



For Immediate Release  
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**National Theatre of the Deaf to Present  
Excerpts of Deaf Theatre Adaptation of  
Shakespeare's King Lear at  
Eugene O'Neill Theatre Centre**

Monte Cristo Cottage, New London CT: The National Theatre of the Deaf is pleased to announce a performance of excerpts from John Basinger's *THE KING*, based on the title character in William Shakespeare's *KING LEAR*. Mr. Basinger will also direct this production for NTD. Patrick Graybill plays the lead character. Graybill is responsible for the Sign Language adaptation of *THE KING*.

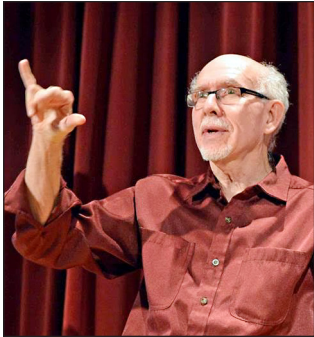
**The performance is on October 18 at 7:30pm in the Margo and Rufus Rose Barn at the Eugene O'Neill Theatre Center in Waterford, CT. There will be a talk-back immediately following the performance. (Tickets are by invitation only.)**

The production will then travel to Gallaudet University as part of "Shakespeare in American Deaf History and The First Folio Tour" at 12:00 noon on October 22, in their Elstad Auditorium.

*THE KING* is a play based upon Shakespeare's *King Lear*, but focuses on Lear alone. In it only one character is seen on stage, a drifter, played by Patrick Graybill, who has hit upon Lear's story as a way to express himself. All the other figures are represented as phantoms or objects that the drifter happens across. Though the drifter remains a mystery, Lear's story is presented directly, and through the magic of theater, these two tormented men, Lear and the Drifter, seem to become one.

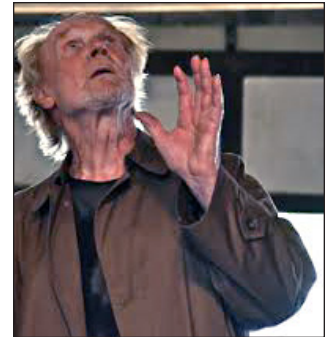
50 years ago, the National Theatre of the Deaf began presenting the theatrical power of Sign

Language (including Shakespeare) to people on every continent on earth; this power is again on display in *The King*. Under the theme, “Visualizing Shakespeare”, Patrick Graybill shows how the imagery in Shakespeare’s words becomes flesh. The National Theatre of the Deaf is the longest existing touring theatre company in the United States having performed in all 50 states and on all 7 continents.



**Patrick Graybill**, revered as a grandfather of ASL poetry, was born in Kansas just before World War II began. He is one of seven children; five of them, including him, were born Deaf. He graduated from Gallaudet College with a bachelor’s degree in English in 1963 and a master’s degree in education in 1964. He eventually decided to study to be a Roman Catholic priest at Catholic University for two years without interpreting services. It was a struggle that motivated him to accept an invitation to be a member of the newly established National Theatre of the Deaf.

**John Basinger** joined the celebrated Tony Award winning National Theatre of the Deaf in 1968, performing with the group as a musician and actor in modest as well as prestigious venues across the US and beyond---including several runs on Broadway, theater festivals in Europe, Israel and more. In 1992 he began memorizing and performing John Milton’s epic poem, *Paradise Lost*. His 2001 three-day marathon recital of that work is available as a boxed DVD set. He has been a board member of NTD for the past ten years and this year is proud to be directing their production of *The King*.



Funding for NTD is provided by: The Beatrice Fox Auerbach Foundation at the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving; J. Walton Bissell Foundation; Ensworth Charitable Foundation and Frank Loomis Palmer Fund, Bank of America, N.A., Trustee; Eugene O’Neill Theater Center; Frederick Loewe Foundation; Hygienic Art; Edward C. and Ann T. Roberts Foundation; Veolia, City of New London Water Authority Community Fund, with the support of the State of Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development, Connecticut Office of the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, and our kind donors.

For more information about NTD log on to [www.ntd.org](http://www.ntd.org). To contact the NTD offices call [860-574-9063](tel:860-574-9063), VP (video phone) [860-607-1338](tel:860-607-1338) (Images available upon request.)

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