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**NASHVILLE SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL**

**SELECTED FOR SHAKESPEARE FOR A NEW GENERATION**

***Performances part of National Endowment for the Arts initiative***

**NASHVILLE, Tenn.** – Jan. 27, 2009 – [Nashville Shakespeare Festival](#) has been selected to participate in *Shakespeare for a New Generation*, a major initiative sponsored by the [National Endowment for the Arts](#) in cooperation with [Arts Midwest](#).

*Shakespeare for a New Generation* will give high-school and middle-school students throughout America the opportunity to experience Shakespeare's works through high-quality productions and educational activities. It is the sixth phase of [Shakespeare in American Communities](#), launched in September 2003, which has already reached more than 1,300 communities, 18 military bases, and 2,200 schools across all 50 states. This is the largest Shakespeare tour in American history.

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“The NEA’s Shakespeare initiative not only introduces millions of Americans to the English language’s greatest writer, but it also brings the experience of professional theater to many students who have never seen it before,” said [NEA](#) Chairman Dana Gioia. “I am delighted that through Shakespeare for a New Generation, we have benefited not only students, but also their teachers, as well as provided employment to numerous actors and theater professionals.”

Through Nashville Shakespeare Festival, more than 1,700 students from 22 local schools will see the production of *Richard the Third*. Students also have the chance to attend workshops. This month alone, 42 *Richard the Third* workshops and six *Hamlet* workshops are booked for 19 area schools.

"Seeing Shakespeare performed live by professional actors is the best way for young people to appreciate the value of Shakespeare's work. We are so grateful for the NEA funding which helps us achieve our mission," Denice Hicks, Nashville Shakespeare Festival Artistic Director, said.

The following 40 theater companies will each receive matching grants to support activities targeting students from at least 10 schools in their communities, states or regions between June 1, 2008 and May 31, 2009.

- The Acting Company (New York, NY)
- Actors' Shakespeare Project (Cambridge, MA)
- African-American Shakespeare (San Francisco, CA)
- Alabama Shakespeare Festival (Montgomery, AL)
- American Players Theatre (Spring Green, WI)
- American Shakespeare Center (Staunton, VA)
- The Aquila Theatre Company (New York, NY)
- Barter Theatre (Abingdon, VA)
- California Shakespeare Theater (Cal Shakes) (Berkeley, CA)
- The Children's Theatre Company (Minneapolis, MN)
- Cincinnati Shakespeare Company (Cincinnati, OH)
- Classic Stage Company (New York, NY)
- Denver Center for the Performing Arts (Denver, CO)
- East LA Classic Theatre (Los Angeles, CA)
- Georgia Shakespeare Festival (Atlanta, GA)
- Honolulu Theatre for Youth (Honolulu, HI)
- Idaho Shakespeare Festival (Boise, ID)
- Indiana Repertory Theatre (Indianapolis, IN)
- Kentucky Shakespeare Festival (Louisville, KY)
- Lantern Theater Company (Philadelphia, PA)

- Main Street Theater (Houston, TX)
- Milwaukee Shakespeare (Milwaukee, WI)
- Montana Shakespeare in the Parks (Bozeman, MT)
- The Nashville Shakespeare Festival (Nashville, TN)
- A Noise Within (Glendale, CA)
- Oregon Shakespeare Festival (Ashland, OR)
- Orlando-UCF Shakespeare Festival (Orlando, FL)
- The Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival at DeSales University (Center Valley, PA)
- PlayMakers Repertory Company (Chapel Hill, NC)
- Portland Stage Company (Portland, ME)
- Seattle Shakespeare Company (Seattle, WA)
- Shakespeare & Company (Lenox, MA)
- Shakespeare Festival at Tulane (New Orleans, LA)
- Shakespeare Santa Cruz (Santa Cruz, CA)
- Shakespeare Theatre Company (Washington, DC)
- The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey (Madison, NJ)
- Utah Shakespearean Festival (Cedar City, UT)
- Walltown Children's Theatre (Durham, NC)
- Weston Playhouse Theatre Company (Weston, VT)
- The Will Geer Theatricum Botanicum (Topanga, CA)

Education will continue to be an integral part of *Shakespeare for a New Generation*. The project combines the presentation of art with arts education through scholastic programs and classroom materials. In addition, educational materials developed by the Arts Endowment and showcasing some of the greatest actors of our day will continue to be distributed, free of charge, to thousands of classrooms.

**Nashville Shakespeare Festival:** The mission of the Nashville Shakespeare Festival is to educate and entertain the Mid-South community through professional Shakespearean experiences. The Festival accomplishes this primarily through its public productions of Shakespeare in the Park in the summer and Winter Shakespeare at The Troutt Theater and its educational workshops for young people and businesses.

**The National Endowment for the Arts:** The National Endowment for the Arts is a public agency dedicated to supporting excellence in the arts, both new and established; bringing the arts to all Americans; and providing leadership in arts education. Established by Congress in 1965 as an independent agency of the federal government, the Arts Endowment is the largest national funder of the arts, bringing great art to all 50 states, including rural areas, inner cities, and military bases.

**Arts Midwest:** Based in Minneapolis, Arts Midwest connects people throughout the Midwest and the world to meaningful arts opportunities, sharing creativity, knowledge, and understanding across boundaries. Arts Midwest connects the arts to audiences throughout the nine-state region of Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin. One of six non-profit regional arts organizations in the United States, Arts Midwest's history spans more than 25 years.

For more information on:

- Nashville Shakespeare Festival, call 615.255.2273 or visit [www.nashvilleshakes.org](http://www.nashvilleshakes.org).
- *Shakespeare in American Communities*, visit [www.shakespeareinamericancommunities.org](http://www.shakespeareinamericancommunities.org).
- National Endowment for the Arts, call 202.682.5570 or visit [www.arts.gov](http://www.arts.gov).
- Arts Midwest, call 612.341.0755 or visit [www.artsmidwest.org](http://www.artsmidwest.org).

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