

Colonial Williamsburg

The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation
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Mr. Jefferson's Palace Garden Party Returns May 3, Features Performance by Award-winning Actor and New Revolutionary in Residence Steven Skybell

The third annual celebration of spring is inspired by "A Midsummer Night's Dream" and features refreshment, period entertainment and fireworks



WILLIAMSBURG, Va. (Feb. 27, 2019) – Mr. Jefferson's Palace Garden Party returns for an evening of 18th century-inspired entertainment and frivolity May 3 from 7-9 p.m.

Guests of Mr. Jefferson's Palace Garden Party are encouraged to don 18th-century attire and enjoy period music, dancing, games, theatrics and a fireworks demonstration over the Governor's Palace formal gardens. Guests will partake in an elaborate spread of desserts and a selection of fine wines courtesy of the Williamsburg Winery. The event features a dramatic performance of Shakespeare, as was popular in the 18th-century, by Broadway and Shakespeare's Globe star Steven Skybell, Colonial Williamsburg's newest Revolutionary in Residence. The special performance is set to an original score performed live in period style.

"We are excited to invite guests on Mr. Jefferson's behalf to this signature spring event in the iconic Governor's Palace gardens," said Bill Schermerhorn, Colonial Williamsburg creative director of signature events. "This year's garden party is inspired by Shakespeare's 'A Midsummer Night's Dream,' which would have been enjoyed by 18th-century revelers during the period. I can think of no one better suited to perform at a Shakespeare-inspired event than renowned Broadway, Shakespeare and television actor Steven Skybell. We are thrilled to have him as a 2019 Revolutionary in Residence."

Steven Skybell is a Broadway veteran and global performer known for his performances as Dr. Dillamond in "Wicked" and various roles in "The Full Monty," "Love! Valour! Compassion!,"

“Café Crown,” and “Ah, Wilderness!” He was one of only two Americans selected for the inaugural season of Shakespeare’s Globe in London, where he appeared in “Henry V” and “A Chaste Maid in Cheapside.” The OBIE award-winner and Helen Hayes Award nominated-actor currently appears as Tevye in the acclaimed Yiddish-language adaptation of “Fiddler on the Roof” in New York City. He is a lecturer in acting at the Yale School of Drama, where he achieved a Master of Fine Arts.

Skybell’s television and film appearances include “Elementary,” “666 Park Avenue,” “NYC 22,” “Law & Order,” “Sex and the City,” “All My Children,” “Simply Irresistible,” “Cradle Will Rock” and “Tom and Francie.” Skybell holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Yale University and a certificate in Acting from Bailliol College’s British American Drama Academy. Prior to his current position at Yale, Steven taught acting at Harvard University, NYU’s Tisch School for the Arts, Fordham University and the Shakespeare Lab at the Public Theater in New York.

In addition to his Palace Garden Party performance, Skybell will join Colonial Williamsburg’s President Jefferson for A Revolutionary in Residence Conversation: “O, For A Muse of Fire,” on Sat., May 4 at 2 p.m. in the Hennage Auditorium of the Art Museums of Colonial Williamsburg. The program requires a special \$10 ticket in addition to Colonial Williamsburg or Art Museums admission. Skybell will also offer an acting workshop for Colonial Williamsburg staff as part of his residency.

“I have always wanted to visit Colonial Williamsburg, and I am delighted to have this opportunity to finally visit as a Revolutionary in Residence,” said Skybell. “As a Shakespeare professional, I appreciate historical practices and can’t wait to perform at the Garden Party under an open sky, which is how many of Shakespeare’s texts were initially intended to be performed. It is sure to be a great time for all!”

Colonial Williamsburg’s Revolutionary in Residence Program honors notable achievers in the worlds of art, media, education and politics to ignite conversation about ongoing national issues while illuminating the link between our nation’s historical roots and contemporary life. The program is generously sponsored by The Grainger Foundation of Lake Forest, Illinois.

Geller Capital Partners is a Lead Corporate Donor of Mr. Jefferson’s Garden Party. Additional donors include Apptio, Inc., Aramark, BrightView Landscape Services, Inc. and the Williamsburg Winery.

Ticketed guests receive a 20 percent discount on Garden Party apparel at Colonial Williamsburg retail shops with proof of Garden Party ticket purchase. Readymade colonial attire for men and women, including gowns, jackets, petticoats, hats, breeches, waistcoats, shirts, jackets and accessories is available for purchase at Tarpley, Thompson & Co. in the Historic Area. Custom-made attire is available to order by request before April 10. A limited number of rental costumes are also available at the William Pitt Store in the Historic Area on a first come, first serve basis.

Tickets for Mr. Jefferson’s Palace Garden Party are \$100 per person. Attendees must be at least 21 years of age. Listed ticket price does not include a tax and gratuity fee of \$12, which will be added at the time of purchase. Garden Party guests can extend their Colonial Williamsburg celebration with a stay at an official Colonial Williamsburg hotel, and qualify for \$350 in resort outlets savings when they book directly on colonialwilliamsburghotels.com/accommodations. Complimentary parking and shuttle service from the Colonial Williamsburg Regional Visitor Center to the Governor’s Palace bus stop is available until 10 p.m.

In the case of inclement weather, this event may be canceled. Weather and event updates will be communicated via Colonial Williamsburg social media outlets and online. Refunds can be processed by calling 888-965-7254.

Additional information is available at Colonial Williamsburg ticketing locations, online at www.colonialwilliamsburg.com/gardenparty, by calling 855-296-6627 toll-free, by downloading the free Colonial Williamsburg Explorer app via the Apple App Store and Google Play, and by following Colonial Williamsburg on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/colonialwmsburg) and [@colonialwmsburg](https://twitter.com/colonialwmsburg) on [Twitter](https://www.instagram.com/colonialwmsburg) and [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/colonialwmsburg).

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The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation preserves, restores and operates Virginia's 18th-century capital of Williamsburg. Innovative and interactive experiences, highlight the relevance of the American Revolution to contemporary life and the importance of an informed, active citizenry. The Colonial Williamsburg experience includes more than 400 restored or reconstructed original buildings, renowned museums of decorative arts and folk art, extensive educational outreach programs for students and teachers, lodging, culinary options from historic taverns to casual or elegant dining, the Golden Horseshoe Golf Club featuring 45 holes designed by Robert Trent Jones and his son Rees Jones, a full-service spa and fitness center, pools, retail stores and gardens. Philanthropic support and revenue from admissions, products and hospitality operations sustain Colonial Williamsburg's educational programs and preservation initiatives.

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