

# EDMONDS CENTER *for the* ARTS

## REDUCED SHAKESPEARE



### *Reduced Shakespeare* The Ultimate Christmas Show (Abridged)

**December 3**

*Sponsored by  
Jan & Benny Teal*

#### ABOUT REDUCED SHAKESPEARE COMPANY

Called a “trio of Modern Marx Brothers” by the Boston Herald and “intellectual vaudeville” by the New York Times, The Reduced Shakespeare Company (RSC) is a touring American comedy troupe that performs fast-paced, seemingly improvisational condensations of huge topics. They hold the record for the longest running comedies in the history of London’s West End as three of its shows ran in repertory at the Criterion Theatre in Piccadilly Circus for almost ten years. Known as the “Bad Boys of Abridgment,” the RSC has performed at the White House, Lincoln Center, Off-Broadway, the Kennedy Center, and Montreal’s famed Just For Laughs Festival, as well as touring the UK, Belgium, The Netherlands, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, China, Singapore, Barbados, Bermuda, Israel, Qatar, and Ireland. The Reduced Shakespeare Company is heard frequently on both NPR and the BBC.

Since its pass-the-hat origins in 1981, the RSC has created ten world-renowned stage shows, two television specials, several failed TV pilots, and numerous radio pieces, all of which have been performed, seen, and heard the world over. The company’s itinerary has included stops off-Broadway, at the White House, the Kennedy Center, Lincoln Center, London’s West End, Seattle Repertory Theatre, American Repertory Theatre and Montreal’s famed Just For Laughs Festival, as well as performances in Israel, Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong, Japan, Malta, Singapore and Bermuda, plus countless civic and university venues throughout the USA, the UK, and Europe.

The company’s first three shows, *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (abridged)*, *The Complete History of America (abridged)* and *The Bible: The Complete Word of God (abridged)* ran for over nine years at the Criterion Theatre in Piccadilly Circus. They were London’s longest-running comedies, and the RSC had more shows running in the West End than Andrew Lloyd Webber. They were also funnier.

The company’s eleventh and brand-new stage show – *Hamlet’s Big Adventure! (a prequel)* – had its international premiere at the London In Tel Aviv Festival in 2019 and its American premiere in 2022. In 2016, in honor of the company’s 35th anniversary and the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare’s death, the RSC premiered its tenth stage show, *William Shakespeare’s Long Lost First Play (abridged)*, at the Folger Shakespeare Theatre in Washington DC. In 2013 the “Bad Boys of Abridgment” unveiled The



Complete History of Comedy (abridged) – to critical and commercial acclaim at both Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park and Merrimack Repertory Theatre, as well as on national tours of the the USA and UK. *The Complete World of Sports (abridged)* opened in 2010 at Merrimack Rep and after touring the USA and UK, ran at the Arts Theatre in London during the 2012 London Olympics. In 2011 came the world premiere of *The Ultimate Christmas Show (abridged)* which became Merrimack Repertory Theatre's best-selling holiday show ever, and the third-best-selling show in MRT's history and also enjoyed a successful run at San Diego Repertory Theatre as well as multiple tours across the USA.

The RSC applied its fast, funny and physical approach to World History in *Western Civilization: The Complete Musical (abridged)*, which toured simultaneously in the US, UK and Australia) and condensed literature into a 90-minute roller-coaster ride in *All the Great Books (abridged)*, which has played to great acclaim at the Kennedy Center, Pittsburgh Public Theatre, San Diego Repertory Theatre, Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park, Seattle's ACT Theatre, and Alabama Shakespeare Festival, as well as Great Britain, Holland, Ireland, and Sweden (in Swedish!). They skewered the 186 greatest movies of all time *Completely Hollywood (abridged)*, which has received critical kudos across the US and UK, as well as Belgium, Holland, Hong Kong, and Barbados.

For TV, the RSC compressed the first five seasons of *Lost* into a ten-minute film called *Lost Reduced*, and was a Jeopardy! category in the 2005 and 2006 Tournaments of Champions. They wrote and starred in *The Ring Reduced*, a half-hour version of Wagner's Ring Cycle for Channel 4 (UK), and reduced the Edinburgh Festival for BBC and the soap opera *Glenroe* for RTE Ireland. *Shakespeare (abridged)* aired on PBS and is available on DVD, as is *America (abridged)*.

For National Public Radio, the RSC has been heard on All Things Considered, Weekend Edition, Talk of the Nation, Day to Day, West Coast Live, and To The Best of Our Knowledge. The BBC World Service commissioned the six-part Reduced Shakespeare Radio Show. The Reduced Shakespeare Company Christmas was heard on Public Radio International.

The RSC won the prestigious Shorty Award in New York City and the Delft Audience Award in Holland. They've also been nominated for an Olivier Award in London, two Helen Hayes Awards in Washington, DC, the SF Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Award, and several podcast awards.

RSC scripts are published in the US and UK, and translated into over a dozen languages. The RSC Radio Show, RSC Christmas, and Bible (abridged) are all available on CD or iTunes.

On April 23, 2014 the company set a Guinness World Record™ for the Highest Theatrical Performance at 37,000 feet aboard an EasyJet flight from London to Verona. The RSC also creates unique entertainments for corporate events, working with such companies as Sky-TV, Time Magazine, Motorola, and Rotary International.

*Pop-Up Shakespeare* (illustrated by Jennie Maizels) was published in 2017 by Candlewick Press in the US and Walker Books in the UK and Australia. Hyperion published their irreverent reference book *Reduced Shakespeare: The Complete Guide for the Attention-Impaired (abridged)*. The company established its own imprint Reduced Books to publish the comic memoir *How The Bible Changed Our Lives (Mostly For The Better)* in all e-book formats.

And the RSC Podcast, a free 20-minute audio glimpse of life backstage and on the road – and the world's longest-running theatre podcast – is available every week at [www.reducedshakespeare.com](http://www.reducedshakespeare.com) and wherever you get your podcasts.

