




GRSF.org | Winona, Minnesota

2014

# Great River Shakespeare Festival

Annual Report



Jon Daly, Leslie Brott, Jenni  
McCarthy, Bailey Bestul,  
and John Steele Jr., *The Merry  
Wives of Windsor*  
PHOTO BY Michal Daniel

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Sigrid Sutter and Tarah Flanagan, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*  
PHOTO BY Michal Daniel

COVER IMAGE: "Get Carried Away" Original Season 11 Poster, Julia Crozier





Chris Mixon, *Hamlet*  
PHOTO BY Michal Daniel



Christopher Gerson, *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern are Dead*  
PHOTO BY Sydney Swanson



Caroline Amos, *Troilus & Cressida*  
PHOTO BY Kathy Greden Christenson



Every year, the Great River Shakespeare Festival gives the region professional, astounding, life-altering Shakespeare productions of the very highest quality, always rivaling and often superseding the offerings of the nearby metropolitan areas. In short, it is theatre that you should not miss.

If you're anywhere near Winona, Minnesota—by which I mean within a roughly three hundred mile radius—it is completely worth heading to The Great River Shakespeare Festival. Go there. Go there now.



*Bardfilm: The Shakespeare and Film Microblog*



## FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

As we enter our second decade, it is gratifying to witness the many ways that GRSF has matured, realizing so many of our original goals. Seeing Andrew Carlson's passionate, nuanced performance as Hamlet this season was a perfect example. Andrew joined the Apprentice Actor Training Program, moved on to an internship and then full membership in the professional acting company. He is now a leader in the company, starring as GRSF's first Hamlet and serving as our Education Director. While growing as an artist within GRSF, he has extended opportunities to the next generation by founding the Shakespeare for Young Actors and school residency programs.

Just as Andrew has climbed the ranks as artist, the company too has risen in prominence. This year, critics from Minneapolis/St. Paul, Milwaukee, Rochester, La Crosse and beyond not only praised the productions, but treated GRSF as an expected part of the cultural landscape of the region. It is clear that more and more audience members view the journey to Winona as a yearly tradition.

Maturity brings stability and an ever widening reputation for artistic excellence. Our challenge is to keep the fresh, innovative energy that made us passionate about GRSF in the first place. This season, we produced four titles never before seen on the GRSF stage. In our third professional company production, we tried a new experiment and produced a language driven play by a modern playwright. *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* not only fulfilled part of the original vision of the company, it proved to us that our audience is eager for a wide range of challenging theatre. We added new education programs to serve younger students, and our opening and closing concerts attracted an even wider audience from the community.

If the first year of our second decade is any indication, maturity will never mean stagnation for GRSF. Maturity will mean that we have the confidence to grow.



Doug Scholz-Carlson  
Artistic Director



## FROM THE MANAGING DIRECTOR

Great River Shakespeare Festival had a banner year according to almost every statistical measure. Those of us who work in the not-for-profit arts management field rarely get to relay such positive findings. As you read on, we hope you will agree there is great cause for optimism and excitement for GRSF's immediate future and long-term prospects to continue to serve as one of the region's artistic leaders and economic catalysts. Because of the hard work of everyone at the festival and the generous support of our sponsors, volunteers, and audiences we are proud to report these Season 11 accomplishments:



**BOX OFFICE RECORDS:** Exceeded our record for most tickets purchased per show. Ticket sales grew by 27% with regional ticket sales now accounting for 67% of all tickets sold.

**DEVELOPMENT ACHIEVEMENTS:** Exceeded our development goals with a slight surplus, raising more money than any previous season. Expanded our corporate and individual donor base and retained, while growing, our foundation and government granting opportunities.

**BUDGETARY REALIZATIONS:** Analyzed and trimmed our production budgets by close to 10% midseason. Proposed for fiscal year 2015 an even leaner budget by cutting an additional 5% across the board.

**STAFFING MILESTONES:** Our new Artistic and Managing Directors proved their abilities to lead by presenting strong productions, universally well received, and financially successful. Our Marketing and Development teams exceeded their aggressive goals and created improved programs and strategies focused on future growth with long term regional expansion.

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Season 12 is poised for even greater impact as we implement the strategies honed this year. The Leadership Circle and iAM GRSF campaigns look to add to the growth of our funding base. As we continue to strengthen our local audiences, our focus will sharpen to regional targets, expanding east to Milwaukee and Chicago, and south to the Quad Cities and Decorah. With three potential blockbuster productions planned, our 2015 season is certain to give even more reason to applaud.

We are so grateful to each of you and look forward to speaking with you about your new or continuing participation and partnership with GRSF. The Great River Shakespeare Festival belongs to all of us: our public servants—the mayor, our city council, state and national representatives—to our vital and thriving industries and corporate partners, to our deeply committed educational institutions, and to each of the citizens in our communities and those who visit from as faraway as Japan and New Zealand. Together we accomplished so much this year, and together we will write an even more thrilling future for the Festival.



**Lee Gundersheimer**  
*Managing Director*

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THE PREMIER  
PLACE TO  
EXPERIENCE  
SHAKESPEARE'S  
STORIES AS  
OUR OWN.

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## OUR MISSION

*To create dynamic, clearly spoken productions of Shakespeare's plays which enrich people's lives.*

To accomplish our mission, we:

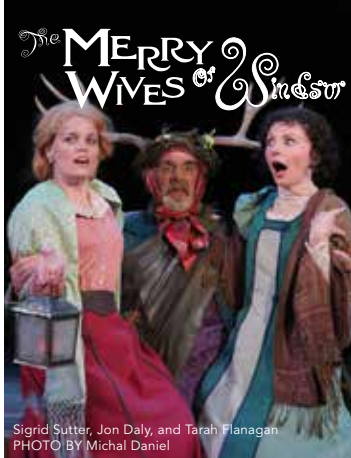
- Engage and sustain a highly skilled company of theatre professionals including Equity Actors.
- Seek and treasure patrons and partners who value and support the Festival's commitment to bringing Shakespeare to the people and making artistic excellence affordable.
- Contribute to the region's vitality and prosperity.
- Provide educational opportunities for learners of all ages and backgrounds.
- Stage plays by other playwrights and encourage artistic events of high quality.
- Explore Shakespeare's language and themes in order to engage people of all ages and backgrounds in conversation relevant to their lives, community, and world.

## OUR CORE VALUES

In all we do, we are passionately committed to:

- Respect, empathy, and compassion
- Excellence, authenticity, and innovation
- Outreach and education
- Accessibility and affordability
- Honesty, responsibility, and accountability
- Diversity and inclusiveness



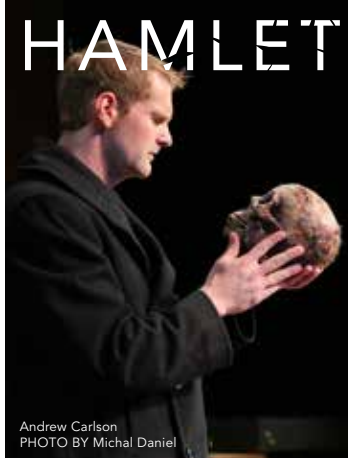


Sigrid Sutter, Jon Daly, and Tarah Flanagan  
PHOTO BY Michal Daniel

**Director**

PAUL MASON BARNES

<b>Performances</b>	17
<b>Attendance</b>	4,411
<b>Total Sales</b>	\$76,153.34



Andrew Carlson  
PHOTO BY Michal Daniel

**Director**

JAMES EDMONDSON

<b>Performances</b>	16
<b>Attendance</b>	4,092
<b>Total Sales</b>	\$61,918.33



Doug Scholz-Carlson and  
Christopher Gerson  
PHOTO BY Sydney Swanson.

**Director**

GALE CHILDS DALY

Written by TOM STOPPARD

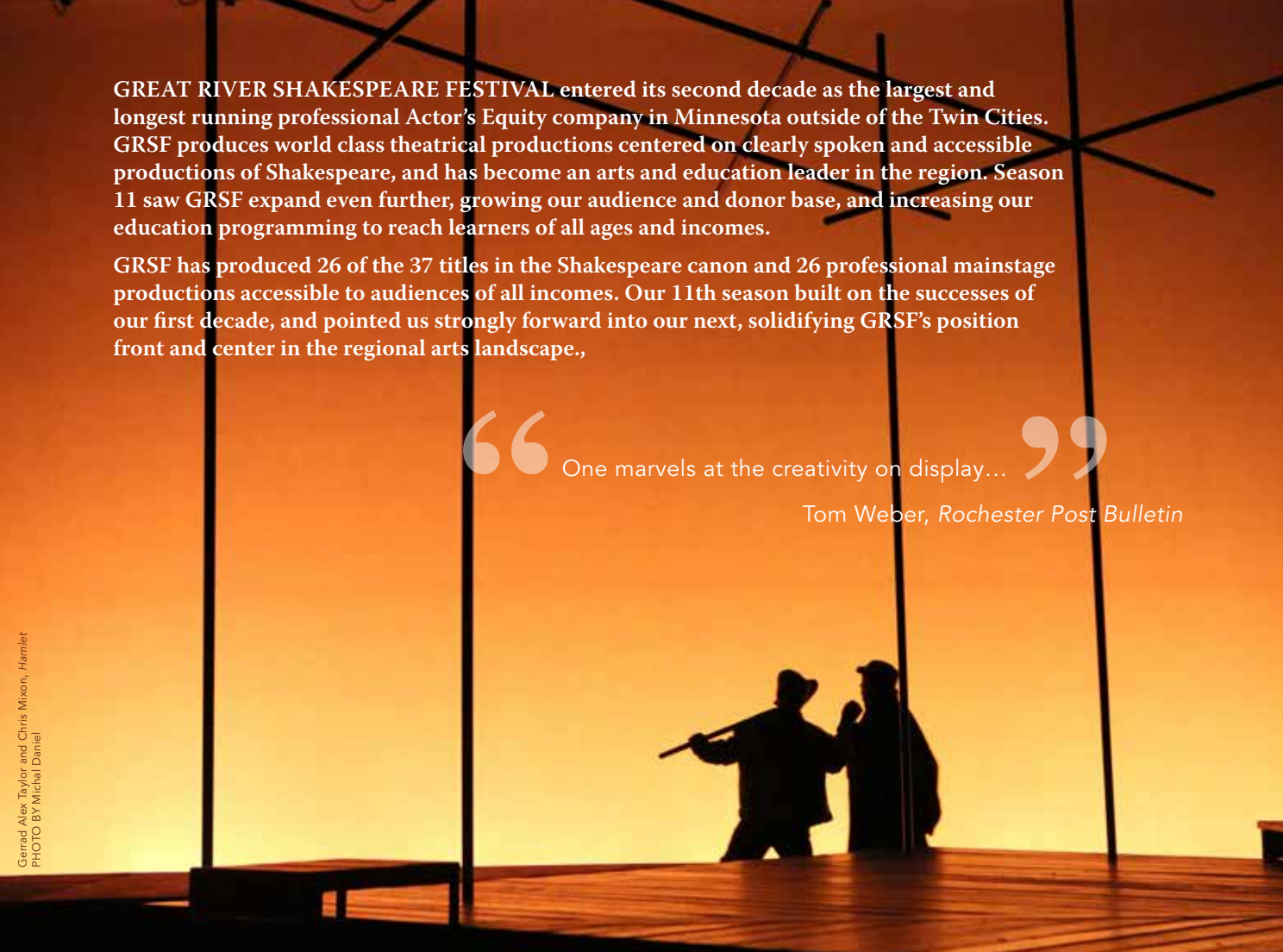
<b>Performances</b>	10
<b>Attendance</b>	2,290
<b>Total Sales</b>	\$30,364.33

“ I was as I watched, learning anew what Shakespeare always teaches: No matter how familiar these plays may seem and no matter how often one sees them, smart and creative productions like this one will regularly remind us that there’s always still more to discover. ”

Mike Fischer, *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*

*“Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead” was presented by special arrangement with SAMUEL FRENCH, INC.*





GREAT RIVER SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL entered its second decade as the largest and longest running professional Actor's Equity company in Minnesota outside of the Twin Cities. GRSF produces world class theatrical productions centered on clearly spoken and accessible productions of Shakespeare, and has become an arts and education leader in the region. Season 11 saw GRSF expand even further, growing our audience and donor base, and increasing our education programming to reach learners of all ages and incomes.

GRSF has produced 26 of the 37 titles in the Shakespeare canon and 26 professional mainstage productions accessible to audiences of all incomes. Our 11th season built on the successes of our first decade, and pointed us strongly forward into our next, solidifying GRSF's position front and center in the regional arts landscape.,

“ One marvels at the creativity on display... ”

*Tom Weber, Rochester Post Bulletin*

# TROILUS & CRESSIDA

- intern/apprentice project -

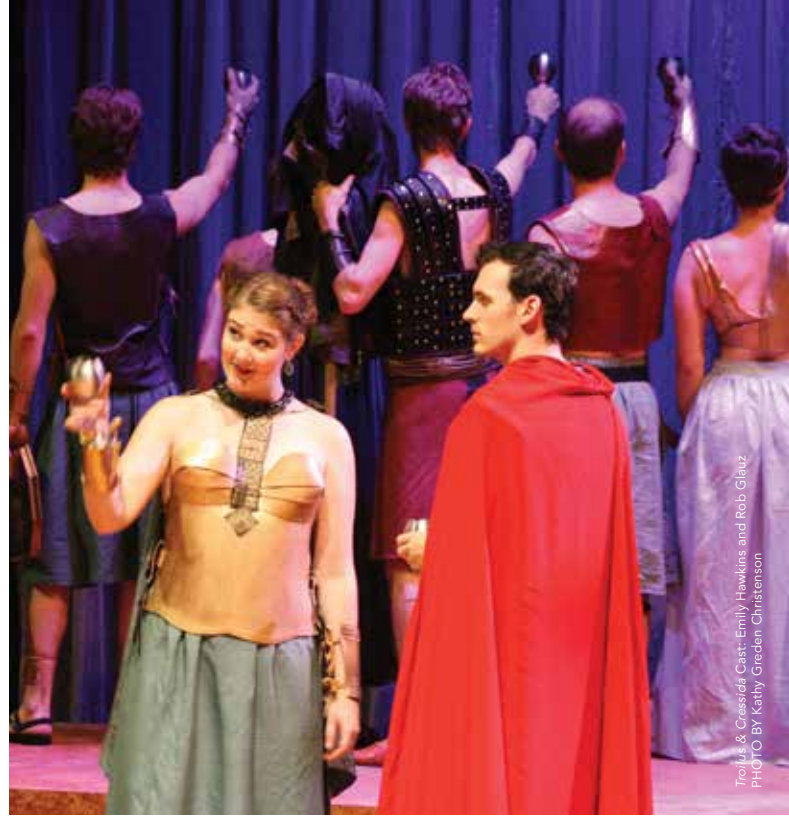
**Director**

RICK BARBOUR

**Performances** 8**Attendance** 530**Total Sales** \$5,695.00

Eight performances for the general public, showcasing the diverse talents of the GRSF apprentice actors, technical and administrative interns.

- Developed and enhanced actors' knowledge of, and experience with, verse as they make the transition from training programs to the professional world.
- Mounted a fully realized production while working with the professional company on mainstage productions.



Troilus & Cressida. Cast: Emily Hawkins and Rob Glaz. PHOTO BY Kathy Greden Christenson

## FRONT PORCH EVENTS

The “Front Porch” is where we gather to talk with our friends, family, and to engage in intelligent civic discourse.

- Frozen River Film Festival and GRSF Company member Christopher Gerson, in partnership with GRSF presented “*Darwin: The Series.*”
- Renowned playwright Carlyle Brown performed his one-man show: *Therapy and Resistance.*
- Symposiums on *The Merry Wives of Windsor* and *Hamlet* led by renowned regional scholars in partnership with Winona State University.
- Festival favorite and Shakespeare scholar Dr. Peter Saccio lectured on “What Happened in Elsinore.”

- The Annual Maria W. Faust Sonnet Contest brought in over 400 entries from 138 poets in 36 states, Washington D.C. and 6 foreign countries.

## LIBRARY PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

GRSF partnered with seven libraries in Southeast Minnesota to bring Shakespeare education to hundreds of students and adults.

- Participating libraries were: La Crescent, Lanesboro, Northfield, Rochester, Rushford, St. Charles and Winona.
- This programming was sponsored in part by a grant from SELCO (Southeast Libraries Cooperating), and allowed over 250 people to attend a Shakespeare play.

- Opening night party at the Winona Public Library, allowing 500 patrons to experience new types of programming at their library.

*This project was funded with money from Minnesota's Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund.*

## WILL READS

The entire community gets ready for GRSF by reading and discussing each of the professional and the apprentice plays.

- Discussions and reading open to anyone and led by local scholars and teachers.
- Prepares Shakespeare fans, new and old, for the season.

The logo for "Will, reads" features the word "Will," in a purple, rounded font with a comma, followed by "reads" in a larger, bold, purple, rounded font. A purple brushstroke underline is positioned beneath the text.

**PRE-SHOW CONVERSATION**

This new, wildly successful piece of GRSF's educational programming was offered 30 minutes before every performance.

- Audience members were given an informative hand-out specific to the show.
- To make the experience richer and more understandable, our assistant directors for each production led a brief talk covering:
  - an introduction to the world of the play
    - a who's who of the characters
    - important pieces of additional information

*The Pre-Show Conversations were generously sponsored by Plasticomp.*

**SHAKESPEARE IN THE SCHOOLS**

For three weeks at local high schools, GRSF teaching artists led classes covering in-depth acting skills and a deeper understanding of Shakespeare.

- In 2014 Winona High School and Cotter High School participated, with growth to La Crescent High School planned for 2015.

**CHILL WITH WILL**

Special performances for each play allowing students to attend for free.

- Additional programming allowed students a deeper look into the play and behind-the-scenes of the theatre.

*Generously sponsored by William Miller Scrap Iron & Metal Company.*

**SHAKESPEARE FOR YOUNG ACTORS/SHAKESPEARE FOR YOUNG DESIGNERS**

An intensive performance workshop geared for students in grades 7-12.

- Introduced students to techniques of acting, text analysis, design, and production.
- Culminated in a public presentation of design and a performance of *The Tempest*.

SYA/SYD Attendance 249

shakespeare  
  
 for young actors

shakespeare  
  
 for young designers



Silas Sellnow  
PHOTO BY Kathy Greden Christenson



**CONCERTS ON THE GREEN**

Friday and Saturday evenings GRSF provided FREE live music concerts on the Winona State University Green, with special opening and closing concerts on the banks of the Mississippi in Levee Park.

- COG's goals are highlighting local and regional musicians, and providing a welcoming atmosphere for the GRSF community.
- COG was sponsored in part by a grant from the Southeastern Minnesota Arts Council.
- The addition of multiple food trucks and vendors added to the experience and gave our local restaurants enhanced visibility and economic outreach opportunities..
- In 2014 over 4,800 people attended concerts.

**REGIONAL OUTREACH EVENTS**

This year GRSF began a focused effort to grow our audience and supporter base throughout the region. We held three events in three locations:

**ROCHESTER:**

- Already a home to Rochester Friends of Will, this event hosted by Randy Chapman, publisher of the Rochester Post Bulletin, and his wife Sheryl, further solidified our relationship with supporters while encouraging new participants.
- GRSF was the recipient of the 2014 Ardee Award for "Outstanding Regional Arts" thanks to our years of outreach, education, and audience development in the greater SE MN region.

**TWIN CITIES:**

- By reaching out to the many arts supporters in the Twin Cities through successful events like this year's party hosted by Jose and Amy Martin, we have begun to cultivate another regional support group. As the only Equity theatre outside of the Twin Cities area, we are working diligently to give audiences a reason to explore the arts outside of their local area.

**LA CROSSE:**

- Held in partnership with key sponsor Dahl Automotive, GRSF connected with current fans, LaCrosse arts and business groups and new prospects in the closest city to Winona at a wonderful event at the Dahl Automotive Museum.

## WOW

Will's Opening Weekend is the grand opening of the GRSF Festival Season.

- The City of Winona partnered to offer a new and exciting event; closing streets for a community parade to the theatre, an opening concert at Levee Park, and a special WOW After-Party at the Winona Public Library.
- The Carriage House B&B hosted the second opening weekend's events, as the addition of a third show extended WOW to two weekends.

*WOW was sponsored by Merchants Bank.*



## COMPANY CONVERSATIONS

Held after each Thursday performance and Sunday mornings, the community gets a chance to connect with the GRSF Company through discussions and Q&As.

- Conversations are a relaxed way to learn more about GRSF and the people who make the Festival possible.

## AFTERWILL

AfterWill parties give audience members a chance to enhance their theatre experience by connecting with the cast and crew.

- This year, AfterWills were sponsored by individuals, and hosted at various venues, including our new partner: The Carriage House B&B.

## CALLITHUMP

The 4th Annual Callithump fundraiser in 2014 raised over \$13,000.

- The GRSF Company and community came together for an evening of fun and entertainment on and off the stage.
- Callithump is GRSF's largest single-event fundraiser and has sold out for the last three seasons.



## 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 2009

*The Winter's  
Tale*

*A Midsummer  
Night's Dream*

Intern/  
Apprentice  
Company: *As  
You Like It*

*Much Ado  
About Nothing*

*Richard III*

Intern/  
Apprentice  
Company:  
*Twelfth Night*

*Twelfth Night*  
*Romeo and  
Juliet*

Intern/  
Apprentice  
Company:  
*Cymbeline*

*As You Like It*  
*Macbeth*

Intern/  
Apprentice  
Company: *Julius  
Caesar*

*The Merchant  
of Venice*

*The Taming of  
the Shrew*

Intern/  
Apprentice  
Company:  
*Pericles*

*Love's Labour's  
Lost*

*The Tempest*

Intern/  
Apprentice  
Company:  
*Hamlet*

# 2010 2011 2012 2013 2014 2015

*Othello*

*The Comedy of Errors*

*The Daly News*

Intern/  
Apprentice  
Company: *Titus Andronicus*

*A Midsummer Night's Dream*  
*King Henry IV, Part 1*

*The Fantasticks*  
Intern/  
Apprentice  
Company: *King Lear*

*The Two Gentlemen of Verona*

*King Lear*

*The Complete Works of William Shakespeare [abridged]*

Intern/  
Apprentice  
Company: *All's Well that Ends Well*

*Twelfth Night, or What You Will*

*King Henry V*

Intern/  
Apprentice  
Company: *Macbeth*

*The Merry Wives of Windsor*

*Hamlet*

*Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead*

Intern/  
Apprentice  
Company: *Troilus and Cressida*

*Much Ado About Nothing*  
*Romeo & Juliet*

*The Glass Menagerie*  
(Presented by special arrangement with Samuel French, Inc.)

Intern/  
Apprentice  
Company: *King John*

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

- TEDD MORGAN, *Chair*
- LARRY JOST, *Vice Chair*
- MARY BERGIN, *Treasurer*
- VIRGINIA LAKEN, *Secretary*

**Directors**

- HEATHER BACH
- ANGUS CALLENDER
- MICHAEL CHARRON
- FRAN EDSTROM
- RAY FELLER
- TERRY HAWKINGS
- ANN LAVINE
- SCOTT R. OLSON
- JUDGE MARGARET SHAW JOHNSON

**STAFF**

**DOUG SCHOLZ-CARLSON**  
*Artistic and Education Director*

**LEE GUNDERSHEIMER**  
*Managing Director*

**EMILY KURASH**  
*Director of Marketing*

*Willard Kitchen*  
*(Season 11)*  
*Director of Development*

**CONNIE DRETSKE**  
*Finance Associate*

**LISA GRAY**  
*Rob Thomas*  
*(Season 11)*  
*Director of Community*  
*Engagement*

**VALERIE WILLIAMS**  
*Bridget Peterson*  
*(Season 11)*  
*Development Associate*

*Kathie Geiger*  
*(Season 11)*  
*Development Associate*

**JOSEPH MILLET**  
*Production Manager*

**VALERIE WILLIAMS**  
*Lauren Smith*  
*(Season 11)*  
*Education Coordinator*

**PETER SUARDI**  
*Rob Thomas*  
*(Season 11)*  
*Company Manager*



The Great River Shakespeare Festival is made possible by the generous support of these foundations and corporate sponsors along with many local business members of the Great River League and our individual donors. Every gift is valued and appreciated, making it possible for GRSF to continue to serve the community. A complete list of donors for the 2014 Fiscal Year can be found in the Season 11 Playbill, available on-line at [grsf.org](http://grsf.org) or request your copy by contacting [boxoffice@grsf.org](mailto:boxoffice@grsf.org).



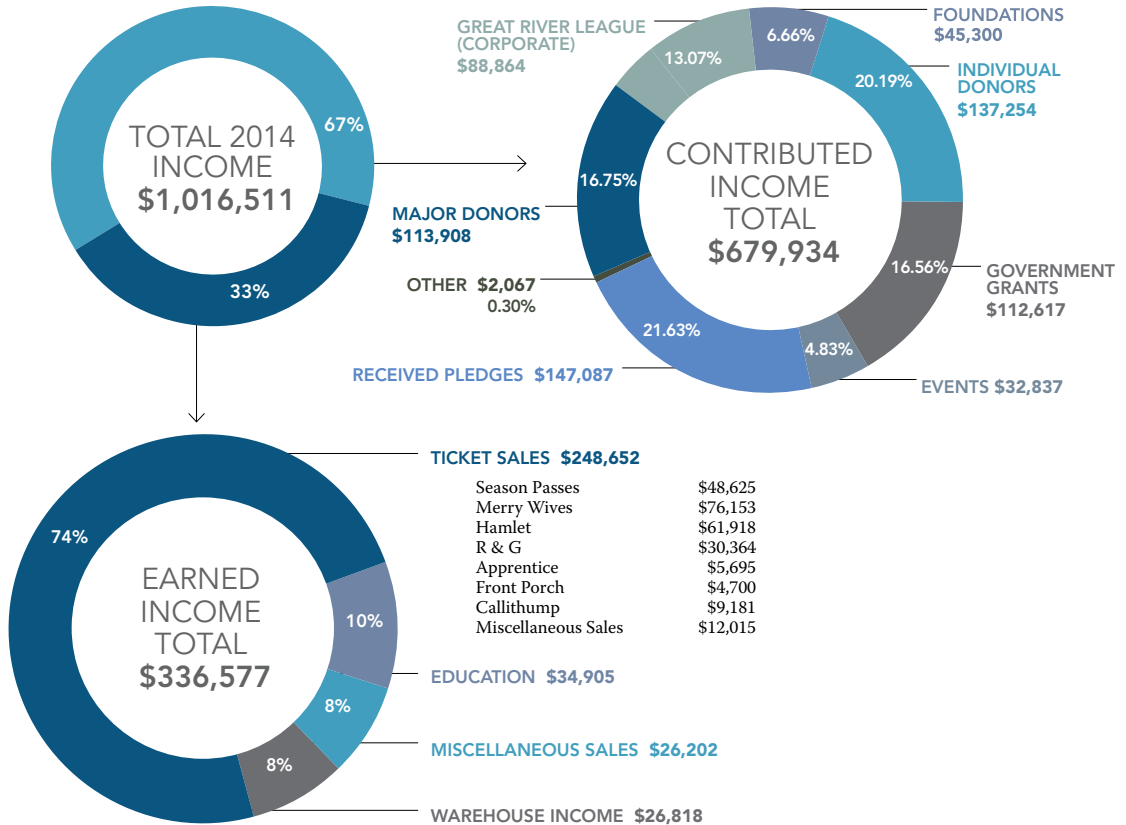
This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a Minnesota State Arts Board Operating Support grant and a Southeastern Minnesota Arts Council grant, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund.



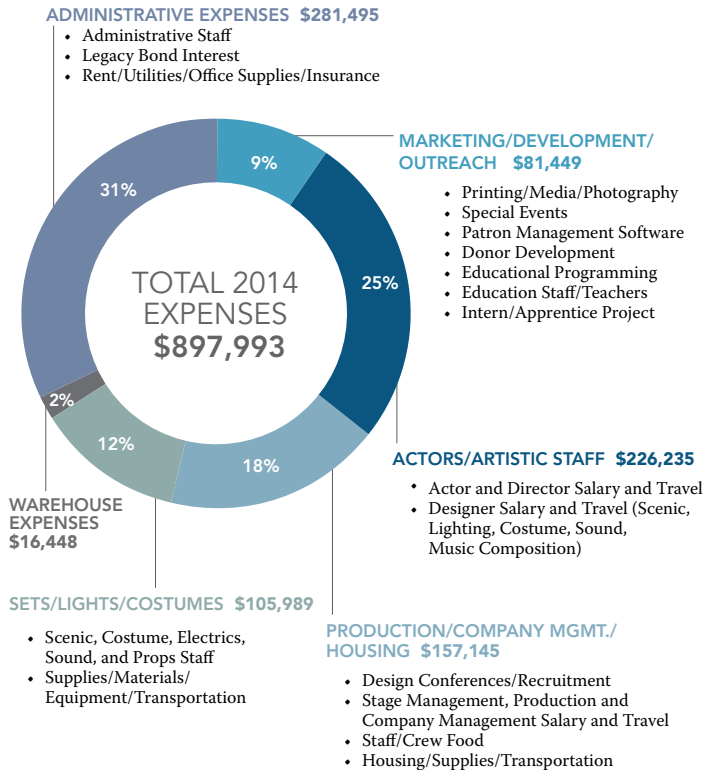
Friends of Will support the Great River Shakespeare Festival by contributing their time and resources.

### Season 11 at a Glance

- Over 370 Friends of Will (including 32 Rochester members) contributed nearly 4200 volunteer hours. The Friends of Will provided company and Festival support, front of house support, and community outreach. The calculated value of their hours was \$92,000.
- For the complete Friends of Will Annual Report, visit [grsf.org/volunteer](http://grsf.org/volunteer)



*All data for 2014 refers to the fiscal year which ran from October 1, 2013 through September 30, 2014.*



Balance Sheet (audited 9/30/2014)

ASSETS

Current Assets	235,086
Property and Equipment	218,944

**TOTAL ASSETS \$454,030**

LIABILITIES

Accrued Liabilities	16,804
Legacy Bonds	295,000
Warehouse Contract for Deed	164,765

**TOTAL LIABILITIES \$476,568**

**FY2014 FUND BALANCE \$(22,539)**

**FY2013 FUND BALANCE \$(141,056)**

**IMPROVEMENT \$ 118,518**

Profit & Loss Statement (audited 9/30/2014)

INCOME

Earned Income - All Sources	336,577
Contributed Income - All Sources	679,934

**TOTAL INCOME \$1,016,511**

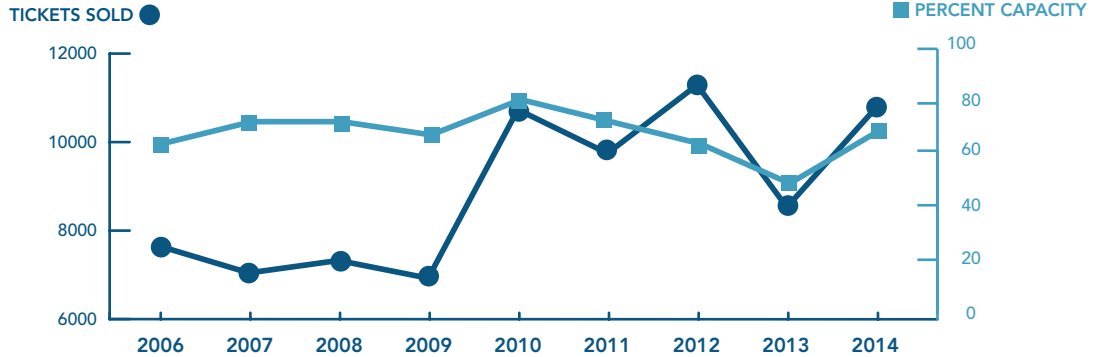
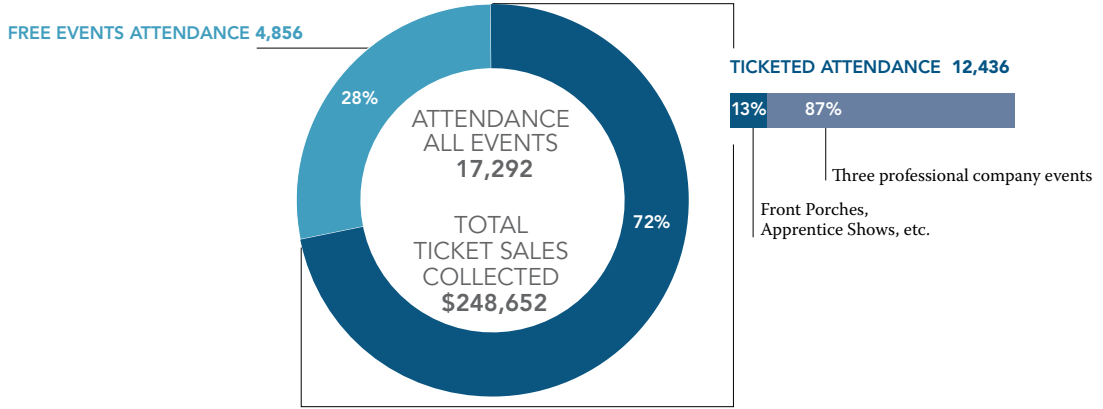
EXPENSE

Administration, Operations, Outreach	507,730
Artistic Programs	309,263

**TOTAL EXPENSE \$897,993**

**INCOME OVER EXPENSE \$118,518**

*All data for 2014 refers to the fiscal year which ran from October 1, 2013 through September 30, 2014.*



## PARTNERING: GRSF DEVELOPMENT

### ANNUAL FUND SUSTAINING SPONSORSHIP

The key initiative of our 11th Season was inaugurating a drive to seek sustaining individual sponsors .

- This effort to solidify long term support was realized with 120 new sustaining members.

### 450 CELEBRATE THE 450TH CAMPAIGN

Our season 11 campaign for individual donors

- GRSF celebrated Shakespeare's 450th birthday by successfully attracting well over the target of 450 new and returning individual donors.



### GREAT RIVER LEAGUE

GRSF's small business and service partnerships

- grew this season from 33 members to well over 100
- 300% growth in revenue, responsible for over \$60,000 in donations

### DEVELOPMENT BOTTOM LINE

In addition to these programs, GRSF was able to

- broaden our corporate donor base
- retain important state and foundation grants
- raise the most money for a single season

**TOTAL RAISED: \$679,934**

# Season 11 2013-2014



Tarah Flanagan and Andrew Carlson  
(2014 Hamlet, dir. Jim Edmondson)  
PHOTO BY Michal Daniel





OFFICES: 79 East Third St.  
PERFORMANCE VENUE: 450 Johnson St.  
Winona, MN 55987 | 507.474.7900

## PARTNERING: GRSF DEVELOPMENT CURRENT INITIATIVES

### LEADERSHIP CIRCLE

GRSF's major donor partnership

- A minimum of 16 donors working together to raise \$350,000 annually (\$300,000 initially).
- Leadership Circle members will also act as key financial and business advisers to the Festival.
- The Leadership Circle is over halfway to its minimum goal with 11 Circle members committed in the first two months of the fiscal year.



### iamGRSF

Our sustaining individual sponsorship initiative

- Refocuses with a new name and a new goal:

*100 new sustaining sponsors with a minimum contribution of \$120 annually (\$10 a month)*

- By committing to ongoing ownership of the festival, the iamGRSF members will form the broadest base of giving in the festival's history.



### GREAT RIVER LEAGUE

Our corporate and services partners

- Membership will grow with the goal of 30 new partners this season.
- Great River League nights will be instituted allowing even more promotional opportunities for members.
- In-kind support and services will be expanded with GRL members assisting with wide ranging donations from haircuts for actors during productions to truck rentals for our load-ins.



# Season 12 2014-2015

More information at [development@grsf.org](mailto:development@grsf.org)