

# School of THEATRE + DANCE

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA / COLLEGE OF THE ARTS

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## Step into the surrealist, Salvador Dalí inspired interpretation of *King Lear* at the University of Florida April 7-15, 2017

**Gainesville, Fla., March 28, 2017** – Often considered one of Shakespeare's greatest tragedies, *King Lear* will be brought to life at the University of Florida (UF) in a striking new interpretation by director Dr. Judith Williams. Williams' *Lear* is set in the 1930s during the Spanish Civil War will transpire at UF School of Theatre + Dance April 7-15, 2017 in the Constans Theatre located in the Nadine McGuire Theatre and Dance Pavilion on UF's campus. Performance times are 7:30 p.m. April 7-8 & 11-15 and 2:00 p.m. April 9.

Sandwiched between *Macbeth* and *Hamlet*, Shakespeare wrote *King Lear* at the height of his theatrical powers. *Lear* tells the story of a powerful monarch, retiring from his responsibilities. He decides to divide his realm among his three daughters: Goneril, Regan, and Cordelia, offering the largest share to the one who says she loves him the most. His two eldest daughters declare their love in excess, but his youngest daughter, Cordelia answers nothing and states "there is nothing she can compare her love." This declaration deeply shakes Lear and fuels his exploration into human suffering.

"We've all made major mistakes in our lives and seeing it snowball in unexpected ways until it feels like the little snowball becomes an avalanche and our life seems out of control, that is where the surrealist interpretation I've taken comes in," said Judith Williams, director of *King Lear*.

Williams describes how Salvador Dalí's work inspired her directorial concept: "Dalí was brilliant at portraying the world as a very complex, multi-layered reality and as the play progresses we see the world more and more through Lear's distorted vision."

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School of Theatre + Dance actors  
Michael Krek and Serah Bennett.  
Photo by TF Guntrup.

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According to the title page of the 1608 Quarto edition of the play, *King Lear* was performed as part of the Christmas festivities at court, a fact confirmed in the Stationers' register on December 26, 1606. The play has since received numerous noteworthy productions, including those in the past century in which Lear as portrayed by John Gielgud (Old Vic, 1940), Laurence Olivier (Old Vic, 1946), Paul Scofield (Stratford, 1962), and Kathryn Hunter (Leicester Haymarket, 1997).

Williams has directed numerous past School of Theatre + Dance productions including *The Liar*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *Twelfth Night*, *The Servant of Two Masters*, *Lysistrata*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Twentieth Century* and *Brighton Beach Memoirs*.

Tickets for the UF production are \$18 for the general public, \$15 for UF faculty/staff and seniors, and \$13 for students. Season and group prices are also available. Tickets are available through the University Box Office located at Gate 1 of the Stephen C. O'Connell by calling 352-392-1653 or at [ticketmaster.com](http://ticketmaster.com). The University Box Office is open Tuesdays through Fridays 12-5:30 p.m. and Saturdays 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. Tickets can also be purchased at the Constans Theatre Box Office starting 45 minutes prior to the performance.

The Nadine McGuire Theatre and Dance Pavilion is located at 687 McCarty Drive, Gainesville, FL 32611. On-campus parking is available at the Reitz Union garage and the Museum Road parking lot. Guests are strongly encouraged to pick up tickets early, as shows run the risk of being sold out.

## About the School of Theatre + Dance

The School of Theatre + Dance is one of the University of Florida College of the Arts' institutionally accredited schools. Undergraduate students can pursue a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in acting, dance, musical theatre, theatre production—including costume design, lighting design and scenic design—or a Bachelor of Arts degree in dance studies or general theatre. Minors are also offered in dance and theatre as well as certificates in arts in medicine and dance in healthcare. Student organizations, showcase programs and other intensives provide students with invaluable professional experiences. UF is home to three School of Theatre + Dance performance venues, including the Constans Theatre, Black Box Theatre and G-6 Studio. To learn more about the School of Theatre + Dance, including upcoming performance dates and ticket information, visit [www.arts.ufl.edu/theatreanddance](http://www.arts.ufl.edu/theatreanddance).

## About the College of the Arts

The College of the Arts is one of the 16 colleges and more than 150 research centers and institutes at the University of Florida in Gainesville, Florida. The College of the Arts offers baccalaureate, master's and Ph.D. degree programs in its three institutionally-accredited schools — the School of Art + Art History, School of Music and School of Theatre + Dance. The college is home to the Center for Arts in Medicine, Center for Arts and Public Policy, Center for World Arts, Digital Worlds Institute, University Galleries and the New World School of the Arts in Miami. More than 100 faculty members and approximately than 1,200 students work together daily to engage, inspire and create. The college hosts more than 300 performances, exhibitions and events each year. Faculty and students also exhibit and perform at other local, national and international venues. To learn more, visit [www.arts.ufl.edu](http://www.arts.ufl.edu).

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