



## SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL ST. LOUIS

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

#### **Shakespeare in the Streets is Set for Clayton Sept. 18-20** *'Good in Everything' adapted from Shakespeare's 'As You Like It'*

ST. LOUIS (Aug. 27, 2014) -- Local residents and professional actors will join forces in the artful adaptation of William Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, as part of the third annual Shakespeare in the Streets presented by Shakespeare Festival St. Louis, scheduled Thursday through Saturday, Sept. 18-20, on Central Avenue between Forsyth Boulevard and Maryland Avenue in downtown Clayton.

The hour-long free play will feature live music by a string quartet from Clayton High School, as well as video projection mapping created by St. Louisan DJ Raven Fox. Central Avenue will be closed to traffic from Forsyth to Maryland from 6 to 10 p.m. nightly; show time is 8 p.m. Parking will be available on the surrounding streets. Patrons are encouraged to bring their own chairs; seating will be limited. On Friday, Sept. 19, a discussion moderated by Focus St. Louis will follow the performance.

The play, *Good in Everything*, is inspired in part by the Clayton School District's historic Voluntary Desegregation program, which began in 1983 and subsequently served as a model for all the suburban St. Louis school districts.

Maalik Shakoor, 19, a St. Louis resident and graduate of Clayton High School, is one of several students performing in the show. He will play the role of Orlando. Professional actors include Michael James Reed in the role of Mr. Frederick and Wendy Greenwood as Phoebe, both of whom have appeared in previous Festival productions. Greenwood serves as the Artistic Director for SIUE's Cougar Theater Company and has worked locally with Mustard Seed Theatre, Muddy Waters Theatre and HotCity Theatre, among others. Khnemu Menu-Ra and Kelley Weber, Drama Teacher at Clayton High School, have also both appeared in past Festival productions and will round out the remaining professionals in the show. Weber's daughter, Hannah, a junior at the high school, is also a cast member.

"Along the way, these characters experience personal growth and unexpected romances as the two cultures encounter each for the first time," said Nancy Bell, SFSTL

Playwright-in-residence. “At the end, they all return to Clayton, inspired to make both worlds better.”

“As we adults hold on to our prejudices and intolerance, the young people in the world are leading the charge to look past those divisions and create the world anew,” said Alec Wild, SITS Director. “The young people we met here - from the local residents to the students involved in the desegregation program - exemplify that leadership, and we hope their story might inspire you to see the good in everything.”

In addition to his work with Shakespeare Festival, as a recipient a 1997 Fox Fellowship, Wild traveled to Saint Petersburg, Russia, to work as the Assistant Director of The Revizor Project, an international, cross-cultural effort to examine the work of Vsevolod Meyerhold. While in Russia, he studied at the Saint Petersburg Academy of Theater. Most recently, he directed at the Orpheum Theater in Los Angeles and at The Great River Shakespeare Festival, which he founded and where he served as Producing and Associate Director for eight years.

Playwright Bell wrote the previous two SITS productions – *Old Hearts Fresh* (based on *The Winter’s Tale*) in the Grove, and *The New World* (an adaptation of the *The Tempest*) performed on Cherokee Street in the Gravois Park/Benton Park West neighborhood. She was awarded a St. Louis Theatre Circle Award for Outstanding New Play for last year’s *Old Hearts Fresh*. Bell has acted in theaters across the country and has numerous TV credits and was most recently seen in *Soups, Stews, and Casseroles: 1976* at the Repertory Theatre of St. Louis.

DJ Raven Fox will be coordinating the video projection mapping. Fox has worked with recording artists Christina Aguilera, Prince and Kool & the Gang, and his signature playing style has garnered him work in Manhattan’s hottest clubs.

Support for SITS programming is being provided by the National Endowment for the Arts Art Works. SITS 2014 is being made possible by generous contributions from the City of Clayton and the Clayton Century Foundation.

In the past 15 years, Shakespeare Festival St. Louis has attracted more than 640,000 people to its annual free performances in Forest Park. The organization has reached 270,000 students through its educational programming and, in 2010, launched SHAKE 38, a marathon citywide presentation of Shakespeare’s entire 38-play canon. 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](http://www.sfstl.com) or call 314/531-9800.

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**EDITOR’S NOTE:** If you are interested in confirming an interview with members of the cast or creative team, please contact Mary McHugh ([marymchugh1@mac.com](mailto:marymchugh1@mac.com)/314/910-1528).

