



William Shakespeare was born in 1564 in Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire. Widely acknowledged as the greatest dramatist the world has ever known, the titles and words of his plays are familiar to people across the planet.

Shakespeare's workplace, the city in which he spent the greatest part of his life, was London. He spent much of his time in the capital living and working north of the Thames, in the City of London. The City today is a very different place from the Elizabethan streets that Shakespeare would have known, but you can still discover many fascinating traces of his life and legacy. To get a complete sense of Shakespeare's London you also have to cross the river to Southwark, where the most famous of his theatres, The Globe, once stood.

Before visiting, we recommend you check websites for the current opening times and admission. Details correct at time of printing (March 2022).



If you wish to visit Shakespeare's Globe for a tour you may want to consider beginning your walk from there. You can then follow the route in reverse, ending at the City Information Centre.

Check website for tour times and dates.
shakespearesglobe.com

Start your journey at the City Information Centre. Walk to the back of the building and turn right onto Carter Lane, then turn left onto St Andrew's Hill and follow it along, until you come to The Cockpit pub. To your right, where St Andrew's Hill and Ireland Yard meet, you'll see the Gatehouse plaque on 5-6 St Andrew's Hill.

Shakespeare's Gatehouse 1

The Cockpit pub marks the approximate site of Shakespeare's Gatehouse. On 10 March 1613, Shakespeare bought the Old Priory Gatehouse from Henry Walker, 'citizen and minstrel (musician)' for £140. The title deed was later bought at an auction in 1843 by the City of London Corporation for £145. The deed of purchase for the property still exists today and is housed at the London Metropolitan Archives; it contains one of only six "authenticated" examples of Shakespeare's signature. The property is particularly significant because – although Shakespeare owned property in Stratford – it is the only property he is known to have owned in London. Given its convenient proximity to the Blackfriars Playhouse and The Globe, Shakespeare may have intended to make it his home, yet no evidence suggests he lived here in the three years prior to his death in 1616.



The deed for the Gatehouse purchase, containing an authenticated signature of Shakespeare

The Cockpit pub, the approximate site of Shakespeare's Gatehouse



© London Metropolitan Archives

Turn right and continue along Ireland Yard. Just before you reach Playhouse Yard, you'll find St Ann Blackfriars' Churchyard on your right, walk up the steps to find the remains of Blackfriars Priory.



Blackfriars Playhouse 2

Shakespeare's Blackfriars Playhouse stood in Playhouse Yard and is regarded as one of the most important sites in English theatre history. Richard Burbage formed a syndicate with Shakespeare, Henry Condell and John Heminge, among others, and together they purchased the Playhouse in 1608; yet, due to the outbreak of plague, the opening was delayed until the winter of 1609. It is

widely believed that *The Winter's Tale* and *Cymbeline* were written with the Blackfriars Playhouse in mind, despite the fact both plays were also performed at The Globe theatre. The final show at Blackfriars Playhouse was performed in 1642, before it was pulled down in 1655.

Remains of Blackfriars Priory in St Ann Blackfriars' Churchyard



View of Blackfriars Playhouse,

Continue down Playhouse Yard and turn right onto Blackfriars Lane. Continue until you come to the corner of Carter Lane and on your right you'll find a blue plaque marking the original site of the Blackfriars Priory.



Blackfriars Priory

Blackfriars Priory 3

Blackfriars Priory was one of the most magnificent religious institutions in medieval London. Henry VIII dissolved the monastery in 1538 and many of its buildings were pulled down. What survived was converted into expensive residential apartments, convenient for courtiers at Whitehall, Westminster and the Tower, as well as Hampton Court and Greenwich Palace.

The right of sanctuary remained within the area of the old monastery, which was a 'liberty,' and outside the jurisdiction of the City authorities. It was the ideal neighbourhood for a playhouse.

OPTIONAL: If time permits, visit The Inns of Court to see a number of sites that stood in Shakespeare's day.

Continue up Ludgate Broadway and Pageantmaster Court until you reach Ludgate Hill, turn left and continue along Fleet Street until you reach the gate for Middle Temple Lane on the left. Go through the gate, if open, and continue and continue straight to reach Temple Hall, then turn left to make your way to Temple Church. To continue the walk, retrace your steps back towards St Paul's Cathedral.



Temple Church

Middle Temple Hall & Temple Church 4

Middle Temple Hall was built between 1562 and 1573 and has the finest Elizabethan interior in London. On 2 February 1602, the first recorded performance of *Twelfth Night* took place here. Temple Church was completed by the Knights Templar in 1185 and contains – as it would have in Shakespeare's day – sculptures of the old knights, commonly referred to by playwrights of the time.

Opening hours:

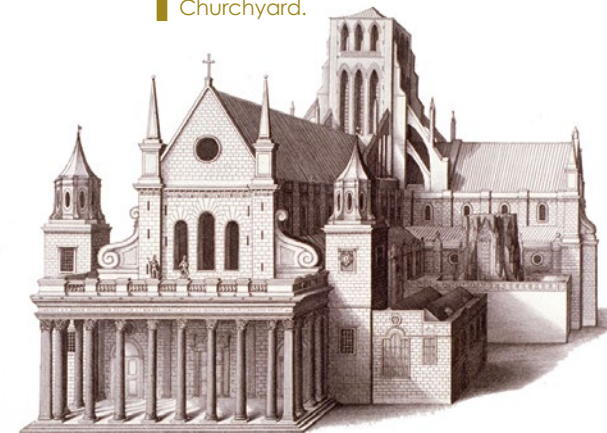
Middle Temple tours are available subject to availability and must be booked in advance.
middletemple.org.uk
templechurch.com

The interior of the Middle Temple Hall



© London Metropolitan Archives

To get to St Paul's continue your way up Ludgate Broadway and Pilgrim Street, then turn right and continue along Ludgate Hill. You'll soon pass Ave Maria Lane on your left and see Stationers' Hall home to one of the Livery Companies of the City (not open to public). During Shakespeare's time, The Stationers' Company regulated the practices and protected the interest of everyone connected with the book trade. The history of the publication of Shakespeare's work can be traced in the Stationers' Register, from the poems to the great folios which appeared after his death. As you approach St Paul's Cathedral, cross the street at the traffic lights and continue down Paternoster Row to St Paul's Churchyard.



South west view of St Paul's Cathedral in Shakespeare's time, Wenceslaus Hollar (1607-1677),

St Paul's Cathedral 5

The old St Paul's Cathedral was one of the largest medieval churches in Europe, until it was destroyed in the Great Fire of 1666. It dominated the skyline of Shakespeare's London and was the centre of both religious and social life in the old City. The Cathedral was at the heart of London's book trade and it is likely that here Shakespeare picked up the books that furnished him with source material for his work. First editions of Shakespeare's plays were also bought and sold here.

stpauls.co.uk

Walk through the Cathedral's yard and garden, then cross New Change Street at the traffic lights before continuing along Cheapside.

OPTIONAL: Turn right down Bread Street for the site of the Mermaid Tavern and the birth place of English poet, John Milton (1608-1674), at the Cannon Street end.

© London Metropolitan Archives



Christmas Eve at The Mermaid Tavern in Shakespeare's time, London Metropolitan Archives

OPTIONAL: The Mermaid Tavern 6

It has long been thought that Shakespeare met with a small group of writers and actors at The Mermaid Tavern. They supposedly formed a lively club which has been depicted by various artists from the 19th century. In addition, one of the signatures to the Shakespeare Deed was of William Johnson, a citizen and member of the Vintners' Company of London who is thought to have been the landlord of The Mermaid Tavern in Shakespeare's day.

From Cheapside, turn left onto Milk Street and follow it along until you see Guildhall Yard and St Lawrence Jewry Church. Cross the street to access the Yard on your right.

Guildhall Great Hall and Guildhall Library 7

Most of Guildhall Great Hall was built during the reigns of Henry IV (Henry of Bolingbroke in Shakespeare's plays) and Henry V, between 1411 and 1430. It is home to the City of London Corporation and has been the centre of City government since the Middle Ages. The Great Hall was also used for important trials, including that of Henry Garnet, a Jesuit implicated in the Gunpowder Plot of 1605. cityoflondon.gov.uk/guildhallgalleries

Guildhall Library houses one of the precious First Folios (printed where the Barbican stands today – refer to map). Whilst many copies survived, very few are in mint condition; the copy housed at Guildhall Library is considered one of the five best in the world. cityoflondon.gov.uk/services/libraries/guildhall-library

First Folio, at Guildhall Library



South view of St Mary Aldermanbury 1814, Shepherd George (1765 -1831)

Continue onto Aldermanbury until you come to the corner of Love Lane (a regular haunt for prostitutes during the 16th century), you'll find the memorial to Heminge and Condell in St Aldermanbury garden.

Heminge and Condell memorial 8

Two of Shakespeare's fellow actors, Henry Condell and John Heminge, are buried in the churchyard of St Mary Aldermanbury. After Shakespeare's death in 1616, Condell and Heminge played a vital role in publishing the First Folio edition of his works, collecting together 36 of his plays. Without the First Folio nearly half of Shakespeare's plays would have been lost. The church was bombed during the Blitz in 1940's and never re-built. Today there is a beautiful garden with a monument to the two men, topped by a bust of Shakespeare. Without the dedication of Condell and Heminge it is likely that a lot of Shakespeare's work would have been lost.



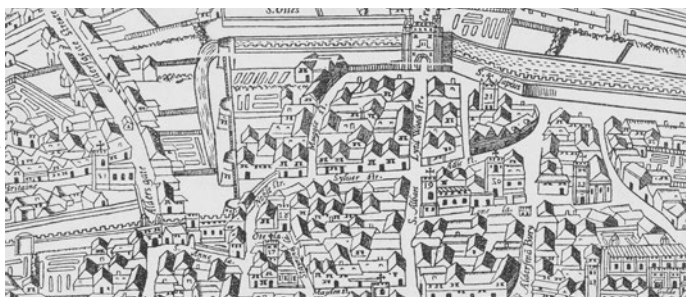
Henry Condell and John Heminge memorial

Turn left and walk down Love Lane, then turn right onto Wood Street. Cross Wood Street and take St Albans Court opposite. Follow Oat Lane until you reach Noble Street. Turn right and look for a small square garden on the right.

Silver Street Lodging 9

The blue tiled plaque in this garden indicate that Shakespeare lodged near here in the house of Christopher and Mary Mountjoy – in 1604. The house perished in the Great Fire of 1666 and the entire area was redeveloped after it was bombed in 1940. Walk through the park to find a block of stone with a medieval skull and cross-bone carving, marking the graveyard of St Olave's Church. The church stood on Silver Street and was located almost opposite to the house where Shakespeare lived and likely wrote *Othello* and *King Lear*.

Silver Street (Sylyer Street) on the Agas map; a bird's-eye view of London, attributed to surveyor Ralph Agas (1540-1621)



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www.cityoflondon.gov.uk



Shakespeare's Globe
Shakespeare's Globe has partnered with the City of London Corporation to produce this publication



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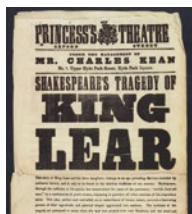
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Playbill for a production of King Lear at the Princess Theatre, 1858. From Theatre Playbills Collection, London Metropolitan Archives



South west view of St Giles without Cripplegate, 1750

Fortune theatre, Golden Lane, Shepherd's Grove (1765-1831)



© London Metropolitan Archives

Leave the garden and turn right along London Wall. Cross London Wall at the traffic lights with Wood Street, and continue along Wood Street. Turn left onto Giles Terrace. On your left you'll find St Giles without Cripplegate church.

St Giles without Cripplegate and the Fortune Playhouse 10

St Giles without Cripplegate survived the Great Fire and is now one of the few medieval buildings still standing in the City. It is here where Edward, Shakespeare's nephew and the illegitimate son of his brother Edmund, was buried in 1607.

The Fortune playhouse once stood in the parish of St Giles without Cripplegate and is referenced in one of the church's stained glass windows. In 1600 an Elizabethan theatrical entrepreneur, Philip Henslowe, and his leading actor, Edward Alleyn, decided to build a new outdoor playhouse. They chose to build the new Playhouse to the north of the river near Whitecross Street – a medieval market street near today's Barbican Arts

Centre. Although square in shape, the Playhouse was otherwise modelled on the polygonal Globe and built by the same carpenter, Peter Street. The Fortune opened at what became known as Playhouse Yard (today's Fortune Street) and prospered until it closed in 1642.

stgilesnewsite.co.uk

St Helen's Bishopsgate, 1736.



St Helen's Bishopsgate on the Agas map, a bird's-eye view of London, attributed to surveyor Ralph Agas (1540-1621), London Metropolitan Archives



Go back onto Wood Street and turn left to continue along Fore Street. When you reach London Wall, turn left and continue until you come to the junction with Bishopsgate. Cross the street at the traffic lights and head right along Bishopsgate – refer to map to find the turning for Great St Helen's.

St Helen's Bishopsgate 11

Another rare survivor of the Great Fire of 1666 is St Helen's Bishopsgate. The Church's strange shape is attributable to it having two naves, one for the parishioners and one for the Benedictine nuns who lived there. For some time it was Shakespeare's parish church and it is presumed he worshipped here. Interestingly, on 15 November 1597, the tax collectors for the Ward of Bishopsgate noted that of 73 rateable residents of the parish, William Shakespeare failed to pay 5s on taxable goods worth £5.

st-helens.org.uk

Go back and continue left down Bishopsgate, crossing the junction, of Leadenhall Street and Gracechurch Street. As you walk down Gracechurch Street you'll see Victorian arches at the entrance to the Leadenhall Market on your left.



Leadenhall Market

Leadenhall Market 12

The iconic Leadenhall Market dates back to the 14th century and is situated between Leadenhall Street, Gracechurch Street and Lime Street. Originally a meat, poultry and game market, it now features a variety of vendors as well as commercial shops, restaurants, cafes and pubs beneath a beautiful 19th-century structure. The Great Fire of 1666 entirely burned down what Shakespeare would have known as Lime Street – the hub of London's scientific community and

where wool and materials were weighed. During the summer time, the space was used for making and storing materials shown at Midsummer pageants which everyone – including Shakespeare – would enjoy. The physical space and social milieu of early modern Lime Street was detailed in John Stow's 1598 survey of London, where it was recognised as a street favoured by the 'worthiest citizens' of London, due to its wealthy merchants' houses.

leadenhallmarket.co.uk

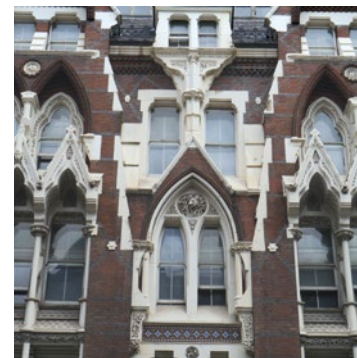
Walk through Leadenhall Market and leave by Lime Passage. Turn right onto Lime Street, cross Fenchurch Street and continue your walk down Philpot Lane. Once you reach Eastcheap turn left and, in a very short distance, you'll see a red-brick gothic-type building.

Eastcheap 13

Eastcheap was one of London's chief meat markets. The district thrived with taverns in Shakespeare's time, and was likely to have been the site of the Boar's Head Tavern. This legendary tavern appears in Henry IV in a scene between two of Shakespeare's

most famous characters, Sir John Falstaff and Prince Hal. Unfortunately, while a Boar's Head pub stood here in the 16th century, this was not the case in the 15th century when this historic play was set. If you look up, you'll notice a boar's head (dating from 1868) poking out from underneath one of the arches right in the middle of the building's facade.

The original site of the Boar's Head Tavern, 33-35 Eastcheap





View of London Bridge and the City as produced by Wenceslaus Hollar, just after Shakespeare died, London Metropolitan Archives, Southwark Priory (later Cathedral, 15) is in the foreground.

Go back the way you came and continue along Eastcheap until you reach King William Street. Turn left to continue your walk across London Bridge.

London Bridge 14

The old London Bridge was one of the architectural splendours of the City, 'a work very rare it seemed rather a continual street than a bridge' (John Stow, 1598). In Shakespeare's day it was the only bridge that crossed the Thames to the City. It stood 480 metres (800 feet) long, was built of stone and featured houses and shops all along its length; most sold goldsmith's work, jewellery and pins – a speciality of the Bridge. Although heavily altered from repair work after the 17th century fires, London Bridge survived until it was replaced in 19th century. It was replaced again in 20th century.

Looking east from London Bridge you can see the Tower of London, a looming symbol of fear and mystery in many of Shakespeare's history plays. Much of the Tower appears the same today as it did in Shakespeare's time.

Once you come to the end of London Bridge cross the street at the traffic lights and continue onto Borough High Street; you will see The George Inn sign hanging in the distance, turn left at the gates into the yard.

The George Inn 15

Shakespeare's life and career is intensely felt in Southwark, once London's chief



National Trust plaque in the George Inn yard

The George stands on the site of an inn built around 1542. This building dates from 1676 – the year of Southwark's Great Fire – and once surrounded three sides of the courtyard. It is the last galleried inn in London, and the only building to provide insight into the kind of establishment used by troupes in the city. Before purpose-built theatres such as The Globe were constructed, inns such as this were commonly used for performances.

Turn right onto Borough High Street, cross over the road and continue walking in the direction of London Bridge. Turn left onto Bedale Street and then continue onto Cathedral Street. You'll find Southwark Cathedral on your right.

Southwark Cathedral 16

In Shakespeare's time, Southwark Cathedral was the parish church of St Saviour's and St Mary Overie ('over the water'). Shakespeare's brother Edmund was buried at St Saviour's on 31 December 1607, during the height of the Great Frost, when the river was completely frozen over. The panoramic artworks depicting London by English cartographer John Norden and later Czech-born etcher Wenceslaus Hollar – drawn from an earlier tower of the church – provide the most reliable visual record of The Globe and its neighbouring theatres. Inside Southwark Cathedral stands a monument to Shakespeare located in the south aisle, created in 1912 by Henry McCarthy.

Shakespeare's memorial at Southwark Cathedral



entertainment district and home to numerous playhouses, animal-baiting rings, inns and brothels. Not only did Shakespeare work in Southwark for the longest and most successful part of his career, a tax return dated 6 October 1600 confirms he lived here for a period of time too.

Above this monument is a memorial window, created in 1954 by Christopher Webb, which replaced the earlier window smashed during World War II. Additionally, next to the window is a memorial to Sam Wanamaker, who led the project to reconstruct The Globe.

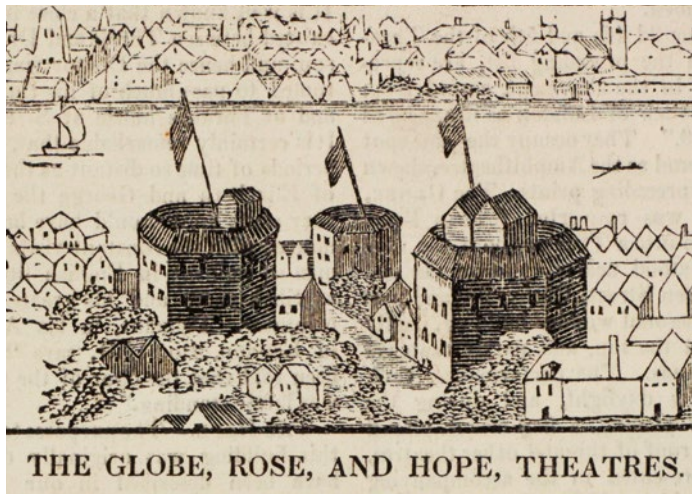
Turn right onto Cathedral Street and walk towards The Golden Hind, a reconstruction of Sir Francis Drake's famous ship, which in Shakespeare's time was moored at Deptford. Go round the ship towards the Thames and turn left onto Pickfords Wharf and continue down Clink Street. As you walk, look out for the remains of the Great Hall of Winchester Palace on your left. This was the London residence of the Bishop of Winchester. Most of the Bishop's property was leased-out for rent, much of it to brothel keepers. In 1600 one of the ratepayers was Shakespeare. Once out of the tunnel, turn left onto Bank End and after a very short distance, turn right onto Park Street, following it along until you approach Southwark Bridge. The site of the original Globe will be on your left (Old Theatre Court Yard).



The Globe on its original site

Site of The Globe 17

A plaque and a series of illustrative panels mark the site of The Globe theatre. Approximately five per cent of the foundations of the first (and second) Globe have been excavated. These foundations verified that the original Globe was a 20-sided polygonal building – vital information used in the quest to later replicate the famed theatre. About 15 of Shakespeare's plays had their first or very early performances at The Globe, including many of his most renowned works.



© London Metropolitan Archives

The Globe, Blackfriars Playhouse, Fortune Playhouse and many others were closed in 1642, as theatre was considered to clash with the ideology of the Government; it was seen as a distraction from the pursuit of a higher, moral society.

Continue onto Park Street, and once you walk under Southwark Bridge, The Rose theatre will be on your right.

The Rose & The Hope 18

A large office block covers the remains of The Rose theatre, the first open-air playhouse to be built on Bankside. The Rose was an irregular 14-sided polygon, smaller than The Globe. Many of Christopher Marlowe's plays were first performed here, as were Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus* and *Henry VI Part 1*. The Rose was run by Philip Henslowe whose 'diary' or account book still survives today and is housed in the library at Dulwich College. Henslowe's diary provides the closest account of the day-to-day running of an Elizabethan playhouse. The Rose was abandoned by 1603 and the site was excavated in 1989.

As you continue along Park Street you will pass Bear Gardens. It is here that The Hope playhouse – built by Philip Henslowe in 1613 – once stood. Animal baiting shows were popular before playhouses were erected on Bankside. The Hope provided Londoners with entertainment in the form of both animal baiting and theatrical drama, as traditional animal baiting rings were similar in structure to theatrical playhouses; round with galleries and a yard.

Continue on Park Street, turn right onto New Globe Walk and down to Bankside on the riverfront. You'll find The Globe to your left.

Shakespeare's Globe 19

Thanks to the uncompromising vision of Sam Wanamaker and the team of scholars, architects and craftsmen he built around him, Shakespeare's Globe has been constructed as the closest estimate to Shakespeare's theatre. It is a masterpiece of authentic timber-frame craftsmanship, using 'green' (untreated) oak, lime plaster reinforced with goat hair, bricks created to an Elizabethan recipe and Norfolk reed thatch. Its official opening was in 1997 with performances usually taking place between April and October.

Around the corner, on New Globe Walk, stands the brick shell of the Sam Wanamaker Playhouse; an archetype of a Jacobean indoor theatre, based on the only surviving design from the 17th century (believed to be by John Webb, a protégé of Inigo Jones). Though Webb's design was never built (as far as we know), the Sam Wanamaker Playhouse is the closest we have to the indoor playhouses where Shakespeare's company performed during the winter months. Named after The Globe's founder, it opened in 2014 and performances usually take place by candlelight from October to April.

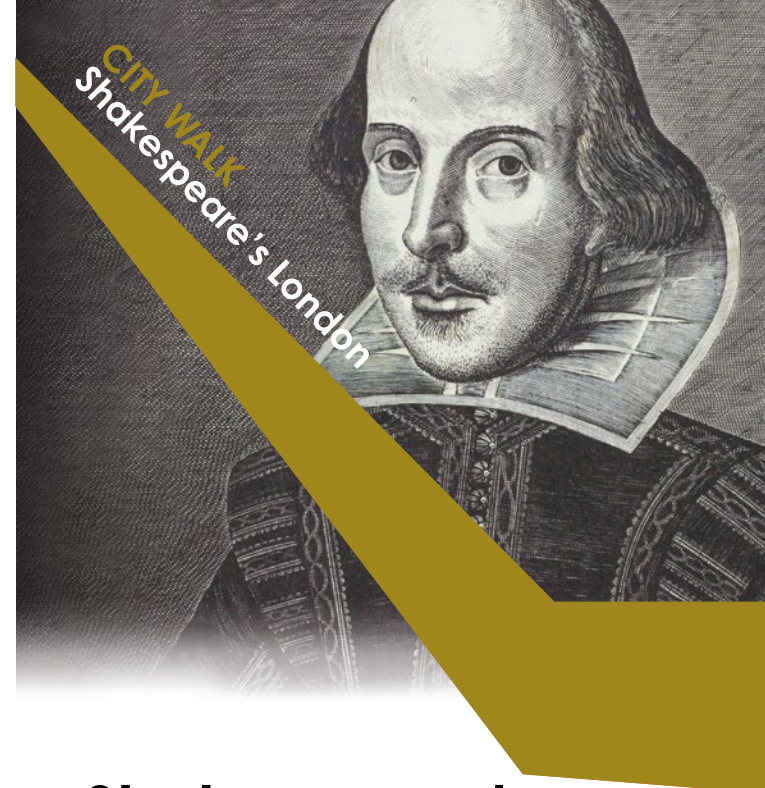
The stage in The Globe theatre



Text includes material adapted from 'Walking Shakespeare's London' by Nicholas Robins (edited with permission of the author).

Shakespeare's Globe

Check website for details of guided tours. shakespearesglobe.com/guidedtours
Performance times vary, check for availability. shakespearesglobe.com



Shakespeare's London

Follow in the footsteps of the world-renowned dramatist and discover the city he made his home



SHAKESPEARE'S GLOBE