

The Department of English, Comparative Literature, and Linguistics
and the H&SS Interclub Council Present



Performing Literary Studies Week

Monday, April 2, 2012

1:00-2:00 p.m. McCarthy Hall 238

“Shakespeare and the Voluntary Sector”

Shakespeare's great dramatic roles have always been regarded as the summits of any serious professional actor's career, but that has not stopped amateur theatre groups of all kinds from getting in on the act themselves. This illustrated lecture, by internationally known Shakespeare expert and author Michael Dobson, considers what it is about Shakespearean drama that has made it so hospitable to voluntary-sector performance, and with what implications for our understanding of the relations between theatre and social change.



Prof. Michael Dobson
Director of the Shakespeare Institute, Stratford-upon-Avon, UK

Internationally famous author of numerous books and articles on Shakespeare, Michael Dobson also regularly comments on Shakespearean performance and criticism for the BBC and for *The London Review of Books* and has contributed program notes for the Royal Shakespeare Company, Shakespeare's Globe, and the Old Vic, as well as working extensively as a consultant to theatre directors and actors. He is co-editor of the Palgrave-Macmillan Shakespeare Series and serves on the editorial boards of *Shakespeare Survey* and *Shakespeare Quarterly*. His publications include *Shakespeare and Amateur Performance: A Cultural History* (2011), *Performing Shakespeare's Tragedies Today: The Actors' Perspective* (2006), *The Making of the National Poet: Shakespeare, Adaptation and Authorship, 1660-1769* (1992), *The Oxford Companion to Shakespeare* (with Stanley Wells, 2009), and *England's Elizabeth: An Afterlife in Fame and Fantasy* (with Nicola Watson, 2002).

The Shakespeare Institute, in the heart of Stratford-upon-Avon, is the University of Birmingham's international center for exploration of the work of Shakespeare and the drama of his time, offering postgraduate programs covering every aspect of Shakespeare, from his early life in Stratford to international adaptations of his work.