



**PSF & CTC Announce
Houston Performance Dates and
Venue Change to Main Street Theater's Chelsea Market**



"Nothing will come of nothing." – *King Lear*

"Love is merely a madness." – *As You Like It*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Thursday, February 17, 2011

The Prague Shakespeare Festival, Guy Roberts Artistic Director, and the **Classical Theatre Company**, John Johnston Executive Artistic Director, are proud to announce an exciting and unprecedented collaboration for Czech and Houston audiences and artists alike: rotating repertory productions of **Shakespeare's *King Lear*** and ***As You Like It***, directed by **Guy Roberts**, starring **Czech superstar Pavel Kříž** and featuring a multinational company of artists from America and Europe.

Performed in English, both plays come to life via a unique artistic ensemble for the project, combining the best of PSF and CTC talent. Audiences and artists in both Europe and the US will have the opportunity to benefit from the experience and cultural sensibilities of like-minded multinational theatre artists as they join forces to illuminate two of Shakespeare's most beloved and revered plays. John Johnston, Executive Artistic Director of Classical Theatre Company says, "**This exciting partnership between PSF and CTC is the first international collaboration of its kind** (a Houston theatre company and a European theatre company jointly creating a production that plays in both Houston and Europe) since the Alley Theatre did something similar back over fifteen years ago." ***As You Like It* and *King Lear* will play in Houston, Texas at Main Street Theater Company's Chelsea Market Stage April 13 - May 1, 2011 then at Vyšehrad (Vyše Castle) in Prague, Czech Republic, May 18 - May 29, 2011.**

Widely acknowledged as Shakespeare's greatest tragedy and one of the greatest English-language plays ever written, *King Lear* is the devastating story of an aging monarch whose decision to divide his kingdom between his three daughters to prevent "future strife" only succeeds in sparking an avalanche of greed, betrayal and ruthlessness. Seduced by flattering professions of false love from his oldest daughters, Lear banishes his youngest daughter, Cordelia, for refusing to participate in the game of "which of you shall we say doth love us most?" Lear's rash actions annihilate his kingdom, his family and his mind. A towering exploration of a world in which everything is in domestic, spiritual and political upheaval bringing to the forefront questions on the nature of love and duty, power and loss, old age and youth, good and evil, ***King Lear* is as resonant today as it was in 1606 when first performed and as it will be hundreds of years from now.**

Of *As You Like It*, Roberts says, "**For Shakespeare love was a madness that drove people to do extraordinary things. It was a disease that could bring ultimate sorrow as in *Lear* or ultimate happiness as in *As You Like It*.**" Set in the mythical Forest of Arden *As You Like It* is one of William Shakespeare's most beloved and vibrant comedies. Sparkling with wit, this joyous tale of a girl disguised as a boy - who tempts the man she loves to fall for the boy she isn't - is flavored with all the longing and pain of everyone's first big romance. Uplifting, awe-inspiring and immense fun, Shakespeare's wondrous comedy is a joyous celebration of the liberating power of love, the redeeming spirit of nature and speaks that unforgettable truth, "**All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players.**"

The productions will be adapted and directed **Guy Roberts**, Artistic Director of the Prague Shakespeare Festival. Czech superstar **Pavel Kříž** will star in *As You Like It* as Jaques and in *King Lear* as The Fool. Longtime Houston favorite, **Rutherford Cravens** will play the title role in *King Lear* in Houston and will alternate the role of Lear in the Czech Republic with Steve Zinkgraf. The productions are underwritten in part by PZ Adventures and are produced by the Classical Theatre Company and the Prague Shakespeare Festival.

continued next page

PRAGUE Shakespeare FESTIVAL
GUY ROBERTS, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
885/3 Janackovo nabrezi
Prague 5, 150 00, Czech Republic
www.pragueshakespeare.org



PAVEL KRÍŽ (LEAR: The Fool & AYLI: Jaques)

Pavel Kříž, is an award-winning actor in the Czech Republic who recently appeared on Czech television in *StarDance IV* (the Czech version of the international hit *Dancing with the Stars*), where he was crowned 'King of the Dance' and won the competition. Following his graduation from the Prague Conservatory, Mr. Kříž starred in numerous TV series, shows and leading parts in Czech films including *Angel Eyes*, *The Brave Blacksmith*, *Scent of Vanilla*, *In Death Alone* and his beloved and iconic appearances as Stephan Safranek in Dusan Klein's Poet saga: *The World Comes as a Poet*, *How Poets Lose Their Illusions*, *How Poets Enjoy Life*, *End of Poets* and *Poets Never Lose Hope*. His latest film is *The Little Knights*. He has worked on many Prague stages. As a member of the National Theater he

played Caesar in *Anthony and Cleopatra*, among many other leading roles. Prominent work in international productions includes supporting roles in *Dune*, *Children of Dune* for ABC and *Zhivago* with Keira Knightly. He has taught film acting at the Langar College, University of British Columbia and Simon Fraser University in Vancouver, the NW Actors Studio in Seattle and the Prague Film School.



RUTHERFORD CRAVENS (LEAR: Lear & AYLI: Corin)

A member of Actors' Equity for 42 years, he is producer/director of Shakespeare Outreach, Houston's only free touring theatre. A twenty year veteran of the Houston Shakespeare Festival, for HSF he has directed *Troilus and Cressida*, *King John*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Measure for Measure*, and *Two Gentleman of Verona*, and has appeared in numerous roles including Bottom in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (twice), Claudius in *Hamlet*, Don Armado in *Love's Labor's Lost*, Titus in *Titus Andronicus*, Touchstone in *As You Like It*, Gloucester and Kent in two productions of *King Lear*, Friar Laurence in *Romeo and Juliet*, Dogberry in *Much Ado About Nothing* and Caesar in *Julius Caesar* among numerous others. At the Alley Theatre he

has appeared in *Taking Steps*, *Arms and the Man*, *Picasso at the Lapin Agile*, *Anthony and Cleopatra*, and *Julius Caesar*. At Stages Repertory Theatre he appeared in, among others, *Castro's Beard*, *Silence*, *Good Boys*, *The Drawer Boy*, *Betty's Summer Vacation*, *The Unseen*, *The Laramie Project*, *Panto Cinderella*, and *Amy's View*. At Main Street Theater he has appeared in *Arcadia*, *A Number*, *The Weir*, *What the Butler Saw*, and *Mr. Pim Passes By*. At Theatre Under the Stars he appeared in *1776*, *Brigadoon*, and *West Side Story*. Recent film and television appearances include featured roles in *Alamo*, *Friday Night Lights*, *Ray*, *Into the West*, the Coen Brothers' *No Country for Old Men*, and the HBO film, *Temple Glandin*. He has written two plays, *Wondergirl* and *Zero Tolerance*, both of premiered at Main Street Theater.

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The Prague Shakespeare Festival (PSF) presents professional theatre productions, workshops, classes, lectures and other theatrical events, of the highest quality, conducted primarily in English by a multinational ensemble of professional theatre artists, with an emphasis on the plays of William Shakespeare, bringing to the Czech Republic, European and World audiences English-language based performances that are fresh, bold, imaginative, thought-provoking, and eminently accessible, connecting the truths of the past with the challenges and possibilities of today.

The Classical Theatre Company (CTC), a 501(c)3 founded in Houston in 2007 by local theatre artist John Johnston, is the only professional theatre company in the State of Texas that produces year-round classical drama. The CTC is dedicated to boldly re-envisioning classical drama on the stage, in the community, and in the classroom through engaging and enlightening plays -bringing them new life and relevance while maintaining the integrity that the works deserve.

PRAGUE *Shakespeare* FESTIVAL
GUY ROBERTS, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
885/3 Janackovo nabrezi
Prague 5, 150 00, Czech Republic
www.pragueshakespeare.org

As You Like It & King Lear
FACT SHEET
CLASSICAL THEATRE COMPANY & PRAGUE SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL

PLAYS: AS YOU LIKE IT and KING LEAR by William Shakespeare
DIRECTOR: Guy Roberts, Artistic Director Prague Shakespeare Festival

DATES:

Wednesday April 13, 2011 – 7:30pm (Preview) – As You Like It
Thursday April 14, 2011 – 7:30pm (Preview) – As You Like It
Friday April 15, 2011 - 7:30pm (Opening) – As You Like It
Saturday April 16, 2011 - 7:30pm – As You Like It
Sunday April 17, 2011 - 2:30pm (Post-show talk-back) – As You Like It
Monday April 18, 2011 - 7:30pm (Industry Night - open to the public) – As You Like It
Thursday April 21, 2011 – 7:30pm (Preview) – King Lear
Friday April 22, 2011 - 7:30pm (Opening) – King Lear
Saturday April 23, 2011 - 7:30pm – King Lear
Sunday April 24, 2011 - 2:30pm (Post-show talk-back) – King Lear
Monday April 25, 2011 - 7:30pm (Industry Night - open to the public) – King Lear
Thursday April 28, 2011 – 7:30pm – As You Like It
Friday April 29, 2011 - 7:30pm – King Lear
Saturday April 30, 2011 - 7:30pm – As You Like It
Sunday May 1, 2011 - 2:30pm – King Lear

TICKETS: Students and Industry \$8, General Admission \$18
Available online at www.classicaltheatre.org or by phone 713.963.9665

LOCATION: Main Street Theater - Chelsea Market Stage
4617 Montrose Blvd.
Houston, TX 77006

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