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Washington Shakespeare Company announces
By Any Other Name: An Evening
of Shakespeare in Klingon
“qaStaHvIS wanI’vam yIDachQo’!” *

Arlington, Va. – Never shrinking from a challenge – and always willing to surprise – Washington Shakespeare Company (WSC) has once again turned Shakespeare on its ear.

In celebration of its groundbreaking 20 years as the metro area’s cutting-edge classical theater company, WSC is pleased to present “By Any Other Name: An Evening of Shakespeare in Klingon,” with special guest George Takei. This unique production includes performances of memorable Shakespearean scenes presented in both English *and* Klingon, the language spoken by the fictional warrior race in the beloved *Star Trek* series.

Appearing with WSC for this one-night-only event is legendary actor George Takei. In addition to his portrayal of Mr. Sulu in the television and film series, Takei has more than 40 feature film and television roles to his credit. “I’ve never participated in an event that brings Shakespeare and *Star Trek* together in this unusual way,” said Takei. “It will be a new and exciting experience for me, and I’m looking forward to boldly going where I’ve never gone before!”

Indeed, the planets have aligned for this remarkable event; the current president of WSC’s board is none other than the creator of the Klingon language, Marc Okrand. A noted linguist, Okrand helped launch television’s closed captioning service for deaf and hard-of-hearing viewers. By an unusual confluence of events, he found himself enlisted to develop Klingon, now believed to be the most widely spoken fictional language in history. Indeed, fans began to study the language, even using Okrand’s *Klingon Dictionary* to translate the works of Shakespeare and the Bible. “Translations of Shakespeare into Klingon and my involvement with WSC began at about the same time,” Okrand remarked. “I was always trying to figure out how to get the two together. Given WSC’s creative approach to Shakespeare, performing scenes in Klingon struck me as something obvious to try. The upcoming celebration of WSC’s 21st season presents a great opportunity to pull these elements together in typical WSC fashion – and to offer an evening that’s both serious and fun.”

Joining Takei on stage will be WSC’s own Artistic Director, Christopher Henley, as well as members of WSC’s Acting Company. The cast will perform scenes and speeches in both English and Klingon from *Hamlet*, *Julius Caesar*, and *Much Ado About Nothing* (with a same sex couple

performing as Beatrice and Benedick). WSC has tackled everything from an all-nude production of *Macbeth* to an all-female production of *The Taming of the Shrew*; thus, taking on Shakespeare in a completely fictional, sci-fi language isn't daunting for Henley. "WSC continues to take chances. Our brand of non-traditional, risk-taking theater is exactly what sets us apart and wins over audiences from around the region. We have evolved from a scrappy to a substantial company, without losing our edge. It's a special treat to celebrate our new space and our 21st year with such a generous and enormous talent as George Takei."

This groundbreaking production on September 25th kicks off a celebration of WSC's 21st season and is a turning point for the company. In October, the company moves into its new theater space in Artisphere, the cultural arts center formerly occupied by the Newseum in Rosslyn, Va. Artisphere will also include a ballroom, a WiFi town square, a restaurant, and a gallery.

"By Any Other Name: An Evening of Shakespeare in Klingon" featuring George Takei takes place at 8 p.m. on September 25th, 2010, at the Rosslyn Spectrum in Arlington. In addition to the scenes from Shakespeare, the performance includes an introduction by Okrand and a question and answer session with Takei, Okrand, and Henley at the conclusion of the show. Tickets for this event go on sale on June 15: a \$150 ticket includes the Klingon event and four flex use theater passes for the WSC 2010-2011 season; a \$250 ticket includes the above package plus a ticket to the VIP reception following the performance. (*Note: George Takei's appearance is subject to professional commitments.*)

To schedule an interview with George Takei, Marc Okrand and/or Christopher Henley or for additional information, please contact Lauren Vicary, (202) 491-7288 or vicarynews@gmail.com.

Subscriptions to WSC's upcoming season are on sale. Contact the box office at 1-800-494-TIXS (8497). Information is also available on our website at www.washingtonshakespeare.org.

* *Klingon for "Don't miss this event!"*

About Washington Shakespeare Company

Founded in 1990, Washington Shakespeare Company (WSC) is a performing arts organization dedicated to producing primarily classic works, both time-tested and contemporary; emphasizing a provocative, bold approach in an intimate setting; and training and showcasing the best emerging talent in the region, mentored by seasoned, professional theater artists.

WSC's mission is expressed through its commitment to artistic excellence, collaboration, developing talent, and promoting educational and social outreach. Our history is replete with edgy, innovative productions of Shakespeare, from *Julius Caesar* on the top floor of an unfinished office building in Ballston to a Kubrick-inspired *Richard II*; productions of works by other world literary giants, from Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* to Wole Soyinka's *Death and the King's Horseman*; American classics, from Tennessee Williams' *A Streetcar Named Desire* to Lillian Hellman's *The Children's Hour* and Edward Albee's *Tiny Alice*; exciting new plays, from Allyson Currin's *Learning Curves* to Julie Jensen's *Two-Headed*; and hit productions of our favorite contemporary playwright, Tom Stoppard, from *Travesties* to *Hapgood*. Our upcoming mainstage programming, and our various exciting reading series build on this tradition of bold productions of classics, both time-honored and contemporary.

WSC is moving into Arlington County's new Artisphere (scheduled to open on 10/10/10) in Rosslyn for our 21st season. Washington Shakespeare Company is supported in part by: Arlington County through the Cultural Affairs Division of the Department of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources and the Arlington Commission for the Arts; The Virginia Commission for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts; The Arlington Community Foundation and the Fund for Arlington.