



Press Release – 22 March 2009

Shakespeare's Birthday and Sonnet Celebrations at the Globe

Shakespeare's Globe Theatre will celebrate Shakespeare's birthday this year with a programme of events inspired by the 400th anniversary of the publication of his Sonnets. The activities start on Saturday 18 April with Mark Rylance's much-loved **Sonnet Walks**, as part of a week packed with events. On Sunday 19 April the Globe invites visitors to join its annual free open day – **Sonnet Sunday**. On Thursday 23 April – Shakespeare's birthday – the Globe will hold a celebratory event on Bankside before launching the 2009 theatre season **Young Hearts** and on Saturday 25 April Globe musicians will join the **Mayor of London's** celebrations in Trafalgar Square.

Shakespeare is the best-known sonnet writer, having composed 154 of them – all of which appeared in a collection published by Thomas Thorpe on 20 May 1609. The Sonnets explore the themes of love, beauty, desire and mortality, and have long been regarded as Shakespeare's most important and distinctive contributions to lyric poetry.

During the summer, the Globe will present three of Shakespeare's four plays which feature sonnets – *Romeo and Juliet*, *As You Like It* and *Love's Labour's Lost*. The entire season includes four Shakespeare plays and three pieces of new writing that explore the great expanse of the heart – from purity to wild passion, and from the rekindling of old love to an evergreen love of life.

Sonnet Walks – Saturday 18 April

Shakespeare's Globe will launch the birthday celebrations on Saturday 18 April with the annual tradition of Mark Rylance's Sonnet Walks, in partnership with Phoebus Cart. Walkers can buy a ticket for two tours of Tudor London: one starting in Westminster Abbey or one starting at the site of Shakespeare's theatre in Shoreditch. Twelve sonneteers unexpectedly pop up and serenade walkers at various locations across London as they stroll to Shakespeare's Globe.

Sonnet Sunday – Sunday 19 April

On Sunday 19 April the Globe opens its doors for a free open day entitled **Sonnet Sunday**, supported by the **Mayor of London**. The day will embrace and involve everyone from 6 to 60 with fun activities across the site, introducing visitors to the Sonnets and the theme of love in Shakespeare. There'll be love songs

to show tenderness, Sword-fighting with Capulets & the Montagues to show passion, together with workshops and fun games on stage for the public to take part in. Sonneteers across the site will engage visitors with the charm and creative inspiration of this extraordinary building and the great legacy of Shakespeare's work and there'll also be the opportunity to take part in a record breaking attempt to film the most people ever say one sonnet.

Shakespeare's Birthday – Thursday 23 April

On Thursday 23 April – Shakespeare's birthday – the Globe launches its 2009 theatre season **Young Hearts** with Dominic Dromgoole's production of *Romeo and Juliet* at 7.30pm.

St George's Day event in Trafalgar Square – Saturday 25 April

As part of the **Mayor of London's** St George's day celebrations in Trafalgar Square on Saturday 25th April, Ensemble Bash, who's musicians played most distinctively in the Globe's 2008 production of *A Midsummer Nights Dream* and play this year in both *The Frontline* and *Troilus & Cressida* will join a fantastic line up of musicians. They will perform a contemporary range of percussive music on period instruments from the Globe

Public Lectures – Autumn 2009

In partnership with The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, Globe Education is delighted to present a series of lectures on Shakespeare's Sonnets during the autumn. Following their première in Stratford during the spring, Professor Stanley Wells and Dr. Paul Edmondson will repeat their lectures at the Globe, which will be illustrated by actors. David Crystal will present a lecture on the evening of Wednesday 18 November, following his appearance in Stratford at midday.

Listings Information

Sonnet Walks

Saturday 18 April

Venue: Shoreditch / Westminster Abbey

Time: 10.00am – 12.45pm

Tickets: Box office – 020 7401 9919

£16 / £13 concs / £10 FoSG

(All tickets must be booked in advance through the box office; walks leave every 15minutes from 10am until 12.45pm)

Sonnet Sunday

Sunday 19 April

Venue: Shakespeare's Globe SE1

Time: 12noon – 5pm

Tickets: FREE EVENT

2009 Theatre Season: Young Hearts

***Romeo and Juliet* directed by Dominic Dromgoole**

Thursday 23 April – Sunday 23 August

Venue: Shakespeare's Globe SE1

Time: 7.30pm

Tickets: Box office – 020 7401 9919 or www.shakespeares-globe.org

700 x £5 tickets (Standing)

£15 - £33 (Seated)

Globe Education: Public Lectures

In Association with the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust

Sex and the Sonnets by Professor Stanley Wells

Thursday 12 November

Venue: Shakespeare's Globe, Nancy Knowles lecture theatre

Time: 7pm

Ticket prices and booking details to be announced

Sonnets and Original Pronunciation by David Crystal

Wednesday 18 November

Venue: Shakespeare's Globe, Nancy Knowles Lecture Theatre

Time: 7pm

Ticket prices and booking details to be announced

The Effect of Shakespeare's Sonnets by Dr. Paul Edmondson

Thursday 26 November

Venue: Shakespeare's Globe, Nancy Knowles lecture theatre

Time: 7pm

Ticket prices and booking details to be announced

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Notes to Editors

The Sonnet is a short lyric poem, which originated in Italy and was introduced into England by Thomas Wyatt. A Shakespearean sonnet consists of 14 lines, each line contains ten syllables, and each line is written in iambic pentameter with a rhyming scheme of ABAB CDCD EFEF GG, in which the last two lines are a rhyming couplet.

Shakespeare's Globe 2009 Theatre Season entitled *Young Hearts* is launched with Dominic Dromgoole's production of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. The season also includes *As You Like It*, *Troilus and Cressida* and *Love's Labour's Lost* as well as three new plays *The Frontline*, *Helen* and *A New World*. 700 tickets are available at £5 for every performance. Shakespeare's Globe Theatre is also presenting UK tours of *The Comedy of Errors* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Tickets are available now from 020 7401 9919 / 020 7087 7398 or via [HYPERLINK "http://www.shakespeares-globe.org"](http://www.shakespeares-globe.org) www.shakespeares-globe.org and range from £5 to £33.

Globe Education was founded in 1989 and is now the country's largest theatre education department offering workshops, lectures and courses to the general public and over 100,000 students of all ages. Whether working with pre-school children or post-graduates, Globe Education promotes practical, theatre-centred approaches to the plays inspired by the Globe's stage and actor-audience relationship.