



SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL ST. LOUIS

Shakespeare Festival St. Louis Educational Tour Takes the Bard to Schools throughout Missouri and Illinois

ST. LOUIS (May 8, 2014) – Shakespeare Festival St. Louis’ educational touring productions visited more than 90 schools and community venues, presenting some 120 activities to 18,000 students, including, for the second year in a row, schools in rural Missouri, thanks to support from the Monsanto Fund.

The adapted 50-minute productions, filled with the Bard’s advice on everything from bullying and leadership to revenge and war, are commissioned from local playwrights and performed by five professional actor/teaching artists who then present the plays at schools and free community events.

The 2014 Education Tour featured the original production *Family of Kings*, a condensed version of the Shakespeare Festival’s 2014 main stage productions of *Henry IV* and *Henry V*, and a 50-minute version of *As You Like It*, as well as two interactive student workshops. The Festival also provides study guides with Common Core State Standards and Missouri State Board of Education Show-Me Standard Tie-Ins, including synopses, character lists, background information, grade-appropriate resources for grades K-12, activities, and lesson plans.

“The goal of all Festival education programs “In the Schools” is to provide only the highest-quality theatre education to inspire people of all ages – to creatively engage, explore, and delight in the works of William Shakespeare,” said Rick Dildine, artistic and executive director for Shakespeare Festival St. Louis. “Through the generous support of our sponsors, we are able to use the power of theatre to build awareness, teach empathy, and support communication among students and their peers.”

The Festival’s Education Tour in St. Louis City and County received generous support from UMB Bank, the John R. Goodall Charitable Trust, and First Bank. The combined support resulted in 14 weeks of programming, scheduled February through May.

In the past 13 years, Shakespeare Festival St. Louis has attracted more than 600,000 people to its annual free performances in Forest Park. In 2010, the organization launched Shake 38, a marathon citywide presentation of Shakespeare's entire 38-play canon. Since 2011, Shakespeare in the Streets has invited St. Louis' neighborhoods to tell their unique community stories, shutting down a street for performances that present the combined talents of professional actors alongside local residents. With support from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Regional Arts Commission, SHAKE38.com, launched on April 23, 2014, Shakespeare's 450th birthday. For more information, please visit www.sfstl.com or call 314/531-9800.

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