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The Essential Shakespeare Live (British Library) (2 CD Set)



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Synopsis

The British Library and the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) join forces to publish this remarkable audio treasury of live Shakespearian performances. Selected from an extensive collection of recordings made by the British Library Sound Archive, these two double CD sets offer scenes and speeches from some of the most celebrated Shakespeare productions in the history of the Royal Shakespeare Company. The extracts cover almost half a century of productions, from Laurence Olivier as Coriolanus in 1959 to Ian McKellen as King Lear in 2007. Ã Â Both Essential Shakespeare Live and Essential Shakespeare Encore! also include booklets that reproduce the play-text of each recorded extract in full along with introductions by Gregory Doran, Chief Association Director of the RSC.Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Essential Shakespeare Live features such notable actors of stage and screen as Judi Dench, Peter Brook, John Barton, Peggy Ashcroft, Alan Howard, Derek Jacobi, Ian McKellen, Alan Rickman, Anthony Sher, Donald Sinden, Robert Stephens, Patrick Stewart, Janet Suzman, and David Warner.Ã Â Among the plays included in the set are King Lear, Hamlet, Twelfth Night, Julius Caesar, Romeo and Juliet, AllÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Well that Ends Well, Henry V, and Richard III.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Starred Review. Bravos all round to the Royal Shakespeare Company and the British Library Sound Archive past and present for this tantalizing selection of brief scenes culled from recorded performances by an ultimate all-star cast. Doran, associate director of the RSC, begins with Olivier as Coriolanus at Stratford in 1959 and moves into the ’60s with Scofield as Lear, David Warner as

Hamlet, Ashcroft as Queen Margaret in The War of the Roses. The ’70s finds a young, round-faced Patrick Stewart as Cassius, Janet Suzman as Cleopatra and McKellen and Francesca Annis as Romeo and Juliet. In the ’80s, Derek Jacobi plays Prospero, Alan Rickman is Jacques in As You Like It and Brian Cox does Titus Andronicus. In the ’90s, Robert Stephens as Falstaff and David Oyelowo as Henry VI lead to a glorious finish with Dench as Countess Rossillion in All’s Well That Ends Well at a 2003 Stratford performance. Sound quality is not uniform throughout, but thumps and bumps and audience responses add to the excitement of live performances. The companion booklet is essential reading, as wonderful as these scenes are, since none are introduced or identified on the discs. The photos illuminate the proceedings but leave one wanting more. Theater buffs, schools and libraries will all applaud this treat and should demand encores. (Jan.) Copyright Ã Â© Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

"What a treasure trove these discs prove for lovers of Shakespare and great acting. . . . I cannot recommend them too highly to anyone who loves Shakespeare." (Telegraph (UK))"It’s fascinating to listen to. You can hear the changes, across the decades, in how actors read their lines (more freely these days), and in how the audience reacts (more vocal now). You also get a sense of the glorious plasticity of Shakespeare’s material, how much it can change in different hands." (Sam Leith Guardian)

Everyone who loves Shakespeare deserves to have this compilation in their audio library: Dench, Olivier, Mckelllan, Schofield--they’re all here presenting well-known scenes that are associated with their careers. Enough said. It’s also a good way to dip your toe into the Shakespeare canon. It will entice you to get the full plays. Othello, Richard III, Hamlet, Lady Macbeth, and more. With these grand voices, there will be no confusion about what’s being said. And these are live performances, which always adds energy to the scene. The audio can be dicey in a very few cases, but don’t let that stop you. It’s a bowl of bonbons for the mind and spirit. It’ll lead you to the main course.

It’s a cd for collectors. You can almost hear all the ’legends’ of British Theatre: Judi Dench, Lorens Olivier, Paul Scofield.

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