



RICHMOND
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ALLIANCE

600 E. Grace Street | Richmond, Virginia | 23219



Press Release
For Immediate Release
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RPAA and Quill Theatre Host Eighth Annual Bardathon

Students from Greater Richmond and Russia Perform in Area's Only Non-Competitive Theatre Festival

Richmond, VA – Nearly 100 students from eight local schools and a Russian theatrical society will perform in a collaborative rendition of William Shakespeare's *Love's Labour's Lost* on March 24 at Dominion Arts Center. Richmond Performing Arts Alliance (RPAA) has partnered with Quill Theatre to host the annual Bardathon for eight consecutive years.

Each of the nine participating groups were assigned one or more scenes from *Love's Labour's Lost*. Preparation began weeks in advance with students memorizing lines, rehearsing, and creating props and small set pieces, all with the guidance of a theatre teacher and the support of Quill Theatre staff. On the day of Bardathon, the students bring the individual scenes together by collectively acting out the play in its sequential entirety. A final morning of rehearsals at Dominion Arts Center's Genworth BrightLights Education Center will lead up to the grand performance at noon in the Libby S. Gottwald Playhouse.

Students from Russia have performed in Bardathon for the past six years, alternating between traveling to the event and participating via webcast every other year. This year students from St. Petersburg's English Theatrical Society will participate virtually by sending a video of scenes, which will be dropped in sequential order over the duration of the play, allowing the group to perform alongside students from the City of Richmond and surrounding counties.

"Each year a new group of students, many of whom have never met, create a unique, spectacular Shakespeare performance," said Lucinda McDermott Piro, RPAA Director of Education. "They learn so much being part of a bigger picture. Seeing the pride and delight they experience in the collaboration is extremely rewarding. It's at the heart of our mission, to provide transformative arts education experiences."

"Bardathon is a unique opportunity for students from the Richmond area to collaborate, take risks and learn about the creative process within the confines of Shakespeare," said Addie Barnhart, Quill Theatre Director of Education. "The beauty of the event is seeing them take ownership of language that seems so challenging but that comes together as a cohesive product in a supportive environment. It's thrilling to watch."

Bardathon's ultimate goal is to bring diverse students together to celebrate the joy of playing some of the richest and most interesting characters ever written in the English language. By performing for one another, students can both learn from and share with each other.

Bardathon is sponsored by the Richmond branch of the English-Speaking Union. Live-streaming of the event will be provided for parents and the public at RPAAlliance.com.



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This year's participating student groups included:

Atlee High School (Hanover County)
Blessed Sacrament Huguenot Catholic School (Powhatan County)
Deep Run High School (Henrico County)
English Theatrical Society (St. Petersburg, Russia)
Maggie L. Walker Governor's School for Government and International Studies (Richmond City)
Matoaca High School (Chesterfield County)
New Kent High School (New Kent County)
Richmond Community High School (Richmond City)
Thomas Dale High School (Chesterfield County)

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Richmond Performing Arts Alliance

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Richmond Performing Arts Alliance (formerly Richmond CenterStage Foundation) is a 501(c)(3) organization whose mission is to provide diverse local and world-class performing arts, transformative arts education experiences for students of all ages, and inspirational venues—all to strengthen the culture and economic vitality of the Greater Richmond region. It is the home to 11 resident arts companies and performing arts groups. RPA venues include the historic Carpenter Theatre, Libby S. Gottwald Playhouse and Rhythm Hall at Dominion Arts Center and Altria Theatre – the largest performance venue between New York and Atlanta. Its arts education initiative operates out of the Genworth BrightLights Education Center and reaches students of all ages in the City of Richmond and surrounding counties.

Quill Theatre was born from the merger of Henley Street Theatre and Richmond Shakespeare. Now in our collective 31st season, our mission is to create theatre rooted in the genius of Shakespeare that provokes the mind and speaks to the soul – theatre worth talking about!

The English-Speaking Union of the United States is committed to promoting scholarship and the advancement of knowledge through the effective use of English in an expanding global community. It is a non-profit, non-political, educational organization formally organized in 1920. It shares its mission with more than 50 nations with English-Speaking Union organizations. The Richmond branch also seeks to promote understanding and good will among the people of the world who speak English, support cultural programs and educational exchanges, and cultivate an appreciation of our common English-speaking heritage.