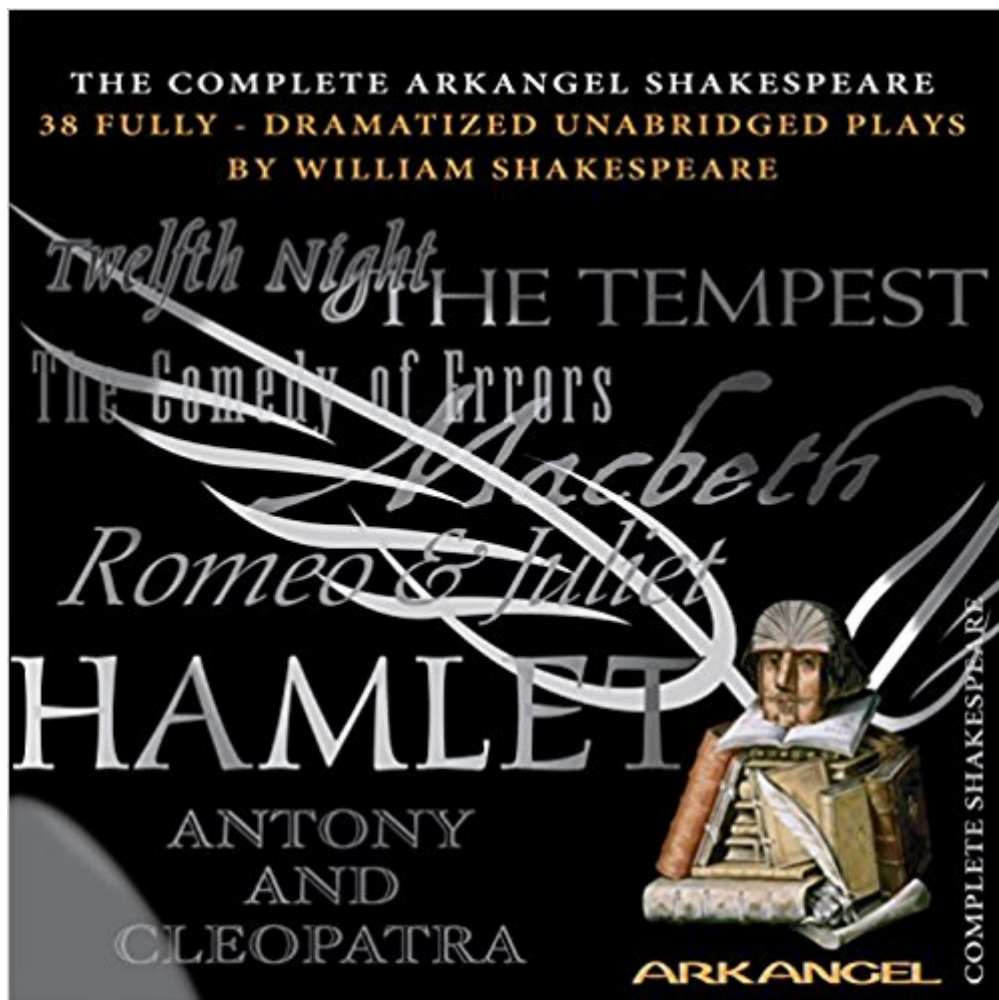




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# The Complete Arkangel Shakespeare: 38 Fully-Dramatized Plays



## Synopsis

[Performed by a Full Cast, including Eileen Atkins, Joseph Fiennes, Sir John Gielgud, Imogen Stubbs, Ciaran Hinds, Simon Russell Beale] For the first time in audio publishing history, all of Shakespeare's plays are available in one extraordinary, definitive collection. Based on "The Complete Pelican Shakespeare", here are all of the master's 38 plays, complete and unabridged, fully dramatized on CDs with an original score and sound design for each play. A monumental project that spanned five years and cost \$3 million, "The Complete Arkangel Shakespeare" represents the collective vision of four people: Shakespeare scholar Tom Treadwell, film producer Bill Shepherd, BBC director Clive Brill, and composer Dominique Le Gendre. Together they have assembled the 400 great actors of the British theater and produced a landmark digital recording with a sophisticated layering of sound that immerses the listener in Shakespeare's world.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Grade 9 Up--The Complete Arkangel Shakespeare offers listeners the first-ever audio set of all 38 of William Shakespeare's plays, unabridged and fully-dramatized. Using a cast of almost 400 actors, most of whom trained at the Royal Shakespeare Company, this set offers Shakespeare in a manner that provides the best of both worlds: the convenient mobility of the audio format and classic, dramatic readings by skilled Shakespearean actors that are reminiscent of Sir Laurence Olivier's Shakespearean performances. Sound effects are skillfully layered and add to the intensity of the pieces as they are presented. The quality of these CDs is remarkable. The diction is clear, the emotions are strong, and the sound effects are well-chosen, easily creating the worlds of the plays

in listeners minds. The major drawback for school and public libraries is that the entire series must be purchased. Plays are not available on an individual basis. Since most high schools teach only four Shakespearean plays--Hamlet, Macbeth, Julius Caesar, and Romeo and Juliet--purchasing this series in its entirety is a major investment that might be better suited to university libraries and drama departments. Public libraries can purchase the entire series for use by college students and adults as well as high school students. Any library that does purchase this exceptionally well-done, impressive masterwork will enjoy it for years to come since Audio Partners has a lifetime replacement policy.--Heather J. Stockwell, Leach Library, Londonderry, NH Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

". . . brilliantly realized by almost four hundred of Britain's best classical actors." -- Town & Country, April 2004"Four hundred actors combine their talents as they transform Shakespeare's Elizabethan English into contemporary-sounding plays without altering the original text." -- VOYA, June 2005"It is an unparalleled opportunity to listen, at one's pleasure, to any of [Shakespeare's] works." -- Bookviews.com, May 2003"It's a lifetime of great listening. A+" -- Entertainment Weekly, June 4, 2004"The quality of these CDs is remarkable; easily creating the worlds of the plays in listeners' minds." -- Heather J. Stockwell, School Library Journal, February 2004"Thirty-eight unabridged plays with outstanding casts offer a paragon of audio theater." --AudioFile, June/July 2004

I'm French but an unquestioning admirer of Shakespeare's theater. I did already possess more than 200 records of the plays, either on CD or on DVD, almost everything more or less available. For years now, I was desiring to own this precious set. At first sight, it seemed a bit expensive to me, but only when forgetting that there are almost 100 CD in the box : all 38 plays complete, more than 100 hours of hearing. I now wonder why I waited so long to buy! Everything here is superlative : actors, direction, sound. I'll retire within a few weeks, so I'll now have plenty of time to listen to the records again and again. I highly recommend this fabulous collection to anybody desiring a vivid and respectful approach to the Bard's masterpieces. Reading Shakespeare is a must. Hearing him in such a marvelous production also is!

If you have to empty your penny jar, if you have to cash in your IRA, do so. Get this. These are absolutely superb recordings of some of the best English ever written and some of the most memorable characters ever created. So you don't recognize every word. Doesn't matter. The

excellent actors carry you along and draw you intimately into the drama. You can follow the play in text if you choose to -- they follow the readily available Complete Pelikan Shakespeare. But you don't need to -- if you aren't familiar with a play the brief four or five line summaries of each scene in the small fold-out accompanying each play are quite sufficient to know which characters are involved. It's possible to listen to these while driving, but you can't concentrate fully unless you're totally stuck in traffic. My number one recommendation is to take a Walkman and a pair of headphones to a hammock under a tree and indulge yourself. Second best is a comfy easy chair. However you listen to these, do get them and listen to them. Or persuade your local library to get the set. The price -- ...-- seems high until you figure that this is 38 complete plays -- less than the cost of the same play in paperback -- and there are a total of 83 disks, so you're paying just \$5 per disk. Cheap! And these aren't some pop music you'll listen to once; these are a lifetime investment for yourself and your family. Get it. Period.

This is a gorgeous production that is indeed a treasure. I listen with a Creative Zen Vision player and every word is delicious. I have enjoyed the first seven plays, thru Hamlet, and every nuance, every word, every inflection, pause, sound, background music theme and all the audio panorama makes every minute an absolute delight. I am now in a quandary about whether to continue listening thru the series or begin again to search among the endless audio treasures for gems I might have missed. This Arkangle series is a gift from the gods and worth many times its price. This kind of talent, dedication and flawless performance beggars description.

I have studied, listened to, and viewed Shakespeare's plays in all available formats for thirty years and I am thoroughly pleased with the Archangel Complete Shakespeare audio. Having listened now to Hamlet and Macbeth, I judge these two productions to be perhaps the best vocal interpretations I have heard ever, any where. They are easy to listen to and easy to understand. The actors interpretations are neither over-done nor under-done. If the remaining plays are as good, this production of the totality of the plays is a gift to scholars and to groundlings as well. Thank you Archangel et al.

Note that EVERYONE who has reviewed this product on has given it 5 stars. That's because it is worth it. So many lovers of Shakespeare can't be wrong. I have seen many bad productions of Shakespeare on stage. Not one of these recordings is anything less than excellent. As other reviewers have noted, the price works out to a bargain and is worth digging into your pockets for. If

you love Shakespeare you must have this set.

We are so incredibly fortunate to live in a time and circumstance that allows this to be available to us. It is remarkable. If in doubt, buy it.

The audio is very clear. Individuals may react differently to the dramatizations. It is expensive but it is delivered in first class packaging and on a per CD basis, it fair enough. For those who really appreciate and study Shakespeare, it is greet to have a CD of every play.

This is like having the Royal Shakespeare Company ready to put on a play for you whenever you feel like it. I have had my eye on this product for years. I first read about it in Rafe Esquith's books on teaching Shakespeare to kids and after doing my research realized what a treasure this was. I've skipped movies, dinners and other extras so I could afford to purchase this. Finally last month the price came down a little and I was able to finally get it. I'm having a ball listening to it. With out the visual "distraction" of a play or movie, I focus more on the gorgeous language and the expressiveness of the actors. I strongly recommend reading Marjorie Garber's "Shakespeare After All" because it'll give you additional tools to appreciate the play. Also, it's fun to listen to the plays in the order (we think) they were written. Interesting to listen to the evolution in the writing and storytelling.

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