

# ST·LOUIS SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL

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**EMBARGOED**  
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at 9:30 a.m. CT

## **St. Louis Shakespeare Festival announces expanded 25th Anniversary Season; including 'Hamlet', Patrick Page's 'All the Devils Are Here' and the launch of 'Romeo & Zooliet' at Saint Louis Zoo.**

**ST. LOUIS, MO** (February 6, 2025) – The St. Louis Shakespeare Festival is thrilled to unveil its landmark 25th anniversary season, featuring a groundbreaking collaboration with the Saint Louis Zoo (July 8-August 17), *Hamlet* at Shakespeare Glen in Forest Park (opening May 30, Tuesday-Sunday at 8 p.m. through June 22) and a one-night-only performance by Tony-Award-nominee and Grammy Award-winner Patrick Page at its 25th Anniversary Gala Celebration on May 15.

With over 100 productions scheduled for its 25th season, the Shakespeare Festival plans to reach more communities and visitors to the region than ever before. Bringing free or low cost access to live theater in 20 parks and public spaces across the bi-state.

"We are bringing the very best of Shakespeare front and center this season with a special expanded lineup," says Tom Ridgely, Producing Artistic Director. "Right out the gate in 2001, free Shakespeare in Forest Park was a hit. Now, it sees some of the largest single night audiences for Shakespeare anywhere in the world. This year, we couldn't be more excited to see the return of *Hamlet* to our mainstage directed by Michael Sexton, one of Broadway's most in demand Shakespeare experts. As well as welcome Patrick Page to St. Louis for his masterful one-man show *All the Devils Are Here: How Shakespeare Invented the Villain.*"

Free Shakespeare in Forest Park will be followed by the mammoth debut of a wildly fun family production *Romeo & Zooliet*. An imaginative stage adaptation based on Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* which will run for six weeks at the Saint Louis Zoo beginning July 8. The production will feature dazzling animal puppetry by world-renowned Michael Curry Design (Broadway's *The Lion King* and *Frozen*, plus Olympic and Super Bowl Ceremonies).

"St. Louis Shakespeare Festival has been our close neighbor in Forest Park for many years and we're thrilled to collaborate on an original performance celebrating both Shakespeare and the natural world," said Michael Macek, Saint Louis Zoo director. "This impressive production will engage children and their families in the arts, telling a timeless story of friendship through the eyes of animal characters."

The full season will include even more one-off events and collaborations with organizations across the region highlighting Shakespeare's cultural legacy across St. Louis

### **25th Anniversary Season Highlights:**

#### **25th Anniversary Celebration featuring Patrick Page's *All The Devils are Here***

**May 15, 2025 at The Sheldon Concert Hall**

As part of the Festival's 25th Anniversary Season Celebration, you can catch this tour de force performance by Tony Award nominee and Grammy Award winner Patrick Page (*King Lear, Hadestown*). Moving expertly through Shakespeare's canon, Page illuminates the ever-evolving conception of evil by delving into more than a dozen of his most wicked villains. Thrilling, biting, hilarious, and enlightening, what Page delivers is a masterclass on the most terrifying subject of them all: human nature. A rare opportunity for St. Louis to see "one of America's greatest classical actors" (*The Wall Street Journal*) on stage.

#### **Shakespeare in the Park: *Hamlet* directed by Michael Sexton**

**May 28 - June 22, Tuesday-Sunday at 8 p.m. • Free in Shakespeare Glen at Forest Park**

Shakespeare in the Park is the Festival's flagship production and the official start of the summer season. As one of the world's largest free and outdoor Shakespeare productions the shows are accessible for everyone, always. To mark its 25th production in Shakespeare Glen, the Festival turns to its greatest masterpiece—*Hamlet*. Directed by the renowned Shakespeare expert Michael Sexton of New York. Audiences can expect a modern take on the dark and complex family drama. Limited reserved seating will also be available for purchase.

#### ***Romeo & Zooliet***

**July 8 - August 17, Tuesday-Sundays at 7 p.m. • In the Saint Louis Zoo on Historic Hill**

Have you ever wondered what happens when the gates of the zoo close and the keepers go home for the night? What if the animals put on their very own Shakespeare performance? That's the basis for the wild new play created by the St. Louis Shakespeare Festival with the Saint Louis Zoo. The ground-breaking partnership will launch in July and run for six weeks only featuring stunning animal puppets by Michael Curry Designs (*The Lion King* on Broadway, Disney's *Frozen* and *Ice Age Live!*) in a delightfully playful take on *Romeo & Juliet*. Tickets go on sale on April 23.

Additional 2025 Programs include...

- **Confluence New Play Festival**

**March 27 - 29 at 3333 Washington • \$15 per ticket**

Annual showcase of emerging playwrights from Missouri and Illinois. This year playwright fellows are Aurora Behlke (St. Louis), M. Kamara (Carbondale) and Aaron Scully (Warrensburg). Single tickets and weekend passes are available now.

- **TourCo: *A Midsummer Night's Dream* directed by Tre-von Griffith**

**August 19 - September 7, Tuesday - Sunday at 6:30 p.m. • Free in Parks Across St. Louis Metro**

This is bite-sized Shakespeare in the Park in locations across the St. Louis metro area. A traveling group of six actors transforms one of Shakespeare's works into a 90-minute family friendly event in a park near you. This year's production is a music filled remount of the 2022 TourCo, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* directed by artist Tre'von Griffith.

- **"Shakespeare in the Streets: East St. Louis" directed by Kathryn Bentley**

**September 2025 • Free to Attend**

In partnership with the ESTL community and journalist DeAsia Paige (*The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, *Belleville News-Democrat*, *VICE*) the Festival will commission a new play based on real stories of residents with Shakespeare's language to be performed over a weekend celebration in the City's streets.

For more information about the full **2025 Season** and to sign up for more visit [stlshakes.org/current-season](https://stlshakes.org/current-season).

To sign up to be a part of the first to know about tickets to **Romeo & Zooliet** visit [stlshakes.org/zooliet](https://stlshakes.org/zooliet).

To secure your seat early for **All The Devils Are Here: How Shakespeare Invited the Villain** for the Festival's 25th Anniversary Gala visit: [stlshakes.org/2025-gala](https://stlshakes.org/2025-gala).

St. Louis Shakespeare Festival's commitment to radically accessible free theater is made possible through the support of hundreds of Festival members and supporters throughout the year. Lead support of the 2025 Season comes from Edward Jones, Regional Arts Commission ARPA for the Arts, Whitaker Foundation, PNC ArtsAlive, Switch, Missouri Arts Council, Pershing Charitable Trust, and The Hearst Foundations.

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**Media Assets:**

[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1U5GLYGXxkzvRQhgZPUC3qMHQCEqPBj4k?usp=drive\\_link](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1U5GLYGXxkzvRQhgZPUC3qMHQCEqPBj4k?usp=drive_link)

**ABOUT**

**St. Louis Shakespeare Festival** strives to foster community and joy across the St. Louis region through the Shakespearean tradition of art for all. Since 2001, the Festival has grown from producing a single production of Shakespeare in Forest Park to a year-round season of impactful programming in exciting and accessible venues throughout the bi-state area. Artistic and education programs reach over 50,000 patrons and students each season. Their award-winning work has been featured in the *New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and *Bloomberg News*.

**Saint Louis Zoo** Home to over 16,000 animals, representing nearly 500 species, the Saint Louis Zoo is recognized worldwide for its innovative approaches to animal care and management, wildlife conservation, research, and education. One of the few free zoos in the nation, the Saint Louis Zoo is the most-visited attraction in the region. Accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA), the Saint Louis Zoo is part of an elite group of

institutions that meet the highest standards in animal care as well as provide fun, safe and educational family experiences. The Saint Louis Zoo and the other AZA-accredited institutions collectively dedicate millions of dollars annually to support scientific research, conservation and education programs. For more information, visit [stlzoo.org](http://stlzoo.org).

**Michael Curry Design** For 35 years, Michael Curry Design has been a leader in entertainment and attractions around the world, creating some of the most iconic forms of puppetry, set design, and spectacle. Our in-house design and production teams are made up of over 50 highly specialized artists, designers, technical consultants, and fabricators. This award-winning multidisciplinary team is sought out by the world's foremost entertainment companies, including The Walt Disney Company, Universal, Wynn Resorts, Metropolitan Opera, Cirque du Soleil, as well as Olympic and Super Bowl Ceremonies. Michael Curry Design continues to innovate, heavily incorporating new technologies while being grounded in traditional theatrical techniques to create the world's most exemplary entertainment experiences.

**Patrick Page (*All the Devils Are Here*, Writer & Performer)** received a Tony Award nomination and a Grammy Award for his work in *Hadestown* on Broadway after starring as Hades in the Off-Broadway, Citadel Theatre, and National Theatre productions. Other Broadway: Conceived and starred in his one-man tour-de-force *All The Devils are Here: How Shakespeare Invented the Villain*, The Inquisitor in *Saint Joan*, Valentina in *Casa Valentina*, Buckley in *A Time to Kill*, Adult Men in *Spring Awakening*, DeGuiche in *Cyrano de Bergerac*, Green Goblin in *Spider-Man: Turn Off The Dark*, Henry VIII in *A Man for All Seasons*, Decius Brutus in *Julius Caesar*, Scar in *The Lion King*, The Grinch in *Dr. Seuss' How The Grinch Stole Christmas*, Lumiere in *Beauty and the Beast*, and Mackie in *The Kentucky Cycle*. Other New York: Cymbeline in *Cymbeline* (New York Shakespeare Festival/Delacort), Max in *The Sound of Music* (Carnegie Hall). He is an Associate Artist of The Old Globe in San Diego (Cyrano, Malvolio), and the Shakespeare Theater Company in Washington, D.C. (Coriolanus, Prospero, Macbeth, Iago, Claudius). Film: *Spirited* for Apple+, *In The Heights*, *Estella Scrooge*, *The Sixth Reel*. Television: Richard Clay on *The Gilded Age* for HBO; Octavius Kratt on *Schmigadoon!*; recurring on *Elementary*, *Madam Secretary*, *Flesh and Bone*, *Big Mouth* and guest starring roles on *Evil*, *NCIS: New Orleans*, *The Good Wife*, *The Blacklist*, *Chicago P.D.*, and *Law and Order: S.V.U.*

**MICHAEL SEXTON (Director, *Hamlet*)** is a director, dramaturg, and teacher from New York. He was the Artistic Director of The Shakespeare Society from 2005-2017 followed by the Director of the Public Shakespeare Initiative at The Public Theater. Recent credits include, as Dramaturg: *Macbeth* w/ Daniel Craig and Ruth Negga (Longacre), *King Lear* (Cort), *Hamlet* (Public), *Othello* (NYTW); and as Director: *Coriolanus*, with Patrick Page and Lisa Harrow, at Red Bull Theater; *The Winter's Tale*, with Peter Francis James, at The Pearl Theatre Company; *As You Like It* and *Henry V* with Geoffrey Owens, Jacob Fishel, and Miriam Hyman, at Two River Theater Company; Kelly Masterson's *Edith*, with Jayne Atkinson and Jack Gilpin, at the Berkshire Theater Festival; and *Titus Andronicus* with Jay O. Sanders at the Public Theater. He has directed New York and world premieres of plays by Rinne Groff, Will Eno, Marsha Norman, Caryl Churchill, Ain Gordon, Rogelio Martinez, Victor Lodato, Phil Porter, Chloe Moss, Marin Gazzaniga, Eric Gamalinda, and Rosemary Moore. He has directed at Red Bull Theater, New York Theater Workshop, Manhattan Class Company, Classic Stage Company, Soho Rep, PS122, The Old Globe, Portland Center Stage, Playmakers Rep, Rising Phoenix Rep, SPF and the Cherry Lane Alternative. He was born in Brooklyn.