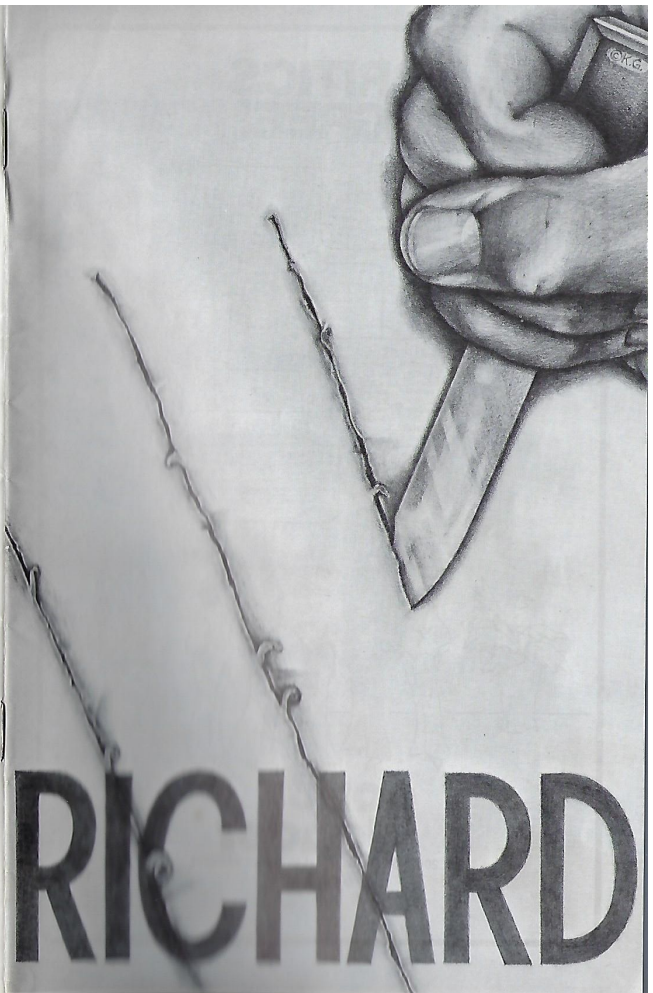
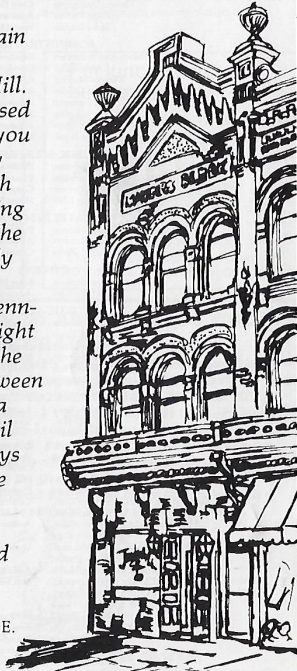


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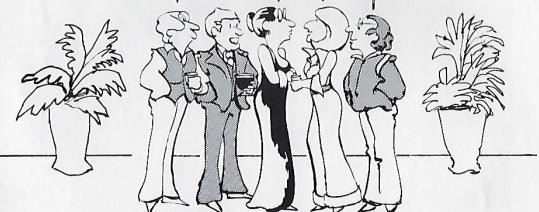
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FOLGER THEATRE GROUP

eighth season 1977-78

Louis W. Scheeder, Producer
presents

RICHARD III

by William Shakespeare

Composer	William Penn
Setting and Lighting Designer	Hugh Lester
Costume Designer	Susan Tsu
Fight Choreographer	Michael Tolaydo
Assistant Director	Mikel Lambert
Director	Louis W. Scheeder

CAST

King Edward IV	Earle Edgerton
Edward, Prince of Wales } <i>the young princes, sons of</i>	Norman Patrick Martin
Richard, Duke of York } <i>Edward IV and Elizabeth</i>	Peter Suddeth
George, Duke of Clarence } <i>brothers of the King</i>	Peter Vogt
Richard, Duke of Gloucester }	Paul Collins
afterward Richard III	
Queen Elizabeth, wife of Edward IV	Mikel Lambert
Duchess of York, mother of Edward IV and his brothers	June Hansen
Lady Anne, widow of Edward Prince of Wales (son of Henry VI), afterward married to Richard III	Elaine Bromka
Margaret, widow of King Henry VI	Dale Hodges
Anthony Woodville, Earl Rivers, brother of Queen Elizabeth	George Dunlap
Marquess of Dorset } <i>sons of Queen Elizabeth</i>	Eric Zwemer
Lord Grey }	James Dean
Sir Thomas Vaughan	John Elko
Duke of Buckingham	John Neville-Andrews
Stanley, Earl of Derby	Albert Corbin
Lord Hastings	John Hertzler
Sir Richard Ratcliffe	Alvin Lee Sanders
Sir William Catesby	David Cromwell
Lord Lovel	Shepard Sobel
Sir James Tyrrel	Ralph Cosham
Duke of Norfolk	Shepard Sobel
Sir Robert Brakenbury, Lieutenant of the Tower	John Elko
Earl of Surrey	James Dean
Henry, Earl of Richmond, afterward King Henry VII	Chris Romilly
Cardinal Thomas Bourchier, Archbishop of Canterbury	Peter Vogt
Thomas Rotherham, Archbishop of York	Ralph Cosham
John Morton, Bishop of Ely	Earle Edgerton
Mistress Jane Shore	Kate van Burek
Sir James Blunt	John Hertzler
Sir Walter Herbert	Ralph Cosham
Sir William Brandon	Robert Lesko
Lord Mayor of London	Robert Lesko
Sheriff of Wiltshire	Peter Vogt
First Murderer	Chris Romilly
Second Murderer	Shepard Sobel
Lords, Attendants, Messengers, Bearers, Bishops, Aldermen, Citizens: John Elko, James Dean, George Dunlap, John Healey, Jr., Robert Lesko, David McConeghey, Alvin Lee Sanders, Shepard Sobel, Eric Zwemer	

The action takes place in London and elsewhere in England.

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Doctors on call please leave your seat location at the box office or with the house manager.

4

Folger Theatre Works an organization of working volunteers who support the Folger Theatre Group

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Rev. John Boyles	Roslyn Kaiser	Donna A. Stein
George and Kathryn Didden	Nancy C. Keebler	Michael and Ann-Rhea Stein
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Dale Ehrhardt	Jessica Lee	Mrs. Jack Eugene Thomas
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The Folger Theatre Group acknowledges with appreciation the generous support given this production as part of the Helen Harris Spalding and Herman Henry Bernard Meyer Shakespeare Memorial, established to "cultivate public taste for Shakespearean drama and literature."

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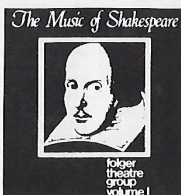
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8

The Tragedy of King Richard the Third

Though it has never attracted as much scholarly and critical commentary as Shakespeare's later tragedies and history plays, *The Tragedy of King Richard the Third* has always been one of the poet's most engaging works in the theatre. First performed in the early 1590s with the celebrated Richard Burbage in the title role, *Richard III* was an immediate popular success with London audiences, and it has maintained its position in the active repertory of the English-speaking theatre (either in Shakespeare's original version or in Colley Cibber's eighteenth-century adaptation, which dominated the stage for more than a century and a half), virtually without interruption, for nearly 400 years. One has only to recall a few of the great actors whose reputations have been associated with the part—David Garrick in the eighteenth century, Edmund Kean in the nineteenth, Laurence Olivier in the twentieth—to appreciate something of the fascination Richard Crookback has evoked in one generation of theatregoers after another.

And the reason is not hard to find. For despite the bold strokes with which he is portrayed, Richard III is in fact a character of sufficient complexity to sustain a great deal of dramatic interest. However much we find ourselves repelled by his ruthless treachery (however much we identify with those in the play who call him "hedgehog," "hellhound," "cacodemon," "fiend"), we cannot help admiring the eloquence, resourcefulness, and virtuosity with which he confides and then proceeds to execute his intentions. His wooing of the grieving Lady Anne is a compelling case in point. Having set himself a seemingly impossible task, Richard is himself astonished by the ease with which he accomplishes it—and so are we.

By comparison with the protagonists of Shakespeare's later tragedies, Richard is a relatively static character. Except for those moments near his death when—reminiscent of Marlowe's Doctor Faustus and proleptic of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*—he faces a self he cannot contemplate without fear and yet cannot "fly," Richard is undeviatingly and unremorsefully committed to his announced determination "to prove a villain." But even so he retains our attention—partly, I suspect, because of the sheer audacity of his exploits, partly because we sit in awe of such consummate artistry, however terribly misapplied.

In many ways Richard seems, and would have seemed to Shakespeare's first audiences, a conventional, even old-fashioned, stage villain: the quick-witted, clever, self-disclosing Vice of the late medieval morality play, the dissimulating Devil familiar from the Scriptures, the haughty magistrate of the early Tudor tragedy of *Fortune*. In other, more important, ways he seems, and would have seemed, disturbingly modern: the Machiavellian politician who acknowledges no law, human or divine, in restraint of his fox-like cunning and leonine rapacity, the totalitarian dictator who subverts every social and religious institution in pursuit of his psychopathic grand designs, the existentialist cosmic rebel whose radical alienation is a challenge to every form of order. To an Elizabethan audience acquainted with "Marlowe's mighty line"—just as to a twentieth-century audience accustomed to the urgent probings of Nietzsche, Dostoevsky, and Camus—Richard would have spoken in a nervously energetic, contemporary idiom.

In Shakespeare's career it was an idiom that had been steadily developing over the course of an "apprenticeship" that had by this period given rise to spectacularly bloody Senecan/Kydian revenge tragedy (*Titus Andronicus*) and an epic trilogy of English history plays (the three parts of *Henry VI*, which provide the grim historical backdrop for the events depicted in *Richard III*) and was now ripening into the mature dramatic craftsmanship that would in time yield tragedies of incomparable poetic range and philosophic depth. Range and depth are not, perhaps, the qualities one most readily associates with the melodramatic *Richard III*. But what the play may be lacking in subtlety and profundity it more than makes up for in its inexorable drive toward the "destiny" that "avoided grace" has prepared for the "bloody tyrant" Richard.

For if Richard seems in many ways a relentlessly "modern" man, we learn by the end of the play that his vaulting ambition is ultimately but an instrument of the same "medieval" Providential order he scorns and seeks to circumvent. Richard may be a "dreadful minister of hell," as Lady Anne calls him, but members of Shakespeare's audience (familiar with the story through its earlier renderings by proponents of the Tudor interpretation of the Wars of the Roses, authors such as Thomas More, Edward Hall, and Raphael Holinshed) would have seen him simultaneously as a "Scourge of God," unleashed to punish England for her sins of the past. Prophetic Margaret reminds us over and over that had there not been strife in the kingdom prior to the advent of Richard, there would have been no ripe occasion for "this poisonous bunch-backed toad" to usurp the throne in the first instance.

As the play ends, an action that has drawn our attention again and again to the past looks optimistically to the future. "By God's fair ordinance," the "bloody dog is dead" and Richmond and Elizabeth (the forebears of Shakespeare's sovereign Elizabeth) are on the throne—ushering in "smooth-faced peace, / With smiling plenty, and fair prosperous days."

John F. Andrews
Editor, *Shakespeare Quarterly*

A Proud 'Richard'

Worthy of the
Folger's Patron Saint

By Richard L. Coe

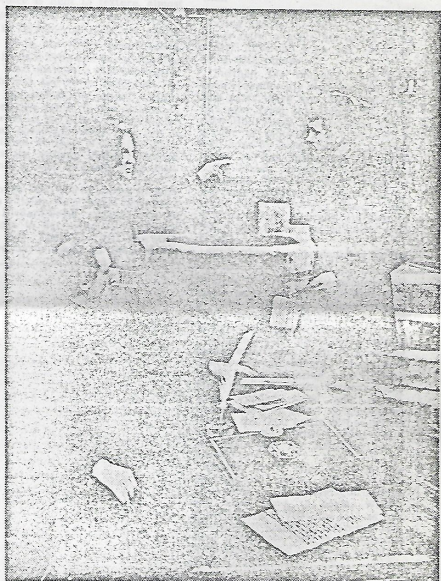
The Folger Theater Group last night unveiled a staging of "Richard III" in which its parent, the Folger Shakespeare Library, can take a deal of pride.

Director Louis Scheeder has corralled an exceptionally large, able cast for his small theater, has been tight with his cuts and generous with details. The play is pesky to stage, especially those final fight scenes which, since the dawn of film, have become more ritual than excitement.

Above all the production is strengthened by a strikingly well-thought-out Gloucester, the dual conniver who becomes Richard III. Paul Collins has made choices that are both intelligent and arresting in his delineation of a character so blackened by Shakespeare that a gallant society, the Friends of Richard III, long and fruitlessly has been trying to redeem what Elizabeth Tudor's propagandist playwright blackened so brilliantly.

As the program note by John F. Andrews, editor of the Shakespeare Quarterly, observes, "Richard seems, and would have seemed to Shakespeare's first audiences, a conventional, even old-fashioned stage villain." Collins has had the wit to avoid this. From his entrance he assumes not a ranting, scene-shattering tone but one of confidential conversation.

See RICHARD, B7, Col. 2



John Neville-Andrews, Paul Collins, John Hertzler in "Richard III."

By Charles Del Vecchio—THE WASHINGTON POST

A Proud 'Richard'

RICHARD, From B1

His voice is light in texture, almost whispers. What he tells us about himself is sardonic. It does not matter that he is not really hunchbacked, only limps a little and has a withered arm. What matters is that Gloucester thinks he's hopelessly deformed.

In his confidential asides, Collins presses this gently as his motivation for what is to come. As bystander he has observed others well and is astonished at their credulity. When others are around, Collins' Richard assumes a kind of Uriah Heep modesty.

Though their words accuse Richard of his villainy, their faces, confronted with Richard-Uriah, suggest why he manages to get away with his constant lies. There is just the tiny shadow of a doubt in their minds

that, maybe, they have misjudged him.

This is an immense help to the playing and to the story line. Collins never fails to make his asides to us subtly different from his conversations with others.

Further, the women's roles have been exceptionally well cast and what fine parts there are: Mad Margaret, left over from the Henry VI plays (like Hollywood, Shakespeare was a master of sequels and prequels), is well done by Dale Hodges. The great scene at her father-in-law's coffin finds Elaine Bromka's Lady Anne receiving Gloucester's proposal of marriage with heady, baffled acceptance. Mikel Lambert's Queen Elizabeth and June Hansen's Duchess of York are finely voiced and well-fused.

While there is some doubling for the

35 roles, it is quite inconspicuous and major parts are done with assurance by Peter Vogt, John Neville-Andrews, David Cromwell, Eric Zwermer, John Hertzler and Albert Corbin.

William Penn's music, used largely during brief scene shifts, is markedly effective to set ensuing moods, and Hugh Lester's setting and lighting make fine use of the Folger's handsome wooden stage and pillars. There's been an effort at impressionism for the final battle scenes, which can't easily be omitted for that would kill Richard's "My Kingdom for a horse!" line.

Coming as it does early in the Shakespeare canon, "Richard III" gives hints of poetry, characterizations and finer plays to come. Wisely, Scheeder treats "Richard III" as one of the great ones and the result is a finer production than the Folger usually manages for its patron saint.

Folger's 'Richard III' Comes Alive

By Peggy Eastman

Special to the Journal

He is no toad, no "lump of foul deformity," though his body is twisted and his psychological warts are many.

As Paul Collins' Richard III sidles across Folger Theatre's stage, gestures with his gloved withered hand and cocks his head at the audience, he turns evil into magnetism, and makes virtue boring.

This physically deformed king, who earned his crown by letting the blood of others, can be interpreted in Shakespeare's play as a one-dimensional incarnation of evil, a symbol of Eli-

zabethan order out of whack. "Thou knowest no law of man or God," accuses Lady Anne, widow of Edward, Prince of Wales, whom Richard has just slain. But Richard makes his own law, neither civil nor divine, and Collins projects his ability to break all the rules and get away with it. Showing the flip side of Richard, the charisma that is the essence of his power, gives depth to the role of consummate villain

in a play that lacks the characterization complexities of "Hamlet" or "MacBeth."

The fact that Richard can woo Anne before her husband's dead body — in one of the best perversions of a love scene in Shakespeare — and win her on the spot, successfully proves his power not only to make his own value system but to make others embrace it. Murder becomes either incidental or neces-

sary; the goodness and plainness of those Richard dispatches become faults, not virtues. Only when he takes the lives of the two little princes in the tower does his value system begin to crack.

A strong supporting cast in the Folger Group's production of "Richard III" helps bolster Collins' fully drawn portrait of the bloody king. Shakespeare habitually put important lines in the mouths of minor characters, and directors who cheat in the casting of these roles cheat the audience. Direc-

See 'RICHARD,' Page B4

Theater Review

'Richard'

From Page B1

for Louis Scheeder has wisely not cheated us.

Out of a character list of 35 (some actors double up, though not intrusively), come excellent cameo performances. The prophetess Margaret, who foretells the doom Richard will bring England, is stunningly played by Dale Hodges. Elaine Bromka as Anne manages to project the difficult duality — hatred and attraction — she feels for Richard, whom she later marries and who then discards her.

The three-hour plus Folger production of "Richard III" does not drag and is marred by only a few details. Peter Vogt as George, Duke of Clarence, the brother whom Richard finishes off early in the action, tends to overplay his role with melodramatic touches. Later, as Cardinal Thomas Bourchier, Archbishop of Canterbury, Vogt's falsetto is disconcerting, though

he doubtless used it to differentiate his two roles.

The dueling scene at the end between Richard and Henry, Earl of Richmond (later King Henry VII), is too drawn-out, and its purely physical staging seems a caricature, out of sync with the rest of the production.

But the Folger Theatre Group has basically done an excellent job with a play that is not Shakespeare's best. Resident composer William Penn's music is just right. Lighting effects, especially highlights on brass armor during the battle scenes, are dramatic. And the program designer, usually forgotten in theatre reviews, deserves praise for including an excellent family tree of Shakespearean characters, and a one-page analysis of "Richard III" by John F. Andrews, editor of the "Shakespeare Quarterly."

"Richard III" will play through July 16 at the Folger Theatre on Capitol Hill. Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday matinees supplement evening performances. For further information, call the box office at 548-4000.