



NEW ROCHELLE COUNCIL ON THE ARTS

City Hall 515 North Avenue New Rochelle, NY 10801 www.newrochellearts.org

PRESS RELEASE
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New Rochelle Council on the Arts “Sound Shore Shakespeare Festival” Returns

Events Celebrate the 450th Anniversary of Shakespeare’s Birth

The New Rochelle Council on the Arts’ **Sound Shore Shakespeare Festival** returns in April to celebrate the 450th anniversary of the birth of the Bard of Avon. The Sound Shore Shakespeare Festival will run from April 3rd to May 15th, with a variety of Shakespeare-themed events planned, including films, concerts, lectures and performances, including the world premiere of a ballet based on *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*.

“The Sound Shore Shakespeare Festival is especially meaningful this year as we celebrate the 450th anniversary of Shakespeare’s birth,” says Theresa Kump Leghorn, President of the New Rochelle Council of the Arts and founder of the festival. “Four centuries may have passed since Shakespeare’s time, but his gift for storytelling – and his grasp of human nature – remain timeless.”

Among the treats in store is a screening of three different versions of “*The Taming of the Shrew*” at the New Rochelle Public Library on Thursdays in April, with introductory comments by Prof. Amy Stackhouse, PhD, Assistant Chair of the English Department at Iona College, and Prof. T. J. Moretti, PhD, Assistant Professor of English at Iona College and Co-Editor of *The Shakespeare Newsletter*.

The Ajkun Ballet will perform the world premiere of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* on April 11th and 12th at the Whitney Young Theater at New Rochelle High School. Choreographed by company founder Chiara Ajkun, the piece is described as “magical and irresistible.” Also on tap is a concert “Serenade in Song – Shakespeare Set to Music” by the Sound Shore Chorale on April 26th. The evening will include madrigals, part songs and scenes from opera and Broadway musicals. A full calendar of events for the Sound Shore Shakespeare Festival can be accessed at www.newrochellearts.org.

Leghorn notes that this year’s edition of the Festival will have a special focus on introducing Shakespeare’s work to young people. “We’re bringing two traveling theater groups to New Rochelle this year,” she says. “Thanks to the **New Rochelle Fund for Educational Excellence**,

Knighthorse Theatre will be conducting workshops at both middle schools and the high school, and NRCA is bringing the Brown Box Theatre Project to work with youngsters at the Boys and Girls Club.” Knighthorse Theatre Company is a non-profit, traveling theatre company dedicated to bringing vibrant, living art into schools, colleges and universities across the country and around the world. Knighthorse specializes in creating original adaptations of Shakespeare with one or two actors --- on a bare stage using simple costumes and few props -- playing all the parts. Or, as the company puts it, “Two actors, 38 plays and a lot of words.” For more on the Knighthorse Theater Company visit their website at <http://www.knighthorse.org>.

The Brown Box Theatre Project is a Boston- based performing arts education collaborative dedicated to bringing high-quality performances to communities and locations along the eastern seaboard that ordinarily lack access to live theater. Brown Box strives to make Shakespeare’s plays accessible and enjoyable to audiences of all ages, with the idea that excellence in the performing arts does not need to come with a hefty price tag attached. For more information about the Brown Box Theatre Project visit their website at <http://www.brownboxtheatre.org/>

The calendar includes:

Shakespeare Festival 2014 Calendar

- **Thursday nights in April: Shakespeare Festival Film at 7 pm**
at the New Rochelle Public Library’s Ossie Davis Theater

Thursday April 3rd: *The Taming of the Shrew* (1967) with Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton, directed by Franco Zeffereilli. Introductory comments by Prof. Amy Stackhouse, PhD, Assistant Chair, Dept. of English, Iona College.

Thursday April 17th (Spring Recess week): *Ten Things I Hate About You* (1999), an updated version with Julia Stiles and Heath Ledger and Joseph Gordon-Levitt. Introductory comments by Prof. Amy Stackhouse, PhD, Assistant Chair, Dept. of English, Iona College.

Thursday April 24th: *Kiss Me Kate* (1953) with Kathryn Grayson, Ann Miller and Howard Keel, featuring songs by Cole Porter. Introductory comments by Prof. T. J. Moretti, PhD, Assistant Professor of English at Iona College and Co-Editor of *The Shakespeare Newsletter*

- **Thursday, April 10th : Odes to the Bard, 7 to 9 pm**
at Recologie, 49 Lawton Street, New Rochelle

An evening of creative wordplay at Recologie. Share your original poetry or prose in the spirit of Shakespeare. Free and open to the public; presentations limited to three minutes. RSVP to judith@recologie.com.

- **Friday, April 11th at 7 pm and Saturday, April 12th at 2 pm: A Midsummer Night's Dream,**

Ajkun Ballet at the Whitney Young Theater, New Rochelle High School

World premiere of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* choreographed by Chiara Ajkun. This magical and irresistible ballet is filled with delightful creatures on a roller coaster of emotional depth and humor. Tickets are \$15 in advance, \$20 at the door; call 646-368-9800 or email artisticstaff@ajkunbt.org for more information.

- **Saturday, April 26th: Brown Box Theater Company Workshops**

at the A.E. Mascaro Boys and Girls Club of New Rochelle, 79 Seventh Street

Two afternoon workshops for youth, plus a workshop open to all ages. Call 235-3736 for details.

- **Saturday, April 26th : Silent Shakespeare, 2 – 4:30 pm**

at the New Rochelle Public Library's Ossie Davis Theater

Thanouser Film Fest : As part of the Sound Shore Shakespeare Festival, this very special event will include a showing of *Cymbeline* (1911), starring the beautiful Florence LaBadie as Imogene. With live musical accompaniment by Ben Model, silent film accompanist for MOMA. Suggested donation: \$2.00.

- **Serenade to Music -- Shakespeare in Song: Saturday, April 26th at 7:30 pm**

At Iona College's Murphy Auditorium

The Sound Shore Chorale in concert featuring madrigals, part songs, and scenes from operas and musicals from Shakespeare's time to our own. Tickets are \$20 for adults, \$15 for seniors and \$10 for students. (Iona students and staff are free.) For more information visit www.SoundShoreChorale.com or call 914- 512-5957.

- **Wednesday, May 14th and Thursday, May 15th**

At New Rochelle High School, Albert Leonard Middle School and Isaac E. Young Middle School

The Knighthorse Theater Company will be in residence, conducting student workshops, made possible by the New Rochelle Fund for Educational Excellence.

- **Wednesday, May 14th : The New Rochelle Fund for Educational Excellence Presents "Shakespeare on Demand" at 7 pm**

In the Linda Kelly Theatre at New Rochelle High School

You're in charge when the Knighthorse Theater Company takes the stage: Choose from any of Shakespeare's plays and delight as Knighthorse brings the Bard alive. Free and open to the public.

In addition to funding from the New Rochelle Council on the Arts, the Sound Shore Shakespeare Festival is being made possible through support from the Arts Alive program of Arts Westchester, with funding from the Decentralization Program of the New York State Council on the Arts, with additional support from the New Rochelle Fund for Educational Excellence and the New Rochelle Public Library.

The New Rochelle Council on the Arts was created by the New Rochelle City Council in 1975 to stimulate and encourage the study and presentation of the performing and fine arts; for 35 years NRCA has worked to fulfill that mission by sponsoring art exhibitions, theatrical productions, dance recitals, film screenings, lectures, and concert series. In addition, NRCA has facilitated collaboration among arts organizations, sponsored public art, and helped build relationships between the arts, the business community and city government. For more information visit NRCA on the web at www.newrochellearts.org.

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PHOTO CAPTIONS:

1. Tyrus and Amy Lemerande make up the Knighthorse Theatre Company. (Credit: Cristina Cerone)
2. The logo for the Sound Shore Shakespeare Festival
3. Still from "The Taming of the Shrew" (1967) with Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton
4. The Ajkun Ballet will perform the world premiere of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*