

DRAFT

SHAKESPEARE in PRISON:
The *Demonstrable* Power of Shakespeare for Social Justice
Lecture
Monday February 10, 2020
Larimer Center for the Performing Arts
Rowland Hall
6:00-8:00 PM
Open to the public at no charge

DATE. Salt Lake City, Utah.

Lesley Currier, Managing Director of the Marin Shakespeare Company, will discuss the Company's innovative and empowering Shakespeare in Prison program Monday February 10, 2020 from 6:00 until 8:00 p.m. at the Rowland Hall Larimer Center for the Performing Arts, 843 Lincoln Street, Salt Lake City. Her lecture, followed by a Q&A, is open to the public at no charge. Seating is available on a first come, first seated basis. Doors open at 5 p.m. This one night-only event is sponsored by the Salt Lake Shakespeare Society.

In 2003, the Company started a weekly Shakespeare class with three prisoners at San Quentin Prison. Hundreds more incarcerated men, women and individuals with physical and mental health issues have now become participants in 13 prisons throughout California. Programs include "Shakespeare," "Acting for Veterans," and "Drama for Re-Entry," which uses drama therapy-inspired exercises to allow incarcerated inmates with release dates to "rehearse" how they want to act when they return home. Increasing also is the number of outside guests attending performances, particularly at San Quentin, where the number of reservations often exceeds available seating.

According to Currier, "These extraordinary events demonstrate the power of the arts to heal, to provide insight into our criminal justice system, and the power of our shared humanity. It's amazing to me that our love of Shakespeare has taken us to a place where we are able to use Shakespeare as a tool to really shine a light on what I consider one of our countries greatest social problems." Currier added that she has never had a player who has gone back to jail.

Former inmates LeMar “Maverick” Harrison and Dameion Brown, Artists in Residence at the Company, speak publicly of the value of Shakespeare for Social Justice in prison and the changes the program brought about to the prisons where they were incarcerated.

<https://www.marinshakespeare.org/2018/10/11/drama-therapy-saved-my-life/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qnCvy7ht6dM&feature=youtu.be>

"When you consider that 95% of prisoners go back into society,* the impact of the the Shakespeare for Social Justice programs and the power of theater can not be overestimated," noted Charles Boynton, founder and president of the Salt Lake Shakespeare Society.



About the Marin Shakespeare Company <https://www.marinshakespeare.org/>

Ms. Currier with her husband Artistic Director Robert Currier produced Shakespeare's plays first thirty years ago. The non-profit corporation has extended its presence beyond staging plays to provide a rich educational experience for 5,000 students each year through in-school programs, summer camps and internships with college students majoring in theater. Primary programs include Mainstage summer season at Dominican University of California's Forest Meadows Amphitheatre in San Rafael; year-round classes for students of all ages; Shakespeare for Social Justice programs; and Shakespeare events throughout the year.

About the Salt Lake Shakespeare Society www.shakespearesaltlake.org

The volunteer-based, non-profit organization is comprised of individuals dedicated to the enjoyment and appreciation of Shakespeare and his times. Its mission is to support its members and, through them, the public at large in expanding the understanding of and joy in classic liberal humanism and the insights into the human condition embodied by Shakespeare.

To arrange interviews, press and media contact:

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* <https://www.marinshakespeare.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Facts-About-Prison-Prison-to-Employment-Connection.pdf>