



# THE SHAKESPEARE INSTITUTE

## Background

**THE SHAKESPEARE INSTITUTE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM IS AN INTERNATIONALLY RENOWNED RESEARCH INSTITUTION ESTABLISHED IN 1951 IN STRATFORD-UPON-AVON TO PUSH THE BOUNDARIES OF KNOWLEDGE ABOUT SHAKESPEARE STUDIES AND RENAISSANCE DRAMA.**

## Key messages

- As Professor Michael Dobson, Director of the Shakespeare Institute says, the Institute is simply *'the best place on earth in which to explore the impact Shakespeare's work has had across four centuries of world culture'*.
- We are engaged in an exciting five-year collaboration with the Royal Shakespeare Company, in a pioneering project that has seen the reinstatement of the iconic studio theatre, The Other Place. See reverse side for information.



## The evidence

- The Shakespeare Institute Library, housing 60,000 volumes including early printed and rare books, aims to collect every significant publications for the study of Shakespeare and Renaissance Drama. It is used by UK and international scholars.
- The 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death took place in 2016. The Shakespeare Institute took part in a whole weekend of events and celebrations in Stratford-Upon-Avon to mark the anniversary, including a special Odes concert, at the Holy Trinity Church, Stratford. This involved a historical revival of the original 1769 Shakespeare Ode, which put Shakespeare on the map as the great representative genius. It was paired with a new commission for contemporary society from the Poet Laureate, Carol Ann Duffy, and Sally Beamish. It was reviewed in national and international press including the New York Times and broadcast around the world by the BBC.



## Key projects

- Professor John Jowett is editing a digital version of the Oxford Complete Works of Shakespeare and is part of a team that has credited Christopher Marlowe as one of Shakespeare's co-writers.
- Professor Ewan Fernie has published a co-authored book 'Macbeth, Macbeth', which is a response to Shakespeare's play and turns into its own entirely new fiction. Ewan was also chosen as one of a handful of academics to front the British Council's Shakespeare Lives campaign.
- Dr Erin Sullivan is studying Shakespeare and digital performance looking at how technological innovations such as live theatre broadcasting, the staging of digital media, and audience participation through social media are reshaping how we encounter and experience Shakespeare as performance.
- Dr Chris Laoutaris is working on a project about the creation of Shakespeare's First Folio of 1623.
- The World Shakespeare Congress took place in July. It had an overarching theme of 'Creating and Recreating Shakespeare' and celebrated Shakespeare's memory and the global cultural legacy of his works in each of the two places which mattered most in his life and career (Stratford and London.) It was delivered and hosted by the Shakespeare Institute, the RSC, Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, Shakespeare's Globe and King's College London.





UNIVERSITY OF  
BIRMINGHAM

RESEARCH AND PRACTICE WITH THE SHAKESPEARE INSTITUTE AT THE OTHER PLACE



# THE OTHER PLACE

## Background

**THE UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM IS A FOUNDING PARTNER OF THE REINSTATED THE OTHER PLACE. OUR COLLABORATION WITH THE RSC HAS ALREADY PRODUCED PIONEERING NEW RESEARCH AND THEATRE.**

## Key messages

- We are engaged in an exciting five-year collaboration with the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC). This pioneering project has seen the reinstatement of the iconic RSC studio theatre, The Other Place, as a creative hub for rehearsal, training, learning and research.
- The collaboration is rooted in the vision of the theatre as a centre for creative and academic exchange, and has developed a laboratory for theatre artists working with scholars and students in creative experiments that stimulate connections between the arts, academia, and society at large.
- Benefits for the University include the opportunity for students to access creative and teaching spaces at The Other Place, with RSC artists and practitioners providing input to our courses, while the RSC has the chance to work closely with internationally renowned academics at the Shakespeare Institute.



## The evidence

- The Other Place opened in March 2016, and includes a 200-seat flexible studio theatre, two new rehearsal rooms, and a new home for the RSC's extensive Costume Store, giving University of Birmingham academics and students unparalleled opportunities to research and create in a live theatre space.
- The theatre has already hosted a vast range of university activity. Some events have included: Research and Development workshops for Professor Ewan Fernie's *Marina* project, performances devised by our Shakespeare and Creativity MA students, an art installation by university Creative Fellow Tom de Freston, and the screening of our Film students' reels.



## Key projects

- Professor Ewan Fernie and Dr Katharine Craik (Oxford Brookes) worked with RSC director Richard Twyman to create *Marina*, a response to Shakespeare's *Pericles* through the lens of today's global migrant crisis.
- A new Creative Fellow, performer and theatre-maker Terry O'Connor, has been appointed to explore the creative opportunities offered by our collaboration with the RSC. She will be working with RSC practitioners, university students and academics to create innovative new theatre pieces throughout 2016/17.
- In December 2016, the Shakespeare and Creativity MA cohort devised and performed their first piece at The Other Place. *Brave New World*, an immersive theatre experience and walking tour, reimagines Stratford-upon-Avon and seeks to answer what Shakespeare really means to us in the 21st century.
- A PhD scholarship has been launched to be co-supervised between the University and the RSC. We are looking forward to this PhD making a creative contribution to the collaboration as a whole, developing and advancing its intellectual agenda and bringing it to wider attention in diverse academic and artistic communities.

