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**SHAKESPEARE  
LIVES IN**

**2016**



**A  
GUIDE  
FOR  
INTERNATIONAL  
MEDIA  
2016**

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## What is Shakespeare Lives?

- A worldwide celebration of the enduring global impact, relevance and creativity of William Shakespeare: the world's best known Briton, and the UK's most successful cultural export ever, on the 400th anniversary of his death in 2016.
- Activity and events in more than 140 countries, new creative commissions, partnerships with the UK's most influential cultural institutions and a global social media campaign to reach millions of people.
- The programme will take inspiration from Shakespeare and bring his legacy to life for good, thanks to a unique partnership with VSO to raise funds for children's education projects around the world.
- Shakespeare Lives launched on 5 January 2016 - Twelfth Night – with an op-ed by the Prime Minister that appeared in 50+ countries.

## Programme highlights

- #PlayYourPart: global social media campaign to raise funds for children's education projects around the world. In partnership with charity partner, VSO, and featuring world-famous figures sharing their favourite moment from Shakespeare.
- Commissioned content: best of emerging British talent from all art forms reinterpreting Shakespeare for 2016. Global call for young global creatives to submit their own work.
- Shakespeare Day: partnership with the BBC for a 24 hour live-stream on 23 April 2016 and a six month portfolio of on-line Shakespeare Lives content.
- Film screenings & events: BFI, National Theatre (including Cumberbatch's *Hamlet*) and other outstanding productions of Shakespeare screened around the world.
- Vast worldwide cultural programme: curated by the British Council and featuring new collaborations, translations, seminars and much more in over 100 countries.
- Teacher resource pack: created with the Royal Shakespeare Company and available to every school in Britain and to 100,000 schools worldwide.
- Government's overseas network: activity in more than 140 countries to celebrate Shakespeare's influence on the UK and the world.
- Queen's Birthday Parties: Permission has been obtained from Buckingham Palace for British Embassies and High Commissions to support the Shakespeare Lives campaign at their QBPs in April or June 2016.

## Partners and how to get involved

- Led by the British Council in partnership with the GREAT Britain campaign, which involves 17 Government departments. External partners include: VSO, BBC, BFI, RSC, Shakespeare's Globe, National Theatre and many more.
- Involvement in Shakespeare Lives is open to all. There are opportunities to support the full programme, the charity partnership, specific activity in the UK or worldwide. Play Your Part!

## Contents

Fast facts about Shakespeare 400.....	2
Shakespeare 400 - what's new for 2016.....	3
Come celebrate the Bard - key events marking the anniversary .....	7
All of Britain's a stage - book your tickets to these Shakespeare performances in 2016 .....	15
Shakespeare on screen.....	21
Step inside a Shakespeare play .....	24
A very modern Shakespeare .....	27
A floral feast - the Elizabethan garden.....	28
Unusual venues to catch a Shakespeare play .....	31
Food for thought - Elizabethan dining experiences .....	34
Ten suitably Shakespearean gifts and goodies .....	36
Shakespeare for families.....	38
Shakespeare's circle .....	40
Six immersive Shakespeare experiences .....	42

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## Fast facts about Shakespeare 400

- Shakespeare wrote 26 of his best-loved plays while he was the owner of New Place and, this home - looked after by the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust - will be a huge attraction in 2016, when it reopens. Visitors to the re-imagined New Place will discover William the family man, homeowner and successful entrepreneur. *Find out more on page 3.*
- During his lifetime, Shakespeare wrote 37 plays and 154 sonnets! With the 400th anniversary of his death in 2016, many will be performed across Britain. *Find out where you can watch a Shakespeare play on page 15.*
- Dedicated exhibitions, art shows, literary festivals, concerts, and even a Shakespeare marathon are all part of the plans to honour the 400th anniversary in 2016. *Discover some of the exciting events to attend on page 7.*
- Shakespeare holds a Guinness World Record for being the most filmed author in the world - his plays and sonnets have been adapted into 420 feature films and TV-movies! *Find out which adaptations and films about Shakespeare were shot in Britain, and where to go to relive the onscreen action, on page 21.*
- Pack your bumper volume of Shakespeare plays and head this way: the Bard set many of his tragedies, comedies and history plays in Britain. *Turn to page 24 to find where to walk in the footsteps of Shakespeare's characters.*
- Pedal-powered productions, rap marathons and deliberate drunkenness - there are plenty of forward-thinkers who will be re-imagining Bard's plays and poems in Britain next year. *Turn to page 27 to find out more.*
- Many Elizabethan gardens around Britain have been restored and replanted in recent years, offering a chance to glimpse the gardens Shakespeare - and his characters - would have known. *Read about where to find these gardens on page 28.*
- Watch some of the Bard's best-loved plays in an array of unusual and outdoor places - from a medieval castle to a botanical garden - and enjoy the venue as much as the plays. *Turn to page 31 for more details.*
- You've watched the plays, visited the landmarks, taken part in festivals - now complete your Shakespearean odyssey with a few fun Bard-inspired gifts to take home. *Read more on page 36.*
- From acrobat and archery to statue impressions and scavenger hunts, children visiting Britain can also help celebrate the Shakespeare anniversary. *Read more on page 38.*
- Shakespeare's plays feature dynamic men and women - and here we uncover who were the people in his life that influenced him and where the locations are that played a major part in their lives. *Turn to page 40 for more details.*
- Step up on stage, eat like an Elizabethan, or dress like a character from the 16th century - whatever takes your fancy, throw yourself - literally - into all things Shakespearean! *Read more on page 42.*

## Shakespeare 400 - what's new for 2016

April 2016 is the 400th anniversary of the death of William Shakespeare, aka the Bard of Avon and arguably history's greatest dramatist. It's also the cue for a glut of new exhibitions, immersive experiences and even cycling tours across Britain.

### Stratford-upon-Avon

Much of the action is taking place in Stratford-upon-Avon, a handsome market town 20 miles south east of Birmingham, where Shakespeare lived for much of his life. One headline attraction is a contemporary recreation of the playwright and poet's final dwelling, occupying its original site. The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust is transforming **New Place**, the site of Shakespeare's home for the last 19 years of his life, to create a new heritage landmark where visitors can discover Shakespeare at the height of his success. The project to represent the site will be one of the most significant Shakespearean projects anywhere in the world to commemorate his legacy.



*In July 2016 the artist's impression of New Place will become the real thing! Credit Shakespeare Birthplace Trust/Stewart Writtle*

Shakespeare wrote 26 of his best-loved plays as owner of New Place. His former home has attracted literary fans since the 17th century, long before his Birthplace was rescued for the benefit of the nation. Unfortunately, New Place was demolished in 1759 by its then owner, Reverend Francis Gastrell, who was annoyed by visiting Shakespeare enthusiasts. The re-imagined New Place is scheduled to open in July, and visitors will discover William the family man, homeowner and successful entrepreneur. Specially-commissioned artworks will evoke a sense of Shakespeare's domestic life. An archaeological dig at the site has unearthed significant new findings, including the site of Shakespeare's 'kitchen' including the great dramatist's 'oven' and 'fridge'. Furthermore, facsimiles of the cookware will be available for visitors to handle, and will be on display at New Place in the neighbouring Grade I listed Nash's House (Tudor in origin), which is currently undergoing a major refurbishment as part of the project. [www.shakespeare.org.uk](http://www.shakespeare.org.uk)

How about meeting Shakespeare's nearest and dearest? From January, a new **'Family & Friends' display** at Shakespeare's Birthplace - a restored Tudor mansion where the Bard was born - will introduce visitors to the social network of Stratford's most famous son: his friends, tenants, neighbours, drinking companions and business colleagues.

[www.shakespeare.org.uk/birthplace](http://www.shakespeare.org.uk/birthplace)



Stratford is also home to the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC). The **Other Place** was formerly the RSC's original studio theatre, before being upgraded in 1991. An all-new Other Place returns in April (bookings from January), and tours will trace productions from the first rehearsals to

*Shakespeare* | 3

*Find out all you need to know about Shakespeare's years as a schoolboy at the Schoolroom & Guildhall. Credit Shakespeare Birthplace Trust*

nerve-jangling opening nights. Along the way, enjoy a first-ever chance to inspect the RSC's store of 30,000 costumes. Plus, work is continuing on a major project that will see the restoration of the Grade II listed Swan Wing. The 1879 wing forms the entrance of the current Swan Theatre and was built as part of the original Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, which will house a new exhibition. Then the newly restored Swan Theatre will host a new exhibition which reveals the people and stories behind its productions. Immersing visitors in its history, the RSC will also reveal how it makes its world-famous productions.

[www.rsc.org.uk/your-visit/tours](http://www.rsc.org.uk/your-visit/tours)

Also opening in summer, **Shakespeare's Schoolroom & Guildhall** is a revitalised visitor attraction at the King Edward VI School. Built between 1418 -1420, the Guildhall has been described by historian Michael Wood as 'one of Britain's most atmospheric buildings'. Following a £1.4million restoration, it will recreate the classroom of Shakespeare's academic years. [www.shakespeares-england.co.uk](http://www.shakespeares-england.co.uk)

Visitors can also visit the Elizabethan home **Harvard House**. The people who lived in Harvard House, which will form part of the Town House ticket, along with Shakespeare's Birthplace and Hall's Croft, were neighbours of Shakespeare. You can experience what life was like 400 years ago - why not try out its Tudor Apprentice Trail and find out whether you could have cut it as a 16th-century butcher or glover? And also worth a visit is Hall's Croft, the home of William's eldest daughter Susanna Shakespeare and her husband, Dr John Hall. [www.shakespeare.org.uk](http://www.shakespeare.org.uk)

The Royal Shakespeare Company has also commissioned a new self-guided tour to mark the anniversary of Shakespeare's death. **Shakespeare Steps** is devised by Birmingham-based theatre company Stan's Café and invites people to follow in the footsteps of the world's most famous playwright. The free self-guided tour, which involves eight locations, will run alongside Stratford's historic spine. At each stop visitors can follow footsteps and speech bubbles painted on pavements that work as instructions for acting out mini dramas.

The tour is inspired by Shakespeare's Seven Ages of Man speech from *As You Like It* and brings to life aspects of Shakespeare's plays, his life in Stratford and historical facts about the town. The tour launches on 30 January and a free map will also be available to guide visitors, give them historical background and also feature a treasure hunt challenge for children. Shakespeare Steps starts at Shakespeare's Birthplace and some of the locations include Shakespeare's New Place, Guildhall and Holy Trinity Church, before finishing at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre. [www.rsc.org.uk/shakespearesteps](http://www.rsc.org.uk/shakespearesteps)

Five miles south-east of Stratford-upon-Avon, art gallery **Compton Verney's Shakespeare in Art: Tempests, Tyrants and Tragedy** exhibition (19 March - 19 June) will explore how fellow creatives have reimagined moments from the Bard's plays. Watercolours by the likes of John Singer Sargent accompany photography, light shows and footage of RSC actors evoking famous Shakespearean scenes. [www.comptonverney.org.uk](http://www.comptonverney.org.uk)

## London

From April to September, London's **Shakespeare400** season promises an array of exhibitions, performances and participatory events courtesy of institutions like the National Theatre and Royal Opera House. At the Barbican Cinema, view classic archived performances of the Bard's plays, or try the British Library's major 'Shakespeare in Ten Acts' exhibition, collating significant stagings from Shakespeare's first *Hamlet* production

to a digital-age deconstruction. Visitors can also inspect the only surviving play script in Shakespeare's hand. [www.shakespeare400.org](http://www.shakespeare400.org), [www.bl.uk](http://www.bl.uk)

And you can't experience the anniversary without a visit to **Shakespeare's Globe**, located on London's South Bank. Over the weekend of 23 - 24 April, specially created short films of each of Shakespeare's plays, featuring some of Britain's best-known actors, will be shown on screens along the banks of the Thames. Dubbed **The Complete Walk**, the project will extend from Westminster Bridge to Tower Bridge and will be produced with support from the British Council, as part of its 2016 *Shakespeare Lives* programme, and the Mayor of London.



*Shakespeare's Globe will see the return of four final performances of its world tour of Hamlet during Shakespeare's anniversary weekend*

The anniversary weekend will also mark the return of the unprecedented world tour of *Hamlet*, which will play on the Globe stage for four final performances, after an extraordinary two years performing in every country in the world.

Shakespeare fans should head over to the City of London to celebrate the anniversary, where they will also be able to see the rarely displayed deed for a property purchased by William Shakespeare in 1613, at the **City of London Heritage Gallery** between 9 January and 31 March. It is one of only six surviving documents to carry his signature, and will be displayed alongside Guildhall Library's First Folio and documents, which bring the story of London's playhouses to life. On 9 April the gallery will be hosting a day dedicated to the playwright, with a focus on Clerkenwell's Jacobean Playhouse and the theatrical people of Clerkenwell. Visitors will be able to explore the history of the Queen's Servants and the Red Bull Theatre through talks, document viewings, performances, and an afternoon walking tour.

Follow the day with a visit to **Keats House**, which will be exploring the relationship between the two poets and will chart Shakespeare's influence on Keats' life and work from 9 April - October. The story will be outlined through objects, prints, and books, with the trail providing a rare opportunity to see Keats' own annotated copies of Shakespearean works. [www.cityoflondon.gov.uk](http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk)

Toast the Bard in London courtesy of **St. James' Court** hotel, whose expert mixologists will give a Shakespearean twist to 12 different cocktails during each month of 2016. On offer in the Hamptons Bar and a picturesque courtyard, those libations are to include March's Othello: a 'strong and serious drink of Bacardi, Maraschino liqueur and grapefruit juice.' [www.stjamescourthotel.co.uk](http://www.stjamescourthotel.co.uk)

## Oxford

Head over to the city of dreaming spires for a series of special events planned around the city for **Shakespeare Oxford 2016**, offering an array of exhibitions, drama, poetry, film showings, art, music and dance. Professional theatre companies will reinterpret Shakespeare's plays, presenting some work in unusual spaces, scholars will share their expert knowledge and actors, artists and musicians will present their responses.

Highlights of the programme include *Shakespeare's Dead* - a major Shakespeare exhibition at the **Bodleian Library**, exploring themes of death in Shakespeare's works; the

Creation Theatre Company's *King Lear* will feature in the historic Blackwell's Bookshop's Norrington Room - one of three Shakespeare plays in their 2016 season. Oxford Playhouse, The Old Fire Station, The North Wall and Pegasus Theatre will also be programming Shakespeare performances, and next year holds many treats for music lovers, including *Silver Sounds & Moody Food* concert promoted by Music at Oxford, plus a *Food of Love* Shakespeare music and film event at SJE Arts. Ultimate Picture Palace will present a Shakespeare Teen Movie and Musical Season as well as the best Shakespeare classic films. [www.shakespeareoxford2016.co.uk](http://www.shakespeareoxford2016.co.uk)

## England

A setting for Shakespeare's *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, beautiful **Windsor Castle** is hosting an anniversary display with a royal twist. Running throughout 2016 from 13 February, *Shakespeare in the Royal Library* will feature rare Shakespearean folios collected by former kings, accounts of Windsor Castle performances and Shakespeare-inspired art produced by members of the monarchy.

[www.royalcollection.org.uk](http://www.royalcollection.org.uk)

Forty minutes by train from London, the award-winning **Guildford Shakespeare Company** has lent a Shakespeare slant to its tenth birthday celebrations. On 20 April, co-founder Matt Pinches' annual lecture tackles 'Will's will': examining why Shakespeare's testament left his wife only the 'second best bed', and considering the dramatist's social standing upon his death. Tickets include slices of birthday cake. [www.guildford-shakespeare-company.co.uk](http://www.guildford-shakespeare-company.co.uk)



*Shakespeare in the Royal Library at Windsor Castle. Credit Royal Collection Trust*



*A bike tour dedicated to all things Shakespeare. Credit The Carter Company*

How about some **Bard-style biking**? Cycling-tour specialist The Carter Company has devised a gentle new ten-night tour following a route that the scribe himself undertook. After a tour of the Globe, meander along the River Thames past Hampton Court, Windsor, Oxford and Blenheim Palace to Stratford, where entry to the five Shakespeare Houses awaits. You'll pedal 11 - 22 miles a day, and sleep at inns and country hotels. [www.the-carter-company.com](http://www.the-carter-company.com)

## Scotland

Further north, four of Scotland's education and arts institutions are joining forces for **New Dreams**, a programme of music, dance, drama and visual-arts events in Glasgow. The collaboration - between artists and academics from the Glasgow School of Art, University of Glasgow, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra and Royal Conservatoire of Scotland - culminates with *Dream On!*, a multimedia performance inside magnificent Bute Hall on 23 April.

## Northern Ireland

While others look back, Northern Ireland's Terra Nova Productions is using the anniversary to move forward. Not only will its *Belfast Tempest* (20 - 23 April) be one of the largest-ever Shakespearean productions, but some 230 international actors, many from Asia, Africa and the Caribbean, are to star in a message of cross-community endeavour. Manipulating *The Tempest* into three stages of Belfast's history - its 1600s formation, late-19th century industrial heyday and modern-day identity - the show will be dramatically staged amid the Belfast docks. [www.terrano productions.net](http://www.terrano productions.net)

## Wales

Full details aren't due until January, but Mid-Wales' annual **Hay Festival** promises a Shakespeare focus next year between 26 May and 5 June. Held at Hay-on-Wye, 40 miles north of Cardiff, the legendary literary get-together is inviting actors, directors, playwrights and academics to share Bard-related insights in celebration of the anniversary year ([www.hayfestival.com](http://www.hayfestival.com)). And check out Flint Castle in north-east Wales - one of the first castles to be built in Wales by Edward I, it features in Shakespeare's *Richard III*. New interpretation panels have recently been installed to give visitors a better understanding of its place in history as well as its significance to the area. [www.cadw.gov.wales/daysout/flintcastle/?lang=en](http://www.cadw.gov.wales/daysout/flintcastle/?lang=en)

Finally, try not to spend all your money: some of it could be worth keeping. Britain's Royal Mint, based in Wales, is to release into general circulation a **special series of three £2 coins**, reflecting Shakespeare's different forms: comedies, tragedies and history plays. The trio will also be available as a set. [www.royalmint.com](http://www.royalmint.com)

## Come celebrate the Bard - key events marking the anniversary

The 400th anniversary of the death of William Shakespeare will be marked by a host of events throughout 2016, in London and Stratford-upon-Avon as well as the rest of Britain. With exhibitions, gala music concerts, film screenings, guided walking tours, symposiums, and even a sonnet rap marathon, there'll be something for everyone - from those still in their salad days and green in judgement, to red-blooded Shakespeare aficionados.

### Throughout 2016

#### **London and environs**

#### **Shakespeare400**

Co-ordinated by King's College London, Shakespeare400 is a consortium of leading cultural, creative and educational organisations that together will mark the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death in 2016 with numerous events, exhibitions and



*Plays, screenings, music; just a snapshot of the type of events celebrating Shakespeare throughout 2016*

performances across the capital and beyond. There'll be special screenings of films including Baz Luhrmann's *Romeo+Juliet* and a rare BBC TV recording from 1989 of *Othello* starring Sir Ian McKellen, as well as performances of music inspired by Shakespeare's plays by the London Philharmonic Orchestra, London Symphony Orchestra and the Royal College of Music. Visitors can also enjoy guided walks and Thames boat tours of Shakespeare's London, plus talks, readings and exhibitions. [www.shakespeare400.org](http://www.shakespeare400.org)

## February 2016

### **County Antrim, Northern Ireland**

**Courtyard Theatre and Theatre at The Mill (6 February + various screenings through to July 2016)**

Bringing Shakespeare to the Belfast area of Northern Ireland, Boxtale Soup Company presents *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the Courtyard Theatre (6 February 2016). Theatre At The Mill will meanwhile broadcast live the National Theatre's *As You Like It* (28 February), Merley Theatre Company's *Henry V* (27 April), RSC's *Othello* (8 June) and *Romeo and Juliet* (9 July). [www.thecourtyardtheatre.com](http://www.thecourtyardtheatre.com) , [www.theatreatthemill.com](http://www.theatreatthemill.com)

*Where is it? In Northern Ireland, 20 minutes' drive north of Belfast.*

### **Windsor Castle, south England**

***Shakespeare in the Royal Library* exhibition (13 February 2016 - January 2017)**

Celebrating the playwright's long-standing association with Windsor and the royal court, this exhibition draws on material in the Royal Library to show how generations of British monarchs have enjoyed Shakespeare's work. Some of Shakespeare's plays were written especially for the royal court, including the comedy *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, performed before Elizabeth I in around 1600. Copies of this and other rare folios of Shakespeare's work will be displayed, some for the very first time. Examining his life, work and influence, the exhibition also includes accounts of performances at Windsor Castle, and art by members of the royal family inspired by Shakespeare's plays. [www.royalcollection.org.uk](http://www.royalcollection.org.uk)



*The Merry Wives of Windsor was first performed for Queen Elizabeth I in...you've guessed it...Windsor Castle!*

*Where is it? Windsor is one hour by train from London.*

## March 2016

### **Compton Verney House**

***Shakespeare in Art: Tempests, Tyrants and Tragedy* exhibition (19 March - 19 June 2016)**



*Reimagine Shakespeare through the artworks on display at Compton Verney*

Shakespeare's plays have motivated artists across the ages - from Singer Sargent, Fuseli, Watts and Romney, to contemporary artists including Tom Hunter. Organised in association with the Royal Shakespeare Company to mark the anniversary, this exhibition features artworks from the RSC Collection. Displayed in this grand 18th-century country mansion, these artworks allow both art and theatre lovers to re-imagine Shakespeare through different media including painting, photography, film, sound and light. [www.comptonverney.org.uk](http://www.comptonverney.org.uk)

*Where is it? Compton Verney House is near Kineton in Warwickshire, west England, just over 90 minutes' drive north-west of London.*

## **Britain-wide**

### ***A Midsummer Night's Dream: A Play for the Nation RSC tour (March - June 2016)***

The Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) takes its production of this Shakespeare classic to the regions and nations of Britain (central England, west Midlands and east Midlands, north-east England, Scotland, north-west England, Yorkshire, south-east England, east England, south-west England, London, Wales and Northern Ireland). Reflecting each region's individuality, a different local amateur company will join the RSC's professional actors in each location - with a teacher, a pub landlord, a rugby player and an ex-army officer among those playing roles including Quince, Bottom and Snout. The touring production returns to Stratford-upon-Avon's Royal Shakespeare Theatre in mid-June, heralded by free activities including *The Fairy Portal Camp*, a feast of dance, song and fire in Stratford's Avonbank Gardens led by Slung Low theatre company (19 - 25 June). [www.rsc.org.uk](http://www.rsc.org.uk), [www.slunglow.org](http://www.slunglow.org)

## **April 2016**

### **Royal Shakespeare Company, Stratford-upon-Avon**

#### **The Other Place - reinstated studio theatre + discovery tour (opening April 2016)**

The RSC reinstates its iconic studio theatre and research and development hub in time for the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death. Originally built in 1973, but closed since 2006, when The Other Place reopens in April 2016 it will feature a 200-seat studio theatre, new rehearsal rooms, costume store and café-bar. Visitors may also take a journey from 'Page to Stage': a new discovery tour that leads from the first day of rehearsals to the first performance, including an opportunity to look inside the RSC's store of 30,000 costumes for the very first time. Tour tickets cost £8.50. [www.rsc.org.uk](http://www.rsc.org.uk)



*In April 2016 the RSC will open The Other Place, with a 200-seat studio theatre*

*Where is it? Stratford-upon-Avon is just over two hours by train from London.*

## **Stratford-Upon-Avon**

### **Shakespeare's Schoolroom and Guildhall - new visitor attraction (opening April 2016)**

The opening of this major new heritage attraction in April 2016 provides the missing chapter in the story of Shakespeare's Stratford-upon-Avon. Dating from 1418, King Edward VI School is where a young William Shakespeare was educated and inspired to become a playwright. One of only a dozen surviving examples of a late medieval provincial Guildhall, this significant historical building has undergone major restoration and conservation work. With soundscapes, films, interactive displays, a Tudor lesson and a heritage classroom, this engaging visitor attraction is set to educate and inspire a new generation.

[www.shakespeareesschoolroom.org](http://www.shakespeareesschoolroom.org)

*Where is it? Stratford-upon-Avon is just over two hours by train from London.*

## **University of Portsmouth**

### **Shakespearean Communities conference (14 - 16 April 2016)**

To mark the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death, the university's Centre for Studies in Literature is holding a conference to celebrate Shakespeare's life, work and influence.

[www.port.ac.uk/centre-for-studies-in-literature/literature-events/conference-2016-shakespearean-communities](http://www.port.ac.uk/centre-for-studies-in-literature/literature-events/conference-2016-shakespearean-communities)

*Where is it? Portsmouth is 90 minutes by train south-west of London.*

## **The British Library, London**

### ***Shakespeare in Ten Acts* exhibition (15 April - 6 September 2016)**

The British Library marks the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death with a major exhibition exploring ten performances that have made Shakespeare the cultural icon he is today. On display will be the only surviving play script in Shakespeare's hand, two of only six authentic signatures, rare printed editions including the First Folio, plus paintings, photographs, costumes and props. [www.bl.uk/shakespeare](http://www.bl.uk/shakespeare)

*Where is it? Central London, nearest underground station is Kings Cross.*

## **University of Glasgow**

### **Disability and Shakespearean Theatre symposium (20 April 2016)**

A symposium organised by the British Shakespeare Association to discuss the depiction, treatment and uses of disability in Shakespeare's work, including one of his most infamous characters: Richard III. Playwright and disability studies scholar Professor Chris Mounsey of the University of Winchester will give the keynote address, while Glasgow-based playwright Molly Ziegler will premier her new play *Let Her Come In*, a one act rewriting of *Hamlet* focusing on mental illness, gender and disability.

[www.britishshakespeare.ws/disability-and-shakespearean-theatre-symposium](http://www.britishshakespeare.ws/disability-and-shakespearean-theatre-symposium)

*Where is it? Glasgow is one hour by train from Edinburgh.*



*Chamber music gets the Shakespeare treatment at Stratford-upon-Avon's Holy Trinity Church*

### **Holy Trinity Church, Stratford-upon-Avon**

#### **Shakespeare 400th anniversary concert by Orchestra of the Swan (21 April 2016)**

With its home in Shakespeare's Stratford-upon-Avon, the 2016 season of this regarded chamber orchestra includes a special commemorative concert in Holy Trinity Church, where Shakespeare was baptised and is buried. The programme features a new work honouring Shakespeare by resident composer Dobrinka Tabakova, plus *The Lark Ascending* by Vaughan

Williams, voted Britain's favourite piece of classical music. [www.orchestraoftheswan.org](http://www.orchestraoftheswan.org)

*Where is it? Stratford-upon-Avon is just over two hours by train from London.*

### **Holy Trinity Church, Stratford-upon-Avon**

#### **Ex Cathedra Shakespeare Odes Concert world premiere (22 April 2016, also at London's Milton Court Concert Hall, 12 May 2016)**

British choral ensemble Ex Cathedra is collaborating with the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, the Shakespeare Institute and the RSC on a unique musical tribute to mark the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death. The concert features a new reconstruction of Thomas Arne's musical setting of *An Ode to Shakespeare* by David Garrick, composed for a Shakespeare Jubilee in 1769. There'll also be a new ode, *A Shakespeare Masquerade*, written by the Poet Laureate, Dame Carol Ann Duffy, composed by Sally Beamish and supplemented by a children's choir. [www.excathedra.co.uk](http://www.excathedra.co.uk)

*Where is it? Stratford-upon-Avon is just over two hours by train from London.*

### **Royal Festival Hall, London**

#### **Shakespeare400: Anniversary gala concert (23 April 2016)**

A special gala evening to celebrate the greatest playwright that ever lived, the London Philharmonic Orchestra will play music by some of the world's greatest composers. The repertoire will include scenes from Verdi's *Otello*, Tchaikovsky's *Hamlet*, Benjamin Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet*, Thomas Adès' *The Tempest* and Verdi's *Falstaff*, interspersed with readings of Shakespeare by actor Simon Callow. [www.lpo.org.uk/whats-on-and-tickets/4372-shakespeare400-anniversary-gala-concert.html](http://www.lpo.org.uk/whats-on-and-tickets/4372-shakespeare400-anniversary-gala-concert.html)

*Where is it? Central London, nearest underground station is Waterloo.*

### **Playbox Theatre, Warwick, west England**

#### **Games + Thrones performance (23 April - 7 May 2016)**

Shakespeare has been central to the work of Playbox Theatre since its inception in 1986. As well as celebrating its own 30th anniversary in 2016, this theatre and performing arts company for and with young people will also celebrate the 400th anniversary of

Shakespeare's death with a series of special events, live music from Tudor England, films and interactive projects.

A highlight will be *Games + Thrones*, an epic and immersive retelling of Shakespeare's *Henry VI*. As befitting this special anniversary, it's the biggest Shakespeare production they've ever undertaken. [www.playboxtheatre.com](http://www.playboxtheatre.com)

*Where is it?* Warwick is a 90-minute train journey north-west of London.

## Stratford-upon-Avon

### Shakespeare Marathon and Half Marathon (24 April 2016)

Organised for more than 30 years by the Rotary Club of Stratford-upon-Avon, this epic fundraising run raises money for local charities including The Shakespeare Hospice. Commencing on historic Church Street, the two-lap race incorporates the town and the surrounding countryside. The 3,700 competitors are a mix of running club members and fun-runners. [www.shakespearemarathon.org.uk](http://www.shakespearemarathon.org.uk)

*Where is it?* Stratford-upon-Avon is just over two hours by train from London.

### Shakespeare's Birthplace, Stratford-upon-Avon

#### 'Sonnet Marathon' with rap artist Devon Glover a.k.a. The Sonnet Man (24 April 2016)

New York-based rap artist Devon Glover a.k.a. The Sonnet Man sets Shakespeare's sonnets to hip hop music. To coincide with Stratford-upon-Avon's annual Shakespeare marathon and half marathon, he'll attempt to rap all 154 of Shakespeare's sonnets in the very place where the Bard was born. [www.shakespeare.org.uk](http://www.shakespeare.org.uk)

*Where is it?* Stratford-upon-Avon is just over two hours by train from London.



*Rap versions of Shakespeare's sonnets? Check them out this April at Shakespeare's Birthplace*

## Stratford-upon-Avon

### Stratford-upon-Avon Literary Festival (24 April - 1 May)

Set in the home of the world's greatest writer, it's one of Britain's most respected literary festivals, attracting thousands of people who share a passion for books. In 2016 it will include a programme of debates, celebrity author events and workshops. There's plenty for children too, with favourite children's authors, poets and illustrators also attending. [www.stratfordliteraryfestival.co.uk](http://www.stratfordliteraryfestival.co.uk)

*Where is it?* Stratford-upon-Avon is just over two hours by train from London.

## Stratford-upon-Avon

### Shakespeare's New Place (opening Spring 2016)

Shakespeare's home for the final 19 years of his life, he wrote 26 of his best-loved plays as owner of New Place - but it was demolished in 1759 by its then owner, Reverend Francis Gastrell, in annoyance of all the visiting Shakespeare enthusiasts! To commemorate the

anniversary of Shakespeare's death in 2016, Shakespeare Birthplace Trust is creating a new heritage landmark on the site of Shakespeare's former home. The re-imagined New Place will echo the footprint of the original Shakespeare family home, while commissioned artworks and displays throughout the site will evoke a sense of Shakespeare's family life as well as the major works that were written here. [www.shakespeare.org.uk](http://www.shakespeare.org.uk)

*Where is it? Stratford-upon-Avon is just over two hours by train from London.*

## May 2016

### **London to Stratford-upon-Avon**

#### **Discover Shakespeare's Way - exclusive tour (6 - 11 May 2016)**

Exclusive tour led by professional Shakespearian actor James Howard, tracing the 146-mile journey from London's Globe Theatre to Stratford-upon-Avon - a journey that Shakespeare himself would have made on numerous occasions. The 2016 tour celebrates the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death. Besides luxury transport and accommodation, included is a bespoke package of theatre visits and private behind-the-scenes tours. [www.shakespearesway.com](http://www.shakespearesway.com)

## June 2016

### **The Savill Garden, Windsor Great Park**

***As You Like It* performed by Watch Your Head productions (22 June - 24 July 2016, Wednesday to Sunday inclusive)**

Arguably Britain's finest ornamental garden, The Savill Garden in Windsor Great Park will host an immersive production of Shakespeare's pastoral comedy *As You Like It*. Follow the actors through woody glades, shaded lawns and colourful floral borders, concluding with the audience and company combining for a boisterous wedding finale, accompanied by fine local food and drink. [www.watch-your-head.co.uk](http://www.watch-your-head.co.uk), [www.windsorgreatpark.co.uk](http://www.windsorgreatpark.co.uk)

*Where is it? Windsor is one hour's train journey from London.*



*Fabulous costumes from the RSC's archive will feature at a new exhibition. Credit VisitBritain/Britain on View*

### **Royal Shakespeare Company, Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon**

#### ***The Play's The Thing* - exhibition (June 2016 - dates tbc)**

Having opened in April 2016 following a major heritage restoration, the Swan Wing (the front-of-house areas of The Swan Theatre) hosts the RSC's major new exhibition celebrating the magic of Shakespeare on stage. With treasures from the RSC's archive and museum collection, including rarely seen props, exquisite costumes and original set designs, the exhibition reveals the secrets and stories behind 100 years of theatre-making in Stratford-upon-Avon. [www.rsc.org.uk](http://www.rsc.org.uk)

*Where is it? Stratford-upon-Avon is just over two hours by train from London.*

## July 2016

### **Stratford-upon-Avon**

#### **63rd Stratford-upon-Avon Poetry Festival (July 2016 - dates tbc)**

Britain's longest-running poetry festival features a programme of readings, performances and workshops. The 63rd event mixes the talents of inspirational and award-winning poets with actors and musicians. [www.shakespeare.org.uk](http://www.shakespeare.org.uk)

*Where is it? Stratford-upon-Avon is just over two hours by train from London.*

### **Norwich**

#### **Shakespeare Festival, Norwich Cathedral (15 - 16 July)**

Enjoy open air Shakespeare in the beauty of Norwich Cathedral's Cloister, commemorating the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death. As well as a number of talks, they will also be staging the Shakespeare Festival. Performances of *Much Ado about Nothing* by The Lord Chamberlain's Men will take place on 15 and 16 July. [www.cathedral.org.uk](http://www.cathedral.org.uk)

### **Bristol**

#### **Bristol Shakespeare Festival**

Set to take extra prominence in 2016 to celebrate the 400th anniversary, Bristol's annual Shakespeare Festival will host performances outdoors and at most unusual spaces across Bristol - brought together entirely by volunteers. [www.bristolshakespearefestival.org.uk](http://www.bristolshakespearefestival.org.uk)

## August 2016

### **Stratford-upon-Avon and London**

#### **10th World Shakespeare Congress (31 July - 6 August 2016)**

Celebrating Shakespeare's memory and the global legacy of his works, this quarter-century congress brings together more than 1,000 academics, researchers and artistic practitioners. Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, headquarters of the International Shakespeare Association, co-host the congress in both London and Stratford-upon-Avon, making it the greatest gathering of Shakespearians anywhere in the world. [www.wsc2016.info](http://www.wsc2016.info)

### **Edinburgh**

#### **Edinburgh International Festival (5 - 29 August 2016)**

This world-famous festival always includes lots of interesting Shakespeare-related activity. To mark the 400th anniversary of his death, it's been announced that a Shakespeare theatre season will be integral to the month-long event in 2016 - with



*A bounty of the Bard - Edinburgh's International Festival will feature plenty of Shakespeare this coming summer*

further details to be announced in April 2016. [www.eif.co.uk](http://www.eif.co.uk)

*Where is it? Edinburgh is four hours from London by train, or an hour's flight.*

### Cliveden Gardens

*A Midsummer Night's Dream* performed by Illyria (27 August) and *Much Ado About Nothing* performed by The Lord Chamberlain's Men (3 September)

The outdoor theatre season held at Cliveden's oriental-inspired Water Garden includes performances of two of Shakespeare's best-loved plays in 2016. Audiences are invited to bring a picnic before the show. [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/cliveden](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/cliveden)

*Where is it? Near Taplow in Berkshire, less than an hour west of London by train.*

### September 2016

#### University of Hull

**Shakespearean Transformations: Death, Life and Afterlives BSA conference (8 - 11 September 2016)**

A professional association of teachers, researchers, theatre practitioners, writers and enthusiasts, the British Shakespeare Association's seventh annual conference takes place in Hull in 2016, during the official run-up to Hull being the UK's City of Culture 2017. Organisers have taken the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death as an opportunity to reflect upon the continuation of Shakespeare on stage, page, canvas, music score and screen. As well as lectures, seminars and workshops, there'll be performances at Hull Truck theatre and the Gulbenkian Centre. [www.hull.ac.uk/bsa2016](http://www.hull.ac.uk/bsa2016), [www.britishshakespeare.ws](http://www.britishshakespeare.ws)

*Where is it? Hull is two-and-a-half hours' train journey north of London.*

## All of Britain's a stage - book your tickets to these Shakespeare performances in 2016

Shakespeare is regarded as the world's most famous playwright. Britain is considered to have some of the best theatres in the world. So in the 400th anniversary year of Shakespeare's death, it makes sense that Britain's leading theatres will have an unbeatable array of Shakespeare productions. Let's raise the curtain and applaud the performances.



*Immerse yourself in a Shakespeare performance in its spiritual home; the Royal Shakespeare Theatre and Swan Theatre in Stratford-upon-Avon*

### Royal Shakespeare Company, Stratford-upon-Avon

Stratford-upon-Avon *is* Shakespeare. And, as with every year, the town's **Royal Shakespeare Theatre** and **Swan Theatre** will boast an impressive programme of theatre in 2016. Home to the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC), not only will they stage some of the Bards best-loved plays in this

special anniversary year, the company will also premier a new theatre in the town.

Originally built in 1973, but closed since 2006, **The Other Place** reopens in April 2016. It will feature a 200-seat studio theatre, new rehearsal rooms, costume store and café-bar.

Performances at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre during 2016 include *A Midsummer Night's Dream: A Play for the Nation* (17 February - 5 March 2016), *Hamlet* (12 March - 13 August), and *Cymbeline* (29 April - 12 August). They've also announced that Shakespearean actor Antony Sher will perform the lead role in a new production of *King Lear* in 2016, with further productions to be announced.

Free to visit exhibitions here include **Well Said! Favourite Shakespeare Quotes** (from 19 March 2016), which sees some of Shakespeare's most memorable quips and quotes, selected by famous writers, actors and poets, transformed into beautiful artworks.

They'll also celebrate Shakespeare's birthday (Saturday 23 April) with a day of free Shakespeare-inspired events, including an outdoor show by Mimbre acrobatic company, culminating with a free firework display. [www.rsc.org.uk](http://www.rsc.org.uk)

*Where is it? Stratford-upon-Avon is just over two hours by train from London.*

### Shakespeare's Globe, London



*Experience a Shakespeare play in true Elizabethan style at London's open-air Globe theatre*

The original Globe Theatre was built in 1599 on the south bank of the River Thames in London - but was destroyed by fire in 1613. A modern reconstruction open since 1997, **Shakespeare's Globe** is an oak-and-thatch replica of the original Elizabethan theatre, showing Shakespeare plays in the open air. The site also includes the **Sam Wanamaker Playhouse**, open since 2014. This smaller, candle-lit space is based on the indoor playhouses of Jacobean London.

The winter season in the Sam Wanamaker Playhouse runs until April 2016, and comprises Shakespeare's four late, great romances: *Pericles*, *Cymbeline*, *The Winter's Tale* and *The Tempest*.

In April 2016 new Artistic Director Emma Rice takes the helm for a brand new season of Shakespeare plays, details of which will be announced early 2016.

To celebrate the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death, the Globe will be showing specially created ten-minute films (one for each of Shakespeare's 37 plays) on screens along a 2.5 mile route on the banks of the River Thames. Shakespeare's birthday weekend in April will also see the return of the Globe's unprecedented two-year **Hamlet** world tour. [www.shakespearesglobe.com](http://www.shakespearesglobe.com)

*Where is it? Central London, nearest underground station is London Bridge.*

### Barbican, London

London's world-renowned **Barbican** is part of the *Shakespeare400* programme - a consortium of Britain's leading cultural, creative and educational organisations that will

together mark the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death in 2016. Open since 1982, this contemporary arts centre includes a concert hall, theatre, studio theatre, cinema, art gallery and library, and is home to the London Symphony Orchestra - hence the Barbican is able to celebrate this special anniversary across the arts.

The Barbican will present *Play On...* a unique international programme featuring performance, music and cinema by or inspired by William Shakespeare. Theatre highlights include the Royal Shakespeare Company performing *Henry IV Parts I & II* (12 December 2015 - 29 January 2016), and *Richard II* starring actor David Tennant (7 - 10 January 2016). A major theatrical event to mark this 400th anniversary, *King and Country: Shakespeare's Great Cycle of Kings* (12 - 24 January 2016) sees these productions performed in repertoire as a complete four-play season cycle.

Forced Entertainment present Shakespeare's complete works as never before - *Complete Works: Table Top Shakespeare* (1 - 6 March 2016) sees each of Shakespeare's 37 plays condensed and performed on a table top using a cast of everyday objects. This intimate and scaled down way to see Shakespeare is vivid, accessible and often comic.

In the radical *Kings of War* (22 April - 1 May 2016) Shakespeare's *Henry V*, *Henry VI* and *Richard III* become modern-day political leaders. This explosive production from theatre company Toneelgroep Amsterdam, directed by award-winning Ivo van Hove, integrates live music and video feeds with dramatic effect.

In Malthouse Theatre's *The Shadow King* (22 June - 2 July 2016), Shakespeare's *King Lear* is re-imagined as a blood-soaked tale of two families in northern Australia, divided by land, identity and legitimacy.

Shakespeare-related cinema events at the Barbican include two silent films: *Hamlet* (1920) and *The Merchant of Venice* (1923) - both screening with live musical accompaniment. The London Symphony Orchestra present a number of concerts marking Shakespeare's quarter-centenary in the Barbican Hall, performing compositions including Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet Overture* and Mendelssohn's incidental music for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The BBC Symphony Orchestra and Chorus will present Berlioz's masterful retelling of the tragic *Romeo and Juliet*. [www.barbican.org.uk](http://www.barbican.org.uk)

*Where is it? Central London, nearest underground station is Barbican.*

### National Theatre, London

One of Britain's most important and prominent performing arts venues, the National Theatre was built alongside the River Thames in central London in 1976. Shakespeare's comedy of love and change, *As You Like It* (until 5 March 2016) is performed here for the first time in more than 30 years. As part of National Theatre Live, the production will be broadcast live to cinemas across Britain on 25 February 2016. There is also a programme of talks and events that look behind the story and characters.

[www.nationaltheatre.org.uk/shows/as-you-like-it](http://www.nationaltheatre.org.uk/shows/as-you-like-it)



*If you like 'As You Like It', watch it at one of the most important British theatres; London's National Theatre. Credit Society of London Theatre*

*Where is it?* Central London, nearest underground station is Waterloo.

### **Rose Theatre, London**

The Rose Playhouse, billed as Bankside's first Tudor theatre (two thirds of the original foundations have been excavated and protected), will host performances of *Hamlet* and *Much Ado About Nothing* in 2016. [www.rosetheatre.org.uk](http://www.rosetheatre.org.uk)

*Where is it?* Central London, nearest underground station is Cannon Street.

### **Royal Opera House, London**

The Spring 2016 season at the Royal Opera House in Covent Garden includes *The Winter's Tale* (12 April - 10 June 2016), a three-act ballet adaptation of Shakespeare's tale of love, loss and reconciliation created by Christopher Wheeldon, Artistic Associate of The Royal Ballet. Performed as part of the Shakespeare400 celebrations.

[www.roh.org.uk/productions/the-winters-tale-by-christopher-wheeldon](http://www.roh.org.uk/productions/the-winters-tale-by-christopher-wheeldon)

*Where is it?* Central London, nearest underground station is Covent Garden.

### **Lyric Theatre, London**

After an acclaimed 2012 run, Filter theatre company's riotous reinterpretation of one of Shakespeare's best loved plays, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (19 February - 19 March 2016), returns to the Lyric Theatre. Featuring music from members of The London Snorkelling Team, this classic tale of young lovers and warring fairies is given a unique and irreverent twist, making it an exciting and accessible Shakespeare production.

[www.lyric.co.uk/whats-on/production/a-midsummer-nights-dream](http://www.lyric.co.uk/whats-on/production/a-midsummer-nights-dream)

*Where is it?* Central London, nearest underground station is Hammersmith.

### **Shakespeare in Shoreditch Festival, London**

The Shakespeare in Shoreditch Festival will return (20 - 30 April) with a programme of plays and performances in celebration of the Bard's historical connection to Shoreditch, east London. The playwright started his creative career in Shoreditch, debuting his first set of plays at the Curtain Theatre, which was Britain's first commercial theatre. In 2015 Shakespeare in Shoreditch commissioned four of Shakespeare's plays to be radically reinterpreted with the theme of storms as inspiration; they will be performed at the festival hub, The Rose Lipman Building, which will include a wrought iron shelter with hurricane lamps and candles for an atmospheric experience. The plays will be accompanied by film screenings and workshops. In a world-record attempt, there will also be a company touring Hackney performing 1,000 plays in ten days. [www.shakespeareinshoreditch.in](http://www.shakespeareinshoreditch.in)

### **The Royal Court Theatre, London**

The result of a major collaboration between the Royal Court and the Schaubühne Berlin, acclaimed theatre director Katie Mitchell explores Ophelia, freed from Hamlet in Alice Birch's *Ophelias Zimmer* (17 - 21 May 2016). In German with English subtitles.

[www.royalcourttheatre.com/whats-on/opheliaszimmer](http://www.royalcourttheatre.com/whats-on/opheliaszimmer)

*Where is it? Central London, nearest underground station is Sloane Square.*



*The Regent's Park Open Air theatre will be showing Henry V this summer. Credit VisitBritain/Eric Nathan*

### **Regent's Park, London**

On the 400th anniversary of his death, Shakespeare returns to Regent's Park, as the Open Air Theatre celebrates his lasting legacy with *Henry V*. [www.openairtheatre.com](http://www.openairtheatre.com)

*Where is it? Central London, nearest underground station is Regent's Park.*

### **The Savill Garden, Windsor, south England**

'Watch your Head' productions will be performing Shakespeare's *As You Like It* around a series of locations in the heart of Windsor Great Park (22 June - 24 July). Visitors can accompany the immersive journey through the ornamental garden, which concludes with a triple wedding at which audience and company come together in a musical and acrobatic celebration. There will be food and drink to enjoy from local suppliers.

[www.theroyallandscape.co.uk/gardens-and-landscape/the-savill-garden](http://www.theroyallandscape.co.uk/gardens-and-landscape/the-savill-garden)

### **Berkeley Castle, Gloucestershire, west England**

Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was written for a Berkeley family wedding that took place in 1596. No less than 520 years later, the play will return to its original home and be performed in the beautiful grounds of Berkeley Castle in Gloucestershire's Berkeley Vale between 17 - 21 July. [www.berkeley-castle.com](http://www.berkeley-castle.com)

### **Birmingham Hippodrome, Birmingham, central England**

An elegant and witty distillation of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Dream* (17 - 20 February 2016) is a one-act ballet created in 1964 by influential choreographer Sir Frederick Ashton, to mark Shakespeare's birthday. Performed by Birmingham Royal Ballet, this story of love and how things get out of hand for mortals and fairies kicks off the ballet company's year-long commemoration of 400 years since Shakespeare's death.

[www.birminghamhippodrome.com/calendar/birmingham-royal-ballet-ashton-double-bill](http://www.birminghamhippodrome.com/calendar/birmingham-royal-ballet-ashton-double-bill)

*Where is it? Birmingham is a 90-minute train journey from London.*

### **Tobacco Factory Theatre, Bristol, south-west England**

Between 11 February - 30 April, this unique theatre aims to produce and present excellent art in unique and intimate spaces, with diverse and exciting shows. In line with the Shakespeare 400 celebrations, the Tobacco Factory Theatre will be offering an all Shakespeare season, starting with *Hamlet*.

[www.tobaccofactorytheatres.com/shows/hamlet](http://www.tobaccofactorytheatres.com/shows/hamlet)



*A sophisticated ballet version of A Midsummer Night's Dream will be performed at the Birmingham Hippodrome*

*Where is it? Bristol is 90 minutes by train from London.*

### **Blackwell's Bookshop Norrington Room, Oxford, south England**

The Creation Theatre company will kick start the year with their performance of 'King Lear' in Blackwell's Norrington room (12 February - 19 March), the first of three plays in its 2016 season. The bookshop's Norrington Room will be transformed into a spectacular theatre with actors performing among a basement of towering book stacks. Oxford Playhouse, The Old Fire Station, The North Wall and Pegasus Theatre will all be programming ground-breaking Shakespeare performances. [www.creationtheatre.co.uk](http://www.creationtheatre.co.uk)

*Where is it? Oxford is around an hour by train from London.*

### **Shakespeare under the Sky, Oxford, south England**

As part of the Globe Theatre on tour performances, the 'Shakespeare under the Sky' summer performance season will include an Oxford Shakespeare Festival of plays at Oxford Castle, the Oxford Shakespeare Company in Wadham Gardens and English Repertory Theatre in University Parks. There will also be performances by Creation Theatre Company. [www.shakespeareoxford2016.co.uk](http://www.shakespeareoxford2016.co.uk)

### **Secret Gardens, Nottingham, central England**

Two **secret gardens** in Nottingham, in central England, will witness successive Shakespeare stagings on 21 April. After chuckling at *Twelfth Night* amid a leafy corner of Bromley House Library, troop across to Newdigate House's shrubbery for the brooding drama of *Julius Caesar*. One ticket buys entry to both performances. [www.lacemarkettheatre.co.uk](http://www.lacemarkettheatre.co.uk)

*Where is it? Nottingham is just over an hour by train from Birmingham.*

### **Brighton, south-east England, then Britain-wide**

*The Complete Deaths* performed by Spymonkey will be a solemn, sombre and funny tribute to the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death, premiering at Brighton Festival on 11 May 2016. There are 74 onstage deaths in the works of William Shakespeare - 75 if you count the black ill-favoured fly killed in *Titus Andronicus*. They range from the Roman suicides in *Julius Caesar* to the death fall of Prince Arthur in *King John*; from the carnage at the end of Hamlet to snakes in a basket in *Antony & Cleopatra*. There are countless stabbings, plenty of severed heads, some poisonings, two mobbings and a smothering. Enobarbus just sits in a ditch and dies from grief, and then there's the pie that Titus serves the Queen of the Goths.

*The Complete Deaths* will then go on a major UK tour from May to October 2016. Full details will be announced soon. [www.spymonkey.co.uk](http://www.spymonkey.co.uk)

*Where is it? Brighton is less than an hour by train south of London.*

### **Glyndebourne, south-east England**

The summer 2016 opera season at world-renowned Glyndebourne includes two Shakespearean productions as part of Shakespeare400. Berlioz's *Béatrice et Bénédicte* (23 July - 27 August), adapted from Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*, will have its fully staged Glyndebourne debut. There'll also be the first revival in ten years of Peter Hall's popular 1981 production of Benjamin Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (11 - 18



*One of Britain's most popular opera festivals at Glyndebourne will include Shakespeare productions in its programme*

August). As well as enjoying world-class opera, smartly dressed visitors come to enjoy a luxurious pre-opera picnic in the grounds.

[www.glyndebourne.com](http://www.glyndebourne.com)

*Where is it? Near Lewes in East Sussex, just under two hours' drive south of London.*

### King's Theatre, Edinburgh, Scotland

One of Scotland's historic and most important theatres, King's Theatre first opened in 1906. Its 2016 programme includes Merely Theatre, one of Britain's most talked about new Shakespeare companies, performing the Bard back to basics-

style - no gauche sets, frilly collars or fussy props: just the actors, the audience and the text. With their new production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Henry V* (5 - 7 May 2016) they're also stripping back the concept of gender. The company of ten actors rehearse each play in five male-female pairs. And each night they'll play their multi-assigned roles regardless of gender. [www.edtheatres.com](http://www.edtheatres.com)

*Where is it? Edinburgh is four hours by train from London or one hour's flight.*

### Wales Millennium Centre, Cardiff

A landmark arts venue located in the Cardiff Bay area of the Welsh capital, this iconic building hosts opera, ballet, dance, comedy and musicals. Following a successful staging in 2015 of Shakespeare's *Richard III*, the first production to be presented in the buildings unusual roof void, Omidaze Productions return to this vast space in 2016 with *Henry VI* (1 - 20 February 2016). This new all-female production, performed in an unconventional theatre space, challenges preconceived ideas about how and where Shakespeare should be staged.

[www.wmc.org.uk/Productions/2016-2017/Other/HenryVI16](http://www.wmc.org.uk/Productions/2016-2017/Other/HenryVI16)

*Where is it? Cardiff is two hours by train from London.*

## Shakespeare on screen

Shakespeare holds a Guinness World Record for being the most filmed author in the world - his plays and sonnets have been adapted into 420 feature films and TV-movies. Meanwhile, the Internet Movie Database credits him as a writer on a whopping 1,109 productions, made in the past and currently in production! Find out which adaptations and films about Shakespeare were shot in Britain, and where to go to relive the onscreen action.

The most recent Shakespeare story to hit screens worldwide was *Macbeth*, in which



*Lights, camera, action! Quiraing on the Isle of Skye played an important role in the recent film of Macbeth starring Michael Fassbender and Marion Cotillard*

Michael Fassbender takes the title role and Marion Cotillard plays Lady Macbeth. The filmmakers used some of Britain's most other-worldly settings to evoke the supernatural elements of the film, with the sweeping panoramas almost upstaging the protagonists at times, during lingering landscape shots. Many of the rolling mountain panoramas were shot on the **Isle of Skye**, in the Scottish Highlands, known throughout the ages as a mysterious place where folklore and mythology meet. It's not hard to believe that witches could just step out of the landscape here - particularly on **Trotternish Ridge**, where many of the film's outdoor scenes were filmed. Strap on your walking boots and head for the **Quiraing** (pronounced 'Kerrang'),

where Macbeth met Duncan, and the latter confirmed his title as Thane of Cawdor. It was in the lakes on this ridge that Michael Fassbender treated fans to a 'Mr Darcy moment' as Macbeth bathes himself clean of battle-wounds in the lake. The Quiraing is on the northern part of Skye, meanwhile **Glen Brittle Forest**, to the south, featured as the woodland where Banquo went riding with his son, and met his sad and sticky end.



*North-east England's Bamburgh Castle was an evocative backdrop to the brooding Macbeth*

Next head to **Glen Sligachan**, backdrop to the battle between Macbeth and MacDonwald in the film's opening scenes ([www.visitscotland.com](http://www.visitscotland.com)). The rugged Dunsinane Castle, which boasts sweeping sea views and a perch high among the sand dunes, was actually **Bamburgh Castle**, in the north-east England region of Northumberland ([www.bamburghcastle.com](http://www.bamburghcastle.com)). It's even more magnificent to look at in real life as it was on screen, and you can head inside for a tour to learn about its centuries-old history. The interior castle scenes were

filmed at **Ely Cathedral** - visit its Lady Chapel and picture the newly crowned King Macbeth on his throne, poised to lose all that he has fought for ([www.elycathedral.org](http://www.elycathedral.org)).

With an all-star cast - Ian McKellen, Annette Bening, Jim Broadbent, Robert Downey Jr and Maggie Smith, to name just a few - the 1995 film adaptation of **Richard III** needed all-star filming locations too. The movie transposed the action to a fictionalised fascist version of England in the 1930s and transformed several iconic locations into military bases and party places. **St Pancras Railway Station** featured as King Edward's seat of government, the scene for a splendid ball - today, the renovated station is in fact a destination in its own right and one for celebrations at that - it is home to Europe's longest champagne bar, the **St Pancras Grand**, as well as decadent drinking den **The Gilbert Scott** ([www.stpancras.com](http://www.stpancras.com), [www.searcys.co.uk/venues/st-pancras-grand](http://www.searcys.co.uk/venues/st-pancras-grand), [www.thegilbertscott.co.uk](http://www.thegilbertscott.co.uk)).



*London's Battersea Power Station doubled up as a military base in the film of Richard III*

**Battersea Power Station's** familiar towers also feature in the film, which reimagines it as a military base on the coast of Kent. The Power Station is currently undergoing something of a facelift and, when it opens, will have a hotel featuring an infinity pool right next to those giant towers. The play sees Richard's brother Clarence

imprisoned in the Tower of London, however the film version recasts **Bankside Power Station** - now home to **Tate Modern** - as his jail ([www.tate.org.uk/visit/tate-modern](http://www.tate.org.uk/visit/tate-modern)).

**Brighton Pavilion** in south-east England, whose majestic turrets are pure fairy tale, stars as King Edward's country retreat. Visit the central Brighton attraction, which was originally built as a seaside pleasure palace for King George IV ([www.brightonmuseums.org.uk/royalpavilion](http://www.brightonmuseums.org.uk/royalpavilion)).

Forty years prior to McKellan, Laurence Olivier took the lead role in *Richard III*, as well as directing and producing the film. Unlike the 1995 version, this one did use the **Tower of London** for key scenes, though Olivier acknowledged in *The New York Times* that geographical accuracy may not have been the film's strongest point, saying: "Americans who know London may be surprised to find Westminster Abbey and the Tower of London to be practically adjacent. I hope they'll agree with me that if they weren't like that, they should have been." You can visit both the Tower and **Westminster Abbey** on a visit to the capital, walking in the footsteps of the real life kings and queens whose lives revolved around both places of power ([www.hrp.org.uk/tower-of-london](http://www.hrp.org.uk/tower-of-london), [www.westminster-abbey.org/visit-us](http://www.westminster-abbey.org/visit-us)).

Northern Irish actor Kenneth Branagh - who may well have tried his hand at playing all of Shakespeare's heroes in his career - played the titular role in *Hamlet* in 1996, which was regarded as one of the best film adaptations of a Shakespeare play. Also no stranger to the silver screen, **Blenheim Palace** in Oxfordshire had a starring role in the film as Elsinore Castle. Some of the Palace's recent on screen roles include *SPECTRE*, *Cinderella* and *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*, and you can take a 'Lights, camera, action!' tour to find out all the backstage gossip ([www.blenheimpalace.com](http://www.blenheimpalace.com)). Branagh also directed a 2006 version of *As You Like It*, in which he transported the action from medieval France to late 19th-century Japan, however it was actually filmed in Britain - notably at **Wakehurst Place** in Sussex, south-east England. The botanical garden is a magical place to visit, boasting ornamental gardens, woodlands, a nature reserve, and an Elizabethan mansion ([www.kew.org/visit-wakehurst](http://www.kew.org/visit-wakehurst)).



*Holkham Beach featured in the unforgettable closing scenes of Shakespeare in Love*

And finally, *Shakespeare in Love* was the film that put the Bard himself centre stage - and earned seven Academy Awards in the process. Various British locations were used in filming, including magnificent **Hatfield House** in Hertfordshire, **Broughton Castle** in Oxfordshire and the chapel at **Eton College**, Berkshire - where Princes William and Harry went to school ([www.hatfield-house.co.uk](http://www.hatfield-house.co.uk), [www.broughtoncastle.com](http://www.broughtoncastle.com)), all in south England. But who can forget the film's closing scenes, in which 'Will' writes a new play about "a new life beginning, on a stranger shore."

That 'stranger shore' was Holkham Beach in

Norfolk, in east England, and it's every bit as stunning in real life as it looks on screen ([www.holkham.co.uk](http://www.holkham.co.uk)).

*On 23 and 24 April, see each of Shakespeare's 37 plays on 37 screens, which will line London's South Bank, commemorating the 400th anniversary of the playwright's death. Each play will be condensed to ten minutes, and the films will show archive footage of*

productions as well as shooting new material in the places the plays were set.  
[www.shakespearesglobe.com/theatre/whats-on/special-events/the-complete-walk](http://www.shakespearesglobe.com/theatre/whats-on/special-events/the-complete-walk)

## Step inside a Shakespeare play

Pack your bumper volume of Shakespeare plays and head this way: the Bard set many of his tragedies, comedies and history plays in Britain. Here's where to walk in the footsteps of Shakespeare's characters.

### Scotland, various locations

*"Great Glamis! Worthy Cawdor!" (Lady Macbeth, Macbeth, Act 1, Scene 5).*

Not for nothing is *Macbeth* nicknamed 'The Scottish Play'; all the action unfolds in Scotland's castles and vast landscapes, transformed into bloody battlefields in the play but now strikingly scenic places to visit. When Lady Macbeth says "Great Glamis! Worthy Cawdor!" she could be giving visitors advice about some of Scotland's best attractions. Approximately 70 miles (120km) from Edinburgh is **Glamis Castle**, the



*Glamis Castle is not only mentioned in *The Scottish Play*, it was the childhood home of the Queen Mother*

childhood home of the Queen Mother and where Princess Margaret was born, as well as boasting its *Macbeth* connection. Take tea in the Victorian kitchen and admire the castle's stunning architecture. **Cawdor Castle**, just outside Inverness in north Scotland, stages Shakespeare productions in its gardens, with *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Much Ado About Nothing* on the programme for summer 2016. [www.glamis-castle.co.uk](http://www.glamis-castle.co.uk), [www.cawdorcastle.com](http://www.cawdorcastle.com)

### Windsor, Berkshire, south-east England

*"Search Windsor Castle, elves, within and out.  
Strew good luck, oafs, on every sacred room,  
That it may stand till the perpetual doom." (Mistress Quickly, The Merry Wives of Windsor, Act 5, Scene 5).*

Rib-tickling farce *The Merry Wives of Windsor* is the only Shakespearean comedy to be entirely set in England, and in Shakespeare's time at that. Take the train to Windsor from London and picture the play's protagonist, Falstaff, blundering into the town's close-knit community and disastrously courting the wives of two wealthy Windsor citizens. Falstaff's final punishment is set up in **Windsor Great Park** at night. Visit the park and keep your eyes out for Herne the Hunter, seen to "walk round about an oak, with great ragged horns." The park is a great place for a picnic, before or after visiting **Windsor Castle**, which, at the time, was inhabited by Elizabeth I. It's thought that she commissioned Shakespeare to write a play with Falstaff at its heart after being delighted with the character in the *Henry IV* plays. [www.royalcollection.org.uk/visit/frogmorehouse](http://www.royalcollection.org.uk/visit/frogmorehouse), [www.theroyallandscape.co.uk](http://www.theroyallandscape.co.uk), [www.royalcollection.org.uk/visit/windsorcastle](http://www.royalcollection.org.uk/visit/windsorcastle)

## The Forest of Arden, Warwickshire, west England

*"I met a fool i' the forest,  
A motley fool." (Jacques, As You Like It, Act 2, scene 7)*

Another play whose setting may have been informed by Shakespeare's own experience is *As You Like It*. The play is largely set in the Forest of Arden, a pastoral space in which sexual freedom and chaos reign, cross-dressing is commonplace and gender roles are subverted. Arden is interpreted as referring both to Ardennes in France, as well as **The Forest of Arden** in Warwickshire. The latter once lay to the north of Stratford-upon-Avon, and though much of the forest itself has been cleared, it retains its rural charm, dotted with bluebells, primroses and wood anemones, medieval hedgerows and ancient oaks that would have been around - and even considered old - in the Bard's day. Tour the surrounding villages including **Wilmcote**, where you can visit where Shakespeare's mother lived, **Mary Arden's Farm**, which reopens to visitors in Spring 2016.

[www.heartofenglandforest.com/visit](http://www.heartofenglandforest.com/visit), [www.shakespeare.org.uk/visit-the-houses/mary-ardens-farm.html](http://www.shakespeare.org.uk/visit-the-houses/mary-ardens-farm.html)

## Pontefract Castle, Yorkshire, north England

*"O Pomfret, Pomfret! O thou bloody prison!  
Fatal and ominous to noble peers!  
Within the guilty closure of thy walls  
Richard the Second here was hack'd to death." (Rivers, Richard III, Act 3, Scene 3).*

Richard II comes to a sticky end at the close of the play of the same name; he's killed at 'Pomfret', known today as **Pontefract Castle**. The Yorkshire castle was notorious and unanimously feared for its bloody reputation; once a magnificent structure, it's now an evocative set of ruins. Visit and, if you're feeling especially brave, embark on a ghost walk of the castle and its dungeons.

[www.experiencewakefield.co.uk/thedms.aspx?dms=3&venue=2190562](http://www.experiencewakefield.co.uk/thedms.aspx?dms=3&venue=2190562),  
[www.pontefractheritagegroup.org.uk/page8a.html](http://www.pontefractheritagegroup.org.uk/page8a.html)

## The Tower of London

*"I do not like the Tower, of any place." (Prince Edward, Richard III, Act 3, Scene 1)*

The Tower of London features prominently in the 'Henriad' plays set in England (which comprises *Richard II*, *Henry IV Part 1*, *Henry IV Part 2* and *Henry V*) and famously in *Richard III* where it forms the backdrop to the ambitious protagonist's bloody seizure of the throne. It's where Richard III's brother was murdered and his nephews banished, to pave the way for his accession. Visit and see the Crown Jewels - musing on the stories of those who've fought to wear it and remembering the famous quote from *Henry IV Part 2*: "Uneasy lies the head that wears the crown"...

[www.hrp.org.uk/tower-of-london](http://www.hrp.org.uk/tower-of-london)



*If you're a fan of the play  
Richard III, the Tower of  
London is a must-visit*



*Quote 'A horse, a horse, a kingdom for my horse' as you watch the Battle of Bosworth re-enactment*

**Bosworth Battlefield, Warwickshire, west England (plus more King Richard III haunts!)**

*"A horse, a horse, my kingdom for a horse!"  
(King Richard, Richard III, Act 5, Scene 4)*

Richard III, bloodthirsty though he may have been in pursuit of power at the Tower of London, died in the **Battle of Bosworth**, which forms the climax of *Richard III*. You can visit the location of the battle, which happened in August 1485 and even see it re-enacted on site by a troupe of actors! **The King Richard III Visitor Centre** in Leicester further illuminates the story of the

king's life and death, specifically focusing on the recent discovery of the monarch's remains, which were interred in a ceremony at **Leicester Cathedral** in March 2015.

[www.bosworthbattlefield.com](http://www.bosworthbattlefield.com), [www.kriii.com](http://www.kriii.com), [www.leicestercathedral.org](http://www.leicestercathedral.org)

## The White Cliffs of Dover

*"This is above all strangeness.*

*Upon the crown o' the cliff" (Edgar, King Lear, Act 4, Scene 6)*

The White Cliffs of Dover form the striking chalk façade that has stood guard to invasions over the years, but more recently become a popular walking spot and a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. In *King Lear*, Gloucester heads there to commit suicide, but is thwarted by his son Edgar, who convinces his blind father he has survived a cliff-top fall and that the gods do not want him to die just yet. [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/the-white-cliffs-of-dover](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/the-white-cliffs-of-dover)

## Shakespeare's London

*Falstaff: Give me a cup of sack: I am a rogue if I drunk today.*

*Prince Henry: O villain! thy lips are scarce wiped since thou drunkest last.*

*Falstaff: All's one for that. (Henry IV, Part 1, Act 2, Scene 4).*

The **Boar's Head Tavern**, where Falstaff and Hal drink and make merry in the *Henry IV* plays, did not actually exist during Henry IV's reign; Shakespeare based it on a tavern that existed on Cannon Street, near London Bridge, in his own day. The pub was destroyed in the Great Fire of London, rebuilt, then demolished again, and its sign now hangs at **Shakespeare's Globe** theatre. London Bridge is the starting point for Mind the Gap's **Drink London** tour, which takes in pubs that Shakespeare used to frequent, so you can even drink in the footsteps of the Bard!

[www.shakespearesglobe.com](http://www.shakespearesglobe.com), [www.mindthegaptours.com/drinklondon](http://www.mindthegaptours.com/drinklondon)

## A very modern Shakespeare



*The Sonnet Man aims to rap all 154 of Shakespeare's sonnets on 24 April*

Including pedal-powered productions, rap marathons and deliberate drunkenness, here's how forward-thinkers will be re-imagining Bard's plays and poems in Britain next year.

With its intricate wordplay and constant rhymes, Shakespearean poetry bears uncanny similarities to modern hip-hop. That fact isn't lost on New York rapper Devon Glover - aka **The Sonnet Man** - who'll make a guest appearance in Stratford-upon-Avon on 24 April.

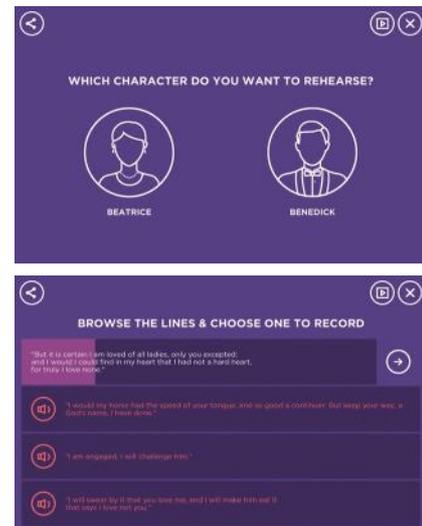
His task? An incredible sonnet marathon: rapping all 154 of Shakespeare's love poems in one go. Audience participation is essential.

[www.thesonnetmannyc.com](http://www.thesonnetmannyc.com)

Transporting Shakespeare's world to modern touch-table screens, the Library of Birmingham - in partnership with the BBC - is installing an **interactive map** to mark the 400th anniversary. The whizzy map will allow users to explore the life, times and works of Shakespeare. [www.libraryofbirmingham.com](http://www.libraryofbirmingham.com)

Also hoping to help young people relate to the Bard's work is a new Android app from the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) and Samsung. **RE: Shakespeare** includes beatboxing games, a chance to create shareable rap tracks using famous couplets, and tutorials from *Doctor Who* actor David Tennant, who has played Hamlet and Richard II. Users can even ape Benedick or Beatrice in sections from *Much Ado About Nothing*, performing opposite virtual RSC actors. <http://bitly.com/1eUXyHc>

**Walking tours** make the Shakespeare story more accessible. In Stratford, The Shakespeare Blog author Sylvia Morris has just launched a smartphone-based tour in conjunction with Pocket Guide. Linking stories about people and places with quotations, 'Shakespeare's Stratford-upon-Avon' shows how the dramatist referenced the town into his work. Available on both Apple and Android, it uses GPS technology so you don't have to keep consulting a map. [www.pocketguideapp.com](http://www.pocketguideapp.com)



*The RSC is producing an app that allows you to perform opposite virtual RSC actors*

The **Shakespeare Reworked** project - getting creatives to collaborate globally - sees Belfast performance artist Amanda Coogan presenting *You Turn Me On, I'm a Radio*: a new multimedia work combining sign language, performance, digital sound and live Instagram-streaming. Working with deaf communities from South Africa, Coogan hopes her 40-minute piece, weaving together different Shakespearean plays, will empower audiences to take a fresh look at the Bard's works. It will be unveiled in Belfast during the summer. [www.theatreanddance.britishcouncil.org](http://www.theatreanddance.britishcouncil.org)

Something equally ground-breaking is promised on 27 February at 2016's **Bath Literary Festival**, where two members of improvisation specialists The School of Night will stage *Rhapsodes*: a show blending poetic stunts, audience suggestions and a new Shakespeare play created on the spot. The high-octane performance earned rave reviews at August's Edinburgh Festival Fringe. [www.theschoolofnight.com](http://www.theschoolofnight.com)



*Shakespeare classics from two wheels!  
The HandleBards unique way of  
performing the Bard's works*

Two groups of 'cycling players' will travel from London to Edinburgh next summer, reprising Shakespeare classics en route. The all-male **HandleBards** will perform *Much Ado About Nothing* and *Richard III*, while the female HandleBardettes tackle *Romeo & Juliet* and *The Taming of the Shrew*. Each will pedal along with all of the set, props and costumes required for nightly performances in castles, gardens, bicycle shops and stately homes. [www.peculius.com/handlebards.html](http://www.peculius.com/handlebards.html)

Contemporising Shakespeare's works can enable 21st-century viewers to better relate to them. In Sheffield, central England - an hour from Birmingham by train - guests at the **Crucible Theatre** will witness a 'modern-day mash-up of Shakespearean romance'. Performed by a 100-strong cast between 13 - 16 July, *A Dream* - loosely based on *A Midsummer Night's Dream* - takes place in a hillside hospital, and sees drink flow, songs sung and dodgy vows made as an evening messily proceeds. [www.sheffieldtheatres.co.uk](http://www.sheffieldtheatres.co.uk)

Part of 2016's Shakespeare Oxford festival, *The Devil Speaks True* is an **auditory experience** where visitors become *Macbeth's* Banquo. Sitting in darkness wearing wireless headphones, you'll be surrounded by binaural sound and dazzled by video projection. Focusing on the psychological effects of returning from war, the chilling production fuses Shakespeare's text and interviews with ex-servicemen. It takes place in the **Old Fire Station** on 17 March. Oxford is an hour's train-ride from London Paddington. [www.shakespeareoxford2016.co.uk](http://www.shakespeareoxford2016.co.uk)

## A floral feast - the Elizabethan garden

Gardening was a popular pastime in Shakespeare's England; elegant *parterres* - symmetrical gardens with flowering borders and gravel paths - were found in many of the grand country houses, while kitchen gardens were popular in urban homes. Herbs and flowers feature regularly in Shakespeare's work, from the oft-quoted '*that which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet*' in *Romeo & Juliet*, to Oberon's description of where Titania sleeps in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*: "*I know a bank where the wild thyme blows, where oxslip and the nodding violet grows.*" Roses feature so often in Shakespeare that there is even a William Shakespeare Rose available to buy, with a traditional, rich scent. Many Elizabethan gardens around Britain have been restored and replanted in recent years, offering a chance to glimpse the gardens Shakespeare - and his characters - would have known. 2016 is the perfect time to experience them as VisitEngland celebrates the Year of the Garden. [www.davidaustinroses.co.uk/william-shakespeare-2000](http://www.davidaustinroses.co.uk/william-shakespeare-2000)

## The Elizabethan Garden at Kenilworth Castle, Warwickshire, west England

The most impressive Elizabethan garden in Britain was originally created for a visit by Queen Elizabeth I in 1575. The man behind the garden was Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, one of her most ardent suitors. For over 400 years the garden was lost to the world, until 2009 when it was recreated with beautiful carved arbours, bloom-filled beds, a spectacular fountain and aviary. The planting is designed to be at its best in July, the month of the Queen's visit in 1575. [www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/kenilworth-castle](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/kenilworth-castle)

*Where is it? Kenilworth is around two hours' drive west of London.*



*A tranquil respite from city life; Plymouth's Elizabethan Gardens. Credit Rob at Shoot Photography*

## Elizabethan Gardens, Plymouth, Devon, south-west England

Plymouth was a flourishing port city during Shakespeare's time, with houses and adjoining gardens being built for the wealthy merchants who made their money from the ship's cargos. Tucked away in the heart of the city, this small Elizabethan Garden feels like a step back in time, and is a great place to pause amid the sightseeing and shopping. Low box hedges contain beds of colourful flowers and fragrant herbs, with slate paths and old stone seats. [www.visitplymouth.co.uk/things-to-do/elizabethan-gardens-p1417583](http://www.visitplymouth.co.uk/things-to-do/elizabethan-gardens-p1417583)

*Where is it? Plymouth is around three-and-a-half hours' train journey from London.*

## Anne Hathaway's Cottage & Gardens, Stratford-upon-Avon, west England

To see a garden that Shakespeare would actually have visited, head to Anne Hathaway's cottage; home of the woman he courted, and who would eventually become his wife. The thatched farmhouse contains some of Anne's original furniture, while outside the traditional cottage garden is a riot of colour, with flower-filled borders and shrubs that are accurate for the period. Anne Hathaway's Cottage is just one of five houses with links to Shakespeare that can be visited in Stratford.

[www.shakespeare.org.uk/visit-the-houses/anne-hathaways-cottage-amp-gardens.html](http://www.shakespeare.org.uk/visit-the-houses/anne-hathaways-cottage-amp-gardens.html)



*Step into Shakespeare's footsteps in the gardens of his wife Anne Hathaway's Cottage. Credit Shakespeare's Birthplace Trust*

*Where is it? Stratford-upon-Avon is around two hours from London Marylebone by train.*

## New Place, Stratford-upon-Avon, west England

The biggest Shakespearean-themed event in 2016 will be the re-opening in July of New Place in Stratford, the only house the playwright ever owned. Along with a revamped interior, the Grade II listed 'Great Garden' - the largest surviving part of Shakespeare's own garden - will host a sculpture trail, with eight bronze works each inspired by one of

the writer's plays. The sunken Knot Garden - a square-framed, symmetrical garden filled with aromatic plants and herbs, which was very popular in Elizabethan times - will be restored to its full Shakespearean-era glory. [www.shakespeare.org.uk](http://www.shakespeare.org.uk)

*Where is it? Stratford-upon-Avon is around two hours from London Marylebone by train.*

### **Aberglasney, Carmarthenshire, west Wales**

Aberglasney was made famous in a BBC series, which filmed the transformation from unkempt landscape to beautiful, manicured gardens. At its heart lies a unique Elizabethan cloister garden, with an elegant stone arcade that is the only one of its kind left in Britain, and an intricate glass parterre. Beyond the cloister there are several different areas to explore, including an Asiatic Garden and a traditional rose garden.

[www.aberglasney.org](http://www.aberglasney.org)

*Where is it? Aberglasney is just over an hour's drive west of Cardiff.*



*Aberglasney in Wales is a fine example of an Elizabethan cloister garden. Credit Jason Ingrams Photography*

### **Burton Agnes Hall, Yorkshire, north England**

Dating back to 1598, Burton Agnes has been in the same family for more than 400 years, and the elegant Elizabethan mansion looks out over spectacular gardens. The Walled Garden was built to contain the original Elizabethan gardens, which have been restored to combine the best of both Elizabethan periods; 16th-century design mixed with present-day techniques, plants and materials. The Walled Garden now holds more than 3,000 plants, with herbaceous borders, rose beds and fruit and vegetable sections.

[www.burtonagnes.com](http://www.burtonagnes.com)

*Where is it? Burton Agnes is around three-and-a-half hours' drive north of London.*



*Quintessentially Elizabethan and yet distinctly unique; Lyveden New Bield. Credit National Trust Images/Paul Harris*

### **Lyveden New Bield, Northamptonshire, central England**

One of the finest surviving examples of Elizabethan garden design, Lyveden is made even more unusual by the unfinished manor house that lies at its heart. Originally begun in the late 16th century, the Tresham family ran into financial debt, and the house was never completed. It stands as a ghostly monument, overlooking the moated garden and grassed, spiral mounds that were a classic feature of Elizabethan gardens.

[www.nationaltrust.org.uk/lyveden-new-bield](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/lyveden-new-bield)

*Where is it? Lyveden is around two hour's drive north of London.*

## Unusual venues to catch a Shakespeare play

Just as Shakespeare's plays feature a range of wonderful locations, from mythical islands to enchanted forests, here in Britain you can watch some of the Bard's best-loved plays in an array of unusual and outdoor places - from a medieval castle to a botanical garden!

### **Within a globe of willow trees...**

Llanwrthwl, mid-Wales

Despite being born in England to a predominantly English family, Wales and the Welsh figured prominently in Shakespeare's life and works. **The Willow Globe** in Llanwrthwl, Wales - a scaled-down, organic version of London's Shakespeare's Globe made out of carefully woven willow that creates a lush, green theatre space in the summer months - is an ideal place to catch a Shakespeare play. Performances take place from April to September and are produced by artistic directors Susanna Best and Philip Bowen, whose extensive professional experience includes years with the Royal Shakespeare Company, the English Shakespeare Company, the Royal Opera House and the Old Vic.

[www.willowglobe.co.uk](http://www.willowglobe.co.uk).

### **In an old watermill...**

West Berkshire, south England

Arguably one of Britain's prettiest theatres, **The Watermill Theatre** in Bagnor, west Berkshire (around 90 minutes' drive from London), is housed in - you've guessed it - a converted mill. It was restored by a theatre enthusiast and purchased by new owners in 1981, who then developed it into a renowned production house specialising in Shakespeare and musical theatre. In 2016, from 25 February to 2 April, you can catch a special performance of *Romeo and Juliet* here. [www.watermill.org.uk/romeo\\_and\\_juliet](http://www.watermill.org.uk/romeo_and_juliet)

### **Among tropical plants in a botanical garden...**

Glasgow, Scotland

Scotland's biggest and best-loved festival of Shakespeare, **Bard in the Botanics**, takes place in the unique setting of Glasgow's Botanic Garden. Depending on the play, actors act out lively performances either outside in the grounds or amid tropical plants and flower displays inside the Kibble Palace glasshouse. Since the first festival, Bard in the Botanics has staged more than 50 productions of Shakespeare's work and it is a highlight of Glasgow's summer event calendar. The 2015 season included productions of *Love's Labour's Lost*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Richard II* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. [www.bardinthebotanics.co.uk](http://www.bardinthebotanics.co.uk)



*Shakespeare among the flora and fauna; Glasgow's Bard in the Botanics*

### **In the shipyard where the Titanic was built...**

Belfast, Northern Ireland

Combine two British legends in one and experience *The Belfast Tempest* - one of the largest Shakespeare productions Belfast will have ever seen performed on the site where the famous, ill-fated *RMS Titanic* was designed and built more than a century ago. As part of Britain's 2016 global celebrations in honour of the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death, between 20 - 23 April this very special Shakespeare performance will debut at the T13 - a cultural space and former shipbuilding warehouse - on Queen's Island, located at the Belfast docks and Titanic Quarter. Grab your blanket, your cushion and your supplies and climb on board for a truly extraordinary version of *The Tempest* - Shakespeare's last play - featuring a 200-strong professional cast of choirs, dancers, actors from around the world. [www.terrano productions.net/belfast-tempest](http://www.terrano productions.net/belfast-tempest).



*A venerable seat of learning such as Cambridge University is the perfect place to catch a Shakespeare performance*

### **In a university college garden...**

Cambridge, east England

The [Cambridge Shakespeare Festival](http://www.cambridgeshakespeare.com) has been running for 27 years, performing over eight weeks each summer in July and August to audiences totalling 25,000. Performances take place in the beautiful gardens of the historic Cambridge University Colleges, which makes for a unique theatre experience. Prior to the performance, you can picnic in this idyllic setting, before sitting back to enjoy an evening of spectacular theatre performed in full period costume with live Elizabethan music.

[www.cambridgeshakespeare.com](http://www.cambridgeshakespeare.com)

### **With a medieval castle as a backdrop...**

Arundel Castle, West Sussex, south England

What better background for a dramatic Shakespeare performance than a gothic-looking medieval castle? The Collector Earl's Garden at Arundel Castle in West Sussex, two hours' drive south of London, is a natural surrounding as Shakespeare intended for his plays. Performed in beautiful Elizabethan costumes by a cast of Britain's finest professional Shakespearean actors, the shows included live music, hilarious comedy and tragedy. In August 2015, in their sixth year as a touring theatre company, and by popular acclaim, GB Theatre returned to Arundel to perform William Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* and *Much Ado About Nothing*. [www.arundel.eighthday.modxcloud.com/whats-on/shakespeare.html](http://www.arundel.eighthday.modxcloud.com/whats-on/shakespeare.html)

### **In a bookshop...**

The Norrington Room, Blackwell's Bookshop, Oxford, south central England

See Shakespeare come alive in the basement of an iconic Oxford book shop when Creation Theatre company returns in 2016 to transform The Norrington Room's three miles of bookshelves into a theatre for its performance of *King Lear* (12 February - 19 March). It will be the first production of a new six-year partnership with Blackwell's Bookshop, located right in the heart of Oxford opposite the Sheldonian Theatre.

[www.creationtheatre.co.uk/show-three](http://www.creationtheatre.co.uk/show-three)

### Overlooking the Atlantic Ocean...

Penzance, Cornwall, south-west England

Carved into a clifftop above Porthcurno Bay in Cornwall, the **Minack Theatre's** dramatic location has drawn visitors for generations. With the Atlantic Sea lapping at the shore below you and the horizon stretching out in front, this is a truly unique location to enjoy a Shakespeare play. The theatre's summer season runs from May until September and 2016's Shakespeare highlights are due to include performances of *As You Like It* (6 - 10 June), *A Winter's Tale* (11 - 5 July) and *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (22 - 26 August). [www.minack.com](http://www.minack.com)



*The view is mesmerising at Cornwall's Minack Theatre, but be sure to keep one eye on the play!*



*Fans of Much Ado About Nothing can catch a performance at the historic Holkham Hall*

### In a secret garden...

Nottingham, central England

The Lace Market Theatre will be hosting a special Shakespeare season in 2016. Highlights include Shakespeare performances in two of Nottingham's secret gardens; on 21 April enjoy *Twelfth Night* in the secret garden at Bromley House Library and a performance of *Julius Caesar* in the secret garden of historic Newdigate House. Both buildings are in the heart of the city, but their gardens are hidden gems. One ticket will gain entry to both performances,

with refreshments served al fresco in the gardens. The Lace Market Theatre will also be putting on a week-long production of *Midsummer Night's Dream* (18 - 23 April 2016). [www.lacemarkettheatre.co.uk](http://www.lacemarkettheatre.co.uk)

### In the grounds of a historic country mansion...

Holkham Hall, Norfolk, east England

Head north of Cambridge to reach Holkham Hall, a majestic historic country house and one of England's finest examples of the Palladian revival style of architecture. This family-friendly venue invites guests to lay down a rug and enjoy a picnic while they enjoy an outdoor Shakespeare performance. For 2016 it will be one of Shakespeare's best-loved comedies, *Much Ado About Nothing*, that graces the stage on 31 August, performed in the open air by The Lord Chamberlain's Men, an all-male cast with Elizabethan costume, music and dance. [www.holkham.co.uk/events/theatre/much-ado-about-nothing](http://www.holkham.co.uk/events/theatre/much-ado-about-nothing)

### In a pub garden...

Across London and southern England

For two very British experiences in one, head to a pub garden for Shakespeare performed by theatre company [Permanently Bard](#). In summer 2015 the company brought its energetic performance of *Romeo and Juliet* to a series of pub gardens in the south of England and

London area. Audiences can order an Elizabethan picnic basket and enjoy being outdoors with a pint of ale or a glass of wine. [www.permanentlybard.co.uk](http://www.permanentlybard.co.uk)

## Food for thought - Elizabethan dining experiences

Dine in the style of William Shakespeare at an Elizabethan banquet and sample a taste of what the gentry ate during the Golden Age of English history. Use your hands to feast on meats and fowls popular in Shakespeare's time, be entertained by courtiers in period costume and even learn how to cook the Elizabethan way at a special cookery course. Take a tip from Shakespeare himself in *The Comedy of Errors* where he penned "Unquiet meals make ill digestions" and try a taste of mead - the oldest drink in Britain.

### Dine at an Elizabethan banquet

#### **Lumley Castle, County Durham, north-east England**

Step back in time to the year 1595 at the banquet feast of Sir John Lumley. Enter through the dungeon doors to the sound of bagpipes before being armed only with a dagger and a bib for feasting on five decadent courses. Banquet maids fill goblets with mead and wine while entertaining with songs, sketches and sing-a-longs before a disco in the dungeon! [www.lumleycastle.com](http://www.lumleycastle.com)

*Getting there: Durham is around three hours by train from London.*



*What better way to finish a banquet in Lumley Castle than with a disco in its dungeon!*

#### **Hatfield House, Hertfordshire, south England**

The Hatfield Banquet takes place in the magnificent 15th-century Great Hall of the Old Palace of Hatfield House, a Grade I listed building that was previously home to Elizabeth I. Guests (who are encouraged to dress up in period-costume) are seated at long banqueting tables and served a delicious four-course dinner of meats, mead and desserts popular in Elizabethan times. King Henry VIII and Queen Elizabeth I, together with their Courtiers, amuse and entertain their guests with authentic period music, song and theatre. [www.hatfieldhousehospitality.co.uk](http://www.hatfieldhousehospitality.co.uk)

*Getting there: Hatfield House is around 45 minutes' drive or a 30-minute train journey from central London.*



#### **Ruthin Castle, Ruthin, north Wales**

Ruthin Castle provides a superb stage for hosting themed dinners modelled upon the legendary feasts the Earl of Warwick held at the Castle in the 16th century. Revellers assemble in the Presence Chamber for the partaking of bread and salt, age-old symbols of hospitality. The lofty Banqueting Hall is where the Ladies of the Court entertain, sing (in

*Shakespeare* | 34

*Mead, wine and banquets - step back into the 16th century at Ruthin Castle*

both Welsh and English), jest and lead the evening's feasting (eaten with daggers and fingers only), where cups of mead and goblets of wine are refilled. Guests can also hire period dress from the costume company. [www.ruthincastle.co.uk](http://www.ruthincastle.co.uk)

*Getting there: Ruthin is approximately one hour by train from Manchester in north-west England.*

### **Learn to cook the Elizabethan way**

#### **Historic Food Cookery Course, Cumbria, north-west England**

Visit food historian Ivan Day's Cumbrian farmhouse in historic Penrith to learn a few tips for period sugarwork, and late-medieval English cookery. The Taste of Christmas Past course demonstrates how to make a Yorkshire Christmas Pie comprised of boned turkey, goose and other birds, mince pie and roast beef and plum pudding. [www.historicfood.com](http://www.historicfood.com)

*Getting there: Penrith is around 1.5 hours from Glasgow by train or about 3.5 hours from London.*



*The kitchens at Hampton Court Palace have seen some serious foodie action since the Tudor period*

#### **Tudor Kitchen at Hampton Court Palace, Surrey, south-east England**

The Tudor kitchens at Hampton Court Palace are famous throughout the world for being those of King Henry VIII. They continued to be used as Royal Court kitchens for a further 200 years, feeding the tables of Tudor, Elizabethan, Stuart and Georgian monarchs and their many courtiers. Now they are home to a fascinating research project run by Historia food archaeologists who regularly bring the kitchens to life experimenting with traditional recipes, ingredients and cooking methods to prepare feasts fit for a king. [www.hrp.org.uk](http://www.hrp.org.uk)

*Getting there: Hampton Court Palace is 35*

*minutes from London Waterloo.*

### **Taste traditional mead**

#### **Lindisfarne Mead, Holy Island, north-east England**

From the ancient isle synonymous with Celtic legend, Lindisfarne Mead is made with honey, grape juice and neutral grain spirit - buy it from St Aidan's Winery on the Holy Island. It tastes clean and light although it is 14.5% abv. There is also a spiced version available. [www.lindisfarne-mead.co.uk](http://www.lindisfarne-mead.co.uk)

*Getting there: The Holy Island is a tidal island off the coast of north-east England.*

#### **Bristol Cider Shop, Bristol, south-west England**

Anyone visiting the city of Bristol for the Shakespeare Festival in July 2016 is well advised to make a stop-off at the famous Bristol Cider Shop to stock up on Hecks Mead, a

traditional mead made from honey produced by bees that live in the Hecks cider orchard. [www.bristolcidershops.co.uk](http://www.bristolcidershops.co.uk)

*Getting there: Bristol is a 90-minute train journey from London.*

## Ten suitably Shakespearean gifts and goodies

You've watched the plays, visited the landmarks, taken part in festivals - now complete your Shakespearean odyssey with a few fun Bard-inspired gifts to take home!

### Shakespeare bath duck

Surprisingly, there's more than one Shakespeare-inspired bath duck on the market to choose from! Voted one of the Top 100 Gifts by *Entertainment Weekly*, CelebriDucks are considered the finest custom rubber duck manufacturer in the world. The Shakespeare CelebriDuck is the choice of the Royal Shakespeare Company's gift shop (£8.99). Meanwhile, the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust gift shop breaks the mould and goes for a more duck-like Shakespeare Duck (£5). Why not collect them all!

[www.rsc.org.uk/shop/item/56224-shakespeare-celebriduck](http://www.rsc.org.uk/shop/item/56224-shakespeare-celebriduck), [www.shop.shakespeare.org.uk/shop/product/4652/Shakespeare-Duck](http://www.shop.shakespeare.org.uk/shop/product/4652/Shakespeare-Duck)



*To quack or not to quack - make bathtimes more fun with this Shakespeare bath duck! Credit Shakespeare Birthplace Trust*

### Sweet Theatre 'Shakespeare's Leading Ladies' chocolate

Sweet Theatre presents a dramatic range of chocolate bars celebrating Britain's greatest playwright. With flavours based around Shakespeare's leading ladies, they're perfect for theatre lovers and chocoholics alike. Made with the finest white chocolate couverture, 'Juliet' is light and sweet. With a warm and spicy finish, cinnamon flavoured 'Desdemona' is vibrant and defiant. 'Lady Macbeth' is dark and tangy with a zesty hint of orange. Others include rich and dark 'Titania', milky and classic 'Ophelia', and fine and minty 'Viola'. Created by chocolatier, theatre producer and actress Sally

Wood (wife of Ronnie Wood of the *Rolling Stones*), they're available at stores including Harvey Nichols and Fortnum & Mason in London, and the Royal Shakespeare Company's gift shop. £3.50 for a 70g bar. [www.sweettheatre.com](http://www.sweettheatre.com)



*You'll come up smelling of roses with a gift from Shakespeare's Sister's Soap*

### Shakespeare's Sister's Soap

These artisan soaps and body butters are hand-made, hand-cut and hand-wrapped in Stratford-upon-Avon by sisters Judith and Amanda. They use only the simplest natural ingredients to leave skin feeling soft and fragrant. Flowers and herbs from their own gardens are distilled in a handmade copper Alembic Still using an ancient method, the resulting flower waters then used

to scent their soaps. Bestsellers include lavender and geranium soap, using lavender cultivated at Hidcote Manor and Attar of Rose geraniums that came to Britain during the crusades. Another popular soap is moulded into the form of a classic Tudor rose and scented with a rose variety that existed in Shakespeare's day. Judith also runs workshops and has given tutorials on natural perfumes in the Elizabethan era. £5.50 for a 90g soap. [www.shakespeareersisterssoap.com](http://www.shakespeareersisterssoap.com)

### Everybody Dies handkerchief

Exclusive to the National Theatre shop is the 'Everybody Dies' range - a witty and literary look at the body count in Shakespeare's tragedies. With beheadings, hangings, stabbings, poisonings, and of course the occasional hungry wild bear, the cast of plays including *Macbeth*, *Romeo & Juliet* and *Titus Andronicus* often meet a gruesome end. The range includes a tote bag, porcelain mug, tea towel, fridge magnet, notebook and greetings cards, as well as its signature item, the handkerchief! £6.50.

[www.shop.nationaltheatre.org.uk](http://www.shop.nationaltheatre.org.uk)



*The National Theatre shop sells this witty, and dramatic, tea towel. Credit ©National Theatre, London 2013 based on a design by Caitlin Griffin*

### William Shakespeare's Star Wars books

Fiction writer Ian Doescher created this series of novels, based on George Lucas's *Star Wars* films, written in the blank verse style of William Shakespeare. Beginning with a sonnet about a 'star-crossed galaxy far, far away', this epic tale of Luke Skywalker, Han Solo, Princess Leia, Obi-Wan and Darth Vader is set in an alien world of Shakespearean words. Full of references to famous Shakespeare plays including *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet*, and *Henry V*, they'll amuse literary lovers and science fiction fans alike. £11.99. [www.iandoescher.com/william-shakespeares-star-wars](http://www.iandoescher.com/william-shakespeares-star-wars)

### Shakespeare Calligraphy Set

The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust gift shop offers an extensive and diverse range of Shakespeare-related products. Their bestselling item is the first folio calligraphy set, comprising a pen, three nibs and a bottle of black ink - because the inky swirls of handwritten prose are far more Shakespearean than texting or typing! The set is also available with gold or red ink for heightened drama. £10.

[www.shop.shakespeare.org.uk/shop/product/6512/Pen-and-Ink-Set-black/](http://www.shop.shakespeare.org.uk/shop/product/6512/Pen-and-Ink-Set-black/)



### William Shakespeare Bust

The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust stocks a range of busts of William Shakespeare, a must-have for the mantelpiece of every Shakespeare lover! There's a small bust made from British gypsum plaster, bearing the quote: "To thine own self be true" (£17.99). Or there's a replica of a 19th-century Parian-ware bust of Shakespeare, produced by William Taylor Copeland (£105). Most dramatic of all is a black jasperware bust, handmade in England exclusively for Shakespeare's Birthplace by Wedgwood (£250).

*A Shakespeare bust should adorn the mantelpiece of every fan of the Bard. Credit Shakespeare Birthplace Trust*

[www.shop.shakespeare.org.uk/shop/product/2642/Shakespeare-Bust-Wedgwood-Black-Jasperware](http://www.shop.shakespeare.org.uk/shop/product/2642/Shakespeare-Bust-Wedgwood-Black-Jasperware)

### Quoting Shakespeare poster

One of the bestselling items in the gift shop at Shakespeare's Globe Theatre is the Quoting Shakespeare poster, Bernard Levin's famous collection of well-known sayings and phrases that have been attributed to William Shakespeare. If you say something has "seen better days" or "vanished into thin air", or say "the game is up", "truth will tell", "too much of a good thing", "a fool's paradise" or "a tower of strength", did you realise you were quoting Shakespeare? As this poster reveals, we probably quote Shakespeare more often than we know! £10. [www.shakespearesglobe.com/shop/product/quoting-shakespeare-poster/87](http://www.shakespearesglobe.com/shop/product/quoting-shakespeare-poster/87)

### Wind-up Shakespeare

The Royal Shakespeare Company's gift shop has an eclectic range of Shakespeare-related gifts and souvenirs, ranging from the serious to the not so serious, like this small wind-up version of Bill! Wind him up and watch him march poetically into the distance. £3.99. [www.rsc.org.uk/shop/item/56223-wind-up-shakespeare](http://www.rsc.org.uk/shop/item/56223-wind-up-shakespeare)



*A great way to get children interested in Shakespeare - a wind-up Bard! Credit Shakespeare Birthplace Trust*

### Shakespeare insults mug

Regarded as the greatest writer of the English language, Shakespeare is also known for his poetic profanity. Some of his most cutting insults, including "Cream faced loon" (*Macbeth*), "King of codpieces", (*Love's Labour Lost*) and "Not so much brain as ear wax" (*Troilus and Cressida*) are printed on this gift-boxed china mug. For the romantically inclined, a Shakespeare Love Quotes mug is also available. £9.99 [www.thepresentfinder.co.uk/buy/shakespeare-insults-mug\\_1761.htm](http://www.thepresentfinder.co.uk/buy/shakespeare-insults-mug_1761.htm)

## Shakespeare for families

From acrobat and archery to statue impressions and scavenger hunts, here's how children visiting Britain can help celebrate the Shakespeare anniversary.



*The Shakespeare Puppet Theatre is coming to London to celebrate the 400th anniversary*

Denmark's Kronborg Castle - Elsinore in *Hamlet* - holds a popular **Shakespeare Puppet Theatre** each year. To celebrate the 400th anniversary, the theatre is coming to Central London's British Library between 28 May and 5 June, offering half-hour-long silent interpretations of *King Lear* specifically aimed at families. [www.bl.uk](http://www.bl.uk)

Beside the Thames, Shakespeare's Globe is a faithful restoration of the 16th-century playhouse where Will staged many of his plays. The **Globe Exhibition & Tour** enables families

and kids to learn more about Shakespeare and the theatre, with live demonstrations

exploring stage-fighting and Tudor clothing. Don't forget to watch a production, either, standing up like Jacobean 'groundlings' always did. [www.shakespearesglobe.com](http://www.shakespearesglobe.com)

At Shakespeare's home of Stratford-upon-Avon, the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) throws a fun-packed day of free outdoor family events for its annual Bard Birthday Celebrations in April. In 2016 this will include a Shakespeare-inspired show by all-female **acrobatic troupe** Mimbire in the Bancroft Gardens on 23 April, followed by a firework display. [www.rsc.org.uk](http://www.rsc.org.uk)

Inspired by *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, the RSC is also staging various 'Magic of Midsummer' activities between 19 - 25 June. Among them is **The Fairy Portal Camp**, a feast of dance, song and fire designed to reconnect us to the spirit world on Midsummer Eve (24 June). Would-be sprites and Pucks of all ages are welcome to participate at the Avonbank Gardens. [www.rsc.org.uk](http://www.rsc.org.uk)

Perfect for families who love a bit of fun, the interactive **Shakespeare Steps** walk through Stratford takes in the Bard's birthplace and schoolroom, plus RSC theatres. En route, painted instructions on pavements cue participants into acting out mini-scenes from the scribe's life and works. The audience? That'll be passing members of the public. It's available from January 2016. [www.stanscafe.co.uk/?p=3781](http://www.stanscafe.co.uk/?p=3781)

Anne Hathaway's Cottage - childhood home of Shakespeare's wife - erects a Family Activity Marquee every year during **Shakespeare Week** (14 - 20 March), a series of events for primary-aged children. Juniors can make a Bard's Beastie or attempt the Will's Woodland Scavenger Hunt. The fun continues at the other four Shakespeare Houses, including Elizabethan-style dress-up at Hall's Croft, and learning a few choice Tudor insults at Shakespeare's Birthplace. [www.shakespeareweek.org.uk](http://www.shakespeareweek.org.uk)

Another of the five Shakespeare Houses is Mary Arden's Farm, a timbered Tudor structure just outside Stratford where the playwright's mother lived. It's now home to the **Shakespeare Countryside Museum**, with falconry displays, ferrets and archery lessons available all year. [www.shakespeare.org.uk](http://www.shakespeare.org.uk)



*Find Shakespeare in unlikely places in Guildford on a Sonnet Walk. Credit Steve Porter*

Founded in 2008 by rapper Akala, with support from Sir Ian McKellen, **The Hip Hop Shakespeare Company** explores the parallels between the work of the Bard and modern rap. Its lively, exuberant productions provide a great way for teens to encounter Shakespeare works. On 29 April, Akala will present his take on *Richard II* at the o2 Academy in Oxford, an hour's train-ride from London Paddington. The minimum age is eight. [www.o2academyoxford.co.uk](http://www.o2academyoxford.co.uk)

A popular component of the Guildford Shakespeare Company's annual birthday celebrations are **Sonnet Walks**. Next taking place on 23 and 24 April, these 90-minute jaunts are like a treasure hunt, only one where the small groups - families are perfect - encounter Shakespeare in unlikely places. Uncontrollable laughter is often reported. The town of Guildford is 40 minutes by train from London. [www.guildford-shakespeare-company.co.uk](http://www.guildford-shakespeare-company.co.uk)

Show up at Lincoln's Drill Hall between 23 - 26 April to catch **performance storyteller** Xanthe Gresham Knight - accompanied by a musician, plus an array of head-dresses - creating a Shakespeare experience exclusively for families. Her performances promise fools, lovers, high drama and odd quotations, with watching kids asked to play princes, shepherds and - surprisingly difficult - statues. Lincoln is two hours by train from Birmingham or London Kings Cross. [www.lincolndrillhall.com](http://www.lincolndrillhall.com)



*Looks like a 'lute' of fun! Cliveden's summertime performances are perfect for children*

**Summertime Shakespeare performances** at the National Trust property of Cliveden cater specifically to families. Not only are the chosen comedies - *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (27 August) and *Much Ado About Nothing* (3 September) - two of the Bard's most accessible plays for children, but those attending the Water Garden shows are actively encouraged to scoff picnics before the show. Cliveden is a 40-minute drive west of London. [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/cliveden](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/cliveden)

## Shakespeare's circle

Shakespeare's plays feature dynamic men and women - but who were the people in his life that influenced him and where are the locations that played a major part in their lives?

**Experience the sights, smells and sounds of a real Tudor farm in Stratford-upon-Avon where Shakespeare's mother, Mary Arden, grew up**

The historic town of Stratford-upon-Avon is a must-visit for Shakespeare fans. For a taste of the daily routine, skills and crafts that the young William would have known, a visit to his mother Mary Arden's childhood home should be top of the list. With an exhibition, activities such as watching the farmer's wife prepare home-grown food over the fire in the farmhouse kitchen, as well as falconry displays and puzzles, quizzes and trails, there's plenty of hands-on activity to get a real sense of life as it would have been for Shakespeare's mother. [www.shakespeare.org.uk/visit-the-houses/mary-ardens-farm.html](http://www.shakespeare.org.uk/visit-the-houses/mary-ardens-farm.html)



*A setting for romance - Anne Hathaway's Cottage in Stratford-upon-Avon*

*Mary Arden's Farm is located in Wilmcote, just under four miles from Stratford-upon-Avon, and a short walk from Wilmcote train station. Travel from London to Stratford-upon-Avon in under two hours by car. A working farm, it is open from March - November each year.*

**Discover where the young William Shakespeare courted his future bride Anne Hathaway at her picturesque family home in Stratford-upon-Avon**

Anne Hathaway's Cottage, the family home of Shakespeare's bride-to-be, is as romantic as any of the Bard's plays. A pretty thatched farmhouse with beautiful grounds and gardens, it's the perfect place to recite a sonnet or two, and admire the many original items of family furniture, including the Hathaway Bed.

The story of the young Anne and William is brought to life by guides and there is a new Tudor Courtship exhibition that takes a light-hearted look at the reality of finding a husband or wife in the 16th century. [www.shakespeare.org.uk](http://www.shakespeare.org.uk)

*Anne Hathaway's Cottage & Gardens are around a 30-minute walk from the town centre. Travel from London to Stratford-upon-Avon in under two hours by car. Check the website for prices, including details of the Five House Pass and opportunities to save online.*

**See theatre at Shakespeare's Globe in London, where the Bard's friend, Richard Burbage, performed his plays on stage.**

There is nowhere better to get a sense of what watching Shakespeare's plays would have been like at the time he wrote them, than at the Globe on London's South Bank. It was on a site nearby (the original Globe burned down in 1613 during a performance of Henry VIII) that the playwright's friend and fellow actor Richard Burbage - who played many of the major Shakespearean characters, including Othello, Hamlet, Lear, and Richard III - performed. Today the rebuilt Globe Theatre is a mecca for Shakespeare fans for its atmospheric and authentic open-air experience (as in Shakespeare's time, if it rains, theatre-goers get wet!). [www.shakespearesglobe.com](http://www.shakespearesglobe.com)



*Shakespeare's friend, Richard Burbage, would also have performed his plays at the original Shakespeare's Globe. Credit John Trampler*

*Plays are performed from mid-April to mid-October and there are also tours and exhibitions on offer.*

*Shakespeare's Globe is on the bank of the River Thames in Bankside's Cultural Quarter in central London.*

**Visit historic Canterbury to see where playwright Christopher Marlowe was born.**

Canterbury is the birthplace of the poet, spy and dramatist Christopher Marlowe, a famous rival of Shakespeare's who, it is even believed, contributed to several of Shakespeare's works. A historic city itself, it is worth taking a guided walking tour of Canterbury to see where Marlowe was educated at King's School, one of the oldest schools in the world, and nearby Canterbury Cathedral. See where he was baptised at St George's Church where only the clocktower remains and take in a play at the Marlowe Theatre, named after the playwright. [www.visitkent.co.uk](http://www.visitkent.co.uk), [www.marlowetheatre.com](http://www.marlowetheatre.com)

*Canterbury is in Kent in south-east England, around a 90-minute train journey from central London.*

**Walk in the footsteps of Elizabeth I, the famous English monarch and patron to Shakespeare, at these historic sites around Britain.**

The influence of Elizabeth I can be seen all around Britain, in abbeys she restored and royal houses she lived in. In central London, **Westminster Abbey** is the site where Elizabeth I was crowned queen in 1559 and visitors can take a guided tour to learn more about its incredible history. Another popular

tourist attraction is **The Tower of London**, the fortress and prison where Elizabeth I was imprisoned by her half-sister Mary I, which today is home of the Crown Jewels. Elsewhere,

**Bath Abbey**, which was built from the late 15th-century, destroyed by Henry VIII and restored under Elizabeth I, is a wonderful place to admire magnificent architecture and enjoy choral music. **Kenilworth Castle** is a former medieval stronghold and royal palace - most famed as the home of Elizabeth's beloved Robert Dudley - where visitors can spend all day exploring the Castle Keep, Great Hall and Elizabethan Gardens. [www.hrp.org.uk](http://www.hrp.org.uk), [www.westminster-abbey.org](http://www.westminster-abbey.org), [www.bathabbey.org](http://www.bathabbey.org), [www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/kenilworth-castle](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/kenilworth-castle)

*Bath is in south-west England, a 90-minute train journey from central London. Kenilworth is in central England, around one hour by train from London.*

**Visit the ancient town of Rye to get a taste of where Jacobean playwright and Shakespeare collaborator, John Fletcher, lived and worked.**

Born in Rye in 1579, John Fletcher became one of the most prolific and influential dramatists of his day with his fame rivalling Shakespeare, who he also collaborated with. The ancient town is popular with visitors for its fine Georgian and medieval houses, cobbled streets and views of Romney Marsh. Walk in the Jacobean playwright's footsteps with tea at Fletchers House Tea Rooms & Restaurant, which was once his home. Other nods to the playwright are to be found at Fletcher's Theatre, which was set up to bring cultural productions to Rye. [www.fletchershouse.co.uk](http://www.fletchershouse.co.uk)

*Rye is in Sussex, south-east England, around 40 minutes by train from London.*

## Six immersive Shakespeare experiences

Step up on stage, eat like an Elizabethan, or dress like a character from the 16th century - whatever takes your fancy, throw yourself - literally - into all things Shakespearean!

**What? Drama workshop with a Shakespearean actor**

**Where?** Sadler's Wells or Urdang Academy, London

**How?** Whether you are completely new to acting or fancy yourself as the Globe Theatre's next star lead, this insightful and inspiring 'Playing Shakespeare' one-day workshop will demystify his plays and help you bring any character to life. Designed for any level of experience, a professional Shakespearean actor employs exercises and techniques to lead students through a playful, creative and exciting class. You will work with different scenes and monologues - and clues within the language and imagery - to understand how Shakespeare's language works and facilitate artistic expression. [www.city-academy.com/shakespeare-acting-course#CourseOutline](http://www.city-academy.com/shakespeare-acting-course#CourseOutline)



*A costume-fans' dream! Immerse yourself in the racks of fabulous film and theatre costumes as Angels The Costumiers*

**What? Elizabethan costume tour at Angels The Costumiers**

**Where?** Hendon, north-west London

**How?** Many a Shakespearean actor and Hollywood star has made the pilgrimage to this very special warehouse in north-west London for a costume fitting at Angels The Costumiers, the world's biggest supplier of costumes to stage and screen. This is the very same team that won an Oscar for the stunning Elizabethan costumes worn in the

1998 hit film *Shakespeare in Love* - so what better place to see what Shakespeare would have worn in his day and what actors playing Shakespeare characters wear on stage?

A family-run business established in 1840, today you can organise a private tour of this vast space, filled with five million costume items hung on 8.5 miles of railing. A tour of the collection takes approximately two hours and looks at all the departments in Angels, including Men's Tailoring, Ladies Making, Alterations, Uniform Department and many more. Spaces on the tour are strictly limited to 12 people. [www.angels.uk.com/thetour.html](http://www.angels.uk.com/thetour.html)

Once you've done the tour, you can even buy your own Shakespearean costume! Angels The Costumiers has a fancy dress shop, Angels, on Shaftesbury Avenue in central London - widely considered the best fancy dress shop in London - and stocks a range of Elizabethan costumes: [www.fancydress.com/pages/hire-galleries/medieval-elizabethan](http://www.fancydress.com/pages/hire-galleries/medieval-elizabethan).

### **What? Try your hand at geese herding or falconry at Mary Arden's Farm**

**Where?** Wilmcote, near Stratford-upon-Avon, west England

**How?** For a fun family day out, head to Mary Arden's House in Wilmcote, just 3.5 miles from Stratford-upon-Avon. This was the childhood home of Shakespeare's mother and sits alongside Palmer's Farm, a living history experience and working Tudor farm transporting visitors back to the 1570s. You can experience the smells, sounds, skills and crafts of the daily routine on a Tudor farm, and even try your hand at geese herding and falconry!



*Herd those geese as they would have done in the Elizabethan era! Credit Shakespeare's Birthplace Trust*

Falconry was a popular pastime of the era and often features in Shakespeare's plays.

[www.visitstratforduponavon.co.uk/attractions/mary-ardens-farm](http://www.visitstratforduponavon.co.uk/attractions/mary-ardens-farm)

### **What? Eat like an Elizabethan**

**Where?** Hatfield House, Hertfordshire, south England

**How?** To get an idea of what Shakespeare would have eaten at a typical Elizabethan banquet, head to Hatfield House, a historical mansion with royal connections set in a large park. Its renowned Elizabethan banquet nights include a lavish four course dinner of traditional English fare with a contemporary twist eaten at long banqueting tables - all set within the magnificent 15th century Great Hall of the Old Palace of Hatfield House, previously home to Queen Elizabeth I. It is certainly a unique dining experience, complete with authentic Elizabethan period music, song and theatre as entertainment.

[www.hatfieldhousehospitality.co.uk/private\\_events/elizabethan\\_banquets](http://www.hatfieldhousehospitality.co.uk/private_events/elizabethan_banquets)

### **What? Go backstage at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre**

**Where?** Stratford-upon-Avon, west England

**How?** Go behind the scenes at the home of the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) on a guided tour exploring the public and private areas of the theatre. To discover the origins of the RSC and its theatres in Stratford, choose the 'Behind the Scenes Tours', where you will explore a production in more depth and learn about the theatre making process (£8.50 per person or £4.50 for under 18s). Or, you can take the 'Front of House Tours', which explore the beginnings of the theatre in 1879 up to the modern day, hear behind-the-scenes secrets, and learn how costumes are made and how effects are achieved (£6.50 per

person or £4 for under 18s). Tours last one hour and depart from the cloakroom. [www.rsc.org.uk/your-visit/tours-and-tower](http://www.rsc.org.uk/your-visit/tours-and-tower).

**What? Dress up as a Shakespeare character**

**Where?** The Globe Theatre, central London

**How?** The iconic Globe Theatre offers fascinating backstage tours that bring this unique space to life with fascinating stories of the 1599 theatre, of its reconstruction process in the 1990s, and how the wooden globe shape works today as a dramatic space. One of The Globe's most popular backstage tours is its 'Elizabethan Dressing' experience. Find out the origin of the phrases 'straight-laced' and 'loose women' on this group tour, which explores the significance of clothing in Elizabethan society and the intricacies of clothing - all demonstrated as one of your group is dressed up as a Shakespearean character!

[www.shakespearesglobe.com/exhibition/combined-group-packages](http://www.shakespearesglobe.com/exhibition/combined-group-packages)

