

BENEFACTORS

The Rude Mechanicals would like to thank their benefactors for their support for the 2002 theatrical season.

PLATINUM

Doug Humphrey, Jaki Demarest

GOLD

Joshua Engel, Trevor Siegel, Rachel Zirkin and Alan Duda

SILVER

Mr. and Mrs. Berg, Calvin Smith, Stephanie Zirkin

BRONZE

Alex Bradley, Don Juran, Robert Perkins, Richard and Michelle Way

UPCOMING SHOWS

Othello

May 2003

Directed by Jaki Demarest

As You Like It

September 2003

Directed by Elise Berg

The Rude Mechanicals Presents

William Shakespeare's



Troilus and Cressida

All lovers swear more performance than they are able, and yet reserve an ability that they never perform; vowing more than the perfection of ten, and discharging less than the tenth part of one...

Act 3, Scene 2

January 24, 25, 31 and February 1 at 8:00 P.M.
Laurel High School Auditorium, Laurel, MD

CAST LIST

Children of Priam, King of Troy

| | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Troilus | Rob Perkins |
| Hector , Hero of Troy | Jaki Demarest |
| Paris , Helen's Lover | Yancy Davis |
| Cassandra , A Prophetess | Melissa Schick |

The Trojans

| | |
|--|----------------------|
| Calchas , | Peter Eichman |
| A Trojan Seer Who Defected to the Greeks | |
| Cressida , | Rachel Zirkín |
| Calchas' Daughter | |
| Pandarus , | Keith Brown |
| Cressida's Uncle | |
| Aeneas , | Lissa Werbos |
| A Trojan Commander | |
| Antenor , | Alan Duda |
| A Trojan Commander | |

The Greeks

| | |
|--|------------------------|
| Agamemnon , | Roger Macdonald |
| General Commander of the Greeks | |
| Menelaus , | Sean Eustis |
| Agamemnon's Brother, Helen's Husband | |
| Nestor , A Veteran | Don Juran |
| Ulysses , The Voice of Reason | Elise Berg |
| Diomedes , A Greek Commander | Jay Henry |
| Achilles , Hero of the Greeks | Joshua Engel |
| Patroclus , Achilles' Partner | Brett Estey |
| Ajax , | Jeff Hersh |
| The Bluntest Weapon in the Arsenal | |
| Thersites , | Calvin Smith |
| A Deformed and Scurrilous Greek | |
| Helen , What It's All Over | Kathryn Kelly |
| Myrmidons , Achilles' Posse | Peter Eichman |
| | Kathryn Kelly |
| | Melissa Schick |
| | Alan Duda |

CAST AND CREW BIOS

just about everyone. Thanks especially to God for gifts and talents, Alan for the opportunity, Sean for special coaching and tips, Kimberly and Susan for love and patience, and Zen Mountain Monastery for serenity lessons learned.

Lissa Werbos (Aeneas) has never been in an actual play before, and thinks it is spiffy. She has enjoyed playing a man; it is most interesting. However, she has had to wear many low-cut dresses in her off-time to reassure herself that she's not turning. To that purpose, Lissa notes the Rude Mechanicals are quality folk. She feels privileged and terrified to be working with them.

Rachel Zirkín (Cressida) isn't quite sure how many RM shows this makes, but does know her previous roles include *Hamlet's* Horatio, *Henry VI's* Margaret, *Twelfth Night's* Maria, and *Romeo and Juliet's* Nurse! She would like to thank both her fiancé, Alan, for his brilliant direction and loving support, and her on-stage partner, Rob Perkins, for his exceptional professionalism and talent. He has been an inspiration and a joy to work with. Kudos to everyone!

10-7 Mon.-Sat.
12-6 Sunday

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CAST AND CREW BIOS

A Christmas Carol with Vpstart Crow in Manassas, VA. Kathryn has a BFA in Theatre from Virginia Commonwealth University. She would like to thank her family and friends for all their support.

Roger Macdonald (Agamemnon) makes his second appearance with the Rude Mechanicals and thanks the entire group for their trust and support. Roger is a full-time student at Howard Community College (HCC) and intends to pursue a BFA with a double major in Art and Theater. Roger has appeared on stage as Trinculo in *Tempest*, Charlemagne in *Pippin*, Federzoni in *Galileo*, Lord Capulet in the HCC Student-Alumni production of *Romeo & Juliet*, Bishop How in *The Elephant Man* and as Vince Fontaine in the Laurel Community Theater production of *Grease*. Roger dedicates this performance to the memory of his daughter Elish.

Rob Perkins (Troilus) thanks the Rude Mechanicals for the chance to play such a complex role. Thanks to Josh, Jaki, Elise, Brett, Alan, Jeff, Rachel, and Keith for their past help; Sean for getting straight the details he misses; Hopi for her costuming tips; Jay for not taking his head off with the sword; Roger, Calvin, and Don for their occasional words of wisdom (and frequent bad puns), and Peter, Kathryn, Yancy, Lissa, and Melissa for a bright glimpse of the stage's future. Can I go home and sleep now?

Jeff Poretsky (Lighting Designer/Photon Pusher) has worked at The Studio Theatre Secondstage and wonders what he's doing here.

Melissa Schick (Cassandra, Myrmidon) is in her second production with the Rude Mechanicals and hopefully not her last. She'd especially like to thank Alan for giving her the opportunity to play such a challenging part, and also Jaki and Jeff for all their help working on it. You have all made this one of the greatest theatrical experiences I've had, and I look forward to working with this amazing cast again. She will be directing *Ludlow Fair*, a one-act by Lanford Wilson for her school, Sandy Spring, for production in May.

Calvin Smith (Thersites) has been enjoying the company of the Rude Mechanicals for a few years now, having appeared in *Hamlet*, *Henry VI*, and *Romeo and Juliet*. He is happy in this outing to be doing onstage what he excels at in his private life: using words to antagonize

DIRECTORS NOTES

A Never Writer to an Ever Reader. News.

'Eternal reader, you have here a new play, never staled with the stage, never clapper-clawed with the palms of the vulgar, and yet passing full of the palm comical. Amongst all there is none more witty than this. Take this for a warning, and at the peril of your pleasure's loss, refuse not, nor like this the less for not being sullied with the smoky breath of the multitude; but thank fortune for the escape it hath made amongst you.'

Thus reads the preface to *Troilus & Cressida*, calling it a comedy. The quarto (first edition) titled it "The Historie of Troylus and Cresseida." The folio (second edition) editors called it "The Tragedie of Troylus and Cressida". Small wonder then the universal groan when I proposed this play for my directorial debut. Shakespeare often tells us what we can be or should be. Here he tells us what, unfortunately, we all too often become.

Examples of final theses questions I chose not to answer in the Director's Notes:

- ❖ *What is a person's value? Is it relative or intrinsic? Use as examples the value placed on Helen, Achilles, and Cressida.*
- ❖ *Helen: Abducted or Eloped?*
- ❖ *So, are Achilles and Patroclus just friends, or what?*
- ❖ *Did Cressida get a bad rap?*
- ❖ *Compare the roles assigned women by Homer, Shakespeare, and the director. Have you indeed come a long way, baby?*
- ❖ *Were T&C renamed 'The Tragedy of Hector,' would it still be considered a problem play?*
- ❖ *What is Hector's tragic flaw? Explain the difference between 'Honor' and 'Glory.'*
- ❖ *Describe the many failures of expectations in T&C. Is Thersites the only character with realistic expectations?*
- ❖ *Why should our endeavor be so loved and the performance so loathed?*
- ❖ *Hey! Where's the Trojan Horse?*

Instead I will merely ask "Were you entertained?"

(Incidentally, in Shakespeare's time, the audience was asked to assume that if a male actor wore a dress, he was portraying a woman. I similarly ask you to assume that if a female actor wears pants, she is portraying a man.)

PRODUCTION STAFF

| | |
|--|---|
| Director | Alan Duda |
| Producer | Elise Berg |
| Assistant Director | Jeff Hersh |
| Lighting Design & Operation | Jeff Poretsky |
| Publicity | Josh Engel |
| Poster Art Work | Alex Bradley |
| Program | Rachel Zirklin/ Rob Perkins |
| Fight Choreography | Jeff Hersh |
| Movement Assistant | Jennifer Crooks |
| Set Construction | Roger MacDonald/ Jaki Demarest/ Josh Engel |
| Costume Support | Hopi Auerbach |
| Minister of Cultural References | Kevin Hollenbeck |
| Worrier in Residence | Sean Eustis |

TROILUS AND CRESSIDA

ACT I

| | |
|----------------|--------------------|
| Prologue | |
| Scene 1 | The Lovers Pine |
| Scene 2 | The Trojan Council |
| Scene 3 | The Greek Council |
| Scene 4 | Helen Vamps |
| Scene 5 | Lovers Woo |

10-MINUTE INTERMISSION

ACT II

| | |
|---------------|----------------------|
| Scene 1 | Achilles Sulks |
| Scene 2 | Cressida Sought |
| Scene 3 | Cressida Bought |
| Scene 4 | Fight Club |
| Scene 5 | Whispers in the Dark |
| Scene 6 | Troilus Rages |
| Scene 7 | War |

CAST AND CREW BIOS

Joshua Engel (Achilles) Rude Mechanicals: Sebastian in *Tempest*, Romeo and Prince in *Romeo and Juliet*, Richard in *Lion in Winter*, Orsino in *Twelfth Night*, Edward and Henry V in *Henry VI*, Player King in *Hamlet*, Verges in *Much Ado*, Sergeant in *Macbeth*. Burtonsville: Kent in *Lear*, Richmond in *Richard III*.

Brett Estey (Patroclus) is happy to be in his fifth RM production. Before this was *Henry VI*, *Twelfth Night*, *Lion in Winter*, and *Romeo and Juliet*. He was also in *Museum* with Cedar Lane Stage over the past summer. He would like to thank Starbucks for keeping him alive.

Sean Eustis (Menelaus) Sound the frickin' trumpets, it's the return of Sean Eustis as Kranky King Menelaus. Previous roles with the Rude Mechanicals include Young Steward (who dies in the end) in *MacBeth*, Laertes (he also dies in the end) in *Hamlet*, and Fabian (whom everybody wants to kill in the end) in *Twelfth Night*. He hopes to make the ending of this play just as interesting, with a little death of one kind or another.

Jay Henry (Diomedes) This Bio was brought to you by the letter Jay.

Jeff Hersh (Ajax/Assistant Director) **HAI**

Don Juran (Nestor) and his silver beard make their first appearance with the Rude Mechanicals. He is relieved to avoid stage combat with actors half his age. His other Shakespeare credit is Pinch/Headsman in *The Comedy of Errors* at Greenbelt Arts Center, where he has also played Wolsey in *A Man For All Seasons*, Lord Caversham in *An Ideal Husband*, Pastor Manders in *Ghosts*, and the Judge in *The Chalk Garden*. Don sings bass with Mishkan Torah choir and chamber groups Convivium and Carmina, recently performing with Carmina as the evil King Marmorinus in *Filius Getronis*. Don is a semi-retired mainframe computer dinosaur and considers theater an ideal way to kill time between softball seasons.

Kathryn Kelly (Helen/Myrmidon) is pleased to be working again with the Rude Mechanicals after playing Miranda in *The Tempest*. She has worked with many theatres along the east coast ranging from Richmond, VA to Philadelphia, PA, and was most recently seen as Belle in

CAST AND CREW BIOS

Hopi Auerbach (Costume Support) Since 1992, Hopi has designed and constructed costumes for many plays including *The Children's Hour*, *The Man Who Came to Dinner*, *A Woman In Mind*, *Bye Bye Birdie*, *Play It Again, Sam*, *Not Now, Darling*, and Ibsen's *Ghosts*. Coincidentally, this included plays set in the 1930's, 1940's, 1950's and 1960's, in chronological order! It has been especially fun for her to work with The Rude Mechanicals and director Duda, partly because they are so appreciative of all of her efforts!

Elise Berg (Ulysses/Producer) It's all about MHNIN.

Keith Brown (Pandarus) is making his debut appearance with the Rude Mechanicals in this production. A first timer here, he has been involved with local community theatre around town for almost 24 years, both on stage and behind the scenes.

Yancy Davis (Paris) This is Yancy's second production with the Rude Mechanicals, and he's very pleased to be expanding his character repertoire from "wussy loverboy" to "selfish arrogant wussy loverboy." Look forward to seeing him in future RM productions as he tackles such roles as "selfish arrogant paranoid wussy loverboy" and "selfish arrogant wussy loverboy with a slight limp."

Jaki Demarest (Hector) Peter 2, Jaki 0. Thanks to Alan for making a man of me, to Jeff for his Playmobil Greek encampment orgy, and all the Rudes for keeping my criminal mind pleasantly and legally occupied.

Alan Duda (Antenor/Myrmidon/Director) has played Hamlet, Richard, and Caliban. This directorial debut has been his dream since 2000. It's for Rachel.

Peter Eichman (Calchas/Myrmidon) This is Peter's fourth production with the Rude Mechanicals, and he gets to kill Jaki. Most recently, he was seen as Tybalt in *Romeo & Juliet*, where he also got to kill Jaki. In real life, Peter is a junior linguistics and philosophy major at the University of Maryland. He isn't planning to kill Jaki. He would like to thank Lissa, Brett, and Alan for being his transportation to and from rehearsals, and Alan again for the happy fact that hell week is *not* during finals (or the semester, either, for that matter)!

SCENE BREAKDOWN

ACT I

Prologue – The Plains of Troy

1200 B.C. Known as 'Helen of Troy,' Helen was originally the queen of Sparta in modern day Greece. She was kidnapped by Paris, a son of Priam, King of Troy. Her husband, Menelaus, formed a coalition of the Greek city-states led by his brother, Agamemnon, to have her returned. This force of over one thousand ships sailed to Troy (a city on the Aegean Sea in modern day Turkey, just south of the Hellespont). Our story begins in the seventh year of the Greek siege of Troy.

The Lovers Pine – Troy

Priam's son Troilus' heart is not in the fight, as he is lovesick for Cressida. He has asked Cressida's uncle, Pandarus, to woo her for him. Pandarus goes to Cressida and brings this up while they discuss the Trojans returning from battle. Cressida confides that while she is interested in Troilus, she worries that men are more interested in the chasing than the catching and thus she is holding Troilus off.

The Trojan Council – Troy

Hector argues with his brothers, Troilus and Paris, about the honor of lawfully returning Helen and thus ending the war – versus the loss of face that would entail. Their sister, Cassandra, warns them of their doom should they keep Helen. Hector chooses glory and sends a challenge to fight any Greek in single combat.

The Greek Council (aka 'Big Fat Greek Scene') – The Greek Camp and Achilles' Tent

As the war drags on, the Greeks' morale dwindles. Their commanders address it each in their own way – Agamemnon questions their resolve; Nestor gives them a pep talk; Ulysses thrusts to the heart of the matter – they are not succeeding because of a lack of respect for the chain of command, starting with their best fighter, Achilles. (After clashing egos with Agamemnon early in the war, Achilles withdrew his contingent of Myrmidons and has taken to sulking in his tent.) This break down has trickled down through the ranks, including Achilles' partner, Patroclus, the blockish Ajax, and the always insolent Thersites. Aeneas arrives from Troy and announces Hector's challenge, which everyone rightfully assumes is for Achilles. Ulysses and Nestor plot that Ajax should fight Hector instead, for if Achilles loses, they lose their best man, and if he

SCENE BREAKDOWN

wins he will become all the more proud. With much pain and effort, Ajax and Achilles learn of the challenge. Achilles retreats into his tent when Agamemnon once more comes to ask him to fight while Ulysses and Nestor try to persuade Agamemnon otherwise.

That Evening: Helen Vamps — Troy

Pandarus tries to inform Paris that Troilus will not be at dinner. He has other plans. Helen and Paris, who already know why, enjoy Pandarus' failure at subtlety.

Lovers Woo — Pandarus' House

With much prompting, Pandarus finally brings Troilus and Cressida together where she admits her love for him and he swears he will be true to her.

[10 Minute Intermission]

ACT II

The Next Morning: Achilles Salks — The Greek Camp

Calchas, a Trojan who defected to the Greeks after foreseeing the fall of Troy, asks that his treachery be repaid by exchanging Antenor (a Trojan the Greeks have captured) for his daughter Cressida. Agamemnon agrees and sends Diomedes to make the trade. Achilles appears, and Ulysses suggests that if Achilles will have nothing to do with them, they should reply in same and disregard him as they pass. Ulysses explains to Achilles that honor can not merely be held, it must be maintained. We learn part of Achilles' reluctance to fight is due to his not so secret love of Polyxena, Priam's daughter. (A better kept secret is that Priam arranged this romance to keep Achilles out of the fight.) With Patroclus' urging, Achilles concedes to at least meet Hector for dinner after the combat and asks that Thersites send the invite through Ajax. Thersites announces Ajax has lost what little wit he had in fretting over his upcoming fight with Hector.

SCENE BREAKDOWN

Cressida Sought — Troy

Having Priam's consent, Diomedes and Paris are returning Antenor to exchange for Cressida. Paris realizes Troilus is with Cressida and sends Aeneas ahead to prepare them.

Cressida Bought — Pandarus' House

Aeneas arrives with the bad news. Troilus leaves to confirm this with Paris and concedes to his father's wishes. However, he returns to swear he will remain true to Cressida, gives her a love token, and promises to sneak in to the Greek camp to visit her. Diomedes arrives to state he will take possession of Cressida.

Fight Club — The Greek Camp

The Greeks are waiting for Hector when Diomedes returns with Cressida. The Trojans arrive and Hector fights with Ajax, but because they are cousins they call the fight once they have shown their prowess. Hector accepts Achilles' invitation for the Trojans to dine with them and Achilles accepts Hector's invitation to meet him in the field. Diomedes goes off to see Cressida, and Troilus and Ulysses follow him. Thersites arrives with a letter from Polyxena and Achilles once again wavers. Thersites follows Diomedes.

That Evening: Whispers in the Dark — Calchas' Tent

Unknowingly watched by Troilus, Ulysses, and Thersites, Diomedes meets with Cressida. Cressida initially refuses him but calls him back when Thersites startles her. Troilus sees only her acceptance of Diomedes' protection and believes he is betrayed.

The Next Morning: Troilus Rages — Troy

Deaf to Cassandra's pleas to save himself, Hector prepares for battle. He tries to protect Troilus from the fight, but Troilus will have none of it and turns Hector's argument of glory and honor against him. Pandarus arrives with a letter maintaining Cressida's love for Troilus, but Troilus has seen otherwise and goes out to meet Diomedes.

War — The Plains of Troy

Still unwilling to fight, Achilles allows Patroclus to wear his armor to win glory in his name when Hector arrives on the field... Everything and nothing gets resolved.