



# Shakespeare Companies and Festivals: An International Guide

By Ron Engle, Felicia Hardison Londre, Daniel J. Watermeier

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Though first performed some 400 years ago, the plays of William Shakespeare still continue to capture the popular imagination and are produced by numerous companies around the world. This reference describes over 140 Shakespeare companies and festivals worldwide. Each company or festival is profiled in a separate entry. Entries are grouped in chapters devoted to particular states or countries, and provide historical, organizational, demographic, and production information.

Each profile describes the history of the festival or company; its organization, including staffing and budgeting; its physical facilities and performance site; the demographics of its audience and the community where it is located; and the company's or festival's approach to producing Shakespeare's plays. Each entry begins with a headnote providing essential information, such as the name, address, box office phone number, length of season, principal staff members, facilities, annual attendance, and budget. Each closes with a chronological listing of all Shakespeare's plays produced by the organization, and resources for further information.

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- Rank: #6850483 in Books
- Brand: Ron Engle Daniel J Watermeier Felicia H Londre
- Published on: 1995-04-30
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.21" h x 1.31" w x 6.14" l, 2.27 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 624 pages

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### Editorial Review

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In 1989, three Shakespeare enthusiasts (Engle, theater arts professor of the University of North Dakota; Felicia Hardison Londre, theater professor at the University of Missouri-Kansas City, and Daniel J. Watermeier, professor of theater at the University of Toledo) visited every Shakespeare company and festival in the U.S. and Canada. Over the next few years, they recruited additional contributors to cover other parts of the world. This directory profiles more than 150 festivals and companies. The first section covers American companies in 37 states. A 32-page insert of good-quality, black-and-white photographs representing an array of performances precedes the second section, which covers companies and festivals in Australia, Canada, China, Japan, New Zealand, South Africa, and many European countries. A headnote introduces each piece, providing mailing address, phone numbers, ticket and performance information, principal players, audition procedures, equity status, budget, and attendance. A descriptive essay, ranging from one paragraph to several pages, details the history of the troupe or festival, its organization, staffing, physical facilities, performance sites, and audience demographics. Each company's approach to Shakespeare is also addressed, and reviews of individual plays or even entire seasons are provided. Classic institutions such as the Royal Shakespeare Company and the Stratford Festival of Canada are considered, as are Bard on the Beach from Vancouver, British Columbia, and the Reduced Shakespeare Company in Big Bear Lake, California, which consists of three men and an assortment of wigs. Humorous anecdotes and personal narratives make for engaging reading. An index and an extended bibliography follow various appendixes. One listing companies by location will be useful for planning trips.

*The Shakespeare Complex* (Drama Book Specialists, 1975) described the 26 American and Canadian Shakespeare festivals that existed at that time. This updated and expanded directory is an indicator of Shakespeare's continuing popularity. Of interest to academic collections, public libraries will also want to consider purchase.

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"If all the world's a (Shakespearean) stage, here is its atlas. This is an excellent reference work, well organized and clearly laid out, with multiple points of access to the information gathered, and one that should be part of any theatre or performing arts collection."-RUSQ

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#### About the Author

RON ENGLE is the Chester Fitz Distinguished Professor of Theatre Arts at the University of North Dakota at Grand Forks. He is the founding editor of *Theatre History Studies*, and has also written books and numerous articles on Shakespeare and theatre.

FELICIA HARDISON LONDRE is Curators' Professor of Theatre at the University of Missouri-Kansas City. She was the founding secretary of the Shakespeare Theatre Association of America, and has published and lectured extensively on Shakespeare.

DANIEL J. WATERMEIER is Professor of Theatre and Drama at the University of Toledo. He was a coeditor of *Shakespeare Around the Globe* (Greenwood Press, 1985), as well as a Guggenheim Fellow.

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