



**SHAKESPEARE'S  
GLOBE**

## ***Merry Wives of Windsor* Study Day – Saturday 12 October 2019**

*Please note: Unless otherwise stated all sessions will take place in the Nancy Knowles Lecture Theatre.*

10.00am-10.15am: **Registration**  
*Shakespeare's Globe Main Foyer*

10.15am – 11.30am: **'How to Become a Merry Wife and Influence People'**  
With Professor Elizabeth Schafer (Royal Holloway, University of London)

11.30am – 11.45am: **Break**

11.45am – 1.00pm: **Explorative seminar: Female Friendship and Feminism**  
With Sara Reimers (Royal Holloway, University of London)

**Or**

11.45am – 1.00pm: **Workshop: I'll exhibit a bill in the parliament for the putting-down of fat men: Me Too in 1602.**  
With Mary McNulty

1.00pm – 2.00pm: **LUNCH BREAK**

2.00pm – 3.30pm: **Specialist Session: Food and Feasting in *The Merry Wives of Windsor***  
With Dr Zoe Hudson

3.30pm – 3.45pm: **Break**

3.45pm – 4.30pm: **Q&A with Sarah Finigan from *The Merry Wives of Windsor* cast**

4.30pm – 5.00pm: **Closing Discussion**

\*Please note schedule is subject to change



**SHAKESPEARE'S  
GLOBE**

## Speaker Biographies

### **Professor Elizabeth Schafer (Royal Holloway, University of London)**

Elizabeth Schafer is Professor of Drama and Theatre Studies at Royal Holloway, University of London. She has published performance histories of *The Taming of the Shrew* and *Twelfth Night*, a monograph on the work of women theatre directors, *MsDirecting Shakespeare: Women Direct Shakespeare*, and a biography of Lilian Baylis, who ran the Old Vic and Sadler's Wells theatres, and was a founding mother of the National Theatre, the Royal Ballet and the English National Opera. In 2013 she ran 'The *Mariam* Project' to mark the 400th anniversary of the publication of Elizabeth Cary's *The Tragedy of Mariam* and in 2016 she dramaturged a 'new' play by Shakespeare entitled *Margaret of Anjou*. Earlier this year she published *Theatre & Christianity* which offers a radical new reading of Isabella in *Measure For Measure*. She is editing Richard Brome's *The City Wit* and *The Northern Lass* for the Oxford University Press complete edition of Brome's plays. She is currently writing a performance history of her favourite Shakespeare play *The Merry Wives of Windsor*.

### **Dr Zoe Hudson**

Zoe Hudson is a social historian who completed her PhD at the University of Kent in 2018. Her research explores the lived experiences of ordinary early-modern individuals, from dining and socialising activities, to work and domestic chores. Her thesis focuses on the unpublished diaries of Richard Stonley (1520-1600), who is the earliest documented purchaser of a work by Shakespeare. Zoe returned to university after working for many years in museums. She now combines her academic research with work in the cultural heritage sector, specialising in public engagement and working with community groups to explore local history topics.

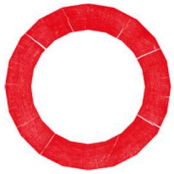
### **Dr Sara Reimers (Royal Holloway, University of London)**

Sara Reimers gained her PhD in Shakespeare, gender and casting from the Department of Drama, Theatre and Dance at Royal Holloway, University of London, where she subsequently worked as a Senior Teaching Fellow. Most recently, she has undertaken a Creative Economy Engagement Fellowship in the same department, collaborating with the Women's Committee of performers' trade union, Equity, to explore the changes performers make to their appearance in the line of work. Sara is also a theatre practitioner and regularly uses practice as part of her research work.

### **Mary McNulty (MA LRAM)**

Mary is Senior Learning Consultant and Practitioner at Shakespeare's Globe. She became a member of the Theatre Advisory Committee in 1986 and continued her Globe involvement through the inception and development of the Education Department. Having worked as an actor for several years, she completed a Research MA: *The Cultural Positioning of Shakespeare's Globe from Wanamaker to Rylance* at the University of Kent, where she is an Associate Lecturer, teaching a range of undergraduate and postgraduate theatre modules while specialising in Shakespeare and early modern performance practice.

\*Please note schedule is subject to change



## Abstracts

### **Professor Elizabeth Schafer (Royal Holloway, University of London): 'How to Become a Merry Wife and Influence People'**

When Mistress Page states that she and Mistress Ford will demonstrate that 'Wives may be merry and yet honest too' she is confronting significant reservations in early modern culture about the desirability of wives who are 'merry'. *The Merry Wives of Windsor* shows 'merry wives' disciplining and influencing the men behaving badly – Falstaff and Ford – but they also set an example to future merry wives, such as Anne Page. The trajectory of Anne Page in recent performance history helps to emphasise that Shakespeare's play on one level tracks Anne's progress as she graduates into the ranks of 'merry wives'.

### **Dr Zoe Hudson: Food and Feasting in *The Merry Wives of Windsor***

*The Merry Wives of Windsor* includes many references to food and dining activities. What can the play reveal about these everyday, domestic activities in the time of Shakespeare? What can audiences understand about Falstaff's character from the food and drink he consumed? What is food doing dramatically and symbolically in the play? In this talk social historian Dr Zoe Hudson will explore archival evidence of Tudor dining activities, including diary reports, household accounts and cookery books. Participants will also get the opportunity to try some Tudor foods and look at historic recipes and ingredients.

### **Sara Reimers (Royal Holloway, University of London): Explorative seminar: Female Friendship and Feminism**

The friendship at the heart of *The Merry Wives of Windsor* is unique in Shakespeare, nowhere else in his work do we see the kinds of collaboration and camaraderie demonstrated by Mistress Page and Mistress Ford. This session will explore the significance of their friendship, placing it in the context of other plays by Shakespeare, as well as considering its relationship with its historical moment. Approaching the play from a feminist critical perspective, we will examine the way in which it lampoons male pomposity and celebrates female ingenuity, and will look at some examples of how this has been handled in performance.

### **Mary McNulty ( MA LRAM) : 'I'll exhibit a bill in the parliament for the putting-down of fat men: Me Too in 1602.**

*With evidence of a court performance in 1597, the first quarto of Merry Wives appeared in 1602.*

I do mean to make love to Ford's wife: I spy entertainment in her... I can construe the action of her familiar style...

I will be cheaters to them both, and they shall be exchequers to me. (*Falstaff I iii*)

How shall I be revenged on him? For revenged I will be, as sure as his guts are made of puddings. (*Mrs Page II i*)

The workshop will explore the staging of that revenge...