Dear Friends,

This was a groundbreaking and exciting year for Shakespeare Festival St. Louis! The Festival was recognized by the Missouri Arts Council as the 2017 Arts Organization of the Year and we celebrated a new milestone of over one million patrons and students served since our first performance in 2001.

Your support keeps our performances, community events, and in-school programs open to all in the St. Louis community. Everyone is welcome! Here’s a quick look at the creative strength and community impact you made possible in 2016:

- A Midsummer Night’s Dream was shared by 40,000 patrons in Forest Park and was the most-nominated play of the year for the St. Louis Theater Circle Awards.
- Our Education Tour brought 50-minute Shakespeare productions and workshops to over 50 schools across metropolitan St. Louis and rural Missouri.
- Record-setting audiences attended the premiere of Remember Me, our latest Shakespeare in the Streets play in Maplewood.
- New partnerships and commissions from the Pulitzer Arts Foundation, St. Louis Symphony, Schlafly Beer, and the St. Louis Public Library celebrated the Bard’s continued relevance and impact today, on the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare’s death.

All of our work is based on the stories, participation, and support of our community. Thank you for your involvement in 2016 – we look forward to exciting years ahead!
“Without programs like Shakespeare Festival’s Education Tour, the students in our rural community would probably not see a live performance, much less directly interact with professional artists.”

John Snodgrass, Scott County Central

In 2016, the Festival’s Education Tour visited 58 schools and over 8,000 students with performances of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* and *Hamlet*. For each of the past 16 years, the Festival has brought the resources of a professional theater company directly to schools across metropolitan St. Louis and rural Missouri. The Tour includes 50-minute Shakespeare productions performed by a team of five teaching artists as well as interactive workshops on character education and the literary arts. Many of the students in our audiences are experiencing live theater and Shakespeare for the very first time.

The Festival also introduced week-long residencies in 2016 for rural or under-resourced schools. Our artists led students through a week of interactive workshops and performances. Teacher survey results were universally positive about the residency’s impact on students’ personal writing, speaking, and listening skills. With the generous support of individual donors and sponsors, the Festival provides all of these programs to schools for free or dramatically reduced rates.

The Festival’s 2016 Rural Education Tour was sponsored by the Monsanto Fund. The Education Tour also received generous support from the Saigh Foundation and First Bank.
“All the stylized figures look impressive. But when the ghost of Clara Clamorgan looms over the audience from the sky, perched over the roof-line, Shakespeare in the Streets achieves the kind of dramatic punch any theater could take pride in, indoors or out.”

Judith Newmark, St. Louis Post-Dispatch

The Festival presented the fifth year of our nationally-recognized community engagement program, Shakespeare in the Streets, in Maplewood in September 2016. The culminating performances attracted the Festival’s largest audience yet for Shakespeare in the Streets. Over 3,000 people gathered in the streets of Maplewood for performances of Remember Me, a mash-up of Hamlet, A Midsummer Night’s Dream, and Romeo and Juliet by the Festival’s Playwright-in-Residence Nancy Bell. For the first time since the inception of Shakespeare in the Streets in 2012, all cast members had a connection to the community. The Festival also collaborated with artists from Maplewood’s Living Arts Studio, a studio for artists living with disabilities, to make large-scale puppets as a featured part of the production. SHAKE 38 2016, the week-long urban performance of the entire Shakespeare canon, included performances in bakeries, improv shops, Zumba classes and swimming pools!

Shakespeare in the Streets 2016 was sponsored by the City of Maplewood with additional support from the National Endowment for the Arts, The Boeing Company, PNC Arts Alive, the Strive Fund, the F.B. Heron Foundation, and Wells Fargo Advisors. SHAKE 38 2016 was possible with a gift from Ken & Nancy Kranzberg.
“When it comes to diversifying the pool of talented actors and actresses being brought to their productions each season, Shakespeare Festival St. Louis’ commitment has been obvious.”

Kenya Vaughn, The St. Louis American

Over 40,000 St. Louisans gathered blanket to blanket in Shakespeare Glen for the Festival’s 16th year in Forest Park. A Midsummer Night’s Dream was the work of 22 actors, 12 designers, 34 crew members, and over 300 volunteers. The Festival’s Artistic Director Rick Dildine directed one of the most accomplished casts to date on the Festival stage with four Broadway actors and one Olivier Award nominee. The production also continued the Festival’s commitment to diverse casting and participation, with one of our most diverse casts to date.

With set design by Scott C. Neale, costumes by Dottie Marshall Englis, lighting by John Wylie, and sound by Rusty Wandall, A Midsummer Night’s Dream was the most nominated play of the year for the St. Louis Theater Circle Awards with 10 nominations across multiple categories.

Leadership support for the Festival’s 2016 season was provided by the Whitaker Foundation with in-kind support from Kiku Obata & Company and Switch. Generous support is also provided by the Missouri Arts Council, the Regional Arts Commission and the Arts & Education Council of Greater St. Louis.
Shakespeare Festival St. Louis gratefully acknowledges all the sponsors and members who make our work possible. This list represents gifts of $1,250 or more made to the Annual Fund during fiscal year 2016 (October 1, 2015–September 30, 2016). We appreciate gifts at all levels and regret that we do not have space here to list them all.

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∞ In Memoriam  
* In Kind

As the only free, professional theatre company in our region, Shakespeare Festival St. Louis relies on the generosity of our community. Over 49% of total revenue came from contributions in 2016. A consistently high percentage of expenses, 72% in FY2016, directly supports the Festival’s programming in the Schools, in the Streets, and in the Park. The Festival maintains positive unrestricted net assets and finished FY2016 with a balanced budget.
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