



SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL ST. LOUIS

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**Shakespeare Festival's Innovative SHAKE 38
Reflects St. Louisans' Diverse Interpretations of the Bard's 38-Play Canon**
5th Annual Celebration of All Things Bard is scheduled April 22-26

ST. LOUIS (March 23, 2015) – Greeting the sun with Yoga at the Missouri Botanical Garden inspired by excerpts from *Richard II*, a spin-off of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* fusing fashion and photography, a bluegrass-inspired *Henry V* at Urban Chestnut's Midtown beer garden, and the results of a call-out to students from across the country to share their ideas on justice and equality in Measure4Measure, are just a few of the diverse performances planned for SHAKE 38, Shakespeare Festival St. Louis' sixth annual performance marathon inspired by William Shakespeare's 38-play canon.

Set for April 22-26, with locations throughout the city, the five-day event's official kick-off is set for 7:30 p.m., April 22, at Big Club Hall in The Hill featuring a high-energy photo shoot in the upstairs studio in a performance of the Bard's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Mirroring the Festival's annual production in Forest Park, SHAKE 38 events are free and open to the public, with no reservations required. Visit www.sfstl.com for an up-to-date schedule.

Measure4Measure, scheduled for 4 p.m. on Fri., April 24, in SLU's Xavier Hall, presents the result of a five-month partnership between Saint Louis University and the Festival. Through video submissions of hip hop, spoken word and poetry, local and national high school and college students were invited to share their ideas on the themes of justice and equality. National partners include students from Lincoln Center Education's Poet-Linc program, Urban Word NYC, MCC Theatre Youth Company.

At the Upstairs Gallery at 2720 Cherokee, a collaboration with Gateway Burners and St. Lou Fringe will result in an extravagant mixer. The *Lose Your Head* party, set for 9:30 p.m. on Sat., April 25, will feature selections from Shakespeare's *Henry VIII*, work

from Fringe's Marie Antoinette-inspired art show, *Gallows*, and the Burner's *Recompression Party*.

“William Shakespeare wrote that ‘All the world’s a stage,’ and St. Louisans have held him up to it by creating and executing some incredibly imaginative interpretations of his work,” said Jennifer Wintzer, the Festival’s Director of Community Engagement and Education. “Over a five-day period, we see performances imagined 400 years ago come to life in bars, in parking garages, art galleries, all in a tribute to an author whose writing focused on themes still relevant today – love, lust, revenge, war.”

Other highlights from this year include: ERA’s *R+J: A Telephone Play, or Don’t Drink the Milk* followed by a Bodysnatchers improv performance, *Much Ado About Nothing* at the 24-hour Coffee Cartel in the CWE, and an opera based on *Troilus & Cressida*, composed specifically for this performance, at the Saint Louis Science Center’s planetarium.

SHAKE 38 will be followed by the Festival’s Main Stage production of *Antony and Cleopatra*, May 22 through June 14, at Shakespeare Glen in Forest Park. This marks the company’s 15-year anniversary of free, live, outdoor, professional theatre in the park. The 2015 season will culminate with the fourth annual Shakespeare in the Streets (Sept. 17-19), a grassroots theatrical experience that invites St. Louis’ neighborhoods to tell their unique community stories, resulting in free street performance that showcase the combined talents of local residents performing alongside professional actors. This year’s event will be held in the city’s Old North neighborhood.

This season of the Shakespeare Festival St. Louis has been made possible with the support of the Regional Arts Commission, financial assistance provided by the Missouri Arts Council, a state agency, and funded in part by the Arts and Education Council.

Recognized this year with the Excellence in the Arts Award from the Arts and Education Council of St. Louis, the Festival has attracted more than 640,000 people to its annual main stage show In the Park. The organization has reached 270,000 students In the Schools through its educational programming and, in 2012, shut down its first street, Cherokee, to present a community-based play In the Streets. 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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