



2025-2026 SEASON IN REVIEW



MISSION: Grounded in the works of Shakespeare, we enrich communities through accessible, inclusive, professional theatre experiences that educate, inspire, and entertain diverse audiences.

VISION: To use Shakespeare's truths and the power of the arts to transform lives. Shakespeare belongs to everyone.

71,485 SERVED THIS SEASON!



FESTIVAL

- 23,510 audience members served at no charge in Central Park
- 11 weeks, 5 productions, 52 performances
- Continued Access – 7th year of Kids' Globe interactive tent; 6th year of TARC to the Park free bus vouchers; ASL Interpretation
- Guest production from Louisville Ballet, *Hamlet & Ophelia*
- Performances from our own programs including Camp Shakespeare, Shakespeare with Veterans, Down Syndrome of Louisville Community Creates, and Gilda's Club Survivorship Shakespeare
- 50 nightly community pre-show performances including: Derby City Chamber Brass, Derby City Fencing, Dreams with Wings, Flamenco Louisville, Homefront Harmonies, Hui Kaululehua, Keen Dance Theatre, Louisville Ballet School, Louisville Food Tours, Mexico Lindo, three witches shakespeare, and more



EDUCATION

- 41,727 served
- Toured to 91 counties: 80 Kentucky, 10 Indiana, 1 Illinois
- Organizations: 297 total served - 179 schools, 46 libraries, 27 community organizations, 45 parks
- Total Performance & Workshop Hours: 731
- 245 summer campers served through Camp Shakespeare (15% scholarship)
- 15 college students from 8 colleges participated in Bekki Jo Schneider Intern Company for summer season
- Shakespeare Off the Page continued
- Facilitated incarcerated youth arts program at the Clark Regional Detention Center in Jeffersonville, Indiana, August-May
- Continued tours to rural areas of Eastern Kentucky, made possible by EO Robinson Mountain Fund and Steele-Reese Foundation
- Toured *Kentucky History* to 5 Louisville Free Public Libraries through America250KY grant



COMMUNITY

- Indoor season: Louisville premiere of *Mary Shelley's Frankenstein* serving 2,774 audience members and the Louisville premiere of *Emma*, presented in partnership with Actors Theatre of Louisville, serving 3,594 audience members (highest-attended indoor production in 10 years)
- Shakespeare in the Parks *The Tempest* toured to a record 45 parks
- *The Two-Actor Tempest* toured to 5 Louisville Free Public Library branches and 41 regional libraries
- 11th anniversary of Shakespeare with Veterans program culminated in Central Park performance
- Arts for All Kentucky residencies with Down Syndrome of Louisville, Dreams with Wings, Kaleidoscope, Gilda's Club, and Brave Spirits LGBTQ+ teen program
- 3rd year serving grieving youth with Hosparus G-Force Camp
- Partnered with Aloha Lou! Polynesian Cultural Festival in Central Park



As You Like It



Antony and Cleopatra



The Two Gentlemen of Verona



Romeo and Juliet

Kentucky Shakespeare Festival in Central Park

"Fantastic performances, you guys continue to amaze and delight. You bring perspective and empathy every summer. We need Kentucky Shakespeare." – *Rob and Ginger*

"Having this company here in our laps is an inestimable privilege and a treasure. There is so much talent, commitment, creativity, and solid hard work happening in this group. And I can just walk here and receive this gift every summer, whenever I feel like it! This is so much better than being a billionaire." — *Michelle*

"My son and I had so much fun Friday night and I also wanted to say thank you for keeping your drink and food prices reasonable! In this economy I really appreciate that." — *Jennifer*

"As usual, it was wonderful, funny, flawless, etc. Shakespeare in the Park has been one of the highlights of every year since I moved here 9 years ago. Thanks again!" — *Art*

"Best Best Best!!! Perfect thing to do in summer in Louisville!!" — *Connie*

"I brought my kids from FT Knox because I remembered this as a kid. My oldest said it changed his view of Shakespeare - his classmates told him he was overrated, but now he doesn't feel that way- that's a win for a preteen." — *Hilary*

"My husband and I saw the show last night. We have been to many productions through the years. I am always amazed at the talent, onstage and behind the scenes. The set, as always is unbelievable. The costumes gorgeous. The talent on stage, not only the acting, but the musical talent. We truly enjoy the outstanding performances!!" — *Gina*

"Do y'all ever think about how crazy it is that we get to enjoy professional theatre, outside, FOR FREE, every summer?! Anyway, Antony and Cleopatra was gorgeous and I got to watch it while eating empanadas and cuddling a puppy. What a whimsical experience." — *Alyssa*



Louisville Ballet's Shakespeare in Dance:
Hamlet & Ophelia

Mary Shelley's Frankenstein

"I still can't get over how incredible the experience was. The acting, the way the story was constructed, the costuming, props, and set design were all fantastic. The actors each gave me chills several times throughout their performances. This was our first KY Shakespeare show and we will definitely be back for more!"

— Victor

"Phenomenal performances by everyone! I adore *Frankenstein* and this is now one of my absolute favorite iterations of it. Thank you for all of the hard work and amazing talent." — Beth

"Truly such an incredible performance. I haven't stopped thinking about it since opening." — Abby

Emma

"Wonderfully updated, heartfelt, and hilarious! 10 out of 10! Our whole family was riveted, from our third grader to her grandma."

— Nicki

"I have never been to a play before. I enjoyed this beyond words."

— Missy

"Such absolute fun. The cast brings some pretty silly stuff alive and makes for a great afternoon or evening. Miss Austin would be smiling!" — Lea

Education and Outreach

"I have never seen our students so engrossed! We teachers really appreciated the professionalism of your team, in their efficiency, in their management of the Q & A, as well as their wonderful performing chops. Thanks to all at Kentucky Shakespeare, and I hope we will be able to invite you again in future years."

— Teacher, Valley High School

"Great play and even greater actors" — Student, Muhlenberg County High School

"I'm surprised at the difference the group has made in my life. I'm a different person. The first few sessions I had my arms crossed and I was just listening. I enjoyed being isolated. Hated being a civilian. This group is responsible for helping me relax and live in the world." — Shakespeare with Veterans member, US Navy Veteran, Vietnam



Mary Shelley's Frankenstein



Emma



Shakespeare in the Parks: The Tempest



Living History: Kentucky History



Camp Shakespeare

Land Acknowledgment

Kentucky Shakespeare acknowledges we are situated on the traditional land of the Adena, Hopewell, Miami, Osage, Shawnee, and **DWJᏍᏆᏚᏴᏍᏔᏅ** Tsalaguwetiyi (Cherokee, East) people. We respect their enduring presence and historical stewardship of these lands.

Anti-Racism Statement

As artists and educators, we are committed to holding the “mirror up to nature,” while creating a safe and welcoming space at our performances, in the community, and in the classroom.

We recognize racism and inequality in our community and the country, and we commit ourselves to anti-racism. We believe that Black lives matter.

We commit to outreach and inclusion of people of all abilities, races, creeds, religions, genders, and sexual identities.

We acknowledge that we are a non-profit arts organization grounded in the works of Shakespeare and commit to exploring Shakespeare’s truths while never losing sight of the fact that not all experiences emanate from a white European vantage point.

We commit to deeply listening to our BIPOC community members, within and outside of our organization. We commit to learning, never being satisfied, and creating positive change – proactively committing our efforts and resources to building anti-racist, inclusive, equitable, and empathetic spaces and experiences for all.

2025-2026 Board of Directors

Anya Bond-Beckley, *Board Chair*
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David James, *Emeritus*
Jonathan Smith, *Ex-Officio*

AUDIENCE SURVEY RESULTS

- 98% felt the community was positively impacted
- 97% felt Central Park was more energized
- 95% gained a better appreciation for the arts
- 95% felt more comfortable with the arts
- 93% reported increased pride in their community
- 88% felt more connected to the community and neighbors
- 83% felt less lonely

Location

74% from Louisville Metro (All Metro ZIP codes served)
12% from elsewhere in KY
9% from Indiana
5% from 25 other states

Years of Attendance

26% first time
28% 1-3 years
23% 4-10 years
13% 11-25 years
10% 26+ years

Age

9% under 18
16% 18-24
28% 25-39
22% 40-54
17% 55-69
8% 70+

LGBTQ+

26%

Income

10% under \$15k
8% \$15-\$24,999
15% \$25k-\$49,999
37% \$50k-\$100k
30% over \$100k

How Many Times Per Summer

28% first time
20% 2 times
31% 3-4 times
16% 5-6 times
5% 7+ times

Race/Ethnicity

3% Asian/Pacific Islander
15% Black/African American
6% Multi-Racial
3% Other
73% White/Caucasian
6% Hispanic/Latino

Living With a Disability

13%

Education

7% less than high school
18% high school graduate
7% associates/2-year
35% college graduate
33% post graduate

Financial Snapshot

Income: \$1,582,895
Expenses: \$1,537,831
Program Services: \$1,337,913 (87%)
Management and General: \$138,404 (9%)
Fundraising expenses: \$61,514 (4%)
Ending net assets: \$478,920

Figures as of August 2026, prior to annual audit

Kentucky Shakespeare

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