

ST·LOUIS  
SHAKESPEARE  
FESTIVAL



# Rosencrantz & Guildenstern



# Are Dead

**MARCH 26-APRIL 11**

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The St. Louis Shakespeare Festival is proud to partner with MindsEye to provide Audio Description during the performance of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead on March 28 at 2 pm. To access the audio description during the show, please click [here](#).

# ST·LOUIS SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL

*Tom Ridgely, Artistic Director; Kate Tichelkamp, Executive Director*

In association with Albion Theatre

PRESENTS

## ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN ARE DEAD BY TOM STOPPARD

WITH

LYNN BERG	IAN MILLER
DANIELLE BRYDEN	ERIC NENNINGER*
TIÉLERE CHEATEM	MASON RAMSEY
JEFF CUMMINGS*	SEAN C. SEIFERT
INDIA EDDY	RYAN OMAR STACK*
MITCHELL HENRY-EAGLES*	JOY CHRISTINA TURNER
BRYN MCLAUGHLIN	

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PROPS DESIGN**  
KATHERINE STEPANEK

**COSTUME DESIGN**  
OLIVIA RADLE

**SOUND DESIGN**  
AMANDA WERRE

**FIGHT  
COORDINATOR**  
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**SCENIC DESIGN ASSISTANT**  
CLAUDIA EMIG

**STAGE MANAGER**  
KATHRYN BALLARD\*

**ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER**  
LEXI SIMS

**CO-PRODUCER**  
ROBERT ASHTON

**CO-PRODUCER**  
COLIN O'BRIEN

**PRODUCTION COMPANY**  
BLANK SLATE

DIRECTED BY  
**TOM RIDGELY**

# A NOTE FROM SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL

Welcome to the Festival's 2026 Season!

As we kick off a new year, we can't help but take a look back at 2025. Our 25th anniversary season was a milestone for the Festival in every way possible. We celebrated 25 years and set records for attendance, number of shows, contributed revenue, ticket sales, online reach and more.

The success of 2025 presented an interesting challenge as we began to plan this 26th season...How could we possibly follow it up?

Our 2026 season doubles down on everything you've come to know and love about the Festival. We will be performing more Shakespeare in more places than ever before...And those productions will feature the work of the premiere Shakespearean artists locally and nationally.

Our mainstage production of *The Tempest* in June will be helmed by Rick Dildine, former Festival artistic director who has gone onto national acclaim. In August, our TourCo production of *Two Gentlemen of Verona* will be directed by Rebekah Scallet of the New Jewish Theater, one of the brightest and most exciting theater artists working in St. Louis today. The tour will expand by an additional week, heading to 30 parks throughout the region this year.

Later in the Fall, a new and refreshed version of *Romeo & Zooliet* will arrive at Shakespeare Glen in Forest Park, where we will have the opportunity to show once again why the accessibility and beauty of the Glen make it the premiere place to see a show in St. Louis... And this time you can bring the whole family!

But it all begins tonight with *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*, directed by Artistic Director Tom Ridgely (also directing this fall's *Romeo & Zooliet*), and written by the legendary Tom Stoppard. This play proves again what we learn over and over at the Festival—that the inspiration to be drawn from Shakespeare's work may well be limitless. I hope you draw some of that inspiration for yourself tonight and enjoy this incredibly beautiful work.

This production would not be possible without so many of you who generously support our season as members of our Thespian Society. We especially want to thank those that supported the Taking Center Stage Fund through our recent Perchance to Dream Campaign. That fund is specifically dedicated to expanding our annual season and significantly underwrote the production costs of this show. If you are interested in learning more about the Thespian Society or the Perchance to Dream Campaign, please don't hesitate to contact us directly.

Now sit back and enjoy the show...And we'll see you soon in Shakespeare Glen and beyond!



A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tom".

Tom Ridgely  
Artistic Director



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kate".

Kate Tichelkamp  
Executive Director



[CLICK HERE TO GIVE!](#)

# ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN MAY NOT BE THE MAIN CHARACTERS IN THEIR STORY, BUT YOU'RE THE STAR OF OURS.

Your support makes it possible for the St. Louis Shakespeare Festival to bring high quality theater to St. Louis and beyond.

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# HOW THE 20TH CENTURY'S MOST ACCLAIMED PLAYWRIGHT FOUND OUT HE WAS JEWISH

By: Amy Lutz, Director of Marketing & Communications, St. Louis Shakespeare Festival  
*This piece was originally published in the St. Louis Jewish Light.*

In Sir Tom Stoppard's *Leopoldstadt*, a character muses, "A Jew can be a great composer. He can be the toast of the town. But he can't not be a Jew." The play, which bears witness to the lives of an Austrian Jewish family before, during and after the Holocaust, examines the tension between the family's Jewish and Austrian identities over the course of several decades.

For most of Stoppard's life, he considered his own identity that of an Englishman and playwright. His Jewish heritage was tucked away, only to be rediscovered late in life, leading to a multi-decade odyssey of self-discovery resulting in the creation of *Leopoldstadt*.

Waiting in the wings of Stoppard's successful career were doubts and questions about his own origins—he was under two years old when the family fled Czechoslovakia in 1939 for Singapore on a journey that eventually led him to England. It wasn't until middle age that Stoppard discovered the extent of his family's experience in the Holocaust.

His journey of self-discovery began in the 1970s when Stoppard asked his mother to begin writing down her memoirs. Years earlier, Stoppard had on occasion asked his mother about the family's Jewish heritage. She was vague, short in her responses.

Bobby Stoppard's resistance to her son's earlier questions was perhaps due less to disinterest, than to trauma. As Stoppard would find out over the course of several decades, most of his mother's family was murdered during the Holocaust. In her memoirs, she remarked on her decision to "draw a blind over my past life" once arriving in England, deciding never to discuss the family's life in Czechoslovakia with Tom or his brother Peter—likely attempting to shield herself from the pain of loss.

Through his mother's memoirs, Stoppard began to discover the full extent of his family's Jewish heritage—and the devastation wrought on his extended family by the Nazis and their collaborators.

His journey reached an apex during a conversation with a cousin, Sarka, in 1993. He recalls the following conversation after Sarka drew him a family tree.

"What happened to Wilma?"  
"She died in Auschwitz."  
"Berta?"  
"Auschwitz."  
"Anny?"  
"She died in a different camp. I don't know where."  
"Ota?"  
"He survived."

This conversation was included, almost word for word, in *Leopoldstadt*. In total, Tom Stoppard lost all four of his grandparents, three aunts and multiple extended family members.

In *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*, Guildenstern muses, "We cross our bridges when we come to them and burn them behind us, with nothing to show for our progress except a memory of the smell of smoke, and a presumption that once our eyes watered."

In the end, Stoppard did not burn the bridge behind him. Instead, he spent the final decades of his life building one back toward a past he had never been allowed to know, piece by piece, memory by memory, until the distance between who he was and where he came from could finally be crossed.

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# A NOTE FROM ALBION THEATRE

All of us at Albion Theatre are delighted that we have been able to collaborate with Tom Ridgely and all the staff at St. Louis Shakespeare Festival on this important piece of British theater.

Albion was formed with the aim of introducing a wide variety of plays from Britain and Ireland to the St. Louis theater audiences. Our first show was in the fall of 2022, and, coincidentally, it was a piece by Tom Stoppard, *Heroes*. Actually, *Heroes* is a translation and adaptation of a French play by Gérald Sibleyras. As I said at the time, a French play adapted by someone born in Czechoslovakia—what's more British than that? Stoppard did not arrive in the UK until he was 9 but become one of the leading post-World War II playwrights in the English language.

Since *Heroes* we have produced 3 seasons of 3 shows with plays ranging from the 1930s to the 2020s. Some have been well-known but rarely seen shows such as Harold Pinter's *The Birthday Party* to new-to-St. Louis playwrights such as Laura Wade's *Colder Than Here*. One regular audience member said "I'm never exactly sure what I'm going to see, but it's always good," and we didn't pay them to say that!

We are a resident theater company at the Kranzberg Black Box, and we hope we've been helpful in bringing our experience of working in the space to this show. It's a great theater for the sort of intimate productions we choose and for a show like *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*.

We hope you'll join us for our two shows in 2026. Two thrillers: *The Wasp* (2015) by Morgan Lloyd Malcolm about revenge, and *The Birds* (2009), Conor McPherson's adaptation of a story by Daphne Du Maurier that Alfred Hitchcock also adapted in his famous film of the same name. To our knowledge both are St. Louis premieres, so don't miss them.



Robert Ashton  
Founder & Executive Director  
Albion Theatre



# THE COMPANY

Lynn Berg.....	Polonius/Ambassador
Danielle Bryden.....	Ophelia
Tiélere Cheatem.....	Player King/Soldier/English King/Horatio
Jeff Cummings*.....	The Player
India Eddy.....	Alfred/Player Queen
Mitchell Henry-Eagles*.....	Rosencrantz
Bryn McLaughlin.....	Spy/Laertes/Attendant 1
Ian Miller.....	Spy/Ambassador/Attendant 3
Eric Nenninger*.....	Claudius
Mason Ramsey.....	Poisoner/Fortinbras/Attendant 2
Sean C. Seifert.....	Hamlet/Fight Captain
Ryan Omar Stack*.....	Guildenstern
Joy Christina Turner.....	Gertrude

**Synopsis from Concord Theatricals:** Acclaimed as a modern dramatic masterpiece, *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* is the fabulously inventive tale of *Hamlet* as told from the worm’s-eye view of the bewildered Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, two minor characters in Shakespeare’s play. In Tom Stoppard’s best-known work, this Shakespearean Laurel and Hardy finally get a chance to take the lead role, but do so in a world where echoes of *Waiting for Godot* resound, where reality and illusion intermix, and where fate leads our two heroes to a tragic but inevitable end.

— Hark!

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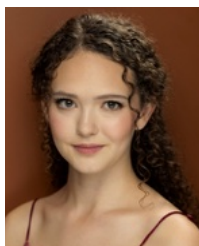
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# CAST & CREATIVE TEAM



**Lynn Berg (Polonius/  
Ambassador)** is an actor and artist active in New York's indie theater scene for twenty years and is co-creator of the internationally acclaimed, award-winning Bouffon Glass Menajoree. His favorite roles include Mayor O'Doul in *Flanagan's Wake*, Uncle Peck in *How I Learned to Drive*, Simon Stimson in *Our Town*, and he's particularly excited to play Polonius again after playing the role in two very different shows, *Hamlet* and *HVMLET*.



**Danielle Bryden (Ophelia)** is delighted to be making her debut with the St. Louis Shakespeare Festival. A recent graduate of WashU, she got her BA in Drama and studied

at the Globe Theatre in London before moving to New York with dreams bigger than her curly hair. Recent credits include *Cabaret* (Sally Bowles), *The Wolves (#46)*, *The Grandest Princess Ball Ever!* (Merida), *Into The Woods* (Florinda), and *Rock Never Dies: The Musical* (Female Swing). She is forever grateful to her family and friends for their continuous and unending support.



**Tiélére Cheatem (Player King/Soldier/  
English King/Horatio)** (They/Them, b. 1990) is a bold, multifaceted artist whose work is rich with Romantic melancholy, queer sensuality,

and a distinctively modern edge. Ethereal yet grounded, their artistry bridges the stage and the gallery, captivating audiences across the

United States, Canada, and the UK. A native of St. Louis, Cheatem's visual and performance work has earned numerous accolades, including two Ann Metzger Biennial Awards from the St. Louis Artists' Guild, Best in Show from the Metro Trans Umbrella Group (MTUG) Art Show, and recognition as one of STL Bucket List's Top 5 Artists of 2021. As a triple threat performer, Cheatem has brought powerful, award-winning performances to the stage in productions such as *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Hippolyta, Helena, Peter Quince) with the Shakespeare Festival St. Louis, *Kinky Boots* (Lola/Simon) with Tesseract Theatre, *La Cage aux Folles* (Jacob) with New Line Theatre, and *The Light in the Piazza* (Fabrizio Nacarelli) with R-S Theatrics. In 2023, Cheatem joined Opera Theatre of Saint Louis's New Works Collective—a community-driven commissioning initiative shaping the future of opera. As a member of the Collective, they helped lead an open call and selection process from over 150 national applicants, ultimately curating three new operatic works, each presented in a 20-minute format. This innovative project celebrates inclusivity, storytelling, and the evolving voice of opera. To see more of their work, follow @tcheatemstudios on Instagram.



**Jeff Cummings\* (The Player)** is delighted to be The Player in Tom Stoppard's *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead*. Previous appearances at St. Louis Shakespeare Festival

include Friar Lawrence via Bard the Owl in *Romeo & Zooliet* and Boyet in *Love's Labor's Lost*. Local credits include *Million Dollar Quartet*, *Clue*, and *Beautiful* with STAGES, the Ghost in *Hamlet*, *Oslo*, and *Million Dollar Quartet/Christmas* for St. Louis Rep, *Behind The Sheet*, *Hold On!*, and *Wedding Band*

# CAST & CREATIVE TEAM

at The Black Rep, *Jake's Women* at Moonstone Theatre, *Good Ship St. Louis* at Upstream Theatre, and *Life Sucks* at New Jewish Theatre. Select regional theatre credits include Brutus in *Julius Caesar* at Utah Shakespeare Festival, Claudius in *Hamlet* at Notre Dame Shakespeare Festival, Phileas Fogg in *Around The World In 80 Days* at Indiana Rep, and in seven seasons with the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, highlights include Berowne in *Love's Labor's Lost*, Bassanio in *The Merchant Of Venice*, the Duke of Suffolk in *Henry VI pts 1 & 2*, and Jack Worthing in *The Importance Of Being Earnest*. Jeff's previous 'Stoppardian' adventures include Septimus in *Arcadia* for both ACT Theatre (Seattle) and the Alliance Theatre (Atlanta), and Henry Carr in *Travesties* and Guthrie in *Night & Day* for Chicago's Remy Bumpo Theatre Company. He is also an Audie Award-winning audiobook narrator with numerous recordings including works by Mark Twain, Gore Vidal, Philip K. Dick, and Dean Koontz. Jeff dedicates his work on this production to the memory of Gary Wayne Barker.



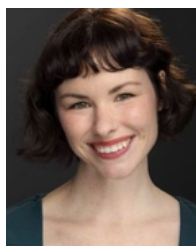
**India Eddy (Alfred/ Player Queen)** is a St. Louis based writer-actor and a current senior at Webster University's Sargent Conservatory of Theatre Arts pursuing a BFA in Acting. India

is so excited to be making her St. Louis Shakespeare Festival and professional debut in one of her all time favourite plays! Learn more at [indiaeddy.com](http://indiaeddy.com).

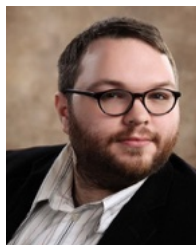
**Mitchell Henry-Eagles\* (Rosencrantz)** is delighted to return to Elsinore with the festival, having previously appeared in the synonymous role in last summer's production of *Hamlet* in Forest Park. Some other recent and



favorite productions include *Merry Wives of Windsor* (St. Louis Shakespeare Festival); *First Date* (New Jewish Theatre); *Hand to God* (Actors Studio); *Life is a Dream* (Upstream); *Trash Macbeth*, *Residents of Craigslist* (ERA), and *Titus Androgynous* (YoungLiars). Much love to Morgan.



**Bryn McLaughlin (Spy/Laertes/Attendant 1)** is over the moon about making her stage debut with the St. Louis Shakespeare Festival! Bryn is a St. Louis-based actor, director, and musician. After studying theatre at Eastern Oregon University, she acted and directed as a core member of the La Grande Shakespeare Company, taking on roles such as Henry in *Henry V* and Hotspur in *Henry IV*. St. Louis credits include playing Janet in *I Have Been Here Before* at Albion Theatre, Leah in *The Immigrant* at New Jewish Theatre, and Sonya in *Uncle Vanya* at St. Louis Actors' Studio. In the spring of 2025, she composed an original score for the world premiere of *Scream, Echo, Scream* by Summer Baer (Nominated: St. Louis Theatre Circle Award for Best New Play). Thank you to the cast and crew of R&G for their generosity of artistic spirit, and to Josiah for being exactly who you are.



**Ian Miller (Spy/Ambassador 2/ Attendant 3)** is thrilled to be making his debut with the St. Louis Shakespeare Festival as a Tragedian in *Rosencrantz and*

# CAST & CREATIVE TEAM

*Guildestern Are Dead*. He studied theatre at Mineral Area College and Truman State University, earning degrees from both institutions. Past stage performances include *Pericles Prince of Tyre*, *Twelfth Night*, *As You Like It*, and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. Ian would like to thank the many friends, family and mentors who guided and supported him through his continuous journey as an actor, with a special shout out to Kala Loughary "Thanks for making monsters out of us!"



**Eric Nenninger\*** (**Claudius**) is overjoyed and grateful to be back on stage in his first production with The Shakespeare Festival. A St. Louis native. Television credits include *Mad*

*Men*, *The Flash*, *The Big Bang Theory*, *9-1-1*, *One Day at a Time* (produced by Norman Lear) HBO's *Generation Kill* and *Winning Time*, *True Story*, *The Politician*, *Kickin' It*, *History of the World Part II*, *Wet Hot American Summer* and *Malcolm in the Middle*. Thank you to my family for all the love and support over all the years.



**Mason Ramsey** (**Poisoner/Fortinbras/Attendant 2**) is thrilled to be making his debut with the STL Shakespeare Festival in *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead!* Previous credits

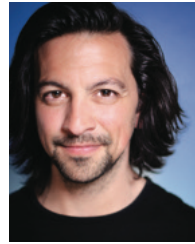
include performances at the Kranzberg with *Tim Without Thalia* and with Tesseract Theatre in *Legally Blonde: The Musical*. Mason has also worked in front of the camera on 640 Productions' *The Collins Film* (Brennan Huizinga) and *Daydreams: The Lazy One Unworthy of Living* (Parker Eisen). His own work also extends behind the camera, with his

directorial debut, *Same Plane Terrain & In Ran Cram*, still in post-production. He offers heartfelt thanks to Jai Mali for their creative support and guidance, as well as to his family and this wonderful company for their encouragement and collaboration. Enjoy the show!



**Sean C. Seifert** (**Hamlet/Fight Captain**) is honored and thrilled to make his St. Louis Shakespeare Festival debut. Sean is a graduate from The Jeanine Larson

Dobbins Conservatory of Theatre and Dance at Southeast Missouri State University. Recent credits include *Ken Ludwig: Baskerville* (New Jewish Theatre; Theatre Circle Nomination); *The Inheritance* (Tesseract Theatre); *The Mousetrap*; *Sister Mary Ignatius*; *Saturday Night Theatre* (Stray Dog Theatre); *Flanagan's Wake* (Westport Plaza Playhouse); *Othello*; *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (The Jeanine Larson Dobbins Conservatory). He would like to thank his parents, family & partner for their continued support.



**Ryan Omar Stack\*** (**Guildestern**) At St. Louis Shakespeare Festival: *Romeo & Zooliet* as Paris and Prince (2025), *Hamlet* as Voltmand (2025). Regional Theatre: *Emma* as

Frank Churchill (Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, 2025); *Arden of Faversham* as Mosby (Colorado Shakespeare Festival, 2024); *Much Ado About Nothing* as Claudio (Colorado Shakespeare Festival, 2023); *King Lear* as Oswald (Colorado Shakespeare Festival, 2023); *You Enjoy Myself* (Local Theater Company, 2023); Additional Credits: *The Queen's Ball*:

# CAST & CREATIVE TEAM

*A Bridgerton Experience* as Sir Harris (Shondaland & Netflix, 2022); *Life Is Strange Remastered* as Facial Motion Capture Actor (Deck Nine Games). Membership: AEA (Actor's Equity Association). Special Awards/Training: OnStage Colorado Award: Actor in a Comedy. Social: @omarstack



**Joy Christina Turner (Gertrude)** is thrilled to return to the St. Louis Shakespeare Festival (STL Shakes). After touring with the STL Shakes TourCo in 2024 as Prospero in *The*

*Tempest*, Turner joined First Run Theatre for their Spectrum Plays, appearing in the one-acts *Betta than Metta* (Mason) and *Double Date* (Gloria). She is deeply grateful for the opportunity to collaborate with such a talented company and is eager to learn everything she can from this experience.



**Katherine Stepanek (Scenic/Lighting/ Props Design)** is a scenic and lighting designer whose work spans regional theatre, opera, and higher education. Her designs have

been seen at Clarence Brown Theatre, Thunder River Theatre, New Jewish Theatre, and Union Ave Opera, among others. She has received multiple SETC Scenic Design Awards, including first-place recognition for Detroit '67 and Million Dollar Quartet at Clarence Brown Theatre. This summer, she returns to Shakespeare with *Two Gentlemen of Verona* for the St. Louis Shakespeare Festival's TourCo. Katherine holds an MFA in Scenic Design from the University of Tennessee and currently

serves as Assistant Professor of Scenic Design at Webster University's Sargent Conservatory of Theatre Arts. She is thrilled to be making her St. Louis Shakespeare Festival debut with *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*.



**Olivia Radle, MBA (Costume Design)**

(she/her) is a local St. Louis designer who has been working in theater for the last four years in various costume related roles including designer,

wardrobe supervisor, and stitcher. She is excited to be designing for St. Louis Shakespeare Festival for the first time, having previously supervised the wardrobe team on *Romeo & Zooliet*, *Hamlet*, and *As You Like It*. Other recent costume design credentials include *Leading Ladies*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Sound of Music*; Riverside Theater Project. Olivia has also been a featured designer at the AltBall fashion show for the last two years. She has had her designs worn by artists and actors including Halsey, Ariel Winter, Beyoncé, Taylorville, and Tyler King Band. When she isn't sewing, Olivia can be found reading with her cats (Draco, Ava and Mistral) or learning a new board game with her husband Chris.



**Amanda Werre (Sound Design)** is

excited to be working on the production. Recent Credits include *The Cottage* and *Ring of Fire* (St. Louis Rep), *Waitress* (The Hanger), *The Wanderers* (New

Jewish Theatre), Regional Theatre: Lyceum Theatre, Metro Theatre Company, Kitchen Theatre Company, Hope Summer Repertory Theatre, Cider

# CAST & CREATIVE TEAM

Mill Playhouse, Idaho Shakespeare Festival and Great Lakes Theatre. Amanda is on faculty at Sargent Conservatory.



**Bart Williams (Fight Choreographer)** is an instructor/coordinator with Dueling Arts International (DAI), Associate Faculty with Theatrical Intimacy Education (TIE), A certified teacher of Chubbuck Technique, and Professor of Movement/Acting/Stage Combat/Directing at Southeast Missouri State University's Dobbin's Conservatory. Recent fight choreography credits include *Ragtime* at Stages St. Louis, *Jersey Boys* and *West Side Story* at the Muni. He will be returning to the Muni for *Newsies* this summer.



**Nikki Green (Intimacy Coordinator)** A native of Metro-Detroit, Michigan, Nikki has taught costume design and technology at WashU since 2018. In addition to designing costumes for

WashU's Performing Art's season, she also serves as their resident Intimacy Choreographer. Nikki's training in Staged Intimacy comes from Intimacy Directors International (now Intimacy Directors and Coordinators Inc.) and Theatre Intimacy Education (TIE). She is thrilled to have this opportunity to work on this production with St Louis Shakespeare. [nikkigreendesigns.com](http://nikkigreendesigns.com).

**Claudia Emig (Scenic Design Assistant)** is a scenic designer and artist based in St. Louis, with experience in both academic and professional settings. Claudia's scenic design credits include *Ride The Cyclone*, *Rodgers and Hammerstein's*



*Cinderella*, and *The SpongeBob Musical*, as well as assistant scenic design for *In A Word* (Webster University's Sargent Conservatory). Her work as a scenic artist includes *Waitress*, *A Grand Night For Singing*, and *Something Rotten* (Music Theatre Wichita), as well as *Natasha, Pierre*, and *The Great Comet of 1812* and *Our Town* (Webster University's Sargent Conservatory of Theatre Arts). She has also worked as a scenic charge artist on *Silence* and *Seize The King* (Webster University's Sargent Conservatory), and is the assistant scenic charge artist at Music Theatre Wichita for the 2026 Summer Season. Outside of the theatre, Claudia spends her time practicing yoga, caring for her plants, and discovering new and unusual ways to create art.



**Kathryn Ballard\* (Stage Manager)** has worked in the St. Louis arts scene for more than 30 years as an actor, stage manager and administrator. R&G marks her 6th production with the St. Louis Shakespeare Festival and it is always a pleasure. She is a proud member of Actors' Equity Association and she thanks you for supporting live, local theatre!



**Lexi Sims (Assistant Stage Manager)** is excited to make her St. Louis Shakespeare Festival debut! Her first stage management experience was with a small production of *Hamlet*. She is an alum of Webster

# CAST & CREATIVE TEAM

University's Sargent Conservatory of Theatre Arts, where she earned her BFA in Stage Management. Recent St. Louis credits include: Tesseract Theatre's *Legally Blonde* (PSM), The Muny's *Evita* (ASM), *Les Misérables* (PA), *The Little Mermaid* (PA), and *Waitress* (PA), The New Jewish Theatre's *The Heidi Chronicles* (ASM) and *Dear Jack, Dear Louise* (ASM). Lexi thanks her family, friends, and mentors for their endless support and encouragement. [@lexisims\\_](http://simslexi26.wixsite.com/portfolio)



**Robert Ashton (Co-Producer)**

For over two decades Robert has been an actor and director in St. Louis theater and has served on the boards of

Muddy Waters Theatre, St. Louis Shakespeare and West End Players Guild. He was Artistic Director at First Run Theatre in 2020 and 2021. Robert retired from a career in manufacturing, primarily in legal and HR functions, and has a degree in Law from Sheffield University. He has been a member of several human services and arts boards and is currently an Advisory Commissioner at the Saint Louis Art Museum.



**Colin O'Brien (Co-Producer)**

is in his twelfth season with the St. Louis Shakespeare Festival. Favorite productions include *Romeo & Zooliet*, *Hamlet*,

*Q Brothers Christmas Carol*, and *King Lear*. Through his company,

Blank Slate, he works as a producer on concerts, parades, and theatrical productions. He serves on the board of Cinema St. Louis, is forklift-certified, and is currently meticulously rewriting, recutting, and redubbing *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy into Christmas movies for Colin and AJ's Annual Christmas Party. [colinandaj.com](http://colinandaj.com)



**Tom Ridgely (Director)**

has served as Artistic Director of the St. Louis Shakespeare Festival since

2018. He is also a Drama Desk

nominated Director who has developed or presented work at the Public Theater, The Old Globe, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival, Red Bull and more, and his productions have won DFW Theater Critics Forum and ECNY Awards and been nominated for St. Louis Theater Circle, Connecticut Critics Circle and BroadwayWorld Connecticut Awards. He came to the Festival from Waterwell in New York City, the company he co-founded and led from 2002-2018.

There he helped create and produce more than a dozen world premieres and adaptations of classics nominated for three IT awards, a Drama Desk, a New York Magazine Culture Award, and a Village Voice "Best of NYC." Since taking over the Festival, he has won a St. Louis Magazine A-List Award for "New Arts Leader" and oversaw the Festival's shift to developing and producing new work, which also won an A-List Award for "New Programming."

# CAST & CREATIVE TEAM

Blank Slate (Production Company) is a live events company. In addition to its work with the St. Louis Shakespeare Festival, it helps produce many of St. Louis's favorite events, including Soulard Mardi Gras, Evolution Music Festival, Great Forest Park Balloon Race, Dogtown St. Patrick's Day Parade, Taste of St. Louis, Cherokee Street Cinco de Mayo, Delish on Delmar, Grove Fest, and Heritage and Freedom Festival in O'Fallon, Mo. @blankslateline

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# FESTIVAL STAFF

Tom Ridgely, *Artistic Director*

Kate Tichelkamp, *Executive Director*

Amy Lutz, *Director of Marketing & Communications*

Erin Vlasaty, *Senior Manager of Institutional Giving*

Olivia Radle, *Finance Manager*

Celia Chojnacki, *Development Manager*

Megan Gooch, *Business Manager*

Hannah Baartman, *Education Coordinator & Teaching Artist*

Deanna Jent, *Program Director - Confluence Regional Writers Project*

Robert Henke, *Scholar in Residence*

Kayla Bakker, *Graphic Design*

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Chorus of Fools Proudly Presents

APRIL  
9-19

written by William Shakespeare

directed by Eric Satterfield



ROMEO & JULIET

TICKETS



EST. 2024

CHORUS OF FOOLS

# PRODUCTION CREW

Production Company.....Blank Slate  
Production Manager.....Colin O'Brien  
Blank Slate Assistant.....Josh Van Hoorebeke  
Company Manager.....Megan Gooch  
House Manager.....Shannon Dobson  
Scenic Artist.....Evy Arnold  
Scenic Design Assistant.....Claudia Emig  
Head Electrician.....Lou Ritter  
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*\*member, AEA, +member, USA Local 829, ++member, I.A.T.S.E. Local #6*

Special thank you to Julia Walker, Sean Savoie, Rob Henke, Claire Sommers, Carman Grisham, Emily Hoffman, Rob Lippert, Jennifer Thompson, Jef Awada, and Joanna Battles.

## Make the upcoming hour o'erflow with joy, and let pleasure drown the brim.

– William Shakespeare



**St. Louis Shakespeare Festival**  
is one of nearly 500 programs  
supported by the Missouri Arts Council,  
the state agency dedicated to the arts  
for all Missourians



[missouriartscouncil.org](http://missouriartscouncil.org)

Kim Bouldin-Jones, St. Charles | *Happy Minutes* | [hangingtime.org](http://hangingtime.org)

- one of over 100 artists statewide highlighted in our Missouri Featured Artists Program

*(Image courtesy of the artist)*

# St. Louis

NEWSLETTERS FROM  
ST. LOUIS MAGAZINE



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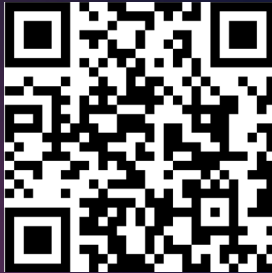


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**STLMAG.COM/NEWSLETTERS**

# COMING SOON

Learn more about the  
Festival's 2026 season!



# THE TEMPEST

Written by William Shakespeare



May 27 - June 21, 2026

Tues-Sun, 8:15pm

Directed by Rick Dildine  
**ST·LOUIS SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL**

**FREE**  
Shakespeare Glen  
in Forest Park

# THE TWO GENTLEMEN



# VERONA

of

WRITTEN BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

DIRECTED BY REBEKAH SCALLET

**AUG 4 -  
SEPT 6**

**ST·LOUIS SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL**

[STLSHAKES.ORG](http://STLSHAKES.ORG)

**FREE**

In Parks Across the Region

ST·LOUIS SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL

**ROMEO &**  
**ZOOJET**

Written by Jennifer Joan Thompson  
Directed by Tom Ridgely

**SEPT. 24-**  
**OCT. 11**

Shakespeare Glen  
in Forest Park

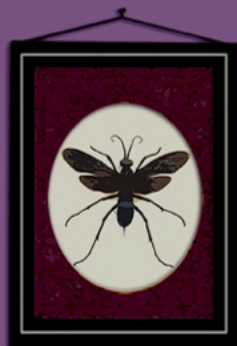
# Coming soon from Albion Theatre in the Kranzberg Black Box Theatre

Two edge-of-your-seat thrillers  
that will haunt you long after you leave the theater

## THE WASP

by Morgan Lloyd Malcolm

JUNE  
12-28



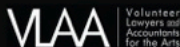
## THE BIRDS

by Conor McPherson  
from a short story  
by Daphne Du Maurier

OCT 16  
-NOV 1



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# ST. LOUIS SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL GOES TO LONDON

## Join STLShakes in London July 13-19, 2026!

This summer, the St. Louis Shakespeare Festival will travel to London for a memorable week of theater, conversation and cultural exploration.

### This curated theater tour includes:

- Six nights at The Montague Hotel
- Six performances
- Three group dinners and daily full English breakfast
- Optional guided visits to galleries, Shakespeare's Globe & more
- Five private discussions with cast members, creatives, critics & arts leaders
- Transportation to all performances and group activities
- Plenty of free time to explore London at your own pace



**CLICK TO  
LEARN  
MORE!**

The full package is \$7,500 per person (for double occupancy. Single occupancy is \$8,500) and includes all tickets, admissions and scheduled experiences. Deadline to register is April 10, 2026 with final amount due by May 15, 2026. Guests are responsible for airfare and incidental meals.



## SUMMER SHAKESPEARE STUDIO

For two-week sessions throughout June and July, our Summer intensive provides passionate young actors from across the US with rigorous training in stage performance, text analysis, and the artistic process!

### 2026 Camp Registration

For ages 9-13 and 14-19

Session 1: June 1-12

Session 2: June 15-26

Session 3: July 6-17

Session 4: July 20-31

Pricing: \$850 per student per session or \$1,500 for a full month (two sessions).

*\*Full and partial scholarships are available.*

**Registration is now open!**

Each morning, students train with Shakespeare Festival teaching artists—engaging with Shakespearean scripts, stagecraft and stage combat (en garde!). Students will exercise their voice and movement skills, developing the same techniques used by professional performers to bring complex texts to life!

After lunch, students rehearse with their peers, preparing abridged productions of Shakespeare shows. The middle school cohort typically performs a show tailored to their cast size and interests, while the high school cohort performs the same play produced in Shakespeare in the Park. As a celebration of their training, the productions are performed for family and friends on the second Friday of the Session.





## SHAKESPEARE IN THE STREETS

Shakespeare in the Streets is a grassroots theatrical experience that invites St. Louis neighborhoods to tell their stories.

A Festival-selected creative team leads the neighborhood in developing an original play based on one of Shakespeare's works—a play with themes that reflects the community's character.

Residents of the year's selected community contribute to all aspects of the production, from story development to live performance. The result is a weekend-long celebration of their collective effort, with three live, outdoor performances. Free and open to the public, these performances unite the neighborhood and introduce it as a creative force to the greater St. Louis area.



Shakespeare in the Streets will return in 2027 in DOGTOWN. Are you a local resident who has a neighborhood story to tell? Email your story to [Erin@STLShakes.org](mailto:Erin@STLShakes.org).



Fostering community and joy across the St. Louis region through the Shakespearean tradition of art for all.

## ABOUT US

Inspired by R. Crosby Kemper, III, the idea of a free Shakespeare festival began in 1997, and with broad civic support, the St. Louis Shakespeare Festival received 501(c)3 status in December 1999.

In 2001, after three years of planning and preparation, first Managing Director Lana Pepper, along with Chairman of the Board Marvin Moskowitz and a visionary Board of community leaders, produced the first annual free Shakespeare festival in Forest Park, a production of "Romeo and Juliet." Since the initial two-week run that attracted 33,000 audience members, the Festival has grown into a year-round institution producing over 250 public performances annually for nearly 100,000 patrons and students. Shakespeare in the Park remains an unofficial start of summer for many St. Louisans.

Today the Festival is recognized as an arts and culture leader of the region and has received numerous awards including "Best Theatre Company," "Most Innovative Arts Organization," and Exemplary Community Achievement from the Missouri Humanities Council. In January 2015, the Festival received the Arts and Education Council's Excellence in the Arts Award and recently in 2019 Focus St. Louis's What's Right with the Region award for fostering creativity for social change.

**ST·LOUIS SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL**