Shakespeare in Nashville:
Local Performance in a Global Context

belmont.edu/english/ShakespeareinNashville

Folger Shakespeare Library Micro-Grant Proposal

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Introduction: Overview, Perspectives, and Impact

Digital performance archives such as MIT's *Global Shakespeares* connect students to multilocal performances around the world—what Alexa Huang calls "Global Shakespeare 2.0." But these well-established archives do not provide clear pathways for students to understand *their own* locality as another node in a network of global Shakespearean performance.

At the same time, scholars such as Peter Kirwan argue that professors of Shakespeare should ask students not only to analyze digital Shakespearean content, but also to create it. By doing so, we can connect students to the reinvigorated "liveness" of Shakespeare that emerges in the interplay of traditional and new media.

Our project addresses these needs within global Shakespeare and digital pedagogy through *Shakespeare in Nashville*, a web-based archive of local Shakespearean performances built and maintained by Nashville-area undergraduates and housed at Belmont University. Via this archive, students will explore editing for performance, acting and set design, and the correlations between production and local context. Ultimately, these activities will allow students to analyze local productions as a culturally significant link to global Shakespearean performance.

Programming in conjunction with *Shakespeare in Nashville* will include "Performing Shakespeare at Home and Abroad," an undergraduate research conference to launch the website, as well as class assignments based on the *First Folio!* tour.

This project will expand Belmont's recent initiative for digital pedagogy to students in the humanities and will build on a ten-year partnership between Belmont University and the Nashville Shakespeare Festival. Furthermore, it will formalize ties among Shakespearean professors throughout Nashville, innovating and expanding our collaborative efforts across campuses and with the NSF.

Once established, *Shakespeare in Nashville* will archive future productions and teaching tools, sustaining the connection of students, scholars, and practitioners in Nashville.

Outcomes

Content for *Shakespeare in Nashville* will include the following:

1) Archival material collected/created by students:
   - Interviews
   - Production and rehearsal footage
   - Photos and set design sketches
   - Edited scripts
   - Annotated bibliography of global digital production archives (appendix A)
   - Selected/featured student essays

2) Pedagogical resources created by Nashville-area professors:
   - Assignment descriptions and lesson plans for utilizing local production archives.

<u>Lasting impact of this site for the classroom</u>:
> *The archive designed by the Digital Literacies class will be "updateable," thus creating a place for ongoing collection of local Shakespeare productions by NSF and college-level theater programs. Dr. Overall's spring classes can benefit by having an ongoing project to teach editing and updating of web-based files. Likewise, the fall 2016 Shakespeare class will document its process of selecting and filming material, which will expedite the experience for the fall 2017 class and beyond. The three of us also anticipate continuing this as long as practical—we believe that once the website is created and launched, we can continue to use it for many years for the archiving of NSF and college-level Shakespeare performances. (We do not know of any college-level performances scheduled for this year; however, we regret we were not able to capture the student-directed all-female Julius Caesar presented at Belmont this past spring!)*

> *We want to launch this project with a conference, not only to publicize its existence, but more importantly to generate inquiry into the content the archive will provide. This archive provides material for investigating the concept of "local Shakespeare": the creation of meaning through the adaptation of local phenomena to the Shakespearean text in a production: music, local references, costuming and setting, casting, etc. These productions will now be available to be analyzed alongside commercial, "global," or other professional theater productions—a possibility not accessible to our students except in the transitory moment of a local production. Our choice of scholars to help frame this inquiry is based on expertise in digital humanities and global Shakespeare (Cavanagh) and in Shakespeare's comedies and in Nashville's Shakespeare culture (Marcus).   In addition to these benefits for classes in the Nashville region, we envision that this archive will be consulted by scholars and students and Shakespeare companies outside Nashville interested in the details of productions within Nashville and local contexts. Ultimately, we hope it contributes to the local/global discussion of creating Shakespeare through production and Shakespeare as a vehicle for*

interrogating local, contemporary culture. At the very least, it gives us the means for ongoing classroom assignments and projects that enable students to think critically, analytically, and imaginatively about the uses of Shakespeare and the preservation of these uses in the contemporary world.

Teaching Assistant:
> *We have a graduate student who has recently completed and defended her proposal for a thesis on Shakespeare and social media (specifically Tumblr); thus, she is an ideal graduate assistant for this project, as it will coincide with her thesis writing and her specific area of expertise within Shakespeare studies. We have adjusted the budget to reflect a stipend for her assistance in Fall 2016.*

Partners

In 2016-17, the Nashville Shakespeare Festival will produce four plays that students will document (*Comedy of Errors*, *Macbeth*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and *The First Folio*, an original play by Roy Kendall on the publication of the First Folio). The NSF was one of fourteen U.S. Shakespeare festivals featured in the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust's 2014 "On the Road" program, which explored Shakespeare in contemporary U.S. culture.

We will invite Nashville-area Shakespeare professors who currently give guest lectures for the NSF to collaborate. These partner faculty represent the following affiliations: Vanderbilt, Tennessee State, Austin Peay, Volunteer State Community College, Lipscomb, and Belmont. Partner faculty will also serve as an editorial board for website content

Producing and Maintaining the site:
The website will be built and maintained by students of "Digital Literacies," a course in the digital humanities taught by Dr. Joel Overall at Belmont University.

Thus, there will not be internal labor costs related to the website; this project will provide an authentic learning experience for the Digital Literacies class. Given that this class is within the English program here and will have primarily English majors and minors, this "digital humanities" project will not only provide authentic material to work with, but also an appropriate conceptual challenge for these students. Dr. Overall actively seeks authentic projects for his students. Last year, the students built a website to promote Belmont's counseling services ("B Well"). As we go forward, this class will provide Dr. Overall's spring classes with an ongoing project to teach editing and updating of web-based files. [Finally, an additional asset to this project is our annual, week-long Belmont University Humanities Symposium; this fall's symposium is on Technology and the Humanities, and will feature nationally-recognized scholars (including Amy Earhart and Carl Blyth) as well as papers and panels by regional scholars and Belmont faculty and students. Drs. McDonald, Yeo, and Overall, and graduate assistant Alyssa Wynans—and possibly some students—will contribute a panel on this project to the symposium.]

First Folio!

Documenting Kendall's *The First Folio* will introduce students to the publication history of Shakespeare's works. In addition, our classes will analyze differences in quarto/folio speeches of *Romeo and Juliet* and hire actors from NSF to help students stage these differences in a performance workshop in conjunction with the arrival of the First Folio.

Expanded Timeline

Summer 2016	Course and assignment development July—gathering of local Shakespeareans from Nashville area universities, colleges, and community colleges with NSF artistic director and producer; introduction of project. Depending upon specific interest in this project (and we know of several faculty interested), we will share the selection and filming possibilities noted for McDonald's Belmont ENL 3620 class below.	McDonald, Yeo, Overall
August 26-Sept 18, 2016	Introduction of project to ENL 3620: Shakespeare Identification of subjects and segments for archive and videoing from Aug/September production of The Comedy of Errors by NSF Filming will be done with student and faculty iPhones; these provide sufficient quality. Raw footage will be stored on a computer dedicated to the Digital Literacies class, password-protected. Graduate Assistant: introduce digital Shakespeare; work with students in classroom and on site to select elements of CE production most effective for digital context; assist students in documenting process for future classes	McDonald (graduate assistant: A. Wynans)
November 2016	Selection of and filming of programs related to First Folio visit to Nashville's Parthenon described above	McDonald (graduate assistant: A. Wynans)
Late November	Identification of subjects and segments for archive and videoing from January production of Romeo and Juliet by NSF	McDonald (graduate assistant: A. Wynans)
January 2017	Videoing of segments from R&J	Yeo / Overall class
February 2017	Students in ENW 2895 Digital Literacies course will be introduced to Shakespeare in Nashville web design project; in Feb-March, these students will	Overall

	learn web coding and will develop a mockup for the site.	
Late March/early April	Students in ENW 2895 will submit detailed mockups of Shakespeare in Nashville website for review by faculty & F 16 Shakespeare students	Overall, McDonald, Yeo
April 20	Students in ENW 2895 will submit final version of Shakespeare in Nashville website	Overall & students
April 20-24	Shakespeare in Nashville Launch conference (2 day-event)	McDonald, Yeo, local partners
Summer 2017	Assessment and redevelopment for 2017-18	McDonald, Yeo, Overall; faculty from local colleges & universities

Works Cited

Huang, Alexander. "Global Shakespeare 2.0 and the Task of the Performance Archive." *Shakespeare Survey* 64 (November 2011): 38-51.

Kirwan, Peter. "'From the Table of My Memory': Blogging Shakespeare in/out of the Classroom." In *Shakespeare and the Digital World: Redefining Scholarship and Practice*. Ed. Christie Carson and Peter Kirwan. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014. 100-112.

Appendix A: Bibliography of Global Shakespeare Performance Archives

Canadian Adaptations of Shakespeare Project. Dir. Daniel Fischlin. University of Guelph. <http://www.canadianshakespeares.ca/>.

The Cleveland Press Shakespeare Photographs: 1870-1982. Cleveland State University. < http://engagedscholarship.csuohio.edu/shakespeare/>.

Designing Shakespeare. Royal Halloway, Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, and Arts and Humanities Research Board. <http://www.ahds.rhul.ac.uk/ahdscollections/#method>.

Globe to Globe Hamlet. Shakespeare's Globe Theater.
　　　<http://globetoglobe.shakespearesglobe.com/>.

MIT Global Shakespeares Video and Performance Archive. Ed. and dir. Peter S.
　　　Donaldson. Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
　　　<http://globalshakespeares.mit.edu/#>.

Routledge Performance Archive. Routledge.
　　　<https://www.routledgeperformancearchive.com/>.

Royal Shakespeare Company. Royal Shakespeare Company. <https://www.rsc.org.uk/>.

Shakespeare in Asia. Stanford University. <http://sia.stanford.edu/about.html>.

Shakespeare in Performance. *Internet Shakespeare Editions*. University of Victoria.
　　　<http://internetshakespeare.uvic.ca/Theater/dbindex/>.

Shakespeare Performance in Asia. Ed. Peter S. Donaldson and Alexa Huang.
　　　Massachusetts Institute of Technology. <http://web.mit.edu/shakespeare/asia/>.

Shakespeare on the Road. Ed. Paul Edmundson. Shakespeare Birthplace Trust and
　　　University of Warwick. < http://shakespeareontheroad.com/>.

Shakespeare's Staging. Dir. Hugh Macrae Richmond. University of California Berkley. <
　　　http://shakespearestaging.berkeley.edu/>.

"Traffic of the Stage." *Touchstone*. Shakespeare Institute Library, University of
　　　Birmingham. <http://traffic.bham.ac.uk/index.htm>.

World Shakespeare Project. Dir. Sheila T Cavanagh. Emory University.
　　　<http://www.worldshakespeareproject.org/contactus.html>.