



**GLOBE
THEATRE**

PRESS RELEASE

Statement on the Globe to Globe *Hamlet* tour

Two years ago, the Globe invited countries from all over the world to participate in its unprecedented 2012 Globe to Globe festival. Thirty-seven companies from thirty-seven countries arrived to celebrate and perform the complete works of Shakespeare. At the time, there were many calls for certain countries to be excluded, on a variety of grounds. After much deliberation, the Globe finally chose to act on the principle that everyone is everyone, and that a policy of inclusion, rather than exclusion, is more true to the spirit of Shakespeare.

The inclusive and celebratory spirit of that festival has led to our decision to tour *Hamlet* to every country in the world.

We have decided that every country means every country, since we believe that every country is better off for the presence of *Hamlet*. Shakespeare can entertain and speak to anyone, no matter where in the world they are. We have always believed that cultural communication, and different peoples talking to each other through art, is a force for good in the world. In every country, we are going for one single and simple purpose: to play *Hamlet* there.

We are very proud of our record of working with a selection of NGOs over the years – Amnesty themselves, PEN, Reprieve and Human Rights Watch. We have raised money for their operations, provided space for them, and felt their influence in many of our productions and the new plays we have performed. In that light, we were disappointed that Amnesty put out a quote about our touring without realizing that it was a world tour, but under the impression that it was going solely to one country.

Hamlet was first written for playing in James I's England, a country riven by internal tensions, and watched over by a repressive and occasionally violent state regime. It travelled immediately, across Northern Europe, through a collection of different political states, and in 1608, it was performed on a ship for the rulers of Yemen. For over 400 years and in hundreds of languages, that play has survived, thrived, and resisted being pigeonholed into any particular standpoint. Like all the best works of art, *Hamlet* instigates discussion and dialogue, and like any theatre, we wish to play to, and interact with, as many people as we possibly can, in as diverse a range of locations as possible. We do not believe that anyone should be excluded from the chance to experience this play.