



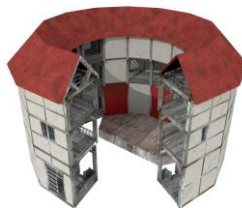
 @thetheatre1576  @The-Theatre-Courtyard-Gallery

[mola.org.uk/shake-it-shakespeare-festival-shoreditch](http://mola.org.uk/shake-it-shakespeare-festival-shoreditch)

## AS THE OPENING OF THE SITE OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S FIRST LONDON PLAYHOUSE APPROACHES, THE THEATRE COURTYARD GALLERY PRESENTS A WEEKEND FESTIVAL OF SHAKESPEAREAN AND ELIZABETHAN EVENTS

- The Theatre Courtyard Gallery will open in 2020 on the site of Shakespeare's first London theatre, the precursor of the Globe and the Rose
- Internationally acclaimed choir The Sixteen launches festival with exclusive performance
- Festival includes Elizabethan games, Shakespearean performances, music, comedy, walking tours and yoga!

This summer, to celebrate the forthcoming opening of the site of London's first purpose-built theatre, the Theatre Courtyard Gallery will present *Shake It Up! A Shakespeare Festival for Shoreditch*, a weekend family festival of performances, events and activities. In March 2020, a new permanent exhibition space will open on the site of **The Theatre** (1576-1598), one of the first Elizabethan playhouses to be built in London and an early home to Shakespeare and his acting company.



*Shake It Up!* runs on **Friday 23 and Saturday 24 August** at sites throughout Shoreditch. Inspired by the era when Shakespeare's plays were first performed in London, the festival's free family events programme includes Elizabethan games, dressing up, art workshops, and object handling by Museum of London Archaeology. There will also be talks on Shakespearean theatre, comedy by The School of Night, music by David William Hughes, sword fighting demonstrations and an interactive Elizabethan dance workshop. Ticketed events include Elizabethan yoga and a new Elizabethan walking tour by Look Up London.

The festival begins with *The Choicest Music of the Kingdom*, a candlelit concert of words and music, performed by internationally-acclaimed choir **The Sixteen** in the atmospheric surroundings of Shoreditch Church. Led by Harry Christophers CBE, The Sixteen will present an exclusive programme of Elizabethan choral works complemented by the words of historic Londoners delivered by Shakespearean actors.

**The Theatre** was Shakespeare's original London playhouse. The purpose-built polygonal structure was built in 1576 when Shoreditch sat on the edge of the City of London. In the 1590s, Shakespeare became resident playwright at the Theatre and his company performed several of his greatest plays, including *Romeo and Juliet*, there. In 1598, having lost the rights to lease the land, Shakespeare's company dismantled the Theatre and moved the timbers across the river to Bankside, to create the Globe, which opened the following year.

Parts of The Theatre's inner wall were discovered in 2008. These archaeological remains, along with artefacts subsequently unearthed on the site, will be at the heart of the new permanent exhibition space, the Theatre Courtyard Gallery, from March next year.

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## ***SHAKE IT UP! FESTIVAL EVENTS***

### **FRIDAY 23 + SATURDAY 24 AUGUST**

#### **Exhibition: Dramatic Discoveries**

**Times:** Friday 9.00 till late; Saturday 10.00 till late

**Venue:** Rich Mix, The Mezzanine

This exhibition explores the history of The Theatre and its archaeological remains on New Inn Broadway, alongside a display of artworks made by year 4 students from nearby Columbia School, as part of the Dramatic Discoveries outreach programme. A collaboration between Rich Mix, The Courtyard Theatre, MOLA and Art Hoppers.

**Free, drop in**

#### **Shakespeare's Shoreditch Walking Tour with Look Up London**

**Times:** Friday and Saturday 11:00 - 12:30

**Venue:** Starts at St. Helens Bishopsgate Church and ends on New Inn Broadway at the site of The Theatre.

A walking tour through Shoreditch, but not as you know it. Explore East London as William Shakespeare would have known it. See the surviving remains of Elizabethan Shoreditch and handle fascinating contemporary objects from the Museum of London Archaeology collection.

**Booking essential.**

**Tickets:** <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/shakespeares-shoreditch-walking-tour-tickets-63377592084>

### **Friday 23 August**



#### **The Choicest Music of the Kingdom: by Harry Christophers and The Sixteen**

**Times:** 19:30 - 21:00

**Venue:** St Leonard's Church

Internationally acclaimed choir The Sixteen, led by Harry Christophers CBE, presents an exclusive programme of Elizabethan and Jacobean choral works, spanning the life of Richard Burbage (1567-1619) - the most illustrious actor of his age. The programme will be interspersed with stories of everyday London, from Shakespeare and his players, to the groundlings of the theatre and the Monarch herself, as actors deliver a true celebration of Elizabethan London. This extraordinary evening of drama and song will be performed in the atmospheric surroundings of St Leonard's Church, Shoreditch, where Burbage and several of the Lord Chamberlain's Men (the acting company for which Shakespeare wrote) are buried. The Sixteen's programme will include works by Byrd, Morley, Gibbons, Weelkes and Ramsey. This is an unmissable, site-specific event that marks the 400th anniversary of Burbage's death and the 40th anniversary of the founding of The Sixteen.

**Booking essential. Tickets:** <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/the-choicest-music-of-the-kingdom-by-harry-christophers-and-the-sixteen-tickets-62299916728>

### **Saturday 24 August**

#### **Before Shakespeare: Rethinking London's Earliest Playhouses**

**Times:** 11:30 – 13:00

**Venue:** Shoreditch Town Hall

Join historical theatre investigators Andy Kesson, Lucy Munro and Callan Davies as they present bite-sized lectures on the beginnings of London's commercial theatres, 1565 – 1595. Before Shakespeare is a research project that asks how and why commercial playhouses came to be built in London during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and The Theatre in Shoreditch is a central space for this research. Join the researchers themselves to explore the world of sixteenth-century playhouses and the plays performed in them, and discover how pioneering, unusual and shocking these spaces were! Talks will feature Elizabethan London's cosmopolitan crowds, female playhouse owners, and bowling, brawls, and broomsticks...

Visit [www.beforeshakespeare.com](http://www.beforeshakespeare.com) for more details on the project.

**Free, drop in**

**From Marchpane to Mutton: a sniff of Shakespeare's time**

**Times:** 13:00 – 13:30

**Venue:** Shoreditch Town Hall

Join Tasha Marks, an award-winning food historian and artist, for a visual and aromatic lecture exploring the food that Shakespeare would have eaten.

**Free, drop in**

**Shakespeare: A Ruff History**

**Times:** 13:30 – 14:00

**Venue:** Shoreditch Town Hall

Looking back through four centuries of Shakespeare in performance and popular culture, Ella Hawkins explores how the ruff came to be the ultimate symbol for the playwright and his works.

**Free, drop in**

**BURBAGE V BRAYNE by Dolphin's Back**

**Times:** 14:00 – 15:00

**Venue:** Shoreditch Town Hall

Using verbatim testimony drawn from legal records and contemporary accounts, the troubled and sometimes violent history of the ownership of The Theatre in Shoreditch is brought to life by actors from The Dolphin's Back, a company that specialises in bringing lost or neglected plays and playwrights – or in this case playhouse histories – back into contemporary performance.

**Free, drop in.**

**Sword Fighting demonstration**

**Times:** 15:00 – 16:00

**Venue:** Shoreditch Town Hall

Watch a spine-tingling demonstration of Elizabethan stage fighting techniques!

**Free, drop in**

**"Elizabethan"**

**Times:** 17:00 – 18:00

**Venue:** Shoreditch Town Hall

Straight from the Edinburgh Fringe - David William Hughes brings his smash hit one man show to Shoreditch! Tobias Bacon - drinker, smoker, tights-wearer, and lover, recounts his life story in this historical musical comedy based on 400-year-old songs.

**Free, drop in**

**Can You Cut a Caper? Elizabethan dance workshop with Sian Williams**

**Times:** 18:30 – 19:30

**Venue:** Shoreditch Town Hall

A fun, free Elizabethan dance workshop, suitable for all abilities.

Led by Sian Williams, dance expert and choreographer, who has been directing dance at Shakespeare's Globe for the last 19 years.

**Free, drop in**

### **The School of Night: creating a new Shakespearean masterpiece on the fly**

**Times:** 20:00 – 21:00

**Venue:** Shoreditch Town Hall

In the 16th century, the School of Night was an arcane, underground sect of artists, thinkers, writers, scientists, and spies, who some scholars believe wrote Shakespeare's plays. Revived for the 21st Century by maverick theatre genius Ken Campbell, this heretical troupe now seeks to improvise lost masterpieces, summon the muses and channel the minds of poets, novelists and playwrights both ancient and modern, creating new works on the fly. Meetings of the School of Night are unlike any other theatrical event you are likely to experience. Every night is different - everything is created on the spur of the moment according to ideas and suggestions proffered by the audience.

**Free, drop in**

### **Room of Ruffs**

**Times:** 11:00-17:00

**Venue:** Shoreditch Town Hall

Drop into an Elizabethan ruff factory. Try a few on for size and pose for a te-ruff-ic selfie! Join in the making and help build a new ruff for the 21st century out of Shoreditch-friendly coffee filters and paper doilies. **Free, drop in.**

### **Elizabethan Card Games**

**Times:** 11:00-17:00

**Venue:** Shoreditch Town Hall

Have more than you show, speak less than you know. Enter a world of Elizabethan gaming! These fun card games can be enjoyed by all, from cunning jackanapes to friendly families. Have a go at the games that Shakespeare and his cronies would have enjoyed in the tavern, and learn a trick or two to take home! **Free, drop in.**

### **Elizabethan Yoga**

**Times:** 11:00-12:00

**Venue:** Rich Mix, The Studio

The downward dog will have its day - and this is it! Join us for a yoga class (suitable for beginners) performed to a live musical accompaniment, and other Elizabethan treats. Please bring a yoga mat or a towel and wear comfortable clothing.

**Booking essential.**

**Tickets:** <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/shakespearean-yoga-tickets-65255202066?aff=ebapi>

### **Family workshops: Dramatic Discoveries**

**Times:** 11:30-12:30 and 14:00-15:00

**Venue:** Rich Mix, The Stage

Families are invited to join **Art Hoppers** in making their own historical artefacts inspired by the discoveries found at the archeological site of 'The Theatre.' Make your own design for a Medieval tile to take home! Engaging materials and an exciting stencilling technique.

**Booking:** [www.richmix.org.uk/events/shake-it-up/](http://www.richmix.org.uk/events/shake-it-up/)

**Free, drop in**

### **Time Tent with MOLA**

**Times:** 11:00-17:00

**Venue:** The Theatre, New Inn Broadway, on the street

Experts from MOLA, the archaeological organisation who excavated The Theatre, will be joining in the fun of the festival with an archaeological feast for the eyes. Objects uncovered in London's original theatre districts will be on display as well as lots of information about sites around Shoreditch. There's something for everyone, including a chance to handle real artefacts excavated from playhouses and activities for children.

**Free, drop in.**

### **Shoreditch Church bells rung by the Royal Cumberland Youth Society**

**Times:** 15:00

**Venue:** Anywhere within earshot of Shoreditch Church

Listen out for a full peal of these historic church bells, rung by the Royal Cumberland Youth Society, a society that has been ringing church bells since 1747!

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**For further information and images, please contact Michael Barrett on 020 8295 2424, 07813-558772 or [mb@thepressoffice.uk.com](mailto:mb@thepressoffice.uk.com)**