

Irwin Appel

Founding Artistic Director, *Naked Shakes*
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CURRENT POSITION (1999-PRESENT)

University of California Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara, CA

- Professor of Theater (Tenure granted 2003)
- Artistic Director, *Naked Shakes* (2006-Present) www.deathofkings.com
- Chair, Department of Theater and Dance (2018-2023)
- Director, Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) Actor Training Program (2005-2018), the only BFA in Acting in the University of California system.
- Creator and Director of two major adaptations of Shakespeare's plays: *The Death of Kings* (Shakespeare's eight histories from *Richard II* through *Richard III*), and *Immortal Longings* (*Julius Caesar*, *Antony and Cleopatra* and George Bernard Shaw's *Caesar and Cleopatra*).

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- The Juilliard School, Drama Division (1983-1987); *Diploma (M.F.A. Equivalent)*
- Princeton University (1979-1983); *A.B., English (Certificate in Theater)*
- Williamstown Theatre Festival, Williamstown, MA (1978); *Apprentice*

DIRECTING

Representative Theaters

- Orlando Shakes, *Naked Shakes*, Prague Shakespeare Company, National Theatre Conservatory at Denver Center for the Performing Arts, Southwest Shakespeare Company, University of California Santa Barbara, Ensemble Theatre Company, Summer Repertory Theatre, Shakespeare Santa Barbara, Bread Loaf Acting Ensemble, Warehouse Repertory Theatre, and others.

Representative Productions

- *Immortal Longings*, *The Death of Kings*, *Macbeth*, *The Winter's Tale*, *Hamlet*, *The Tempest*, *King Lear*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Twelfth Night*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Measure for Measure*, *Comedy of Errors*, *A View From the Bridge*, *Equivocation*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *Lydia*, *Anowa*, *Pentecost*, *Rabbit Hole*, *Seagull*, *Angels in America*, *Man and Superman*, and many others.
- Founder and Artistic Director of *Naked Shakes*, currently in its eighteenth season at UCSB, whose mission since 2006 has been to present Shakespeare using the power of the actors and the language. The critically acclaimed, Santa Barbara Independent Award-winning *Naked Shakes* has performed at UCSB and transported productions to the Shakespeare Center of Los Angeles, Southwest Shakespeare Company in Phoenix and Taliesin West, Arizona, Center Stage in downtown Santa Barbara and Verona, Italy in August 2023. *Naked Shakes* is a member of the [Shakespeare Theatre Association](#).

- Director/Playwright/Adapter of *The Death of Kings*: a two-play adaptation of Shakespeare's history plays. *Part One: I Come But For Mine Own*, comprises *Richard II*, *Henry IV*, Parts 1 and 2, and *Henry V*. *Part Two: The White Rose and the Red*, condenses *Henry VI*, Parts 1, 2 and 3, and *Richard III*. Both plays were performed in repertory at UCSB in February/March 2016. *The Death of Kings* won seven Santa Barbara Independent awards for direction, adaptation, performance and design. A third play, *The Death of Kings: Seize the Crown*, a ninety minute compilation of the two main plays, received its European premiere at the Prague Shakespeare Company's Summer Shakespeare Intensive in 2017, and a more recent production traveled to Southwest Shakespeare Company in March 2019. <https://thedeathofkingsofficial.wordpress.com>. In August 2023, *Naked Shakes* performed *The Death of Kings* to be the closing act of the Verona Shakespeare Fringe Festival in Verona, Italy, part of the European Shakespeare Festivals Network. In fall 2023, I will direct *The Death of Kings* as Visiting Professor at Jagiellonian University, Kraków, Poland.
- Director, *Trapped in Amber*, a new play by Carlos Morton, commissioned by the International Border Studies Center and University of Gdańsk, Poland, and in collaboration with the Musical Theatre School of Danuta Baduskowa in Gdynia, Poland. First produced as staged reading in English during June 2022 and then in workshop production with Polish translation, October 2022.
- Director/Playwright/Adapter of *Immortal Longings*: a one-play adaptation of Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, *Antony and Cleopatra* and George Bernard Shaw's *Caesar and Cleopatra*. Performed by *Naked Shakes* on Zoom in Summer and Fall 2020 (video available).
- Director/Actor, Southwest Shakespeare Company: Virtual Classics: Live! series: directed *Richard III*, *Romeo and Juliet* and *The Merchant of Venice* in national Zoom productions during the pandemic. Also, acted the role of Shylock in *The Merchant of Venice*, with Patrick Page as Antonio, and played multiple roles in *Henry V*.
- Artistic Director/Actor - The Mad Hatters Educational Theatre: directed artistic area of organization that used theatre to foster understanding about people with special needs or disabilities. The Mad Hatters was a national touring theatre company based in Kalamazoo, Michigan with an annual budget of \$350,000 and over 150 performances per year. Artistic responsibilities included directing all programs, writing all new scripts, composing music, recruiting and training new talent, and acting in all performances. Acting responsibilities included playing seven to ten characters per one-hour performance, heavy improvisation with audience members and other actors, mastering a repertoire of fifteen to twenty-five full programs, and performing in a wide variety of venues. Administrative responsibilities included show bookings, production management, public relations and interaction with Executive Director and Board of Directors.

ACTING

(Member, Actors Equity Association, 1987-Present)

Representative Theaters

- Prague Shakespeare Company, Shakespeare Santa Cruz, Shakespeare Festival/LA, New York, Oregon, Utah, Colorado and Santa Barbara Shakespeare Festivals, Southwest Shakespeare Company, The Acting Company, Theatre For a New Audience, Hartford Stage, Indiana Repertory Theatre, Colorado New Play Summit at the Denver Center of the Performing Arts, Bread Loaf Acting Ensemble, Theater Artists Group.

Representative Acting Roles

- Falstaff in *Henry IV, Part One*, Richard in *Richard III*, Prospero in *The Tempest*, Shylock in *The Merchant of Venice*, Bottom in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Falstaff in *Merry Wives of Windsor*, Timon in *Timon of Athens*, Dogberry in *Much Ado About Nothing*, Kent in *King Lear*, Macbeth in *Kabuki Macbeth*, Oscar Wilde in *Gross Indecency: The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde*, Serebryakov in *Uncle Vanya*, Aunt Chuck in *Appoggiatura*, Matt in *Talley's Folly*, Stage Manager in *Our Town*, DeVere in *The Beard of Avon*, Frank in *Molly Sweeney*, Duke Senior and Duke Frederick in *As You Like It*, and many others.
- For Prague Shakespeare Company at the Estates Theatre in Prague, Czech Republic, played Falstaff in *Henry IV, Part One* in July 2022, and Pandarus in world premiere of a new modern English language translation of *Troilus and Cressida* by Lillian Groag, directed by Guy Roberts and Rebecca Udden, and produced in association with Oregon Shakespeare Festival's Play On! 36 playwrights translate Shakespeare project in April 2018.

COMPOSER/SOUND DESIGNER

Representative Theaters

- Orlando Shakes, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Arizona Theatre Company, Indiana Repertory Theatre, New Jersey Shakespeare Festival, Shakespeare Santa Cruz, PCPA, Pan Asian Repertory Theatre, University of California Santa Barbara, and many others.

Representative Productions

- *Macbeth*, *Other Desert Cities*, *Twelfth Night*, *All My Sons*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *A View From the Bridge*, *Rabbit Hole*, *Up: The Man in the Flying Lawn Chair*, *Take Me Out*, *God's Pictures*, *On the Razzle*, and many others, including most productions I have directed as well.

PROFESSIONAL PRESENTATIONS, WORKSHOPS AND LECTURES

- Lectures, workshops and panels on *Naked Shakes*, *The Death of Kings*, *Shakespeare* and other topics presented in Beijing and Nanjing, China; Kraków, Gdańsk, Gdynia and Warsaw, Poland; Athens, Greece; Budapest, Hungary; Vienna, Austria; Prague, Czech Republic; Zurich, Switzerland; Calgary, Victoria and Ottawa, Canada; Washington, DC, New York, NY, Dallas, TX and Santa Barbara, CA, USA.

AWARDS

- Winner of eleven *Santa Barbara Independent Theater* and *BroadwayWorld* awards for direction, acting and sound design.