gift, and he's had the ability to do that ever since I've known him. He has a great empathy for actors.

**Q: What has it been like trying to learn the role of George in such a short amount of time?**

**A:** There's a huge amount of lines and it's not as easy as it used to be, because as you get older, your brain dries up. Fortunately I have a wonderful partner in my acting coach, Bella Merlin. She heads up the acting department at UC Davis and she's very adept at helping

me compartmentalize things in my head. I've also been blessed to be working with an extraordinary group of actors. I've been watching them intently. They're all doing three plays, and I've got an easy ride with just one. I'm so lucky to be here with such a talented group of people.

**Q: What attracted you to the role of George III?**

**A:** Well, history is a great passion of mine, so doing something like George has been a chance for me to do a lot of background reading into the War of Independence (the American Revolution) and how he lost the colonies. When a play encompasses a particular passion of yours, it's so much more fun. I love playing the role, probably more than any other role I have done in my life.

**Q: Isn't the play a satire?**

**A:** It does poke fun at modern medicine and doctors, which in America is a touch point. Doctors here make vast sums of money, and you can't turn on the TV in America without seeing some form of general advert for some drug or a medical insurance company. I think it does point fun at the medical profession and it's jolly good that it does. We have

wonderful health care in England. It's a brilliant system. And I'm all for (President) Obama's idea for a national health care program. Why shouldn't people have access to affordable medicine?

**Q: Haven't forensic scientists diagnosed King George's illness?**

**A:** He had porphyria (a disease caused by a build-up of enzymes in the blood) which can cause symptoms that include turning your urine port-colored. Other symptoms are that you get eczema, your skin burns, you have trouble enunciating speech, you suffer from tremendous paranoia, your vision goes hazy and you suffer terrible headaches.

Nobody really knows what causes it and they didn't know how to cure it. They did terrible things to George to treat him. They were giving him enemas, then opium, then powders filled with lead. It's amazing he lived through it.

**Q: How are the play and film versions different?**

**A:** The play goes into much greater depth ... It's the most fabulous play. Americans will delight in it. It's very accessible to an audience, it's hysterically funny and it's deeply moving at

the same time. To me, that's the measure of a great play — if it informs, entertains, enlightens and moves you at the same time.

**Q: How have you enjoyed working at the Globe?**

**A:** I love San Diego. It's a glorious place. It's not as big or as dirty as L.A. and the city's got a great vibe. The Globe has been wonderful. They take very good care of us and give us nice apartments.

**Q: I understand you have two sons who are also famous in their own right.**

**A:** I'm very proud of my sons. My youngest son, Max, is the 2006 and 2009 World Streetboard Champion. He's 23 and he lives in London with his mother. He's going to be a chef and wants to be an international star someday.

And my other son, Joe Anderson, is a movie star. He's 28 and he's been in the business for five years and has done 13 or 14 films (including "The Crazies," "Across the Universe," "Control," "The Ruins"). He has always had a great interest in being behind the camera. He'll be a great director, that's his passion. He lives in L.A. and is married to an American girl now. This is his home.

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## British TV star steps in to save Globe's 'Madness'

- Story
- Discussion

By PAM KRAGEN - pkragen@nctimes.com | Posted: June 23, 2010 9:14 am | No Comments Posted | Print

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[Buy this photo](#) Miles Anderson stars as England's King George III in the Old Globe production of "The Madness of George III." Photo courtesy of The Old Globe

When the star of the Old Globe's "The Madness of George III" dropped out two days before rehearsals were to begin in April, director Adrian Noble feared he might have to scrap the production altogether. But it turns out that another King George was waiting in the wings.

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Noble and Anderson worked closely together in the '70s and '80s at the Old Vic and Royal Shakespeare Company before Anderson left to do television and film. (His long career has included roles on ITV in "Ultimate Force" and "Soldier

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Then, when star Patrick Page pulled out of the Globe festival ---- Page will instead play the Green Goblin in the \$52 million Broadway musical "Spider-Man: Turn off the Dark" this fall ---- Globe casting director Samantha Barrie told Noble that his old friend Anderson was just a few hours north and had a green card to work in the U.S.

"It really could have been a very serious situation, because you don't do plays like 'Madness of George III' without a George. But we had enormous fortune in finding Miles Anderson," Noble said. "He's brilliant. He's a wonderfully gifted actor of both very serious roles and comedy."

Anderson ---- who was born in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) and moved to England in the 1970s ---- didn't know a line in Bennett's script before Barrie called him in April, but he said he was thrilled at the opportunity to work with Noble again in San Diego. Anderson talked about the experience in an interview last week:

**Question: How long have you lived in Los Angeles?**

Answer: I moved there just over a year ago. It was a childhood dream of mine to live in America and it's rather late in life to fulfill it, but here I am. I always wanted to work in the States. I love working with American actors. They approach the craft with a great deal of zest and enthusiasm and they like to talk about acting. Here it's considered a proper job, not just a job for rogues and vagabonds, like it is in England. So it's nice to be amongst them at the festival.

**Q: What have you been working on since you moved here last year?**

A: I did an episode of "Criminal Minds" and I'm just about to direct a play up at UC Davis, so I keep myself pretty busy. It wasn't my intention to fall back into theater, but the great lure of coming here was not only to play the role of George, but also the prospect of working with Adrian again. He likes to throw me a challenge, he knows me very well. And it's always a very enlightening and invigorating experience working with him. As soon as I knew Adrian was directing this, I couldn't say no.

**Q: What's Adrian like in rehearsals?**

A: He is able to set up a working atmosphere in rehearsals where actors are not afraid to experiment and go out on a limb. The secret to great acting is not being afraid of being bad. In America there's this great myth that you have to succeed, but he allows for people to fail in rehearsals so they don't fail in front of the public. That's a great gift, and he's had the ability to do that ever since I've known him. He has a great empathy for actors.

**Q: What has it been like trying to learn the role of George in such a short amount of time?**

A: There's a huge amount of lines and it's not as easy as it used to be, because as you get older, your brain dries up. Fortunately I have a wonderful partner in my acting coach, Bella Merlin. She heads up the acting department at UC Davis and she's very adept at helping me compartmentalize things in my head. I've also been blessed to be working with an extraordinary group of actors. I've been watching them intently. They're all doing three plays, and I've got an easy ride with just one. I'm so lucky to be here with such a talented group of people.

**Q: What attracted you to the role of George III?**

A: Well, history is a great passion of mine, so doing something like George has been a chance for me to do a lot of background reading into the War of Independence (the American Revolution) and how he lost the colonies. When a play encompasses a particular passion of yours, it's so much more fun. I love playing the role, probably more than any other role I have done in my life.

**Q: The play doesn't just tell the story of George's struggle with mental illness, it's also a satire on the medical field, isn't it?**



A: It does poke fun at modern medicine and doctors, which in America is a touch point. Doctors here make vast sums of money, and you can't turn on the TV in America without seeing some form of general advert for some drug or a medical insurance company. I think it does point fun at the medical profession and it's jolly good that it does. We have wonderful health care in England. It's a brilliant system. And I'm all for (President) Obama's idea for a national health care program. Why shouldn't people have access to affordable medicine?

**Q: In recent years, forensic scientists have diagnosed King George's illness, haven't they?**

A: He had porphyria (a disease caused by a build-up of enzymes in the blood) which can cause symptoms that include turning your urine port-colored. Other symptoms are that you get eczema, your skin burns, you have trouble enunciating speech, you suffer from tremendous paranoia, your vision goes hazy and you suffer terrible headaches.

Nobody really knows what causes it and they didn't know how to cure it. They did terrible things to George to treat him. They were giving him enemas, then opium, then powders filled with lead. It's amazing he lived through the treatments.

**Q: The play hasn't been done very much in America, but we're familiar here with the film version. How are they different?**

A: The play goes into much greater depth than the film did. It's the most fabulous play. Americans will delight in it. It's very accessible to an audience, it's hysterically funny and it's deeply moving at the same time. To me, that's the measure of a great play ---- if it informs, entertains, enlightens and moves you at the same time. "George" does all of those things.

**Q: How have you enjoyed working at the Globe?**

A: I love San Diego. It's a glorious place. It's not as big or as dirty as L.A. and the city's got a great vibe. And the Globe has been wonderful. There's not much money in theater, but they take very good care of us and give us nice apartments.

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**"The Madness of George III"**

**When:** previews, 8 p.m. July 1, 2; regular shows, 8 p.m. July 3, 9, 13, 15, 21, 28; Aug. 1, 5, 13, 18, 21, 24, 26, 29; Sept. 4, 16 and 24; also 7 p.m. Sept. 7, 12 and 22

**Where:** Lowell Davies Festival Theatre, Old Globe complex, 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park, San Diego

**Tickets:** \$29-\$78

**Info:** 619-234-5623

**Web:** theoldglobe.org

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- THEATER REVIEW: Starlight kicks off season with bubbly 'Suds'

June 27, 2010

## Onstage seating puts audience in the spotlight

By James Hebert  
STAFF WRITER

It's either the best seat in the house or an introvert's worst nightmare: watching a play from the stage — while the rest of the audience watches you.

But whether the prospect of being perched onstage brings out your inner drama queen or just makes you want to whimper "What's my motivation?," theaters are making a mini-fad of getting audiences into the act.

Two local shows going up this month put theatergoers in the middle of the plays. "The Taming of the Shrew," part of the Old Globe Theatre's 2010 Shakespeare Festival, offers 14 discounted onstage seats for each performance. And at

North Coast Repertory Theatre in Solana Beach, four audience members not only are recruited to sit on bleachers alongside cast members of "The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee," but actually get to compete in the bee.

Those shows join such recent audience-embracing works as the Broadway musicals "Spring Awakening" and "Xanadu" — both of which came through San Diego — and the play "Equus." And whether this is all just a passing novelty or theater's answer to the "everyone can be a star" ethos of our time, sitting within spitting distance of live actors is its own special breed of reality.

SEE **Onstage, A10**

### ONSTAGE

CONTINUED FROM A1

## Audience can see play from actors' perspective

Arrangements vary widely among plays: For "Equus," the seats were elevated above the stage, while "Xanadu" included onstage audience members in a show-closing number. "Spring Awakening" had actors sitting next to (sometimes unsuspecting) playgoers.

"Seeing it onstage, it's like a totally different show," said Michael Mahady, 17, a senior at Cathedral Catholic High School who has taken in "Spring Awakening" 10 times — four of them from onstage. "First of all, you can feel the music. And you're interacting with the actors — they're sitting right next to you. You hear them singing, not through the microphone, but next to you.

"It's just a totally different experience. You see everything from the actors' perspective, instead of from the house." On top of all that, he added: "It's bragging rights, you know?"

But what about the potential downside — the distraction factor of putting Joe Playgoer in the footlights? What if a Shakespeare patron fidgets or snoozes or, Bard forbid, has to use the loo?

"If they do, they do," said Ron Daniels, who is directing "The Taming of the Shrew." "Doesn't matter. I hope that's the whole feel of the production."

Daniels said his loose-limbed staging adds a crew of young men who dance, sing, hang out and chat with the onstage audience. There's also a second-act "mistake" that prompts that pose to question spectators about what's gone wrong.

Daniels believes that bringing playgoers into the onstage fold "creates a greater sense of community." And community is about sharing: thoughts, emotions, observations ... bodily fluids.

### CENTER STAGE

**What:** "The Taming of the Shrew"

**When:** Currently in previews; opens Wednesday, through Sept. 26

**Where:** The Old Globe's Lowell Davies Festival Theatre

**Information:** [theoldglobe.org](http://theoldglobe.org)

**What:** "The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee"

**When:** Previews Wednesday to Friday; performances July 3-25

**Where:** North Coast Repertory Theatre

**Information:** [northcoastrep.org](http://northcoastrep.org)

"After having sat onstage one time, I haven't been able to see it from the house again."

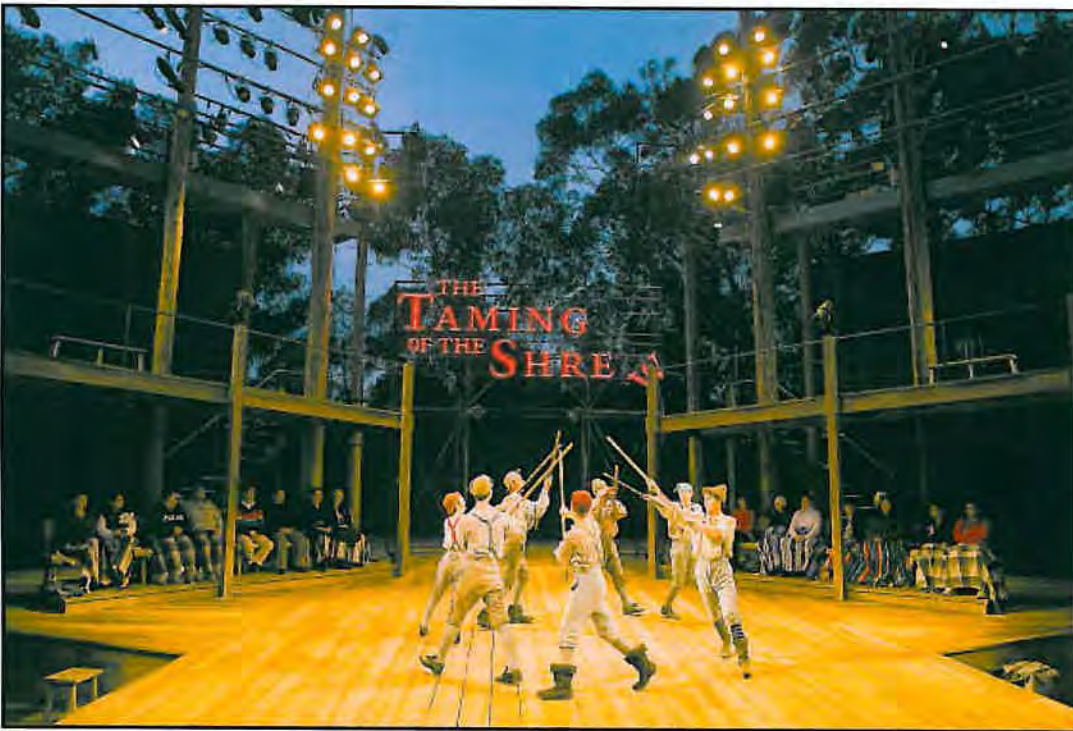
**MICHAEL MAHADY,**  
*fan of "Spring Awakening"*

Actors, after all, do sweat. And project.

"The most recent time I saw ('Spring Awakening')," Mahady said, "I sat next to one of the actors who was singing, and I felt spit on my head."

Those kinds of unexpected conditions are one reason such tickets are often discounted. The Globe, for example, is selling stage seats for \$19 — \$10 less than the lowest-priced standard ticket.

Ami Adkins of East County had it a little easier in the "getting-rained-on department" when she went to see "Xanadu," which



**"The Taming of the Shrew" is part of the Old Globe Theatre's 2010 Shakespeare Festival. It offers 14 discounted onstage seats for each performance. *Craig Schwartz***

came to La Jolla Playhouse in late 2008 under Playhouse artistic leader Christopher Ashley's direction.

"I think they sprinkled glitter on us," said Adkins, who sat onstage with her teenage daughter, mom and sister.

Adkins enjoyed being in the thick of the movie-inspired satire, which featured roller-disco dancers circling the onstage patrons.

"I felt like we were kind of part of it, yet not," Adkins said. "The attention was really on the cast of characters in the play. We were sort of like part of the set. I don't think the audience paid a huge amount of attention to us sitting up there."

Ashley said that because "Xanadu" concludes with the opening of a roller disco, "I really wanted the musical to end with a feeling of a party onstage" — something that's a little hard to pull off with only nine actors.

"Part of the solution, I felt, was to put part of the audience onstage in the middle of the action with visible musicians and include them as direct participants," he said. "At the end of the show, the audience and actors



**"Spring Awakening," seen here at its West Coast premiere at the Balboa Theatre in August 2008, has actors sitting next to playgoers. *John R. McCutchen / Union-Tribune***

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Adkins can admit it now: "We did kind of stand up and boogie."

"Not only are you seeing the actors, but behind the actors you're seeing the audience respond," Simas said. "So you have a sense not only of the storytelling of the piece, but the response of the audience to the piece."

"That does, I think, in some way change how you respond to the play. Because you're more aware of the people around you."

It's definitely changed how Mahady, an aspiring performer, experiences "Spring Awakening." Now, the idea of watching it from the audience takes a back seat.

"I feel spoiled," he said. "After having sat onstage one time, I haven't been able to see it from the house again."

For Rick Simas, who is directing "Spelling Bee" at North Coast Rep, the idea of being put up on view at a play has a flip side.



## Onstage seating puts audience in the spotlight

By [James Hebert](#), UNION-TRIBUNE THEATER CRITIC

Originally published June 26, 2010 at 10 p.m., updated June 27, 2010 at midnight



/ Photo by Craig Schwartz

"The Taming of the Shrew" is part of the Old Globe Theater's 2010 Shakespeare Festival. It offers 14 discounted onstage seats for each performance.

### CENTER STAGE

**What:** "The Taming of the Shrew"

**When:** Currently in previews; opens Wednesday, June 30 through Sept. 26

**Where:** The Old Globe's Lowell Davies Festival Theatre

**Information:** [theoldglobe.org](http://theoldglobe.org)

**What:** "The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee"

**When:** Previews Wednesday to Friday; performances July 3-25

**Where:** North Coast Repertory Theatre



**Information:** [northcoastrep.org](http://northcoastrep.org)



Photo by John R. McCutchen - Union-Tribune

"[Spring Awakening](#)," seen here in its West Coast premiere at the Balboa Theatre in August 2008, has actors sitting next to playgoers.

It's either the best seat in the house or an introvert's worst nightmare: watching a play from the stage — while the rest of the audience watches you.

But whether the prospect of being perched onstage brings out your inner drama queen or just makes you want to whimper "What's my motivation?," theaters are making a mini-fad of getting audiences into the act.

Two local shows going up this month put theatergoers in the middle of the plays. "The Taming of the Shrew," part of the Old Globe Theatre's 2010 Shakespeare Festival, offers 14 discounted onstage seats for each performance. And at North Coast Repertory Theatre in Solana Beach, four audience members not only are recruited to sit on bleachers alongside cast members of "The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee," but actually get to compete in the bee.

Those shows join such recent audience-embracing works as the Broadway musicals "Spring Awakening" and "Xanadu" — both of which came through [San Diego](#) — and the play "Equus." And whether this is all just a passing novelty or theater's answer to the "everyone can be a star" ethos of our time, sitting within spitting distance of live actors is its own special breed of reality.

Arrangements vary widely among plays: For "Equus," the seats were elevated above the stage, while "Xanadu" included onstage audience members in a show-closing number. "Spring Awakening" had actors sitting next to (sometimes unsuspecting) playgoers.

"Seeing it onstage, it's like a totally different show," said Michael Mahady, 17, a senior at Cathedral Catholic High School who has taken in "Spring Awakening" 10 times — four of them

from onstage. “First of all, you can feel the music. And you’re interacting with the actors — they’re sitting right next to you. You hear them singing, not through the microphone, but next to you.

“It’s just a totally different experience. You see everything from the actors’ perspective, instead of from the house.” On top of all that, he added: “It’s bragging rights, you know?”

But what about the potential downside — the distraction factor of putting Joe Playgoer in the footlights? What if a Shakespeare patron fidgets or snoozes or, Bard forbid, has to use the loo?

“If they do, they do,” said Ron Daniels, who is directing “The Taming of the Shrew.” “Doesn’t matter. I hope that’s the whole feel of the production.”

Daniels said his loose-limbed staging adds a crew of young men who dance, sing, hang out and chat with the onstage audience. There’s also a second-act “mistake” that prompts that posse to question spectators about what’s gone wrong.

Daniels believes that bringing playgoers into the onstage fold “creates a greater sense of community.” And community is about sharing: thoughts, emotions, observations ... bodily fluids.

Actors, after all, do sweat. And project.

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## FOXWORTH WAITED LONG TIME FOR 'KING LEAR'

BY PAM KRAGEN  
[pkragen@nctimes.com](mailto:pkragen@nctimes.com)

Veteran television, film and stage actor Robert Foxworth carried around a dog-eared copy of William Shakespeare's "King Lear" for the past five years, hoping a director would give him a crack at the role. He's finally getting that chance this summer in the Old Globe's Shakespeare Festival.

Foxworth, who has lived in Encinitas for the past 18 months with his wife, Stacey Thomas, will play both King Lear and a smaller role as Dr. Willis in "The Madness of George III." Those two plays and Shakespeare's "The Taming of the Shrew" will rotate in repertory through late September on the Globe's outdoor festival stage.

Although best known for his television work (he was Chase Gioberti on "Falcon Crest" from 1981-'87, and Bernard Chenoweth on "Six Feet Under" from 2001-2003, among many other roles), the Texas-bred Foxworth got his start in theater and is thrilled to be immersed in it once again this summer. He's gotten rave reviews so far from Adrian Noble, the festival's new artistic director, who spent more than 20 years as an artistic director and stage director for the Royal Shakespeare Company.

"He's marvelous," Noble said of Foxworth as Lear. "He's physically, intellectually and vocally robust and



**Encinitas resident Robert Foxworth has called King Lear the most challenging role of his career.**



**Robert  
Foxworth**

he's tough as nails, but he has a very vulnerable side to him. He's a real granddad, too. It's lovely that he gets those two sides you have to get to play Lear. He has a strong, dynamic, tyrannical side and he also has strong emotional attachments to certain people like Cordelia and the Fool."

One of Shakespeare's later tragedies, "King Lear" is the story of a vain and aging English king who decides to test his three daughters' love by asking them to flatter him openly at court.

When his youngest and most devoted daughter, Cordelia, chooses not to express her love in public, Lear disowns her and hands his kingdom over to his elder daughters, Goneril and Regan. They quickly prove their

disloyalty to their father by banishing him and waging war for control of the throne. Ultimately Lear loses everyone he loves and goes mad with grief.

Noble has reset the Globe production in the late 18th century, and the play travels

See 'Lear,' 21



# 'Lear'

Continued from Page 13

through time to the mid-20th century. "It starts out in a highly structured court and then moves into 20th-century civilization, where we progressed to barbarianism. We got better and better at finding ways to hurt each other. 'King Lear' seems the appropriate play to explore that in," Noble said.

Foxworth talked about the role in a telephone interview a few weeks ago:

**Question: People know you best from television, but you got your start in the theater and you've done a lot of Shakespeare, right?**

**Answer:** Yes I was doing plays with the Houston Children's Theatre when I was 8 years old and I started my theater career at 18. Right after high school, I went to work for the Alley Theatre. I was a gofer, an actor and a set builder. After college, I went to the Arena Stage in Washington, D.C. ... where I played 21 roles in three seasons. I did four productions at the American Shakespeare Festival in Stratford, Conn., I've done two Shakespeare plays at the Guthrie (in Minneapolis) and one at South Coast Rep (in Costa Mesa). At the Old Globe I did "Antony and Cleopatra" many years ago and did "Julius Caesar" there in 2003.

**Q: Why do you enjoy doing Shakespeare?**

**A:** I love the dynamic of the language. There's something that engages the spirit in doing Shakespeare. When you're speaking the language, opening the physical and psychic vibrators to reach the audience, it's a powerful experience. I feel in contact with the past and a thrust toward the future, because there's such a profound understanding of human nature in Shakespeare. You feel you're part of a continuum.

**Q: Is "King Lear" is a role you've wanted to do for a long time?**

**A:** I'd spoken to someone at the Globe several years ago about doing it, but I think I was not considered "weighty" enough at the time. "Cornelia" (a 2009 Globe production, where he played a sinister George Wallace) turned out to be my unintended audition. The casting director kept leaning on (Adrian Noble) saying ... "Look, he can do it" and he finally agreed.

**Q: Adrian Noble is an expert on Shakespeare. What have rehearsals been like?**

**A:** I feel so blessed to have this opportunity. He has brought to the whole cast a kind of awareness and excitement and rattled our cages. He's so detail-oriented, and his passion is just thrilling. It's invigorating, and I feel so grateful. I go home at the end of the day exhausted but exhilarated. I thought I knew all about Shakespeare, but I've learned that I didn't have a clue — not a clue. He really has exploded all my preconceptions about the play and the character and in a very dynamic and grounded way, he is reinventing it through his process.

He's very hands-on at the beginning, then he begins to loosen his grip as you crack open the meaning of the language.

**Q: Adrian Noble described that the first hour of "King Lear" is when the actor really has to "cut the mustard," and it's easy after Lear goes mad. What does he mean by that?**

**A:** It's true that after he starts to go mad there's a liberation and a kind of joyousness. He's right in the sense that as you begin to go mad, you lift off like a plane might do as it goes down the runway. But it's physically and emotionally exhausting once you're in flight. I can tell you that if I had not been in training for months to prepare for this role, I would not be talking to you right now.

**Q: Adrian said that he thought your personal experiences — as both a father and as someone who's experienced personal loss (Foxworth's wife and companion of 22 years, "Bewitched" star Elizabeth Montgomery, passed away from cancer in 1995) — have been helpful in defining your Lear. True?**

**A:** I'm the father of kids who are in their 30s and 40s and I've been a widower. You go through a lot of experiences over time, and those things come into play. You know what you are capable of emotionally and psychologically, and you know the kind of person you have been and are now. Your slate is not as blank as it once was. I wouldn't have understood the passion, the madness, the love and ego of this character 15 or 20 years ago. You grow toward a role and then you grow away from it.

**Q: A lot of your energy right now is focused on "King Lear," but you're also appearing in "The Madness of George III." What can you tell me about playing Dr. Willis?**

**A:** Dr. Willis is one of the doctors whose cure seems to work. He's iconoclastic, but he's not kooky. In terms of the language and appositions, it's simpler. It's less dense texturally, too, so it's been lighter. I have so much respect for Miles (Anderson, who plays King George III). He's done such an incredible job. It's a joy to watch him and he's a great guy. I'm sure he and I will be friends for many years after this.

**Q: Now that you're through rehearsals, how has the experience been for you, returning to a Shakespeare repertory company after all these years?**

**A:** I haven't worked in a company of actors since my 20s, so it's been over 40 years and it's been a thrill. It's so much fun, there's so much energy and enthusiasm and talent and skill. Really, it's been incredibly heartening.

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## Foxworth eager to tackle long-awaited role in 'King Lear'

- Story
- Discussion

By PAM KRAGEN - pkragen@nctimes.com | Posted: June 23, 2010 9:14 am | No Comments Posted | Print

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Craig Schwartz Robert Foxworth as King Lear in the 2010 Shakespeare Festival production of King Lear directed by Adrian Noble, June 12 - Sept. 23, 2010 at The Old Globe. Photo by Craig Schwartz.

Veteran television, film and stage actor Robert Foxworth carried around a dog-eared copy of William Shakespeare's "King Lear" for the past five years, hoping a director would give him a crack at the role. He's finally getting that chance this summer in the Old Globe's Shakespeare Festival.

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**"King Lear"**

**When:** previews, 8 p.m. Thursday-Saturday; regular shows, 8 p.m. July 6, 10, 14, 16, 19, 22, 24, 29, 30; Aug. 3, 8, 10, 11, 15, 19, 25, 28. 29; Sept. 3, 5, 8, 11, 17 and 23; also 7 p.m. Sept. 8 and 14

**Where:** Lowell Davies Festival Theatre, Old Globe complex, 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park, San Diego

**Tickets:** \$29-\$78

**Info:** 619-234-5623

**Web:** [www.theoldglobe.org](http://www.theoldglobe.org)

Posted in Theatre on *Wednesday, June 23, 2010 9:14 am* | Tags: Entertainment Preview, Nct, Theater,



June 20, 2010

## Finding his voice in the sound of the Bard's words

**By James Hebert**  
THEATER CRITIC

Shakespeare famously described life as "full of sound and fury, signifying nothing." To Adrian Noble — one of the foremost Shakespeare directors on the globe (and now, as it happens, practicing that art at the Globe) — sound is the very essence of the Bard's work, and it signifies everything.

In his scores of productions over the past 25 years or so, and in his newly published book "How to Do Shakespeare," the new artistic director of the Old Globe Theatre's 2010 Shakespeare Festival returns again and again to the importance of listening to the plays.

In his estimation, this is one canon that should never be greeted with plugged ears.

"It's the most important thing, really," says Noble, who led England's esteemed Royal Shakespeare Company for nearly 13 years beginning in 1991. "I always say to actors that you have to **make** audiences listen. I don't think people do necessarily listen. We're not used to it. We're used to looking at things."

How that approach will change the nature of the Globe's annual festival should start to become apparent this week, when Noble rolls out "King Lear," the first of the three plays to open. Noble is directing "Lear" and the fest's one non-Shakespeare entry, "The Madness of George III"; Ron

Daniels, last at the Globe in 2009 with "Kingdom," directs "The Taming of the Shrew."

While the previous artistic director, Darko Tresnjak — who led the festival from its revival in 2004 through last year — stressed the importance of text, his productions also were known for their eye-catching style.

But Noble, who is 59, has been ears-deep in the aural aspects of Shakespeare since he was a kid in Chichester, England.

"When I was about 10, my Grandma gave me his complete works," Noble recalls. "Very cheap — Woolworth's. Ten shillings, it cost. I've never known why she did that. I never asked. I

SEE **Noble, E5**

### DETAILS

Old Globe Theatre's 2010 Shakespeare Festival. Three plays running in nightly repertory: "King Lear," "The Taming of the Shrew" and "The Madness of George III."

**When:** Tuesdays-Sundays, 8 p.m. most evenings (check with theater for full schedule), through Sept. 26.

**Where:** Old Globe's Lowell Davies Festival Theatre, Balboa Park.

**Tickets:** \$29-\$78 (\$19 onstage seating for "Shrew")

**Phone:** (619) 234-5623

**Online:** theoldglobe.org



**Adrian Noble feels actors "have to make audiences listen. I don't think people do necessarily listen. We're not used to it. We're used to looking at things." John Gibbins / Union-Tribune**

## NOBLE

CONTINUED FROM E1

### 'The play talks to me more if I allow it to talk to me'

should've asked.

"She was a woman who left school at 12 or 13, a farm laborer's daughter, never had the education or money. But she bought me this Shakespeare book.

"So I started saying these speeches out loud, and I found them quite intoxicating. I loved doing them. I had stumbled upon a rather good way in, which was to say the lines out loud."

In focusing on the sonic structure of Shakespeare's poetry, Noble doesn't discount the importance of interpreting what it all means.

But "I tend not to do that, to be perfectly honest," he says. "Because it interests me less. Not that the meaning interests me less, but I find the play talks to me more if I allow it to talk to me. I think Shakespeare is more interesting than I am."

He adds with a laugh: "Or indeed, than most people I know."

Noble uses the opera "The Marriage of Figaro" as an example: You don't need to understand what Mozart had in mind when he wrote it to map out the ways its musical transitions work. That work is a helpful example, since it was another opera Noble directed — Verdi's Shakespeare-derived "Macbeth," for New York's Metropolitan Opera in 2007 — that helped bring him to the Globe.

Louis G. Spisto, the theater's CEO/executive producer, saw that production as well as Noble's "Hamlet" at the 2008 Stratford Festival in Canada and was inspired to pursue the director as the successor to Tresnjak, who had decided to leave the Globe.

Once aboard, Noble conferred with Spisto on which plays to produce for his first season (the Globe has since confirmed that Noble will return as festival artistic director in 2011).



**Robert Foxworth and Emily Swallow in "King Lear."** Foxworth, a veteran at the Old Globe, calls Adrian Noble's staging of the play a "wonderful surprise." *Craig Schwartz*

"Lou said to me he wanted, ideally, a kind of big play, a signature play," Noble recalls. "I'd just done 'Hamlet,' (so) I didn't want to do 'Hamlet.' And I came across 'King Lear' and I said, 'Well, you've got to find a King Lear.'"

"And he said, 'I know a King Lear.'"

That turned out to be Robert

ing cast of fest returnees, newcomers and USD/Globe graduate student actors who will perform the three plays in nightly repertory, says Noble's focus on language has been revelatory for him.

"I've found, frankly, that virtually all my preconceptions of the play and character were blown away by his opening new doors," Foxworth says. "It's been a wonderful surprise — taking the language and letting it open up for us in a new and surprising way.

"I kind of get a little inarticulate about it because it's such an experiential thing that it's hard to describe. (But) finding ways of saying it that excite and engage an audience, so they're not allowed to lay back and watch a play happen at them. The language sets up an excitement from us to them, so that we're all participants."

In order to help the Shakespeare segment of the festival mesh more gracefully with the Bennett play, which was first produced in 1991 (and spawned

the movie "The Madness of King George" in 1994), Noble sends Lear forward into the 18th century.

The Bennett play "creates a marvelous dialogue with 'King Lear,' actually," Noble says. "They're parallel themes. Madness, obviously. A very strict court with very strong social mores, which disintegrate. And I've always been fascinated with the politics of the 18th century," the historical setting for "George."

"Then I had this further thought, which was to start both the plays at the same point. So I started 'King Lear' just after the American Revolution, because George goes on about losing the American colonies."

Noble knows a little about difficult partings. His work at the RSC stretched even further back than his tenure as artistic director, and in that time he directed such big names (or names-to-be) as Kenneth Branagh and Ralph Fiennes.

But he left in turmoil over his ambitious plans to revamp the company (and amid apparent resentment over his work on the movie-based musical "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang," a hit on London's West End in 2002 and a Broadway transfer in 2005).

Noble says the criticism wasn't what led him to leave. It was more that by the time he left, he was spending 25 percent or 30 percent of his time on artistic matters, and the rest on politics, administration, fundraising and speechmaking — 20 or 25 speeches a week, he says.

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"Coming here is very nice," he concludes with a smile, "because I don't have to do any of the boring stuff."

The message is loud and clear: Leave the speeches to Shakespeare.

## Finding his voice in the sound of the Bard's words

By [James Hebert](#), UNION-TRIBUNE THEATER CRITIC

Sunday, June 20, 2010 at 12:02 a.m.



John Gibbins / Union-Tribune

Adrian Noble is the new creative director of the Old Globe's Summer Shakespeare Festival. He is directing a rehearsal of "King Lear."

### DETAILS

Old Globe Theatre's 2010 Shakespeare Festival. Three plays running in nightly repertory: "King Lear," "The Taming of the Shrew" and "The Madness of [George III](#)."

**When:** Tuesdays-Sundays, 8 p.m. most evenings (check with theater for full schedule), through Sept. 26.

**Where:** Old Globe's Lowell Davies Festival Theatre, Balboa Park.

**Tickets:** \$29-\$78 (\$19 onstage seating for "Shrew")

**Phone:** (619) 234-5623



Online: [theoldglobe.org](http://theoldglobe.org)

Shakespeare famously described life as “full of sound and fury, signifying nothing.” To Adrian Noble — one of the foremost Shakespeare directors on the globe (and now, as it happens, practicing that art at the Globe) — sound is the very essence of the Bard’s work, and it signifies everything.

In his scores of productions over the past 25 years or so, and in his newly published book “How to Do Shakespeare,” the new artistic director of the Old Globe Theatre’s 2010 Shakespeare Festival returns again and again to the importance of listening to the plays.

In his estimation, this is one canon that should never be greeted with plugged ears.

“It’s the most important thing, really,” says Noble, who led England’s esteemed Royal Shakespeare Company for nearly 13 years beginning in 1991. “I always say to actors that you have to make audiences listen. I don’t think people do necessarily listen. We’re not used to it. We’re used to looking at things.”

How that approach will change the nature of the Globe’s annual festival should start to become apparent this week, when Noble rolls out “King Lear,” the first of the three plays to open. Noble is directing “Lear” and the fest’s one non-Shakespeare entry, “The Madness of George III”; Ron Daniels, last at the Globe in 2009 with “Kingdom,” directs “The Taming of the Shrew.”

While the previous artistic director, Darko Tresnjak — who led the festival from its revival in 2004 through last year — stressed the importance of text, his productions also were known for their eye-catching style.

But Noble, who is 59, has been ears-deep in the aural aspects of Shakespeare since he was a kid in Chichester, England.

“When I was about 10, my Grandma gave me his complete works,” Noble recalls. “Very cheap – Woolworth’s. Ten shillings, it cost. I’ve never known why she did that. I never asked. I should’ve asked.

“She was a woman who left school at 12 or 13, a farm laborer’s daughter, never had the education or money. But she bought me this Shakespeare book.

“So I started saying these speeches out loud, and I found them quite intoxicating. I loved doing them. I had stumbled upon a rather good way in, which was to say the lines out loud.”

In focusing on the sonic structure of Shakespeare’s poetry, Noble doesn’t discount the importance of interpreting what it all means.

But “I tend not to do that, to be perfectly honest,” he says. “Because it interests me less. Not that the meaning interests me less, but I find the play talks to me more if I allow it to talk to me. I think Shakespeare is more interesting than I am.”

He adds with a laugh: “Or indeed, than most people I know.”

Noble uses the opera “The Marriage of Figaro” as an example: You don’t need to understand what Mozart had in mind when he wrote it to map out the ways its musical transitions work. That work is a helpful example, since it was another opera Noble directed — Verdi’s Shakespeare-derived “Macbeth,” for New York’s [Metropolitan Opera](#) in 2007 — that helped bring him to the Globe.

Louis G. Spisto, the theater’s CEO/executive producer, saw that production as well as Noble’s “Hamlet” at the 2008 Stratford Festival in [Canada](#) and was inspired to pursue the director as the successor to Tresnjak, who had decided to leave the Globe.

Once aboard, Noble conferred with Spisto on which plays to produce for his first season (the Globe has since confirmed that Noble will return as festival artistic director in 2011).

“Lou said to me he wanted, ideally, a kind of big play, a signature play,” Noble recalls. “I’d just done ‘Hamlet,’ (so) I didn’t want to do ‘Hamlet.’ And I came across ‘King Lear’ and I said, ‘Well, you’ve got to find a King Lear.’”

“And he said, ‘I know a King Lear.’”

That turned out to be Robert Foxworth, the veteran stage, film and TV actor who brought a memorable bite to the role of the late [Alabama](#) Gov. George Wallace in the 2009 Globe production of Mark Olsen’s “Cornelia.”

As it turned out, Foxworth was looking for someone who was looking for a Lear.

“I’ve been carrying a copy of the play around for several years, hoping that someone would get the idea,” says Foxworth, a Globe associate artist who moved to Encinitas not long ago. “I think in a way, Wallace was my audition for Lear. I think here at the theater, they said, ‘Hmmm, maybe he can do that.’”

As for why he had begun seeking the role in the first place: “Age,” Foxworth responds with a quick laugh. “For about the past eight years I’ve thought, ‘Well, I’d better do it within this decade, because I won’t be able to do it afterward.’”

Foxworth, part of the sprawling cast of fest returnees, newcomers and USD/Globe graduate student actors who will perform the three plays in nightly repertory, says Noble’s focus on language has been revelatory for him.

“I’ve found, frankly, that virtually all my preconceptions of the play and character were blown away by his opening new doors,” Foxworth says. “It’s been a wonderful surprise — taking the language and letting it open up for us in a new and surprising way.

“I kind of get a little inarticulate about it because it’s such an experiential thing that it’s hard to describe. (But) finding ways of saying it that excite and engage an audience, so they’re not

allowed to lay back and watch a play happen at them. The language sets up an excitement from us to them, so that we're all participants."

In order to help the Shakespeare segment of the festival mesh more gracefully with the Bennett play, which was first produced in 1991 (and spawned the movie "The Madness of King George" in 1994), Noble sends Lear forward into the 18th century.

The Bennett play "creates a marvelous dialogue with 'King Lear,' actually," Noble says. "They're parallel themes. Madness, obviously. A very strict court with very strong social mores, which disintegrate. And I've always been fascinated with the politics of the 18th century," the historical setting for "George."

"Then I had this further thought, which was to start both the plays at the same point. So I started 'King Lear' just after the American Revolution, because George goes on about losing the American colonies."

Noble knows a little about difficult partings. His work at the RSC stretched even further back than his tenure as artistic director, and in that time he directed such big names (or names-to-be) as [Kenneth Branagh](#) and [Ralph Fiennes](#).

But he left in turmoil over his ambitious plans to revamp the company (and amid apparent resentment over his work on the movie-based musical "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang," a hit on London's West End in 2002 and a Broadway transfer in 2005).

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The message is loud and clear: Leave the speeches to Shakespeare.

## VETERAN ACTOR FOXWORTH WAITED A LONG TIME FOR 'KING LEAR'

BY PAM KRAGEN

pkragen@californian.com



**Robert Foxworth**

Veteran television, film and stage actor Robert Foxworth carried around a dog-eared copy of William Shakespeare's "King Lear" for the past five years, hoping a director would give him a crack at the role. He's finally getting that chance this summer in the Old Globe's Shakespeare Festival.

Foxworth, who has lived in Encinitas for the past 18 months with his wife, Stacey Thomas, will play both King Lear and a smaller role as Dr. Willis in "The Madness of George III." Those two plays and Shakespeare's "The Taming of the Shrew" will rotate in repertory through late September on the Globe's outdoor festival stage.

Although best known for his television work (he was Chase Gioberti on "Falcon Crest" from 1981-1987, and Bernard Chenoweth on "Six Feet Under" from 2001-2003, among many other roles), the Texas-bred Foxworth got his start in theater and is thrilled to be immersed in it once again this summer. He's gotten rave reviews so far from Adrian Noble, the festival's new artistic director, who spent more than 20 years as an artistic director and stage director for the Royal Shakespeare Company.

"He's marvelous," Noble said of Foxworth as Lear. "He's physically, intellectually and vocally robust and he's tough as nails, but he has a very vulnerable side to him. He's a real granddad, too. It's lovely that he gets those two sides you have to



**Robert Foxworth has called King Lear the most challenging role of his career.** Courtesy photo

### "King Lear"

**WHEN** Previews, 8 p.m. Thursday-Saturday; regular shows, 8 p.m. July 6, 10, 14, 16, 19, 22, 24, 29, 30; Aug. 3, 8, 10, 11, 15, 19, 25, 28, 29; Sept. 3, 5, 8, 11, 17 and 23; also 7 p.m. Sept. 8 and 14

**WHERE** Lowell Davies Festival Theatre, Old Globe complex, 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park, San Diego

**TICKETS** \$29-\$78

**INFO** 619-234-5623

**WEB** [www.theoldglobe.org](http://www.theoldglobe.org)

get to play Lear. He has a strong, dynamic, tyrannical side and he also has strong emotional attachments to certain people like Cordelia and the Fool."

One of Shakespeare's later tragedies, "King Lear" is the story of a vain and aging English king who decides to

test his three daughters' love by asking them to flatter him openly at court.

When his youngest and most devoted daughter, Cordelia, chooses not to express her love in public, Lear disowns her and hands his kingdom over to his elder daughters, Goneril and Regan. They quickly prove their disloyalty to their father by banishing him and waging war for control of the throne. Ultimately Lear loses everyone he loves and goes mad with grief.

Noble has reset the Globe production in the late 18th century, and the play travels through time to the mid-20th century. "It starts out in a highly structured court and then moves into 20th-century civilization, where we progressed to barbarism. We got better and better at finding ways to hurt each

other. 'King Lear' seems the appropriate play to explore that in," Noble said.

Foxworth talked about the role in a telephone interview a few weeks ago:

**Question: People know you best from television, but you got your start in the theater and you've done a lot of Shakespeare, right?**

**Answer:** Yes I was doing plays with the Houston Children's Theatre when I was 8 years old and I started my theater career at 18. Right after high school, I went to work for the Alley Theatre. I was a gofer, an actor and a set builder. After college, I went to the Arena Stage in Washington, D.C. ... where I played 21 roles in three seasons. I did four productions at the American Shakespeare Festival in Stratford, Conn., I've done two Shakespeare plays at the Guthrie (in Minneapolis) and one at South Coast Rep (in Costa Mesa). At the Old Globe I did "Antony and Cleopatra" many years ago and did "Julius Caesar" there in 2003.

**Q: Why do you enjoy doing Shakespeare?**

**A:** I love the dynamic of the language. There's something that engages the spirit in doing Shakespeare. When you're speaking the language, opening the physical and psychic vibrators to reach the audience, it's a powerful experience. I feel in contact with the past and a thrust toward the future, because there's such a profound understanding of human nature in Shakespeare. You feel you're part of a continuum.

**Q: Is "King Lear" is a role you've wanted to do for a long time?**

**A:** I'd spoken to someone at the Globe several years ago about doing it, but I think I was not considered "weighty" enough at the



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time. "Cornelia" (a 2009 Globe production, where he played a sinister George Wallace) turned out to be my unintended audition. The casting director kept leaning on (Adrian Noble) saying ... "Look, he can do it" and he finally agreed.

**Q: Adrian Noble is an expert on Shakespeare. What have rehearsals been like?**

**A:** I feel so blessed to have this opportunity. He has brought to the whole cast a kind of awareness and excitement and rattled our cages. He's so detail-oriented, and his passion is just thrilling. It's invigorating, and I feel so grateful. I go home at the end of the day exhausted but exhilarated. I thought I knew all about Shakespeare, but I've learned that I didn't have a clue — not a clue. He really has exploded all my preconceptions about the play and the character and in a very dynamic and grounded way, he is reinventing it through his process.

He's very hands-on at the beginning, then he begins to loosen his grip as you crack open the meaning of the language.

**Q: Adrian Noble described that the first hour of "King Lear" is when the actor really has to "cut the mustard," and it's easy after Lear goes mad. What does he mean by that?**

**A:** It's true that after he starts to go mad there's a liberation and a kind of joyousness. He's right in the sense that as you begin to go mad, you lift off like a plane might do as it goes down the runway. But it's physically and emotionally exhausting once you're in flight. I can tell you that if I had not been in training for months to prepare for this role, I would not be talking to you right now.

**Q: Adrian said that he thought your personal experiences — as both a father**

**and as someone who's experienced personal loss (Foxworth's wife and companion of 22 years, "Bewitched" star Elizabeth Montgomery, passed away from cancer in 1995) — have been helpful in defining your Lear. True?**

**A:** I'm the father of kids who are in their 30s and 40s and I've been a widower. You go through a lot of experiences over time, and those things come into play. You know what you are capable of emotionally and psychologically, and you know the kind of person you have been and are now. Your slate is not as blank as it once was. I wouldn't have understood the passion, the madness, the love and ego of this character 15 or 20 years ago. You grow toward a role and then you grow away from it.

**Q: A lot of your energy right now is focused on "King Lear," but you're also appearing in "The Madness of George III." What can you tell me about playing Dr. Willis?**

**A:** Dr. Willis is one of the doctors whose cure seems to work. He's iconoclastic, but he's not kooky. In terms of the language and appositions, it's simpler. It's less dense texturally, too, so it's been lighter. I have so much respect for Miles (Anderson, who plays King George III). He's done such an incredible job. It's a joy to watch him and he's a great guy. I'm sure he and I will be friends for many years after this.

**Q: Now that you're through rehearsals, how has the experience been for you, returning to a Shakespeare repertory company after all these years?**

**A:** I haven't worked in a company of actors since my 20s, so it's been over 40 years and it's been a thrill. It's so much fun, there's so much energy and enthusiasm and talent and skill. Really, it's been incredibly heartening.

## Mad men

'King Lear'  
and 'Madness  
of George III'  
make for royal  
dialogue at  
The Old Globe

**By James Hebert**  
THEATER CRITIC

**T**wo monarchs with troubled minds: The English royals of Shakespeare's "King Lear" and Alan Bennett's "The Madness of George III" make some kind of pair.

They also make up two-thirds of the hand the Old Globe Theatre is playing with its 2010 summer Shakespeare Festival (the other fest work is the comedy "The Taming of the Shrew").

"Lear" opened last week. "George," now in previews, has its opening night Saturday. Though the plays were written some four centuries apart, both deal with kings who are losing their grip amid political and domestic turmoil.

Festival artistic director Adrian Noble says the "marvelous dialogue" between the works is what inspired him to

stage both for his first season at the Globe. To heighten the parallels, he has set "Lear" in roughly the same time period as "George."

Neither of the two tragic title characters suffers from mental illness in quite the conventional sense: Lear's break from reality is an acute (and richly metaphorical) state of grief and rage, while George turns out to be suffering from a mysterious physical malady. But in both plays, their struggles serve to illuminate themes of power and control, and the loss of those commodities.

Here, a look at what Miles Anderson (who plays George) calls "a season of madness."

**THE KING:** George III  
**THE ACTOR:** Miles Anderson

**THE CONTEXT:** A reluctant king, George finds himself on the throne and on the hook for the loss of the American Colonies.

**MAD MOTIVATION:** George suffers from an undiagnosed case of porphyria, which can cause mental disturbances.

**MAKING IT MODERN:** The state of health care becomes a major theme.

**QUOTABLE:** "As (George) says at one stage, 'My body is going mad, and I'm locked



Robert Foxworth as King Lear in the Old Globe's 2010 Shakespeare Festival production. Craig Schwartz

inside.' He's a man desperately trying to get out, who can't get out. And suffering the insanity of the world around him." (Anderson)

**THE ROYAL:** King Lear  
**THE ACTOR:** Robert Foxworth

**THE CONTEXT:** The aging Lear, yearning for the quiet life, decides to hand over his kingdom to his three daughters.

**MAD MOTIVATION:** Lear

rashly cuts his one loving daughter out of the inheritance; when the other two less loyal offspring start plotting against him, he surrenders to insanity, wandering the wilderness and screaming into a storm.

**MAKING IT MODERN:** Period costumes give way to a latter-day military look as Lear's folly leads to armed conflict.

**QUOTABLE:** "I find that 'Lear' — even though it deals with some dark aspects of



From left, Robert Foxworth, Miles Anderson and Emily Swallow in "The Madness of George III." *The Old Globe*

character and life — (has) a great deal of joyousness. When Lear goes mad, he discovers in a sense who he really is, I think. There's a kind of liberation that takes place." (Foxworth)

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**James Hebert:** (619) 293-2040; jim.hebert@uniontrib.com; blog: houseseats.uniontrib.com; Twitter: jimhebert

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#### DETAILS

**"The Madness of George III" and "King Lear"**

**When:** Running in nightly repertory with "The Taming of the Shrew." (Check theater for schedule.)

**Where:** Lowell Davies Festival Theatre, Balboa Park.

**Tickets:** \$29-\$78

**Phone:** (619) 234-5623

**Online:** [theoldglobe.org](http://theoldglobe.org)

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# Mad men at the Old Globe

## ‘King Lear’ and ‘Madness of George III’ make for royal dialogue

By [James Hebert](#), UNION-TRIBUNE THEATER CRITIC

Wednesday, June 30, 2010 at 8:54 p.m.



Robert Foxworth as King Lear in the Old Globe’s 2010 Shakespeare Festival production. Craig Schwartz

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From left, Robert Foxworth, Miles Anderson and [Emily Swallow](http://theoldglobe.org) in “The Madness of George III.” The Old Globe

Two monarchs with troubled minds: The English royals of Shakespeare’s “King Lear” and Alan Bennett’s “The Madness of George III” make some kind of pair.

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James Hebert: (619) 293-2040; jim.hebert@uniontrib.com housesets.uniontrib.com

# Who was Lear?

Four actors provide answers for thousands this summer.

IN WRITING "THE TRAGEDIE OF KING LEAR," sometime between 1604 and 1606, William Shakespeare created a character that would forever defy easy definition. After four centuries, actors, directors, scholars, critics and audiences continue to ask: Who was Lear?

Was he mad or simply foolish? Was Shakespeare making a case for generational appreciation and reconciliation at a time when his aging parents were "creeping towards death" – his father dying a few years before "Lear" was written and his mother a few years after? Was Lear a stand-in for an dotty tyrant or a God? Was the play a warning to England of the dangers of a declining monarch? Or, was this simply the decline of a single mind?

This summer in Southern California, there was a simple answer to "Who was Lear?" He was Dakin Matthews and Harry Groener, alternating at Antaeus Theater Company's production in North Hollywood, Robert Foxworth, at

the Old Globe (continuing through September 23), and Dennis Krausnick at Shakespeare Orange County (ending September 18).

Since they had been Lear, we decided to ask them who he was?

**W**HERE BETTER TO BEGIN THAN AT the beginning.

"There are some important things to figure out," said Matthews, the one of the four who previously played Lear in a full production. "Among them is the level of his strength, and smarts, at the beginning of the play. We've all seen very old and doddering Lears, and very shallow and stupid Lears. The actor has to make his mind up as to exactly what state of decay – if any – Lear has at the beginning of the play, as well as what his central intention is and, perhaps what his central problem is."

"I never felt that he was crazy to begin with," Groener said. "He certainly is old, and he may exhibit signs of old age, but it is not a disease. And I don't think it should be. As soon as it's a disease he's off the hook. And he can't be off the hook. He makes a choice in the first scene, and I chose to make that choice happen on stage and not off stage. He asks the women, which of them loves him best? It's a little thought, a little choice. What scares me about that is that it becomes enormous. It kills people. It kills his whole family. And it kills him."

"He's not manifesting madness at the beginning," added Foxworth. "But it's a kind of madness. There is a kind of madness in that sort of power, I think. You have to be a little mad to be that driven and that self-centered."

All agree that Lear's opening gambit is meant to leave nothing to chance. "We have divided our Kingdom in three," he says. It is not, as Alfred Bates wrote in his analysis a century ago, "out of a foolish tenderness [that he] has given away everything."

Lear begins by stating that the one we shall "say doth love us most" shall receive "our largest bounty," and then rewards Goneril and Regan equal shares for their fawning. By making it a first two equal, the only one that can be larger is the third.

"Lear actually has an interesting plan," Matthews said, "which is to guarantee succession while he's still alive. He's going to actually name Cordelia, his heir apparent. He also knows exactly who's going to marry her because he's going to marry her to France, not

Burgundy. I think that's what it's about.

"The reason he gets so furious at Cordelia is because she's destroying a very daring plan," he said. "I think he's a very smart man. I think he knows that his powers are failing and that's the reason he wants to do it now. This is not a real test. He's not really going to give it on the basis of what they say. It's Cordelia's refusal to participate in a ritual. And something just snaps and he goes nuts."

"It's my feeling that she has her own plans," Foxworth said. "She doesn't want to be suckered into something that is still controlled by Daddy or the sisters and her plan is to marry either Burgundy or France and add all of their power to the power she has so that she really is in control of a larger cross-channel empire. And she tells the truth of what she's feeling."

"He goes off into whatever he goes off into," said Groener. "He becomes blinded, and blindness is one of the themes in this play. His journey is to see again, and he eventually does. He begins to see and in the scene that he is supposedly the most mad in that scene on the heath when he comes in with all that stuff on him and all the flowers and all that. It's where he's supposed to be craziest that I think he's most sane."

"Yes," said Krausnick. "And once he goes mad, the fool can leave him because he doesn't need the fool anymore, he's

Dennis Krausnick and Alyssa Bradac at Shakespeare Orange County; Harry Groener, and Robert Pine as Gloucester, at Antaeus; Robert Foxworth at the Old Globe, and Dakin Matthews (right) with Stephen Caffrey as Fool at Antaeus.



PHOTOS (LEFT TO RIGHT): SHAKESPEARE ORANGE COUNTY, ED KREIGER/ANTAEUS, JEFFREY WEISSER/OLD GLOBE THEATRE, ED KREIGER

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## Old Globe Summer Shakespeare Festival returns with new leader

BY PAM KRAGEN

[pkragen@nctimes.com](mailto:pkragen@nctimes.com)

The Old Globe has two things to celebrate this month – its 75th anniversary and the arrival of Adrian Noble, new artistic director of the Summer Shakespeare Festival.

Noble, who spent more than two decades with England's Royal Shakespeare Company (including 13 years as artistic director), is directing two of the festival productions, Shakespeare's "King Lear" and Alan Bennett's "The Madness of George III," and is overseeing Ron Daniels' direction of Shakespeare's "The Taming of the Shrew." Daniels directed the hip-hop musical "Kingdom" at the Globe last year.

A repertory company of 26 actors (including 13 students from the Globe's MFA program at the University of San Diego) will perform all three plays, which will rotate in repertory six nights a week Saturday through Sept. 26 on the Globe's outdoor Lowell Davies Festival stage. Starring in the title role of "King Lear" is Robert Foxworth, the film and television veteran who was seen last year in the Globe's "Cornelia" and 2003's "Julius Caesar." And playing the lead in "Madness of George III" is British TV and stage star Miles Anderson. He replaces Globe vet Patrick Page, who withdrew last spring.



**Emily Swallow and Jonno Roberts, who play Katherine and Petruchio in "The Taming of the Shrew," during a rehearsal break at the Old Globe Theatre. All photos courtesy of the Old Globe**

Noble – whose credits include directing more than 100 plays, two musicals, a film and an opera, as well as a recently published book on Shakespeare – replaces Darko Tresnjak, the much-honored, Yugoslavian-born director who founded the festival seven years ago and left last fall to return to freelance directing (Tresnjak's production of "Twelfth Night" opens Friday at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival).

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("Hamlet" at 2008's Stratford Shakespeare Festival) and enjoyed it immensely. I wasn't wild on the cold, but I realized I missed it more than I imagined. What really stimulated it was writing the book. When you spend several months writing about Shakespeare, it sharpens the appetite. So when Lou (Spisto, the Globe's executive producer) invited me to come take over the festival, I thought it sounds like just about the perfect offer.

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## THE OLD GLOBE SUMMER SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL

**When:** 8 p.m. Tuesdays-Sundays Saturday through Sept. 26; (some performances in September begin at 7 p.m.; check schedule below)  
**Tickets:** \$29-\$78; there are 14 onstage seats for each performance of "Taming of the Shrew" priced at \$19.  
**Info:** 619-234-5629 Web: [www.theoldglobe.org](http://www.theoldglobe.org)

### ■ "King Lear"

**When:** Previews, 8 p.m. Saturday, Sunday and June 24, 25, 26; Opens July 6 with performances July 10, 14, 16, 19, 22, 24, 29, 30; Aug. 3, 8, 10, 11, 15, 19, 25, 28, 29; Sept. 3, 5, 8, 11, 17 and 23; 7 p.m. Sept. 8 and 14.

### ■ "The Madness of George III"

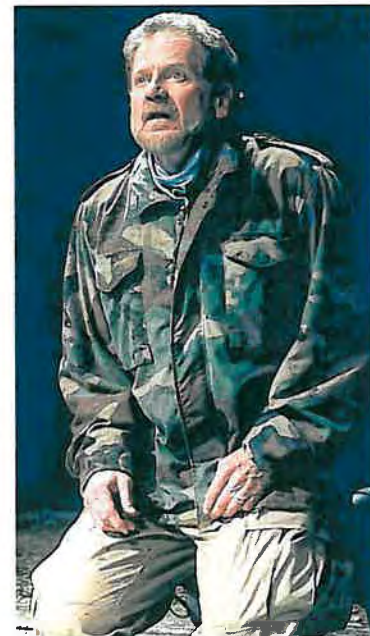
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**Miles Anderson, above, plays the title role in "The Madness of George III," and Robert Foxworth, seen at right as Brutus in the Globe's 2003 "Julius Caesar," plays the title role in "King Lear."**



**Costume sketches by Deirdre Clancy for the festival include The Fool in "King Lear," left, Katherine in "Taming of the Shrew," center, and King George in "The Madness of George III."**

### Globe?

**A:** Actors are actors the world over. The difference is that here they're dealing with formal language, so that's a challenge. But I found that the cadence of the American accents works rather well with Shakespeare's words. They're very talented, very keen and very quick.

**Q: Do you see any differences between Shakespeare audiences in America, Canada or the U.K.?**

**A:** We brought a lot of (RSC) shows to Brooklyn and Washington, D.C., over the years, and it's

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See **Festival, 22**

# Festival

Continued from Page 13

**dance in his shows. I read that your productions used a lot of props. How would you describe your style?**

**A:** I did have a phase where I used a lot of umbrellas and balloons, but now I don't have a style. I guess I don't like lots of scenery and I really don't like naturalistic scenery. I mean, if you put "As You Like It" in a naturalistic forest, you'd have to have rabbits and lions to keep to the theme. I think it's best to avoid it.

**Q: Do you believe in cutting Shakespeare's plays or changing the time setting and locale?**

**A:** Yes, of course I cut. People today have a short attention span. In the 19th century, audiences would watch two plays in one evening. They'd have watched "King Lear" and then sat through another play. People just can't do that today. I've cut "Lear" quite a bit, all the way through the play.

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**A:** Yes. There are one or two plays that one never goes back to because I feel like I have nothing more to say about it as a director. But with "King Lear," that's never the case, because doing the play is largely to do with the man playing Lear, and where you are in your own life. I would go back to "Lear" again in the future, too.

**Q: So how is your latest Lear, Robert Foxworth?**

**A:** He's marvelous. He's a really strong actor. He's physically, intellectually and vocally robust and he's tough as nails, but he has a very vulnerable side to him.

**Q: Are you doing anything different with this production of "Lear"?**

**A:** We move across 1 1/2 centuries. We start in the late 18th century and end in the 20th century. It starts out in a highly structured court and then moves into 20th-century civilization where we progressed to barbarianism. We got better and better at finding ways to hurt each other. "King Lear" seems

the appropriate play to explore that in.

**Q: Let's talk about "The Madness of George III." You had your star drop out unexpectedly. How did you salvage the production?**

**A:** We had a terrible disappointment just 48 hours before we were set to begin rehearsals. It really could have been very serious, because you don't do plays like "Madness of King George" without a George. But we had enormous fortune in finding Miles Anderson. When I joined Bristol Old Vic (in 1976), Miles was the lead actor there and we worked together several times over four years, then we all went to the RSC within 12 months of each other. He stayed on and off during the '80s and then went on to movies and television, then he moved to America. I didn't know what we were going to do, and then we found out that Miles was not only in L.A., but he had a green card. Talk about landing on your feet.

**Q: What's he like as an actor?**

**A:** Brilliant. He's a wonderfully gifted actor of both very serious roles and comedy. Nigel (Hawthorne, who starred in both the play's London premiere and film version) had similar qualities as George. That's what you need, because the role requires both serious and comedy skills.

**Q: Had he performed the role before or has he learned it in rehearsals?**

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style. I know he's passionate about telling the story clearly and wittily, and he's as passionate about the language as I am. That's why I asked him to do it. You have to have a cohesive style so all three plays work together, and we work together very well.

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**A:** The controversy is a bit passe in England. We're doing it without the prologue. I think it stands fine on its own. I think Ron sees it as a very romantic love story, which I think is absolutely correct.

I saw a production of it when I was at Stratford (in Canada), and I was so upset I took my kids out at the interval. It was about bashing up Kate. I didn't want my children to see this. This is not what the play is about. You think you're making it feminist having people treat her like s-- , but this is a lie. It was a production that hated women. It's a play about love, but love is complicated. Love does contain violence and passion plus emotion plus sex -- It's fireworks.

**Q: Do you get fireworks from the actors playing Petruchio and Kate?**

**A:** Samantha (Barrie, Globe casting director) found them in auditions, and she's a genius. I told her I wanted actors with volatility, a great skill with language and very attractive. We found Jonno Roberts on the West Coast and Emily Swallow on the East Coast, and they've got great chemistry.

**Q: You've brought in your own design team for this year's festival. What can you tell me about them?**

**A:** I brought over the costume designer and lighting designer from England. Deirdre Clancy worked with me for 20 years, and she's one of the world's great costume designers. Alan Burrett and I worked together on my last "King Lear" and he now lives in San Diego. And Shaun Davey, a great friend of mine in Ireland, did the music for "King Lear" as a favor. We're using the same set designer, Ralph Funicello, whose work I liked a lot. He came over to England and worked in my house with me on the set design, which will wrap around the audience a bit more.

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## Notable English stage director takes over Globe's Shakespeare festival

- Story
- Discussion
- Image (4)

By PAM KRAGEN - pkragen@nctimes.com | Posted: June 9, 2010 9:09 am | No Comments Posted | Print

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[Buy this photo](#) Adrian Noble, Artistic Director of The Old Globe's 2010 Shakespeare Festival and Executive Producer Lou Spisto. Photo by Craig Schwartz.





The Old Globe has two things to celebrate this month ---- its 75th anniversary and the arrival of Adrian Noble, new artistic director of the Summer Shakespeare Festival.

Noble, who spent more than two decades with England's Royal Shakespeare Company (including 13 years as artistic director), is directing two of the festival productions, Shakespeare's "King Lear" and Alan Bennett's "The Madness of George III," and is overseeing Ron Daniels' direction of Shakespeare's "The Taming of the Shrew." Daniels directed the hip-hop musical "Kingdom" at the Globe last year.

A repertory company of 26 actors (including 13 students from the Globe's MFA program at the University of San Diego) will perform all three plays, which will rotate in repertory six nights a week Saturday through Sept. 26 on the Globe's outdoor Lowell Davies Festival stage. Starring in the title role of "King Lear" is Robert Foxworth, the film and television veteran who was seen last year in the Globe's "Cornelia" and 2003's "Julius Caesar." And playing the lead in "The Madness of George III" is British TV and stage star Miles Anderson. He replaces Globe vet Patrick Page, who withdrew last spring.

Noble ---- whose credits include directing more than 100 plays, two musicals, a film and an opera, as well as a recently published book on Shakespeare ---- replaces Darko Tresnjak, the much-honored, Yugoslavian-born director who founded the festival seven years ago and left last fall to return to freelance directing (Tresnjak's production of "Twelfth Night" opens Friday at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival).

Noble talked about the festival in an interview last week:

**Question: After leaving the RSC, you took an extended break from directing Shakespeare. What attracted to you to this job?**

Answer: I was still directing, just not Shakespeare. I felt I needed a break. Then I did it in Canada ("Hamlet" at 2008's Stratford Shakespeare Festival) and enjoyed it immensely. I wasn't wild on the cold, but I realized I missed it more than I imagined. What really stimulated it was writing the book. When you spend several months writing about Shakespeare, it sharpens the appetite. So when Lou (Spisto, the Globe's executive producer) invited me to come take over the festival, I thought it sounds like just about the perfect offer.

**Q: Many of the actors you worked with at the RSC have gone on to huge careers in film and television. I read a review where a critic said Kenneth Branagh did his best work for you. Do you think that grounding in the classics in a Shakespearean company is the secret of their success?**

A: Absolutely. Doing the classics is more difficult than doing new plays, and when you spend years playing all of these characters, you build up a body of skill that can't be matched in any other way.

**Q: How do you find the training of the American actors at the Globe?**

A: Actors are actors the world over. The difference is that here they're dealing with formal language, so that's a challenge. But I found that the cadence of the American accents works rather well with Shakespeare's words. They're very talented, very keen and very quick.

**Q: Most of your career has been concentrated on the classics, do you like directing new plays?**

A: I've done one or two. Early in my career, I was good at doing big classical plays with big casts, so because I had a knack for it, I was asked to do a lot of big productions and not the smaller plays. But I've done new plays by Brian Friel and Nick Wright. And I really enjoy plays by Tom Stoppard, Nick Dear and Yasmina Reza.



**Q: Do you see any differences between Shakespeare audiences in America, Canada or the U.K.?**

A: We brought a lot of (RSC) shows to Brooklyn and Washington, D.C., over the years, and it's very interesting. Audiences in New York were sharper than they were in London or Washington. We brought over "Cymbeline," which is a very witty play, it's sharp with a lot of puns and wordplay, and we found that the lines got a huge number of laughs in New York and we weren't used to that in London. They laughed a bit less in Washington. I've never directed Shakespeare for an audience on the West Coast, so we'll see how they react.

**Q: Your predecessor, Darko, was known for creating beautiful stage pictures and using a lot of elements like music, puppetry, dance and bawdy humor in his shows. I read somewhere that your productions used a lot of color and props. How would you describe your style?**

A: I did have a phase where I used a lot of umbrellas and balloons, but now I don't think I have a specific style. I guess I don't like lots of scenery and I really don't like naturalistic scenery. I mean, if you put "As You Like It" in a naturalistic forest, you'd have to have rabbits and lions to keep to the theme. I think it's best to avoid it.

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**Q: Will this year's set be different from the standard one Ralph has designed over the past several years?**

A: Yes, it will. For one thing, it will wrap around the audience a bit more.

**Q: You've said you have enjoyed working at the Globe this spring and summer. Is there any chance you will make this an annual thing?**

A: We're already talking about next year and I've got some ideas. We'll see how it goes.

**Summer Shakespeare Festival**

**When:** 8 p.m. Tuesdays-Sundays, June 12-Sept. 26 (some performances begin at 7 p.m., check schedule for details)

**Where:** Lowell Davies Festival Theatre, Old Globe, Balboa Park, San Diego

**Tickets:** \$29-\$78; there are 14 onstage seats for "Taming of the Shrew" performances priced at \$19

**Info:** 619-234-5629

**Web:** www.theoldglobe.org

### "King Lear"

Shakespeare's late tragedy is the story of a foolish English king whose kingdom is destroyed by his own vanity. King Lear is driven mad when his two cruel daughters and their power-hungry husbands take control of the government, banish him to the wilderness and ultimately kill those he loves most.

**When:** Previews, 8 p.m. June 12, 13, 24, 25, 26; Opens July 6 with performances July 10, 14, 16, 19, 22, 24, 29, 30; Aug. 3, 8, 10, 11, 15, 19, 25, 28, 29; Sept. 3, 5, 8, 11, 17 and 23; 7 p.m. Sept. 8 and 14

### "The Madness of George III"

Alan Bennett's 1991 political satire is inspired by the true story of how the English king's bouts with mental illness led to the Regency Crisis of 1788. The play was made into a 1994 film titled "The Madness of King George."

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Shakespeare's early comedy is the story of a fortune-hunting rogue who marries a temperamental woman for her family's fortune and seeks to tame her willfulness with kindness.

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# Old Globe 2010 Shakespeare Festival

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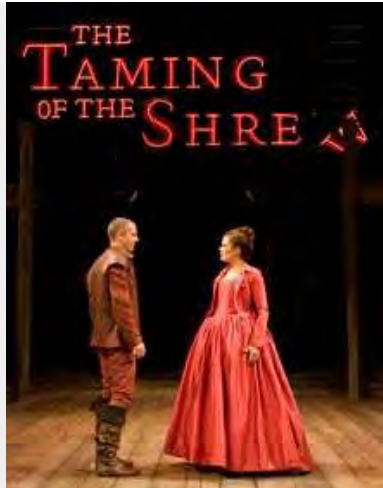


King Lear

It's that time of year again, the sun is out, the weather is beautiful and the thing it brings to mind is... The Old Globe's 2010 Shakespeare Festival! What could be a better way to appreciate two things San Diego is famous for – our weather and The Old Globe- then by combining them? The Shakespeare Festival runs June 12 – Sept. 26 and begins the Globe's year-long celebration of its 75th Anniversary.

**King Lear** - One of the greatest and most powerful dramas in western literature, King Lear is the ultimate family drama told against a background of intense political intrigue. Lear, an aging monarch, has decided to divide his kingdom between his three daughters – each to receive land and wealth in proportion to their declaration of love for him. Two of them compete to flatter their father, while the one loving daughter, Cordelia, refuses to play the game and is exiled. Seduced by his daughters flattery, Lear sets in motion a catastrophic series of events that will destroy his kingdom, his family and ultimately his sanity. King Lear runs June 12 – Sept. 23. Previews run June 12, 13, 24 and 25. Opening night is June 26.





The Taming of the Shrew

The Taming of the Shrew - Shakespeare's The Taming of the Shrew is the quintessential battle-of-the-sexes comedy! Baptista has two daughters that need to be married off – Bianca; docile, beautiful and much sought after by the noble men of the town, and Katherine; ill-tempered and shrewish, with an acid tongue that no man can tame. As the oldest, Katherine must marry first – not that she much cares. Bianca's many suitors can't afford to wait, so in a wild scheme to find a husband for Katherine, they convince the wily Petruchio to take on the challenge of domesticating the willful "shrew." Can Petruchio subdue Katherine's temper and win her bountiful dowry, or will she continue her shrewish ways? Taming of the Shrew runs June 16 – Sept. 26. Previews run June 16, 17, 27 and 29. Opening night is June 30.



Madness of King George III

The Madness of King George III - An international theatrical sensation that was later adapted into a film and nominated for four Academy Awards, The Madness of George III is a masterpiece of royal intrigue by renowned playwright Alan Bennett, a Tony Award®-winner for The History Boys. In the years immediately following the American Revolutionary War, this powerful play explores the majestic court of England's King George III and his deterioration into

madness and his determination to hold on to political power from those around him. The Madness of King George III runs June 19 – Sept. 24. Previews run June 19 and 20 and July 1 and 2. Opening night is July 3.

Tickets are currently available by subscription only and prices range from \$75 to \$228. Single tickets go on sale Sunday, April 25. Subscription packages may be purchased online at [www.TheOldGlobe.org](http://www.TheOldGlobe.org) by phone at (619) 23-GLOBE or by visiting the box office.

Season Subscriptions offer substantial savings with special subscriber benefits. Subscriptions can be purchased online at [www.TheOldGlobe.org](http://www.TheOldGlobe.org), by phone at (619) 23-GLOBE [234-5623] or by visiting the box office at 1363 Old Globe Way in Balboa Park. Subscriptions to the Globe's Summer Season range from \$75 to \$372. Five-play packages range from \$146 to \$372. Four-play packages (Festival plus musical) range from \$117 to \$316. Shakespeare Festival packages (3 plays) range from \$75 to \$228. Discounts are available for full-time students, patrons 29 years of age and younger, seniors and groups of 10 or more.

The Old Globe is located in San Diego's Balboa Park at 1363 Old Globe Way. There are several free parking lots available throughout the park. Valet parking is also available (\$10). For additional parking information visit [www.BalboaPark.org](http://www.BalboaPark.org)

Interested in having your San Diego theater performance, venue, event, or other local activity featured in the San Diego Theater Guide? Send details to ErinMarie at [sdtheater.examiner@gmail.com](mailto:sdtheater.examiner@gmail.com) or Follow me on Twitter! @SdTheaternews

# THE BOTTOM LINE

June 18, 2010

## 2010 SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL AT THE OLD GLOBE

Executive Producer Lou Spisto announced the complete cast and creative team for the Globe's 2010 Shakespeare Festival performed in repertory in the outdoor Lowell Davies Festival Theatre. Adrian Noble is the Artistic Director of the 2010 Festival and will direct Shakespeare's *King Lear* and Alan Bennett's *The Madness of George III*. Ron Daniels will direct *The Taming of the Shrew*. Miles Anderson will play the title role in *The Madness of George III* and Bruce Turk will play the Fool in *King Lear*, replacing the previously announced Patrick Page, who has withdrawn from the Festival due to a scheduling conflict. The Shakespeare Festival runs now –

Sept. 26 and begins the Globe's yearlong celebration of its 75th Anniversary. *King Lear* runs now – Sept. 23. Opening night is June 26. *The Taming of the Shrew* runs now – Sept. 26. Opening night is June 30. *The Madness of King George III* runs now – Sept. 24. Opening night is July 3. As previously announced, Globe Associate Artist Robert Foxworth will play the title role in *King Lear* and Dr. Willis in *The Madness of George III*, Jonno Roberts will play Edmund in *King Lear* and Petruchio in *The Taming of the Shrew* and Emily Swallow will play Goneril in *King Lear*, Katherine in *The Taming of the Shrew* and Queen Charlotte in *The Madness of George III*. The reper-



Robert Foxworth will play *King Lear* and Dr. Willis in *The Madness of King George III*, both directed by Adrian Noble, in The Old Globe's 2010 Shakespeare Festival. Photo by Tom Munnecke.

tory company also features Michael Stewart Allen, Donald Carrier, Craig Dudley, Globe Associate Artist Charles Janasz, Joseph Marcell, Adrian Sparks and Jay Whittaker, as well as The Old Globe/University of San Diego Professional Actor Training Program students Shirine Babb, Andrew Dahl, Grayson DeJesus, Ben Diskant, Christian Durso, Catherine Gowl, Kevin Hoffmann, Andrew Hutcheson, Steven Marzolf, Jordan McArthur, Brooke Novak, Aubrey Saverino, Ryman Sneed and Bree Welch. The creative team includes Ralph Funicello (Scenic Design), Deirdre Clancy (Costume Design), Alan Burrett (Lighting Design), Christopher R. Walker (Sound Design and Original Music), Shaun Davey (Original Music), Steve Rankin (Fight Director), Claudia Hill-Sparks (Vocal and Dialect Coach) and James Latus (Stage Manager).

Associated events taking place during the run of the 2010 Shakespeare Festival include:

POST-SHOW FORUMS: *King Lear* - Aug. 3 & 25 and Sept. 14; *The Taming of the Shrew* - July 7 & 20 and Sept. 21; *The Madness of George III* - July 13, Aug. 31 and Sept. 22. Discuss the play with members of the Shakespeare Festival repertory company at post-show discussions led by the Globe's creative staff after the performance. FREE.



Bruce Turk will play the Fool in *King Lear*, directed by Adrian Noble, in The Old Globe's 2010 Shakespeare Festival. Photo by Craig Schwartz.

#### INSIGHT SEMINARS:

*King Lear* - June 14; *The Taming of the Shrew* - June 21; and *The Madness of George III* - June 28th. Shakespeare Festival Insight Seminars are a series of informal presentations featuring a panel selected from the Festival's artistic company. The seminars take place on Monday nights in the Lowell Davies Festival Theatre. Reception, 6:30 pm. Seminar, 7 pm. Admission is FREE and reservations are not required.

#### SHAKESPEARE IN THE GARDEN:

*King Lear* - July 19, Aug. 10 & 25 and Sept. 17; *The Taming of the Shrew* - July 8, Aug. 4 & 14 and Sept. 9; and *The Madness of George III* - July 13, Aug. 18 and Sept. 4 & 24th. Shakespeare in the Garden is a series of informal presentations of ideas and insights to enhance the theater-going experience. The seminars feature members of the Shakespeare Festival creative team and take place

in the Craig Noel Garden. Presentations begin at 7 pm. Admission is FREE and reservations are not required.

#### OUT AT THE GLOBE:

Thursday, Aug. 12 at 6:30 pm. An evening for gay and lesbian theater lovers and the whole GLBT community, Out at the Globe includes a hosted wine and martini bar, appetizers, door prizes and a pre-show mixer. \$20 per person. RSVP at (619) 23-GLOBE. (Tickets to *The Taming of the Shrew* are sold separately.)

#### THANK GLOBE IT'S FRIDAY:

Friday, Aug. 6 & 13 at 6:30 pm. Kick off the weekend with the Globe's Friday pre-show bash. TGIF includes a hosted wine and martini bar, appetizers and dessert, and live music from a local San Diego artist. \$20 per person. RSVP at (619) 23-GLOBE. (Tickets to *The Taming of the Shrew* and *The Madness of George III* are sold separately.) In addition to the Shakespeare Festival, the Globe's 2010 Summer Season features the World Premiere of the Broadway-bound musical *Robin and the 7 Hoods* (July 14 – August 22), directed by Casey Nicholaw with lyrics by Sammy Cahn and music by Jimmy Van Heusen, and the West Coast Premiere of *The Last Romance* (July 30 – September 5), a romantic comedy by Joe DiPietro starring television icon, Marion Ross. Tickets are currently available by subscription only.

**IF YOU GO—The Art Of Generosity—** Benefiting The San Diego Human Dignity Foundation, at Anthology, 1337 India Street, San Diego. Saturday, June 12 beginning at 6 pm. Info: [artofgenerosity.org](http://artofgenerosity.org) or [mylgbtfoundation.org](http://mylgbtfoundation.org)



## Colorblind: Casting In Shakespeare Transcends Barriers



By Barbara Smith



Denzel Washington played the title role in *Richard III* in New York's Public Theater in 1990. James Earl Jones played a black King Lear in a mostly white cast in Joseph Papp's 1974 New York Shakespeare Festival production of that play. Patrick Stewart played the lead in white in an all-black company of *Othello* in 1997 at the Shakespeare Theater in Washington, D.C.

On a local level, *King Lear*, now playing as part of San Diego's 2010 Shakespeare Festival at the Old Globe Theatre presents Joseph Marcell, a black actor, in the key role of the Earl of Kent. Marcell, who plays his role with gusto and class, is an accomplished Shakespearean actor having performed in the UK and U.S. with national Shakespearean companies. Indeed, Marcell has key parts in two other Globe Festival gems; *The Taming of the Shrew*, and *The*

*Madness of George III*. Convention-breaking casting often provides an added tension and depth to theatrical productions and colorblind casting in Shakespeare can provide an even more provocative dynamic.

Many of us grew up seeing traditional productions of Shakespeare in which the only role played by a black actor was Othello, who the Bard denotes as a Moor. Perhaps the most to-the-point definition of non-traditional or colorblind casting in Shakespeare comes from Des McNuff, award-winning former artistic director of the La Jolla Playhouse and current artistic director of Canada's Stratford Shakespeare Festival, who, in introducing his production of *Macbeth* at the Stratford Festival in 2009, defined non-traditional casting as "a term that means, among other things, that 'ethnically diverse' actors get to play Shakespearean roles other than Othello. This, to me, is a fundamental requirement for any theatre that presumes to call itself a leader." Indeed, the multi-talented director's provocative production paired Canadian Colm Feore as Macbeth and Jamaican-born Yanna McIntosh as Lady Macbeth.

Colorblind or non-traditional casting in Shakespeare is not a new phenomenon and in fact, according to Art Horowitz, chair of the Theatre and Dance Department at Pomona College, in the last 20 years, the practice has become *de rigueur*. He cites the celebrity productions named above, and adds to the list a bold and unorthodox 2002 all-female production of *King Lear* presented by the Cal Arts Center for New Performance in Los Angeles, which garnered three NAACP theatre awards. Horowitz' own directorial catalog includes many colorblind productions including *Hamlet* in which he paired an African American Ofelia with a Hamlet who was white with positive results. The bottom line is that audiences want great acting, Horowitz contends. "Theatre should come from a race neutral position," he adds, and besides, "We have too many good African American actors out there and we want them in the best roles possible."

To put things in a historical perspective, in 1821, forty years before Lincoln ended slavery, and fifty years before black Americans earned the right to vote, the first black theatrical group in the country, the African Company of New York, was putting on plays in a downtown Manhattan theatre to which both black and white audiences flocked, earning their bread with satires of white high society. Renowned African American actor Ira Aldridge, who gained fame playing Othello in 1825 in London's Royalty Theatre, was part of this company before leaving the United States in search of more acting opportunities and less discrimination in his art. For most of the play's performance history, Othello was played by a white actor in blackface, which is how the role was played in Shakespeare's time. And surprisingly, until the much-revered Paul Robeson became the first black actor of the 20th century to portray Shakespeare's Othello on Broadway in 1943, Othello had usually been played by white actors, sometimes just as whites, but frequently by whites in blackface. Surprisingly, even after Robeson's barrier-breaking role, Anthony Hopkins played Othello on television in blackface (1981) as did Orson Welles (1952) and Lawrence Olivier (1965) in film.



Today, with our first African American president, conversations about race and the possibility of a colorblind society hang in the air. McNuff's words describing a colorblind approach to theatre could very well inspire a society on the brink of transformation. He directs his words to Canadians, but they portend well for our country as well. "Ours is a multi-racial society," he says. "If our audiences can't find their own reflections on our stages, as Shakespeare's audiences did on his, we cannot possibly claim to be speaking to [our citizens] today. The complexion of [our country] has changed and continues to change, and we must change with it in order to stay at the forefront of our art." Taking it a step further, perhaps the willing suspension of disbelief that is a staple in successful theatre could find a place in day-to-day interactions among our diverse citizenry so that people could, as Dr. King advised, be regarded based on the content of their character, not the color of their skin.

All of Shakespeare speaks to the human experience. For a look at some honest reflections in a modern colorblind context, you can still see *King Lear*, *Taming of the Shrew*, and *The Madness of George III* before the Old Globe's Shakespeare Festival curtain falls September 26. For more information, visit [www.theoldglobe.org](http://www.theoldglobe.org)

Posted: Tuesday, January 4, 2011 12:30 pm | Updated: 12:38 pm, Tue Jan 4, 2011.

By [Kelly Bennett](#)

Sometimes I feel like I need a translator when watching Shakespeare plays. Most opera productions come with captions that run on digital screens above the stage. But this kind of artistic interpretation might not be on your radar: translating what's happening on a theater stage to an audience that can't hear.

Local writer Maya Kroth penned a vivid look at the interpreters hired by local theaters to turn the theatrical experience into [something that makes sense for a deaf person](#). Kroth's Union-Tribune story includes a bunch of fascinating glimpses into the work of these unsung fixtures in the theater scene:

While some things (like iambic pentameter) are bound to be lost in translation, certain other literary devices don't have to be. ... [Just] as spoken rhymes comprise words that sound alike, signed rhymes are built from hand shapes that look alike.

#### Toothing their horns:

- They're [the orchestra's "stuntmen,"](#) the players whose instrument, the French horn, is the most exposed sound in the bunch. To be one of these five local musicians, a "certain fearlessness is required," writes the U-T's James Chute.

- UCSD artist/architect [Teddy Cruz](#) was [selected as one of 52 fellows](#) in the fifth annual program run by the national arts advocacy organization United States Artists.

- Local dance leader John Malashock was touted in the Los Angeles Times' list of "faces to watch" in 2011 ([click to number nine](#) on this page).

- From Wheat Thins commercials to a Lifetime movie about women detectives, San Diego provided backdrops and settings for [many television and film shoots](#), reported Cathy Anderson, head of the San Diego Film Commission, on [sdnews.com](#).

- Local guitar giant Taylor Guitars has grown from a company launched in 1974 with a \$10,000 loan [to a powerhouse](#) earning \$70 million a year ([U-T](#)). I got to meet the [man who oversees neck and body construction](#) at the company's El Cajon headquarters a couple of years ago.

#### A look behind, a look ahead:

- A bovine-loving music librarian, a dog-painting school district employee and a bartending ballerina: [these are some of the local art-makers](#) we've met in the last few months. Their work and lives provide a great lens for viewing the art and drama of making art in San Diego.

The local arts arenas buzzed this week with end-of-year roundups and looks ahead to the events coming in 2011. I've only been on [the arts beat](#) since September, so I found the roundups below interesting and instructive.

#### Space closed, space opened:

- Many galleries, museums and theater operators across the region grappled with dwindling resources in 2010, including Solana Beach's Ordovery Gallery. The North County Times' Pam Kragen included that and [scores more details](#) from the past year in her meticulous roundup.

- But new places opened, too, like the [East Village artists' haven, Space 4 Art](#). KPBS's Angela Carone included that event and many more in [her excellent roundup](#) of news, successes, new faces and controversies.

- I included the [trouble at the Birch North Park Theatre](#) as one of [the arts storylines we'll be following](#) in the coming months. And along the lines of Space 4 Art, we also want to know about arts organizations that are expanding, opening or finding new spaces. If you have any ideas you think I should look into, [drop me a line](#).

#### The show had to go on:

- The local theater scene attracted several lists of highs and lows from local critics. The [NCT's Pam Kragen's](#) top pick was The Madness of George III at The Old Globe, while the [U-T's James Hebert](#) liked Ruined at La Jolla Playhouse. CityBeat's Marty Westlin went with Cygnet Theatre Company's Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street for his top pick.

- Best [local jazz stories](#), memories and shows; as well as pop concerts and albums. (U-T's George Varga)



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FISHING BECOMES ROLE PLAYED  
NATURALLY BY VETERAN ACTORS

ED ZIERALSKI • U-T

It's not every day that a couple of fishermen swap lies and cast flies with King George III and Ernest Hemingway.

But there were Andy "Montana" Koczon and Thomas "Spot" Rhoades doing just that Wednesday morning in San Diego Bay waters off Coronado.

Miles Anderson, an award-winning stage star, has played the lead role in "The Madness of King George III," all summer at the Old Globe Theatre in Balboa Park. Adrian Sparks played Sir Lucas Pipys and Sir Boothby Skrymshir in that play and had roles in "The Taming of the Shrew" and "King Lear," which also ran all summer as part of the Globe's Shakespearean Festival.

Sparks also stars in the one-man show, "Papa," an internationally successful play written by John de Groot about Hemingway's life. Sparks has won best actor awards for his authentic work in "Papa."

When a friend of theirs, Broadway actress Mary Munger, discovered the men loved to fish, she set them up with Koczon, an avid angler who once owned Andy Montana's, a fly-fishing shop on Coronado.

"What I love about Miles and Adrian is they're great fun, and they're just regular guys," Koczon said. "And they love to fish."

Anderson hooked into his big role this summer when the play's original actor, Patrick Page, took a role on Broadway in the upcoming Spider Man musical two days before rehearsals started for the Old Globe productions.

"I could live in San Diego the rest of my life," said Anderson, whose family escaped Zimbabwe (then Rhodesia) and settled in England. "I'm indebted to Patrick Page. Without him

I never would have found San Diego."

Anderson grew up fishing for shad and tigerfish off Africa. His father was a hunter and fisherman. Anderson's dream was to be a game ranger. But when the family was forced to leave Southern Africa due to political unrest, he changed career paths.

Anderson carries his fishing gear in the bed of his small pickup that has a bumper sticker that says "Live Your Dreams." The longtime award-winning British TV, film and stage star has fished most of his life, including a short stint as a commercial fisherman off Greece.

"When Adrian found out I fished, too, we fished everywhere we could, but mostly at the spots on Andy's map," Anderson said. "The very best thing about being an actor is having mornings like this where you get out and fish as the sun rises."

Fishing was tough Wednesday, but the actors didn't seem to mind.

"Fishing isn't always about catching," Anderson said. "If it was, no one would fish. It's about the company. The Irish call it, 'The Craic' (pronounced crack), the good conversation, telling stories. Men share their philosophies, their lives when they fish."

Sparks provided some glimpses of his one-man play, "Papa," breaking out some very entertaining Hemingway lines regarding fishing. Hemingway was an avid angler who became one of the best big-game anglers of his day. Being a fisherman allowed Sparks to have a lot better understanding of the role.

"Hemingway talks of being waist deep in mist-covered trout streams and admiring the beauty of the trout as they moved," Sparks said. "I understand that. I get that. I've done it

in Montana when the salmon fly hatch was on.

"I've been told I'd be a lot further along in my career if it wasn't for fishing. I used to live in upstate New York and commute to the city so I could fish."

Sparks, who grew up in Chicago, is new to ocean fishing. He called it his summer experience — learning it and now enjoying it.

One of his favorite stories involves his play, "Papa."

"A woman came backstage and walked up to me and said, 'I was all the way out to our car, but I just had to come back to thank you because after seeing "Papa," I now understand



Actors Miles Anderson (left) and Adrian Sparks took a break from their stage roles this week to fish the waters of San Diego Bay off Coronado. JOHN GIBBINS • U-T

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The woman's husband, probably a fisherman, was behind her, mouthing the words, "Thank You."



# NEWS

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IQ quiz

What is the capital of the state of California?  
a) Sacramento b) Hollywood

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## King George III, Hemingway fish San Diego Bay

BY ED ZIERALSKI

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED SEPTEMBER 24, 2010 AT 3:14 P.M., UPDATED SEPTEMBER 24, 2010 AT 1:32 A.M.

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Sparks said fishing often has taken priority in his life, sometimes at the expense of getting an acting gig.

"I've been told I'd be a lot further along in my career if it wasn't for fishing," Sparks said. "I used to live in Upstate New York and commute to the city so I could fish. I discovered the Catskills and the streams in Upstate New York. I'd commute to the City so I could be closer to the trout streams. My favorite type of fishing is to fish the mountain streams in Montana during a salmon fly hatch. I spend days walking streams and fishing."

He recalled making the movie, "Return to Lonesome Dove," with [Jon Voight](#) and [Oliver Reed](#), but what he remembers most about it was the fishing and the salmon fly hatch at the time the movie was made in Montana.

Sparks has a long list of credits, from plays, to TV and movie roles and some long-running commercials. But people recognize him most from his role in the 1997 Seinfeld episode, "The Summer of George," where he plays a man who wrestles his seat back from Kramer, serving as a seat saver for celebrities at the Oscar's.

Sparks, who grew up in [Chicago](#), is new to ocean fishing. He called it his summer experience, learning it and now enjoying it.

One of his favorite stories involves his play, "PAPA."

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## San Diego Arts

(<http://www.sandiego.com/arts-and-theatre>)

2010 SAN DIEGO NEWSMAKERS: Theater

*Legally Blonde, King Lear & a mad monarch top the list*

**by Welton Jones**

Posted on Tue, Dec 21st, 2010

Last updated Mon, Dec 20th, 2010

Theatre in San Diego ended an era this year with the death at 94 of Craig Noel, a major part of every day in the 75-year history of the Old Globe Theatre and a towering figure in the entire cultural fabric of the city for most of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

Otherwise, though hampered by hard economic times, this was a solid year on local stages. With a best-musical Tony Award for *MEMPHIS*, fresh from the La Jolla Playhouse, the city continued its gaudy record for passing shows on to Broadway. (Are *ROBIN AND THE SEVEN HOODS* or *LIMELIGHT* next? Hmmm. We'll see) Adrian Noble, a stalwart of England's Royal Shakespeare Company, restored the festival feel to the Old Globe's summer Shakespeare with three terrific productions. And a pair of leading managements hedged box-office bets with first-class revivals from the two most commercially successful playwright of the last 50 years, Neil Simon (three of his autobiographical WWII plays at the Globe) and Alan Ayckbourn (the epic trilogy *THE NORMAN CONQUESTS* at Cygnet Theatre.)



### Number three: Legally Blonde.

One of these last even survived my laborious, often absurd apples-oranges process of picking the year's "best" productions. Sigh. But the boss says "do it," so here they are, in ascending order:

10. **LOST IN YONKERS, Old Globe.** Into a bleak household ruled by a formidably austere matriarch a pair of sweet and lively boys are dropped due to WW II austerity. As Neil Simon tells it, and the Globe's lovingly detailed version showed, everybody grows in understanding and humanity.

**9. ALIVE AND WELL, Old Globe.** A trifling fable about the boy and the girl whose eventual love-match everybody sees coming except themselves. He's a passionate Civil War re-enactor and she's a skeptical reporter chasing a local legend in way-rural Virginia. Well-cast, neatly staged and exquisitely costumed.

the Kenny Finkle piece probably was part of many a delightful night out.

8. **AN INSPECTOR CALLS, Lamb's Players.** Pure soul food for the Lamb's fabled expertise with snooty, period tension, the J.B. Priestley notoriously ambiguous mystery got another polished revival in the Coronado playhouse, this time with boss Robert Smyth playing the pushy inspector, hectoring out the various truths with a fearsome perseverance.

7. **AURELIA'S ORATORIO, La Jolla Playhouse.** From her royal theatre heritage as granddaughter of Eugene O'Neil and daughter of Charlie Chaplin, Victoria Thierree Chaplin has drawn a new surreal fantasy built around the sturdy talents of HER daughter, Aurelia, with dancing clothes, improbable illusions, tap routines, puppets and what-all at the service of whimsical spectacle. May the Playhouse keep up this association and may this bloodline never end.

6. **RUINED, La Jolla Playhouse.** In the savage chaos of Africa's long, post-colonial nightmare, Lynn Nottage finds some room to hope, even if her characters are grossly debased and, in the case of the brutalized and ostracized women rape victims, ruined. The La Jolla production, nicely cast and deftly staged by Liesl Tommy, illuminated the author's meticulous passion precisely.

5. **BOOM, San Diego Repertory Theatre.** It's the end of the world and Adam and Eve have only just met, through a steamy personals ad. Except he's gay and she's a stubbornly kooky anti-breeder. But it all may be just a living exhibit in some far-off future museum. With Rachael VanWormer and Steven Lone as mankind's unlikely hope, Sam Woodhouse pummeled Peter Sinn Nachtrieb's goofy riff into a weird coherence.

4. **GOLDA'S BALCONY, Old Globe.** Tovah Feldshuh has been polishing her portrayal of Golda Meir for about seven years and finally, after a record Broadway run, it was ready for the Globe. Using a fake nose, dowdy padding and a cigarette baritone, Feldshuh delivered a touching, inspirational and moving portrait of Israel's late matriarch. And how's that for a pair of formidable women: the indomitable leader and the virtuoso actress?

3. **LEGALLY BLONDE, national tour at the Civic Theatre.** Can the UCLA sorority queen, despite being rich, gorgeous, smart, respected, loved and young, make it at Harvard Law? "Well, duh!" answered this vast, loud, energetic, kitschy Broadway musical with radiant actors, chirpy tunes, robust dancing and general sappy good will, one of the nicest surprises of the season.

2. **KING LEAR, Old Globe.** The diction was crystalline, the inexorable plots ground smoothly downward and the rich humanity of the complex characters had room to breath in Adrian Noble's near-definitive staging of a universally respected classic. Robert Foxworth headed a fine cast and even the swirling onstage winds were controlled in service of coherence.

And the number-one San Diego Newsmakers production of the year...

**THE MADNESS OF GEORGE III, Old Globe.** From the American Revolution through the Napoleonic Wars, King George III ruled the British Empire, with time off for insanity. Alan Bennett's thoughtful and moving play became the surprising bookend opposite LEAR to Adrian Noble's masterful examination of vulnerability in monarchs. Even without the genius of Shakespeare's poetry, Noble's triumphant artistry made Bennett's play the more thoroughly successful show of the thematic pair.

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## Foxworth, Swallow, Roberts Set For 2010 SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL

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Wednesday, April 21, 2010; Posted: 12:04 PM - by [BWW News Desk](#)

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Executive Producer [Lou Spisto](#) today announced the complete cast and creative team for the Globe's 2010 Shakespeare Festival performed in repertory in the outdoor Lowell Davies [Festival Theatre](#). [Adrian Noble](#) is the Artistic Director of the 2010 Festival and will direct Shakespeare's *King Lear* and [Alan Bennett](#)'s *The Madness of George III*. [Ron Daniels](#) will direct *The Taming of the Shrew*. [Miles Anderson](#) will play the title role in *The Madness of George III* and [Bruce Turk](#) will play the Fool in *King Lear*, replacing the previously announced [Patrick Page](#), who has withdrawn from the Festival due to a scheduling conflict. The Shakespeare Festival runs June 12 - Sept. 26 and begins the Globe's year-long celebration of its 75th Anniversary. Tickets are currently available by subscription only and prices range from \$75 to \$228. Single tickets go on sale

Sunday, April 25. Subscription packages may be purchased online at [www.TheOldGlobe.org](http://www.TheOldGlobe.org), by phone at (619) 23-GLOBE or by visiting the box office. Single tickets go on sale April 25 at 10:00 a.m.

*King Lear* runs June 12 - Sept. 23. Previews run June 12, 13, 24 and 25. Opening night is June 26. *The Taming of the Shrew* runs June 16 - Sept. 26. Previews run June 16, 17, 27 and 29. Opening night is June 30. *The Madness of King George III* runs June 19 - Sept. 24. Previews run June 19 and 20 and July 1 and 2. Opening night is July 3.

As previously announced, Globe Associate Artist [Robert Foxworth](#) will play the title role in *King Lear* and Dr. Willis in *The Madness of George III*, [Jonno Roberts](#) will play Edmund in *King Lear* and Petruchio in *The Taming of the Shrew* and [Emily Swallow](#) will play Goneril in *King Lear*, Katherine in *The Taming of the Shrew* and Queen Charlotte in *The Madness of George III*.

The repertory company also features [Michael Stewart](#) Allen, [Donald Carrier](#), [Craig Dudley](#), Globe Associate Artist [Charles Janasz](#), [Joseph Marcell](#), [Adrian Sparks](#) and [Jay Whittaker](#), as well as [The Old Globe](#)/University of San Diego Professional Actor Training Program students [Shirine Babb](#), Andrew Dahl, Grayson DeJesus, Ben Diskant, Christian Durso, Catherine Gowl, [Kevin Hoffmann](#), Andrew Hutcheson, [Steven Marzolf](#), [Jordan McArthur](#), [Brooke Novak](#), [Aubrey Saverino](#), Ryman Sneed and Bree Welch.

The creative team includes [Ralph Funicello](#) (Scenic Design), Clancy Steer (Costume Design), [Alan Burrett](#) (Lighting Design), Christopher R. Walker (Sound Design and Music) and [James Latus](#) (Stage Manager).

[Miles Anderson](#)'s stage appearances in the West End and for the [Royal Shakespeare Company](#) (RSC) include *The Witch of Edmonton*, *The Twin Rivals* (Best Supporting

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Actor, British Drama Awards), Macbeth, The Weir, Oliver!, Twelfth Night and Life's a Dream (Best Actor nomination, Olivier Awards). He was awarded three British Drama Awards in his first of 10 seasons with the RSC in Stratford. He has worked with directors [Richard Attenborough](#), [Trevor Nunn](#), [Adrian Noble](#), [Max Stafford-Clark](#), [Sam Mendes](#), Paul Seed, [John Caird](#) and Dominic Cooke, as well as actors [Peter Ustinov](#), [Judi Dench](#), [Kevin Kline](#), [Denzel Washington](#), Simon Russell-Beale, [Zoe Wanamaker](#), [Harriet Walter](#), [Juliet Stevenson](#), [Richard Griffiths](#), Jean-Claude Van Damme. Anderson is perhaps best known in recent times for his British television appearances as Colonel Aidan Dempsey in ITV's "Ultimate Force," Roger O'Neill in the award-winning "House of Cards," Terry Fox in BBC's "Holby City" and Colonel Dan Fortune in the hit series "Soldier, Soldier."

[Bruce Turk](#), in addition to playing the Fool in King Lear, will also appear as Grumio in The Taming of the Shrew and Dr. [Richard Warren](#) in The Madness of George III. Turk has previously been seen at [The Old Globe](#) in All's Well That Ends Well, The Merry Wives of Windsor, Hamlet, Measure for Measure, The Winter's Tale (San Diego Critics Circle [Craig Noel](#) Award), The Comedy of Errors, Macbeth, Antony and Cleopatra, As You Like It and Don Juan. His Broadway credits include The Green Bird and Juan Darien. Turk's Off Broadway credits include Pericles [Brooklyn Academy Of Music](#), King John, Titus Andronicus and The Green Bird. He has appeared regionally at A Noise Within, The Shakespeare Theatre, [McCarter Theatre](#) Center, [Seattle Repertory Theatre](#), The Denver Center for the Performing Arts, [Goodman Theatre](#), [GeVa Theatre](#), Shakespeare Santa Cruz, Shakespeare [Theatre Of New Jersey](#), [Cincinnati Playhouse](#), [La Jolla Playhouse](#) and [Prince Music Theatre](#).

[Adrian Noble](#) joined the [Royal Shakespeare Company](#) (RSC) in 1980 and served as its Artistic Director and Chief Executive from 1990-2003. His recent [Theater Productions](#) include Hedda Gabler for The Theatre Royal in Bath and the West End, Hamlet for the Stratford Festival of Canada, Cosi Fan Tutte for the Opera De Lyon, Kean for [Thelma Holt](#) Ltd at the Noel Coward Theatre, Summer and Smoke and A Woman Of No Importance for [Stanhope Productions](#), The Home Place by [Brian Friel](#) at the [Gate Theatre](#) and the West End, Brand by Ibsen starring [Ralph Fiennes](#), Pericles at The Roundhouse in Stratford and the West End London and Chitty Chitty Bang Bang at The London Palladium starring [Michael Ball](#).

[Ron Daniels](#) returns to [The Old Globe](#) after directing last season's hip hop musical, Kingdom, which was performed at both San Diego's Lincoln High School and the Globe. He is an Honorary Associate Director of the RSC, and a former Artistic Director of its experimental theatre, [The Other Place](#). He is also the former Associate Artistic Director of [American Repertory Theater](#). Born and raised in Rio de Janeiro, Daniels is a founding member of São Paulo's Teatro Oficina. His upcoming projects include Il Postino for the LA Opera, which opens in Los Angeles in September starring Plácido Domingo. The production will then be seen in Paris and Vienna.

The King Lear cast features [Michael Stewart](#) Allen (Duke of Cornwall), [Donald Carrier](#) (Duke of Albany), Andrew Dahl (Oswald), Ben Diskant (King of France), [Craig Dudley](#) (Doctor), Christian Durso (Duke of Burgundy), [Robert Foxworth](#) (King Lear), Catherine Gowl (Cordelia), [Charles Janasz](#) (Earl of Gloucester), [Joseph Marcell](#) (Earl of Kent), [Steven Marzolf](#) (Curan, Herald), [Jonno Roberts](#) (Edmund), [Aubrey Saverino](#) (Regan), [Adrian Sparks](#) (Old Man), [Emily Swallow](#) (Goneril), [Bruce Turk](#) (Fool), [Jay Whittaker](#) (Edgar), with [Shirine Babb](#), [Kevin Hoffmann](#), Andrew Hutcheson, Grayson DeJesus, [Jordan McArthur](#), [Brooke Novak](#), Ryman Sneed and Bree Welch (Ensemble).

The Taming of the Shrew cast features [Michael Stewart](#) Allen (Tranio), [Shirine Babb](#) (Widow), [Donald Carrier](#) (Hortensio), [Craig Dudley](#) (Tailor, Vincentio), [Charles Janasz](#) (Pedant, Curtis), [Joseph Marcell](#) (Gremio), [Jordan McArthur](#) (Biondello), [Jonno Roberts](#) (Petruchio), [Adrian Sparks](#) (Baptista Minola), [Emily Swallow](#) (Katherine), [Bruce Turk](#) (Grumio), Bree Welch (Bianca) and [Jay Whittaker](#) (Lucentio) with Andrew Dahl, Grayson DeJesus, Ben Diskant, Christian Durso, [Kevin Hoffmann](#), Andrew Hutcheson and [Steven Marzolf](#) (Ensemble).

The Madness of George III features [Michael Stewart](#) Allen (Fox), [Miles Anderson](#) (George III), [Shirine Babb](#) (Lady Pembroke), [Donald Carrier](#) (Sheridan), Andrew Dahl (Prince of Wales), Grayson DeJesus (Ramsden), Ben Diskant (Greville), [Craig Dudley](#) (Dundas), Christian Durso (Braun), [Robert Foxworth](#) (Dr. Willis), [Kevin Hoffmann](#) (Duke of York), Andrew Hutcheson (Fortnum), [Charles Janasz](#) (Thurlow), [Joseph Marcell](#) (Sir [George Baker](#)), [Steven Marzolf](#) (Captain Fitzroy), [Jordan McArthur](#) (Papandiek), [Brooke Novak](#) ([Margaret Nicholson](#)), Ryman Sneed (Maid), [Adrian Sparks](#) (Sir Lucas Pepys, Sir Boothby Skrymshir), [Emily Swallow](#) (Queen Charlotte), [Bruce Turk](#) (Dr. [Richard Warren](#)) and [Jay Whittaker](#) (William Pitt) with Catherine

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Gowl, [Aubrey Saverino](#) and Bree Welch (Ensemble).

Associated events taking place during the run of the 2010 Shakespeare Festival include:

#### POST-SHOW FORUMS:

King Lear Aug. 3 & 25 and Sept. 14

The Taming of the Shrew July 7 & 20 and Sept. 21

The Madness of George III July 13, Aug. 31 and Sept. 22

Discuss the play with members of the Shakespeare Festival repertory company at post-show discussions led by the Globe's creative staff after the performance. FREE.

#### SHAKESPEARE IN THE GARDEN:

King Lear July 19, Aug. 10 & 25 and Sept. 17

The Taming of the Shrew July 8, Aug. 4 & 14 and Sept. 9

The Madness of George III July 13, Aug. 18 and Sept. 4 & 24

Shakespeare in the Garden is a series of informal presentations of ideas and insights to enhance the theater-going experience. The seminars feature a panel selected from the Shakespeare Festival creative team and take place in the [Craig Noel](#) Garden. Presentation begins at 7:00 p.m. Admission is FREE and reservations are not required.

OUT AT THE GLOBE: Thursday, Aug. 12 at 6:30 p.m. \$20

An evening for gay and lesbian theater lovers and the whole GLBT community, Out at the Globe includes a hosted wine and martini bar, appetizers, door prizes and a pre-show mixer. \$20 per person. RSVP at (619) 23-GLOBE. (Tickets to The Taming of the Shrew are sold separately.)

THANK GLOBE IT'S FRIDAY: Friday, Aug. 6 & 13 at 6:30 p.m. \$20

Kick off the weekend with the Globe's Friday pre-show bash. TGIF includes a hosted wine and martini bar, appetizers and dessert, and live music from a local San Diego artist. \$20 per person. RSVP at (619) 23-GLOBE. (Tickets to The Taming of the Shrew and The Madness of George III are sold separately.)

In addition to the Shakespeare Festival, the Globe's 2010 Summer Season features the World Premiere of the Broadway-bound musical Robin and the 7 Hoods (July 14 - August 22), directed by [Casey Nicholaw](#) with lyrics by [Sammy Cahn](#) and music by [Jimmy Van Heusen](#), and the West Coast Premiere of The Last Romance (July 30 - September 5), a romantic comedy by [Joe DiPietro](#) starring television icon, [Marion Ross](#). Tickets are currently available by subscription only.

SEASON SUBSCRIPTIONS offer substantial savings with special subscriber benefits. Subscriptions can be purchased online at [www.TheOldGlobe.org](http://www.TheOldGlobe.org), by phone at (619) 23-GLOBE [234-5623] or by visiting the box office at 1363 Old Globe Way in Balboa Park. Subscriptions to the Globe's Summer Season range from \$75 to \$372. Five-play packages range from \$146 to \$372. Four-play packages (Festival plus musical) range from \$117 to \$316. Shakespeare Festival packages (3 plays) range from \$75 to \$228. Discounts are available for full-time students, patrons 29 years of age and younger, seniors and groups of 10 or more.

LOCATION: [The Old Globe](#) is located in San Diego's Balboa Park at 1363 Old Globe Way. There are several free parking lots available throughout the park. Valet parking is also available (\$10). For additional parking information visit [www.BalboaPark.org](http://www.BalboaPark.org).

The Tony Award-winning Old Globe is one of the country's leading professional regional theaters and has stood as San Diego's flagship arts institution for 75 years. Under the direction of Executive Producer [Louis G. Spisto](#), [The Old Globe](#) produces a year-round season of 15 productions of classic, contemporary and new works on its three Balboa Park stages: the 600-seat [Old Globe Theatre](#), the 250-seat Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre and the 612-seat outdoor Lowell Davies [Festival Theatre](#), home of its internationally renowned Shakespeare Festival. More than 250,000 people attend Globe productions annually and participate in the theater's education and community programs. Numerous world premieres such as The Full Monty, Dirty Rotten Scoundrels, A Catered Affair, and the annual holiday musical, [Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas!](#), have been developed at [The Old Globe](#) and have gone on to enjoy highly successful runs on Broadway and at regional theaters across the country.

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# Robert Foxworth, Patrick Page, Jonno Roberts, Emily Swallow Set for Old Globe's 2010 Shakespeare Festival

By: **Andy Propst** · Feb 10, 2010 · San Diego

Robert Foxworth, **Patrick Page**, Jonno Roberts, and Emily Swallow are set for the **Old Globe Theatre**'s 2010 Shakespeare Festival, to run June 12 - September 26.

Foxworth will play the title character and Page will play the Fool in Shakespeare's *King Lear*. The two actors will also appear opposite one another in Alan Bennett's *The Madness of George III*, with Page as the title character and Foxworth as Dr. Willis. Both productions will be directed by Adrian Noble.

Roberts and Swallow will star as Petruchio and Katherine, respectively, in the third offering in the repertory season, *The Taming of the Shrew*. Ron Daniels will direct the production. Additional casting for the entire season will be announced at a later date.

For further information, visit [www.TheOldGlobe.org](http://www.TheOldGlobe.org).


 Patrick Page  
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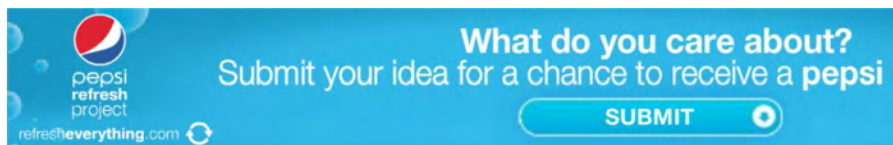
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## Robert Foxworth & Patrick Page to Headline 2010 Shakespeare Festival



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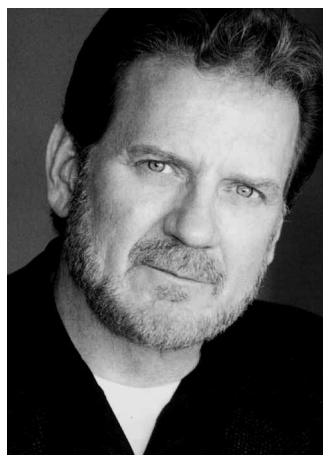
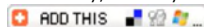


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Wednesday, February 10, 2010; Posted: 12:02 PM - by [BWW News Desk](#)



Executive Producer Lou Spisto today announced principal casting for the Globe's 2010 Shakespeare Festival performed in repertory. Robert Foxworth will play King Lear and Patrick Page the Fool in Shakespeare's tragedy, directed by Festival Artistic Director Adrian Noble. The crowns are swapped in Alan Bennett's *The Madness of George III*, also helmed by Noble, where Page will play King George III and Foxworth will play Dr. Willis. The Festival also includes Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew* directed by Ron Daniels with Jonno Roberts and Emily Swallow as the two sparring lovers.

"I'm thrilled to begin our 75th Anniversary celebration with this very exciting Shakespeare Festival headed by Royal Shakespeare Company veteran, Adrian Noble," said Spisto. I'm especially pleased to welcome back to the Globe stage two of the country's leading actors, Robert Foxworth and Patrick Page."

The 2010 Shakespeare Festival runs June 12 - Sept. 26 and begins the Globe's year-long celebration of its 75th Anniversary. Shakespeare was first produced at the Globe in 1935 as part of the California Pacific International Exposition in Balboa Park and has been central to the Globe's mission since that time. *King Lear* runs June 12 - Sept. 23. Previews run June 12, 13, 24 and 25. Opening night is June 26. *The Taming of the Shrew* runs June 16 - Sept. 26. Previews run June 16, 17, 27 and 29. Opening night is June 30. *The Madness of George III* runs June 19 - Sept. 24. Previews run June 19 and 20 and July 1 and 2. Opening night is July 3.

Robert Foxworth (*King Lear*, *King Lear*; *Dr. Willis*, *The Madness of George III*) is an Associate Artist of The Old Globe and has appeared in *Cornelia*, *Julius Caesar*, *Private Lives* and *Below the Belt*. Foxworth has been seen on Broadway in the Tony Award-winning *August: Osage County*, *Twelve Angry Men*, *Judgment at Nuremberg*, *Honour*, *Ivanov*, *Candida*, *Love Letters*, *The Crucible* (Theatre World Award) and *King Henry V*, and played Robert in the national tour of *Proof*. His stage work also includes *Claudius in Daniel Sullivan's Hamlet* (South Coast Repertory), *Cyrano* (Great Lakes Theatre Festival), *Iago* and *Macbeth* (Guthrie Theater), *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* (Hartford Stage), *Galileo* (CENTERSTAGE) and *Uncle Vanya* (Geffen Playhouse). His numerous television and film credits include *"Falcon Crest"*, *"Six Feet Under"*, *"Gilmore Girls"*, *Syriana* and voice of Ratchet in *Transformers I and II*.

Patrick Page (*Fool*, *King Lear*; *George III*, *The Madness of George III*) recently appeared in *I Do! I Do!* in the Globe's new Sheryl and Harvey White Theater. He has also appeared at the Globe as *Cyrano* in *Cyrano de Bergerac* (San Diego Critics Circle Craig Noel Award) and *Malvolio* in *Twelfth Night* (2009 Shakespeare Festival), as well as Pogo Poole in *The Pleasure of His Company* and Jeffrey Cordova in *Dancing in the Dark* (Craig Noel Award). On Broadway, Page has been seen as *Henry VIII* in *A Man for All Seasons* (Outer Critics Circle nomination), *The Grinch* in *Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas!*, *Scar* in *The Lion King*, *Brutus* in *Julius Caesar*, *Lumiere* in *Beauty and the Beast*, *Marley* in *A Christmas Carol* and multiple roles in *The Kentucky Cycle*.

Jonno Roberts (*Edmund*, *King Lear*; *Petruchio*, *The Taming of the Shrew*) has appeared on Broadway in *Take Me Out* and Off Broadway in *Bug*, *Monster* and *Uncle Vanya*. His regional credits include *King Lear* (Shakespeare Theatre Company); *Mother Courage*, *Richard II* and *Antigone* (American Repertory Theater); and *A Streetcar Named Desire* (Intiman Theatre). Roberts' international credits include *Wozzeck* (Toronto); *Villeggiatura Trilogy* and *The Spiritualists* (Russia and Europe); and *MedeaMaterial*,

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Hamletmachine and King Lear (New Zealand).

Emily Swallow (Goneril, King Lear; Katherina, The Taming of the Shrew; Queen Charlotte, The Madness of George III) appeared on Broadway as Charlie and Marie LaSalle in High Fidelity and Off Broadway in Romantic Poetry (Manhattan Theatre Club), The Black Eyed (New York Theatre Workshop), Measure for Pleasure (The Public Theatre/NYSF) and Like Love (NY Musical Theatre Festival). Her regional credits include Pop! (Yale Repertory Theatre), A Midsummer Night's Dream (Guthrie Theater) and Enchanted April (San Jose Repertory Theatre).

Adrian Noble joined the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) in 1980 and served as its Artistic Director and Chief Executive from 1990-2003. His recent theater productions include Hamlet for the Stratford Festival of Canada, Così Fan Tutte for the Opera De Lyon, Kean for Thelma Holt Ltd at the Noel Coward Theatre, Summer and Smoke and A Woman Of No Importance for Stanhope Productions, The Home Place by Brian Friel at the Gate Theatre and the West End, Brand by Ibsen starring Ralph Fiennes, Pericles at The Roundhouse in Stratford and the West End London and Chitty Chitty Bang Bang at The London Palladium starring Michael Ball.

Ron Daniels returns to The Old Globe after directing last season's hip hop musical, Kingdom, which was performed at both San Diego's Lincoln High School and the Globe. He is an Honorary Associate Director of the RSC, and a former Artistic Director of its experimental theatre, The Other Place. He is also the former Associate Artistic Director of American Repertory Theater. Born and raised in Rio de Janeiro, Daniels is a founding member of São Paulo's Teatro Oficina. His upcoming projects include Il Postino for the L.A. Opera, which opens in Los Angeles in September starring Plácido Domingo. The production will then be seen in Paris and Vienna.

In addition to the Shakespeare Festival, the Globe's 2010 Summer Season features the World Premiere of the Broadway-bound musical, Robin and the 7 Hoods, directed by Casey Nicholaw with lyrics by Sammy Cahn and music by Jimmy Van Heusen, and the West Coast Premiere of The Last Romance, a romantic comedy by Joe DiPietro starring television icon, Marion Ross. Tickets to the 2010 Summer Season are currently available by subscription only.

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LOCATION: The Old Globe is located in San Diego's Balboa Park at 1363 Old Globe Way. There are several free parking lots available throughout the park. Valet parking is also available (\$10). For additional parking information visit [www.BalboaPark.org](http://www.BalboaPark.org).

CALENDAR: Boeing-Boeing (3/13-4/18), Alive and Well (3/20-4/25), What You Will (5/11-6/6), The Whipping Man (5/8-6/13), King Lear (6/12-9/23), The Madness of George III (6/19-9/24), The Taming of the Shrew (6/16- 9/26), Robin and the 7 Hoods (7/14-8/22), Last Romance (7/30-9/5).

The Tony Award-winning Old Globe is one of the country's leading professional regional theaters and has stood as San Diego's flagship arts institution for 74 years. Under the direction of Executive Producer Louis G. Spisto, The Old Globe produces a year-round season of 15 productions of classic, contemporary and new works on its three Balboa Park stages: the 600-seat Old Globe Theatre, the 250-seat Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre and the 612-seat outdoor Lowell Davies Festival Theatre, home of its internationally renowned Shakespeare Festival. More than 250,000 people attend Globe productions annually and participate in the theater's education and community programs. Numerous world premieres such as The Full Monty, Dirty Rotten Scoundrels, A Catered Affair, and the annual holiday musical, Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas!, have been developed at The Old Globe and have gone on to enjoy highly successful runs on Broadway and at regional theaters across the country.

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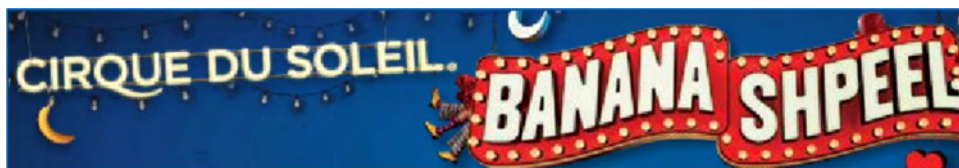
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## Page and Foxworth Will Play *King Lear* and *King George* in Summer Rep at Old Globe

By [Kenneth Jones](#)  
10 Feb 2010



Patrick Page will play the Fool to the Lear of Robert Foxworth in the Old Globe Theatre's 2010 Summer Shakespeare Festival staging of *King Lear*. Executive producer Lou Spisto announced principal casting for the Globe's in-repertory summer plays on Feb. 9.

Festival artistic director Adrian Noble will direct the tragedy about the King who wrongs a devoted daughter.



Patrick Page and Robert Foxworth as Kate.

"The crowns are swapped" for the production of Alan Bennett's *The Madness of George III*, also directed by Noble: Page will play King George III, and Foxworth will play attendant Dr. Willis.

The Shakespeare Festival also includes Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*, directed by Ron Daniels, with Jonno Roberts as Petruchio and Emily Swallow

The 2010 Shakespeare Festival runs June 12-Sept. 26 and begins the Globe's year-long celebration of its 75th anniversary. Shakespeare was first produced at the Globe in 1935 as part of the California Pacific International Exposition in Balboa Park "and has been central to the Globe's mission since that time."

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Page recently appeared in *I Do! I Do!* in the Globe's new Sheryl and Harvey White Theater. He has also appeared at the Globe as Cyrano in *Cyrano de Bergerac* (San Diego Critics Circle Craig Noel

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Award) and Malvolio in *Twelfth Night* (2009 Shakespeare Festival), as well as Pogo Poole in *The Pleasure of His Company* and Jeffrey Cordova in *Dancing in the Dark* (Craig Noel Award). On Broadway, Page has been seen as Henry VIII in *A Man for All Seasons* (Outer Critics Circle nomination), The Grinch in *Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas!*, Scar in *The Lion King*, Brutus in *Julius Caesar*, Lumiere in *Beauty and the Beast* and more.

\*

In addition to the Shakespeare plays, the Globe's 2010 Summer Season features the world premiere of the Broadway-bound musical *Robin and the 7 Hoods*, directed by Casey Nicholaw with lyrics by Sammy Cahn and music by Jimmy Van Heusen, and the West Coast premiere of *The Last Romance*, a romantic comedy by Joe DiPietro starring Marion Ross.

Tickets to the 2010 Summer Season are currently available by subscription only. Visit [www.TheOldGlobe.org](http://www.TheOldGlobe.org).

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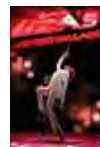
  

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# Miles Anderson, Robert Foxworth, Jonno Roberts, Emily Swallow et al. Set for Old Globe's 2010 Shakespeare Festival

By: [Dan Bacalzo](#) · Apr 21, 2010 · San Diego

Revised casting has been announced for the Old Globe Theatre's 2010 Shakespeare Festival, to run June 12 - September 26. The [previously reported](#) Patrick Page has withdrawn from the Festival due to a scheduling conflict.

*King Lear* will star Robert Foxworth in the title role, and feature Michael Stewart Allen (Duke of Cornwall), Donald Carrier (Duke of Albany), Andrew Dahl (Oswald), Ben Diskant (King of France), Craig Dudley (Doctor), Christian Durso (Duke of Burgundy), Catherine Gowl (Cordelia), Charles Janasz (Earl of Gloucester), Joseph Marcell (Earl of Kent), Steven Marzolf (Curan, Herald), Jonno Roberts (Edmund), Aubrey Saverino (Regan), Adrian Sparks (Old Man), Emily Swallow (Goneril), Bruce Turk (Fool), Jay Whittaker (Edgar), with Shirine Babb, Kevin Hoffmann, Andrew Hutcheson, Grayson DeJesus, Jordan McArthur, Brooke Novak, Ryman Sneed, and Bree Welch (Ensemble).

*The Taming of the Shrew* is led by Jonno Roberts (Petruchio) and Emily Swallow (Katherine), and will feature Michael Stewart Allen (Tranio), Shirine Babb (Widow), Donald Carrier (Hortensio), Craig Dudley (Tailor, Vincentio), Charles Janasz (Pedant, Curtis), Joseph Marcell (Gremio), Jordan McArthur (Biondello), Adrian Sparks (Baptista Minola), Bruce Turk (Grumio), Bree Welch (Bianca) and Jay Whittaker (Lucentio) with Andrew Dahl, Grayson DeJesus, Ben Diskant, Christian Durso, Kevin Hoffmann, Andrew Hutcheson and Steven Marzolf (Ensemble).

*The Madness of George III* will star Miles Anderson in the title role, and feature Michael Stewart Allen (Fox), Shirine Babb (Lady Pembroke), Donald Carrier (Sheridan), Andrew Dahl (Prince of Wales), Grayson DeJesus (Ramsden), Ben Diskant (Greville), Craig Dudley (Dundas), Christian Durso (Braun), Robert Foxworth (Dr. Willis), Kevin Hoffmann (Duke of York), Andrew Hutcheson (Fortnum), Charles Janasz (Thurlow), Joseph Marcell (Sir George Baker), Steven Marzolf (Captain Fitzroy), Jordan McArthur (Papandiek), Brooke Novak (Margaret Nicholson), Ryman Sneed (Maid), Adrian Sparks (Sir Lucas Pepys, Sir Boothby Skrymschir), Emily Swallow (Queen Charlotte), Bruce Turk (Dr. Richard Warren), and Jay Whittaker (William Pitt) with Catherine Gowl, Aubrey Saverino and Bree Welch (Ensemble).

Adrian Noble will direct both *Lear* and *George III*, while Ron Daniels will direct *Shrew*. The creative team for the repertory productions will include Ralph Funicello (scenic design), Clancy Steer (costume design), Alan Burrett (lighting design), and Christopher R. Walker (sound design and music).

For further information, visit [www.TheOldGlobe.org](http://www.TheOldGlobe.org).



Jonno Roberts  
(Photo courtesy of The Old Globe)

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## Old Globe Presents KING LEAR

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Photo by [Craig Schwartz](#).

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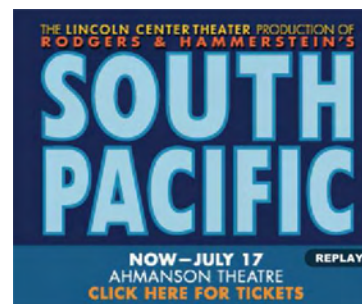


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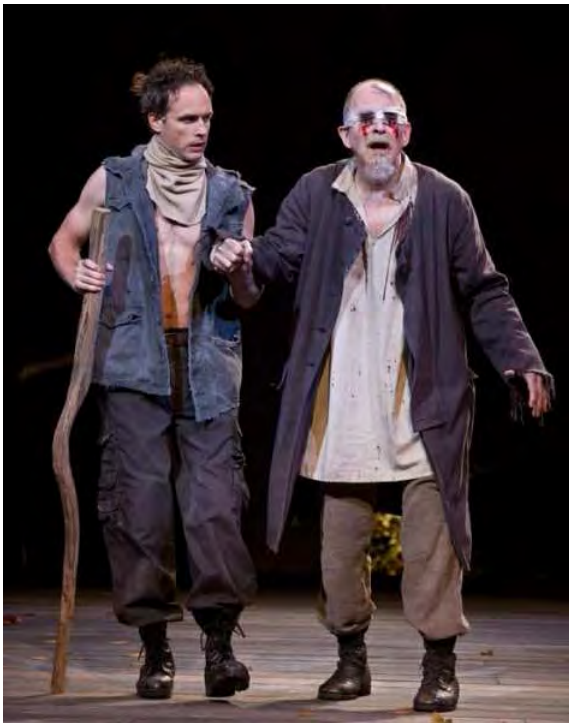
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## Photo Flash: The Old Globe Presents THE TAMING OF THE SHREW



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Friday, June 18, 2010; Posted: 01:06 PM - by [BWW News Desk](#)
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Baptista has two daughters that need to be married off - Bianca; docile, beautiful and much sought after by the noble men of the town, and Katherine; ill-tempered and shrewish, with an acid tongue that no man can tame. As the oldest, Katherine must marry first - not that she much cares. Bianca's many suitors can't afford to wait, so in a wild scheme to find a husband for Katherine, they convince the wily Petruchio to take on the challenge of domesticating the willful "shrew."

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Photo by [Craig Schwartz](#).

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The 2010 Shakespeare Festival

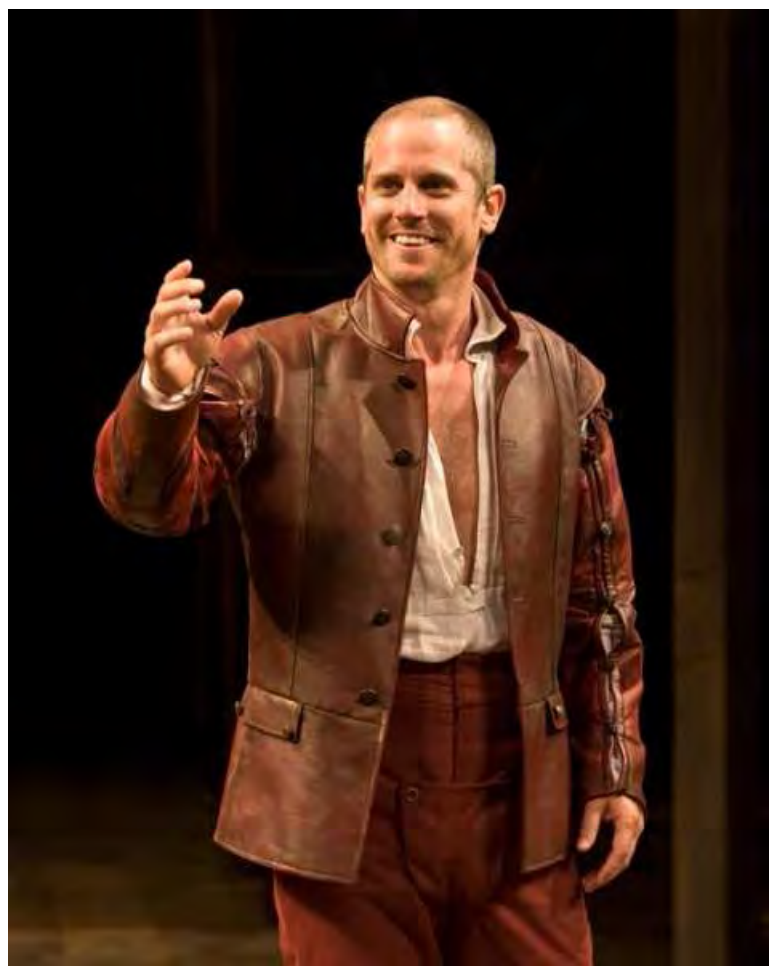


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## PHOTO CALL: *The Taming of the Shrew* at San Diego's Old Globe

By Irina Khodorkovsky  
30 Jun 2010

San Diego's Old Globe Theatre is currently presenting a staging of Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew* as part of its summer repertory season, running through Sept. 26.

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This production of *The Taming of the Shrew*, directed by Ron Daniels, features Jonno Roberts as Petruchio and Emily Swallow as Kate.

The 2010 Shakespeare Festival runs June 12-Sept. 26 and begins the Globe's year-long celebration of its 75th anniversary. Shakespeare was first produced at the Globe in 1935 as part of the California Pacific International Exposition in Balboa Park "and has been central to the Globe's mission since that time."

This *Shrew* runs in repertory with productions of *King Lear* and *The Madness of George III*.

Here is a first look at the production:

### View the Entire Photo Gallery



Jonno Roberts as Petruchio and Emily Swallow as Katherine  
Photo by Craig Schwartz

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## Photo Flash: Old Globe Presents THE MADNESS OF GEORGE III

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Wednesday, June 23, 2010; Posted: 02:06 PM - by [BWW News Desk](#)

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Executive Producer [Lou Spisto](#) today announced the complete cast and creative team for the Globe's 2010 Shakespeare Festival performed in repertory in the outdoor Lowell Davies [Festival Theatre](#). [Adrian Noble](#) is the Artistic Director of the 2010 Festival and will direct Shakespeare's King Lear and [Alan Bennett](#)'s The Madness of George III. [Ron Daniels](#) will direct The Taming of the Shrew. [Miles Anderson](#) will play the title role in The Madness of George III and [Bruce Turk](#) will play the Fool in King Lear, replacing the previously announced [Patrick Page](#), who has withdrawn from the Festival due to a scheduling conflict.

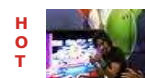
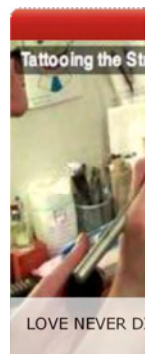
The Shakespeare Festival runs June 12 - Sept. 26 and begins the Globe's year-long celebration of its 75th Anniversary.

Tickets are currently available by subscription only and prices range from \$75 to \$228. Single tickets go on sale Sunday, April 25. Subscription packages may be purchased online at [www.TheOldGlobe.org](http://www.TheOldGlobe.org), by phone at (619) 23-GLOBE or by visiting the box office. Single tickets go on sale April 25 at 10:00 a.m.

King Lear runs June 12 - Sept. 23. Previews run June 24 and 25. Opening night is June 26. The Taming of the Shrew runs June 16 - Sept. 26. Previews run June 16, 17, 27 and 29. Opening night is June 30. The Madness of King George III runs June 19 - Sept. 24. Previews run June 19 and 20 and July 1 and 2. Opening night is July 3.

Photo 1, 4, 6: Photo courtesy of [The Old Globe](#).

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### Old Globe in San Diego sets casting for 2010 Shakespeare Festival

February 10, 2010 | 12:41 pm



The Old Globe's annual Shakespeare Festival will kick off this year in June and will include repertory performances of "King Lear," "The Taming of the Shrew" and Alan Bennett's "The Madness of George III."

The San Diego company said [Robert Foxworth](#) and Patrick Page will play lead roles in "King Lear" and "The Madness of George III." Foxworth will take the title role of "Lear," with Page playing the role of the Fool. For the Bennett play, Page will play King George III and Foxworth will play Dr. Willis, the physician who attempts to cure the monarch's insanity.

In June, Foxworth was named an associate artist for the Globe.

Adrian Noble, a longtime Royal Shakespeare Company veteran who [recently joined the festival](#) as artistic director, will direct "King Lear" (June 26 to Sep. 23) and "The Madness of George III" (July 3 to Sept. 24).

"The Taming of the Shrew" (June 30 to Sept. 26) will feature Jonno Roberts and Emily Swallow in the roles of Petruchio and Katherina, respectively. The production will be directed by Ron Daniels, who is also set to direct the world premiere of "Il Postino" at Los Angeles Opera in September.

This summer's festival will mark the start of the Old Globe's 75th Anniversary celebration. The company said Shakespeare was first produced at the Globe in 1935 as part of the California Pacific International Exposition in Balboa Park.

-- David Ng

Photo: The Old Globe campus. Credit: The Old Globe

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## Page, Foxworth lead Shakespeare fest

### BACKSTAGE



### PAM KRAGEN

Actors Patrick Page and Robert Foxworth will co-headline the Old Globe's 2010 Summer Shakespeare Festival, the theater announced last week.

Page, who won a San Diego Theatre Critics Circle Award for his starring role in the festival's "Cyrano de Bergerac" last summer, will return this summer to play the title role in Alan Bennett's "The Madness of George III," and he'll play the Fool to Foxworth's King Lear in the Shakespeare tragedy. Foxworth, by turn, will also play the role of Dr. Willis to Page's George III.

Foxworth, who recently moved to Encinitas with his wife, Stacey Thomas, had a stellar turn last year as Alabama Gov. George Wallace in the Old Globe's "Cornelia" and has appeared there twice in Shakespeare productions as Polonius in 2007's "Hamlet" and Brutus in 2003's "Julius Caesar."

This year's Shakespeare festival will be overseen by new artistic director Adrian Noble, a veteran of the Royal Shakespeare Company. Noble succeeds founding director Darko Tresnjak, who resigned last fall after six years at the helm.

Like Tresnjak, Noble will direct two of the festival productions — "The Madness of George III" and "King Lear." The third production, Shakespeare's "Taming of the Shrew," will be directed by Ron Daniels (who helmed the Globe's 2009 hip-hop musical "Kingdom") and will co-star Jonno Roberts and Emily Swallow.

In separate interviews this past week, Foxworth and Page talked about the festival and how excited they are to work together.

Foxworth said he's been carrying around a copy of "King Lear" for five years, hoping some theater would give him a chance to play the meaty part.

"I'd spoken to someone at the Globe several years ago about doing it, but I think I was not considered 'weighty' enough. 'Cornelia' turned out to be my audition. They came to me after that and asked if I'd be interested and I said 'Oh — I don't know,' Foxworth joked, adding that he's excited about performing with Page. "I had so admired his performances last year and thought, 'Oh man, this would be really cool if we could snag him.' I can't wait to see him as George III."

Lear is considered one of the most demanding roles in all theater, and performing all summer in repertory is also a challenge, but Foxworth said he's more than up to the task.

"I'm in training physically and I'm working on the plays," he said. "As an actor, I've spent

a lot of my life unemployed, so to be overworked for a few months is not a big deal for me."

He's also happy to be working much of this year in his newly adopted hometown.

"I lived in L.A. for 30 years and got tired of it 20 years ago," said Foxworth (best known for TV roles in "Falcon Crest" and "Six Feet Under"). "I was doing a 19-city tour of 'Proof' a few years back and my wife and I decided to look at every city we visited as a potential place to settle down. She's from San Diego, and no city on the tour measured up

home he shares with wife, Paige Davis, and the financial sacrifices.

"First, I want to work with Adrian Noble," Page said. "He is a visionary director and one of the world's leading experts on Shakespeare. I could not pass up the opportunity to learn from him."

Second, Page said he's a big Foxworth fan.

"We have not worked together before, and the idea of 'swapping crowns' with him in 'King Lear' and 'The Madness of George III' was too delicious to resist," Page said.

Third, Page said he was intrigued by both of the roles he'll be playing.

"Both King George and Fool are roles that terrify me, which is a good sign," he said. "In the case of 'George III,' it will be the first American production of the play, and its proximity to 'Lear' will deepen and complicate its meaning."

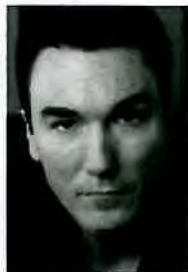
And finally, Page said he committed because Globe executive producer Lou Spisito and casting director Samantha Barrie have made him and Davis feel very welcome in San Diego.

"There are definitely financial and family sacrifices involved, but Paige and I thought about it for several months before making the decision and we are really excited about it."

The Globe, which celebrates its 75th anniversary this year, will present the



Robert Foxworth



Patrick Page

anywhere close. We absolutely love it here. It's exceeded our expectations"

Page, who's now in final rehearsals for an off-Broadway production of "The Duchess of Malfi," said there were many reasons he decided to commit to the festival again this year, in spite of its distance from the New York



Shakespeare festival from June 12 to Sept. 26.

"Lear" opens the festival June 12, "Shrew" opens June 16 and "George" opens June 19. All three plays will feature the same repertory company of actors and they will run in rotation. For tickets, visit [theoldglobe.org](http://theoldglobe.org).



In other Globe news, the production of "Lost in Yonkers" has been extended by a week due to popular demand.

The Neil Simon comedy will run through March 7.



Two inland North County musicians have been named the winners of the La Jolla Symphony & Chorus' recent 2010 Young Artists Competition.

Charissa Barger, a 23-year-old Escondido harpist, won first place in the instrumental division. Barger graduated from the Colburn Conservatory of Music in L.A. and is the principal harpist for the American Youth Symphony and Young Musicians' Foundation Debut Orchestra, both in L.A.

Cindy Byunghye Choi, a 26-year-old soprano from Rancho Bernardo, won first place in the vocal division. She graduated from Northwestern University and sings with the San Diego Opera Chorus.

Barger and Byunghye won \$1,500 prizes, in the contest that was held Jan. 23 at UC San Diego. Two local teens also tied in the category of "Most Promising" artist: Torrey Pines High School student Dominique Kim, a 14-year-old flutist, and Great Oaks High School student Taylin Im of Temecula, a 16-year-old pianist.



"Kooza," Cirque du Soleil's newest traveling tent show, won't open until Feb. 25, but circus-lovers who enjoy old-fashioned traditions may want to watch the tent rise today at the Del Mar Fairgrounds. "Kooza" blends the traditions of clowning and acrobatics in an all-new show that will run for a month at the fairgrounds.

---

Pam Kragen is the entertainment editor of the North County Times.

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## KRAGEN: Page, Foxworth signed for '10 Shakespeare fest

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By PAM KRAGEN - [pkragen@nctimes.com](mailto:pkragen@nctimes.com) | Posted: February 17, 2010 10:36 am | No Comments Posted | [Print](#)

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Patrick Page will return to play King George III in "The Madness of George III" at the Old Globe's 2010 Summer Shakespeare Festival.



Actors **Patrick Page** and **Robert Foxworth** will co-headline the **Old Globe's 2010 Summer Shakespeare Festival**, the theater announced last week.

Page, who won a San Diego Theatre Critics Circle Award for his starring role in the festival's "Cyrano de Bergerac" last summer, will return this summer to play the title role in Alan Bennett's "The Madness of George III," and he'll play the Fool to Foxworth's King Lear in the Shakespeare tragedy. Foxworth, by turn, will also play the role of Dr. Willis to Page's George III.

Foxworth, who recently moved to Encinitas with his wife, Stacey Thomas, had a stellar turn last year as Alabama Gov. George Wallace in the Old Globe's "Cornelia" and has appeared there twice in Shakespeare productions as Polonius in 2007's "Hamlet" and Brutus in 2003's "Julius Caesar."

This year's Shakespeare festival will be overseen by new artistic director Adrian Noble, a veteran of the Royal Shakespeare Company. Noble

succeeds founding director Darko Tresnjak, who resigned last fall after six years at the helm.

Like Tresnjak, Noble will direct two of the festival productions — “The Madness of George III” and “King Lear.” The third production, Shakespeare’s “Taming of the Shrew,” will be directed by Ron Daniels (who helmed the Globe’s 2009 hip-hop musical “Kingdom”) and will co-star Jonno Roberts and Emily Swallow.

In separate interviews this past week, Foxworth and Page talked about the festival and how excited they are to work together.

Foxworth said he’s been carrying around a copy of “King Lear” for five years, hoping some theater would give him a chance to play the meaty part.

“I’d spoken to someone at the Globe several years ago about doing it, but I think I was not considered ‘weighty’ enough. ‘Cornelia’ turned out to be my audition. They came to me after that and asked if I’d be interested and I said ‘Oh ... I don’t know,’” Foxworth joked, adding that he’s excited about performing with Page. “I had so admired his performances last year and thought, ‘Oh man, this would be really cool if we could snag him.’ I can’t wait to see him as George III.”

Lear is considered one of the most demanding roles in all theater, and performing all summer in repertory is also a challenge, but Foxworth said he’s more than up to the task.

“I’m in training physically and I’m working on the plays,” he said. “As an actor, I’ve spent a lot of my life unemployed, so to be overworked for a few months is not a big deal for me.”

He’s also happy to be working much of this year in his newly adopted hometown.

“I lived in L.A. for 30 years and got tired of it 20 years ago,” said Foxworth (best known for TV roles in “Falcon Crest” and “Six Feet Under”). “I was doing a 19-city tour of ‘Proof’ a few years back and my wife and I decided to look at every city we visited as a potential place to settle down. She’s from San Diego, and no city on the tour measured up anywhere close. We absolutely love it here. It’s exceeded our expectations.”

Page, who’s now in final rehearsals for an off Broadway production of “The Duchess of Malfi,” said there were many reasons he decided to commit to the festival again this year, in spite of its distance from the New York home he shares with wife, Paige Davis, and the financial sacrifices.

“First, I want to work with Adrian Noble,” Page said. “He is a visionary director and one of the world’s leading experts on Shakespeare. I could not pass up the opportunity to learn from him.”

Second, Page said he’s a big Foxworth fan.

“We have not worked together before, and the idea of ‘swapping crowns’ with him in ‘King Lear’ and ‘The Madness of George III’ was too delicious to resist,” Page said.

Third, Page said he was intrigued by both of the roles he’ll be playing.

“Both King George and Fool are roles that terrify me, which is a good sign,” he said. “In the case of ‘George III,’ it will be the first American production of the play, and its proximity to ‘Lear’ will deepen and complicate its meaning.”

And finally, Page said he committed because Globe executive producer Lou Spisto and casting director Samantha Barrie have made him and Davis feel very welcome in San Diego.

“There are definitely financial and family sacrifices involved but Paige and I thought about it for several months before making the decision and we are really excited about it.”

The festival, which kicks off the Globe’s 75th anniversary season, runs from June 12 to Sept. 26.

“Lear” opens the festival June 12, “Shrew” opens June 16 and “George” opens June 19. All three plays will feature the same repertory company of actors and they will run in rotation. For tickets, visit [theoldglobe.org](http://theoldglobe.org).

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In other Globe news, the production of **"Lost in Yonkers"** has been extended by a week due to popular demand. The Neil Simon comedy will run through March 7.

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Two inland North County musicians have been named the winners of the La Jolla Symphony & Chorus' recent 2010 Young Artists Competition.

**Charissa Barger**, a 23-year-old Escondido harpist, won first place in the instrumental division. Barger graduated from the Colburn Conservatory of Music in L.A. and is the principal harpist for the American Youth Symphony and Young Musicians' Foundation Debut Orchestra, both in L.A.

**Cindy Byunghye Choi**, a 26-year-old soprano from Rancho Bernardo, won first place in the vocal division. She graduated from Northwestern University and sings with the San Diego Opera Chorus.

Barger and Byunghye won \$1,500 prizes, in the contest that was held Jan. 23 at UC San Diego. Two local teens also tied in the category of "Most Promising" artist: Torrey Pines High School student **Dominique Kim**, a 14-year-old flutist, and Great Oaks High School student **Taylin Im** of Temecula, a 16-year-old pianist.

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# SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE

April 25, 2010

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## ARTS NEWS

### Page turns to another role

"The Madness of George III" has turned into the sadness of Patrick Page fans, as the Old Globe Theatre announced that the Broadway veteran and Globe regular will not take part in this year's Summer Shakespeare Festival.

Page was to play the title role in "George III," as well as the part of the Fool in "King Lear." But a conflict with another pending project prompted him to drop out of the annual festival, which begins in June. The British actor Miles Anderson, who has worked with festival artistic director Adrian Noble before, takes over Page's royal role. Bruce Turk, a versatile festival favorite, will portray the Fool.

Reached by phone in New York, Page said that due to contractual reasons he was not yet able to reveal the project that drew him away from the Globe, but said the turn of events took him by surprise.

"I was packed and on my way to San Diego when I suddenly found out I wasn't coming to San Diego," Page said. "It was a big, big shock to me, and I'm sad that I'm not going to be there."

"It was an immediate scheduling conflict that had not been foreseeable up to that time. We thought I was clear for the next six months." (The festival runs through late September.)

Page added that he "was thrilled to hear they got Miles (Anderson), and thrilled also that Bruce Turk will be playing the Fool — it's an absolutely perfect fit for that role and Adrian's production, so I was really happy."

Page's Globe credits include "Dancing in the Dark," "The Pleasure of His Company," "Twelfth Night" and "Cyrano de Bergerac," for which he won an award from the San Diego Theatre Critics Circle this year as best lead male performer in a play.

His most recent Globe role came last December alongside his wife, Paige Davis, in the musical "I Do! I Do!"

In addition to "The Madness of George III" and "King Lear" (with Robert Foxworth in the title role) the 2010 Globe Summer Shakespeare Festival also takes in Shakespeare's "Taming of the Shrew."

JAMES HEBERT



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## Throne for a loss: Patrick Page drops out of Globe fest

JAMES HEBERT

THURSDAY, APRIL 22, 2010

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Besides "The Madness of King George III" and "King Lear," the 2010 Globe Summer Shakespeare Festival also takes in Shakespeare's "King Lear." Robert Foxworth plays the title role in that production.



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8 pm Saturday	<a href="#">Norah Jor</a>	

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26 Apr, 2010

### **Shakespeare Festival in San Diego June 16-Sept.26, 2010**

Posted by: Beach Reporter In: [california](#) | [events](#)



[San Diego, CA](#)—Shakespeare lives at The Old Globe Theatre in San Diego! They loved William Shakespeare so much, San Diego built a theater and named it after him in Balboa Park (circa 1935.) In addition to the popular Shakespeare Summer Intensive which invites high school students to try-out for the Shakespeare bootcamp of acting, The Old Globe annually features a line-up of Shakespeare play productions.

The 2010 Shakespeare Festival from June 12 through September 26, 2010, begins The Old Globe's year-long celebration

of 75 years in Balboa Park. The festival is held at the 612-seat outdoor Lowell Davies Festival Theatre in Balboa Park.

**Plays will include:**

- King Lear - June 12, 2010 - September 23, 2010, Lowell Davies Festival Theatre
- The Taming of the Shrew - June 16, 2010 - September 26, 2010, Lowell Davies Festival Theatre
- The Madness of George III, Directed by Adrian Noble & written by renowned playwright Alan Bennett, Jun 12 — Sep 26 at Lowell Davies Festival Theatre

The 2010 Shakespeare Festival runs June 12 – Sept. 26 and begins the Globe's year-long celebration of its 75th Anniversary. Shakespeare was first produced at the Globe in 1935 as part of the California Pacific International Exposition in Balboa Park and has been central to the Globe's mission since that time. King Lear runs June 12 – Sept. 23. Previews run June 12, 13, 24 and 25. Opening night is June 26. The Taming of the Shrew runs June 16 – Sept. 26. Previews run June 16, 17, 27 and 29. Opening night is June 30. The Madness of King George III runs June 19 – Sept. 24. Previews run June 19 and 20 and July 1 and 2. Opening night is July 3. In addition to subscription, you can purchase single tickets for the productions per availability.

Single tickets went on sale Sunday, April 25, 2010. Subscription packages may be purchased online at [TheOldGlobe.org](http://TheOldGlobe.org), by phone at (619) 23-GLOBE or by visiting the box office. The Old Globe is located in Balboa Park at 1363 Old Globe Way, San Diego, CA. There are numerous free parking lots available throughout the park. Valet parking is available for approx. \$10.

The Old Globe produces 15 mainstage productions each year ranging from Shakespeare to new works, and an annual family musical, Dr. Seuss' How The Grinch Stole Christmas!. The Globe is one of San Diego's largest arts institutions, its leading arts employer, and among the nation's top-ranked regional theatres. More than 250,000 people attend Globe productions and participate in the theater's education programs and outreach services each year. The current operating budget is approx. \$20 million.

LOCATION: The Old Globe is located in San Diego's Balboa Park at 1363 Old Globe Way. There are numerous free parking lots available throughout the park. Valet parking is also available (\$10). For additional parking information visit [www.BalboaPark.org](http://www.BalboaPark.org).

Tags: [old globe theatre](#), [san diego](#), [shakespeare festival](#)

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# NORTH COUNTY TIMES

April 29, 2010

PREVIEW SECTION

## BACKSTAGE



### PAM KRAGEN

And in another example of art and music coming together in Encinitas, E Street Cafe will host the **Luthiers' Co-Op First Annual Guitar/Art Exhibition** from 3 to 7 p.m. Saturday.

Vista woodworker Sue Spray will present this exhibit of handmade guitars and harps, as well as art by Americana artist and cafe owner Dominic Alcorn.

"These guitars are built from some of the finest global hardwoods available, and produce rich tones hard to find in commercially," Spray said. "Our stringed instruments represent an art form using time-honored techniques and processes that are slowly disappearing."

Luthiers will be on hand to discuss their instruments and live music will be provided by local guitarist Peter Puppington and others.

A portion of proceeds from guitar sales will benefit the Helen Woodward Animal Center. E St. Cafe is at 128 W. E St., Encinitas. Call 760-599-9663.



**Patrick Page**, whose performances at the Old Globe have earned him Craig Noel Awards from the San Diego Theatre Critics Circle for the past two years in a row, has withdrawn

from the Globe's Summer Shakespeare Festival.

Page was to have played the title role in "The Madness of George III" and the Fool in "King Lear" at the festival, which features three plays in repertory from mid-June through September on the Globe's outdoor stage.

Reached via e-mail last week, Page said he couldn't comment on why he was forced to pull out of the festival, but said that an official press announcement will be made in a few weeks (which I presume means he got an offer for another show that was too good to turn down).

Actor Miles Anderson will replace Page in the role of King George and Bruce Turk will play Lear's Fool.

Anderson is a 10-year veteran of the Royal Shakespeare Company in Stratford, England, where he was three British Drama Awards, and is best known for his role as Col. Aidan Dempsey in the English TV series "Ultimate Force" and the role of Roger O'Neill in "House of Cards."

Turk is a regular at the Globe festival and a past Craig Noel Award winner.

This year's festival is being led by Adrian Noble, who ran the Royal Shakespeare Company from 1990-2003.



**Miles Anderson**



Home / Entertainment / Entertainment Columnists / Pam Kragen: Backstage

## KRAGEN: Adam Lambert's first solo tour will skip San Diego hometown

- Story
- Discussion

By PAM KRAGEN - [pkragen@nctimes.com](mailto:pkragen@nctimes.com) | Posted: April 28, 2010 9:26 am | No Comments Posted | [Print](#)

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[Buy this photo](#) North County-raised singing sensation Adam Lambert will launch his first solo tour in June, but it won't include any stops in his hometown of San Diego. The closest he'll come is Costa Mesa. Courtesy photo

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Homegrown singing sensation Adam Lambert will launch his first solo tour in June, but the closest he'll come to his boyhood home of San Diego is a pair of shows July 27 and 28 at the Orange County Fair in Costa Mesa.

"The Glam Nation Tour" opens June 4 in Wilkes Barre, Penn., and includes 19 dates at medium- to large-size venues in the U.S. and Canada, including New York's Nokia Theatre, Toledo's Omni and Toronto's Molson Amphitheatre. Opening for Lambert will be 25-year-old guitarist/singer Orianthi ("According to You") and on some dates, Lambert's 18-year-old fellow "Idol" finalist Allison Iraheta.

Lambert has said in interviews that he plans to tour with a stage show that includes dancers, costumes and other theatrical elements. Lambert's single "Whataya Want From Me" is now a top 10 hit and his debut album "For Your Entertainment" has sold more than 600,000 copies in the U.S. His music is also a big hit overseas. From the age of 1, Lambert grew up in Rancho Penasquitos and performed in musical theater productions from ages 10 to 17, when he moved to L.A. to pursue a theater/music career.

The on-sale date for Lambert's shows at Costa Mesa's Pacific Amphitheatre has not been announced. Ticket-buyers should have their dialing or keyboard fingers ready. Last weekend tickets went on sale for one of Lambert's non-tour concerts in New England and it sold out within minutes.

---

Back in the late 1980s, Steven Oberman saw a "Nature" documentary about Mozu ---- a snow monkey from Japan's Shiga Highlands who managed to adapt and survive despite being born with deformed hands and feet ---- and he remembers thinking that one day it would make a good story for the stage.

Twenty years later, "Mozu" the musical is about to debut. Oberman will oversee a reading of his play, with music by Jude Thomas, at 6 p.m. Monday at Carlsbad's Schulman Auditorium. A post-performance discussion with the creative team will follow.

Mozu was born with nearly useless limbs, believed to have been caused by her mother's ingestion of insecticide, but the documentary showed how she defied the odds and successfully raised a family (she died in 1997 at age 26). Over the years, Oberman said he read many books and studies on Japanese snow monkeys (macaques) and last year, he traveled to Japan to meet with researchers and study the monkeys up close.

Although Oberman's musical "Mozu" is inspired by the monkey's heroic survival, it will be highly theatrical ---- with monkeys who both talk and sing. Originally, Oberman wrote the lyrics and set them to traditional Japanese folk songs. Then he got in touch with Thomas, a music teacher at San Diego State University, to compose the score.

Next week's reading will be directed by Jim Strait, former managing director for Moonlight Stage Productions, and will feature Scott Andrew Amiotte, Caro Louise Aristei, Bryan Balderman, Rosalie Celestial, Dan Feraldo, Justin Warren Martin, and D'Ann Paton. The reading will serve as a workshop to help Oberman, Thomas and Strait prepare for the musical's world premiere, scheduled for Aug. 19 at Diversionary Theatre in San Diego. The full production will feature live music and elements of kabuki theater. Although Oberman's own youth-focused theater company, Theatre Arts for Fun Education, is producing "Mozu," the musical has some grown-up themes, so it's best suited for older audiences.

Tickets to Monday's reading cost \$5 and can be ordered by calling Oberman's theater company, Theatre Arts for Fun Education, at 760-268-0169 or visit [www.taffe.org](http://www.taffe.org).

---

Steve White, the Encinitas blues singer/guitarist, who lost his voice box to cancer of the larynx last year, will present his first art exhibit at First Street Gallery in Encinitas beginning Saturday. The monthlong solo show at 820 S. Coast Highway will feature 64 oil pastels on various subjects.

White recently returned from a trip to Europe, where he played guitar and met with friends and fans. He's now hoping to have a digital voice box implanted in his throat that will synthesize speech and allow him to have free use of his hands to play guitar.

A reception for White will be held at the gallery from 4:30 to 8:30 p.m. Saturday. For details, visit [stevewhiteblues.com](http://stevewhiteblues.com).

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## Summer Stages : Theater

By [STEVEN McELROY](#)  
Published: May 7, 2010

### Arkansas

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Shakespeare & Company  
John Douglas Thompson will play the title role in Shakespeare's "Richard III" in the Shakespeare & Company production in Lenox, Mass., beginning July 2.

### ARKANSAS SHAKESPEARE

**THEATER** Conway, June 16-July 3.

For a few weeks the theme here will be "Shakespeare With a Bite," when "The Comedy of Errors" and "Henry V" run in repertory with "Dracula," newly adapted by Todd Olson,

who also directs, from the 1897 novel by Bram Stoker. (With "Twilight" and "True Blood" the rage, a look back at the granddaddy of vampires seems dead right.) Matt Chiorini, the company's producing artistic director, will direct "Henry" and play the title character. "Alice in Wonderland," in an adaptation for just three actors, is also on the schedule. (501) 269-4815, [arkshakes.com](http://arkshakes.com).

### California

**CALIFORNIA SHAKESPEARE THEATER** Orinda. This Siesta Valley theater will open its summer season with "[John Steinbeck's](#) The Pastures of Heaven" (June 2-27), adapted from a 1932 book of interrelated stories. Octavio Solis is the playwright, and Jonathan Moscone, the artistic director of the company, directs. The remainder of the lineup at the outdoor Bruns Amphitheater includes Shaw's "Mrs. Warren's Profession" (July 7-Aug. 1) and, of course, some Shakespeare: "Macbeth" (Aug. 18-Sept. 12) and "Much

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Ado About Nothing" (Sept. 22-Oct. 17), all presented against the gorgeous backdrop of the East Bay hills. (510) 548-9666, [calshakes.org](http://calshakes.org).

**SAN FRANCISCO INTERNATIONAL ARTS FESTIVAL** May 19-30. Even in a city known for its counterculture, this festival is eclectic. Music, dance, theater and more from the imaginations of a variety of local and international artists are crammed into two busy weeks. Theatrical highlights are Al Khareef Theater Troupe from Syria presenting "The Solitary" (May 21-23), about the relationship between a political prisoner in solitary confinement and his jailer; and "Harlekin" (May 20-22), by the company Derevo, from St. Petersburg, Russia, a troupe that avoids labels like "actor" and "theater" and has developed its own style of experimental performance. (800) 838-3006, [sfiaf.org](http://sfiaf.org).

**THE OLD GLOBE** San Diego. The annual revels at the outdoor Lowell Davies Festival Theater (June 12-Sept. 26) consist of three plays in repertory: Shakespeare's "Taming of the Shrew" and "King Lear," and "The Madness of George III," by [Alan Bennett](#). Meanwhile, on the indoor stage, Mad Men meet wise guys in "Robin and the 7 Hoods" (July 14-Aug. 22), a new musical based on the 1964 Rat Pack movie that transplanted the Robin Hood legend to 1960s Chicago. Casey Nicholaw ("The Drowsy Chaperone") directs; the book is by Rupert Holmes; and the production includes songs from the film, like "My Kind of Town," as well as others also written by the team of [Jimmy Van Heusen](#) and [Sammy Cahn](#). (619) 234-5623, [theoldglobe.org](http://theoldglobe.org).

## Connecticut

**EUGENE O'NEILL THEATER CENTER** Waterford, June 18-Aug. 14. Since its founding in 1964 by George C. White, the O'Neill has been developing new plays and musicals through its programs of readings, discussions and rehearsals. It was rewarded for its efforts this year by winning the [Tony Award](#) for Regional Theater, to be presented at the Tony ceremonies in New York on June 13. This summer, the National Musical Theater Conference, with past successes like "In the Heights" and "Avenue Q," will develop "Buddy's Tavern" (book by Raymond De Felitta, lyrics by Alison Hubbard, music by Kim Oler), "Clear" (book, music and lyrics by Paul Oakley Stovall) and "Eden" (book and lyrics by Jonathan Levi, music by Mel Marvin). In addition the playwrights conference will include readings of seven plays, and the center will present two more annual conferences: one for puppetry and the other for cabaret and performance. (860) 443-1238, [theoneill.org](http://theoneill.org).

**INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF ARTS AND IDEAS** New Haven, June 12-26. Solo performances of "Moby-Dick" and an interpretation of the Apollo 11 Moon landing ("Space Panorama") are part of the theater segment of this annual multidisciplinary event. Other offerings include two productions by the National Theater of the United States of America: "Chautauqua!" and "Susurrus," which employs themes from "A Midsummer Night's Dream," music from the [Benjamin Britten](#) opera of the same name and a surreal story that audience members will hear through an iPod headset while strolling through the city's

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# SAN DIEGO CITY BEAT

May 12, 2010 Summer Guide

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## Proper Shakespeare vs. 'reduced' Shakespeare

The renowned **Old Globe Theatre** is celebrating its 75th anniversary this year, but the group's upcoming **Summer Shakespeare Festival** (its seventh under executive producer Lou Spisto) will also mark two pretty serious firsts. For one thing, Globe founding director R. Craig Noel won't be there—the so-called father of San Diego theater, who helped lead the outfit to national prominence, died April 3 at 94 after several years of failing health. And the festival has a new artistic director in Adrian Noble, whose credits in his native Great Britain include the artistic directorship of London's famed Royal Shakespeare Company from 1991 to 2003. The award-winning Noble, 59, turned his *A Midsummer Night's Dream* into a film and has directed several successful London musicals. Credentials like that should translate into the usual lush and upscale fare at the roofless, 660-seat Lowell Davies Festival Theater June 12 through Sept. 26. The schedule includes ***King Lear***, the classic tale of family, royalty and mortality; ***The Taming of the Shrew***, an Elizabethan battle of the sexes; and a non-Bill entry, ***The Madness of King George***, which chronicles the monarch's slide into insanity after the Revolutionary War. Visit [www.oldglobe.org](http://www.oldglobe.org).

### But if that isn't your thing...

One of my 712 regular theater dates has never been to a Shakespeare play with me, complaining that Bill's stuff is too long and complicated. She's wrong, of course, if only because I'm invariably right about all things theatrical—but this summer, those of you who feel like she does don't have to wade through all those big, bad brambles. In fact, you can "see" all 37 Shakespeare plays in a little more than an hour-and-a-half. All you have to do is check out **The Reduced Shakespeare Company**, a comedy trio that reduces big, fat, serious topics to short, sharp sketches. The group has been at it since 1981, when they passed the hat during a 20-minute *Hamlet* at various Southern California Renaissance faires. Six stage shows, two TV specials and a billion radio spots later, they're one of the toasts of shtickdom, having performed all over the world. Get the dish on William Shakespeare, a rather average actor and part-time prop master who wrote a few decent plays, in one fell swoop at Downtown's **The Lyceum** from June 11 to 20. If she plays her cards right, I just might take my friend (or maybe not). Visit [www.sdrep.org](http://www.sdrep.org).

—Martin Jones Westlin



# NIGHT AND DAY



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## Theater & Arts

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## Outdoor theater is perfect for a midsummer night

BY [JAMES HEBERT](#), UNION-TRIBUNE THEATER CRITIC  
 THURSDAY, MAY 27, 2010 AT 12:03 A.M.

Lightning, rain, humidity, mosquitoes ... who needs all that drama? Especially when drama is what you're trying to take in, not live through.

San Diego's dry, temperate and relatively bug-free summers turn out to be just about perfect for enjoying plays al fresco, and several local companies take advantage of that happy fact by rolling out a theatrical feast come the warm(er) months.

The biggest of the outdoor theater series is the **Old Globe Theatre's Summer Shakespeare Festival**, which presents three plays running in nightly repertory at the Globe's Lowell Davies Festival Theatre in Balboa Park.

This year's lineup, assembled by new festival artistic director Adrian Noble, features "King Lear" (running June 12 to Sept. 23); "The Taming of the Shrew" (June 16 to Sept. 26); and "The Madness of George III" (June 19-Sept. 24). Details: [theoldglobe.org](http://theoldglobe.org) or (619) 234-5623.

At the other end of Balboa Park is the venerable **Starlight Musical Theatre**, which presents three family-minded musicals in the spacious Starlight Bowl this summer: "SUDS: The Rocking '60s Musical," June 17 to July 4; "The Pajama Game," July 15 to Aug. 1; and "Hello, Dolly!," Aug. 19 to Sept. 5. Details: [starlighttheatre.org](http://starlighttheatre.org) or (619) 232-7827.

Up in Vista, **Moonlight Stage Productions** continues its own tradition of summer musicals at the newly renovated Moonlight Amphitheatre, a great place for a picnic and a show amid the greenery of Brengle Terrace Park. Coming up: "Oklahoma!" (July 14-31), the 1943 classic that was Rodgers & Hammerstein's first musical; "Crazy for You" (Aug. 11-28), the Tony-winning ode to the music of the Gershwins; and the Vietnam-set "Miss Saigon" (Sept. 8-25). Details: [moonlightstage.com](http://moonlightstage.com) or (760) 724-2110.

While it might be pushing the definition of "summer," Carlsbad-based **New Village Arts Theatre** also is partnering with Moonlight to stage Shakespeare's comedy "As You Like It" at the Vista amphitheater Oct. 6-10, when the weather is likely still to be the opposite of inclement. (Clement?) Details: [newvillagearts.org](http://newvillagearts.org) or (760) 433-3245.

And things don't get much more summery than San Diego Actors Theatre's **"Dive In Theatre,"** a site-specific performance taking place at the lap pool of the L'Auberge Del Mar hotel Sept. 10-11 and 17-18. Details: [sdactorstheatre.net](http://sdactorstheatre.net) or (858) 268-4494.

And may your summer theater adventures go swimmingly.

James Hebert: (619) 293-2040; [jim.hebert@uniontrib.com](mailto:jim.hebert@uniontrib.com) [houseseats.uniontrib.com](http://houseseats.uniontrib.com)



CHARLIE NEUMAN / UNION-TRIBUNE

Moonlight Stage Productions plans to emphasize musicals at the newly renovated Moonlight Amphitheatre, a spot that is perfect for picnics and shows in its setting amid the greenery of Brengle Terrace Park.

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MOST POPULAR

# SAN DIEGO DOWNTOWN NEWS

June 2010

## Shakespeare, dance, Mozart and the start of Starlight's season



**THE LIVELY  
ARTS**  
Charlene Baldrige

Summer is in sight at last with outdoor arts activities beginning. Pack up your picnic and head out for some culture.

### At the Old Globe

It's the Old Globe's 75th anniversary, and all three productions of the Shakespeare Festival 2010 open in previews this month. They are William Shakespeare's great tragedy "King Lear," starring Robert Foxworth in the title role, and the romantic comedy "The Taming of the Shrew," with Jonno Roberts and Emily Swallow playing the warring lovers. These two play in repertory through the end of September with Alan Bennett's "The Madness of George III."

Information: [www.theoldglobe.com](http://www.theoldglobe.com) or (619) 23-GLOBE.

### At San Diego Repertory Theatre

June 10 to 12, as part of the 17th annual Lipinsky Family Jewish Arts Festival, Malashock Dance teams up with composer Yale Strom to showcase three sections of their upcoming collaboration, "Chagall."

Monday, June 21, the Jewish Arts Festival presents "Klezmer Summit,"



Shakespeare Festival 2010 at the Old Globe opens with William Shakespeare's great tragedy "King Lear."

a not-to-be missed musical event with Strom, Hot P'tromi and Camarada (Jewish Tango).

\$18-\$25, [www.sdrep.org](http://www.sdrep.org), (619) 544-1000.



Mezzo-soprano Frederica von Stade will be featured in the June 18 Mainly Mozart Festival performance in Balboa Theatre.

COURTESY PHOTO

### At Balboa Theatre

Don't miss the annual Mainly Mozart Festival (June 8-19) with renowned guest artists Sarah Chang (June 11), Frederica von Stade (June 18), and a host of others, plus the

Festival Orchestra under the baton of David Atherton.

Balboa Theatre: 868 Fourth Ave. Information and tickets: [www.mainlymozart.org](http://www.mainlymozart.org) or (619) 239-0100, ext. 2.

### At the Starlight Bowl

June 17-July 4, Starlight's 64th season kicks-off with "Suds, the Rocking '60s Musical." Special family rates (kids free on Sundays and Thursdays) make Starlight affordable and fun for the entire family.

Information: [www.starlighttheatre.org](http://www.starlighttheatre.org) or (619) 232-7827.



The Starlight Bowl's 64th season kicks off with "Suds, the Rocking '60s Musical"

## SAN DIEGO

Regional Reviews by Bill Eadie

### San Diego Summer Theatre Preview

The recession has clearly hit San Diego theatre. Companies this summer are, for the most part, not experimenting much, sticking mostly to the tried and true. Shakespeare's on the bill, as it has been every summer in San Diego, as is *Hello, Dolly!*. The one major premiere is pretty much recycled, and even the smaller theatres have taken to digging out interesting theatrical chestnuts. Still, San Diego does its best theatre business during the summer, when both the Old Globe and the La Jolla Playhouse are running a full head of steam (the Globe will have five productions playing simultaneously in August) when lots of tourists are in town.

So, what will there be to see? Well, my bet for the surest thing is Cygnet Theatre's mounting of all three of Alan Ayckbourn's *Norman Conquest* plays. These three (*Table Manners*, *Round and Round the Garden*, *Living Together*) will play in repertory (with marathon performances of all three plays on Saturdays), similar to last season's British staging in New York. Cygnet is coming off of a very high level production of Stephen Sondheim's *Sweeney Todd*, and it has shown that it can marshal the resources necessary to pull off something like this 1973 tour-de-force. Performances begin July 28 with an official opening on August 7, a marathon day, and the repertory runs into November. Before that (through July 3), Cygnet is mounting a very credible production of Noel Coward's *Private Lives* at its Old Town Theatre home base.

The Old Globe wins the prize for quantity, as it does every summer, with five productions on the boards at once. The Globe closes its spring production of Matthew Lopez's *The Whipping Man* on June 13 as it begins to open the summer Shakespeare repertory in its outdoor theatre. Repertory director Darko Tresnjak has departed, leaving Executive Producer Louis Spisto in charge of the entire operation, both artistic and financial. Mr. Spisto has reached across the pond to bring in former Royal Shakespeare Company artistic director Adrian Noble to serve as artistic adviser for the summer repertory. Mr. Noble will direct *King Lear*, which begins performances on June 12, and *The Madness of King George III*, which starts on June 19. Ron Daniels directs *The Taming of the Shrew*, which begins on June 16. The repertory company includes some Globe rep stalwarts and Associate Artist Robert Foxworth, who will play the title role in *King Lear*.

In July, the Globe brings in a pre-Broadway run of the jukebox musical *Robin and the 7 Hoods*. Based on the film of the same name with a book by Rupert Holmes and using Rat Pack-era songs by Sammy Cahn and Jimmy Van Heusen, the show will feature Broadway performers Will Chase, Eric Schneider, Amy Spanger and Kelly Sullivan. San Diego native Casey Nicholaw directs and choreographs. Performances begin July 14 with opening night scheduled for July 30.

The Globe's summer season concludes with the West Coast premiere of *The Last Romance*, Joe DiPietro's play about love later in life. Long-time Old Globe Associate Artist Marion Ross stars with her life partner, Paul Michael. Performances begin July 30.



The La Jolla Playhouse is mounting only two productions this summer while promising two new musicals for later in its season. The summer shows are *Surf Report*, by local playwright Annie Weisman (*Be Aggressive*), and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, directed by Playhouse artistic director Christopher Ashley using an upside-down set, puppetry by Basil Twist, and music composed by Felix Mendelssohn. *Surf Report* runs June 15 - July 11, while *A Midsummer Night's Dream* runs July 20 - August 22. Opening in early September will be the Christopher Curtis/Thomas Meehan musical biography of Charlie Chaplin, dubbed *Limelight*, and a William Finn/James Lapine musical version of the film *Little Miss Sunshine*, will open next February.

The other premiere of note is the first West Coast production of the Broadway musical [*title of show*], running in July and August at the Diversionary Theatre. With a strong cast of local performers that includes Tony Houck, Heather Paton, Karson St. John and Tom Zohar, direction by James Vasquez, and musical direction by Tim McKnight, this one looks promising.

Some of the other smaller theatres will be pulling out plays considered to be "classic" in one form or another. New Village Arts, 30 miles north of downtown in the beach town of Carlsbad, is currently staging Tennessee Williams' rarely seen *Summer and Smoke* and will be following that production up in July with *The Seven Year Itch*. Lamb's Players Theatre opens its production of *Harvey* in its Coronado facility this week, and North Coast Rep continues through June 20 with *The Voice of the Prairie*, a play about storytelling just as radio was getting its start. And Moxie Theatre begins performances of Sarah Ruhl's adaptation of Eurydice on June 17; it runs through the beginning of August.

Summer is also the time for musicals, both indoors and outdoors. Indoors, the San Diego Repertory Theatre will be producing the regional premiere of *Hairspray* with a mixed cast of professional adults and teenaged theater students. North Coast Rep presents the first local production of *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* throughout July. Lamb's has a white gospel show, *Smoke on the Mountain*, running into July at its downtown Gaslamp district location, and it will open a company-written musical titled *MiXtape* at the Coronado location in August. Oddly, the Lawrence Welk Resort, which was known for musicals, has given them up for the summer after its current production of *Footloose* closes in late June. They'll resume in September with *The Full Monty*.

Outdoors, the Starlight Bowl in Balboa Park stages *Suds* in June, *The Pajama Game* in July, and *Hello Dolly!* in August. Moonlight Stage, up north in Vista, runs a youth theatre production of *Cinderella* in June, *Oklahoma!* in July, *Crazy for You* in August, and *Miss Saigon* in September. The theatre is located near Camp Pendleton Marine Base, so who knows about having a helicopter hovering over the stage in this last production ...

Late spring in San Diego has been mild with better than usual weather, and if this trend continues into summer a lot of people may say, "To hell with the recession, I'm going there." And, that'd be good for everyone in San Diego, including theatres.

See the [current season schedule for the San Diego area](#).

- [Bill Eadie](#)

Follow Bill on Twitter: [www.twitter.com/SDBillEadie](http://www.twitter.com/SDBillEadie).

## Balboa Park Beat

Maren Dougherty tracks the news, views and what's next for Balboa Park online

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06/17/2010

### 3 for 2: Three summer date night options in Balboa Park

If your typical date night involves take-out sushi from down the street, whatever happens to be next on the Netflix queue, and a 10pm bedtime, it might be time to try something a little more adventurous. I'm not suggesting that you develop a lifestyle like Ashton Kutcher's character in "Killers" – actually, given [the reviews](#), let's forget I even mentioned it – but a jaunt to Balboa Park for a few hours of culture and conversation sounds pretty nice, right?

1. Whether you're in a 10-year relationship and you're looking for new friends for Trivial Pursuit night or you're brainstorming a fun way to spend time with your newest connection from Match.com, The San Diego Museum of Art's [Culture & Cocktails](#) event (free for museum members, \$15 for nonmembers) is a fun way to go out, be social, and experience fine art. Tonight's Culture & Cocktails, held in conjunction with the exhibition "[Heroes: Mortals & Myths in Ancient Greece](#)," will feature Ouzo cocktails, live DJs, and a sneak preview of "Heroes and Hope" by [Sacra/Profana](#). Art making activities for the evening include designing Greece-inspired crowns and participating in Brian Dick's [Museum Mascot Project](#) by crafting a sticker, button or pin for his mascot outfit.

2. Step into a museum during a busy Saturday afternoon and you probably won't describe the experience as romantic. But Thursday at sunset? Entirely different story. This summer, [the Museum of Photographic Arts](#) and [The San Diego Museum of Art](#) will both be open until 9pm every Thursday. To go big, opt for the Prado's [VIP Dinner Package](#), which includes dinner with a bottle of wine and two tickets to MoPA for the "[Taking Aim](#)" exhibition of rock 'n' roll photographs selected by Graham Nash of Crosby, Stills and Nash. Given the 3-course menu, it's an excellent deal (\$79.95 per couple, tax and gratuity not included) but if you need a more budget-friendly option, stop by the Prado's bar during happy hour (Tuesdays – Fridays, 4-6pm & 8-10pm) for \$3.50 drinks and similarly priced appetizers.



3. The Old Globe's 2010 Shakespeare Festival started this week. Arguably the best date night option is "[The Taming of the Shrew](#)," the light battle-of-the-sexes comedy that doesn't require downloading a Shakespeare iPhone app to understand the action on stage. The Shakespeare Festival plays are all performed at the outdoor Lowell Davies Festival Theatre, a perfect venue for snuggling under the stars. If you're under 30, check out The Globe's [\\$20 Under 30](#) program to purchase discounted tickets for "The Taming of the Shrew," "King Lear," and other upcoming shows.

*MoPA night facade by Jennifer Dery*

Posted at 10:59 AM in [Balboa Park Events](#) | [Permalink](#)

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## Beat the curtains

Catch these 5 plays before they fold up the sets

**By James Hebert**  
THEATER CRITIC

**W**hen summer comes to San Diego, the town's live stages get about as busy as the Mission Beach boardwalk (only with less roller skating — no "Starlight Express" revivals, please!).

The Old Globe's summer Shakespeare Festival, which now has all three of its plays ("King Lear," "The Taming of the Shrew," "The Madness of George III") up and running in previews, is the beach-blanket behemoth in this scenario. But that doesn't mean we should ignore some already-opened shows that continue to kick up a little sand of their own.

Here's a look at five still-running local plays worth checking out — folk musicals and comedies, dramas and operettas, with settings that stretch from ancient Greece to 1930s England to the old-tyme rural South. It's like one big

globo-theatrical beach party. (But please, leave the Frisbees at home.)

**"Private Lives":** Marital bliss gets tossed onto the bonfire in Noel Coward's classic British comedy; Cygnet Theatre's staging kindles the flames with zip and wit. Old Town Theatre, 4040 Twiggs St., through July 3.

**"Eurydice":** Moxie Theatre is back from hiatus with the ever-unpredictable Sarah Ruhl's rethinking of Greek myth. (That's "yur-ID-ih-see" to you.) At only 36, Ruhl is a two-time Pulitzer Prize finalist — for "The Clean House" and "In the Next Room (the Vibrator Play)," now on Broadway — as well as a MacArthur "genius" anointee. And Moxie has a proven touch with adventurous female playwrights. Rolando Theatre, 6663 El Cajon Blvd., College Area, through Sunday.

**"Engaged":** Gilbert and Sullivan crafted such classic comic operettas as "The Pirates of Penzance" and "The Mikado." Gilbert minus Sullivan came

up with this sharp-edged farce about matrimonial chaos among Victorian-era travelers. The local company Talent to aMuse dusts off the 1877 piece for a rare go-round. Swedenborg Hall, 1531 Tyler Ave., University Heights, through Sunday.

**"To Kill a Mockingbird":** It's the 50th anniversary of Harper Lee's iconic American saga of race and justice; On-Stage Playhouse marks the moment with Christopher Sergel's stage adaptation, another work that doesn't pop up locally very often. Onstage Playhouse, 291 Third Ave., Chula Vista, through July 3.

**"Smoke on the Mountain":** The singin' Sanders family serves up its music with a big side of corn, but the Lamb's staging of this down-home musical revue (the theater's sixth go-round with "Smoke") has the musical chops and comic smarts to reach some good-time peaks. Horton Grand Theatre, 444 Fourth Ave., downtown, through Sunday.



Noel Coward's classic British comedy "Private Lives" gets a feisty staging in Old Town. *Daren Scott*



## Catch these 5 plays before they fold up the sets

By [James Hebert](#), UNION-TRIBUNE THEATER CRITIC

Wednesday, June 23, 2010 at 3:51 p.m.

### (BACKSTAGE PASS)

‘The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee’

Thursdays-Saturdays, 8 p.m.; Sundays, 2 and 7 p.m., plus some Wednesdays, through Aug. 1.  
North Coast Repertory Theatre, 987 Lomas Santa Fe Drive, Solana Beach. \$32-\$50;  
[northcoastrep.org](http://northcoastrep.org) or (858) 481-1055.

That hurts: Bees sting, as any once well-regarded speller who has ever washed out of his junior high school’s annual contest due to a nervous slip on a can’t-miss word that is still burned into his brain to this day can tell you. They definitely inspire tummy-flutters (and more) for the precocious but insecure kids who populate William Finn and Rachel Sheinkin’s Tony-winning musical that gets its regional premiere at North Coast Rep next week.

Vie for the crown: Rick Simas, directing a cast of nine for NCRT, has the proper qualifications: “I was a good speller,” he says of his own school days. (Not only that, he’s the co-director of SDSU’s MFA musical-theater program and has staged a host of shows around town.) His “Bee” will invite audience “guest spellers,” chosen via pre-performance interviews, to vie for the crown alongside the play’s characters. Here’s a tip (based on a sneak peek at the word list): Study up on the words “homunculus” and “oubliette.” And win one for us.

JAMES HEBERT

When summer comes to [San Diego](#), the town’s live stages get about as busy as the Mission Beach boardwalk (only with less roller skating — no “Starlight Express” revivals, please!).

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Noel Coward’s classic British comedy “Private Lives” gets a feisty staging in Old Town. Daren Scott



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## Theatre Scene: one hot summer on stage

Posted by [admin](#) on 6/18/10 • Categorized as [Arts & Entertainment](#), [Theater](#)



Craig Noel (courtesy Old Globe)

## Theatre Scene

### by Cuauhtémoc Kish

It is only fitting and proper that, as we roll out the first issue of *Gay San Diego* and begin our coverage of the area's summer theatre, we raise a glass of bubbly to **Craig Noel**, the founding director of The Old Globe.

Noel died at his home in San Diego on April 3 at the age of 94. He is survived by his partner, Hamza Houdi, with whom he shared 37 years of his life.

His celebrated career at the Globe spanned 70-plus years. Noel directed more than 200 works and produced an additional 270 productions. In 2007, he received the National Medal of Arts in a ceremony at the White House.

He mentored **Jack O'Brien**, the Globe's artistic director emeritus, as well as **Darko Tresnjak**, who helmed the Globe's renowned Shakespeare Festival in recent years — both men of astounding artistic talent who, like, Noel, happened to be members of our community.

### Shakespeare Festival

The Old Globe's 2010 Shakespeare Festival will feature three productions running in repertory beginning June 12 and running through September 26. They include William Shakespeare's "King Lear" and "The Taming of the Shrew," as well as Allan Bennett's "The Madness of George III."



Robert Foxworth plays King Lear in the 2010 Shakespeare Festival production. (Photo by Craig Schwartz)

**"King Lear"** is one of the most powerful dramas from Shakespeare's oeuvre, filled with political intrigue and family strife. Lear, an aging monarch with three daughters, will divide his kingdom in dollops large and small to each daughter based upon her declaration of love for him. Cordelia, one of his daughters, is exiled for refusing to play a part in this game of feigned flattery. A catastrophic series of events destroys his family, along with his sanity.

**"The Taming of the Shrew"** is a light comedy about a father and his two unmarried daughters. The ill-tempered and acid-tongued Katherina, considered an untamed shrew, and her younger sister, Bianca, sought after for her beauty and charm. Petruchio steps up and takes on the challenge of domesticating Katherina.

**"The Madness of George III"** takes place in the majestic court of England's King George in the years immediately following



the American Revolutionary War. The story chronicles his deterioration into madness as he struggles valiantly to hold onto political power at any cost.

The festival's artistic director, Adrian Noble, will direct both Shakespearean productions while Adrian Noble will direct "The Madness of George III."

**INFO:** (619) 234-5623 or [theoldglobe.org](http://theoldglobe.org).

Prefer you theatre with a little less formality? Don't fret, the summer is filled with drama, comedy, and Broadway musicals.

Lamb's Players Theatre is producing Mary Chase's "**Harvey**" through July 18. Before it became the classic movie starring James Stewart, this hilarious and endearing comedy was a Broadway hit and winner of the Pulitzer Prize for Drama. Elwood P. Dowd is the nicest guy in town. It just happens that his best friend is an invisible white rabbit. It might be time for family to check him into the local sanitarium.

**INFO:** (619) 437-0600 or [lambplayers.org](http://lambplayers.org).

BLKBOX and Ion Theatre Company have extended — by popular demand — Terrence McNally's "**Frankie & Johnny in the Clair De Lune**" (through June 19) and "**GAM3RS**" (through June 20). "Frankie and Johnny" tells the story of an unlikely romance between two scarred middle-agers that seems to be resonating well with audiences. And "GAM3RS" is a one-man show that has Steve Smolinski saving humanity from destruction at the hands of bloodthirsty elves, all done without leaving his cubicle at work.

**INFO:** (619) 600-5020 or [iontheatre.com](http://iontheatre.com).

Diversions Theatre will offer up a John Olive musical called "**[title of show]**" through August 8. It's a love letter to musical theatre and the joy of collaboration. This will be an official event of San Diego Pride.

**INFO:** 220-0097 or [diversionary.org](http://diversionary.org).

**Moxie Theatre will introduce us to Sarah Ruhl's "Eurydice" from June 12-27 at the Rolando space once occupied by Cygnet. Playwright Sarah Ruhl wrote "Eurydice" in 2000, inspired by the death of her father in 1994. She re-imagines the classical myth of Orpheus to focus, not on his descent to the underworld to rescue his bride, but on Eurydice's journey while there.**

**INFO:** (858) 598-7620 or [moxietheatre.com](http://moxietheatre.com).

And everyone must come out to the San Diego Rep's production of "**Hairspray**," July 17 through August 15. Meanwhile, Broadway San Diego will bring the Tony Award winner, "**In The Heights**," to the Civic Theatre in July.

This is going to be one hot summer of theatre!

Tool Box:

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(WHERE TO GO, SEE & BE SEEN)



Adrian Noble and Lou Spisto

## The Globe Goes Noble

There's a new man in town, and he brings with him a glowing artistic reputation. A former artistic director of The Royal Shakespeare Company and a heralded director at Canada's Stratford Festival and the Metropolitan Opera, Adrian Noble is now in charge of The Old Globe's Shakespeare Festival, which has very recently opened with his take on the bard's deeply moving and unsettling tragedy, *King Lear*, followed by *The Taming of the Shrew* and *The Madness of King George III*, the latter of which was directed also by Noble. The plays will be performed in repertory through late September. Noble has staged productions throughout the world, building a strong reputation as an inventive and fearless artist. He's a great addition to the Globe, befitting its 75th celebratory year.

(619/234-5623, [www.theoldglobe.org](http://www.theoldglobe.org))

DARLENE G DAVIES

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## King Lear Takes The Stage at The Old Globe

2010-06-21 · By admin

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Robert Foxworth as King Lear

**The Old Globe** presents William Shakespeare's **King Lear**, Directed by Adrian Noble. Lear, an aging monarch, has decided to divide his kingdom between his three daughters – each to receive land and wealth in proportion to their declaration of love for him. Two of them compete to flatter their father, while the one loving daughter, Cordelia, refuses to play the game and is exiled. Seduced by his daughters' flattery, Lear sets in motion a catastrophic series of events that will destroy his kingdom, his family and ultimately his sanity.

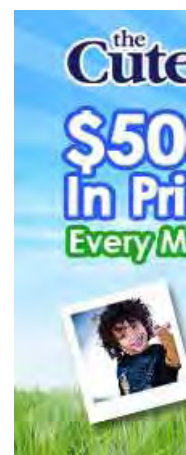
On June 12, 2010, preview performances of the Old Globe production of King Lear took the stage at the Old Globe **Lowell Davies Festival Theatre** located in San Diego's Balboa Park. The preview performances run through June 25th. Opening night for King Lear is officially Saturday June 26. Regular performances begin July 26th through September 23rd.

### Cast for the show includes:

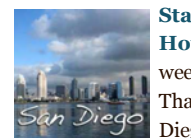
Michael Stewart Allen (Duke of Cornwall), Shirine Babb (Ensemble), Donald Carrier (Duke of Albany), Andrew Dahl (Oswald, Ensemble), Grayson DeJesus (Ensemble), Ben Diskant (King of France, Ensemble), Craig Dudley (Doctor), Christian Durso (Duke of Burgundy, Ensemble), Robert Foxworth (King Lear), Catherine Gowl (Cordelia), Kevin Hoffmann (Ensemble), Andrew Hutcheson (Ensemble), Charles Janasz (Earl of Gloucester), Joseph Marcell (Earl of Kent), Steven Marzolf (Curan, Herald, Ensemble), Jordan McArthur (Ensemble), Brooke Novak (Ensemble), Jonno Roberts (Edmund), Aubrey Saverino (Regan), Ryman Sneed (Ensemble), Adrian Sparks (Old Man), Emily Swallow (Goneril), Bruce Turk (Fool), Bree Welch (Ensemble) and Jay Whittaker (Edgar).

### Post-Show Forums

Tuesday, August 3, Wednesdays, August 25 and Sept. 14.



## Rec



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Post a Job  
\$25 for 30 days

Discuss the play with members of the cast following the performance. FREE

**Shakespeare in The Garden**

Sunday, July 18, Tuesday, August 10, Wednesday, August 25 and Friday, Sept. 17. ©

A series of informal presentations of ideas and insights that enhance the theatre-going experience. FREE

Tickets for the performance are \$29-\$78. Tickets may be purchased at the Old Globe Box Office from noon to final curtain Tuesday through Sunday. American Express, Discover, MasterCard and VISA accepted. (619) 23-GLOBE [234-5623]

For additional information on the King Lear Production or to purchase tickets online, visit [The Old Globe website](#).

The Old Globe is located in San Diego's Balboa Park at 1363 Old Globe Way. Free parking is available throughout the park. Valet parking is also available (\$10). For parking information visit the [Balboa Park website](#).

ADV

2009-10 TalkStory Media:

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*Photo courtesy of The Old Globe*

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3

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Category: Arts, Events, Lifestyle

Related Topics: Balboa Park, Shakespeare's King Lear, the old globe

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**Erin Reiter**

San Diego Theater Examiner

## Go before they are gone!

September 22nd, 2010 5:10 pm PT



The Old Globe

*Photo: Photo courtesy of The Old Globe*

### Related articles

- See 'My Run' this weekend at the San Diego Film Festival!
- Latin Jazz Band Plays Live At Cal State San Marcos
- This week in San Diego fiction - September 30-October 2
- Wall Coverings at new Rady's Pavilion designed by 18 year old artist
- This week in San Diego fiction - September 26-September 29
- Margaret Cho gives it good at Humphreys

### Popular articles

1. Legendary Pictures gets strategic investment from Orange Sky Golden Harvest Ent

### Do you like this story?

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Be the first of your friends to like this.

If you haven't yet seen the 2010 Shakespeare Festival at The Old Globe then this is the time to go! This is the final week for the festival and it must close on Sunday September 26th.

Only One Performance Left! Thursday, September 23rd

### King Lear

One of the greatest and most powerful dramas in western literature, King Lear is the ultimate family drama told against a background of intense political intrigue. Lear, an aging monarch, has decided to divide his kingdom between his three daughters – each to receive land and wealth in proportion to their declaration of love for him. Two of them compete to flatter their father, while the one loving daughter, Cordelia, refuses to play the game and is exiled. Seduced by his daughters flattery, Lear sets in motion a catastrophic series of events that will destroy his kingdom, his family and ultimately his sanity

Only two performances left! Wednesday September 22nd and Friday September 24th!

### The Madness of King George III

An international theatrical sensation that was later adapted into a film and nominated for four Academy

2. Hollywood and the New Season of Reality
3. Vanaprasta on the prowl p1
4. Stephen B. Burke will become CEO of NBC Universal
5. Katy Perry on SNL: singer does more dirty things with Elmo (video, photos)
6. LA craft beer crawl

### Popular slideshows

1. 2010 Youth Olympics Opening Ceremony
2. Nikki Reed
3. Covert Affairs USA Network 2 hour event season finale
4. Highlights of The Real World: New Orleans, Episode 11
5. Red
6. Jersey Shore Video Game

### Most commented articles

1. The Coen Brothers' 'True Grit' trailer starring Hailee Steinfeld & Jeff Bridges
2. Kim Kardashian and Serena Williams bring star power to NFL
3. Wanda Jackson: In A Nutshell
4. "In the Ghetto": Who Really Wrote That Hit Song?
5. Ryan Kwanten is a brother of a different feather in 'Legend of the Guardians'
6. L.A. premiere of Terrence McNally's 'Some Men'

Awards, The Madness of George III is a masterpiece of royal intrigue by renowned playwright Alan Bennett, a Tony Award®-winner for The History Boys. In the years immediately following the American Revolutionary War, this powerful play explores the majestic court of England's King George III and his deterioration into madness and his determination to hold on to political power from those around him.

Only two more performances left! Saturday September 25th and Sunday September 26th

### The Taming of the Shrew

Shakespeare's The Taming of the Shrew is the quintessential battle-of-the-sexes comedy! Baptista has two daughters that need to be married off – Bianca; docile, beautiful and much sought after by the noble men of the town, and Katherine; ill-tempered and shrewish, with an acid tongue that no man can tame. As the oldest, Katherine must marry first – not that she much cares. Bianca's many suitors can't afford to wait, so in a wild scheme to find a husband for Katherine, they convince the wily Petruchio to take on the challenge of domesticating the willful "shrew." Can Petruchio subdue Katherine's temper and win her bountiful dowry, or will she continue her shrewish ways?

Tickets can be purchased online at [www.TheOldGlobe.org](http://www.TheOldGlobe.org) by phone at (619) 23-GLOBE [234-5623] or by visiting the box office at 1363 Old Globe Way in Balboa Park.

Discounts are available for full-time students, patrons 29 years of age and younger, seniors and groups of 10 or more.

Interested in having your San Diego theater performance, venue, event, or other local activity featured in the San Diego Theater Guide? Send details to ErinMarie at [sdtheater.examiner@gmail.com](mailto:sdtheater.examiner@gmail.com) or Follow me on Twitter! [@SdTheaternews](https://twitter.com/SdTheaternews)

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# KNOWLEDGE IS NECESSITY

MUSINGS ON MENTAL HEALTH

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2010

## The Madness of Lear



On Saturday I attended a superb production of King Lear at the Old Globe in San Diego's Balboa Park. Sample this luscious insult:

OSWALD

*What dost thou know me for?*

KENT

*A knave; a rascal; an eater of broken meats; a base, proud, shallow, beggarly, three-suited, hundred-pound, filthy, worsted-stocking knave; a lily-livered, action-taking knave, a whoreson, glass-gazing, super-serviceable finical rogue; one-trunk-inheriting slave; one that wouldst be a bawd, in way of good service, and art nothing but the composition of a knave, beggar, coward, pandar, and the son and heir of a mongrel bitch: one whom I will beat into clamorous whining, if thou deniest the least syllable of thy addition.*

Lear's madness is already the topic of conversation in the first scene of Act I, when our main character retires as king in all but title, leaving him to the tender mercies of his two scheming eldest daughters, Regan and Goneril. Lear compounds his bad judgment by impulsively disowning his youngest and most beloved daughter, Cordelia. When his faithful retainer Kent objects - "When Lear is mad. What wilt thou do, old man?" - Lear, in a rage, banishes him.

In private, Regan and Goneril take note of their father's mental instability, knowing full well they may be his next target, and the scheming begins in earnest.



ABOUT JOHN MCMANAMY AND  
KNOWLEDGE IS NECESSITY



I am an award winning mental health journalist and author.

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Later on, the houseguest from Hell (Lear) meets the hostess from Hell (Goneril). In a rage, Lear takes leave, cursing his daughter thusly:

*Dry up in her the organs of increase;  
And from her derogate body never spring  
A babe to honour her!*

Meanwhile, his fool counsels:

*thou hadst little wit in thy bald crown,  
when thou gavest thy golden one away.*

Lear, in a moment of clarity, realizes he has wronged his youngest daughter. "O, let me not be mad, not mad, sweet heaven," he pleads. "Keep me in temper: I would not be mad!"

But Regan turns him out (in the company of his fool) into the stormy night, a broken man, raging into the fury:

*Your horrible pleasure: here I stand, your slave,  
A poor, infirm, weak, and despised old man*

Out on the heath, Lear encounters Edgar, a victim of a frame-up and fugitive from his father's wrath, disguised as a mad man. A surreal dialogue ensues, with Lear referring to the fake madman as "philosopher" and "learned Theban," a conversation that continues indoors, with the fool fitting right in. In an aside, Edgar empathizes with Lear, confessing:

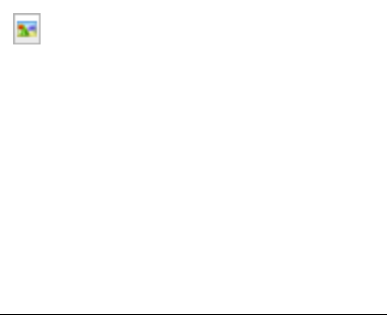
*My tears begin to take his part so much,  
They'll mar my counterfeiting.*

Soon after, in an ironic twist of fate, our storm-drenched band encounters Edgar's father and dupe in the frame-up, Gloucester, who has recently had his eyes plucked out and consequently fails to recognize his wronged son. He takes a liking to the youth, and engages him as his guide. In a commentary on the sad state of affairs in the world, he utters:

*'Tis the times' plague, when madmen lead the blind.*

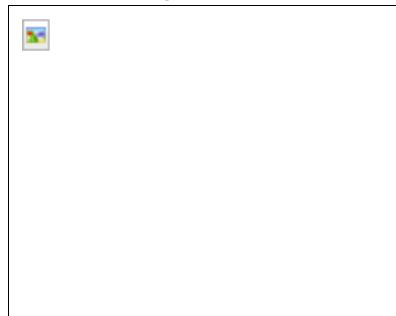
The action picks up further afield in Dover, with Lear thoroughly

#### WELCOME

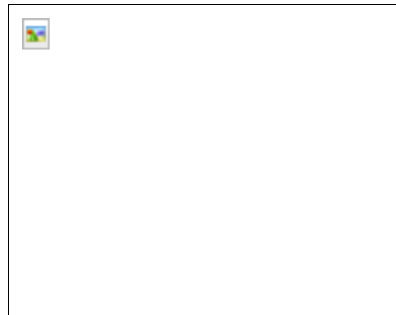


#### FEATURED VIDEOS

##### NAMI San Diego Walk



##### Concurrent Iraq 5K Run





mad and disheveled. Cordelia and her army manage to get to her father before the armies of her scheming sisters. A doctor advises Cordelia, watching over her sleeping father:

*Our foster-nurse of nature is repose.*

On awakening, a more settled Lear reconciles with his daughter. The doctor advises:

*Be comforted, good madam: the great rage,  
You see, is kill'd in him: and yet it is danger  
To make him even o'er the time he has lost.  
Desire him to go in; trouble him no more  
Till further settling.*

The good old fashioned rest cure, based on the ancient principle that much of mental illness is stress-based. A number of years ago, I came across an article in the very first issue of the American Journal of Psychiatry (then the American Journal of Insanity) from 1844 that noted with approval:

*Now we confess, almost with shame, that although near two centuries and a half have passed since Shakespeare thus wrote; we have very little to add to his method of treating the insane. To produce sleep and to quiet the mind by medical and moral treatment, to avoid all unkindness, and when patients begin to convalesce, to guard, as he directs, against everything likely to disturb their minds and to cause a relapse is now considered the best and nearly the only essential treatment.*

Alas, tragedy is about to unfold. We were watching the production under a night sky, with the ghostly eucalyptus trees as a backdrop. Lear appeared as if from the trees, carrying his beloved dead daughter. The only sound that could be heard was the sickening thud in our hearts.

No one does literature better than Shakespeare. Ditto for psychology.

POSTED BY JOHN MCMANAMY AT 8:37 PM 

LABELS: [JOHN MCMANAMY](#), [KING LEAR](#), [OLD GLOBE](#), [SHAKESPEARE](#)



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I learn from you. So do others. Your comments are a key to the success of "Knowledge is Necessity." [More ...](#)

**Erin Reiter**

San Diego Theater Examiner

## Don't miss the Old Globe's Shakespeare Festival and post show forums!

September 14th, 2010 5:15 pm PT

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**San Diego Movie Theaters**

Find listings for local movie theaters - indie, multiplex & more.  
[yellowpages.com](http://yellowpages.com)



There is still time to check out the Old Globe Theatre's Shakespeare Festival! If you still haven't seen *King Lear*, *The Taming of the Shrew* or *The Madness of King George III* you have until the end of this month to see them all!

Accompanying *The Taming of the Shrew* and *The Madness of King George III* are the interesting post show forums. These forums take place after the show and give you a chance to speak with and ask questions to the cast members you just watched performing on stage!



The Old Globe  
 Photo: The Old Globe

**The next post show forums are:***The Taming of the Shrew*

Tuesday, September 21

*The Madness of George III*

Wednesday, September 22

For more information on show dates and times, tickets and special events go to [www.theoldglob.org](http://www.theoldglob.org)

The Old Globe is located in San Diego's Balboa Park at 1363 Old Globe Way. There are numerous free parking lots available throughout the park. For additional parking information visit [www.BalboaPark.org](http://www.BalboaPark.org).

Interested in having your San Diego theater performance, venue, event, or other local activity featured in the San Diego Theater Guide? Send details to ErinMarie at [sdtheater.examiner@gmail.com](mailto:sdtheater.examiner@gmail.com) or Follow me on Twitter! [@SdTheaternews](https://twitter.com/SdTheaternews)

# SAN DIEGO INTERNATIONAL TIMES

June 1, 2010

YU YU

## "2010 Summer Shakespeare Festival" [2010 サマー シェイクスピア フェスティバル]

夏の野外劇場で文学史上の傑作を堪能 / 75 周年を祝う今年は「リア王」他上演



● シェイクスピアをテーマに、オールドグローブ劇場が贈る夏季恒例の野外演劇祭。1935 年より続く同イベントは今年で 75 周年を迎える。

今年の演目はシェイクスピアの 4 大悲劇の 1 つ "King Lear" (邦題『リア王』)、初期に発表された喜劇 "The Taming of the Shrew" (邦題『じゃじゃ馬ならし』)。




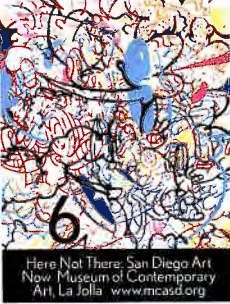


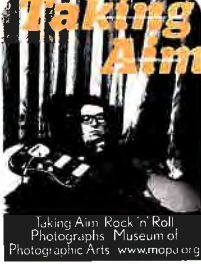





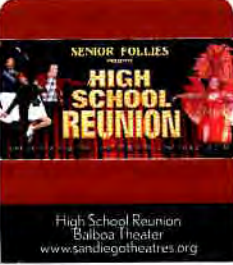


し)、イギリスの戯曲家アラン・ベネットによる "The Madness of George III" を上演。

● 以下に各演目を紹介。◆『リア王』— ブリテンの老王リアは退位にあたって、国の領土を 3 人の娘に分け与えようとする。喜んだ長女ゴネリルと次女リーガンは父親の歓心を買おうとするが、末娘コーディリアは姉たちの下心を見抜き、父親に真実のみを伝える。コーディリアの率直な物言いに激怒したリア王は、忠実な家臣ケント伯爵の忠告にも耳を貸さず、末娘を勘当してしまう。そして、ゴネリルとリーガンに全ての財産と王権を譲ったものの、態度を豹変した娘たちに追い払われてしまう。「ハムレット」「マクベス」「オセロー」と並ぶシェイクスピア悲劇。◆『じゃじゃ馬ならし』— 飲み屋を追い出され道端で眠っている酔払いスライの姿をみて、領主がイタズラを思いつく。酔いが醒めたスライに彼が領主であると信じ込ませる。そこへ旅芸人一座が現れて、劇「じゃじゃ馬ならし」を演じる。パドヴァの商人バプティスタには 2 人の娘がいた。長女カタリーナは激しい性格のじゃじゃ馬で、次女ビアンカは優しく美しい。バプティスタは数多いビアンカの求婚者たちに「カタリーナが結婚するまでビアンカは嫁に出さない」と宣言する。劇中劇で展開するシェイクスピア喜劇。◆ "The Madness of George III" (\*直訳は「ジョージ 3 世の狂気」)— 1788 年のロンドン。在位 28 年目のイギリス王ジョージ 3 世は王妃シャーロットとの間に 15 人の子供がいる。アメリカ植民地への課税が発端となり、独立戦争を招いて領土を失ったと批判を浴びていた。一方、王家を支持する政治組織と反対派が長年対立を続けていた。"The History Boys" でトニー賞を受賞したアラン・ベネットによる戯曲。

● THE GLOBE THEATRES (Lowell Davies Festival Theatre), 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park / 619-239-2255 (T)。期間— 6/12 (土) ~ 9/26 (日)。上演— 火~日曜: 8pm。※各演目のスケジュールはウェブで要確認。チケット— \$29 ~ \$78。http://www.oldglobe.org



June / Junio entertainmenttheatreconcertsgalasculture 2010

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
	 <p>1 -SEPT 5 Heroes: Mortals and Myths in Ancient Greece San Diego Museum of Art <a href="http://www.sdmart.org">www.sdmart.org</a></p>	 <p>2 Promises2Kids Gala with Pat Benatar La Jolla <a href="http://www.promises2kids.org">www.promises2kids.org</a></p>		 <p>4 Tim McGraw: Cricket Wireless Amphitheater <a href="http://www.livenation.com">www.livenation.com</a></p>	 <p>5 Encinitas Wine Festival San Diego Botanical Garden <a href="http://www.encinitaswinefestival.com">www.encinitaswinefestival.com</a></p>	 <p>6 Here Not There: San Diego Art Now Museum of Contemporary Art, La Jolla <a href="http://www.mcasd.org">www.mcasd.org</a></p>
	 <p>8 Mainly Mozart Concert Series Balboa Theater <a href="http://www.mainlymozart.org">www.mainlymozart.org</a></p>		 <p>10 World of Color Disney's California Adventure <a href="http://www.disney.com">www.disney.com</a></p>	 <p>11 The Temptations: Pechanga Resort &amp; Casino <a href="http://www.pechanga.com">www.pechanga.com</a></p>	 <p>Taking Aim: Rock 'n' Roll Photographers Museum of Photographic Arts <a href="http://www.mopa.org">www.mopa.org</a></p>	 <p>13 SAN DIEGO INTERNATIONAL WINE COMPETITION WINE AND ROSES Wine and Roses Charity Wine Tasting Westgate Hotel <a href="http://www.wineandroses.net">www.wineandroses.net</a></p>
 <p>2,3,5,6 Teatro Puntig y Coma Lyceum Space <a href="http://www.sdrep.org">www.sdrep.org</a></p>	 <p>-JULY 3 PRIVATE LIVES Old Town Theatre <a href="http://www.cygnettheatre.com">www.cygnettheatre.com</a></p>	 <p>17 Touch, Taste, Experience: Ligne Roset La Jolla RSVP: <a href="mailto:mail@ligneroset-laajolla.com">mail@ligneroset-laajolla.com</a></p>	 <p>18 KC and the Sunshine Band San Diego County Fair <a href="http://www.sdfair.com">www.sdfair.com</a></p>	 <p>BRINDIS GALA CELEBRATES 24 YEARS SATURDAY, JUNE 19, 2010 MANA Brindis San Diego Museum of Art <a href="http://www.manastd.org">www.manastd.org</a></p>	 <p>Amigos en Concierto Copley Symphony Hall <a href="http://www.sdmasterchorale.org">www.sdmasterchorale.org</a></p>	 <p>20</p>
	 <p>22</p>	 <p>Kenney Loggins San Diego County Fair <a href="http://www.sdfair.com">www.sdfair.com</a></p>	 <p>SENIOR FOLLIES HIGH SCHOOL REUNION High School Reunion Balboa Theater <a href="http://www.sandiegotheatres.org">www.sandiegotheatres.org</a></p>	 <p>25 Julio Iglesias San Diego County Fair <a href="http://www.sdfair.com">www.sdfair.com</a></p>	 <p>26 Tux'n Tennis Embarcadero Marina Park <a href="http://www.christiancommunitytheater.com">www.christiancommunitytheater.com</a></p>	 <p>Intocable San Diego County Fair <a href="http://www.sdfair.com">www.sdfair.com</a></p>
 <p>12-SEPTEMBER 26 King Lear The Old Globe <a href="http://www.oldglobe.org">www.oldglobe.org</a></p>		 <p>30 Lonestar San Diego County Fair <a href="http://www.sdfair.com">www.sdfair.com</a></p>				



## Theatre



**June 12**

### **OPENING OF OLD GLOBE THEATRE'S SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL**

Once again, summer nights in Balboa Park will come alive with the classics. The 2010 Shakespeare Festival runs June 12-Sept. 26 and begins the Old Globe Theatre's year-long celebration of its 75th Anniversary. Three dynamic Shakespeare productions—*King Lear*, *The Taming of the Shrew* and *Madness of George III* will be performed in nightly rotation in the outdoor Lowell Davies Festival Theatre. 619.234.5623 for tickets.

**JAZZTRAX SUMMER FESTIVAL**  
Performances by Mindi Abair and Eugene Groove, Nick Colionne, Alex Bugnon, Cindy Bradley, Jackiem Joyner and Steve Oliver. **Lakeside Lawn, Marina Resort, Big Bear Lake.** Through June 20. \$110-\$250. (866) 872-9849. [jazztrax.com](http://jazztrax.com).

**IRISH FAIR & MUSICAL FESTIVAL**  
Traditional Irish music, dance performances, Irish dog shows, parades, sheep herding shows, "pub grub" and drinks, **Verizon Wireless Amphitheater,** 8800 Irvine Center Dr., Irvine. Also June 20. \$15-\$22. [irishfair.org](http://irishfair.org).

**SUNDAY, JUNE 20**  
**FATHER'S DAY KAYAK ADVENTURE**  
Paddle down one of San Diego's oldest reservoirs, Lake Hodges, where

southern mixed chaparral gives way to a thin band of San Diegan coastal sage scrub, live oak woodland, and southern riparian forest. Includes kayak, equipment and paddling instruction. **San Diego Natural History Museum.** \$65.  
Information/registration: (619) 255-0203. [sdnhm.org](http://sdnhm.org).

### GET THE WORD OUT.

E-mail your calendar of events announcements to **Claire Fadden**, [cfadden@lifeafter50.com](mailto:cfadden@lifeafter50.com). Include a brief description, location, date, time, cost, phone and website. Submission does not guarantee publication. Deadline for the June issue is June 11.

## 2010 SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL



At the Old Globe's annual Shakespeare Festival, Globe associate artist Robert Foxworth plays the title role in *King Lear* and Dr. Willis in *The Madness of George III*. *King Lear* runs through Sept. 23. Other performances during the festival include: *The Taming of the Shrew* (June 16 – Sept. 26). *The Madness of King George III* (June 19 –

Sept. 24). The three productions are performed in nightly rotation. The Old Globe, Lowell Davies Festival Theatre (outdoors), 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park, San Diego. JUNE 12 – Sept. 26. \$35-\$78. (619) 234-5623. [theoldglobe.org](http://theoldglobe.org).


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# OUR CITY SAN DIEGO

Summer

2010

## OurCity Recommends



### ► Old Globe Summer Shakespeare Festival

June 12 – Sept. 26

This summer, the Old Globe will be celebrating its 75th anniversary of the Summer Shakespeare Festival with King Lear (June 12 – Sept. 23), Taming of the Shrew (June 16 – Sept. 26), and Madness of George III (June 19 – Sept. 24) performed under the stars in the outdoor Lowell Davies Theatre. Festival tickets \$75 – \$228. Contact 619-23-GLOBE or visit [TheOldGlobe.org](http://TheOldGlobe.org).

### ► Shen Yun

July 13 – 15

Experience authentic pre-communist Chinese culture through classical Chinese dance and a live orchestra. World-class performers from around the globe come together with elaborate costumes and animated backgrounds to create this elegant and explosive show. This up-lifting show is great for all ages and backgrounds. Tickets \$80 – \$200. Contact 888-973-7469 or visit [shenyunperformingarts.org](http://shenyunperformingarts.org).

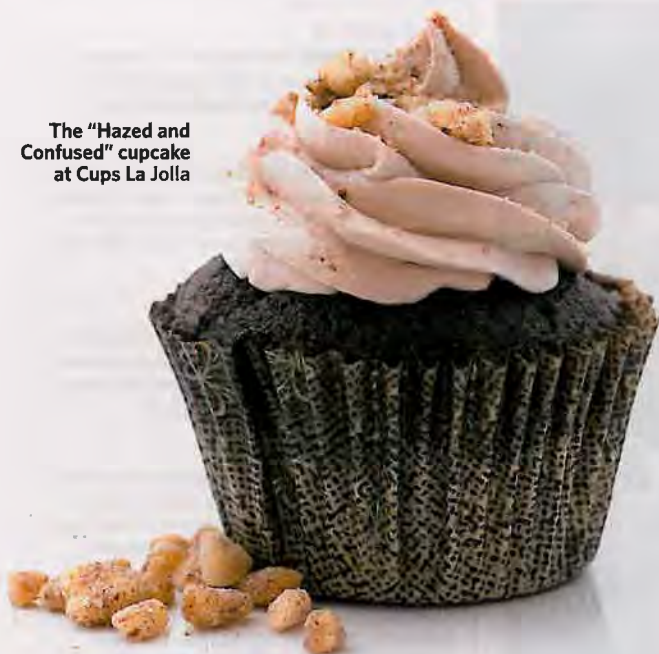
### ► Seeing Beauty

Through Jan. 2011

What is your definition of beauty? At the Seeing Beauty exhibit in the Museum of Photographic Arts, you can view various points of view on beauty. Seeing Beauty will encourage you to challenge, redefine or confirm your definition of beauty. The exhibit explores different genres of photography through various photographers. Museum admission \$4 – \$6. Contact 619-238-7559 or visit [mopa.org](http://mopa.org).

## HERE + NOW

The "Hazed and Confused" cupcake at Cups La Jolla



### DINING

#### RUNNETH OVER

Sugary sweets have been considered "junk food" for generations, and while it'd be a stretch to call cupcakes healthy, organic cupcakery **Cups** takes some of the guilt out of indulging. The stylish cupcake lounge has a sleek retro-modern design and more than 50 flavors in its repertoire, each with playful names like the Elvis (chocolate cake with banana cream filling and peanut buttercream), Fig Leap (fig cake with goat cheese frosting) and Velours Rouge (red velvet). The menu changes daily, but always includes one vegan and one gluten-free selection. 7857 Girard Ave., La Jolla, 858.459.CUPS

### THEATER

#### Get the Shakes

William Shakespeare may be 400 years past his prime, but on local stages, he's never been hotter. The Old Globe's popular **Summer Shakespeare Festival** comprises three plays—*King Lear*, *The Taming of the Shrew* and *The Madness of George III*—performed in nightly repertory on the outdoor stage (June 12–Sept. 26). The La Jolla Playhouse offers its own spin on the Bard with its exciting, "gravity-defying" production of **A Midsummer Night's Dream**, featuring an onstage orchestra playing strains of Felix Mendelssohn's score, plus aerial acrobatics, puppetry and more. Helmed by LJP's Tony-nominated artistic director Christopher Ashley, it runs July 20–Aug. 22. p. 55–56



Old Globe Theatre



# PRESIDIO SENTINEL

July 2010

## THEATRE IN SAN DIEGO

### The Old Globe

**"Robin and the 7 Hoods,"** a new musical, with lyrics by Sammy Cahn, music by Jimmy Van Heusen, based on the original screenplay by David R. Schwartz, and directed and choreo-



**Robert Foxworth as King Lear in the 2010 Shakespeare Festival production of *King Lear*.**

graphed by Casey Nicholaw, runs from July 14 through August. 22.

When Robbo, a fast-rising entrepreneur in Chicago's sophisticated nightclub scene, finds himself wanted by both sides of the law, he and his merry band quickly learn that a few wrongs – and a few songs – could make things right.

The Old Globe is located in San Diego's Balboa Park at 1363 Old Globe Way. For tickets and information, call (619) 23-GLOBE [234-5623].

**"King Lear,"** by William Shakespeare and directed by Adrian Noble, runs through Sept. 23 at the Lowell Davies Festival Theatre in Balboa Park.

Lear, an aging monarch, has decided to divide his kingdom between his three daughters – each to receive land and wealth in proportion to their declaration of love for him. Two of them compete to

flatter their father, while the one loving daughter, Cordelia, refuses to play the game and is exiled. Seduced by his daughters' flattery, Lear sets in motion a catastrophic series of events that will destroy his kingdom, his family and ultimately his sanity.

The Old Globe is located in San Diego's Balboa Park at 1363 Old Globe Way. For tickets and information, call (619) 23-GLOBE [234-5623].

**"The Taming of the Shrew,"** by William Shakespeare and directed by Adrian Noble runs through Sept. 26 at the Lowell Davies Festival Theatre in Balboa Park.

Baptista has two daughters that need to be married off – Bianca; docile, beautiful and much sought after by the noble men of the town, and Katherine; ill-tempered and shrewish, with an acid tongue that no man can tame. As the oldest, Katherine must marry first – not that she much cares. Bianca's many suitors can't afford to wait, so in a wild scheme to find a husband for Katherine, they convince the wily Petruchio to take on the challenge of domesticating the willful "shrew."

The Old Globe is located in San Diego's Balboa Park at 1363 Old Globe Way. For tickets and information, call (619) 23-GLOBE [234-5623].

# NORTH COUNTY TIMES

June 20, 2010

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**✓ Check  
it out...**

## ⌘ THEATER



### **"KING LEAR"**

#### **Opens Saturday in Balboa Park**

Shakespeare's epic tragedy opens the Old Globe's 2010 Summer Shakespeare Festival, which features three plays in repertory through late September. Robert Foxworth — known for his TV roles on "Falcon Crest" and "Six Feet Under," as well as his stage roles at the Globe — plays Shakespeare's foolish English ruler whose vanity destroys his kingdom. Royal Shakespeare Festival veteran directs the production on the Globe's outdoor festival stage. Performances are at 8 p.m. Dates vary. Tickets are \$29-\$78. For a full schedule, call 619-234-5623 or [theoldglobe.org](http://theoldglobe.org).

— Pam Kragen, arts editor

# SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE

June 25, 2010

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## **THEATER:** FESTIVAL FAVORITE

Summer in San Diego means Shakespeare at the Old Globe. It officially gets under way Saturday as "King Lear" opens on the outdoor stage. Adrian Nobel, the festival's new head, directs. [oldglobe.org](http://oldglobe.org)

# Weekend

ND | NIGHT & DAY



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movies • music • tv • arts

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# LA JOLLA LIGHT

June 24, 2010

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**SUMMER SHAKESPEARE** Robert Foxworth as King Lear and Emily Swallow as Goneril in the 2010 Shakespeare Festival production of 'King Lear,' directed by Adrian Noble. Through Sept. 23 in repertory at The Old Globe. \$29-\$89. (619) 234-5623, [www.theoldglobe.org](http://www.theoldglobe.org). CRAIG SCHWARTZ



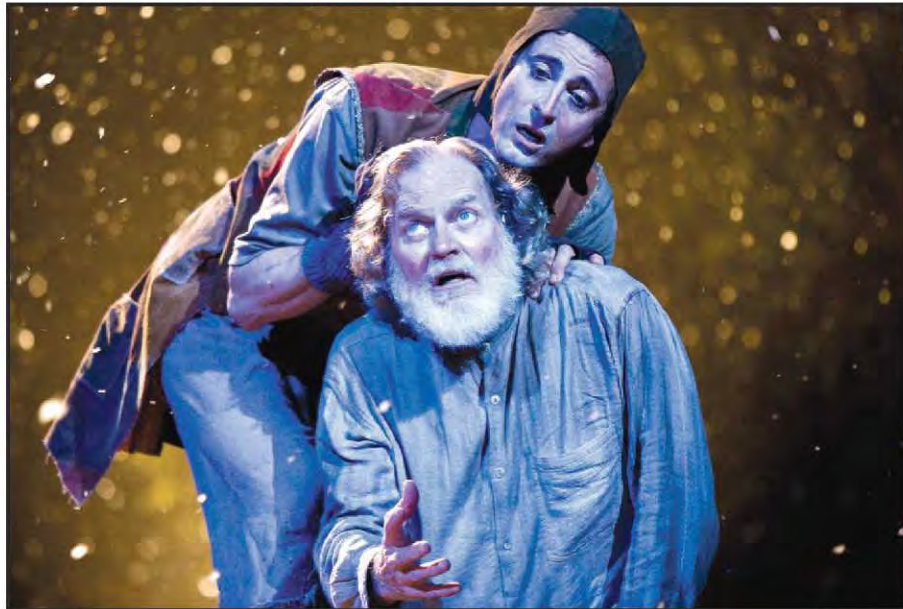
# SAN DIEGO READER

July 22, 2010

CALENDAR

Calendar  
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LISTINGS



King Lear

## King Lear

In Adrian Noble's valuable book *How to Do Shakespeare*, the former artistic director of the Royal Shakespeare Company teaches a master class on the subject. His direction of *King Lear* at the Old Globe puts his teachings into practice. I have never heard the story told better. Like *Coriolanus*, whose "heart's his mouth," the cast makes thought and speech one. Bruce Turk's nimble Fool, Catherine Gowf's firm Cordelia, Jonno Roberts's Edmund (as funny as he is vile), and especially Jay Whittaker's multi-voiced Edgar make each moment brand

new. Robert Foxworth's Lear begins puffed up and regal and ends, 20 years older, like a dying candle extinguished by its wax. But his always-competent performance lacks size. Foxworth could tweak the narcissism and suggest that it masks a profound instability at the King's core. Dierdre Clancy's costumes begin upscale, in the 18th century, and then fan out as they come forward in time. Ralph Funicello's spare set includes dark, castle-high walls and autumn leaves on the floor (swept away in the wintry second act). Shaun Davey's original music handles the entrances well but is absolutely unnecessary when Lear and Cordelia reunite (she, strangely, not in his arms). At this point the audience doesn't need music to tell them how to feel! (Note: *King Lear* runs in repertory with *The Taming of the Shrew* and *The Madness of George III*; call the theater for days and times of each.)

### Critic's pick.

OLD GLOBE THEATRE, 1363 OLD GLOBE WAY, BALBOA PARK. 619-234-5623. 8PM THURSDAYS, 8PM FRIDAYS, 8PM SATURDAYS, 8PM SUNDAYS, 8PM TUESDAYS, 8PM WEDNESDAYS, THROUGH SEPTEMBER 23.

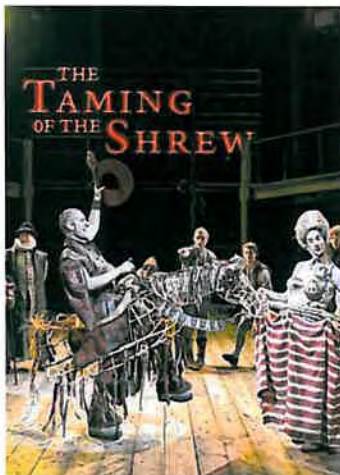
# NORTH COUNTY TIMES

June 27, 2010

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**Check  
it out...**

## ⌘ THEATER



### **"THE TAMING OF THE SHREW"**

**Previews begin Sunday  
in San Diego**

The Old Globe's 2010 Summer Shakespeare Festival features Shakespeare's comedy about a fortune-hunting rogue who marries a temperamental woman for her family's fortune and seeks to kill her with kindness, directed by Ron Daniels and starring Jonno Roberts and Emily Swallow. Previews begin at 8 p.m. Sunday and Tuesday with regular shows beginning at 8 p.m. July 7. The play will rotate in repertory with "King Lear" and "The Madness of George III" through late September on the Globe's outdoor Lowell Davies Festival Theatre stage in Balboa Park; \$29-\$78 (there will be 14 seats onstage, priced at \$19, for each performance; 619-234-5623 or [theoldglobe.org](http://theoldglobe.org)).

# SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE

July 8, 2010

NIGHT & DAY

## PLAYBILL



### THORNY ISSUES UNTAMED

Emily Swallow as Katherine in the 2010 Shakespeare Festival production of "The Taming of the Shrew" directed by Ron Daniels, at The Old Globe. It's playing at the Globe through Sept. 26. *Craig Schwartz*



# SAN DIEGO READER

July 22, 2010

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The Taming of the Shrew

## The Taming of the Shrew

Shakespeare's Petruchio is either played as an icon of male dominance or an abusive sexist swine. For the Old Globe, inventive director Ron Daniels negotiates a third possibility: as played by Jonno Roberts, he's a bumbling "rudesby" who may never have woo'd before. He and Kate (Emily Swallow) experience love at first sight, and she goes along with him. The strategy works, at least until the curtain falls. Roberts and Swallow are always entertaining, but it's hard to believe that even a Kate in love could withstand Petruchio's boot camp tactics. Bruce Turk (Grumio) and Donald Carrier (Hortensio) head a strong supporting cast (Bree Welch and Shirine Babb, as Bianca and a rich widow, suggest that marriage to these newlyweds will be no honeymoon). The director turns Ralph Funicello's spare, useful set into a hybrid world: part Late-Renaissance, part today, the latter

including moves and gestures for the groundling in us all.

### Worth a try.

(Note: *Shrew* runs in repertory with *King Lear* and *The Madness of George III*.)

OLD GLOBE THEATRE, 1363 OLD GLOBE WAY, BALBOA PARK. 619 234 5623. 8PM THURSDAYS, 8PM FRIDAYS, 8PM SATURDAYS, 8PM SUNDAYS, 8PM TUESDAYS, 8PM WEDNESDAYS, THROUGH SEPTEMBER 26.



# LA JOLLA LIGHT

July 1, 2010

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**IN REPERTORY** Miles Anderson stars in 'The Madness of George III,' 8 p.m. July 3-Sept. 24, at the Old Globe's Lowell Davies Festival Theatre, Balboa Park. Post-show forums July 13, Aug. 31 and Sept. 22. \$29-\$78. (619) 234-5623, [www.BalboaPark.org](http://www.BalboaPark.org). COURTESY

# DEL MAR TIMES

July 2, 2010

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**IN REPERTORY** Miles Anderson stars in 'The Madness of George III,' 8 p.m. July 3-Sept. 24, at the Old Globe's Lowell Davies Festival Theatre, Balboa Park. Post-show forums July 13, Aug. 31 and Sept. 22. \$29-\$78. (619) 234-5623, [www.BalboaPark.org](http://www.BalboaPark.org). COURTESY

# CARMEL VALLEY NEWS

July 1, 2010

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**IN REPERTORY** Miles Anderson stars in 'The Madness of George III,' 8 p.m. July 3-Sept. 24, at the Old Globe's Lowell Davies Festival Theatre, Balboa Park. Post-show forums July 13, Aug. 31 and Sept. 22. \$29-\$78. (619) 234-5623, [www.BalboaPark.org](http://www.BalboaPark.org). COURTESY

# SAN DIEGO DOWNTOWN NEWS

September 2010

## URBAN ARTS



Starring in "MiXtape, a Musical Journey Through the '80s," making its world premiere at Lamb's Players Theatre, are (from left) Spencer Rowe, Season Marshall Duffy, Louis Pardo and Joy Yandell.

Photo by J.T. McMillan

### 'The Last Romance,' 'MiXtape' and Sutton Foster



THE LIVELY  
ARTS  
Charlene Baldrige

What happened to summer? Not ready to fall into fall just yet? It's still summertime on San Diego stages. Just take a look:

#### At the Old Globe

- All are recommended: Joe DiPietro's gentle romantic comedy, "The Last Romance," with Marion Ross, Paul Michael and Patricia Conolly plays through Sept. 12.
- Shakespeare's "King Lear" and "The Taming of the Shrew" continue in rotating repertory through Sept. 23 and 26, along with "The Madness of King George," which continues through Sept. 24. Information: [www.theoldglobe.com](http://www.theoldglobe.com) or (619) 23-GLOBE.

#### At the Horton Grand Theatre

- Lamb's Players Theatre presents the world premiere of "MiXtape, a Musical Journey Through the '80s," created by Jon Lorenz and Colleen Kollar

Smith and directed by Kerry Meads at the gemlike theater located at 444 4th Ave. in the Gaslamp Quarter. Information: [www.lambplayers.org](http://www.lambplayers.org) or (619) 437-6000.

#### At the Balboa Theatre

- Saturday, Sept. 25, 4 p.m., the 2010 regional champions, San Diego Chorus Sweet Adelines, presents its annual show, featuring four-part harmony "songs from today and yesterday" at the acoustically-excellent theater, 868 Fourth Ave. at E Street in the Gaslamp Quarter. Information: <http://sdchorus.org> or (619) 685-3385.

- Friday, Oct. 1, 8 p.m., dynamite Broadway star Sutton Foster, who got her start at La Jolla Playhouse in the title role of "Thoroughly Modern Millie," appears in a cabaret concert accompanied by Michael Rafter. Information: [www.broadwaysd.com/suttonfoster](http://www.broadwaysd.com/suttonfoster) or ticketmaster.

#### At the Lyceum

- Sept. 24-Oct. 10, San Diego Musical Theatre presents Leiber and Stoller's "Smoky Joe's Café," which presents the golden age of rock with hits from Elvis, the Drifters, Dion, the Coasters and Ben E King. The Lyceum is located at San Diego Repertory Theatre, 79 Horton Plaza. Information: [www.sdmt.org](http://www.sdmt.org) or (858) 560-5740



## PLAYBILL

### Critic's Choice

**'King Lear':** In Adrian Noble's lucid and moving production for the Old Globe Shakespeare Festival, a fine ensemble cast speaks the classic tragedy's poetry with a crispness that informs nearly every aspect of the show. Robert Foxworth is an understated but achingly tormented Lear, and the staging has a spare but sometimes magical visual sense. (Hebert) Lowell Davies Festival Theatre, 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park. Through Sept. 23. (619) 234-5623, oldglobe.org. \$29-\$78.

**'The Last Romance':** When widower Ralph unexpectedly deviates from his daily routine, his life takes a sudden detour. Life becomes exciting once again when he meets an elegant woman at the dog park. Real-life couple Marion Ross and Paul Michael star in Joe DiPietro's tender romantic comedy that serves as a reminder that time is short and, regardless of age, life should be lived to the fullest. (Klam) Sheryl & Harvey White Theatre, 1362 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park. Through Sept. 12. (619) 234-5623, oldglobe.org. \$29-\$62.

**'The Taming of the Shrew':** Go to see the crackling performances of Emily Swallow as Kate and Jonno Roberts as Petruchio and grit your teeth, if you must, over the problematic gender politics of Shakespeare's much-debated romcom. Director Ron Daniels doesn't totally solve the play's thorny thematic issues (nor the somewhat wandering feel of the second act), but his inventive and loose-limbed staging brings the fun nonetheless. (Hebert) Lowell Davies Festival Theatre, 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park. Through Sept. 26. (619) 234-5623, oldglobe.org.

# SAN DIEGO READER

September 9, 2010

CALENDAR

## Calendar THEATER

## THEATER LISTINGS



**King Lear:** Spare set includes castle-high walls

*How to Do Shakespeare*, the former artistic director of the Royal Shakespeare Company teaches a master class on the subject. His direction of *King Lear* at the Old Globe puts his teachings into practice. I have never heard the story told better. Like Coriolanus, whose "heart's his mouth," the cast makes thought and speech one. Bruce Turk's nimble Fool, Catherine Gowl's firm Cordelia, Jonno Roberts's Edmund (as funny as he is vile), and especially Jay Whittaker's multivoiced Edgar make each moment brand new. Robert Foxworth's Lear begins puffed up and regal and

ends, 20 years older, like a dying candle extinguished by its wax. But his always-competent performance lacks size. Foxworth could tweak the narcissism and suggest that it masks a profound instability at the King's core. Deirdre Clancy's costumes begin upscale, in the 18th Century, and then fan out as they come forward in time. Ralph Funicello's spare set includes dark, castle-high walls and autumn leaves on the floor (swept away in the wintry second act). Shaun Davey's original music handles the entrances well but is absolutely unnecessary when Lear and Cordelia reunite

(she, strangely, not in his arms). At this point the audience doesn't need music to tell them how to feel! (Note: *King Lear* runs in repertory with *The Taming of the Shrew* and *The Madness of George III*; call the theater for days and times of each.)

### Critic's pick.

OLD GLOBE THEATRE, 1363 OLD GLOBE WAY, BALBOA PARK. 619-234-5623. 8PM THURSDAYS, 8PM FRIDAYS, 8PM SATURDAYS, 8PM SUNDAYS, 8PM TUESDAYS, 8PM WEDNESDAYS, THROUGH SEPTEMBER 23.

### **The Last Romance**

It helps that Joe Di Pietro wrote this lightweight charmer for Marion Ross and her husband, Paul Michael. Their backstory proves that the play's theme is possible. Eighty-three-year-old Raphael Bellini (two great Italian artists in one name) has walked the same walk for years. In a play loaded with life-changing events, he takes a different path and meets Carol Reynolds. They slowly grow together (but have secrets, and will they become like an opera's plot: people meet but can't get together "because life gets in the way"?). The script's complications are predictable and a mite forced. What works is Ross and Michael's interplay. The actors are obviously having fun meeting each other, as it were, for the first time. Patricia Conolly plays Ralph's potentially spurned sister Rose with crusty conviction. Joshua Jeremiah performs during scene changes with a big, operatic voice. And in keeping with the theme, designer Alexander Dodge crowns the stage with

a wreath of autumn leaves.

### Worth a try.

OLD GLOBE THEATRE, 1363 OLD GLOBE WAY, BALBOA PARK. 619-234-5623. 8PM THURSDAY, 8PM FRIDAYS, 2PM AND 8PM SATURDAY, 2PM SUNDAY, THROUGH SEPTEMBER 12.

### **The Madness of George III**

In Alan Bennett's drama, "mad King George" isn't. Unlike *King Lear*, whose mania sears his synapses, George only has the symptoms, but enough of them to prompt the Regency Crisis of 1788 (since his condition could topple the government). A battery of doctors, a hypochondriac's nightmare in powdered wigs, try to heal the king but only exacerbate the condition. At the Old Globe, Miles Anderson plays George III like an inverted iceberg: deep down, at the tip, he's sane. Everything else becomes a burden that Andrews, in an exceptional performance, overcomes, thanks to a man named Willis. Under Adrian Noble's inventive direction (the cast runs in and out of eight mirrored double doors with the speed of farce),

the Globe's summer festival intersects in Willis: his authoritarian tactics recall Petruchio (in *Shrew*); and Robert Foxworth plays Willis and also *King Lear* (to whom George is often compared). Andrew Dahl's a kick as the Prince of Wales, a corpulent poseur, Emily Swallow gives the Queen a loving patience, and Jay Whittaker's William Pitt exudes an almost insane ferocity. Bruce Turk, Adrian Sparks, and Joseph Marcell make the attending physicians (and their medieval cures) eerily absurdist. But like the king, they only seem mad. (Note: *Madness* runs in repertory with *King Lear* and *The Taming of the Shrew*.)

### Worth a try.

OLD GLOBE THEATRE, 1363 OLD GLOBE WAY, BALBOA PARK. 619-234-5623. 8PM THURSDAYS, 8PM FRIDAYS, 8PM SATURDAYS, 8PM SUNDAYS, 8PM TUESDAYS, 8PM WEDNESDAYS, THROUGH SEPTEMBER 24.

### **King Lear**

In Adrian Noble's valuable book



**APPLAUSE** by Phyllis DeBlanche

## Getting Playful

**Making Music(al):** New Village Arts Theatre heads *Into the Woods* for some Sondheim—and the Carlsbad company's first musical—Sept. 23–Oct. 31 (760-433-3245, newvillagearts.org).

**Run for the Poses:** The well-known derby-wearing actor comes to life at La Jolla Playhouse in the premiere of *Limelight: The Story of Charlie Chaplin*, Sept. 7–Oct. 17. LJP's Potiker Theatre highlights *Notes from Underground*, Dostoevsky's seminal work, Sept. 17–Oct. 17 (858-550-1010, lajollaplayhouse.org).

**Simonizing:** The Globe continues its repertory ways with Neil Simon's *Broadway Bound* and *Brighton Beach Memoirs*, rotating

on the main stage Sept. 14–Nov. 17; the Lowell Davies Festival Theatre takes turns outdoors with *King Lear*, *The Taming of the Shrew* and *The Madness of George III*, through Sept. 26; following *The Last Romance*, extended through Sept. 12, the Sheryl & Harvey White Theatre hosts *Welcome to Arroyo* Sept. 25–Oct. 31, (619-234-5623, theoldglobe.org).

**Rabbit Punch:** Lamb's Players' hugely popular *Harvey* pushed its premiere of '80s-revisiting *miXtape* to the company's Gaslamp venue, where the *Boomers* wanna-be is slated through Sept. 26—and hoping for extensions of its own, as *Smoke on the Mountain* wafts over to Coronado Sept. 2–19 (619-437-0600, lambsplayers.org).

**Is Lawrence Rolling or Laughing?** *The Full Monty* might be just about the last show one would expect at the Welk Resorts Theatre, but the Escondido stage has a few sly tricks up its ... sleeve. The nearly-nude hilarity (Sept. 6–Oct. 17) takes off after a somewhat more sedate appearance by Mitzi Gaynor in *Razzle Dazzle: My Life Behind the Sequins*, Sept. 2–5 (888-802-SHOW, welktheatresandiego.com).

**Getting a Comedy Rep:** North Coast Repertory Theatre takes *Becky's New Car* for a comedic spin in Solana Beach Sept. 1–26 (858-481-1055, northcoastrep.org); downtown, the San Diego Rep takes a bite out of *Superior Donuts*, Sept. 25–Oct. 24 (619-544-1000, sdrep.org).

**By the Light of the Moon:** Starlight invites audiences to greet *Hello, Dolly* through Sept. 5 in Balboa Park (619-232-7827, starlighttheatre.org); Moonlight says farewell to *Miss Saigon* Sept. 8–25 in Vista (760-724-2110, moonlightstage.com).

**Mistress Distress:** *Gigi* examines the education of a courtesan who discovers she'd rather be a missus. Lyric Opera San Diego re-creates Paris for the Lerner and Loewe musical, Sept. 25–Oct. 3 (619-239-8836; lyricoperasandiego.org).

## Artful PLEASURES

**Arty Parties:** A few good ways to celebrate Arts Month San Diego: The 111 dazzling images in the sixth annual "Art of Photography Show" line the Lyceum Theatre lobby Aug. 28–Nov. 7 (619-825-5575, artofphotographyshow.com). "Art and the Animal" crawls, flies and gallops into the San Diego Natural History Museum, Sept. 4–Oct. 31 (619-232-3821, sdnhm.org). The Hilton San Diego Bayfront hosts the Art San Diego Contemporary Art Fair, Sept. 2–5, with more than 50 galleries participating (artssandiego-fair.com). The delicate subject of one's delicates intrigued artist Natasha Zupan so much that she created paintings with lingerie, on display in "Flesh Folds" at Alexander Salazar Fine Art Sept. 20–31, with a reception Sept. 24 (619-531-8996, alexandersalazarfineart.com, natashazupan.com).

CRAIG SCHWARTZ

Charlie Chaplin (played by Robert McClure) woos Oona O'Neill (Ashley Brown) in La Jolla Playhouse's *Limelight*.

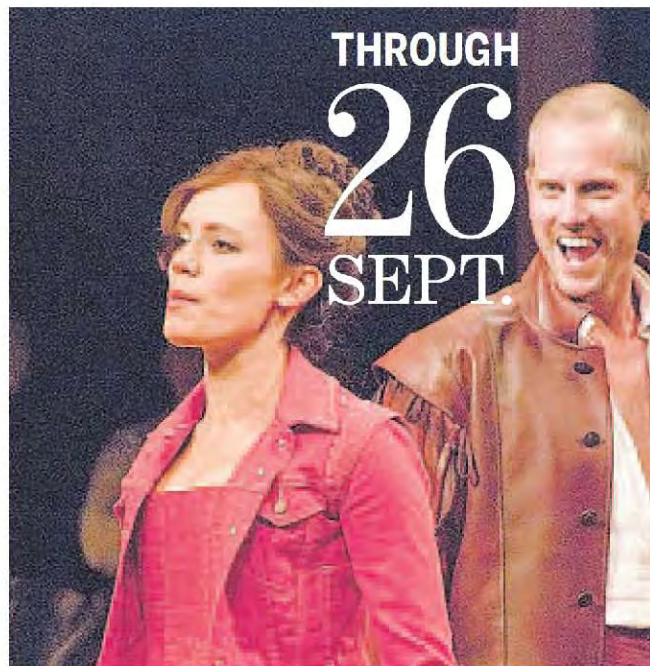




# SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE

September 19, 2010

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## **Summer Shakespeare Festival**

Old Globe Theatre: (619) 234-5623, [theoldglobe.org](http://theoldglobe.org)

This week marks the last chance to see the three plays in the Globe's Shakespeare fest: "The Taming of the Shrew" (today, Tuesday, Saturday and next Sunday), "King Lear" (Thursday) and "The Madness of George III" (Wednesday and Friday). Get in before they're gone.



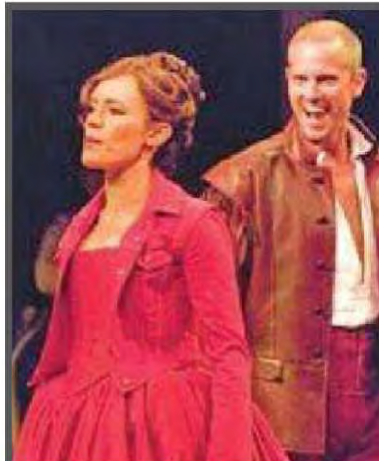
# GAY & LESBIAN TIMES

September 2, 2010

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**Thursday, Sept. 9th**

**Taming of the Shrew** – The Old Globe Theatre will be presenting the



**Thursday, Sept. 9st**

"Taming of the Shrew" on Thursday, September 9th at 8 p.m. Shakespeare's "The Taming of the Shrew" is the quintessential battle-of-the-sexes comedy! Baptista has two daughters that need to be married off – Bianca; docile, beautiful and much sought after by the noble men of the town, and Katherine; ill-tempered and shrewish, with an acid tongue that no man can tame. As the oldest, Katherine must marry first – not that she much cares. Bianca's many suitors can't afford to wait, so in a wild scheme to find a husband for Katherine, they convince the wily Petruchio to take on the challenge of domesticating the willful "shrew." Can Petruchio subdue Katherine's temper and win her bountiful dowry, or will she continue her shrewish ways? For more information or for tickets, visit [www.theoldglobe.org](http://www.theoldglobe.org). ●

# LOS ANGELES TIMES

September 19, 2010

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## Critics' Choices

**The Taming of the Shrew** Fetching leads Jonno Roberts and Emily Swallow bring real chemistry and imaginative empathy to this agreeable revival, creating a genuine romance that carries the show. Director Ron Daniels simply presents unsavory thematic elements as factors of Shakespeare's era while keeping one eye on our own, which goes double for the cast (D.C.N.). The Old Globe, 1363 Old Globe Way, San Diego. Today, Tue. and next Sun., 7 p.m.; Sat., 8 p.m.; ends next Sun. \$29-\$67. (619) 234-5623.

# LOS ANGELES TIMES

September 26, 2010

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## Critics' Choices

**The Taming of the Shrew** Fetching leads Jonno Roberts and Emily Swallow bring real chemistry and imaginative empathy to this agreeable revival of the Bard's un-PC crowd-pleaser, creating a genuine romance that carries the show. (D.C.N.). The Old Globe, 1363 Old Globe Way, San Diego. Ends today. \$29-\$67. (619) 234-5623.

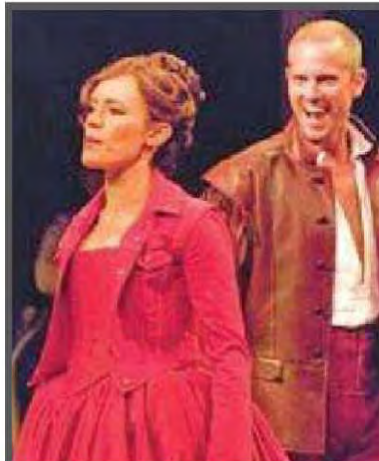
# GAY & LESBIAN TIMES

September 2, 2010

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**Thursday, Sept. 9th**

**Taming of the Shrew** – The Old Globe Theatre will be presenting the



**Thursday, Sept. 9st**

"Taming of the Shrew" on Thursday, September 9th at 8 p.m. Shakespeare's "The Taming of the Shrew" is the quintessential battle-of-the-sexes comedy! Baptista has two daughters that need to be married off – Bianca; docile, beautiful and much sought after by the noble men of the town, and Katherine; ill-tempered and shrewish, with an acid tongue that no man can tame. As the oldest, Katherine must marry first – not that she much cares. Bianca's many suitors can't afford to wait, so in a wild scheme to find a husband for Katherine, they convince the wily Petruchio to take on the challenge of domesticating the willful "shrew." Can Petruchio subdue Katherine's temper and win her bountiful dowry, or will she continue her shrewish ways? For more information or for tickets, visit [www.theoldglobe.org](http://www.theoldglobe.org). ●



# LOS ANGELES TIMES

September 19, 2010

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## Critics' Choices

**The Taming of the Shrew** Fetching leads Jonno Roberts and Emily Swallow bring real chemistry and imaginative empathy to this agreeable revival, creating a genuine romance that carries the show. Director Ron Daniels simply presents unsavory thematic elements as factors of Shakespeare's era while keeping one eye on our own, which goes double for the cast (D.C.N.). The Old Globe, 1363 Old Globe Way, San Diego. Today, Tue. and next Sun., 7 p.m.; Sat., 8 p.m.; ends next Sun. \$29-\$67. (619) 234-5623.

# LOS ANGELES TIMES

September 26, 2010

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## Critics' Choices

**The Taming of the Shrew** Fetching leads Jonno Roberts and Emily Swallow bring real chemistry and imaginative empathy to this agreeable revival of the Bard's un-PC crowd-pleaser, creating a genuine romance that carries the show. (D.C.N.). The Old Globe, 1363 Old Globe Way, San Diego. Ends today. \$29-\$67. (619) 234-5623.

## PLAYBILL

### Critic's Choice

**'Becky's New Car':** Steven Dietz's bittersweet charmer of a tale is a kind of midlife coming-of-age saga. The inspired Carla Harting (a UCSD alum and off-Broadway powerhouse) lends beautiful dimension to central character Becky with her disarming smile and gleefully conspiratorial bond with the audience. She also matches up well with Mark Pinter, who has just the right feel for the blithe naiveté of the rich widower Walter, an unexpected presence in the married Becky's life. David Ellenstein directs with a fluid feel for the piece's mix of wit and wistfulness; it's a show whose laughs (if not always its ultimate lessons) feel earned. (James Hebert) North Coast Repertory Theatre, 987 Lomas Santa Fe Drive, Solana Beach. Through Sept.

26. (858) 481-1055, northcoastrep.org. \$37.

**'Eleemosynary':** Lee Blessing's play jumps through time to illuminate the lives of three extraordinary — if damaged — women, and how familial bonds twist and bend but never fully break. Led by director Chelsea Whitmore and a fine cast consisting of Rhona Gold, Julie Anderson Sachs and Rachael VanWormer, Moxie Theatre delivers a humorous, poetic and sometimes poignant staging of Blessing's flawed drama. (Jennifer Chung Klam) Moxie Theatre, 6663 El Cajon Blvd., Rolando. Through Sept. 26. (858) 598-7620. \$25.

**'King Lear':** In Adrian Noble's lucid and moving production for the Old Globe Shakespeare Festival, a fine ensemble cast speaks the classic tragedy's poetry with a crispness that

SEE PLAYBILL • 12

## PLAYBILL

### FROM 11

informs nearly every aspect of the show. Robert Foxworth is an understated but achingly tormented Lear, and the staging has a spare but sometimes magical visual sense. (Hebert) Lowell Davies Festival Theatre, 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park. Through Sept. 23. (619) 234-5623, oldglobe.org. \$29-\$78.

**'miXtape':** This sprawling musical revue, written by Lamb's regulars Jon Lorenz and Colleen Kollar Smith, pinballs so dizzyingly through the pop-culture milestones of the 1980s that its theme song could be X's "Breathless." Yet the show hangs together admirably for the most part, thanks to versatile performers, a crack band, director Kerry Meads' turn-on-a-dime staging and the writers' savvy concept, which

uses the iconic idea of an old-school cassette mix-tape as a pretext for flashdancing through nearly every '80s phenom imaginable. (Hebert) Horton Grand Theatre, 444 Fourth Ave., Marina. Through Sept. 26. (619) 437-6000, lambsplayers.org. \$28-\$58.

**'The Norman Conquests: Table Manners':** There is everything to like about this show, starting with the fact that Cygnet Theatre has taken on the challenge of doing all three of Alan Ayckbourn's "Norman Conquest" plays in rotation. In "Table Manners," directors Sean Murray and Francis Gercke achieve a superb balance between heartbreaking moments and downright slapstick. Albert Dayan plays the hapless Norman with a zany physicality, as if possessed by the spirit of Isadora Duncan. (Janice Steinberg) Cygnet Theatre In Old Town, 4040 Twiggs St., Old Town. Through Nov. 6. (619) 337-1525,

cygnettheatre.com. \$34-\$49.

**'Smoke on the Mountain':** The comic saga of the singin' Sanders family hits Lamb's once again; Connie Ray's musical revue is as light as a turkey feather, but the cast's strong performances make the most of the folksy fun. (Hebert) Lamb's Players Theatre, 1142 Orange Ave., Coronado. Through Sept. 19. (619) 437-6000, lambsplayers.org. \$38-\$48.

**'The Taming of the Shrew':** Go to see the crackling performances of Emily Swallow as Kate and Jonno Roberts as Petruchio and grit your teeth, if you must, over the problematic gender politics of Shakespeare's much-debated romcom. Director Ron Daniels doesn't totally solve the play's thorny thematic issues (nor the somewhat wandering feel of the second act), but his inventive and loose-limbed staging brings the fun nonetheless. (Hebert) Lowell Davies

# Giving Back

September 2010

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## arts

BY EDWIN RENDÓN

OLD GLOBE THEATRE:

**THE SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL AT LOWELL DAVIES THEATRE**



Summer days might almost be over, but in San Diego this time of year is just right for a play, under a starry night sky. Join the Old Globe for the last month of their highly-regarded Shakespeare Festival on the lawn for an acid tongue woman no man can tame, a deteriorating Crown driven into madness or a kingdom destroyed by family division. The Taming of the Shrew is the quintessential battle-of-the-sexes comedy while King Lear is the ultimate family drama

told against a background of intense political intrigue. The Madness of George III is a masterpiece of royal intrigue that explores a man's determination to hold on to political power despite those around him. Choices must be made in all plays but make sure yours is to bring a blanket! Now – [September 26th](#)



Launer's cancellation, the Circle gala will be especially visible this year, which is precisely why a note of caution about the group's internal conduct is in order.

### The past as prologue?



I'd love to be able to report recent history on the matter; fact is, however, that at least two respected and longtime Circle representatives allegedly (and to this day) characterize my arbitrary decision not to join the group as "unforgivable," after which they've pretty much relegated me to

*persona non grata* status among collective membership. Not exactly the climate for free-flowing debate about local theater, much less an inducement to attend a meeting—in any event, please note that any firsthand impressions I convey about the group were gathered quite some time ago.

That was in 2004, to be exact, when I first approached the Circle about membership. Lots of legitimate questions about San Diego theater were raised at the three parleys I went to (one of which featured a very nice dinner at The Park House in University Heights; I had pork chops)—the problem was that no discernible answers were forthcoming. Hastily scribbled check-marks on dog-eared ballots (hastily furnished by an equally dog-eared committee member) and vociferous free-for-all replaced considered discussion about stage content; good queries about the nature of coverage were drowned out by at least 73 opinions about at least 73 separate shows.

One member e-mailed me in explanation that the meetings were a forum for the group to "let off steam"; after what I saw, I took that to mean that service to the readerships is a secondary concern and decided to put as many miles between myself and the group as possible.

### Rehearsals once a month

No, decorum was not the Circle's strong suit on those occasions, and I'm given to understand that things are about the same today; this doesn't exactly inspire confidence in a nine-member group that reportedly can't bring itself to meet once a month to boot. If you had to direct a play with nine cast members and couldn't get everybody together to rehearse at least every 30 days, you'd stage what you deserve.

The San Diego Theatre Critics Circle features some very, very fine writers and I trust that its annual awards show (which I've never attended) reflects their expertise. That's a very important hypothetical right now, as, for the moment, the group is the only game in town.

But as the theater community's anticipations turn to evening finery and make-up bases in the next many weeks, it may want to hold aside a thought for an assessment of the subsurface. While its lone ceremony will likely be a lovely affair, the hosts might have come by it amid ill-considered information. Beauty, after all, is only skin-deep—and sometimes, that's because its foundation is equally shallow.

### NOW PLAYING

\* **King Lear:** The aging regent seeks to bequeath his kingdom to his three daughters in proportion to their love for him. Through Sept. 23 at The Old Globe Theatre's Lowell Davies Festival Theatre in Balboa Park. \$29-\$56. [oldglobe.org](http://oldglobe.org)

**The Madness of George III:** The King of England slides into insanity following his country's loss in the American Revolution. Through Sept. 24 at The Old Globe Theatre's Lowell Davies Festival Theatre in Balboa Park. \$29-\$56. [oldglobe.org](http://oldglobe.org)

\* **Miss Saigon:**

Kim, a Vietnamese bar girl, pays the ultimate price three years after the birth of her son by an American G.I. Through Sept. 25 at Moonlight Amphitheatre in Vista. \$22-\$45. [moonlightstage.com](http://moonlightstage.com)



**Shotgun Wedding Anniversary:** Basil and Petals are marking 25 crappy years of marriage, and the celebration just may end in murder. Produced by Mystery Café, it runs through Sept. 25 at Imperial House restaurant in Bankers Hill. \$59.50 with dinner. [mysterycafe.net](http://mysterycafe.net)

\* **Becky's New Car:** Becky Foster, beset by middle-age wanderlust, takes the bull by the horns and drives into a new life. Through Sept. 26 at North Coast Repertory Theatre in Solana Beach. \$30-\$41. [northcoastrep.org](http://northcoastrep.org)

**Eleemosynary:** A woman of some means is at the heart of a faltering family that needs reconnecting and forgiveness within. Produced by MOXIE Theatre, it runs through Sept. 26 at The Rolando Theatre in the College Area. \$20. [moxietheatre.com](http://moxietheatre.com)

\* **The Taming of the Shrew:** Petruchio has all kinds of tricks up his sleeve to tame Katherine and woo her to the altar. Through Sept. 26 at the Old Globe [oldglobe.org](http://oldglobe.org)

**Limelight:**

The Story of Charlie Chaplin: Soaring success and a fall from grace marked the career of the man who changed motion pictures forever. Through Oct. 17 at the Mandell Weiss Theatre in La Jolla. \$44-\$80. [lajollaplayhouse.org](http://lajollaplayhouse.org)



\* **miXtape:** Life was just beginning for Generation X in this musical look at the 1980s. Produced by Lamb's Players Theatre, it runs through Oct. 24 at The Horton Grand Theatre, Downtown. \$28-\$58. [lambplayers.org](http://lambplayers.org)

\* **The Norman**

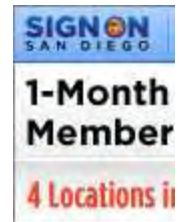
**Conquests:**

This trilogy of full-length comedies (Table Manners, Round and Round the Garden, Living Together), performed in rotating repertory, focuses on Norman and his oddball in-laws. Produced by Cygnet Theatre Company, the program runs through Nov. 7 at The Old Town





# NIGHT AND DAY



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## Theater & Performing Arts

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## The haunted and the vaunted

A look back at the year in theater

BY JAMES HEBERT

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 30, 2010 AT 4:35 P.M.

For [theater](#) in San Diego, 2010 began with a whisper. It ended with something more akin to a shiver.

Duncan Sheik's spare, lyrical ghost story "Whisper House," a world-premiere work (and Sheik's first stage piece since the huge Broadway success of "Spring Awakening"), proved to be a beacon of haunting things to come when it hit the Old Globe Theatre last January.

Cygnnet Theatre followed with a ravishingly nasty revival of [Stephen Sondheim](#)'s blood-soaked "Sweeney Todd." Ion Theatre, freshly settled



SEAN M. HAFEEY

into its revamped Hillcrest digs, rolled out Jeffrey Hatcher's inventive adaptation of the chiller "[Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde](#)." (Clearly, based on these two shows, Victorian London was not a place to go sticking your neck out.)

David Poe and Holly Brook played singing ghosts in the Old Globe's world-premiere production of Duncan Sheik's "Whisper House."

Moxie Theatre pulled off the myth-based afterlife meditation "Eurydice" with an affecting minimalism, and then (in partnership with Intrepid Shakespeare Co.) staged the witch-centric classic "The Crucible" with a maximum sense of relevance.

And North Coast Repertory Theatre joined the supernatural scrum (in name, anyway) with a devastating take on "Ghosts," Henrik Ibsen's story of family breakdown.

Toward year's end, La Jolla Playhouse played for keeps with two shows steeped in their own particular kinds of horror: Director Robert Woodruff's adaptation of the Dostoevsky tale of alienation "Notes From Underground"; and an unforgettable production of Lynn Nottage's "Ruined," the 2009 Pulitzer Prize-winner about tragedy and redemption in war-torn Central Africa.

Looking back, it's easy to think of 2010 as a theater year that reveled in the unsettling and the upsetting. But as always, there was light, too, whether it came via the bright satirical blasts of Diversionary Theatre's "[title of show]" or the more muted radiance of Moonlight Stage Co.'s elegant "Ring Round the Moon."

Given those contrasts and the massive variety of theater that happens regularly on local stages, picking 10 top plays out of the 100-plus I saw this year feels harshly arbitrary, like comparing apples with oranges and then matching those both against figs. Or aardvarks.

And yet I've managed to come up with a list that is so unimpeachable it is guaranteed to stand the test of time. That time being approximately 37 minutes, when doubt and regret and second-guessing will begin to set in.

So -- and please, stop me before I dither again! -- on to the list. But first, the disclaimers and honorable mentions:

I missed Ion's "Hurlyburly," which many of my critic colleagues raved about; as well as "Notes From Underground" (reviewed by freelance writer Jennifer Chung Klam while I was out of town), a show that seemed to divide audiences (and critics) like few others.

Besides shows mentioned earlier, I also admired Intrepid's "King John," North Coast Rep's "[25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee](#)" (a plum of a local premiere), Cygnet's hugely ambitious "The Norman Conquests" as well its "Private Lives," the Playhouse's sumptuous "A Midsummer Night's Dream," and the Globe's bracing take on Neil Simon's "Lost in Yonkers" (along with the theater's very strong Shakespeare Festival).

And one out-of-town pick: The band [Green Day](#)'s Broadway opus "American Idiot," a gritty tone poem scribbled in power chords and raw poignancy. Now there's a show that took 2010 from a whisper to a scream.

1. **"Ruined," La Jolla Playhouse:** I thought I was prepared for the blistering impact of Nottage's play, having seen the 2009 off-Broadway staging (and having read the script while serving as a Pulitzer juror). Yet Liesl Tommy's direction drew fresh sparks from the friction of hope and despair in Nottage's story of women who've found dubious refuge from war in a makeshift bar and brothel.
2. **"Sweeney Todd," Cygnet Theatre:** Deborah Gilmour Smyth, a performer of amazing range, helped make this show as the gleefully savage Mrs. Lovett, but she had plenty of help from fellow cast members and Cygnet's chill-filled staging.
3. **"Whisper House," Old Globe:** Duncan Sheik's atmospheric score, by turns playful and disquieting, carried this simply scripted musical about a young boy struggling to vanquish ghosts (real or imagined) while holed up in a remote Maine lighthouse.
4. **"Yellow Face," Mo'olelo Performing Arts Co.:** Seema Sueko's company, known more for its commitment to social causes than to comedy, stretched beautifully with David Henry Hwang's smart, coyly self-referential satire.
5. **"boom," San Diego Repertory Theatre:** Peter Sinn Nachtrieb's deceptively silly play wound up on the Pulitzer shortlist in 2009 for its utterly original take on such big topics as evolution, creation myths and global apocalypse. (Not to mention Craigslist dating.) Rep artistic chief Sam Woodhouse's ear seemed perfectly tuned to the play's very weird wavelength. (What's the frequency, Peter?)
6. **"[title of show]," Diversionary Theatre:** Speaking of creation myths: Tracking the evolution of "[title of show]" could give anyone headaches. It's a musical about the birth of a musical: Itself. Somehow, director James Vasquez and his cast figured it out exquisitely.
7. **"The Taming of the Shrew," Old Globe:** Director Ron Daniels brought all kinds of fun to Shakespeare's story of a reluctant bride and her too-eager suitor, with an especially sharp eye for the plights of secondary characters.
8. **"Ghosts," North Coast Rep:** It was amazing to come to a performance of this notoriously difficult Ibsen work late in the run, and find the Solana Beach theater packing every last seat in the house. A testament to artistic chief David Ellenstein's directorial mastery of the story's tensions and textures.
9. **"Hairspray," San Diego Rep:** Woodhouse and Co. teamed with student actors and musicians from the San Diego School of Creative and Performing Arts to stage the hit musical's local premiere with eye-catching pizzazz.
10. **"miXtape," Lamb's Players Theatre:** Yes, it's a musical revue, and yes, it pays homage to some of the dippiest pop-culture moments in history. Somehow, though, creators Colleen Kollar Smith and Jon Lorenz make this '80s tribute something more than just a guilty pleasure. I'll say it again (even if it wasn't very funny the first time): They whip it good.



## Where Words Fail

*The performance bar has never been higher; the economic bar, never lower.*

In one sense the best, in most others the worst of times. Throughout the county the level of performance has never been higher. You can expect competent acting in most local theaters. Two examples: Scripps Ranch, an erstwhile “community” theater, is fast becoming a regular stop on the critics’ beat; Moonlight Stage Productions’ radiant *Ring Round the Moon*, in Vista, was a personal favorite.

For the first time, the Critics Circle announced nominees for its annual Craig Noel Awards before the ceremony itself (listed at [sdcriticscircle.org](http://sdcriticscircle.org)). Ordinarily, the maximum is five per award. In some of the acting categories, six became finalists — culled from bulging lists of eight or nine strong candidates (that Monique Gaffney didn’t make the cut for her outstanding performance in *Gee’s Bend* at North Coast Rep still boggles the mind). The performance bar has never been higher; the economic bar, never lower.

A current TV commercial says one in six Americans is “going hungry” — *one in six*. But instead of showing them, you see images of smiling faces and great heaps of food — puffy

pizzas sliding off of a tray — and joy abounding, thanks to the Bank of America. There’s a disjoint between what you see and hear. TV wouldn’t dare show the homeless man I saw on Rosecrans, holding a cardboard sign that read, “If this recession hasn’t bit you yet, you’re an a-hole!”

The result in theaters: artistic timidity. Stage the familiar, the nonthreatening, the audience-stroking; show steaming pizzas, not famished faces.

In recent years, the line between entertainment and art has blurred. What emerges from a look back at 2010 are attempts to take audiences beyond safe themes and stock responses to the place where words fail and emotions brim — the attempts, in other words, at art.

Ion Theatre deserves an award for courage. They took over the old Sixth at Penn stage, converted it into a handsome, intimate space, and never once gave in to the Don’t Worry, Be Happy syndrome.

They opened 2010 at *Diversions* with *Hurlyburly*. The word on David Rabe’s vortex of narcissistic males: if you stage it, they won’t come. Those who did saw one of the year’s finest

French Riviera exterior, which looked permanent, then followed it with a posh Parisian flat filled with, what, 20 pillows, 50?

One of my favorite scenes last year happened during the scene change for *Private Lives*. When first performed back in the ’30s, the transition took place behind a curtain. Cygnet did it before our eyes: a cavalcade of pillows, tossed here and there, bouncing into place, piling higher and higher. In the age of minimalism — economic and artistic — it was a kick to watch old-time, scenic opulence accumulate, amazingly, in about ten minutes.

My love of musicals has been lifelong, but my respect for well-made ones grows every year: so many elements to integrate, so many people wearing hats you wonder which works better, collaborators (Rodgers and Hammerstein) or control freaks (Jerome Robbins, Bob Fosse)?

The musicals of 2010 provided no answer. They had appealing ideas: a haunted lighthouse (*Whisper House*, Old Globe), New Orleans’

red-light district and the birth of jazz (*Storyville*, San Diego Rep), a life of Charlie Chaplin (*Limelight*, La Jolla Playhouse). But none had a halfway decent book. The stories were just transitions to the next song. And in some cases, you’d swear the score and the book met for the first time on opening night. Some needed more central control, others had too much, but they made one thing clear: in musicals, the story’s still the spine.

There were two local answers for musical success: have James Vasquez direct (he codirected *Sweeney* and helmed *Title of Show*, the four-handed charmer at *Diversions*); the other, cast Steve Gunderson. He excelled — if I can remember them all — in *Hairspray*, *Into the Woods*, *The Grinch*, *Sweeney Todd*. To top it off, Starlight did a lively version of *Suds*, which Gunderson cowrote.

For its summer festival, the Old Globe hired a director at once in control and democratic. Adrian Noble, artistic director of the Royal Shakespeare Company from 1991 to 2002, staged two of the year’s most impressive productions: *King Lear* and *The Madness of George III*. In both, speech and action were one. There was never a sense, as so often in Shakespeare and “classic” theater, of spaces between the two: strange pseudo-pauses or false emphases. The cast for *Lear* performed as if every moment was brand new. Best overall staging I’ve seen of that great play.

The critics only award acting that originates in San Diego. Might have to make 2010 an exception. Tovah Feldshuh’s one-person show, *Golda’s Balcony* — about Golda Meir, fourth prime minister of Israel — practically hypnotized Old Globe



Bill Camp in *Notes from the Underground*: “I am a sick man. I am a wicked man.”

productions. Francis Gercke played Eddie, an Omega male so self-absorbed he might implode. For almost three hours, Gercke sustained a manic

intensity. As part of an outstanding ensemble cast, Karson St. John did an unforgettable monologue as Bonnie, a stripper who uses a balloon.

audiences. Whether gray-haired and chain-smoking in a beat-up blue bathrobe or shedding decades in seconds, Feldshuh was masterful — not only as Meir but also in cameos (including a hilarious Henry Kissinger).

It will be equally impossible to forget another “touring” performance: Bill Camp as The Man in *Notes from Underground* at La Jolla Playhouse (based on the Dostoevsky novel and originally staged at Yale Rep). Barefoot on a snow-covered floor, wearing a headset mike, his face often projected across the rear wall, Camp began with the book’s first words: “I am a sick man. I am a wicked man. I am an unattractive man,” and then backed them up. He played all four seasons often, it seemed, at once: funny, confused, passive, angry, the later percolating into a massive eruption. In the end The Man took on the full hatred of the audience. He just stared back, as if he didn’t care, so long as your reaction was violent.

I’m always curious about what makes a great performance tick. As I watched Feldshuh and Camp (and Rob McLure playing Charles Chaplin in *Limelight*), I applied the Technique Test: pull back and check out the craft, find the hooks and stays in their strings of moments. See the actor. Impossible. They were so focused you couldn’t break yours.

Ditto *Ruined* at La Jolla

Playhouse. I had read Lynn Nottage’s play before (it won the Pulitzer Prize in drama for 2009) but had no idea it could sting — or sooth — so deeply.

Civil war storms around Mama Nadi’s demilitarized bar/brothel in the Ituri rain forest. Somehow, with gunfire not far away, she accommodates miners, rebels, and soldiers of the Democratic Republic of Congo and provides relative safety for her girls. Then forces close in.

And somehow the play (and the excellent Liesl Tommy-directed production) managed to find positives amid convincing chaos. The ensemble cast was amazing, and the sound/score so integral it became clear only afterward that *Ruined* is also a musical with choreography, songs, and an ongoing, pulseline beat.

When you reach that place where words fail and emotions brim, sometimes it’s tempting to corral — and distance — your response with metaphor. So *Ruined* is about “survival” or “exploitation” or what the author calls the “war on women.” And it’s all these in triplicate, but so much more, and far more immediate. As with the Technique Test, it wouldn’t let you pull away. As the song goes, the play and production were far better than a metaphor can ever, ever be. ■



## STORIES THEATER REVIEWS

## Where Words Fail

By Jeff Smith | Published Wednesday, Dec. 29, 2010

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Bill Camp in *Notes from the Underground*: "I am a sick man. I am a wicked man."

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In its own space, among other impressive projects, Ion staged *Frankie and Johnny in the Clair de Lune*, with Deanna Driscoll and Jeffrey Jones. Like Rosina Reynolds and Richard Baird, who clicked on every imaginable cylinder in North Coast Rep's *Ghosts*, Driscoll and Jones did remarkable tandem work (allegedly a box-office no-no, *Ghosts* was one of North Coast Rep's best-sellers).

Cygnnet Theatre once again demonstrated its versatility. They followed a rip-roaring version of Sondheim's *Sweeney Todd* (said to be audience-unfriendly, it

played to sold-out houses — we seeing a pattern here?), with its exact opposite: Noel Coward's elegant farce *Private Lives*. Like the contrasting styles, the sets couldn't have been further apart: Sean Fanning caked *Sweeney*'s brick walls with London soot; Andrew Hull opened *Lives* with a windswept French Riviera exterior, which looked permanent, then followed it with a posh Parisian flat filled with, what, 20 pillows, 50?

One of my favorite scenes last year happened during the scene change for *Private Lives*. When first performed back in the '30s, the transition took place behind a curtain. Cygnet did it before our eyes: a cavalcade of pillows, tossed here and there, bouncing into place, piling higher and higher. In the age of minimalism — economic and artistic — it was a kick to watch old-time, scenic opulence accumulate, amazingly, in about ten minutes.

My love of musicals has been lifelong, but my respect for well-made ones grows every year: so many elements to integrate, so many people wearing hats you wonder which works better, collaborators (Rodgers and Hammerstein) or control freaks (Jerome Robbins, Bob Fosse)?

The musicals of 2010 provided no answer. They had appealing ideas: a haunted lighthouse (*Whisper House*, Old Globe), New Orleans' red-light district and the birth of jazz (*Storyville*, San Diego Rep), a life of Charlie Chaplin (*Limelight*, La Jolla Playhouse). But none had a halfway decent book. The stories were just transitions to the next song. And in some cases, you'd swear the score and the book met for the first time on opening night. Some needed more central control, others had too much, but they made one thing clear: in musicals, the story's still the spine.

There were two local answers for musical success: have James Vasquez direct (he codirected *Sweeney* and helmed *Title of Show*, the four-handed charmer at Diversionary); the other, cast Steve Gunderson. He excelled — if I can remember them all — in *Hairspray*, *Into the Woods*, *The Grinch*, *Sweeney Todd*. To top it off, Starlight did a lively version of *Suds*, which Gunderson cowrote.

For its summer festival, the Old Globe hired a director at once in control and democratic. Adrian Noble, artistic director of the Royal Shakespeare Company from 1991 to 2002, staged two of the year's most impressive productions: *King Lear* and *The Madness of George III*. In both, speech and action were one. There was never a sense, as so often in Shakespeare and "classic" theater, of spaces between the two: strange pseudo-pauses or false emphases. The cast for *Lear* performed as if every moment was brand new. Best overall staging I've seen of that great play.

The critics only award acting that originates in San Diego. Might have to make 2010 an exception. Tovah Feldshuh's one-person show, *Golda's Balcony* — about Golda Meir, fourth prime minister of Israel — practically hypnotized Old Globe audiences. Whether gray-haired and chain-smoking in a beat-up blue bathrobe or shedding decades in seconds, Feldshuh was masterful — not only as Meir but also in cameos (including a hilarious Henry Kissinger).

It will be equally impossible to forget another "touring" performance: Bill Camp as The Man in *Notes from Underground* at La Jolla Playhouse (based on the Dostoevsky novel and originally staged at Yale Rep). Barefoot on a snow-covered floor, wearing a headset mike, his face often projected across the rear wall, Camp began with the book's first words: "I am a sick man. I am a wicked man. I am an unattractive man," and then backed them up. He played all four

seasons often, it seemed, at once: funny, confused, passive, angry, the later percolating into a massive eruption. In the end The Man took on the full hatred of the audience. He just stared back, as if he didn't care, so long as your reaction was violent.

I'm always curious about what makes a great performance tick. As I watched Feldshuh and Camp (and Rob McLure playing Charles Chaplin in *Limelight*), I applied the Technique Test: pull back and check out the craft, find the hooks and stays in their strings of moments. See the actor. Impossible. They were so focused you couldn't break yours.

Ditto *Ruined* at La Jolla Playhouse. I had read Lynn Nottage's play before (it won the Pulitzer Prize in drama for 2009) but had no idea it could sting — or sooth — so deeply.

Civil war storms around Mama Nadi's demilitarized bar/brothel in the Ituri rain forest. Somehow, with gunfire not far away, she accommodates miners, rebels, and soldiers of the Democratic Republic of Congo and provides relative safety for her girls. Then forces close in.

And somehow the play (and the excellent Liesl Tommy-directed production) managed to find positives amid convincing chaos. The ensemble cast was amazing, and the sound/score so integral it became clear only afterward that *Ruined* is also a musical with choreography, songs, and an ongoing, pulseline beat.

When you reach that place where words fail and emotions brim, sometimes it's tempting to corral — and distance — your response with metaphor. So *Ruined* is about “survival” or “exploitation” or what the author calls the “war on women.” And it's all these in triplicate, but so much more, and far more immediate. As with the Technique Test, it wouldn't let you pull away. As the song goes, the play and production were far better than a metaphor can ever, ever be.

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## ART & CULTURE



Left to right: *Sweeney Todd*, Monique Gaffney, Deborah Gilmour Smyth, Phil Johnson and Sean Cox

# The Marty Awards

Setting the record straight on local theater in 2010 • BY MARTIN JONES WESTLIN

San Diego theater had its ups and downs in 2010, which isn't to say the year was all that typical. The ups were *really* up—one troupe put on the greatest show in the history of the universe; Ion Theatre Company pulled its ass off the street (again) and found a permanent home; and The Old Globe Theatre, the city's oldest theater and the eighth largest in the country, celebrated its 75th anniversary, with lots of new construction as a backdrop. Solemnity made the rounds, too, fueled by a slate of crappy shows, the April 3 passing of Globe founder R. Craig Noel and the sudden Dec. 4 death of acclaimed local performer Sandra Ellis-Troy.

But I'm not here to talk about sad stuff. The end of 2010, see, marks the inaugural **Marty Awards**, *CityBeat*'s definitive nod to the year's best work and performers on local stages. The list, culled from attendance at about 120 shows, was a lot of fun to compile, and I hope that registers with you. If not, I heartily invite you to a rousing game of darts at a time of your choosing—just stand directly in front of the board and face your opponent. Easy, huh?

**Best Set Design:** Several elements didn't quite jibe in La Jolla Playhouse's fair *A Midsummer Night's Dream* from last summer, but you couldn't have proven it by the work of **Neil Patel**, who scores the Marty for Best Set Design. Patel's Victorian meeting room literally turned upside down (including the grand piano and the fireplace) to reveal the enchanted forest in which Hermia and Lysander's romantic dream takes place, with its trees fashioned from chandeliers and its billowy clouds from pristine white curtains. Just as people assume characters in a show, so do the best sets—and when it came to *Midsummer*, this one played the lead.

**Best Costumer:** With profuse apologies to Lamb's Players Theatre's Jeanne Reith, the pre-eminent costume designer in the solar system, I must cheerfully bestow this year's Best Costumer award on **Deirdre Clancy**, who dressed

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**Lifetime Achievement:** When it comes to longevity in local theater, one practitioner stands out: **D.J. Sullivan**. Sullivan, founder of The Sullivan Players and D. J. Sullivan Workshop and recipient of the first Lifetime Achievement Marty, has been directing and coaching actors and other directors for more than 40 years around here, numbering Christian Hoff (*Jersey Boys*) and Oscar nominee Annette Bening (*American Beauty*) among her students and *General Hospital* and *Dallas* among her acting credits. San Diego's theater community loves Sullivan deeply and intensely, and no wonder: It's hard to stay mad at somebody who's apparently never bothered to frown.

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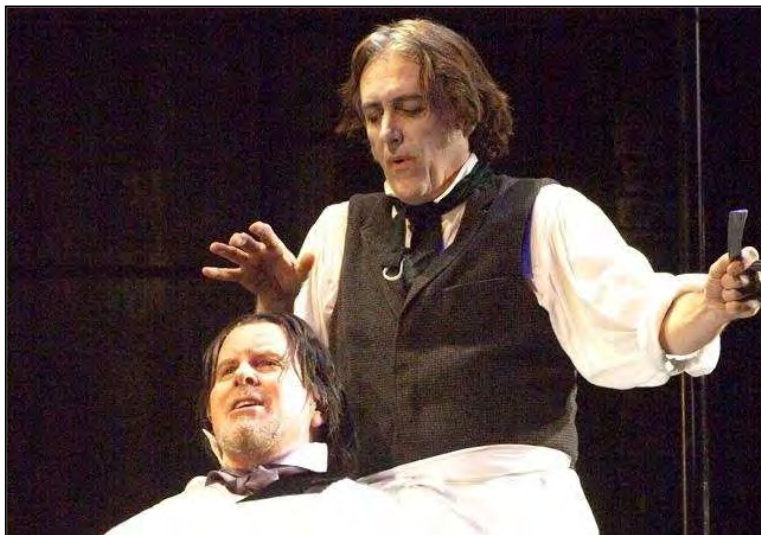
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Wednesday, Dec 29, 2010

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By Martin Jones Westlin



A scene from Sweeney Todd - Photo by Darren Scott

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## YEAR IN REVIEW: Playhouse celebrates a Tony win, Globe sees management changes and quality is found at all levels

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YEAR IN REVIEW: Playhouse celebrates a Tony win, Globe sees management changes and quality is found at all levels

By PAM KRAGEN - pkragen@nctimes.com North County Times - Californian | Posted: Wednesday, December 29, 2010 8:13 am | No Comments Posted | Print

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[Buy this photo](#) A scene from La Jolla Playhouse's 2008 production of "Memphis," which won the 2010 Tony Award for Best Musical. Photo by Kevin Berne.



The La Jolla Playhouse celebrated a Tony win for its 2008 export “Memphis” this year, and the Old Globe marked the passing of

one leader and the arrival of another in 2010.

San Diego County's other theaters had much to celebrate this year as well, despite a lingering recession that dampened ticket sales and donations and led many companies to make safe artistic choices (sentimental, feel-good musicals rather than risk-taking plays). But as always in San Diego, a number of theatrical bright spots livened up the scene this year.

Here's a look at the year in San Diego theater, including my picks for the best (and worst) productions of 2010.

### The Top 10

1. **"The Madness of George III," The Old Globe.** Adrian Noble, the Globe's new Shakespeare Festival artistic director, arrived with this classy, thrilling and beautifully designed production highlighted by my favorite performance of the year ---- British actor Miles Anderson, starring as the mentally troubled English king whose fight for sanity was heartbreaking and redemptive to watch. What made Anderson's performance even more amazing was that he learned the huge role in a matter of weeks, after the show's original star quit.
2. **"Ruined," La Jolla Playhouse.** Lynn Nottage's Pulitzer Prize-winning drama about the violence done to women in the war-torn Congo got a note-perfect rendering this fall at the Playhouse. Director Liesl Tommy's well-cast production was lush, musical and comical, but it didn't flinch from the grisly toll the African war takes on its most innocent victims.
3. **"Eurydice," Moxie Theatre.** Moxie's production of the Sarah Ruhl drama (which retells the Greek myth of Orpheus), was innovatively directed by one of the county's best creative minds, Delicia Turner Sonnenberg. The quirky play takes many turns, and Turner Sonnenberg always had a surprise (sometimes funny, often heartbreaking and always clever) hidden around every corner.
4. **"Hairspray," San Diego Repertory Theatre.** Brimming with youthful energy, this production marked the first collaboration between a local professional theater and the enormously talented students of the San Diego School of Creative and Performing Arts (which has produced many Broadway stars).
5. **"Limelight: The Story of Charlie Chaplin," La Jolla Playhouse.** While this world premiere musical's script still needs focus, the great subject matter, eye-popping design, smart use of scenery, film and sound, likable score by Christopher Curtis and a superb performance by leading man Robert McClure made this one of my favorite shows of the year.
6. **"Yellow Face," Mo'olelo Performing Arts.** Since its founding in 2004, Seema Sueko's Mo'olelo has specialized in thought-provoking issue plays (all topical, but not all well-written), so David Henry Hwang's hilarious self-skewering of Asian stereotypes was a breath of fresh air for this sometimes-too-serious company. Sueko's direction was bright and light, and Greg Watanabe's lead performance was a tour de force.
7. **"King Lear," The Old Globe.** Noble's other Shakespearean outing this summer was visually stunning and featured many fine performances in roles big (Encinitas-based Robert Foxworth was a restrained Lear) and small (Jay Whitaker as the madman Tom).
8. **"The Crucible," Moxie Theatre and Intrepid Shakespeare Company.** This co-production of Arthur Miller's Pulitzer Prize-winning allegory (pairing the Salem Witch Trials and the communist witch hunts of the '50s) had one of the biggest casts of any play presented on a local non-college stage this year. Co-directors Jennifer Eve Thorn and Christy Yael slowly built the tension in this taut thriller with a payoff that delivered, thanks in large part to Sean Cox's heart-rending performance as the flawed farmer John Proctor.
9. **"Ghosts," North Coast Repertory Theatre.** Henrik Ibsen's rarely performed tragedy could easily have tipped into melodrama, if not for David Ellenstein's thoughtful direction and two excellent performances by Rosina Reynolds and Richard Baird. Also worthy of praise is Marty Burnett's creatively imagined set, which allowed for several locales in one.
10. **"Boom," San Diego Repertory Theatre.** This lithe little comedy by Peter Sinn Nachtrieb imagines a world just hours before a nuclear cataclysm and the mysterious future of life on earth. Sam Woodhouse's spry direction and smart casting made it one of the quirkiest and most entertaining tickets of the year.

**Honorable mentions:** La Jolla Playhouse's hard-to-watch but faithfully adapted "Notes From Underground," and its ambitiously designed "A Midsummer Night's Dream"; The Old Globe's weak-scripted but well-directed and -choreographed "Robin and the 7

Hoods" musical; Moonlight Stage Productions' "Miss Saigon," unforgettably starring Johann Michael Camat as the Engineer; Diversionary's smart and well-cast "Title of Show"; Intrepid Shakespeare's brave mounting of the rarely produced "King John"; New Village Arts Theatre's musical debut, "Into the Woods"; Ion Theatre's edgy "Hurlyburly"; Welk Resorts Theatre's lively and well-cast "The Full Monty"; Cygnet Theatre's epic three-plays-in-one "The Norman Conquests," rock-solid "The Piano Lesson" and smart "Private Lives."

**The not-so-good list:** Sadly, there were a lot of duds in the 2010 theatrical season. Most of the weak shows had the best of intentions but the worst of scripts. Among the best-forgotten are San Diego Repertory Theatre's creative misfire "Storyville"; the Old Globe's badly scripted new plays "Alive and Well," "The Whipping Man" and "Welcome to Arroyo's"; North Coast Repertory Theatre's weak "Glorious" and "Becky's New Car"; Intrepid Shakespeare's miscast "The Taming of the Shrew"; La Jolla Playhouse's underwhelming "Surf Report"; Diversionary Theatre's monotonous "Anita Bryant Died For Your Sins"; and The Theatre Inc.'s gaudy and confusing "Orestes."

Many theaters also went for "safe" fare to appeal to older, more conservative theatergoers. While most these shows were well-staged, there wasn't much in the way of variety. The Old Globe produced not one, not two, but three Neil Simon plays this year; the over-produced "Steel Magnolias" showed up all around town (and will again, at Lamb's Players Theatre, in February); and most of the musicals seen on stages countywide were old standbys ("Hello, Dolly," "Gigi," "Crazy For You").

### The year in review

Here's a recap of some of the highs and lows of 2010:

-- La Jolla Playhouse brought home yet another Tony Award in June for the Christopher Ashley-directed musical **"Memphis,"** produced in La Jolla in 2008. Besides Best Musical, "Memphis" earned Tonys for Best Original Score (David Bryan), Best Book of a Musical (Joe DiPietro) and Best Orchestrations (Bryan and Daryl Waters).

-- **Craig Noel**, founding artistic director of the Old Globe, passed away April 3 at the age of 94. Noel spent 70 years with San Diego's oldest and largest theater, and his impact on building the city's national reputation as a theater town led the San Diego Theatre Critics Circle to rename their annual awards in his name nine years ago. A memorial in Balboa Park last May drew more than 1,000 mourners, who flew in from all over the country to celebrate Noel's legacy.

-- Royal Shakespeare Company veteran **Adrian Noble** made an impressive debut as the new Summer Shakespeare Festival director at the Old Globe, and he's already signed on to return in 2011. One of Noble's first tasks was replacing the sudden withdrawal of festival star Patrick Page, who was offered the role of the Green Goblin in Broadway's high-profile but troubled musical "Spider-Man: Turn Off the Dark." The void was beautifully filled by L.A.-based actor Miles Anderson.

-- **Ion Theatre**, co-founded by Claudio Raygoza and Glenn Paris, revamped the old Sixth@Penn Theatre in Hillcrest and launched a critically acclaimed season of intelligent, edgy fare last spring.

-- Fledgling **Intrepid Shakespeare Theatre**, formed last year by recently married actors Sean Cox and Christy Yael, found a permanent home at San Dieguito Academy in Encinitas this fall and established itself as a theater to watch with well-received productions of "King John" and "The Crucible."

-- **Greg Evans**, the San Marcos-based creator of the "Luann" comic strip and musical, premiered a second musical, "Wrinkles," in Vista last April. The work-in-progress musical about aging was such a hot ticket, the show's 10-day run sold out weeks before it opened.

-- San Diego's **Moxie Theatre** nearly lost its theatrical home last spring because of a threatened rent increase on its space in a Rolando shopping mall. Happily, the landlord and Moxie came to terms and the theater has re-signed a long-term lease for the property.

-- **Starlight Theatre**, long troubled by creaky finances and an unfortunate outdoor location (under the flight path for Lindbergh Field), was able to produce its 65th season last summer with help from hundreds of volunteers from San Diego's Rock Church, who spent a month renovating, repainting and updating the company's aging Starlight Bowl.

-- In what may be a first, the national touring production of **"101 Dalmatians, The Musical"** was canceled before it could get to the San Diego Civic Theatre last June. Plagued by terrible reviews, slow bookings and the loss of its star (Rachel York, who

left the tour three months before it went belly-up), producers pulled the show off the road in April. Broadway/San Diego filled the gap with **"Avenue Q."**

-- Faced with a long-term trend in declining ticket sales, **Welk Resorts Theatre's** artistic director Joshua Carr pulled the plug on its traditional offering of classic book musicals. Instead, he's changed up the season with limited-engagement bookings of celebrity solo shows, musical tribute acts and the occasional star-driven plays and musicals.

-- In November, **Griff Duncan and Fullerton Civic Light Opera** ended a yearlong effort to bring big-budget musicals to the California Center for the Arts, Escondido. When FCLO's fourth Escondido offering, "Jane Eyre," sold just a few hundred tickets before it was scheduled to open last month, Duncan canceled rather than rack up a \$50,000 loss. "The ticket sales were going in the wrong direction," he said. "We know that our product is good, but the audience didn't respond, and we don't know what else we can do. We've tried four times and apparently what we're doing is not of interest to the public down there. Escondido has a magnificent arts facility, but apparently its people don't want to use it."

-- Coronado's **Lamb's Players Theatre** laid off five members of its administrative staff in November and announced plans to sell one of its buildings in order to right its financial ship. In a letter to patrons, Lamb's producing artistic director Robert Smyth said that a continued decline in donations and ticket sales meant the company had to make significant cuts to ensure long-term viability.

-- **Dan Kirsch**, the creative and well-liked executive/artistic director at San Diego's Diversionary Theatre, announced this month that he'll step down in March. Kirsch replaced Chuck Zito six years ago and said he now feels it's time to move on. He will stay on through winter to help the University Heights theater's board plan the 2011-12 season, and to give them time to search for his replacement. A board member said Kirsch was a stabilizing influence on the gay-identified University Heights theater and he "kept the drama to a minimum and the professionalism to the maximum."

Besides Craig Noel, several important figures in San Diego theater passed away in 2010:

-- On April 18, former North County Times arts writer **Bill Fark** passed away at the age of 91. Fark served as theater and visual arts critic for the North County Times, and its predecessor the Times-Advocate, for more than 25 years until his retirement in 2005. Fark endowed the Escondido Public Library with a vast collection of scripts and playbills, was a patron of the arts, wrote scripts and screenplays and even appeared onstage in Moonlight Stage Productions' 2003 musical "Singin' in the Rain."

-- **Donald Shiley**, whose invention of the artificial heart valve in 1971 helped him amass an estimated \$400 million fortune, passed away Aug. 1 at the age of 90. Through the patronage of his wife Darlene, Shiley put his money where his heart was ---- including a \$20 million donation to the Old Globe, sizable donations to KPBS and numerous endowments to UC San Diego, USD and other institutions.

-- Vista's **Sandra Ellis-Troy**, one of San Diego County's most beloved and prolific actors, passed away in her sleep on Dec. 4 at the age of 68. Ellis-Troy was a veteran of productions at the Moonlight Amphitheatre, New Village Arts, North Coast Repertory Theatre, Cygnet Theatre and Starlight Theatre, and she was already booked for shows through next spring.

### On the horizon

While the economy may be rebounding, local theaters will still be in belt-tightening mode in 2011. County, state, federal and foundation grants are either declining or in peril (San Diego City Councilman Carl DeMaio recently proposed slashing city arts grants by 25 percent to shore up a looming budget deficit), so look for more safe programming next year.

Here are a few productions of note on the horizon:

-- La Jolla Playhouse will kick off its year with the world premiere of the James Lapine-William Finn musical **"Little Miss Sunshine."** A Broadway-worthy cast will star in this stage adaptation from Feb. 15-March 27 of the Oscar-winning film about a dysfunctional family's road trip to California in a VW bus. Other world premieres on the Playhouse schedule are Kirsten Greenidge's "Milk Like Sugar" and Arthur Kopit and Anton Dudley's "A Dram of Drumchhicit."

-- The Old Globe will produce Tracy Letts' 2008 Pulitzer Prize- and Tony-winning play "August: Osage County" from May 7-June 12. Sure to be the talk of the season, it's the epic story of a Oklahoma family dealing with issues of suicide, incest, drug addiction, infidelity, pedophilia and more in a three-story cutaway home set.



- In January, Moxie Theatre presents the world premiere of Javier Velasco's "**The Toughest Girl Alive**," a bio-musical about Oceanside-based blues singer Candye Kane, a onetime unwed teen mother, adult film star and bisexual cancer survivor.
- In May, Diversionary Theatre presents the world premiere of William di Canzio's "**Dooley**," a based-on-fact drama about Dr. Tom Dooley, the openly gay former Camp Pendleton Navy physician who founded several health clinics for Vietnamese orphans in Laos before his death in 1961.
- **Cirque du Soleil** fans can celebrate the return of the Montreal company in March when "Quidam" arrives for a five-day engagement at the Valley View Casino Center (formerly the San Diego Sports Arena).
- Cygnet Theatre will produce the world premiere of La Jolla playwright **Stephen Metcalfe's** "The Tragedy of the Commons" from Jan. 20-Feb. 20. Metcalfe's suburban drama is the story of how a retired couple's plan to sell their La Jolla home to an owner who wants to tear it down causes turmoil in their fragile relationship.
- **Welk Resorts Theatre's** season will once again be studded with short-term bookings of celebrity-driven shows, including solo shows by Shirley Jones, Rita Moreno, Debbie Reynolds, Vicki Lawrence and Debby Boone, along with a game show hosted by Bob Eubanks.
- Carlsbad's **New Village Arts** returns to one of its favorite playwrights, Sam Shepard, with "Simpatico" in March, along with the regional premiere of Scott Hudson's romantic drama "Sweet Storm" in April.
- Moonlight Stage Productions hasn't unveiled its 2011 summer season (which will return to a four-show schedule after two three-show seasons) except for the announcement of "**Hairspray**," which is rumored to be starring beloved Fallbrook actor Randall Hickman in the drag role of Edna Turnblad.
- San Diego Repertory Theatre's 2011 season will have two important local premieres, Tracy Letts' "**Superior Donuts**" and Sarah Ruhl's hilarious Tony nominee "**In the Next Room (or the vibrator play)**."
- Intrepid Shakespeare in Encinitas plans to produce yet another rarity, Shakespeare's "**Richard II**," in late February.
- Escondido's Patio Playhouse steps outside its usually comfortable boundaries with Amy Freed's hyper-witty "**The Beard of Avon**" in February.

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# **ADRIAN NOBLE**

## **FEATURES**

## A Noble man and the Bard

BY PAM KRAGEN

[pkragen@nctimes.com](mailto:pkragen@nctimes.com)

New festival director Adrian Noble arrives at the Old Globe with credentials that would be hard to beat anywhere in the world.

He joined England's Royal Shakespeare Company in 1980 and worked there through 2003, serving for 13 of those years as artistic director and chief executive. Over the course of his career, he has produced nearly 300 plays (most by William Shakespeare), directed 100 productions, won numerous awards and been honored with more than 120 Olivier nominations, the UK equivalent of the Tonys.

But despite his impressive resume, there's nothing stuffy about the married, 59-year-old father of two. His personality is humble, affable and grounded, and he oozes passion for the works of Shakespeare.

In a heavily attended lecture last week at the Globe, Noble spoke enthusiastically about his lifelong love affair with Shakespeare and why he believes the Bard deserves his place as the greatest writer in history.

Born in 1950, Noble grew up in Chichester, an artsy, cathedral-filled city near England's south coast, where he says he was the "son of the generation who came through the last war and put back together Europe." When he was 10, Noble's grandmother bought him a 10-shilling copy of "The Complete Works of William Shakespeare" at Woolworth's, but the book "sat moldering" unopened in his bedroom for years. When Noble was 16, a theater was built in Chichester, and Laurence Olivier and Maggie Smith were brought in to perform in its inaugural production of "Othello."

Thrilled by what he'd seen, Noble raced home and dug out his Shakespeare book and began reading the speeches to himself out loud.

"I became intoxicated with the language," he said. "If you say it aloud, you will become enamored of the words."

Noble went on to college and drama school, then won a scholarship to the Bristol Old Vic, where his first assignment was to direct Shakespeare's devilishly difficult "Titus Andronicus."

"I'm not a big fan of academic research on plays because it leads you down dead ends," he said. "But I did



**Adrian Noble ran the Royal Shakespeare Company in England for 13 years.** Courtesy photo

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In 1980, he moved on to the Royal Shakespeare Company in Stratford-Upon-Avon, where he worked as an assistant director from 1980 to 1987, a director in 1988 and 1989, and then (after a brief break to direct outside the company) served as artistic director/chief executive from 1991-2003. During those years, he earned a reputation as one of the world's leading Shakespeare directors.

Over the years, the actors Noble worked with at the RSC reads like a who's who of Britain's biggest stars — Daniel Day-Lewis, Kenneth Branagh, Patrick Stewart, Ralph Fiennes, Helen Mirren, Alan Rickman, Michael Gambon, Pete Postlethwaite, Jonathan Pryce, Derek Jacobi, and on and on.

But things soured in the early 2000s, when he tried to modernize the company and right its financial ship by closing its London theater, revamping its Stratford home base, reducing staff, shortening actors' contracts and more. Company veterans (including Dame Judi Dench) criticized both the changes and Noble, who took a sabbatical in the midst of the upheaval to direct a musical in the West End. Fed up with the attacks in the press on both himself and his wife, RSC actress Joanna Pearce, Noble resigned in 2003, later telling London's "Telegraph" that

# Noble

Continued from Page 13

his final year at the RSC was a "vile, hateful ... horrible time."

"I wanted to join the RSC because it was a real company and it was mostly a good time," Noble said last week. "But in the early years, 65 percent of what I was doing was artistic and by the time I left, it was only 30 percent."

Noble returned to directing (including Verdi's "Macbeth" for New York's Metropolitan Opera) but he avoided directing Shakespeare plays for five years. His passion was reignited when he wrote a book for actors titled "How To Do Shakespeare," and when he directed "Hamlet" two years ago at Stratford Shakespeare Festival in Canada — a production one Canadian critic called the greatest production in the festival's 56-year history.

Old Globe Executive Producer Lou Spisto also saw the Stratford "Hamlet" and described it as "simple and clear and powerful and the text made so much sense."

Spisto said he is so pleased with the work that Noble has done so far that he has already invited him back next summer, and Noble said he's going over plans for next year.

"Shakespeare is the great humanist writer, the great explorer of humanity," Noble said. "He was the connoisseur of the subtleties of the human psyche and the great observer .... To do Shakespeare well, you have to get bigger because his passions are ours, but they are just a bit roomier."

Noble said that the most important part of directing a play by Shakespeare is not the sets or the costumes, but the words and the words alone.

"In Shakespeare's day, they had no scenery. The ear was the most important receptor of information, and the imagination was stimulated by the words that were spoken," he said. "The world of Shakespeare in plays is plastic. It moves through the power of the poetry."

In his new book, Noble says the key to performing Shake-

speare's plays is understanding "the plumbing" of the text. "It's what you don't see in a house, but without which the lights won't come on."

Noble writes that Shakespeare used two tools to make his writing more dynamic — apposition and metaphor.

Noble calls apposition "the rubbing together of word against word" — like in Hamlet's famous line "to be or not to be" — which creates "a muscularity, an edge and friction ... a highly dynamic ... examination of the words."

And Noble calls Shakespeare's use of metaphor a window into his characters' psyches. "When a human can't communicate an emotion, they will invent a metaphor to describe it. Very often, those metaphors come from someplace profound."

Modern actors don't recite Shakespeare's verse in the whispery, singsongy way it was once performed in the '40s and '50s. Noble said the style of delivery began to change in the 1960s, when working-class actors like Richard Burton and Alan Bates moved into the RSC, and the growing popularity of Stanislavski's "method" style of acting, where the words are informed by memories from the subconscious.

Nonetheless, Noble said it's still vitally important to pay attention to the meter and pulse in Shakespeare's writing.

"It's like a drumbeat underneath a play," he said. "It gives power to the actors and it excites the audience. If you ignore that as an actor, you disempower the words. He gives you the beat and uses it for remarkable effects that can be volatile and dynamic."

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## A Noble man and the Bard

- Story
- Discussion
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By PAM KRAGEN - pkragen@nctimes.com | Posted: June 9, 2010 9:09 am | No Comments Posted | Print

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[Buy this photo](#) Adrian Noble, new artistic director of the Summer Shakespeare Festival at the Old Globe, addresses the cast of "The Taming of the Shrew," while "Shrew" director Ron Daniels, seated at right in black turtleneck, looks on. Photo courtesy of the Old Globe



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He joined England's Royal Shakespeare Company in 1980 and worked there through 2003, serving for 13 of those years as artistic director and chief executive. Over the course of his career, he has produced nearly 300 plays (most by William Shakespeare), directed 100 productions, won numerous awards and been honored with more than 120 Olivier nominations, the UK equivalent of the Tonys.

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He said his passion was reignited when he started writing a book for actors titled "How To Do Shakespeare," and he was invited in 2008 to direct "Hamlet" at Stratford Shakespeare Festival in Ontario, Canada ---- a production that one gushing Canadian critic called the greatest production in the festival's 56-year history.

Old Globe Executive Producer Lou Spisto also saw the Canadian production of "Hamlet" and was impressed. "It was simple and clear and powerful and the text made so much sense. We've seen 'Hamlet' many times but I could see in that production that he had an understanding of how to put things on stage like no one else."

So when the Globe festival's founding artistic director Darko Tresnjak resigned last year, Spisto said he thought Noble would be the perfect man to take the festival to the next level.

"Adrian is unique in that he really understands how to build a company of actors with varying degrees of experience," Spisto said. "When I first spoke to him about the position, it was the fact that he would get to work with some of our student actors that most excited him."

Spisto said he's so pleased with the work that Noble has done so far that he has already invited him back next summer.

"I'm delighted with what I'm seeing," Spisto said. "The 'Lear' is very strong, very powerful. It's beautiful. 'George' is going to knock our socks off. 'Taming of the Shrew' is a great deal of fun."

Noble said he's talking about plans for next summer. Though no plays have been announced for 2011, Noble seems to be relishing his dip back into Shakespearean waters.

"Shakespeare is the great humanist writer, the great explorer of humanity," Noble said. "He was the connoisseur of the subtleties of the human psyche and the great observer .... To do Shakespeare well, you have to get bigger because his passions are ours, but they are just a bit roomier."

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Although Noble can go on at length about Shakespeare's use of punctuation ("ignore all the commas, just pay attention to the semicolons and full stops") and who actually wrote the plays (he doesn't pay much attention to the Oxbridge authorship debate, but he's certain that only one person wrote all the plays), he doesn't want audiences getting bogged down in line-by-line analysis.

"You should just love the language. Enjoy it in a playful way," he said. "For Shakespeare's audience, it was more delightful. Look for rhyme, wordplay and alliteration ... it will lead you into the heart of the play."

Posted in Theatre on *Wednesday, June 9, 2010 9:09 am* | Tags: Entertainment Preview, Nct, Theater,  
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## EX-RSC CHIEF TO OLD GLOBE

The San Diego theater appoints the Royal Shakespeare Company's former artistic director to head its 2010 festival.

MIKE BOEHM

Adrian Noble got roughed up a bit toward the end of his tenure as the Bard's man in Britain — he left in 2003 after 13 years as artistic director of the Royal Shakespeare Company, his plans for tearing down its main stage in Stratford-upon-Avon and building a more contemporary facility having drawn slings and arrows from the media and the arts community.

Noble, 58, is eager to have another go at leading a company of Shakespearean actors, this time at San Diego's Old Globe. Noble has been named artistic director of next year's annual Shakespeare Festival, consisting of three summer productions at the Lowell Davies Festival Theatre in Balboa Park, the theater announced Friday.

In mid-August, Noble, whose post-RSC freelance work has included directing operas and overseeing the Broadway transfer of his hit London production of the musical "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang," will make his first-ever visit to San Diego and begin his

[See Shakespeare, Page D15]



KEN HOWARD Metropolitan Opera  
**ADRIAN NOBLE:** "It's just what I wanted to do."

## Adrian Noble joins Old Globe

[Shakespeare, from Page D1] first directing job in Southern California.

He'll replace Darko Tresnjak, who, after six seasons overseeing the Old Globe's summer festival, is going freelance. Tresnjak is the director of "Coriolanus" and Edmond Rostand's "Cyrano de Bergerac," two of the three productions (along with "Twelfth Night") now in repertory at the 615-seat Davies theater.

Noble's first task is to choose next season's plays with the Old Globe's executive producer, Louis Spisto — probably two Shakespeares and another classic play — and make some preliminary casting decisions.

Speaking from his home outside London, in the village of Kingston Blount, Noble said he's hankering to do "King Lear" again, having led productions at the RSC starring Michael Gambon in 1982 and Robert Stephens in 1993. That depends on finding the right actor to play Lear, which will be on his agenda when he arrives next month.

"I was very keen to do Shakespeare, and Lou just rang out of the blue," Noble said. "I thought, 'This is good — to have a group of actors, have an identity, work with them, build up a body of skill and knowledge. It's just what I wanted to do. It was one of those phone calls — quite serendipitous.'"

Noble said his Shakespearean Jones returned last year, when he directed "Hamlet" at the Stratford Shakespeare Festival in Ontario, Canada. "When Shakespeare is your life for 20 years ... I wanted to do other things," he said of the five Shakespeare-free years after leaving the RSC.

What brought him back to the fold, oddly, was a Canadian reality TV show called "Triple Sensation," in the mold of "American Idol" and "Britain's Got Talent." The premise is to find the nation's best young triple-threat singing-dancing-acting talent, with a panel of

pros, including Noble, delivering the verdict. Noble started hearing good things about Canada's Shakespeare festival under its new leader, Des McAnuff, former artistic director of the La Jolla Playhouse.

"It was a nice moment to catch me. I was looking to do some theater," Noble said.

He said it was invigorating to work with North American actors.

"What North American actors would bring was a wonderful realism and ability to act in the moment, absolutely truthfully, and what I brought was an understanding of how Shakespeare wrote, and we could make a bridge, a link between the two traditions."

Noble, who recently directed Bizet's "Carmen" in Paris and Verdi's "Macbeth" at New York's Metropolitan Opera and has a "Don Giovanni" lined up in France as well, said his Canadian experience prompted him to carve out several months to write a book, "How to Do Shakespeare." Due for publication this fall, it's geared toward helping student actors "handle the language, speak the verse, analyze a speech and deliver it."

Spisto said he contacted Noble's agent after seeing the Ontario "Hamlet," just to say that the Old Globe would be happy to have Noble direct a play sometime. This spring, when Tresnjak informed the Globe he wouldn't be back after this year's Shakespeare Festival, Spisto was more specific, offering Noble the artistic directorship for next summer. Whether that becomes an ongoing relationship or is just a one-time teaming "remains to be seen," Spisto said.

For now, he says, Noble fills the bill as something special for what will be the Old Globe's 75th-anniversary season. "Adrian is a highly sought-after director, and it's remarkable to be able to lure him to San Diego."

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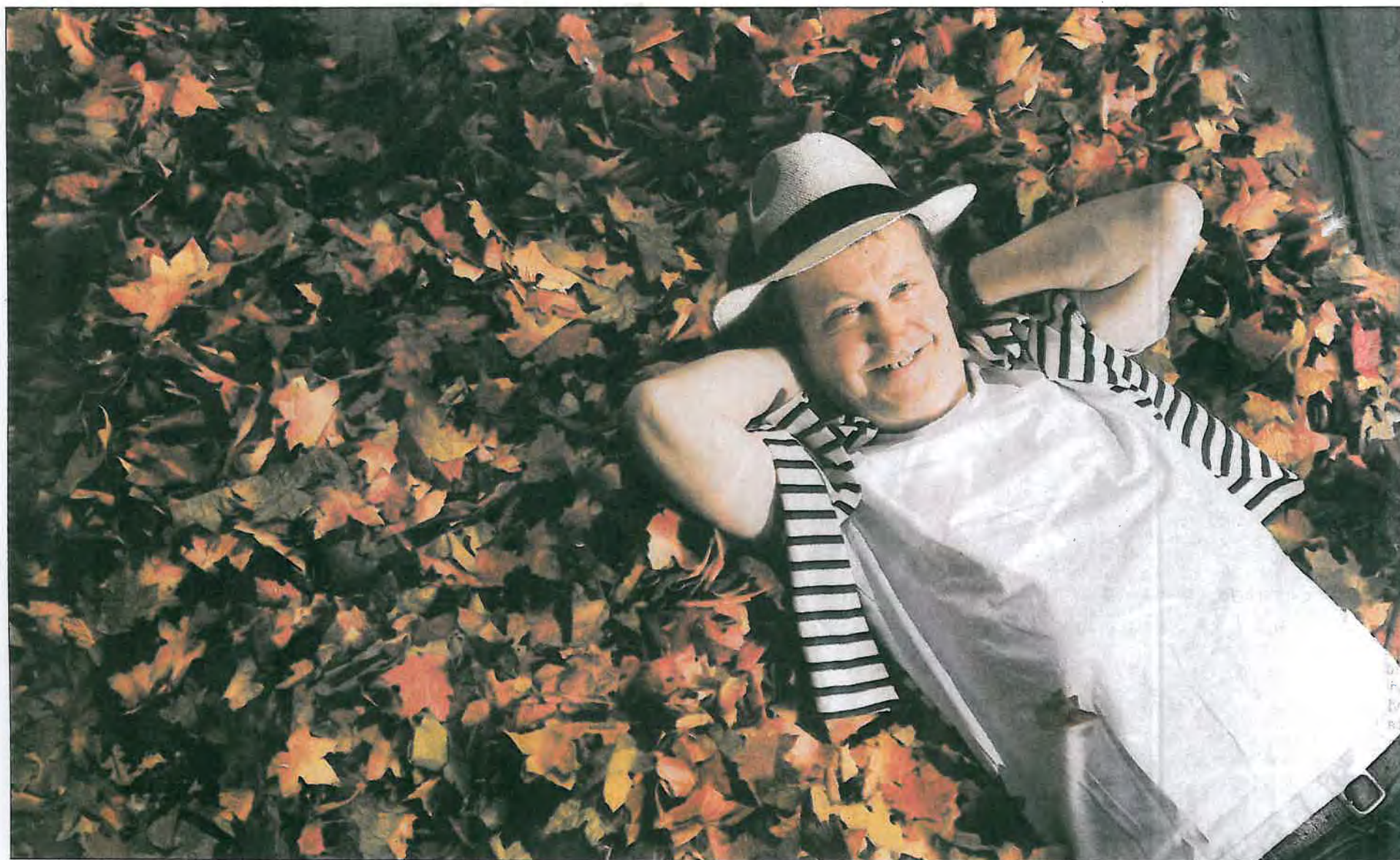


# LOS ANGELES TIMES

June 27, 2010

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Adrian Noble, formerly with the Royal Shakespeare Company, is organizing the Old Globe's summer festival. Much of his knowledge was learned from a pal.



Photographs by CHRISTINA HOUSE For The Times

**QUOTE HE:** "I think Shakespeare is one of the great civilizing influences in the world," Adrian Noble says. "I think he's one of the great unifiers of mankind."



# He and the Bard are buddies

REED JOHNSON  
REPORTING FROM SAN DIEGO

If it weren't for Adrian Noble's poor eyesight, Southern Californians might not be gaining new insights into William Shakespeare this summer.

As a lad growing up in Chichester, England, Noble, the future artistic director of the Royal Shakespeare Company, was afflicted with myopia. One day when his optician was "poking about in my eye," he told Noble about his improbable plan to start a world-class theater festival right there in Chichester, featuring some of Britain's best actors.

It sounded a bit barmy. But a few years later, in 1962, the Chichester Festival was born, and Noble was among the first audiences to see a who's who of England's stage royalty taking on multiple roles in a variety of plays, Shakespearean and otherwise.

"I don't think he realized quite what he'd done, actually," Noble said recently of the impresario-optician, Leslie Evershed-Martin. "Laurence Olivier. Ralph Richardson. Edith Evans was there. Michael Redgrave. Maggie Smith. I mean, it was just astonishing."

From that youthful exposure, Noble began to develop a lasting appreciation for the concept of a theater company that could tackle several plays at once in rotating repertory and in which there were no small parts, only small actors.

Now he's bringing that time-honored idea to San Diego's Old Globe, where he's serving as artistic director of the venue's annual summer play festival. This year's lineup consists of Shakespeare's "The Taming of the Shrew" and "King Lear," along with Alan Bennett's 1991 "The Madness of George III," a fictionalized biographical drama about the 18th century British monarch whose autocratic hubris sparked the American Revolution. Ron Daniels directs "Shrew" and Noble the other two plays, all performed through September in the outdoor amphitheater at the Old Globe's picturesque campus in San Diego's Balboa Park.

Repertory theater is a way of performing, and experiencing, plays that's regrettably rare in the United States, mostly because of the difficulty and cost of getting several dozen actors, designers and technicians to sign on to a months-long commitment. Noble, whose recent directing credits include opera productions in Paris and at New York's Metropolitan Opera as well as the hit musical "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang" in London's West End, believes that the rewards of repertory festivals are as great for audiences as for actors.

"It gives an audience a chance to get to know a company of players. That's the nice thing," he said. "And sometimes there's a dialogue between the plays, so there's a dialogue between 'King Lear' and 'The Madness of [George III].' And there's a dialogue in a way between 'King Lear,' one of the great middle to late tragedies, and 'The Taming of the Shrew,' one of the early lighter comedies. It gives an audience a bit of a sense of occasion."



**REACH:** Aubrey Saverino, center, is striving daughter Regan in Noble's staging of "King Lear."



**MOMENT OF REALIZATION:** Robert Foxworth portrays Lear and Catherine Gowl is pure-hearted, ill-fated Cordelia.

To heighten that dialogue, Noble is setting "Lear" in 1776 rather than its usual much older milieu. As the production advances the setting gradually will update to around the time between the 20th century's two world wars, offering a sub-textual commentary on how concepts of monarchy and leadership evolved through the ages.

## Longtime relationship

Widely regarded as a meticulous student of Elizabethan verse, Noble, 59, has made Shakespeare's works as well as his approach to ensemble-building a cornerstone of his career.

That's hardly surprising for a man who devoted 13 years of his life to running the world's premier Shakespeare company (controversially, at times), who knows the author's *oeuvre* inside-out, and who last year published a book, "How to Do Shakespeare," that fuses personal anecdotes with practical, hands-on knowledge and astute line readings that illuminate Shakespeare's technique.

"I think Shakespeare is one of the great civilizing influences in the world. I think he's one of the great unifiers of mankind," said Noble.

Noble credits Shakespeare with inventing the structure of the modern repertory company. By writing plays for his own troupe, Shakespeare allowed a specific group of actors to mature and take on more ambitious roles over time, Noble said, while the playwright himself grew more artful and sophisticated in his plotting and poetry.

"Lear" is a good play to build a company around, Noble said. Because it contains nine or 10 really good parts, plus a number of solid secondary roles, it allows him to assemble a core group of actors of different ages and experience levels, broadening the casting possibilities for other plays.

Noble's new Southern California playmates — including Robert Foxworth, scaling the Mt. Everest title role in "Lear" as well as the more manageable part of the would-be healer Dr. Willis in "Mad-

## Shakespeare Festival

**What:** Old Globe's 2010 Shakespeare Festival: "King Lear," "The Taming of the Shrew" and "The Madness of George III" in repertory

**Where:** 1363 Old Globe Way, San Diego

**When:** June 12 to Sept. 26

**Admission:** \$29 to \$78 (plus \$19 limited onstage seating for "Shrew")

**Contact:** [www.theoldglobe.org](http://www.theoldglobe.org)

ness of George III" — appear to have embraced his philosophy.

"He actually started out the first few days of rehearsals doing some exercises with us, finding a sense of unity and give-and-take," Foxworth said by phone last week while weaving his car along the 405 en route to San Diego. "I know if any part of us come back for the next festival season, we're going to be carrying not only these ideas about how to do Shakespeare but how to do theater."

Lou Spisto, the Old Globe's executive director, said the theater's audiences "love the idea of the festival because they love the connection with the actors." Two main challenges in mounting three plays with a team of 25 performers, five designers and multiple directors, Spisto said, are casting a versatile company and constructing a set that's "flexible and adaptive."

Spisto reckoned that Noble would be the right man for the job after seeing the director's staging of "Hamlet" at the Stratford Festival of Canada a few years ago. Noble is replacing Darko Tresnjak, who went freelance after six seasons leading the San Diego event.

"There's a confidence he has in what he's doing, which is not arrogance but is simply knowing what you're doing, and that comes across," Spisto said. "He's having a

great time, and it shows."

Noble's Old Globe gig represents a sort of reunion with the Bard after several years of separation that followed his tempestuous resignation from the RSC in 2003.

As Noble describes that parting, in his customary discursive mode — even-toned, urbane, puckishly humorous — the time simply had come for him to move on.

"I loved it at first," he said. "But I'll tell you something that happened to me. When I took over the company in 1990, probably 60 to 65 percent of my time was spent on artistic matters — directing, reading plays, working with actors. By the time I left it had been reduced to between 25 and 30 percent."

Toward the end of his tenure, Noble drew fire from labor unions for planning to shorten RSC actors' contracts and shrink the company. Other proposals, including his desire to quit the Barbican, the hulking London arts complex that then housed the RSC, earned him a thrashing from the British press and spurred dissent from some prominent actors.

His final heresy, however, was calling for the demolition of the RSC's barn-like 70-year-old theater in Stratford-upon-Avon, Shakespeare's birthplace, and to replace it with a cozier, more audience-friendly facility.

"Leaving the RSC was very, very traumatic," he said. "It became a bit bloody.... And of course the press loves controversy."

## Together again

Since then, Noble has pursued a successful freelance career. But he hadn't done Shakespeare until his "Hamlet" production in Canada. The challenge of combining different stage and acting traditions in that show helped reignite his relationship with the Bard.

"There was a fascinating marriage between the Shakespearean tradition that I grew up in, and I developed myself, and a more North American Method-based, a Stanislavskian-based tradition," he said. "And then Lou asked if I'd become artistic director of the Shakespeare festival here."

So there he was, at rehearsal — a scene the greatest writer in the history of the English language might've recognized, as theater was made from elements as simple as words, space and actors assembled outdoors on a balmy afternoon.

"One of the things that I always find very moving is that the frontispiece of the First Folio lists the actors," Noble said, referring to the collection of Shakespeare's plays published in 1623. "There's 26 of them. And if you analyze them, you will find that there are the leading men, there are the older character men, the younger character men, the character women."

"And that's sort of what one is looking for when one is creating any Shakespeare company, whether it's in Stratford-upon-Avon or San Diego. It kind of doesn't make any difference, really. So we look for that breed of people. Except we have real women rather than men playing girls!"

[reed.johnson@latimes.com](mailto:reed.johnson@latimes.com)





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### Former RSC director Adrian Noble talks about his new gig at the Old Globe

July 2nd, 2010, 1:01 pm · [Post a Comment](#) · posted by [PAUL HODGINS, THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER](#)



San Diego's [Old Globe](#) has scored a coup by replacing [Darko Tresnjak](#), outgoing director of its summer Shakespeare season, with [Adrian Noble](#).

The 59-year-old director is one of the giants of British theater. Since his professional debut in the mid-1970s he has been nominated for 120 [Olivier Awards](#), and his 1991-2002 artistic directorship of the [Royal Shakespeare Company](#) was as high-profile as it was controversial (his suggestion that the company's theater be ripped down and replaced met with shrill opposition from Britain's theatrical hierarchy).

Though Noble's busy career took him to New York many times (his latest work there is "[Chitty Chitty Bang Bang](#)"), he has never directed in southern California before the Old Globe tapped him.

I talked recently with Noble about his season, which includes [Robert Foxworth](#) in the title role of "[King Lear](#)," as well as "[The Taming of the Shrew](#)" and rare non-Shakespearean play, Alan Bennett's "[The Madness of George III](#)." All three plays have just opened and are running in repertory throughout the summer. Noble directed "[Lear](#)" and "[Shrew](#)."

**The Orange County Register:** Why did you take this job at the Old Globe?

**Adrian Noble:** I think the timing had a lot to do with it. When I left the Royal Shakespeare Company I didn't want to do Shakespeare. I took five years off. Then I was asked to do "[Hamlet](#)" in Canada (at the [Stratford Shakespeare Festival](#)). I became kind of interested in Shakespeare again, and so this offer came through at a nice time.

**Register:** Tell us about the plays you chose for this season.

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**Noble:** We were looking to do something significant. It's the 75th anniversary (of the Old Globe). We wanted to do something quite big. The success of "Lear" depends on the man you get to play the king, and where you are in your life (as a director). There are certain plays I don't want to direct again, but "Lear" certainly isn't one of them. With (Robert Foxworth), I met him and looked at his material and thought it would be a really good idea.

**Register:** I've talked to British directors who have trouble working with American actors on Shakespeare. What was your experience?

**Noble:** I found no difference at all. Not a shred. I was expecting to; the accents are different and cadences are different. But arguably the American actors are more keen to learn the techniques than perhaps the Brits, who think they know it all. I've had nothing but a marvelous experience with the actors here. It was exactly like working with a company of British actors. In a way they're more open. They're quite smart and they know I have something I can teach them.

**Register:** Tell us a bit about your directorial approach to "Lear" and "The Madness of George III."

**Noble:** We've started "Lear" at the end of the 18th century. Then it oozes through time and finishes in Beckett Land. I started it there partly because I was looking for a period in history when kings had really nearly absolute power – back at least 200 years ago. Then I thought it would be rather good if we took a date that's resonant in British and American history because we were doing "The Madness of George" at the same time. It's set in 1788, just after the Revolution. Lear is quoted a lot in the Bennett play.

**Register:** How do you like working outdoors in the Lowell Davies Festival Theatre, with the San Diego Zoo in the background?

**Noble:** I like that, I have to say. In "Lear" we can open up the back (of the stage) and you've got nature and trees and wild animals. I love it. They make their noises; I add in a few more noises!

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## Noble to lead 2010 Shakespeare Fest

Director will replace Old Globe's Tresnjak

By James Hebert  
THEATER CRITIC

The Old Globe Theatre has hired the distinguished British director Adrian Noble to lead its 2010 Summer Shakespeare Festival, taking the place of Darko Tresnjak, who is leaving the theater.

Noble, who was artistic director of England's renowned Royal Shakespeare Company for nearly 13 years, will initially be on a one-year contract to direct the festival, whose 2010 edition coincides with the Globe's 75th anniversary.

Tresnjak, who has directed 14 productions at the Globe since 2002, was tapped six years ago to revive the theater's tradition of staging classical works in summer repertory. In addition to serving as artistic director of the Shakespeare fest, he has held the title of resident artistic director since last year.

Tresnjak will depart the Globe in September to focus on independent directing projects, said Louis G. Spisto, the theater's CEO and executive producer.

Spisto declined to say whether the theater plans to fill the position of resident artistic director. As executive producer, Spisto will continue to be responsible for the bulk of the Globe's programming, as he has been for the past several years.

Spisto said Noble was the Globe's first choice to take over the Shakespeare festival.

"He's a master of classical theater," said Spisto. "(He has) a very straightforward, no-nonsense approach that delivers the text and is always fresh without being gimmicky.

"I'd seen his 'Macbeth' at the Met, which was spectacular," Spisto said of Noble's 2007 adaptation of the Shakespeare-derived Verdi work for the Metropolitan Opera. "But last season's 'Hamlet' at Stratford (the top-tier Shakespeare festival in Ontario, Canada) was tremendous. My colleagues at Stratford said he's hard to get, but he's great when you get him."

Noble, who is 58, led the Royal Shakespeare Company,



Adrian Noble will direct two of the Globe's three Shakespeare Festival productions next year. Ken Howard

based in Shakespeare's birthplace of Stratford-upon-Avon, from 1991 to 2003.

He has earned some 120 Olivier Award nominations (the top British theater prize), and while he's best-known for his classical work, he has shown great range over the years, directing works from opera to American musicals ("Kiss Me Kate") to the hit 2002 movie-based show "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang" in London's West End.

The British newspaper *The Independent* once called Noble "perhaps the most ambitious

artistic director in the history of the RSC," a company whose roots go back 130 years (it took its present name in 1961).

Noble, speaking by phone from his home in England, joked that the closest he's ever come to San Diego is the Los Angeles airport. But he called his hiring "one of those extraordinarily fortunate coincidences. Serendipity, I think, is the right word."

Last year's "Hamlet" renewed Noble's enthusiasm for Shakespeare after a deliberate five-year break from the Bard. So Spisto's call, he explains, "was kind of perfect timing, because my juices were absolutely running for Shakespeare. And the Old Globe's got a very high reputation in the Shakespeare world."

Noble, who will make his first visit to San Diego next month, said he's pondering a production of "King Lear" as the centerpiece of the 2010 festival, but is far from making any definite decisions yet.

He's also looking forward to working with the USD/Globe MFA acting students who are a big part of the fest (Noble started an academy for young actors just before he left RSC), and to experiencing the "collegiate" feel of a theater company again after his stint as an independent director.

"It's something special you

only get in companies — being part of putting it all together," Noble says.

The Yugoslav-born Tresnjak first came to the Globe in 2002 to direct Shakespeare's "Pericles," after directing for eight summers at the Williamstown Theatre Festival and elsewhere on the East Coast.

In 2003, he was chosen to head the following year's renewal of the Shakespeare festival, which had been a staple at the theater in past decades.

In addition to directing many of the fest entries — including "Cyrano de Bergerac" and "Coriolanus" for the 2009 edition, now in progress — Tresnjak took on regular-season plays as well. He has specialized in neglected classics such as 2007's "Bell, Book and Candle" and last year's "The Pleasure of His Company." He also teaches in UCSD's Department of Theatre and Dance.

Tresnjak was named the Globe's co-artistic director in 2008, sharing the job with Jerry Patch, after the departure of longtime artistic director Jack O'Brien. A few months later, Patch left for a job at the Manhattan Theatre Club in New York, and Tresnjak was named resident artistic director.

"Darko is really a terrific talent," said Spisto. "He's been instrumental in the success of the festival."

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Director will replace Old Globe's Tresnjak

By **James Hebert**

UNION-TRIBUNE STAFF WRITER

2:00 a.m. July 10, 2009

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"Darko is really a terrific talent," said Spisto. "He's been instrumental in the success of the festival. It would not have been the success it's become without his involvement. And we thank him for that."

**James Hebert** ;

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# SAN DIEGO DAILY TRANSCRIPT

July 10, 2009

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## **Old Globe artistic director resigns**

**By JENNA LONG**, The Daily Transcript

The Old Globe's resident artistic director, Darko Tresnjak, will leave his post in September to pursue independent directing opportunities. After managing the Globe's renowned summer Shakespeare festivals for six seasons, Tresnjak will be succeeded by international director, Adrian Noble.

Globe CEO Louis G. Spisto announced the staff restructuring Friday.

Noble will take charge of the theater's 2010 Shakespeare Festival, which will celebrate the Old Globe's 75th anniversary season, and direct two of the three productions presented in repertory.

"The 2010 Shakespeare Festival will begin the Old Globe's year-long celebration of 75 years in Balboa Park," Spisto said. "I have long been an admirer of Adrian's work and it is tremendously exciting to have him join us at this important time at the Globe. Adrian and I are currently in the planning stages for next year's festival and we look forward to announcing the season soon."

Noble's directing career includes both opera and theater mediums; he served as artistic director of the Royal Shakespeare Company from 1990-2003 and has received 120 Olivier Award nominations.

Tresnjak was invited to lead the Shakespeare Festival in 2004. His festival productions, "Cyrano de Bergerac" and "Coriolanus," are currently performed in repertory through Sept. 27 at the Globe.

Tresnjak will make his directorial debut at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival with Shakespeare's "Twelfth Night" in June 2010.

"The last six years have been an exhilarating time for me," he said.

*Send your comments to [Jenna.Long@sddt.com](mailto:Jenna.Long@sddt.com)*





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**Posted: Fri., Jul. 10, 2009, 1:04pm PT**

## **Noble new a.d. of Shakespeare Fest**

### **Will lead 75th-anniversary events at Old Globe**

By [GORDON COX](#)

Former Royal Shakespeare Company artistic director Adrian Noble has been named a.d. of the 75th-anniversary Shakespeare Fest at the Old Globe Theater in San Diego.

Noble, who led the RSC from 1990-2003, will fill a post to be vacated in September by Darko Tresnjak, who ends his six-year stint as fest a.d. to pursue independent helming gigs.

Noble will direct two of the three yet-to-be-named repertory offerings of the 2010 Shakespeare Fest, which will kick off a yearlong celebration of the Old Globe's 75th anniversary at the company's Balboa Park venue. Fest will run June 12-Sept. 26, 2010.

Current fest is comprised of rep productions of "Twelfth Night," "Coriolanus" and "Cyrano de Bergerac."

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# SAN DIEGO News Network

July 16, 2009

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## Pat Launer on San Diego theater: 'Macbeth,' 'Noises'

Catch up with "Jazz Queens," Resilience of the Spirit Festival, arts news and more

By Pat Launer, SDNN

### NEWS AND VIEWS

... Around the Globe: Distinguished British director **Adrian Noble** is coming across the pond. After 13 years as artistic director of the Royal Shakespeare Company (1991-2003), he's ready to try an American Shakespeare troupe. Noble will helm the 2010 Summer Shakespeare Festival at the Old Globe, just in time for the theater's celebratory 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary season. It was a surprise to many that **Darko Tresnjak**, supremely successful artistic director of the Shakespeare Festival and since last year, resident artistic director of the Old Globe, is leaving the theater.

A brilliant director, Tresnjak shepherded 14 productions at the Globe since 2002. Six years ago, he revived and revitalized the summer Shakespeare repertory company. He has won numerous local awards for his productions, and leaves his legacy this season with a stellar "Cyrano de Bergerac" and a provocative "Coriolanus." His plans are to pursue independent projects, which he'd also been doing during his time at the Globe, directing operas, in particular. It's not yet clear whether or when the Globe will name another resident artistic director. Noble, age 58, who has racked up some 120 Olivier Award nominations (the British equivalent of the Tonys), has also directed his share of operas — most recently, Bizet's "Carmen" in Paris and Verdi's "Macbeth" at the Met in New York — in addition to the London-to-Broadway musical, "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang." Though he'd taken a hiatus from staging the Bard, he recently wrote a book called "How to Do Shakespeare" (to be published this fall), and he's rarin' to go to it again. Along with the Globe's CEO/executive producer Lou Spisto, Noble will choose the plays for next summer's Shakespeare Festival, which might, like this season, include another non-Shakespearean classic. Tresnjak has laid some excellent groundwork over the past six years, and I hope we haven't seen/heard the last of him. He leaves the Globe in September, and Noble comes to town - his first time ever in San Diego - mid-August.



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Noble said his Shakespearean jones returned last year, when he directed "Hamlet" at the [Stratford Shakespeare Festival](#) in Ontario, Canada. "When Shakespeare is your life for 20 years ... I wanted to do other things," he said of the five Shakespeare-free years after leaving the RSC.

What brought him back to the fold, oddly, was a Canadian reality TV show named "[Triple Sensation](#)," in the mold of "American Idol" and "Britain's Got Talent." The premise is to find the nation's best young triple-threat singing-dancing-acting talent, with a panel of pros delivering the verdict. While serving alongside "A Chorus Line" composer Marvin Hamlisch, "Jersey Boys" choreographer Sergio Trujillo and producer Garth Drabinsky, Noble started hearing good things about [Canada's Shakespeare festival under its new leader, Des McNuff](#).

"It was a nice moment to catch me. I was looking to do some theater," Noble said.

He said it was invigorating to work with North American actors.

"What North American actors would bring was a wonderful realism and ability to act in the moment, absolutely truthfully, and what I brought was an understanding of how Shakespeare wrote, and we could make a bridge, a link between the two traditions."

Noble, who recently directed Bizet's "Carmen" in Paris, Verdi's "Macbeth" at New York's Metropolitan Opera, and has a "Don Giovanni" lined up in France as well, said his Canadian experience prompted him to carve out several months to write a book, "How to Do Shakespeare." Due for publication this fall, it's geared toward helping student actors "on how to handle the language, speak the verse, analyze a speech and deliver it."

Spisto said he contacted Noble's agent after seeing the Ontario "Hamlet," just to say that the Old Globe would be happy to have Noble direct a play sometime. This spring, when Tresnjak informed the Globe he wouldn't be back after this year's Shakespeare Festival, Spisto was more specific, offering Noble the artistic directorship for next summer. Whether that becomes an ongoing relationship or is just a one-time teaming "remains to be seen," Spisto said.

For now, he says, Noble fills the bill as something special for what will be the Old Globe's 75th-anniversary season. "Adrian is a highly sought-after director, and it's remarkable to be able to lure him to San Diego."

-- Mike Boehm

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[Much Ado, Indeed - Adrian Noble's vision for the Royal Shakespeare Company takes it from London to the hinterlands and far beyond \(even your local cinema\)](#)

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*Photo: Lowell Davies Festival Theatre, home of Old Globe Shakespeare Festival. Credit: Craig Schwartz*

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## Adrian Noble Talks The Old Globe's Summer Shakespeare Festival



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In a recent interview with Reed Johnson of the [LA Times](#), [Adrian Noble](#) talked about this season's Shakespeare Festival at [The Old Globe](#) in San Diego.

Noble recalls seeing Shakespeare productions at the Chichester Festival in his home town of West Sussex as a young man in the early 1960s: "[Laurence Olivier](#). [Ralph Richardson](#). [Edith Evans](#) was there. [Michael Redgrave](#). [Maggie Smith](#). I mean, it was just astonishing."

Noble now serves as the artistic director of [The Old Globe](#)'s summer festival, this year Noble has chosen to do the plays in rep, he says "It gives an audience a chance to get to know a company of players. That's the nice thing, And sometimes there's a dialogue between the plays, so there's a dialogue between 'King Lear' and 'The Madness of [George III]'. And there's a dialogue in a way between 'King Lear,' one of the great middle to late tragedies, and 'The Taming of the Shrew,' one of the early lighter comedies. It gives an audience a bit of a sense of occasion."

Noble was the artistic director of the Royal Shakespeare company for 13 years, he left in 2003 surrounding a great deal of controversy, the bad press hasn't assuaged his love of Shakespeare, Noble still believes "Shakespeare is one of the great civilizing influences in the world. I think he's one of the great unifiers of mankind."

To read the complete article [Click Here](#).

The Shakespeare Festival runs June 12 - Sept. 26 and begins the Globe's year-long celebration of its 75th Anniversary.

Tickets are currently available by subscription only and prices range from \$75 to \$228. Single tickets go on sale Sunday, April 25. Subscription packages may be purchased online at [www.TheOldGlobe.org](http://www.TheOldGlobe.org), by phone at (619) 23-GLOBE or by visiting the box office. Single tickets go on sale April 25 at 10:00 a.m.

King Lear runs June 12 - Sept. 23. Previews run June 24 and 25. Opening night is June 26. The Taming of the Shrew runs June 16 - Sept. 26. Previews run June 16, 17, 27 and 29. Opening night is June 30. The Madness of King George III runs June 19 - Sept. 24. Previews run June 19 and 20 and July 1 and 2. Opening night is July 3.

## The Old Globe's Shakespeare Festival gets the Noble treatment

"When I emerge from directing Shakespeare, I feel [I'm] a richer human being," Adrian Noble says. "The exposure to such a multi-perspective view of humanity is by definition enriching."

Noble knows whereof he speaks. From 1990 to 2003 he was artistic director of England's Royal Shakespeare Company. This summer he's in San Diego as the artistic director of the Old Globe Theatre's Shakespeare Festival, which opens the company's 75th-anniversary celebration. Noble—who has received 120 Olivier Award nominations—has chosen to direct *King Lear* and to team it with Alan Bennett's *The Madness of George III*, which he is also helming.

Directing Shakespeare, Noble says, "is like a well that is continuously refilling itself. I am doing *Lear* for the third time, and it's like coming to the play afresh. There's so much to draw from, so much to discover. It's a huge challenge—Shakespeare is the hardest taskmaster. It hones your skills. You have to get better as a director to direct Shakespeare."

The pairing of the two plays seemed natural, Noble says, for obvious reasons—both deal with kings who go mad, and *Lear* is quoted often in the Bennett play, which concerns a real British king and his deterioration into madness after the Revolutionary War.

"Part of George's fall into madness was his grief at losing the American colonies," Noble says. So the director decided to connect the two plays even further, to start *Lear* "in the fourth quarter of the 18th century," around the time of the American Revolution.

He says he also thought, "Why don't we end up with *Lear* in the 20th century?" I thought that time in *Lear* is elastic. We find with *Lear* that a contemporary landscape

emerges as the play progresses."


*Lear*, he says, "needs to start in a formal, very patrician court, in which everybody knows their place and nobody steps out of line. Catastrophe follows—the division of the kingdom. Very quickly, the formality of the court disintegrates, the kingdom falls apart. Because it's a great poetic drama, the cosmos collapses into violent storms, extraordinary tempests."

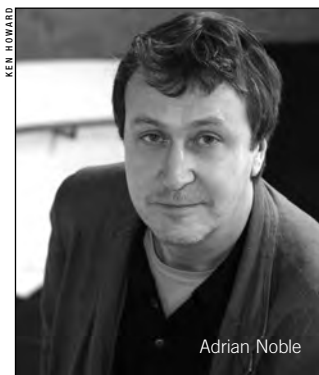
To have any chance of success with the play, he says, "You have to allow the audience to witness that disintegration. So I thought I'd take for my departure the moment in British history when the biggest rupture happens—the loss of the American colonies, which were regarded by many people in Britain as part of one nation. And then as civiliza-

tion disintegrates it seemed to naturally fall into the 20th century, for me the period just before the Second World War. One of the terrible things that characterized the 20th century was the barbarism between man and man."

Robert Foxworth, whose Broadway credits include *August: Osage County* and *Twelve Angry Men*, is *Lear* and British actor Miles Anderson is King George. The festival also includes *The Taming of the Shrew*, directed by Ron Daniels.

One reason for choosing *Lear*, Noble says, "is that you're running a theatre company. *Lear* offers 15 or 16 wonderful parts. You have to think about that in terms of attracting the quality of actor you want to attract."

He says he is excited to be working with American actors. "I've found the ability in American actors to combine the best of the Stanislavski-based Method approach to acting with the discipline that a Shakespearean approach to a character would require. It's a fascinating marriage of two traditions." 



KEN HOWARD

Adrian Noble



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# The (Adrian) Noble Approach to Shakespeare — Now in California

By *Mervyn Rothstein*  
27 Jul 2010



Adrian Noble

The former artistic director of the Royal Shakespeare Company dons sunglasses to direct *King Lear* and *The Madness of George III* at The Old Globe in sunny San Diego.

\*

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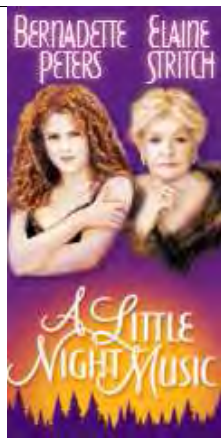
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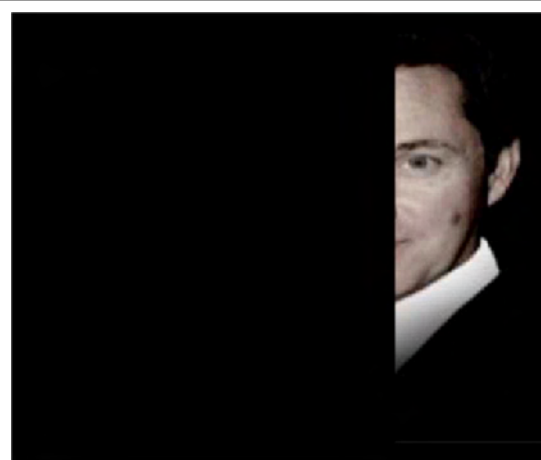
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## The Old Globe to present AN EVENING WITH ADRIAN NOBLE 6/2

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essential."

Old Globe Executive Producer [Lou Spisto](#) today announced An Evening with [Adrian Noble](#), a free lecture and open forum to be held in the [Old Globe Theatre](#) on Wednesday, June 2 at 7:00 p.m. Noble is the Artistic Director of the Globe's 2010 Shakespeare Festival and the author of How to Do Shakespeare, a guide to performing, listening to and appreciating the works of Shakespeare. The event will be followed by a book signing in the theater's lobby. Reservations are required for this FREE event. Reservations can be made by visiting [www.theoldglobe.org](http://www.theoldglobe.org) or by calling the Box Office at (619) 23-Globe.

The hour and a half event will feature opening remarks by [Lou Spisto](#). [Adrian Noble](#) will discuss his approach to the perennial issues of performing Shakespeare sprinkled with anecdotes drawn from his several decades of directing experience and answer questions from the audience. Academy Award-winning actor [Ralph Fiennes](#) called Noble's How to Do Shakespeare an invaluable book for actors and "for any student of Shakespeare it should be

Noble will direct the Shakespeare Festival's productions of King Lear (June 12 - Sept. 23) and [Alan Bennett's](#) The Madness of George III (June 19 - Sept. 24). He joined the [Royal Shakespeare Company](#) (RSC) in 1980 and served as its Artistic Director and Chief Executive from 1990-2003. His recent [Theater Productions](#) include Hedda Gabler for The Theatre Royal in Bath and the West End, Hamlet for the Stratford Festival of Canada, Così Fan Tutte for the Opera De Lyon, Kean for [Thelma Holt](#) Ltd at the Noel Coward Theatre, Summer and Smoke and A Woman Of No Importance for [Stanhope Productions](#), The Home Place by [Brian Friel](#) at the [Gate Theatre](#) and the West End, Brand by Ibsen starring [Ralph Fiennes](#), Pericles at The Roundhouse in Stratford and the West End London and Chitty Chitty Bang Bang at The London Palladium starring [Michael Ball](#).

LOCATION: [The Old Globe](#) is located in San Diego's Balboa Park at 1363 Old Globe Way. There are numerous free parking lots available throughout the park. Valet parking is also available (\$10). For additional parking information visit [www.BalboaPark.org](http://www.BalboaPark.org).

The Tony Award-winning Old Globe is one of the country's leading professional regional theaters and has stood as San Diego's flagship arts institution for 75 years. Under the direction of Executive Producer [Louis G. Spisto](#), [The Old Globe](#) produces a year-round season of 15 productions of classic, contemporary and new works on its three Balboa Park stages: the 580-seat [Old Globe Theatre](#), the 250-seat Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre and the 612-seat outdoor Lowell Davies [Festival Theatre](#), home of its internationally renowned Shakespeare Festival. More than 300,000 people attend Globe productions annually and participate in the theater's education and community programs. Numerous world premieres such as The Full Monty, Dirty Rotten Scoundrels, A Catered Affair, and the annual holiday musical, [Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas!](#), have been developed at [The Old Globe](#) and have gone on to enjoy highly successful runs on Broadway and at regional theaters across the country.

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Adrian Noble  
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## Adrian Noble Will Be Artistic Director of Old Globe's 2010 Shakespeare Festival

San Diego's Old Globe announced July 10 that former RSC artistic director Adrian Noble will assume that same role for the Old Globe's 2010 Shakespeare Festival celebrating the theatre's 75th anniversary season.

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# Adrian Noble to Become Artistic Director of Old Globe's 2010 Shakespeare Festival

By: **Brian Scott Lipton** · Jul 10, 2009 · San Diego

Adrian Noble will become the artistic director of The Old Globe's 2010 Shakespeare Festival, to run June 12-September 16, which celebrates the theater's 75th anniversary season. He succeeds Darko Tresnjak, who will leave his post in September to pursue independent directing opportunities. In addition to overseeing the festival, Noble will direct two of the three productions to be presented in repertory.

Noble was artistic director of The Royal Shakespeare Company from 1990-2003. He recently directed *Carmen* at Opéra Comique in Paris and the Broadway and West End productions of the musicals *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*. He received Drama Desk Award nominations for his direction of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Art of Success*. Noble will also be directing *Don Giovanni* for Opera de Lyon and *Alcina* for the Vienna State Opera in upcoming seasons.

For more information, visit [www.oldglobe.org](http://www.oldglobe.org).



Adrian Noble  
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## Adrian Noble Named As Artistic Director Of The Old Globe's 2010 Shakespeare Festival

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by BWW News Desk



Executive Producer [Louis G. Spisto](#) today announced the appointment of [Adrian Noble](#) as Artistic Director of [The Old Globe's](#) 2010 Shakespeare Festival celebrating the theater's 75th anniversary season. One of the theater's most respected and sought-after directors, Noble will oversee the Festival and direct two of the three productions presented in repertory.

Noble succeeds Resident Artistic Director [Darko Tresnjak](#) who will leave his post in September to pursue independent directing opportunities. The annual festival will run from June 12 through September 26, 2010.

"The 2010 Shakespeare Festival will begin [The Old Globe's](#) year-long celebration of 75 years in Balboa Park," said Spisto. "I have long been an admirer of Adrian's work and it is tremendously exciting to have him join us at this important time at the Globe. Adrian and I are currently in the planning stages for next year's Festival and we look forward to announcing the season soon."

Noble commented, "I am thrilled to be calling San Diego and [The Old Globe](#) my artistic home during the next year. The Globe has a worldwide standing in the theater community and I am very much looking forward to working with Lou and the entire Globe staff to fashion a festival that is inspired by the Globe's remarkable 75-year history."

Noble's career has taken him around the world directing both opera and theater. He was artistic director of The [Royal Shakespeare Company](#) from 1990-2003 and has received 120 Olivier Award nominations. Noble's recent productions include Carmen at Opéra Comique in Paris (June 2009), his universally acclaimed production of Hamlet at Canada's Stratford Festival (2008), Verdi's Macbeth at The Metropolitan Opera (2007) and the West End productions of the musicals Chitty Chitty Bang Bang and The Secret Garden. He will also be directing Don Giovanni for Opera de Lyon and Alcina for the Vienna State Opera in upcoming seasons.



Tresnjak was invited to lead the Shakespeare Festival in 2004. He is currently represented on the Festival stage with productions of *Cyrano de Bergerac* and *Coriolanus*, and will make his directorial debut at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival with *Twelfth Night* in June 2010.

"The last six years have been an exhilarating time for me," said Tresnjak. "I was honored to head the Shakespeare Festival as it returned to the repertory format and to have worked with the incredibly supportive staff at the Globe."

"[The Old Globe](#) Shakespeare Festival's return to repertory six years ago was met with great enthusiasm by audiences from around the country," added Spisto. "The Festival's reputation has continued to grow, with audiences from nineteen countries in attendance last season alone. Darko has contributed greatly to the Festival's tremendous success and has helped to ensure its exciting future."

[The Old Globe](#) is located in San Diego's Balboa Park at 1363 Old Globe Way. There are numerous free parking lots available throughout the park. Valet parking is also available (\$10). For additional parking information visit [www.BalboaPark.org](http://www.BalboaPark.org).

Shakespeare Festival: *Twelfth Night*, *Cyrano de Bergerac* and *Coriolanus* (in repertory thru 9/27), *Sammy* (9/17-11/1), *The Savannah Disputation* (9/26-11/1), *Whisper House* (1/13-2/21).

The Tony Award-winning Old Globe is one of the country's leading professional regional theaters and has stood as San Diego's flagship arts institution for 74 years. Under the direction of Executive Producer [Louis G. Spisto](#), [The Old Globe](#) produces a year-round season of 15 productions of classic, contemporary and new works on its three Balboa Park stages: the 580-seat [Old Globe Theatre](#), the 226-seat [Arena Stage](#) at the San Diego Museum of Art's James S. Copley Auditorium (an interim second stage during construction of the new 250-seat Conrad Prebys Theatre Center) and the 612-seat outdoor Lowell Davies [Festival Theatre](#), home of its internationally renowned Shakespeare Festival. More than 250,000 people attend Globe productions annually and participate in the theater's education programs and outreach services. Numerous Broadway-bound premieres and revivals, such as *The Full Monty*, *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*, [A Catered Affair](#), and the annual holiday musical, [Dr. Seuss' How The Grinch Stole Christmas!](#), have been developed at [The Old Globe](#) and have gone on to enjoy highly successful runs in New York and at regional theaters across the country.

[Adrian Noble](#) led the [Royal Shakespeare Company](#) as Artistic Director and Chief Executive from 1990-2003. Noble's most recent theatre productions include *Hamlet* for the Stratford Festival of Canada, *Così fan Tutti* at the Opera De Lyon, *Keane* for [Thelma Holt](#) Ltd at the Noel Coward Theatre, *Summer and Smoke* and *A Woman Of No Importance* for [Stanhope Productions](#), *The Home Place* by [Brian Friel](#) at the Abby and the West End, *Brand* by Ibsen starring [Ralph Fiennes](#), *Pericles* at The Roundhouse in Stratford and the West End London and *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* at The London Palladium starring [Michael Ball](#). In 1980 he joined the RSC as Assistant Director, becoming an Associate Director almost immediately. His first production for the RSC was Ostrovsky's *The Forest* which transferred first to [The Warehouse](#) and then to the Aldwych and was named best revival in 1981 Drama Awards. In 1988 he was appointed by [Terry Hands](#) to be Artistic Director of the RSC whole Stratford season and in 1989 went on to be Artistic Director of the RSC London season. His RSC productions include *A Dolls House*, *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *Measure for Measure*, *King Lear*, *Anthony and Cleopatra*, *The Winters Tale*, *Henry V*, *Desert Air*, *As You Like it*, *Macbeth*, *Kiss Me Kate*, *The Art of Success*, *The Plantagenets* and *The Master Builder*. In 1989 Adrian left the RSC to pursue an independent career and directed *The Art of Success* at the [Manhattan Theatre Club](#) and Chekhov's *The Three Sisters* at the [Gate Theatre](#), Dublin and [The Royal Court Theatre](#). Noble has directed Don

Giovanni for Kent Opera, The Duchess of Malfi in a circus tent in Paris, The Faerie Queen for the [Peter Hall](#) Company at the Aix-en Provence Festival and a Japanese production of Twelfth Night. He was also a member of the 1989 Gulbenkian Enquiry into Training Directors. His film A Midsummer Night's Dream was released in 1996. His production of The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe opened at Sadlers Wells Theatre in December 2000 and was revived in Stratford in 2002. Noble has been awarded D.Litt from Birmingham University (1994) and Bristol University (1996).

Photo Credit: Walter McBride/Retna Ltd.

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By [Andrew Gans](#)  
10 Jul 2009

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Adrian Noble  
photo by Ken Howard

San Diego's Old Globe announced July 10 that former Royal Shakespeare Company artistic director Adrian Noble will assume that same role for the Old Globe's 2010 Shakespeare Festival celebrating the theatre's 75th anniversary season.

Noble added, "I am thrilled to be calling San Diego and The Old Globe my artistic home during the next year. The Globe has a worldwide standing in the theatre community and I am very much looking forward to working with Lou and the entire Globe staff to fashion a festival that is inspired by the Globe's remarkable 75-year history."

Tresnjak, who was invited to lead the Shakespeare Festival in 2004, stated,

Noble, who directed the West End and Broadway productions of *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*, will succeed resident artistic director Darko Tresnjak, who will leave his post in September to "pursue independent directing opportunities," according to the press statement. Noble will oversee the Festival and direct two of the three productions presented in repertory.

In a statement Old Globe executive producer Louis G. Spisto said, "The 2010 Shakespeare Festival will begin The Old Globe's year-long celebration of 75 years in Balboa Park. I have long been an admirer of Adrian's work and it is tremendously exciting to have him join us at this important time at the Globe. Adrian and I are currently in the planning stages for next year's Festival and we look forward to announcing the season soon."

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Adrian Noble was artistic director of The Royal Shakespeare Company from 1990-2003 and has received 120 Olivier Award nominations. His recent productions include *Carmen* at Opéra Comique in Paris (June 2009), *Hamlet* at Canada's Stratford Festival (2008), Verdi's *Macbeth* at The Metropolitan Opera (2007) and the West End production of *The Secret Garden*. He will also be directing *Don Giovanni* for Opera de Lyon and *Alcina* for the Vienna State Opera in upcoming seasons.

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## The Old Globe's Shakespeare Festival gets the Noble treatment

"When I emerge from directing Shakespeare, I feel [I'm] a richer human being," Adrian Noble says. "The exposure to such a multi-perspective view of humanity is by definition enriching."

Noble knows whereof he speaks. From 1990 to 2003 he was artistic director of England's Royal Shakespeare Company. This summer he's in San Diego as the artistic director of the Old Globe Theatre's Shakespeare Festival, which opens the company's 75th-anniversary celebration. Noble—who has received 120 Olivier Award nominations—has chosen to direct *King Lear* and to team it with Alan Bennett's *The Madness of George III*, which he is also helming.

Directing Shakespeare, Noble says, "is like a well that is continuously refilling itself. I am doing *Lear* for the third time, and it's like coming to the play afresh. There's so much to draw from, so much to discover. It's a huge challenge—Shakespeare is the hardest taskmaster. It hones your skills. You have to get better as a director to direct Shakespeare."

The pairing of the two plays seemed natural, Noble says, for obvious reasons—both deal with kings who go mad, and *Lear* is quoted often in the Bennett play, which concerns a real British king and his deterioration into madness after the Revolutionary War.

"Part of George's fall into madness was his grief at losing the American colonies," Noble says. So the director decided to connect the two plays even further, to start *Lear* "in the fourth quarter of the 18th century," around the time of the American Revolution.

He says he also thought, "Why don't we end up with *Lear* in the 20th century?" I thought that time in *Lear* is elastic. We find with *Lear* that a contemporary landscape

emerges as the play progresses."


*Lear*, he says, "needs to start in a formal, very patrician court, in which everybody knows their place and nobody steps out of line. Catastrophe follows—the division of the kingdom. Very quickly, the formality of the court disintegrates, the kingdom falls apart. Because it's a great poetic drama, the cosmos collapses into violent storms, extraordinary tempests."

To have any chance of success with the play, he says, "You have to allow the audience to witness that disintegration. So I thought I'd take for my departure the moment in British history when the biggest rupture happens—the loss of the American colonies, which were regarded by many people in Britain as part of one nation. And then as civiliza-

tion disintegrates it seemed to naturally fall into the 20th century, for me the period just before the Second World War. One of the terrible things that characterized the 20th century was the barbarism between man and man."

Robert Foxworth, whose Broadway credits include *August: Osage County* and *Twelve Angry Men*, is *Lear* and British actor Miles Anderson is King George. The festival also includes *The Taming of the Shrew*, directed by Ron Daniels.

One reason for choosing *Lear*, Noble says, "is that you're running a theatre company. *Lear* offers 15 or 16 wonderful parts. You have to think about that in terms of attracting the quality of actor you want to attract."

He says he is excited to be working with American actors. "I've found the ability in American actors to combine the best of the Stanislavski-based Method approach to acting with the discipline that a Shakespearean approach to a character would require. It's a fascinating marriage of two traditions." 



KEN HOWARD

Adrian Noble

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### THEATER NEWS

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# Adrian Noble to Give Free Lecture at Old Globe; Matthew Lopez Named Playwright-in-Residence

By: [Dan Bacalzo](#) · May 6, 2010 · San Diego

Old Globe Theatre's artistic director Adrian Noble will give a free lecture and host an open forum, entitled *An Evening with Adrian Noble*, on Wednesday, June 2 at 7pm.

Noble will discuss his approach to the perennial issues of performing Shakespeare sprinkled with anecdotes drawn from his several decades of directing experience and answer questions from the audience. The event will be followed by a book signing of Noble's *How to Do Shakespeare* in the theater's lobby.

In related news, the Old Globe has named Matthew Lopez as Playwright-in-Residence. The two-year residency includes a commission for a new play, and Lopez will also take part in the Globe's education outreach and audience development activities. The theater is presenting the West Coast premiere of Lopez's *The Whipping Man*, May 8-June 13, while the playwright's other works include *Zoe's Perfect Wedding*, *Reverberation* and *Tio Pepe*.

For more information, visit [www.TheOldGlobe.org](http://www.TheOldGlobe.org).



Adrian Noble  
(© Ken Howard)



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# **JONNO'S DIARY**

# SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE

April 25, 2010

**OPERA DIARY** JONNO ROBERTS

## Breaking bad? He's ready for the dark side



It seems only fitting, dear San Diego, that I should be writing this weekly missive to you. You see, Shakespeare understood the fun of having a character step out onto the front of the stage and talk directly to the audi-

ence. He knew what it could ... do.

Sure, there are the big weepy twerps like Hamlet, moaning about how upset his tummy is after every ghostly visitation from his slaughtered daddy. But, where Billy Shakes really got it right was when he has a bad guy, a real bastard perhaps, step to the front of the stage.

Because unlike Hamlet, the bad guy won't let you down. He'll tell you exactly what he is about to do, who he's going to mess with and how, and he'll make you love to hate, and hate to love him, every bloody step of his way to the top.

SEE **Diary, E2**

## DIARY

CONTINUED FROM E1

### 'I do intend to have a pretty filthily good time'

And it just so happens that I am here to play one of Shakespeare's greatest baddies, Edmund the Bastard.

Now, I have no intention of killing any of the other actors in this group (yet), nor do I intend to have *all* of the delightful young actresses fall in love with me, but I do intend to have a pretty filthily good time doing these plays. And I hope you will come along with me for the journey.

The action thus far: Our esteemed director, who shall henceforth be known as Adrian Noble, is smothered under a cloud of volcanic ash and smoke in Britain, and is unable to be here for the commencement of rehearsals. One of the leading actors has had to pull out at the last moment, having been called to grace the Broadway stage. Our rehearsal room would be kingless, if not for the splendidly bearded Robert Foxworth, who shall play Lear this summer.

Normally, rehearsals start with a lot of business — where

is this, who is that, etc. Sixty or more people stand and introduce themselves as carpenters or lighting designers or stage crew. The actors stand and fight every impulse to introduce themselves with a half-hour discussion of their worldly importance. The costume and set renderings are presented, so everyone knows whether this production will take place in a Stalinist farming commune, or Stonehenge, or on a hitherto unknown planet in the future, or in a strange theatrical place called "sort-of everywhere." We discover if we'll be fighting with swords or pistols or bamboo poles. We see that part of our costume will involve shirtlessness and mentally calculate how long it will take to lose five pounds of belly fat.

But because of the volcano, we just have Foxworth and that terrific beard. So, he leads us as we sit and read the play together for the first time. And as the last, tragic lines are still hovering in the room, the guy playing Edmund says: "Anyone for a pint of Arrogant Bastard?"

The work begins.

**Jonno Roberts** will be journaling his experiences rehearsing and performing in the Old Globe's Summer Shakespeare Festival for the Sunday Arts section. For more on Roberts, [jonnoroberts.com](http://jonnoroberts.com); more on the Old Globe, [oldglobe.org](http://oldglobe.org).





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THEATER DIARY

## Breaking bad? He's ready for the dark side

BY JONNO ROBERTS

SUNDAY, APRIL 25, 2010 AT 12:05 A.M.

It seems only fitting, dear [San Diego](#), that I should be writing this weekly missive to you. You see, Shakespeare understood the fun of having a character step out onto the front of the stage and talk directly to the audience. He knew what it could ... do.

Sure, there are the big weepy twerps like Hamlet, moaning about how upset his tummy is after every ghostly visitation from his slaughtered daddy. But, where Billy Shakes really got it right was when he has a bad guy, a real bastard perhaps, step to the front of the stage.

Because unlike Hamlet, the bad guy won't let you down. He'll tell you exactly what he is about to do, who he's going to mess with and how, and he'll make you love to hate, and hate to love him, every bloody step of his way to the top.

And it just so happens that I am here to play one of Shakespeare's greatest baddies, Edmund the Bastard.

Now, I have no intention of killing any of the other actors in this group (yet), nor do I intend to have all of the delightful young actresses fall in love with me, but I do intend to have a pretty filthily good time doing these plays. And I hope you will come along with me for the journey.

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Jonno Roberts

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# SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE

May 2, 2010

## THEATER DIARY

JONNO ROBERTS

### The vectors of insanity are converging



We're moving. The Old Globe is in action.

And when I say we are moving, I mean we are moving with the pace and purpose of

a bunch of potheads who have been told there is both a police raid and a pizza delivery imminent. You see, usually, when a company is working on a play, they have four or five weeks of rehearsals — six days a week, eight hours a day, to rescue a play from its confinement as black squiggles on a white page and turn it into some kind of living, breathing piece of theater; one that is hopefully even worth having several hundred people

SEE **Diary, E6**

## DIARY

CONTINUED FROM E1

### Learning lines can be a bit dull and frustrating

fork over a fair chunk o' cash to come and watch eight times a week.

At the Old Globe, however, we have three different plays now officially in concurrent rehearsal, under two directors, a gaggle of stage managers, and with a cast made up of the usual criminals, drunkards, gamblers, gorgeous young lasses, and dashing handsome paragons of virtue like yours truly, all essentially being required to function with multiple personality disorders. Three plays. Three vectors of insanity.

We out-of-towners are all staying in one apartment building quite close to the theater. At 7 p.m. we break from our rehearsal day and trudge back, past the zoo and the Spanish arts village, to our wee actor-colony. We chat about the day's work:

about discoveries made and questions to be asked; about the glorious quest to do true justice to the writings of a man who is arguably the world's greatest artist ... and as we arrive home, we part. We scuttle into our respective holes. We steam some chicken or microwave a pizza or squeeze in a half-hour at the gym, and then ...

Lines.

Right now, most of us are spending our evenings desperately trying to stuff an absurd quantity of words into our heads in a very specific order. Doing three plays means that the hardest, the least pleasant task that is part of the actors' life is trebled in nastiness, trebled in tedium and trebled in complexity.

Thank the Lordy I am only in two productions this year. Nonetheless, I have an answer to the question that actors get asked most: "How do you remember the words?" Sadly, there is no trick. We memorize our lines the same way one has to memorize dry facts for a school exam. With a hammer.

And it is an unpleasant, dull, frustrating, difficult,

and — certainly in my case — a soporific task. Every page of every script I have ever worked on has eventually ended up with a drool-stain somewhere on it, caused by me falling asleep facedown at the table trying to learn my %~@& lines. In fact, I dribbled on one of Petruchio's soliloquies just after 10 o'clock this very evening.

So, as I said — the Old Globe is in action. Picture us as a vast, ancient naval power, with sailors swarming down the shore to their ships, hauling the hulks down ramps and heaving them into the blue Aegean waters, unfurling the sails, fastening the oars in their rowlocks.

I'm the bloke who's fast asleep, dribbling all over the battle-plans.

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## Theater Diary: The vectors of insanity are converging

By JONNO ROBERTS

Sunday, May 2, 2010 at 12:05 a.m.



Jonno Roberts

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## Pucker up: It's time to kiss and tell (us)

By JONNO ROBERTS

Sunday, May 9, 2010 at 12:05 a.m.



David Brooks / UNION-TRIBUNE

Jonno Roberts rehearses his role as Petruchio in Shakespeare's play "The Taming of the Shrew."

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### Jonno Roberts: Theater diary

**Jonno Roberts is writing weekly about his experiences rehearsing and performing in the Old Globe's Summer Shakespeare Festival for the Union-Tribune's Sunday Arts section. Roberts is playing Petruchio in "The Taming of the Shrew" and Edmund in "King Lear."**



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I'll never forget my first kiss. Not my first real kiss — I'll never forget my first kiss. Not my first real kiss — that moment of back-seat fumbling or behind-the-toolshed fondling was lost long ago in the sinkhole of my memory. But my first stage kiss? Unforgettable. Sixteen years old; the show was "West Side Story," and she was (I tremble at the name) Lucy Brooke. And I looked forward to that kiss like nothing else ever in my life, as we slowly built up

to it in rehearsals. And then, one Thursday night, we kissed. Her breath was sweeter, and her lips softer, than anything I had ever known.

Flash forward. I'm now about 27, my first role in New York, a new play at a big theater, with a big-name director and a big-name cast. On day two, we're up on our feet, scripts in hand, stumbling around the stage and exploring the first scenes. I expect us to just mark the kiss with an "all right, here's where we'll kiss," because that is how it worked in high school, but no. In the big leagues, the kiss just comes. A big, wet, sloppy pash. But this time, it's from someone called Jake.

And I just laugh for what seems like half an hour until our darling director has to tell me to shut up, grow up and get back to work.

A year later, I'm naked, wet and soapy in a baseball clubhouse shower, replicated on a Broadway stage. The lead character jumps on me and pretends he's going to rape me. Nothing makes an actor question the validity of his career choices like the soapy junk of one of People magazine's "50 Most Beautiful People" mashed up against his thigh, eight shows a week.

Next show: Naked onstage again. For a l-o-n-g time, with an older woman. We end up covered in blood and bugs. The show after that: I strangle a man with my tie and make love to his wife over his corpse.

Are you seeing a pattern?

But this leads us to today. We're discovering that our production of "The Taming of the Shrew" really deserves the subtitle "A Love Story."

And love stories have a very particular kind of kiss. There are three great kisses in this show. One is comical and occurs offstage — another character tells everyone about it. The second is awkward, the first fumbling kiss of a husband and wife who are actually falling in love. The third? A kiss of passion that pretty much ends the play.

We've been working chronologically, and hadn't yet gotten to the kissy bits. As a result of my character's frustration, I have even added an extra one in — where I desperately want to kiss her, but as I can't, I kiss one of the guys instead (although I really should have warned the poor actor first).

And then today? Kate and Petruchio get pulled out of "Shrew" rehearsals and go into "Lear" to play Goneril and Edmund: two nasty, nasty characters. In there, we finally kissed. It was cold, calculating and ugly.

And I felt right at home.

Jonno Roberts is playing Petruchio in "The Taming of the Shrew" and Edmund in "King Lear" in the Old Globe's Shakespeare Festival. He'll be journaling his experiences in each Sunday's Arts section.

# SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE

May 16, 2010

## THEATER DIARY

JONNO ROBERTS

### Directors can curb an actor's enthusiasm



We're in the fourth week. I've told you about the read-through, the agony of learning lines, the stolen pleasures of the stage

smutch ... and now, here we are at the point of resistance. The actor (me, for the sake of this argument) now has a basic sense of the characters he is playing. The director has now "blocked" all the scenes in the plays — that is, we have gone in and decided who stands where and who moves when — and we are starting the slow business of detail work, where, in hot, focused sessions, digging deeper into the scenes, arguing over and picking at nuances and shifts in language and intention, debating the import of a comma, we, the actor, have come to the conclusion that we shouldn't stand where we were initially standing, and that moving on line X is a travesty and an insult to the playwright, the actor and, most of all, the audience.

In short, in this period between scene-blocking rehearsals and run-throughs of the entire plays, what is happening is the muddy, bloody Passchendaele of the war between actor and director.

It is well known in theater circles that any time an actor does something wrong onstage, blame can be clearly laid at the feet of the director (or "director" as some like to call them). Can't hear Mark Anthony's oration? The director was adamant that the actor should be more "intimate." Blanche DuBois appears comatose? The director inveighed against the perils of "over-energizing" a scene.

Oedipus Rex is inexplicably smeared in pink instant pudding and is reciting his lines in a singsong voice while bouncing, naked, in a bungee-harness? Director. And the converse is true — any time a show works well and looks terrific, it is only because the actors were brilliant enough to bring the concept and world to life that the excesses of the director had a chance to work.

SEE **Diary, E2**

## DIARY

CONTINUED FROM E1

### It's good? He gets the credit. Bad? It's the director

I once had a director who gave me an instruction (a "note," in the parlance) so horribly bad that all I could do was agree vehemently, make him say it exactly the same way once more, nod sagely, write it down in my notebook and circle it twice, and then proceed to do the scene exactly the same way I had done it originally. Herr director smiled, patted me on the back, and smarmily whispered "See?" as if

by listening to him I had made the greatest move in my brief artistic life.

And I suppose that brings us to the two larrikins occupying the directors' thrones at the Globe. Adrian Noble may have written the best book around on reading and performing Shakespeare's text ("How to Do Shakespeare," a rather naughty title), but does that give him a right to tell *me* how to do it? Just because he's an influential and celebrated Englishman, in ecstasies of joy at being able to break out his linen suits for the SoCal weather, does that make him Simon Cowell? Huh?

And as for Ron Daniels ... a Brazilian with an English accent, an internationally renowned opera and theater director who, like a widowed Greek grandmother, only owns black clothes — the sole point of agreement between he and me is that my fake horse should make a fake poop. Kenneth Branagh, in his autobiography, described Ron as a cross between Goebbels and Inspector Clouseau. I have nothing more to add to that.

Why? Because actors are always right.

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**THEATER DIARY**

## **Directors can curb an actor's enthusiasm**

By Jonno Roberts

Sunday, May 16, 2010 at 12:04 a.m.



David Brooks / UNION-TRIBUNE

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# SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE

May 23, 2010

## THEATER DIARY

JONNO ROBERTS

### A horse is a horse, of course, of course ...



I received my horse today, and I am thrilled with it.

One of the big events in "Shrew" is the arrival of Petruchio at his wedding

on a horse, which is described in horrific and entertainingly obscure detail by the servant Biondello — "full of windgalls, sped with spavins, rayed with the yellows, past cure of the fives, stark spoiled with the staggers, begnawn with the bots" and on and on. It is a bravura piece of writing by a young actor who was still new to playwriting; it sweats with the sheer joy of language; even the original audience probably had no idea what half of it meant — and that doesn't matter a bit.

Well, in our production the arrival on the horse also becomes

SEE **Diary, E2**

## DIARY

CONTINUED FROM E1

### He gets paid to play with toys! How cool is that?

a skimmington ride, a traditional punishment for a man who is cowed by a shrewish wife.

Petruchio is mocking himself, arriving at his wedding already playing the part of the terrorized husband everyone expects him to become, and mocking the very society that entertains such tortments. It's a fun bit.

Anyway, I got my horse today! And when an actor gets a new toy, all the angels in heaven rejoice (far more than, say, some poor orphan getting a toy. Angels don't give a toss about that rot).

You see, we get some ridiculously cool toys. I definitely like playing with my toy sword in "King Lear," for example. Toy swords come with pretend sword fights, only the sword fights are choreographed so that we get to look *really cool* doing them. Sometimes, the toys are simple objects — a giant wooden cable spool, say, that you have to play on until you can roll about on it onstage like a logrolling circus clown.

Sometimes toys can get you in trouble: Perhaps a director commands you to spend several weeks living in a wheelchair to become super-facile with using it. Imagine the wrath incurred when the good samaritan who rushes to your aid after you have a silly spill gets a giggled excuse of "It's OK — I'm an actor". (By the way, my wheelchair-wheelie is wicked good now.)

On film and TV sets, our toys can be *real* horses. Or wagons. Or Batmobiles. Often, they are guns. Pistols. Rifles. AK-47s. Blowing up a truck with a rocket-propelled grenade? Serious toy fun. Explosive squibs? Sure, sometimes they leave a nice bruise, but being shot with a toy machine-gun is so much more fun when fake blood explodes from your chest. Acting toys are the *coolest*.

But, as with my horse, sometimes the coolness comes from the sheer genius of the artist who has welded a frame, soaked and bent rattan and sculpted the head, designed a whole array of puppetlike controls, all from scratch, all invented on the spot, in the workshop, just for a few brief seconds on stage. And now you get to take this glorious work of art and craft, and bring it to life? It's a professional requirement! How cool is that?!

Sometimes the toys are words, like Biondello's speech ("begnawn with the bots!"). Sometimes they are costumes: 6-inch platforms, or a sweeping canvas duster coat. Sometimes they're my horse.

What a wonderful, wonderful gift, to have that built into the fabric of your working life.

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## A horse is a horse, of course, of course ...

By Union-Tribune

Sunday, May 23, 2010 at 12:03 a.m.

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# SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE

May 30, 2010

**THEATER DIARY** JONNO ROBERTS

## Words and superstitions, passed down across years



We have emerged from the basement! Rehearsals in our subterranean studios are over and today we

slithered, blinking, into the sunlight to begin the final staging, putting what has been devised in a studio with the outlines of the set taped out on the floor, onto the stage proper, with real walls, doors, stairs.

And what a rare and precious thing it is, to be doing this work out-of-doors! Actors spend their lives mewed up in windowless rehearsal rooms and theaters. Several of us were terrified that

the kiss of sunlight may reduce us to ashes (however, while it is true that we share the same hours and some of the same habits as vampires, we have a profoundly different relationship to mirrors).

When we move into the theater we don't just move to a new building, we move into a sort of hallowed space. And forgive me if this sounds completely dorky, but there is a sort of magic that builds up in a theater. Think of the magic that accumulates in places like Fenway Park or, *sigh*, the old Yankee Stadium. There is sweat and blood, effort and triumph and defeat that leaches into the material of the structure. There are old friends who

SEE **Diary, E4**

### DIARY

CONTINUED FROM E1

## Stories told to inoculate actors from misfortune

worked here that have passed on, and this stage is a tangible connection to their life's work.

The very words we speak have an almost Talmudic history: When Shakespeare's plays were first published, his original manuscripts were long gone, so the typesetters often had to rely on the recollection of the actors who spoke the lines in the original productions. Unique among playwrights, when we speak Shakespeare, we are speaking words passed down from fellow actors across the centuries.

And with those words, passed on from our predecessors, are other time-honored links: the rituals and superstitions, the habits of generations. We say "Break a leg" because it is considered terribly bad luck to wish "good luck." Whistling backstage is *verboten* — heavy things will fall on your head. Mentioning, or quot-

ing from, the cursed play "Macbeth" is absolutely the worst and most dangerous crime — if you must refer to it, it is always as "the Scottish play."

So, we start to settle into our new home and our new clothes. The gorgeous lasses swoosh around in big hooped skirts, with corsets showing their boobs up around their chins. The lads strut around in topcoats and waistcoats and riding boots, like the peacocks from the zoo who occasionally visit us backstage.

And when dusk falls, and the slow process of Technical Rehearsal begins, we occupy our time backstage with the telling of theater war stories: the actor playing Chino in "West Side Story" who forgets to take his gun onstage and has to improvise, eventually killing Tony by kicking him while screaming "Poisoned shoe! Poisoned shoe!" (leaving Maria to say the immortal lines: "How much poison is left on this shoe, Chino? Enough for you? Enough for you? How much and still enough for me?"); the actor who starts a performance of "Twelfth Night" by mangling his opening line, and instead of saying "If music be the food of love, play on" says "If food be the ... aww &#\*%!"; the performance of "Julius Caesar" where one of the murderers fails to grab a sprung knife and instead actually stabs Caesar, whose Shakespearean "Et tu, Brute?" turns into a string of curses of the bluest kind.

We tell these stories both to entertain, and to inoculate ourselves against misfortune. In our own way we are calling on the ever-present gods, ghosts and demons of the theater to bless our endeavor, to keep the swords blunt and the blood fake. Because a play is play — and like any time you play, it's all fun and games until ... nah, I'm not going to tempt Fate. You'll have to finish that one yourself.

**Jonno Roberts** is playing Petruchio in "The Taming of the Shrew" and Edmund in "King Lear" in the Old Globe's Shakespeare Festival. He's journaling in Sunday's Arts. For his diary entries, visit [uniontrib.com/news/theater-diary/](http://uniontrib.com/news/theater-diary/); for more on Roberts, [jonnoroberts.com](http://jonnoroberts.com); more on the Old Globe, [theoldglobe.org](http://theoldglobe.org).



## THEATER DIARY

# Words and superstitions, passed down years

By JONNO ROBERTS

Sunday, May 30, 2010 at 12:05 a.m.

We have emerged from the basement! Rehearsals in our subterranean studios are over and today we slithered, blinking, into the sunlight to begin the final staging, putting what has been devised in a studio with the outlines of the set taped out on the floor, onto the stage proper, with real walls, doors, stairs.

And what a rare and precious thing it is, to be doing this work out-of-doors! Actors spend their lives mewed up in windowless rehearsal rooms and theaters. Several of us were terrified that the kiss of sunlight may reduce us to ashes (however, while it is true that we share the same hours and some of the same habits as vampires, we have a profoundly different relationship to mirrors).

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# SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE

June 6, 2010

**THEATER DIARY** JONNO ROBERTS

## Hello, Tech rehearsal; farewell, Outside Life



If it is true that it is after 3 o'clock in the morning and I have just sat down in the sty that is my living quarters, with heaps of clothes stinking across the floor as if a panicked mob of hobos stripped naked and fled into the night, a pile of plates a-mouldering like John Brown in my sink, and a freshly cracked Sicilian red that somehow appears to be already at a low neap tide, then it must also be true that I am in the throes of Tech rehearsals.

I am constitutionally unable to survive this onslaught without suffering the total collapse of my *Outside Life*. Right now I do not go to the gym (well, let's face it — I've visited that horrible dungeon twice since January, so I can hardly blame Tech. But I think about it...); I cannot execute basic tasks like grocery shopping or telephoning my wife; my plants are unwatered and my bills are... somewhere...

But that is the thrill and joy of Tech. It becomes all-consuming. In rehearsals, we spend a month or so figuring out what our characters are doing and why. In many ways, what we are attempting is the first quickening — in this case, breathing life back into the words that are formulated and sprawling on the page. We run scenes, develop characters and relationships, block out our basic movement, work out when to bellow and when to whimper... we do all the actory stuff.

Tech is the unifying period when all the other artists that make the theater so vibrant get to ply their magic — if we have done our jobs well, and given a vital spark to the words, they now bring the bellows that turn that spark to flame.

How is this done? There are five main fields: set design and construction, costumes, stage props, lighting, and sound. The Set immediately brings levels and architecture not available in the studio. It gives us a new world to live in. Props can become so central to an actors existence on-stage that a wrong placement, or a slightly different cigarette case, can completely throw our minds off a scene in performance. So in

Tech, we begin to get used to the actual objects that will populate our world. (And I play more with my HORSE!)

Costumes, which have been worked on for weeks, if not months, now arrive; often the way the designer has dressed us will bring whole new approaches to our characters, to how a scene is felt and played. And the fun! Think of the best Halloween costume you have ever worn and multiply by a hundred. Perfectly tailored! Extravagant fabrics! Once again, the level of artistry that goes into such things beggars me.

But also, we have to see if we can make it up stairs in this outfit, if we can dance in that one, and how fast we can change from one outfit to the next (a good quick-change is a marvel of engineering and coordination).

And that leaves light and sound — the living magic of the theatrical experience. Light and sound aren't there to decorate the play: in the world of the play, they are the atmosphere — the air we breathe. Each lighting cue has to be coordinated to movements on the stage. Each sound effect or catch of music also has to be specifically anchored.

This is detailed work — enter too fast, you blow a cue. Stand, on a bare stage, 6 inches too far to the left, and your face will be left in shadow. Do it wrong — you can break the ghost-threads that bind the audience to the world of the play. Do it right, and it seems like effortless, immersive perfection.

Thus tech continues. For three weeks the crews are working 37-hour days, the directors are marshaling the several forces that will create their vision, the stage manager who will control the chaos every night is forging and tempering his Zen-mind, and the actors are messing everything up for everyone. And while everyone else will curse and sweat, thanks to them we are looking bloody great doing it.

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## Hello, Tech rehearsal; farewell, Outside Life

Sunday, June 6, 2010 at 12:05 a.m.

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# SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE

June 13, 2010

**THEATER DIARY** JONNO ROBERTS

## Somewhere in the middle of the park, a creature stirs ...



Imagine, if you will, the theater as a large house on the shores of Lake Geneva, on a dark and stormy night. There

is a group of intense, sallow half-lunatics, who, for the sake of my extended metaphor, shall go by the name of Victor Frankenstein (with perhaps a lightish-in-the-loafers friend called Clerval and a sexy Cousin Elizabeth thrown in for the Mary Shelley geeks).

Continue imagining, if you will, a lifeless form on a marble slab — sewn from disparate

body parts gathered by our cast of Victors — and that this creature-in-waiting, this bastard agglomeration stitched and glued and bound together, has the form of something recognizable. Of something that possesses potential. A form that, by virtue of its legs, needs to walk. That by virtue of its chest, needs to breathe.

To talk, to sing.

To eventually be chased onto the polar ice floes by its creator and ... sorry, I'll stop now.

You know what comes next. A big jolt of electricity and a maniac in goggles bellowing

SEE **Diary, E2**

### DIARY

CONTINUED FROM E1

## Actors feed off surge of current from audiences

"It's aliiiiive!" Now, where do we get electricity? Well, "lightning" would be the usual response. You'd get points for "wall socket." But in my overstretched metaphor, the electricity can be provided by nothing other than an audience. It is only them that can bring the play-creature to life. And we had our first wee crackling blue spark a couple of nights ago.

You see, at the end of tech for "Shrew," some 30 or so friends and local schoolkids came in and saw our final run-through under lights. And all of a sudden, the play began to breathe. Lines made a different kind of sense. Asides and monologues to the audience now had a reason to be said. And why? Because a play, like all art, is a form of communi-

cation. And like all art, it doesn't become art until it is beheld. It doesn't truly exist until there is someone to communicate to.

The wonderful thing that can make this such exciting art, and makes a play a play as opposed to a film, is that in live performance the audience is able to communicate back, to respond and even shape the very thing they see.

Thankfully, on this occasion this communication wasn't in the form of shouts of "getoff-thestage!" but was in a lower frequency. We can feel the low hum of an audience listening. We can feel when a wave of energy is building in the theater, and we feel when you are riding that wave with us. We hear laughter, we hear silence, we hear rustling (I know it's crazy, but we also hear those "sassy" comments you make when we are naked and *cold* onstage). Theater is always a dialogue between audience and actor.

And like any dialogue, to be truly rewarding for both sides, both sides have to be talking. If you want to see a good play, then see it with a lively audience. Or *be* a lively audience. Actors feed off the energy that is projected onto the stage from the house. Not because we're showoffs or because it strokes our egos (should I say "not *just*"?), but because it lets us know that there is real communication going on. Because it means the surge of current you are giving the creature makes it more potent.

The moment's getting closer. You'll be invited soon. And this creature is longing to ... chat.

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THEATER DIARY | JONNO ROBERTS

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By Union-Tribune

Sunday, June 13, 2010 at 12:05 a.m.

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# SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE

June 20, 2010

## THEATER DIARY JONNO ROBERTS

### He's lookin' good (he hopes), but how would he know?



Tonight, I must confess, is a melancholic night. Maybe that is due to the fact that it is 4 a.m. and I'm washing down microwaved Hot Pockets with a just-passable Languedoc. More likely, it is due to the malaise that follows a not-so-good show.

How does one define such a thing? Certainly, I am old enough and ugly enough to know that I can never actually judge whether or not I managed a "good" or "bad" performance. Many is the night I have left the stage feeling like a mugger who has stolen money and time from the poor, unsuspecting theatregoer, only to be told by the stage manager (our only reliable auditor) that the show was great. And just as many times I have left the stage ready to shag my own reflection in a mirror, thinking that I have just elevated myself to the pantheon of great actors, that my performance will be whispered of in hushed tones by generations who will tell of how their forebears were present the night of my theatrical apotheosis ... only to be called in to the aforesaid stage manager's office for a stern chat about whether or not I was drunk, high or brain-damaged during the last two hellish hours (of course, deeply committed as I am to being a True Actor, I am usually all three).

And the fact is that what I experience of a play is utterly different from what the audience experiences. I can never step outside a show and see how it is holding together, any more than a piston can climb out of a cylinder and admire the engine it is powering.

I have never seen a scene that I am in. I have no idea what I even look like! Of course, I believe that I am 6-foot-5, deeply tanned, athletic and muscular, with the deep, mellifluous voice of James Earl Jones and the boyish good looks of Jake Gyllenhaal ... but then again, I may be wrong. I may look like Megan Fox. Crikey, for all I know, my legs are fishbelly-white, I could be in desperate need of an industrial-strength dose of Rogaine and that flap of flesh that hangs over my belt could be some kind of invasive belly-fat. How can I know?!

Without cracking wise, I have had the good fortune of being in a few plays that I can be intensely proud of. Plays with a clarity of vision, or a theatrical imagination, that have wedged themselves into the consciousness of many who saw them. And while I have the immense satisfaction of knowing I was part of them, I never got to see them myself. I have nothing tangible left from them.

I cannot show them to my grandchildren. I cannot pull them out of my pocket in a bar in

SEE **Diary, E2**

## DIARY

CONTINUED FROM E1

### 'I have never seen a scene that I'm in'

order to impress a pretty girl. I cannot hold them in my hand, late at night, and say to myself "See? You did good, once. You may do so once again." Unlike most other art forms, we leave no artifact for later evaluation. No carving, no moving picture, no canvas that we can stick on a gallery wall and admire. We leave no scar on the world other than, we hope, a memory lodged in someone's mind.

So I'll just hope that my performance tonight was fine. I'll continue to believe that in costume and under lights I look like I stepped out of a Bowflex infomercial. I'll set my sights on making sure these shows are good enough to scar some minds this summer. And the pretty girl in the bar? Well ... I can always ask if she reads the *Union-Tribune*. ...

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**THEATER DIARY/JONNO ROBERTS**

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By Union-Tribune

Sunday, June 20, 2010 at 12:02 a.m.

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I cannot show them to my grandchildren. I cannot pull them out of my pocket in a bar in order to impress a pretty girl. I cannot hold them in my hand, late at night, and say to myself “See? You did good, once. You may do so once again.” Unlike most other art forms, we leave no artifact for later evaluation. No carving, no moving picture, no canvas that we can stick on a gallery wall and admire. We leave no scar on the world other than, we hope, a memory lodged in someone’s mind.

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# SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE

June 27, 2010

**THEATER DIARY** JONNO ROBERTS

## For an actor, sculpting a role is an ever-changing work of creation



It is said that no two humans are the same. I would extend that rule to actors. Each actor brings their own identity, history, physicality and, most importantly, *imagination* to a

role in a different way. Even when we work on plays as old and weighted with historical interpretation as Shakespeare's, the character is always born anew.

(Incidentally, I believe that every person watching a play sees an entirely different performance. We always watch through the lens of our different his-

tories, different fears or prejudices or loves. Just as we cannot step in the same river twice, no two people can ever see the same play.)

Therefore, the first stage of an actor's work is the creation of a whole new role in rehearsal.

Some actors work by slowly building up a role from the inside, like a sculptor working in clay, starting from a small kernel of character and adding layer upon layer until there is a form that is satisfactory, finishing with the fine work of creating the creases and folds of detail. Others work more like sculptors in marble, with a big mass of shapeless material, a wealth

SEE **Diary, E2**

### DIARY

CONTINUED FROM E1

## A performance is often more like running a jazz riff

of ideas and tactics that must be chipped and filed away at, tried and discarded, until the form underneath is revealed.

How will our character walk? Or speak? Do we bellow when we want something? Do we sob? If our character gouges out someone's eyes, does it upset us? Or does it make us a little, well ... horny? In the plays that we are doing this summer there are defining choices to be made:

What prompts Lear's love-test? How serious is it? What is the moment when his sanity snaps?

In "Shrew," how does Petruchio really treat Kate? Do we go the traditional way, which seems to hold that if a blustering bully of a man slaps a woman's bum enough times, she'll fall in love with him? Or do we discard theatrical tradition, look carefully at Shakespeare's actual text, and maybe

discover something deeper?

In any case, the audience often shouldn't even register that those decisions were made, but meet the characters fully fleshed and inevitable, effortlessly conjured in the theatrical world.

And as our shows open this week, we enter the second stage of the actors work: where we get to re-create these characters anew, every night, in front of an audience. The joy of live performance is that every night is different — we react to the different performances of our mates onstage. We react to the different energies of the audience.

Every line within the play can still be uttered differently, every movement can be made with a different intent.

What we have to achieve, night after night, is a rediscovery, improvised minutely within the confines of the world we have created.

There is creativity in performance. There is a massive engagement of the actors' powers of imagination and awareness, more akin to a tight jazz ensemble than a concert pianist following a score (although when things go bad, I

have been known to pull a Glenn Gould and sit in the corner, mad and mumbling, with my head on the Steinway).

The great Polish director Jerzy Grotowski once said something along the lines of "an actor is a person who stands on the wooden boards of the stage and looks at the ceiling, and we see the green grass beneath his feet and the blue sky above his head."

Know this: First, that actor has put hours into creating how he walks on this imaginary grass, how he stands in the imaginary breeze, how he gazes at the imaginary sky.

Second: Dirty slut that he is, he's going to pretend to get all fifty-footed and sky-eyed again — for the 500 johns that walk through the door tomorrow night.

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# For an actor, sculpting a role is an ever-changing work of creation

By Union-Tribune

Sunday, June 27, 2010 at 12:01 a.m.

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## Jonno Roberts: Theater diary

**Jonno Roberts is writing weekly about his experiences rehearsing and performing in the Old Globe's Summer Shakespeare Festival for the Union-Tribune's Sunday Arts section. Roberts is playing Petruchio in "The Taming of the Shrew" and Edmund in "King Lear."**

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July 4, 2010

## To the play! But first, a nap and playtime ...



### THEATER DIARY

JONNO  
ROBERTS

As this is my penultimate dispatch from the front lines of the Old Globe, and as I am in a silly mood, having just come from a tremendously fun "Shrew," I shall put off my big "Why do we do Shakespeare?" for next week, and instead talk, flippantly and subjectively (and hoping against hope to avoid the perils

of Onan), about how an actor (or at least, this actor) prepares for a performance.

Obviously, I cannot go into detail about the specific rituals and incantations, the ceremonial sacrifices and the exact consumption ratio of cocaine to Martinique Rum, because the actors' societies are the last true secret-holders (i.e. John Travolta and Tom Cruise's crowd), but I can give you an idea.

Basically, my workday starts around 4 p.m. With an 8 p.m. curtain, that gives me time to prepare and eat some food,

reread the play, have a shower, discover and eradicate a new nest of errant hairs somewhere absurd on my face, ears, back, wherever it is that 35-year-old men start discovering their mortality, and then take what is for me the vital element, a decent bloody nap.

The nap is the most essential of all the actors tools. Without the nap, our minds are tired, overstretched, in need of exactly what you are paying us to provide, which is a little light (or heavy) diversion. At

SEE **Diary, E3**

### DIARY

CONTINUED FROM E1

## Actor's warm-up can be extreme, even ridiculous

the end of the day, when eight o'clock rolls around, I need to be honeymoon-fresh. So I nap. And for the lovely ladies out there — I nap on my tummy, sometimes with only my socks on, and leave an embarrassing and unnaturally prolific puddle of drool. You like?

At 7:30, actors are called to the theater, but many try to be there a little or a lot earlier. There may be a 'Fight Call' at 7 or 7:15 so we can run through and ensure the safety of any physical bits — particularly those involving swords and knives. I myself try to arrive an hour or so before the show and take a little corner of the stage and do my own warm-up, which, after the nap, is the second most important part of show preparation. Acting is athletic, mentally, physically and vocally, so the joints need to be lubed, the throat warmed and the teeth and lips elastic (enunciating sentences like "up and down the lift shaft bounced the Spanish dwarf" ...).

My warm-up is a tad ridiculous, to tell the truth. Rather than jogging around and executing graceful gym-stretches, I put loud music on my headphones and engage in some half-spastic writhing, headstands, pratfalls and giggles until I feel that I am bruised, sweaty, and having enough daft, kidlike fun to go and play fancy-dress for a paying audience. The darling ushers who have volunteered to come in each night must think I'm a complete fool, shrieking "it's the final countdoooooown" in a relatively quiet theater whilst apparently attempting to pin myself like a solo wrestler. I apologize.

But hopefully, by now my mind is mad enough to go into performance.

Which is when it gets inflicted on the poor souls backstage. I flirt with (read: annoy) the backstage crew for a few minutes and wander down to the dressing rooms to bother the other actors. Some retreat into their own quiet pregame concentration. Some tease each other mercilessly. Others quietly chat about oil spills and World Cup scores until we are cued onstage, in front of the hundreds of people who have come to see and hear a play and want it to be a bloody good one. We have no do-overs — our sol-

emn contract is that every night we will try to do our best by our audience and by our fellow actors, get out on the stage and give a top-notch performance. Our not-so-solemn contract is that we are there to have fun, to revel in even the darkest moments of the play. Because it's not called "play" for nothing.

I watch Bob Foxworth dancing rings around the text at the end of the first act of "Lear." He has been working at the highest level of focus and imaginative intensity for well over an hour, and is still going.

He's exhausted, but he's nimble. He's intense. Whatever I've done to prepare that night, it's all for the sheer pleasure of trying to keep up with actors like him.

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## To the play! But first, a nap and playtime ...

Originally published July 3, 2010 at 7:48 p.m., updated July 4, 2010 at 12:02 a.m.

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# SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE

July 11, 2010

## THEATER DIARY

JONNO ROBERTS

### In awe of the Bard — and with good reason

Well — the shows are up and running. Summer is teasing us like a half-clad girl in a stand of birch trees, playing now-you-see-me, now-you-don't.

The cast is organizing itself into softball teams and soccer teams, the poker nights are being planned, the sheer pleasure of moving into the performance period is beginning to set in. And my job here is done. So, for my final installment of the *Union-Tribune* Theater Diary, I shall try to simply discuss Shakespeare.

I am more and more fascinated with the bugger every year. All I want to do is somehow convey to you the immense pleasure that comes from matching oneself up

SEE **Diary, E2**

## DIARY

CONTINUED FROM E1

### Whole new vistas of meaning have opened up

to the work of the Greatest Artist to Ever Live (and I'll wrestle anyone who disagrees with that title).

Billy Shakes continues to baffle and defeat me at every turn. I fancy myself a bit of a smarty-pants at times, one who has a good, informed read on his plays ... yet time and time again I run smack-bang into one of Bill's plays and am beggared by his brilliance. To steal from Harold Bloomstaff, his plays are truly "poems unlimited" — every play, every scene, possesses seemingly limitless levels of meaning. There is no one "right" interpretation of any of his plays, and every time you think you have a solid grasp on him, a new level of meaning will be revealed, and you'll be left marveling at his insight.

"Lear" does that to me every night. The scene with Lear and Gloucester toward the end (the "mad" scene) is one of the most moving, beautiful, wise texts I have come across. I stand backstage and listen — and learn.

And then there is "Shrew," one of the "problem plays" (the other being "The Merchant of Venice," that supposed masterpiece of anti-semitism — which was even broadcast as propaganda by the Nazis following *Kristallnacht*). "Shrew" is generally interpreted as a misogynist fantasia, and for 400 years that is how the play has been generally performed. A tough guy, a soldier and adventurer, rolls into town, literally cracking a whip, throws a woman over his shoulder, beats her, berates her and finally defeats her. In the end, she is so happy to have been stomped on by a sexy brute, she gives a big long speech about the pleasures of wifely submission. A couple of years ago I played Petruchio and did all the usual stuff — carried her around on my shoulder, threw her over my knee and spanked her. (She was a lovely lass, too. The spanking was great fun).

And yet working on the play this

time, and following the text closely, whole new vistas of meaning have opened up for me — because the relationship that Billy S. stuck on the page is much more complex and brilliant and wise than what our society has wanted to stick on the stage. The only person who beats a woman is Kate herself. The blustering adventurer — creative, mad and manly as he is — is actually leaving home "to see the world" for the first time. The supposed "torturing" is all staged to demonstrate love, not brute strength. And finally, a woman whom no one will listen to is given the stage, set loose on her tormenting family and, in the famous "submission" speech, weaves a web of meaning, half-meaning and illusion that is dazzling in its complexity and insight. (The key to the "submission speech" is surely in the preceding "sun/moon" scene.)

That's detailed stuff for a Sunday paper, I know. But I hope you'll come and see the plays. I hope you'll see how all three interact with each other, and reveal layers of meaning within. How two mad kings can be so different. How three plays deal differently with torment. And wisdom. And love. And families (always families!).

I hope you'll enjoy watching actors grow and change through different roles. I hope you'll lose yourself, as we have, in the work of two playwrights who revel in the sheer pleasure of words and language. And most of all, as I keep saying, I hope you'll enjoy the communal experience of "Play." Because the audience is who we're talking to.

And we're having a lot of fun talking. We're having fun with fake blood and eyeballs and pretend swordfights and gratuitous snowstorms and cane horses and beautiful women in corsets and Jay Whittaker's (probably fake) abdominals. We're reveling in the darkest tragedy.

We're having the time of our lives in the comedy. Grab a blanket, and come play at the Plays.

This is **Jonno Roberts'** last posting from the festival for Sunday Arts. For his diary entries, visit [uniontrib.com/news/theater-diary/](http://uniontrib.com/news/theater-diary/); for more on Roberts, [jonnoroberts.com](http://jonnoroberts.com); more on the Old Globe, [theoldglobe.org](http://theoldglobe.org).



## In awe of the Bard — and with good reason

By Union-Tribune

Sunday, July 11, 2010 at midnight

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