

Camp Shakespeare 2018

Camp Shakespeare is a two-week University of Texas residential summer camp for young people, ages 11-16,* dedicated to ensemble playing with the plays of Shakespeare, exploring Shakespeare through performance. “Exploring” and “performance” are key words here. They suggest that we are finding our way not through rehearsals but performances. Every moment is performance. Campers are challenged to play out their interpretative discoveries on stage.

(*The younger applicants must have reached 11 by January 1st 2018.)

All of the elements of the program are intended to promote an understanding and appreciation of the works of Shakespeare, and of their extraordinarily complex and penetrating vision of human life. Campers develop, test and transcend their sense of self through their exploration of Shakespearean characters. What we pursue here is the conviction that anyone can live life more fully through a personal encounter with Shakespeare’s art.

Camp Shakespeare seeks kids who work well with others, who are inventive, elastic, eager to play, explore and take risks, and are ready to rumble when they arrive.

Camp Shakespeare accepts applications from candidates anywhere, in public, private, or home schools. Experience with theater or with Shakespeare is not necessary. Commitment to working long hours daily at play with others is. Each session will be composed of 14 students. Applications are available on the shakespeare-winedale.org website for both prospective campers and former campers.

DAILY SCHEDULE AND ACTIVITY

Campers begin their day quite early, at 6:30 with cabin-cleaning and other assigned duties before meeting in groups or one-on-one with the staff to work on lines, characterization, or a scene at 7:00. A brief period of physical and vocal exercise follows. Then breakfast. Morning and afternoon work/play sessions (from 8:15- 4:00) take place in the Theater Barn at Winedale and the air-conditioned Henkel Hall in Round Top. Every lunch is a picnic, prepared and set out by campers. Late afternoon sessions (4:00-6:00) are busy with Journal writing, relaxation exercises, quiet time, painting, mask- making, lines, and preparing for the evening. Improvised “problem-solving” exercises, singing, dancing, and free improvisational play follow supper. The day concludes with film sequences of Shakespeare’s plays and Cabin Time, wherein campers “unwind” and exchange responses to accomplishments of the day.
Lights out : 9:15 p.m.

CAMP DATES

Camp Shakespeare will offer two sessions for Summer 2018

Session 1: Sunday, June 10 — Saturday, June 23

Session 2: Sunday, July 1 — Saturday, July 14

THE PLAYS

Session 1: The Comedy of Errors

Session 2: A Midsummer Night's Dream

PUBLIC PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE

Campers will be performing at the following dates and venues:

Session 1:

Thursday, June 21, at the Crystal Theater in Gonzales, Tx, at 3:30pm

Friday, June 22, at the Austin Scottish Rite Theatre in Austin, Tx, at 2:00pm

Saturday, June 23, at The Winedale Historical Center's Theater Barn, at 1:00pm

Session 2:

Thursday, July 12, at the Crystal Theater in Gonzales, Tx, at 3:30pm

Friday, July 13, at Henkel Hall in Round Top, Tx, at 7:00pm

Saturday, June 23, at The Winedale Historical Center's Theater Barn, at 1:00pm

CAMP FEE

The cost of Camp Shakespeare '18 is \$1,100.00. Some scholarship monies are available. Questions about scholarships should be directed to Doc Ayres at jayres@cvctx.com

CAMP SITE

The site of Camp Shakespeare '18 is Briarfield B & B Retreat & Conference Center, near Round Top, Texas. The Inn provides a comfortable country and historical setting for the experience: students enjoy the privilege of using and the responsibility of caring for these beautifully-restored 19th century Texas buildings which serve as dormitories, dining, and gathering spaces. See briarfieldatroundtop.com.

STAFF

Camp Director: Robin Grace Soto. Now in her 10th Camp year, Robin holds a B.A. in Theater from St. Edward's University and is a graduate of the Actors Theatre of Louisville apprentice program.

Director of Mission: Professor Jim (Doc) Ayres, Distinguished Teaching Professor Emeritus, The University of Texas. Founding Director of Shakespeare at Winedale and Camp Shakespeare.

Doc and Robin will be assisted by three other staff each session.

CAMP APPLICATIONS

Each session will be composed of 14 students. The application process requires prospective campers to send (1) the completed Registration Form; (2) the Completed Application with an essay by the applicant (a) introducing herself/himself and (b) explaining why he or she wishes to participate in Camp Shakespeare '18, exploring expectations/hopes/goals; and (3) two letters of recommendation from teachers. Applications from former campers do not require teachers' letters.

Please note:

The application process and deadlines have changed slightly from years past.

Please email all application materials, including letters of recommendation for new campers, to Doc Ayres at jayres@cvctx.com. We will no longer be accepting applications that have been mailed to the PO Box. All applications must be received electronically.

Application process for NEW CAMPERS

Part One: Registration Form	Due: ASAP to register your intent to apply. Must be received by March 31 st , 2018
Part Two: Application and Essay (Plus 2 Letters of Recommendation)	Due: March 31 st , 2018
Part Three: In-person or Phone Interview	Between March 15-April 1 st

Final selections will be announced on or around April 1st, 2018

NOTE: Applicants cannot be considered for acceptance unless all application materials have been submitted before the deadlines listed above. We strongly encourage applicants to get their materials in as early as possible. Please email all application materials to Doc Ayres at jayres@cvctx.com

Application Process for FORMER CAMPERS

Part One: Registration Form

Due: ASAP to register your intent to apply. Must be received by 31st, 2018

Part Two: Application and Essay

Due: March 31st, 2018

Final selections will be announced on or around April 1st, 2018

NOTE: Applicants cannot be considered for acceptance unless all application materials have been submitted before the deadlines listed above. We strongly encourage applicants to get their materials in as early as possible. Please email all application materials to Doc Ayres at jayres@cvctx.com

SELECTION PROCESS

We do not audition applicants. We do interview new applicants and give serious consideration to letters of recommendation.

Former Campers should be aware that their prior experience in Camp does not automatically guarantee them a place in the next Camp sessions.

All applications are reviewed by the directors. Our goal is to select equal numbers of boys and girls, a balance of new and former campers and a fair representation of all ages (11-16). We attempt to honor the applicant's first choice for session but often we have to take the second choice because of the balances we seek in gender, age, and between new and former camper experience. Often we cannot select candidates who select only one session, for the same reasons.

As we read new applications, we give major consideration to the applicant's ability to live, work, and play cooperatively and generously with others; to a desire for shared and disciplined play experience; a willingness to try new things, risk, and explore; and to a firm commitment to the ensemble approach. With former camper applications, we consider not only their contributions in every one of those areas, but also their leadership, their positive approach to every part of camp and to their development as a healthy and energetic community player.

Applicants are therefore applying for a play experience, not a specific Shakespearean play or part. After notification of selection, campers will receive role (character) assignments and suggestions about preparation.

NOTIFICATION OF ACCEPTANCE

Candidates will be notified of their acceptance on or around April 1st, 2018 and are expected to acknowledge acceptance by e-mail. To secure registration, parents of Campers selected should send the full (\$1,100.00) fee payment to Professor Ayres, Camp Shakespeare, P.O. Box 202, Round Top, Tx, 78954. Checks should be made “TO” The University of Texas and marked “FOR” Camp Shakespeare.

CAMP POLICIES

At Camp Shakespeare, we hope to create together a highly original, extraordinary learning experience. We have a country setting for that, much like Shakespeare’s forest of Arden or the wood outside Athens. There is a different clock here. This world is filled with magic, wonder, song, and words and we do it without cell phones, computers, ipods, radios, or electronic games. The only TV game show here is Shakespeare. We do encourage campers to bring musical instruments of any kind. Upon acceptance into the program, campers are notified of what items to bring and not to bring.

TELEPHONE CONTACT AND VISITATION

Camp staff members notify parents of a camper’s illness and/or problems with following the daily schedule or working with others, explaining how we are addressing those difficulties. Parents wishing to contact campers for any reason should call any of the three staff members at any time.

PREPARATION FOR CAMP

Upon acceptance, campers will be sent a text of the play chosen (with plenty of space for questions and annotation), role assignments, information about what to bring to Camp, a Release and Indemnification form and a Medical History report (to be returned by mail before arrival). Campers prepare by reading and re-reading the play and by working toward understanding language and characterization. Campers are expected to have memorized all of their assigned lines by the arrival date. Campers may at any time e-mail any of the staff for assistance, advice, suggestions, or answers to questions arising during this period of preparation.

Campers who arrive at Camp without the preparation noted above may be dismissed from Camp.

A SUMMARY

Camp Shakespeare seeks kids who:

- work well with others
- are ready and eager to speak up, make observations and respond to others from the beginning
- are inventive, elastic, eager to explore and take risks
- are ready to rumble (get involved, assist others, take initiative) when they arrive
- desire to live, work, and play with a positive attitude, cooperatively and generously with others
- have a desire for shared and disciplined play experience
- have a willingness to try new things, risk, and explore and do those
- have a firm commitment to the ensemble approach

FURTHER INFORMATION

Our web site, shakespeare-winedale.org, carries up-to-date information about the summer camp. Parents and candidates are urged to check the site weekly for new information and possible changes. Questions of any kind about Camp Shakespeare '18 should be directed to Doc Ayres at jayres@cvctx.com.

The following observations by a former (1980) Shakespeare at Winedale student whose daughter (age 12) attended Camp Shakespeare, and the parent of a recent camper (age 16), say quite a bit about what happens at Camp Shakespeare:

Their accomplishment [at Camp] is the more remarkable when we consider that none of these students are theater or drama students but only kids interested in working together to explore a play through performance. In the process, their play becomes a vehicle for their exploration of language, of social encounter and problem-solving, for developing self-confidence and self-esteem, verbal and written expression, and, through Shakespeare, for gaining insight into the human condition.

Looking in from the outside, it's a pretty risky thing that Camp Shakespeare is doing. I actually think that's why it works. It creates the right community for those kids – it's not about me, it's about us; it's about the play. The kids realize what amazing stuff they can accomplish in just two weeks' time by letting go. The camp empowers kids to be themselves and use what they've got, and puts faith in them that they can do it. Believing they can do it, they do!