



Press Release: 31 December, 2009

**Shakespeare's Globe and Theatre Royal Bury St Edmunds present two unique events about
'The Georgian Globe'**

Shakespeare's Globe in partnership with the Theatre Royal, Bury St Edmunds – the third oldest surviving theatre in the country – is presenting two unique events focusing on the relationship between Georgian and Shakespearean theatre traditions.

On Sunday 21 February, Shakespeare's Globe's popular 'Read Not Dead' project will take to the road for a special one-off event at the Theatre Royal, Bury St Edmunds. Working in partnership with the Theatre Royal's 'Restoring the Repertoire' programme, it will present a staged reading of *The Jew of Venice* by George Granville – a Georgian adaptation of Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*. This rehearsed reading offers an opportunity to experience the play in the type of Georgian playhouse for which it was originally written.

Performed by the cast of the Theatre Royal's production of *The Merchant of Venice*, this reading will be a fascinating game of spot the difference, giving a unique insight into the changing tastes of audiences and playwrights. The play – written almost fifty years after the readmission of Jews into England under Oliver Cromwell and over a hundred years after *The Merchant of Venice* was first performed – will allow audiences to compare and contrast how attitudes towards the character of Jewish moneylender Shylock changed over one turbulent century.

On Tuesday 26 January, Colin Blumenau, the Artistic Director of the Theatre Royal Bury St Edmunds, visits Shakespeare's Globe to deliver a talk entitled 'The Georgian Globe'. Colin led the beautiful refurbishment project of the Theatre Royal – built in 1819 – where Shakespeare's Globe on Tour performed in 2009.

Patrick Spottiswoode, Director of Globe Education at Shakespeare's Globe, said ***"The Globe Library has recently acquired an original quarto of Granville's play. The staged reading at the Theatre Royal will allow us to further our exploration of the ways that theatre buildings and***

changing attitudes affect how stories are told, and how Shakespeare's works have themselves been 'played with' over time. It will certainly be thrilling to hear Granville's play brought to life in the sort of playhouse for which it was intended".

Colin Blumenau, the Artistic Director of the Theatre Royal Bury St Edmunds, said *"What, frankly, could me more appropriate than a partnership between Shakespeare's Globe and the Theatre Royal Bury St Edmunds? Both organisations are involved in the exploration and reinvigoration of an historic repertoire. Each organisation adopts both a scholarly and an eminently practical approach to this work by involving themselves in thorough research but then, crucially, delivering the outputs of that research in a way that the plays themselves demand – on the stages of our theatres. I hope this is the start of a deepening collaboration between our two organisations. "*

Globe Education has staged - and recorded live for archive in front of audiences - over 150 plays by Shakespeare's contemporaries since the 'Read Not Dead' series began in 1995. The Theatre Royal Bury St Edmunds' 'Restoring the Repertoire' series started in 2004, staging readings of lesser known works from the 18th and early 19th centuries, and running research and events on drama in the Georgian period. Following the reading of *The Jew of Venice* the Theatre Royal will be staging two more rehearsed readings of Georgian versions of Shakespeare's plays, including Nahum Tate's 'happy-ending' version of *King Lear* and a spoof version of *Hamlet* by John Poole.

ENDS

Further information from Chris Adams, Press and PR Officer at Globe Education on 020 7902 1468, chris.a@shakespearesglobe.com or Lucy Close, Communications Officer at the Theatre Royal on 01284 829947, lucy@theatreroyal.org

Listings:

Talk: 'The Georgian Globe' by Colin Blumenau

Tuesday 26 January, 7pm

Nancy W Knowles Lecture Theatre, Shakespeare's Globe, London

Tickets: £10 (£8 Friends of Shakespeare's Globe/concs/students) including glass of wine/juice

To book, call the Box Office on 020 7401 9919 or visit www.shakespeares-globe.org

Read Not Dead: 'The Jew of Venice'

Sunday 21 February, 5pm

Theatre Royal Bury St Edmunds

Tickets: £7

To book, call the Box Office on 01284 769505 or visit www.theatreroyal.org

Notes to Editors:

- **Globe Education** presents a programme of workshops, lectures, events and staged readings all year round. The theme for the autumn season of public events is Shakespeare: Poet and Playhouse. For general enquires about Globe Education please call 020 7902 1430 or visit www.globe-education.org
- **Shakespeare's Globe Theatre**. Following its run at Shakespeare's Globe, *Love's Labour's Lost* is touring North America until 23 December. For the first time ever, Shakespeare's Globe will present a Christmas production with *Footsbarn's Christmas Cracker*. Box office: 020 7401 9919 or online at www.shakespeares-globe.org
- **The Theatre Royal Bury St Edmunds** is the last remaining working Regency Theatre in Britain and the only Theatre on the National Trust's portfolio of properties. This beautiful and intimate playhouse re-opened in 2007 following £5.3 million restoration project to restore its unique 18th century decorative scheme and layout. Today it has the special ambition to restore the lost dramatic repertoire of the Georgian era, researching and performing Georgian plays in a project entitled 'Restoring the Repertoire'.
- **Shakespeare's Globe Exhibition** is open all year round. May to September from 9am to 5pm and October to April from 10am to 5pm. Admission includes a guided tour of the Theatre. For further information, telephone 020 7902 1500.
- **Shakespeare's Globe Shop** stocks a variety of products, including season specific merchandise. Items can be bought at the on-site shop or on-line at www.globe-shop.com.
- **Capital Campaign** – Shakespeare's Globe is currently fundraising for a major development project. The first part of the campaign – to develop a Globe Education and Rehearsal Centre – is underway. To find out more visit www.shakespeares-globe.org/thesecondstage
- **The Shakespeare Globe Trust** is a registered charity No.266916. **The Globe receives no public subsidy.**