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*Hysterical Adventures: Laughing Between Comedy and Tragedy*

# Seattle Shakespeare Announces Their 2023-2024 Season

**SEATTLE, WA** – Seattle Shakespeare Company has announced a full slate of shows for their 2023-2024 season. Along with programming selections, they have announced reduced prices for almost all single tickets for the upcoming season.

The indoor season includes *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *The Bed Trick*, and *Romeo and Juliet*. Productions have been trimmed to sleek three-week runs, and the company will use the fourth weekend to feature an inaugural run of **special one-off events**.

Educational programming this season includes the return of the youth ensemble performing their own versions of *The Merry Wives of Windsor* and *Romeo and Juliet*. Serving students in schools, the spring educational tour will be *Macbeth* presented by an ensemble of professional actors. Student matinees of all indoor stage productions and the tour are available for booking for educators.

The season will close with the traditional Wooden O free Shakespeare in the parks with a show to be announced. More information about all of these offerings are available at [seattleshakespeare.org](http://seattleshakespeare.org).

## **Indoor Season**

Starting strong in October, artist Eddie DeHais opens the season with a rousing adaptation of *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. DeHais is creating a Windsor that feels farcically familiar while examining the stickiness of conflicting personalities and viewpoints in a small town. This rowdy, raucous, unruly romp features some of Shakespeare's most clever and comic characters.

*The Merry Wives of Windsor* runs October 25 – November 12, 2023.

On Thursday, November 16 and Saturday, November 18, following the closing of *Windsor*, Seattle Shakespeare will produce a unique, one-off cabaret event. In the vein of Broadway's *Miscast*, Seattle's favorite actors will take the stage with vignettes from Shakespeare that they're unlikely to perform otherwise. It will prove to be a night full of surprise and delight.

Following will be a sunny production of *The Comedy of Errors*, to get Seattleites through the darkest part of winter, Directed by Jimmy Shields, who joined SSC in this spring's *Twelfth Night*.

This small ensemble version cleaves right to the heart of the comedy, with economical use of cast members presenting the show's doubling to uproarious effect. Shields will be joined by powerhouse members of Seattle Shakespeare's Drum and Colours company, a troupe comprised of BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) collaborators.

***The Comedy of Errors*** runs January 10 – 28, 2024.

A tipsy, jolly nearly-improvised performance of *Henry V* follows Seattle Shakespeare's recent presentation of both parts of *Henry IV*, and Falstaff's autumn return in *Windsor*. This special event will take place on Thursday, February 1 and Saturday, February 3.

Next in the lineup is ***The Bed Trick***, a new play written by Seattle favorite, and longtime SSC collaborator, Keiko Green and directed by SSC's Associate Artistic Director Makaela Milburn. Green brings her sharp provocation and biting humor to a new play that puts contemporary discussions of consent and manipulation in direct conversation with one of the most problematic devices in Shakespeare.

***The Bed Trick*** runs March 20 – April 7, 2024.

The final extra event for the season is to be a showcase featuring a local Seattle luminary. Full details on the project are forthcoming, but there will be four performances in the week of April 8, following the closing of *The Bed Trick*.

The mainstage season will close with a comedy that goes wrong—*Romeo and Juliet*, directed by SSC's Artistic Director George Mount. "With so many interpretations out there on this comic romance-turned-tragedy, this production is going to really focus on the stresses teenagers experience on a daily basis," Mount said. "Pressure from peers, parents, societal expectations, sex, changing bodies, childhood/adulthood transitions, lack of autonomy, self-identity, violence. Romeo and Juliet die because they are young. And if society kills its young people, it kills its future."

***Romeo and Juliet*** runs April 24 – May 12, 2024.

### **Education Programming**

Formerly Short Shakes, **the youth ensemble is being reinvented as the Young Mechanicals**, and will resume in fall 2023. The Young Mechanicals is an after-school program that equips students to rehearse and perform a classic play. Directed by a professional teaching artist, students dig into the language, develop their characters, and ultimately present their own version of the productions featured in the season. The Young Mechanicals will put on *The Merry Wives of Windsor* in the fall and *Romeo and Juliet* in the spring. More information about registration, requirements, and pricing for the youth ensemble will be available later this summer.

***Macbeth*** will be the spring education tour and will be directed by Mike Nevarez. The tour travels around the entire state, from Aberdeen to Zilla, and is the Seattle Shakespeare program that

serves the greatest population, meeting students where they are in their learning of Shakespeare's works.

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"I hope everyone is going to fall in love with everything we've got on the docket just as much as we have while crafting it," said Mount. "We had the fun challenge of thinking creatively about how we can rebuild our community during a time of such uncertainty while simultaneously being able to foster the future of the organization."

"This past year has shown that the arts are struggling to get audiences to return, but the one thing that people always seem to be game to show up for is comedy," said Associate Artistic Director Makaela Milburn. "So we had an eye to finding the humor in all the pieces that we're presenting, even if that humor is dark. We're leaning into the hysterical in every sense of the word, with all the connotations and history that carries. We look forward to exploring how that theme flows through the season."

With regard to the pricing changes, Managing Director John Bradshaw said, "We have heard feedback from our community that the cost of attending an evening at the theatre is prohibitive. And we don't want our community to have to choose between feeding their families or feeding their souls. This is not the end, but just one more step in increasing accessibility by decreasing barriers." Seattle Shakespeare's rush program, Groundlings, also continues to be a budget-conscious option, as those with a \$5 lifetime membership are able to buy up to two (2) \$10 tickets an hour before the show.

Subscriptions are now available and range in price from \$92 to \$200 for all four shows. Three-show packages and flexible subscriptions are also available. Season ticket packages can be purchased by calling the box office at 206.733.8222 or online at [seattleshakespeare.org](http://seattleshakespeare.org). Single tickets will go on sale mid-July.

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### **2023-2024 INDOOR SEASON**

#### ***The Merry Wives of Windsor***

By William Shakespeare

Adapted & Directed by Eddie DeHais

October 25 - November 12, 2023

Performed at Center Theatre

A Queer Adaptation

wherein neighbors look a little different,  
but are just the same at heart

Our old friend Falstaff has a ploy to make some easy money—woo Mistress Page **and** Mistress Ford and thus gain access to their husbands' wealth. It shouldn't be too challenging; he can be quite a charming and insightful man when it benefits him. He sends the mistresses notes with

declarations of love, but in a small town like Windsor, everyone knows everyone else's business and Mistresses Page and Ford soon realize their notes are exact copies.

Rather than take that insult *lying down*, they make dates with Falstaff, scheming to be discovered in flagrante by their husbands and so to achieve their saucy revenge on the knight. Throw in a cartload of other zany characters and watch shenanigans ensue!

Theatre maker Eddie DeHais adapts and directs this rowdy, raucous, unruly romp featuring some of Shakespeare's most clever and comic characters. They are creating a *Merry Wives of Windsor* that will feel farcically familiar while examining the stickiness of conflicting personalities and viewpoints in a small town.

### ***The Comedy of Errors***

*Presented by SSC's Drum and Colours Company*

By William Shakespeare

Directed by Jimmy Shields

January 10 - 28, 2024

Performed at Center Theatre

What are the chances there's a guy walking around town with your face? What are the chances there's another guy walking around town with your servant's face? Antipholus and Dromio encounter some trouble when their doppelgangers seem to be on the loose in Ephesus, not realizing that their identical twins with identical names were separated from them in a shipwreck decades earlier. This sets up a chain of dominos: launching several existential crises, arrests, assaults, and an exorcism until the truth of the doubling is finally revealed. The descent into hysteria is reversed with a family reunion and a happily ever after.

Jimmy Shields makes his Seattle Shakespeare directorial debut following his appearance as Sir Andrew Aguecheek in 2023's *Twelfth Night*. Originally adapted for Wooden O, this small ensemble version of *The Comedy of Errors* cleaves right to the heart of the comedy and features actors playing their own twins to hilarious effect.

### **WHAT IS DRUM AND COLOURS?**

*The Comedy of Errors* is a continuation of the Drum and Colours project first launched in winter 2022 with presentations of *Hamlet* and *As You Like It* in repertory. Furthering the work of previous projects like the Shakespeare Equity Engagement program (SEE) and the Holding Space project, Drum and Colours aims to meet the community's needs with an all-BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) company with 360-degree representation, including actors, directors, and production team. It explores BIPOC company members' personal connections to the classics and sheds new light on familiar works. SSC believes that art that is open—to adaptation, interpretation, and the recognition of the wonderful vastness of the human experience—is stronger and more long-lasting than art which ignores that complexity.

### ***The Bed Trick***

By Keiko Green

Directed by Makaela Milburn

March 20 - April 7, 2024

Performed at Center Theatre

College: a time of freedom, of frivolity, of friskiness. Freshmen Lulu and Marianne test their limits as they party through the school year in search of their place in the world: Marianne is newly eighteen, while Lulu tries to reignite a spark with her boyfriend of ten years. But when their drama-nerd-roommate Harriet brings in baggage from a student production of *Measure for Measure*, ideas of consent and manipulation start to seep into their lives.

Seattle favorite Keiko Green brings her sharp provocation and biting humor to a new play that puts contemporary discussions in direct conversation with one of the most problematic devices in Shakespeare. In the grand tradition of the [problem plays](#), *The Bed Trick* has no answers, but will have you pondering the questions long after you leave the theatre.

Keiko Green is a playwright, screenwriter, and performer based in Los Angeles and Seattle. She is a Core Company Member at ACT, the 2023 Resident Playwright at Orange County's Chance Theatre, and previously part of Seattle Repertory Theatre's Writers Group and Theatre Mu's New Play Incubator. As an actor, she has performed at Seattle Shakespeare Company in *Othello*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *All's Well That Ends Well*, *Bring Down the House Pts 1 & 2*, as well as *Love's Labours Lost* and *Much Ado About Nothing* with Wooden O. As a playwright, her plays have been developed/produced by the O'Neill National Playwrights Conference, the Old Globe, the Kennedy Center, the National New Play Network, Playwrights Realm, Ensemble Studio Theatre, and Atlantic Theatre Company. Seattle productions include: *Hometown Boy* (Seattle Public Theater), a virtual production of *Wad* (ACT), and *Nadeshiko* (Sound Theatre Company) — which received the Gregory Award for Outstanding New Play. She is currently working on commissions from MTC/Sloan Foundation, the Old Globe, and Seattle Shakespeare Company. As a screenwriter, she wrote on Hulu's upcoming *Interior Chinatown* and is developing a sci-fi thriller with Hillman Grad. BFA: NYU Drama - Experimental Theatre Wing, MFA: UCSD Playwriting.

### ***Romeo and Juliet***

By William Shakespeare

Directed by George Mount

April 24 - May 19, 2024

Performed at Center Theatre

Conflict is brewing in the streets of Verona as a new generation ages into a war they have no stake in—yet. Young Capulets and Montagues have spent their whole lives being taught to hate one another, but when Romeo and Juliet meet, all they see is their love and what they're willing to sacrifice to be together. Desire, parental expectations, and a drive for independence pressure these lovers to make choices that could change the fate of their whole community.

Artistic Director George Mount guides this production of *Romeo and Juliet* that will leave you questioning what you thought you knew about one of the most famous love stories ever told.