



HUMOR, PASSION, & HORROR IGNITE THE 2025 SEASON!

February 5, 2025

Hello Friends –

We are so pleased to share our 2025 season line-up with you. Thank you for your patience. From high comedy of manners to gripping gothic horror, from epic romance to hysterical silliness, we've packed this season with something for everyone.

Audiences are in for a lot of surprises this season. These are not dusty, old, museum-piece versions of the classics. These timeless classics and adaptations are crackling with electricity and bring a freshness that makes them feel visceral and of the moment. The seismic shifts these characters experience — some humorous, some tragic — send out aftershocks that are sure to ignite your imagination. We invite you to experience Broadway-caliber theatre right in your own backyard without the bridge or tunnel and without the Broadway prices. I know you'll be glad you came.

The 2025 season kicks off in May with Oscar Wilde's witty, comic masterpiece, [*The Importance of Being Earnest*](#). Peppered with an array of deliciously eccentric characters and seasoned with Wilde's notoriously biting social commentary, *Earnest* follows two wildly eligible bachelors who attempt to escape the constraints of Victorian society in their pursuit of love, marriage, and happiness – though not necessarily in that order. Double dual identities, a domineering matriarch, and a mysterious handbag spark hilarious confusion in this comic gem that critics have called “the funniest play ever written.”

Next, we attempt the impossible: “37 plays in just 99 minutes!” Can it be done? Fasten your seat belts for a high-energy, slapstick roller-coaster ride through Shakespeare's entire canon with [*The Complete Works of William Shakespeare \(abridged\) \[revised\] \[again\]*](#) by Adam Long, Daniel Singer, and Jess Winfield. Three madcap actors scamper their hapless way through all the comedies, tragedies, histories, and romances in one hysterical, fast-paced, and irreverent evening that will leave you rolling in the aisles with laughter. *The Today Show* said, “If you like Shakespeare, you'll like this show. If you hate Shakespeare, you'll LOVE this show!” With this outrageous summer romp, we will offer our [FREE TIX FOR KIDS](#) initiative on the Main Stage for the very first time. Picnicking on the lawn and patio outside the Kirby Theatre will also be encouraged, giving friends, families, and neighbors the opportunity to make their summer theatre outing a special experience.

In September, we ask “How far would you go for true love?” as we bring [*Romeo and Juliet*](#) to the stage under the direction of Artistic Director Emerita, Bonnie J. Monte. In a society ravaged by hate and violence, two young people unexpectedly find love. Their youthful passion shines a light of hope against the pernicious and poisonous enmity of their families in Shakespeare's masterful romantic tragedy.

[*Mary Shelley's Frankenstein*](#) electrifies the stage just in time for the Halloween season. This visceral and captivating retelling of Mary Shelley's gothic classic leaps to life in David Catlin's eerie and spine-tingling adaptation. Lightning flashes, thunder rumbles, and ghost stories crackle in the air as the mother of science fiction weaves her infamous tale of horror, love, vengeance, and unholy experimentation, challenging viewers to consider who is the real monster — creature or creator?

In December, audiences are invited to step in from the cold as the Kirby stage is transformed to a 1940s-style radio studio for *It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play*, back by popular demand. Based on the story "The Greatest Gift" by Philip Van Doren Stern and inspired by Frank Capra's beloved holiday film, this heartfelt adaptation follows the life of the idealistic George Bailey. When all seems lost, an unlikely guardian angel intervenes and offers George an unexpected gift. With a nostalgic blend of holiday cheer and theatrical magic – including 40s-era jingles and sound effects created live on stage – *It's A Wonderful Life* will warm your heart and make you fall in love with the inhabitants of Bedford Falls all over again.

I am sorry to say that we will not be presenting a production at the Greek Amphitheatre at St. Elizabeth University this year. The Outdoor Stage opened in 2002 and has since grown to be a popular summer tradition for families across the region. We're heartbroken to have to lose the Outdoor Stage this season, but it is a sad necessity. In the last two seasons alone, we lost over a quarter of our performances due to extreme heat and rain. The reduced income did not, however, reduce our expenses. The combined increase in expenses and challenging weather conditions has made the program untenable at this time. Our partnership with the wonderful folks at St. Elizabeth University enabled us to bring exciting classic theatre to thousands of families from across the region in a beautiful setting under the stars and we are eternally grateful to them for that. We are exploring alternate schedules and funding opportunities that may allow for a return in the future. In the meantime, we will continue our FREE TIX FOR KIDS program and pre-show picnicking outside the Kirby Theatre with *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (abridged) [revised] [again]* in July.

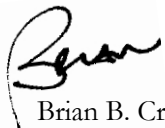
Complete Works subscriptions and Memberships for the Main Stage Season are now on sale! Smaller and flexible discount packages will be available in March. Single tickets will go on sale later in the spring. To ensure that you can get the best seats at the best prices (with savings up to \$8 off each ticket, and up to 18% off the season), we encourage you to purchase subscriptions now.

In addition to the subscription series, audiences can look forward to new offerings in The Shakespeare Theatre's *Classics for Kids* program. Launched in 2023, *Classics for Kids* welcomes our youngest patrons and their families and features classic works of children's literature. Through scripts-in-hand presentations with acclaimed STNJ artists and visually stunning performances by the Tanglewood Marionettes and others, *Classics for Kids* fosters a love of great stories and an appetite for the joy of theatre-going.

For more information regarding the Theatre's programs, subscription packages, and more, visit ShakespeareNJ.org or call the Box Office at 973-408-5600.

I look forward to seeing you at the theatre this season.

All the best,



Brian B. Crowe
Artistic Director



Yours
Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey