

'Word is God' at Shakespeare theatre's season in London

by [Jo Siedlecka](#)

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London, March 28 (ENInews)--Shakespeare's Globe Theatre in London has entitled its 2011 season "The Word is God" and will mark the 400th anniversary of the King James Bible with a cover-to-cover reading between Palm Sunday, 17 April, and Easter Monday, 25 April.

Twenty actors, including many Globe regulars, will take part in the reading, which will take 69 hours over the eight days. They will recite all 1,189 chapters of the historic bible, considered an essential part of the development of the English language, in the theater built as a replica of the place that saw many of Shakespeare's greatest plays.

"Four hundred years ago, a set of church scholars sat in Stationer's Hall by St. Paul's Cathedral and put the finishing touches to the King James Bible. Across the river, a set of playwrights, Shakespeare foremost amongst them, entertained a town. The playwrights listened to the clerics in church, the clerics sneaked in to listen to the plays in the theatre. Between the two of them they generated an energy, a fire and wit in the English language. We will honour that achievement this summer, starting with the recital of one of the greatest and most significant English texts - the Bible," Artistic Director Dominic Dromgoole said in an interview.

The theater's season will also include the story of the creation of the King James Bible in the play "Anne Boleyn," by Howard Brenton. The story looks at the legacy of Henry VIII's second wife, who conspires with the exiled William Tyndale to make England Protestant forever. Starting 70 years after her death, the play examines how King James united England's religious factions with a common Bible, and the debt he owed to Anne.

In August, the Globe will present "The Globe Mysteries," a set of medieval mystery plays in a new version by poet and playwright Tony Harrison. "The Globe Mysteries"

will bring stories from the Bible to life whilst celebrating the spirit of street theatre and processional performance.

The King James Bible anniversary is echoed within the Globe's education program, which will host a series of events entitled "The Heard Word: Pulpit Vs Playhouse." They include a lecture by Professor Graham Holderness of the University of Hertfordshire on the relationship between the works of Shakespeare and the King James Bible.

In modern drama, the theater will present the world premiere of "The God of Soho" by Chris Hannan, a hectic comedy about modern Britons looking for the divine.

Website: <http://www.shakespearesglobe.com>.