



**ACTORS' SHAKESPEARE PROJECT OPENS 13TH SEASON: *FAMILY FAULT LINES***

***HAMLET* By William Shakespeare**

**October 5 - November 6, 2016 at The Church of the Covenant in Boston's Back Bay**

Media Contact: Joanne Barrett 617-834-6021  
[jbpr@comcast.net](mailto:jbpr@comcast.net) @jebpr

**BOSTON, MA.** - August 30, 2016 - **Actors' Shakespeare Project (ASP)** has earned its reputation for performing the works of William Shakespeare with clarity and focus on language, emphasis on the characters' journeys, and a commitment to remain actively itinerant. The 13th season will exemplify ASP's vision for presenting Shakespeare, with productions of *HAMLET*, *THE TEMPEST* (Directed by Allyn Burrows; December 1, 2016 – January 8, 2017; Willet Hall at United Parish, Brookline), Christopher Marlowe's *EDWARD II* (Directed by David R. Gammons; February 22 - March 19, 2017, Charlestown Working Theater), and *A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM* (Directed by Patrick Swanson, May 10 - June 4, 2017, Multicultural Arts Center, Cambridge). For more information visit [actorsshakespeareproject.org](http://actorsshakespeareproject.org).

According to Artistic Director Allyn Burrows, "We didn't choose the titles for ASP's 2016-17 season solely on their common threads of familial antipathy, schisms, and misunderstanding; but we know such stuff makes for damn good storytelling. Hence the season's theme of *Family Fault Lines* that run throughout the season, small cracks that as they grow and spread, should offer up a hot buffet of dialogue through mirth, machination, and family madness."

#### **HAMLET**

Under the direction of Resident Acting Company (RAC) member **Doug Lockwood**, *HAMLET*, featuring members **Omar Robinson\*** (Hamlet), **Marianna Bassham\*** (Gertrude), and **Richard Snee\*** (Polonius) will run October 5 - November 6, 2016 (*Press performance October 8, 2016 at 8PM*) at Church of the Covenant, 67 Newbury Street, Back Bay Boston.

*Hamlet* is one of Shakespeare's most well known tragedies, with immortal lines and haunting stories. Tormented by his father's untimely death, the young prince Hamlet struggles to discern reality from illusion in the rotten state of Denmark, as he copes with the loss of his father, his mother's remarriage, romantic complications, friendly betrayals, and reflections on life's biggest questions. For centuries, audiences have seen themselves in the brilliant, troubled prince at the center of this mix of ghost story, comedy, seven-murder revenge thriller, and philosopher's gold mine.

According to Director Doug Lockwood, his approach begins in defining unique perspectives on both the text, and the environment the production creates for its audience. "My edits of the script really seek to put the focus on the family and the friendships in Hamlet's life. At the end of the play, Hamlet urges Horatio to live and 'tell my story'. That is what I see as the leaping off point for this production. It is really Horatio's memory of the events that happened."

"The world of this play is the beautiful Church of the Covenant on Newbury Street. Spiritual strains and conflicts throughout the text in this holy space will enhance Shakespeare's words," adds Lockwood. "A key source of inspiration in staging the play has been the film 'Queen Margot' by Patrice Chereau, and its depiction of the late 16th Century religious war between Protestants and Catholics. This singular place inspires us to conjure images of claustrophobic purgatory and a church filled with ghosts-while the church organ enhances the atmosphere."

Additional cast members include **Peter G. Andersen** (Horatio), **Rory Boyd** (Player King), **Poornima Kirby** (Ophelia), **Ross MacDonald\*** (Claudius), and **Alexander Platt** (Laertes), with other roles played by the ensemble.

The creative team includes **Jenna McFarland Lord** (set designer), **Deb Sullivan\* \*** (lighting designer), **?(costume designer)**, **Arshan Gailus** (sound designer), **Ted Hewlett** (violence designer), **Annie Hoffman** (vocal coach) and **Adele Nadine Traub\*** (stage manager).

## **ASP HAMLET PROJECT EVENTS 2016**

### **ASP Youth Programs**

The *Hamlet* Project September 19 – November 12, 2016; Mondays and Wednesdays 5 - 8 PM, Saturdays 11 - 3 PM. An interdisciplinary piece of original theater taking Shakespeare's monumental tragedy *Hamlet* as the launching point. Opportunities to perform in different neighborhoods throughout the year. Artists from all disciplines welcome. No experience necessary. Cost: \$400; full and partial scholarships available. For more information 617-776-2200 x288, [www.actorsshakespeareproject.org](http://www.actorsshakespeareproject.org)

### **Hamlet Open Rehearsal**

Saturday, September 24, 2016 at 11 am - 12 pm at **The Church of the Covenant**.

### **POST-SHOW CONVERSATION SERIES: Hamlet Fault Lines**

*Post-show conversations take place in the theatre immediately following each Sunday 2 or 3 pm matinee and last for approximately 25 minutes. Please join us!*

#### **Sunday, October 16, 2016 (2 PM performance)**

##### *Community Fault Lines*

We have the unique privilege of performing *Hamlet* in The Church of the Covenant's sanctuary. How does the church inform the play and the play inform the church? What themes in *Hamlet* speak to both theater audiences AND church communities today? Mortality, faith, the afterlife, race and racism, sexual repression, violence, ghosts ... the list goes on. How do those communities engage with one another around those themes? Join *Hamlet* director Doug Lockwood and Church of the Covenant's Reverend Julie Avis Rogers and other invited guests as they examine how our roles as theatre-goers and church-goers overlap and diverge.

#### **Sunday, October 23, 2016 (3 PM performance)**

##### *Family Fault Lines*

Decay, disease, and corruption abound in Hamlet's home and family. Join Shakespeare scholar and Salem State University professor Jeffrey Theis as he facilitates a discussion with members of the cast on these themes in *Hamlet*. What happens when growth and restoration are compromised as family members seek different desires? Examine the family fault lines in the play through the lens of ecological and domestic decay.

#### **Sunday, October 30, 2016 (3 PM performance)**

##### *Gender Fault Lines*

Shakespeare is famous for playing with gender. While there are no cross-gender roles as written in *Hamlet*, there has been a great deal of conversation about the role of the masculine and the feminine in the play. What are the fault lines that exist between the gender roles and their social constructs in *Hamlet*? Shakespeare scholar Coppelia Kahn, Professor Emerita of English at Brown University, will share her thoughts, joined by cast members and the audience exploring masculine vs. feminine identity in *Hamlet*.

#### **Sunday, November 6, 2016 (3 PM performance)**

##### *Psychic Fault Lines*

Psychoanalyst, psychiatrist, author, and theatre/film consultant Philip Freeman will facilitate a discussion with members of the cast on the psyches of Hamlet, Ophelia and other characters in the play. Are they experiencing a descent into madness, or are there greater forces at play? Where is the line between one person's reality and another person's madness? Can psychic fault lines be healed?

**Actors' Shakespeare Project - Boston Public Library Event at the Copley Square Branch in conjunction with the BPL exhibit *Shakespeare Unauthorized*.**

*"The Play's the Thing!"* Saturday, November 5th, 11:45 AM - 1:30 PM

Shakespeare's poetry was written to be performed and his rich text is most resonant when brought to life. Join professional theatre company Actors' Shakespeare Project as they bring scenes from *Hamlet*, the first show of their 13th season, to the Copley branch. Travel with the actors through various spaces in the library, starting in the *Shakespeare Unauthorized* exhibit room itself, as we see Hamlet's inner struggle unfold. Following the performance, stay for an interactive workshop led by members of ASP's teaching artist team where you'll have a chance to step into the shoes of Shakespeare's actors and make Hamlet's enduring words your own.

**SCHEDULE AND TICKET INFORMATION**

**Official Opening/Press Performance:** Saturday, October 8 at 8 PM. Please RSVP to [jbpr@comcast.net](mailto:jbpr@comcast.net) by ???. Please specify number of seats as The Church of the Covenant is cushioned pew seating and we will not have the usual seating flexibility.

**Performances** (*Please read carefully. This is an irregular schedule*): **Preview performances:** Wednesday, October 5 at 7:30PM, Thursday October 6 at 7:30PM and Friday October 7 at 7:30PM. Saturday, October 8 at 8PM, Wednesday, October 12 at 7:30PM, Thursday October 13 at 7:30PM, Sunday October 16 at 2PM & 7PM, Thursday, October 20 at 7:30PM, Friday, October 21 at 7:30PM, Saturday, October 22 at 8pm, Sunday October 23 at 3PM, Thursday, October 27 at 7:30PM, Friday, October 28 at 7:30PM, Saturday, October 29 at 8pm, Sunday October 30 at 3PM, Thursday, November 3 at 7:30PM, Friday, November 4 at 7:30PM, Saturday, November 5 at 8pm, and Sunday November 6 at 3PM.

**Student Matinees for *Hamlet* are all sold out.**

**Tickets** are \$30-\$50 (\$15 student rush) and can be purchased at [actorsshakespeareproject.org](http://actorsshakespeareproject.org) and OvationTix at 866.811.4111 or at the venue, although selection may be limited. Senior discount tickets are \$3 off regular price. Groups of 10+ may reserve seats for select performances via ASP's Patron Services at 617.776.2200 x225 or [groups@actorsshakespeareproject.org](mailto:groups@actorsshakespeareproject.org).

ASP's production is part of Shakespeare in American Communities, a program of the National Endowment for the Arts in partnership with Arts Midwest.

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**About: Actors' Shakespeare Project** is an award-winning professional theater company with a Resident Acting Company and extensive education, youth and community programs. ASP performs and works in found spaces, schools, theaters and neighborhoods to present and explore the robust language, resonant stories, and deeply human characters in Shakespeare's plays and in works by other great playwrights. Our work is ensemble-based and focused on intimacy, storytelling, language, relationships, voice, risk and artistry within and throughout the Boston area. For more information visit [actorsshakespeareproject.org](http://actorsshakespeareproject.org).

\*A Member of the Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States.

\*\*Member of United Scenic Artists Local 82