

About the Theatre

Mission

The mission of The Philadelphia Shakespeare Theatre is to produce the most excellent Shakespeare productions and education programming, accessible to all.

History

The Philadelphia Shakespeare Theatre was founded as The Red Heel Theatre in 1989, initially focusing on classic works of English theatre. In 1993, Carmen Khan became the Artistic Director and in 1996 focused the company's efforts on the works of Shakespeare, renaming the organization The Philadelphia Shakespeare Festival.

As The Philadelphia Shakespeare Festival, we staged 38 productions, bringing Shakespeare to over 35,000 area high school students with our Student Matinee Series and over 70,000 theatre goers with our nightly season productions. In 2008, the Philadelphia City Council presented the company with a Council Resolution honoring the theatre's contribution to the city for excellence in performance and education.

Within the past few years we have introduced several new initiatives, including: The Connoisseur Shakespeare Series of discussions coupling acclaimed Shakespeare scholars and professional actors; a school tour for middle and high school students; a reading group for Shakespeare enthusiasts; and the Classical Acting Academy, providing early career actors with intense classical training and the general public with free summer Shakespeare performances.

To better reflect our year-round programming schedule and expanded impact in Philadelphia's cultural community, we rebranded the organization as "The Philadelphia Shakespeare Theatre" in 2010 with a mission "to be a world-class Shakespeare company, and to bring our education programs to every high school student in the region."

Today, The Philadelphia Shakespeare Theatre stages two professional productions in repertory each spring, reaches over 4,000 school children annually with our Open Door Project educational programs, provides free training for young actors through our Classical Acting Academy, and ensures everyone has an opportunity to personally experience why Shakespeare is "not of an age, but for all time" by offering the Academy's professionally directed performances free to the public each August. We serve not only our most passionate fans but also Philadelphia's academic community by presenting lectures by Shakespeare experts through our Connoisseur Shakespeare Series, and provide area enthusiasts with an opportunity to share their passion at monthly club gatherings.