



Play On!

Shakespeare in Silent Film

Music by the composers and musicians of Shakespeare's Globe

From *King John* in 1899, film adaptations of Shakespeare's plays proved popular with early filmmakers and audiences. By the end of the silent era, around 300 films had been produced. This feature-length celebration draws together a delightful selection of thrilling, dramatic, iconic and humorous scenes from two dozen rare archive titles, many of which have been unseen for decades. Accompanied by a new score, *Play On!* will be released on Blu-ray and DVD in a Dual Format Edition by the BFI on 18 July 2016.

See Hamlet addressing Yorick's skull, King Lear battling a raging storm at Stonehenge, *The Merchant of Venice* in vibrant stencil colour, the fairy magic of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and what was probably John Gielgud's first appearance on film, in the balcony scene from *Romeo and Juliet*. These treasures from the BFI National Archive have been newly digitised and are brought to life by the composers and musicians of Shakespeare's Globe Theatre, in this, the 400th anniversary year of Shakespeare's death.

BFI National Archive curator of silent film, Bryony Dixon, is available to talk about the films.

Special features

- Presented in both High Definition and Standard Definition
- *Introduction to Silent Shakespeare* (2016, 10 mins)
- *Play On! Making the Music* (2016, 11 mins)
- *King Lear* (1910, 13 mins, silent with commentary by Judith Buchanan)
- *The Winter's Tale* (1913, 43 mins, silent with commentary by Judith Buchanan)
- *Living Paintings (Romeo and Juliet)* (1924, 1 min, silent with commentary by Judith Buchanan)
- *Silent Shakespeare* (2004, 88 mins): programme of silent Shakespeare films, previously released on BFI DVD, with music by Laura Rossi and optional commentaries by Judith Buchanan
- Illustrated booklet with new writing by Bryony Dixon (silent film curator, BFI National Archive and Bill Barclay (director of music, Shakespeare's Globe)

Product details

RRP: £19.99/ Cat. no. BFIB1253 / Cert U

UK / 2016 / 63 mins / black and white, tinted and colour / silent with music / original aspect ratio 1.33:1 / BD50: 1080p, 24fps, PCM 2.0 stereo (48kHz/24-bit) DVD9: PAL, 25fps, Dolby Digital 2.0 stereo (320 kbps)

Press contact:

Jill Reading, BFI Press Office, Tel: (020) 7957 4759 E-mail: jill.reading@bfi.org.uk

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