

A STAGED READING OF NAHUM TATE'S *KING LEAR*

JOSEPH CURDY



In 1754, David Garrick's biographer Arthur Murphy claimed that Nahum Tate's adaptation of Shakespeare's *King Lear* would, with its happy-ending, "always be most agreeable to an audience." Nearly 100 years later, poet and essayist Barry Cornwall mused that Tate's *Lear* was "so amusingly vile that indignation soon relieves itself in laughter."

On 27th

January 2008, eight RSC associate actors, members of the University of Warwick, and students of the Shakespeare Institute gathered at the Shakespeare Institute Hall, where audiences were finally able to judge for themselves by attending a staged-reading of the text. The staged-reading was well received. The professional readers included Richard Cordery



(currently in Michael Boyd's Histories Company at the RSC), Clifford Rose (RSC-veteran), Jenny Ogilvie (currently in the *Noughts & Crosses* Company), and Peter Hinton (recently in Sir Trevor Nunn's *Lear/Seagull* Company). Other parts were read by Joseph Curdy (current Shakespeare Institute student) and Will Sharp (part-time Institute student, editor of *The Winter's Tale* for the RSC edition of Shakespeare's complete works).

