

NEW FILMED SHAKESPEARE PRODUCTIONS FOR SCHOOLS

The award-winning Guildford Shakespeare Company (GSC) have recorded special productions of *Macbeth* and *Romeo & Juliet* for school audiences to fill the gap left by theatre closures.

As part of their coronavirus response, GSC have adapted the key two Shakespeare school texts specifically for GCSE students, accompanying the recordings with over 100 minutes of additional footage, providing context to the play's themes and characters.

GSC's school productions keep Shakespeare's original language throughout, enabling students to appreciate the dramatic impact of the text in performance. Filmed on location, the two films feature four actors who play all roles.

Ant Stones, GSC's Head of Development for Education: *"We are really proud of our school productions. They have always provided a strong interpretation of Shakespeare's great plays and provoked great discussion points for the students. Although we can't visit the schools during the pandemic, filming the productions means that students can still benefit from watching scripts in performance."*

Both films come with additional visual classroom material, including cast interviews and scenes in rehearsals, allowing students to further explore language, characters and different interpretations. The films are being made available online, meaning they can easily slot within the school timetable and be revisited at school or at home, throughout the year.

Kate Graves, Cobham Free School: *"We are so incredibly grateful for the resources provided by GSC during this difficult time. It has been fantastic to be able to offer students the opportunity to watch a production of *Macbeth* which was created with them in mind. It was a wonderful experience for them during a year which has been very different and difficult for them."*

Ant Stones: *"The beautiful surroundings and religious setting of St Nicolas' Church in Guildford added a wonderful atmosphere to each play and highlighted the character's most virtuous and evil actions. Filming with complete social-distancing was also a fascinating experience and pushed the characters in certain directions."*

A trailer for the films can be found on the GSC website, along with full details on how to access them at www.guildford-shakespeare-company.co.uk/schools-touring/. Each film is available to purchase now at a special introductory price of £200 (if ordered before Spring Half Term, Friday 12 February), and can be accessed for the rest of the academic year.

Production of these films was made possible through the generous support of The Geoff Herrington Foundation.

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Note to Editors

Guildford Shakespeare Company is an award-winning, site-responsive theatre company. Established in 2006 by actor-managers Sarah Gobran and Matt Pinches, it has produced over 40 shows in unique venues including Guildford Cathedral, Watts Gallery, West Horsley Place and a Flemish Spiegeltent. In 2015, Brian Blessed OBE played the title role in *King Lear*. Its Education and Outreach works with over 5000 people young and old every year including free-to-access social inclusion programmes. GSC is one of the largest producers of home-grown theatre in the region.