

Why Shakespeare?

An International Education Conference exploring the current and potential value of Shakespeare in education today: September 2012

“Shakespeare’s work is a comprehensive world in which to explore the anxieties of growing up.” Michael Boyd (RSC Artistic Director)

In conjunction with the Olympic and Paralympic Games, **London 2012** is staging a Cultural Olympiad - a series of events to showcase arts and culture, culminating in a UK-wide festival in summer 2012 which will bring together leading artists from all over the world. It is the largest cultural celebration in the history of the modern Olympic and Paralympic Games. A major project for the 2012 festival will be the **World Shakespeare Festival**, led by the RSC, with performances by leading international theatre companies.

At the close of the summer festival, in September 2012, the RSC, along with other cultural partners, will be hosting an **International Education Conference**, bringing together research and practice exemplifying how and why the world teaches Shakespeare. Many different cultures have come to own Shakespeare’s work, through exploring the interpretive possibilities in the plays and re-imagining the contexts for the common human experiences found in them. By sharing our combined experiences of Shakespeare in education, this conference will explore how young people across the world connect with and make sense of Shakespeare; and ask whether these experiences can help them learn more about themselves, each other and the world around them.

The aim of the conference: To explore the current and potential value of Shakespeare in education through celebrating and sharing best practice in the teaching of Shakespeare from across the world.

We will meet this aim by:

- Working with the British Council to carry out an international survey into where, how and why Shakespeare is taught.
- Exploring the history and value of Shakespeare in the education systems of different countries
- Researching young people’s experiences of Shakespeare in different societies
- Actively seeking out examples of good practice in the teaching of Shakespeare from around the world
- Working with key organisations to engage student and teacher voice in the dialogue about how and why we teach Shakespeare
- Working with schools in our long-term partner programme, the Learning and Performance Network to create and strengthen links with schools and artists internationally in order to find new ways of learning from and with each other
- Inviting exemplary practitioners, key academics and artists to the international education conference

We are interested to hear from anyone with a significant experience of Shakespeare in education, as a teacher or student, and from anyone who feels they can contribute creatively to the conference through leading a workshop, seminar or presentation.

Further details will follow in due course. Please register your interest by contacting Tracy Irish, Education Programme Developer: WSF - tracy.irish@rsc.org.uk

