

**For Immediate Release**  
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## **United World College-USA Joins Global Initiative Celebrating Shakespeare's 444<sup>th</sup> Birthday Public Invited**

**MONTEZUMA, NM** - As part of a global youth initiative to have Shakespeare performed around the world on the same day to mark Shakespeare's 444th birthday, UWC-USA Theatre Arts students will give free performances of both *The Merchant of Venice* (in the Kluge Auditorium at 7pm) and *Twelfth Night* (an outdoor performance on the hillside beside the Sasakawa Center at 5pm) on Wednesday, April 23.

*The Merchant of Venice* will be the directing debut for student director Tabias Wilson (USA-Kansas) who has chosen to set the play in 1940's Venice with a female Shylock (Kelsey Smith, UK). *Twelfth Night* will be set in ancient Greece and staged in front of a dramatic rock face transformed into Illyria.

"This is going to be a truly global event," says UWC Theatre Arts Teacher Tim Crofton. "Not only are the productions going to be part of a huge, world-wide event, but many parts of the world are going to be represented on our stage. Nineteen nationalities will be represented in the two UWC casts."

Shakespeare 24 is a 24-hour globe-trotting extravaganza to mark Shakespeare's 444th birthday, on St. George's Day, April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2008. Kicking off in New Zealand and ending 24 hours later in Hawaii, 62 youth groups (11-21 years) from 34 countries will stage specially abridged plays at 7pm, local time. The plays will run in the following order: New Zealand, Fiji, Solomon Islands, Australia, Japan, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, Vietnam, Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Russia, United Arab Emirates, Israel, Romania, Turkey, Croatia, Germany, Malawi, Norway, Serbia, Zimbabwe, United Kingdom, Ireland, Iceland, Ghana, Cape Verde, Brazil, Bermuda, Mexico, USA (Maryland, Massachusetts, Virginia), Canada, USA (Arkansas), Mexico, USA (New Mexico, Washington, Alaska and Hawaii).

This inaugural year is building up to a round-the-clock international festival that will include most countries in the world by 2012. With the whole world as their stage, participating groups will bring their own local interpretations to the Bard's plays.



Sea, ships, time and the stars



John Lewis



national  
youth  
theatre

Shakespeare  
SAY SPAE  
Schools Festival

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United World College-USA is located in the northern New Mexico town of Montezuma, six miles from Las Vegas, NM. UWC-USA is one of 12 United World Colleges located on five continents dedicated to making education a force to unite people, nations, and cultures for peace and a sustainable future. Founded in 1982, UWC-USA offers a unique program of academic and experiential education for 200 students from over 80 countries.