CSC

Fiasco Theater's PERICLES

SHOW GUIDE

WELCOME

We're delighted to share this Show Guide for Fiasco Theater's ***Pericles***, which gives you a deeper look into this production.

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A NOTE FROM JILL RAFSON

CSC PRODUCING ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

As a theater dedicated to the classics, William Shakespeare is an inevitable part of the conversation for us at CSC. There is perhaps no author in the English language more universally accepted as being, well, universal.

With a body of work featuring 39 full-length plays, Shakespeare has given the theater so many different stories, so many canvases of characters, that he seems to touch on every human emotion in the spectrum. And the staying power of his works is as much about the quantity and variety as it is about the ability of his plays to hold so many disparate interpretations. His best-known plays have been poked, prodded, trimmed, musicalized, updated, and then some. The fact that they move us in all of these contexts is a sign of their deserved status as classics.

But there are some plays in Shakespeare's oeuvre that don't get reexamined as often. Many of these hail from his late period, which is where we find *Pericles*. While earlier tragic masterpieces forced his heroes to reckon with the costs of their fatal errors (see *Hamlet, King Lear, Othello,* etc.) or, in the comedies, allowed all to be happily

resolved and marked by weddings (see *Much Ado About Nothing, A Midsummer Night's Dream, As You Like It*, etc.), the later works combined the two impulses and arguably took a more nuanced approach to how things might turn out for a Shakespearean hero. Forgiveness and second chances suddenly came into play.

Shakespeare was operating at the peak of his powers when he wrote *Pericles* and others from this time (*A Winter's Tale, The Tempest, Cymbeline*). His poetry was soaring, and his scope was expanding. In *Pericles*, we see him go beyond a brief and intense period of story and into a more episodic form, covering decades in the life of his hero. He allowed for the possibility of the miraculous in this work, playing with themes of hope, endurance, and reunion. He played with genre, with setting, and with plot in new ways.

Perhaps it is these aspects of *Pericles* that set it apart from much of the Shakespearean canon and that have also made it less frequently performed. It's a complicated play, with high seas, high emotions, and a lot of story to cover. I think it takes an ensemble like Fiasco Theater to untangle it all and show *Pericles* to us anew. With clarity, humor, imagination, and vibrant music, the brilliant storytellers of Fiasco are themselves a reason to revisit this tale today.

While it may be a less familiar journey to even the most devoted theatergoers among us, I hope that this production will make you wonder why we don't see *Pericles* more often and that, in your personal canon, you will begin to see this play as being as worthy of attention as so many of its better-known predecessors.

HOW FIASCO THEATER AND THEIR PERICLES CAME TO BE

Fiasco Theater's founding artistic directors – Jessie Austrian, Noah Brody, and Ben Steinfeld – met during the first years of the Brown-Trinity MFA program under the newly-formed leadership of Pulitzer Prize winning playwright, Paula Vogel and Artistic Director of The Public Theater, Oskar Eustis. In this program, the trio found innovative ways to collaborate across a multitude of disciplines including acting, directing, and writing. After graduating, they wanted to find a way to continue working together so they formed Fiasco Theater. The company is named after the term allegedly used to describe commedia dell'arte performances that went horribly (and hilariously) wrong, honoring the work artists can make when they take substantial risks.

Fiasco Theater thinks of itself as an actors ensemble first, and offers company members the chance to make decisions about a project that go beyond the typical responsibilities of an actor. Fiasco's pursuit of joyful artmaking is underscored and led by their collaborative nature and non-hierarchical leadership structure which prioritizes multiple perspectives from both the artists and the audience.

After the COVID-19 Shutdown, Fiasco started a new program called Without A Net as a means to create and share work without the budgetary

constraints of a full production. The company essentially rents a rehearsal studio and invites the audience after 10 or 12 days of rehearsal for a run of 10 or 12 performances. Co-Artistic Director Ben Steinfeld says "It ends up looking kind of like a two-week workshop that has been really well-funded. Except it's actually a four-week workshop... that's been poorly funded. The emphasis is on a rehearsal kind of aesthetic. It's almost like what it would look like the last run through in the rehearsal hall before moving into the theater or something like that." In October 2022, Fiasco presented a Without A Net production of ***Pericles,*** which has since grown into the production currently seen at Classic Stage Company.

The cast and crew of Fiasco Theater's *Pericles* read through the script during the first rehearsal at CSC.

When it came time to decide on a new text to work on, members of Fiasco Theater came together and read a variety of plays, and *Pericles* distinguished itself for its large, impossible moments. The play required the company to ask "How do you do a shipwreck? How do you do a feast? How do you do a jousting tournament? How do you do kidnapping? How do you [stage] somebody giving birth at sea?" Thus the ensemble had the opportunity to explore theatrical storytelling challenges,

combined with a Shakesperian sense of language, humanity, and joy.

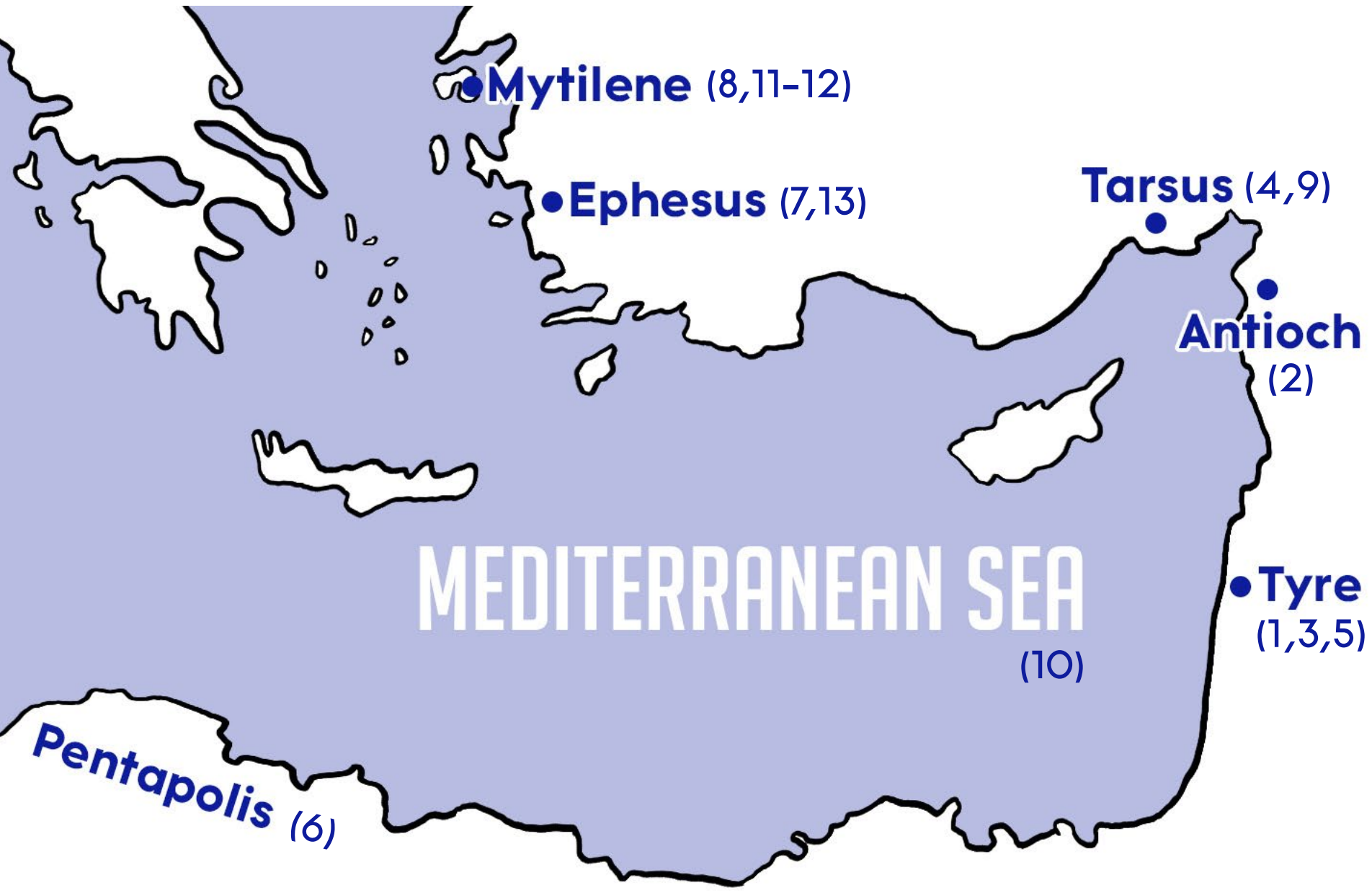
Fiasco Theater's *Pericles* has taken a winding journey not unlike the titular character's story, and the meaning of this play has similarly shifted over time. When describing how he'd like audiences to think and feel about this text, Steinfeld says, "Like all Shakespeare plays, it always feels like it's about whatever's going on right now. We chose it coming out of COVID because it felt like it was about resilience, about sort of going through hard things and coming through the other side...but I never like to pre-determine what the audience's experience is going to be. What I would say is that Fiasco cares deeply about the audience having a rich and meaningful and joyful experience, that we just never, ever compromise." Fiasco Theater's relentless pursuit to create work that is current, fun, and redefines the artistic process has led to many succcesses. Previous productions have lived multiple lives in Off-Broadway, regional, and international theaters with notable productions such as *Into the Woods*, *Cymbeline*, and *Twelfth Night*, which was a previous co-production with CSC.

The core ensemble of Fiasco continues to find creative ways of storytelling. Steinfeld comments, "Everybody's got kids, and you know that everybody's lives are in a very different state than they were when we started out. So the things that resonate with us now are just different than the stuff we were interested in when we were still older than everybody thought we were but relatively young." So whether you've seen many productions with Fiasco or if this production is your first introduction, the unique collaboration with CSC on *Pericles* invites you to focus on the journey.

MAPPING THE LIFE
OF PERICLES, THE PRINCE OF TYRE

Our play follows Pericles, Prince of Tyre's treacherous journey over many years and ancient locations. Follow our map through our protagonist's 17th century journey to return home.

Spoiler alert: some details of the play included within!



1

Pericles is a prince born in **Tyre**.

2

He visits the **kingdom of Antioch** (where he discovers a dark secret involving the king).

3

Pericles flees back to Tyre to avoid execution.

4

Pericles decides to leave Tyre so he can avoid being murdered by **King Antiochus'** servant **Thaliard** and goes to **Tarsus**. Here, **King Cleon** and his wife **Dionyza** bemoan the famine that has beset their nation, and Pericles saves them.

5

Helicanus calls Pericles back to Tyre.

6

On his way back, Pericles is shipwrecked and lands in **Pentapolis** where he meets his wife, **Thaisa**.

7

He tries to return to Tyre after hearing that the King of Antioch is dead, but on the journey back his wife dies in childbirth and washes up on the shore of **Ephesus**.

8

Pericles lands in Tarsus and leaves his daughter, **Marina**, there. Marina is sold as prostitute in **Mytilene** on the island of Lesbos.

9

Pericles, now King of Tyre, goes back to Tarsus to find his daughter, but is told she is dead.

10

Pericles, overwhelmed with grief, sets sail again.

11

Pericles' crew lands in Myteline, where he is reunited with this daughter.

12

Goddess Diana tells him to go to her temple in Ephesus and tell of his experiences.

13

Pericles goes to Ephesus and reunites with his wife. The whole family is back together again.

THE MORAL ARC OF SHAKESPEARE'S UNIVERSE BENDS TOWARDS JUSTICE

In his later plays *Pericles, Cymbeline, The Winter's Tale,* and *The Tempest,* Shakespeare provides more than horrible warnings or moral epithets about the state of the world when governmental leaders are corrupt or "good" kings rule states in which "the great ones eat up the little ones" (*Pericles, III.I*). Shakespeare magnifies and investigates — almost to an excruciating level — the underlying cause as to why such immorality, injustice, and unnecessary human suffering exists. War, displaced families, tempests, unfit heads of state, thievery, poverty, gender inequality, vengeance, death, betrayals, riddles, and the mystery of divine intervention are a few of the timely tragic themes within the later plays. More than just poetical, the plays are political too, and serve as a proverbial call to awaken faith in mankind, to challenge our values, beliefs, and perceptions of a fair, just society, and ultimately to inspire a return to empathy, love, peace, and cosmic companionship before our "little life is rounded with a sleep."
(*The Tempest, IV.I*).

Shakespeare indeed wrote about such powerful, existential themes within his earlier plays. However, he had not made a name for

himself yet and relied heavily on the Petrarchan structures (14th century Italian rhyme scheme) and conventions that were popular at the time. It wasn't until later in his life that the Bard embraced a more radical, unconventional writing style — perhaps reflecting the political upheaval and radical reign of King James I. The later plays are riskier and bolder in style. The text is richer. The characters are more complex, and the plots move within supernatural, fairytale, and mythical structures. Shakespeare's later plays are a passionate spiritual introspection and investigation of human motivation and intention, status and power, objectives and obstacles. From the Golden era to the Jacobean era, Shakespeare knew the power that theater had upon audiences and was well-versed in using that power not to criticize, but to inspire political discourse through a moral lens.

Shakespeare did not write to impose ethics, or to solicit his own political agenda. These stories aim to impart moralistic insight into the dichotomous nature of humanity. Shakespeare's message is that life entails destruction; tragedy is indeed inevitable. Yet the darkness eventually gives way to light, to re-birth and new life. Pericles reunites with his estranged family; Prospero regains their dukedom; Imogen rekindles her relationship with Posthumous; and Leontes is mercifully given a second chance with his beloved Hermione. Shakespeare always juxtaposes two parallel universes, the dark and the light, moral and immoral, suffering and redemption, to convey the tragicomic paradox of life. "To experience these plays in the theater is to endure and enjoy a violent shift

of tonal extremes, from despair to ecstasy," says Shakespeare scholar Russ McDonald from Shakespeare's Globe.

Lady Justice courtesy of William Cho/Pixabay.com

Shakespeare's moral artistry is not in pointing fingers. He offers questions rather than statements, doubts rather than certainties, an enigma rather than a demonstration. The plays aren't illustrations of dogma or doctrine. They're living, breathing expressions of timeless literature seeking to comprehend the deeper phenomena and truth about the human condition. He's not writing cautionary tales. He is utilizing the power of poetry to examine, reflect, and understand every man and woman's struggle "to be, or not to be" (*Hamlet, III.I*). In other words, Shakespeare is not morally pedantic, punishing evil and rewarding virtue. He asks us instead to empathize with and believe in humanity— flaws and all— and to consider the possibility that we are all more alike than different.

Shakespeare's later plays represent his final statement about the world within the final years of his life. Given the nature of how each of these plays ends, the theme is forgiveness. Shakespeare advocates that without forgiveness, there is no hope, and without hope, there cannot be perseverance. Human frailty and suffering exist on our planet, yet transcendence is inevitable and results from great fortitude and the fierce will to love, to inspire, and to "live and deal with others better" (*Cymbeline, V.V*). The world is not merely something to endure or defy. Life is a mystery, a great adventure that entails many "slings and arrows" (*Hamlet, III.I*). But, as Shakespeare sees it, it is also a wondrous journey that leads to self-discovery, triumph, and reconciliation, should we choose to forgive. Shakespeare poignantly celebrates this moral vision in all his later plays, but particularly in the epic tale of Pericles, where forces of evil are vanquished, the tragic hero miraculously receives the blessing of a transformed life, the Great Chain of Being is restored, and the moral arc of the universe bends towards justice.

5 GENRES IN THE 5 ACTS OF PERICLES

ACT I : POLITICAL THRILLER

"Then, lest my life be cropped
to keep him clear,
By flight I'll shun the danger
which I fear."

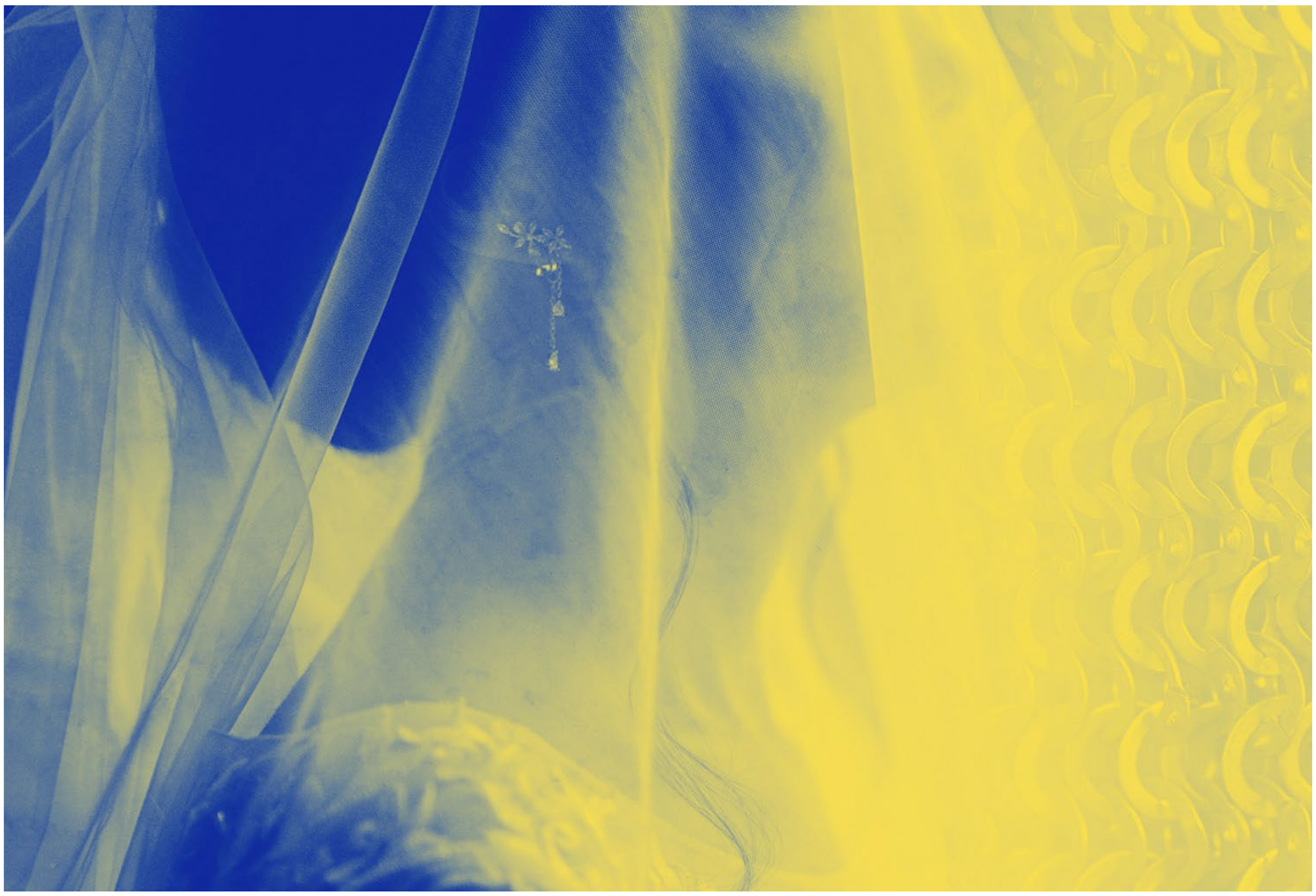
Pericles, Act I Scene I

Pericles must flee his home in Tyre and set sail for Tarsus to escape the murderous Thaliard sent by King Antiochus. This act is filled with high tension power struggles, acts of valor, and suspenseful escape.

ACT II : PASTORAL ROMANCE

"It pleaseth me so well
that I will see you wed.
And then with what haste you can,
get you to bed."

Simonides, Act II Scene V



Pericles must again prove his valor, but this time stripped away of his royal esteem in a foreign land and charged with love for a fair maiden. Act II is flowery with notable speeches of passion, virtue, and romance.

ACT III : EPIC MELODRAMA

"O you gods!
Why do you make us love
your goodly gifts
And snatch them straight away?"

Pericles, Act III Scene I

Setting sail again, Pericles must cope with grief and loss. Act III pushes our protagonist to the extreme as epic tragedy follows him and all newfound joys are ripped from his grasp.

ACT IV : COMING-OF-AGE PICARESQUE

"If fires be hot, knives sharp,
or waters deep,
Untied I still my virgin knot will keep.
Diana aid my purpose!"

Marina, Act IV Scene II

15 years have passed and Pericles' daughter, Marina, takes center stage to prove herself virtuous and independent. Act IV changes our story's protagonist and puts pressure on the young Marina to quickly adapt in foreign lands. Resilience and morals resonate as Marina grows into womanhood.

ACT V : SPIRITUAL PAGEANT DRAMA

"No more, you gods! Your present kindness makes my past miseries sport."

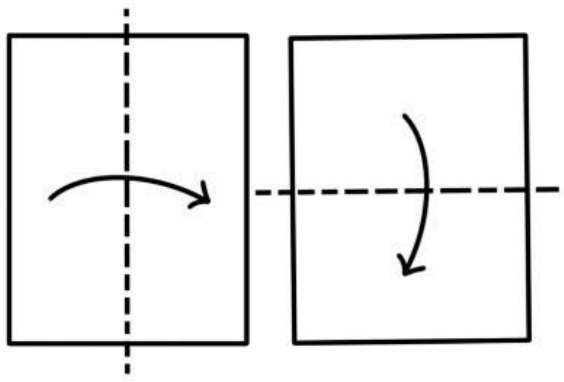
Pericles, Act V Scene III

Having proven his strength through many tumultuous obstacles, Pericles is divinely drawn to reunite with his family. Act V brings a cathartic conclusion with emphasis on supernatural circumstances that conclude the play.

MAKE YOUR OWN PAPER BOAT

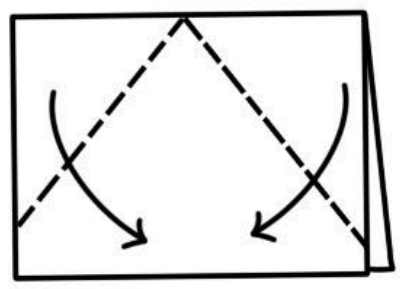
Similarly to many of Shakespeare's other late plays, *Pericles* is filled with long voyages at sea. Create your own paper boat to set sail on the magical journey that is Fiasco Theater's *Pericles*.

1.



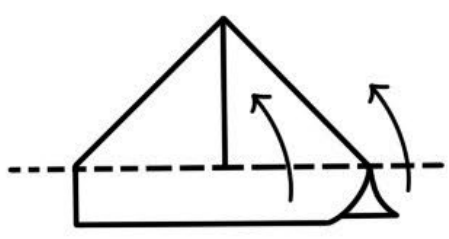
First, fold the paper length-wise and width wise

2.



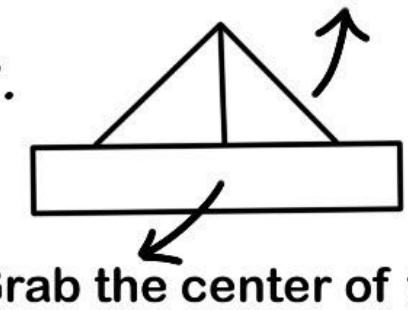
With the flaps facing down, fold the top corners towards the center

3.



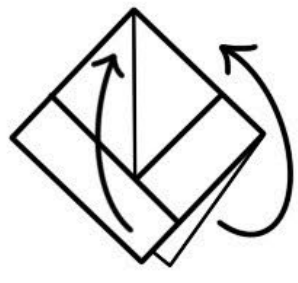
Fold up the flaps on both sides of the paper, making a triangle on top of a rectangle

4.



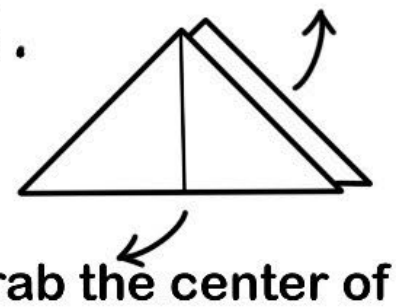
Grab the center of the rectangle on both sides and gently pull until it creates a diamond shape

5.



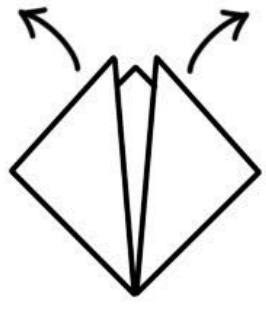
Fold the bottom of the diamond up on both sides

6.



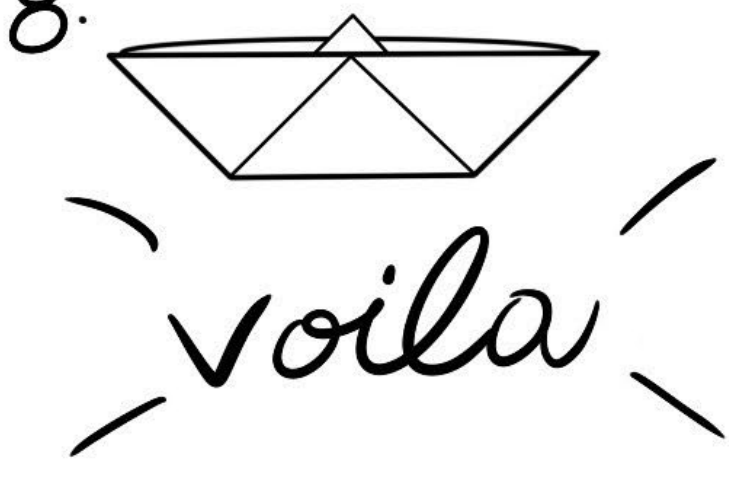
Grab the center of the triangle on both sides and gently pull

7.



Gently pull the two sides of the square apart

8.



EDUCATION SECTION

FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

This section was developed by CSC to help students and teachers prepare to see *Fiasco Theater's Pericles.* Feel free to share it!

THE STORY

Fiasco Theater's *Pericles* opens with a prologue. Gower, a balladeer[1], greets the audience with a song. He tells them they will hear the tale of Pericles, a prince who will face – and be transformed by – many challenges. Yet Gower promises a miracle: despite these hardships, virtue and honor will rule Pericles' fate.

Pericles, Prince of Tyre, sails to Antioch to woo Princess Hesperides. Her father King Antiochus the Great has promised to give up his beautiful daughter to whichever suitor can solve an impossible riddle. The punishment for guessing wrong is death, and many princes have lost their heads in their bold quest for Hesperides – a fact that brings Antiochus such joy that he has their heads displayed along the city walls. Despite the risk, Pericles boldly undertakes the challenge. He solves the riddle, but much to his surprise, he discovers a serious problem: Antiochus has a dark secret. Certain that sharing the riddle's answer publicly will humiliate his host and put his own life at risk, Pericles makes clear through modest intimation that although he knows the answer, he is choosing not to answer. Antiochus grants Pericles a 40-day extension to answer the riddle, but Pericles, sensing trouble, flees the kingdom. His intuition is not wrong: Antiochus soon entrusts a nobleman, Thaliard, with one mission: kill Pericles.

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1 **Did you know?** The character of Gower was inspired by John Gower, an English writer whose epic 33,000-line poem *Confessio Amantis* was the inspiration for *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*.

In Tyre, Pericles confides in his trusted advisor, Helicanus. He shares the secret he uncovered in Antioch: that Antiochus has committed incest with his daughter. Pericles worries that Antiochus, to hide his shame, will bring war to Tyre. Helicanus affirms Pericles' assessment of the danger and advises him to sail to Tarsus and wait out the trouble. He instructs Pericles to bring food with him, because Tarsus has fallen on hard times, and the people are starving; they will welcome anyone who can help. After appointing Helicanus to rule Tyre in his absence, Pericles sets sail immediately, narrowly missing Thaliard's arrival. When Pericles arrives in Tarsus, Cleon, the Governor of Tarsus, and his wife Dionyza are so beleaguered that they assume Pericles has come to conquer them. They are overjoyed when they learn he has brought them a life-saving supply of corn, and they swear to honor and host him forevermore. Pericles plans to stay indefinitely, but he is forced to flee almost immediately, because he receives a message from Helicanus warning him of Thaliard's murderous pursuit.

Pericles sets sail, and this time, he is not so lucky: there is a major storm, his ship is wrecked, and he is washed ashore in Pentapolis with nothing but the clothes on his back. Nearby, three fishermen discuss the agonizing cries of the shipwrecked and contemplate the similarities between life on land and amongst the fish: in both places, those who have the most devour those who have the least. Pericles hears them talking and asks for help, either to support his efforts to find food and shelter, or to bury him when he dies. The fishermen offer him warm clothes and tell him about Pentapolis,

which is ruled by the good King Simonides. King Simonides' daughter Thaisa's birthday celebrations are to be held the next day, and princes and knights are traveling to compete in a tournament for her love. Just then, the fishermen catch a rusted piece of armor in their net, and Pericles realizes it is none other than his own, given to him by his late father, the King of Tyre. Pericles asks the fishermen for his armor so he may wear it and compete in the tournament. The next day, he joins the knights fighting for Thaisa's attention. His shield bears his motto: In Hac Spe Vivo ("In this hope we live"). The crowd marvels at Pericles' unconventional appearance, noting that he does not look like a nobleman, but King Simonides is unconcerned: a king's worth is determined by his actions, not his appearance. Pericles wins the day, and Thaisa crowns him with a wreath of victory. At dinner, Simonides seats Thaisa near Pericles, and though the two both seem intrigued with Pericles, neither wishes to force the other's hand or move more quickly than would be appropriate. Simonides encourages Thaisa to get to know Pericles by toasting his victory and sharing a dance. By the end of the night, Pericles and Thaisa have fallen in love, and the next morning, Thaisa writes to her father telling him she will wed Pericles immediately! Simonides lies to Thaisa's many other suitors, telling them she has decided to wait another year before considering marriage so she may complete her service to the goddess Diana. The other suitors thus dispelled, Simonides summons Pericles and compliments him on yet more excellence — this time, his musicianship — before confronting him and accusing him of wooing his daughter. When Thaisa joins them, Simonides has some

fun at the lovers' expense, telling them they had better not cross him by getting married without his blessing — or he'll have to punish them by forcing them to get married!

Pericles and Thaisa wed happily, and it is not long before they find themselves expecting their first child. Yet the arrival of a letter from Helicanus interrupts their wedded bliss: Antiochus is dead, shriveled by lightning, and the threat to Tyre's safety has been lifted. Pericles' throne, however, will be lost if he does not return immediately, as the people have begun to cry out for Helicanus to assume the throne — something Helicanus, ever-loyal to Pericles, does not want. Pericles is forced to set sail for Tyre, and despite the risk, Thaisa insists on joining her husband. Regrettably, Pericles meets another terrible storm at sea. The storm causes Thaisa to have a difficult and frightening labor, and she dies in childbirth. Lychordia, Thaisa's maid, presents Marina to a brokenhearted Pericles. Due to sailors' superstitions, Pericles cannot even give Thaisa a proper burial — he is forced to lower her overboard for burial at sea. Not long after, he learns that they are near Tarsus, and he decides to take Marina there and leave her with Lychorida to be raised by Cleon and Dionyza, his old friends. Cleon, who remembers all Pericles did for the people of Tarsus, takes Marina in gladly and promises to care for her like his own daughter. Pericles resumes his voyage home to Tyre. Yet before the day is done, Cerimon, a doctor and devotee of the goddess Diana, makes a strange discovery: a coffin has washed ashore, and inside it is a woman – not dead, as Lychorida and the sailors

had believed, but alive. Thaisa awakens, and Cerimon takes her to Diana's temple to heal her.

INTERMISSION

We move ahead fifteen years in time. Pericles governs joylessly in Tyre as Marina is raised abroad in Tarsus. Yet all is not well in Tarsus: although Cleon and Dionyza promised to care for Pericles' daughter like their own child, now that Marina has grown up to be a beautiful young woman, they feel intolerable jealousy at the attention she receives at the expense of their own daughter, Philoten. Dionyza hires a servant, Leonine, to murder Marina. Cleon tries to dissuade his wife, but in the end caves to Dionyza's request, acknowledging he, too, would like to see Marina gone. Dionyza convinces Marina, who is mourning the recent death of Lychorida, to take a walk with Leonine. Marina is shocked when Leonine unseats his sword and tells her to say her prayers to God. Although she tries to dissuade him, he is undeterred — only the unexpected arrival of pirates prevents him from carrying out his plan. The pirates abduct Marina and sell her to Pander, who attempts to force her to work in his brothel and asks his wife Bawd to prepare her. However, Marina uses her wit and musical talents to protect herself from this fate. Lysimachus, the governor of Mytilene, visits the brothel in disguise and meets Marina. Her wit and virtue impress him, and he gives her a large sum of money before telling the proprietors of the brothel to change their ways. Marina is able to leverage her many skills to leave Pander's house and instead earn a reputation as a skilled singer and dancer.

During this time, Pericles receives word from Cleon and Dionyza of Marina's supposed death. Weighed down by grief at the loss of his daughter, and still grieving the loss of his wife many years earlier, Pericles' heart breaks, and he ceases to speak. He sails with Helicanus, first to Tarsus where Marina lived, and then on to Mytilene. In Mytilene, he meets Lysimachus, who sends Marina to try to help him heal. Although at first Pericles pushes her away, both he and Marina sense a connection. As she reveals the circumstances of her birth and parentage, Pericles fears a cruel trick played on him by the gods, but this is no trick: father and daughter are reunited at long last. Pericles receives a vision from the goddess Diana and follows her instructions to sail to her temple at Ephesus. There, with Marina, he is shocked to discover that the nun serving at Diana's altar is none other than Thaisa, who survived her premature burial at sea. In an instant, all that was lost is restored, and years of suffering melt away. Pericles, Thaisa, and Marina leave with Cerimon, who promises to tell them how she saved Thaisa all those years ago.

THE PEOPLE & PLACES OF FIASCO THEATER'S PERICLES

OUTSIDE TIME AND PLACE

GOWER, a balladeer, or storyteller; the Chorus, who comments on the action of the play

TYRE - located in Lebanon

PERICLES, prince of Tyre; the hero of the story
HELICANUS, a lord of Tyre and Pericles' chief advisor

ANTIOCH - located in modern-day Turkey

ANTIOCHUS, king of Antioch
HESPERIDES, princess of Antioch
THALIARD, nobleman of Antioch and assassin-for-hire

TARSUS - located in modern-day Turkey

CLEON, governor of Tarsus
DIONYZA, wife to Cleon
LEONINE, servant to Dionyza and assassin-for-hire
+ **PIRATES**

PENTAPOLIS - located in modern-day Libya

SIMONIDES, king of Pentapolis
THAISA, princess of Pentapolis; wife to Pericles and mother of Marina
LYCHORIDA, attendant to Thaisa and, later, to Marina
+ three **FISHERMEN**, two **SAILORS**, and two **KNIGHTS** who compete for Thaisa's hand in marriage

MARINA, daughter of Pericles and Thaisa

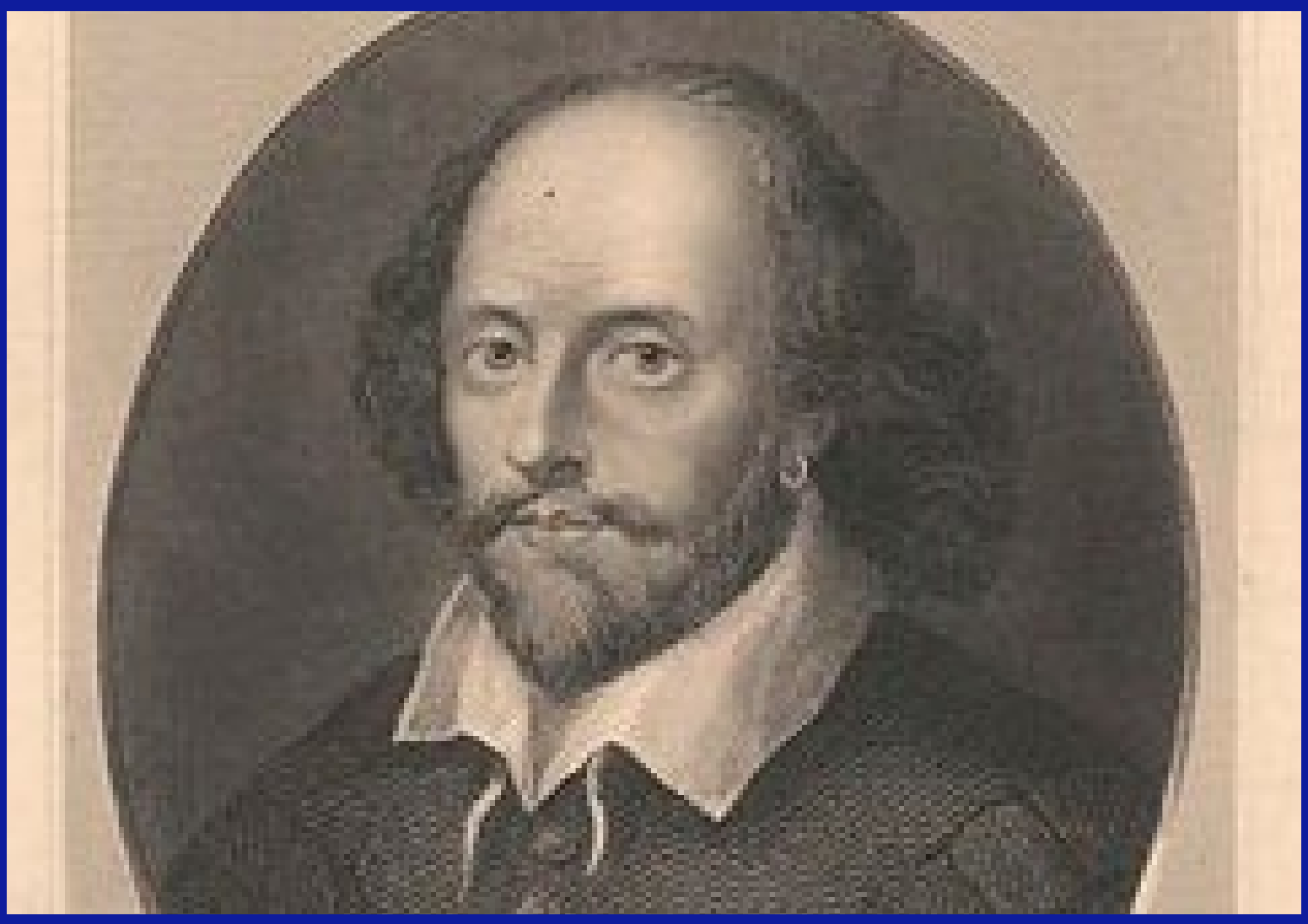
EPHESUS - located in modern-day Turkey

DIANA CERIMON, a physician/goddess
SERVANT, aide to Cerimon

MYTILENE - located on the Isle of Lesbos, Greece

LYSIMACHUS, governor of Mytilene
PANDER, owner of brothel
BAWD, mistress of brothel and wife to Pander
BOLT, servant to Pander and Bawd

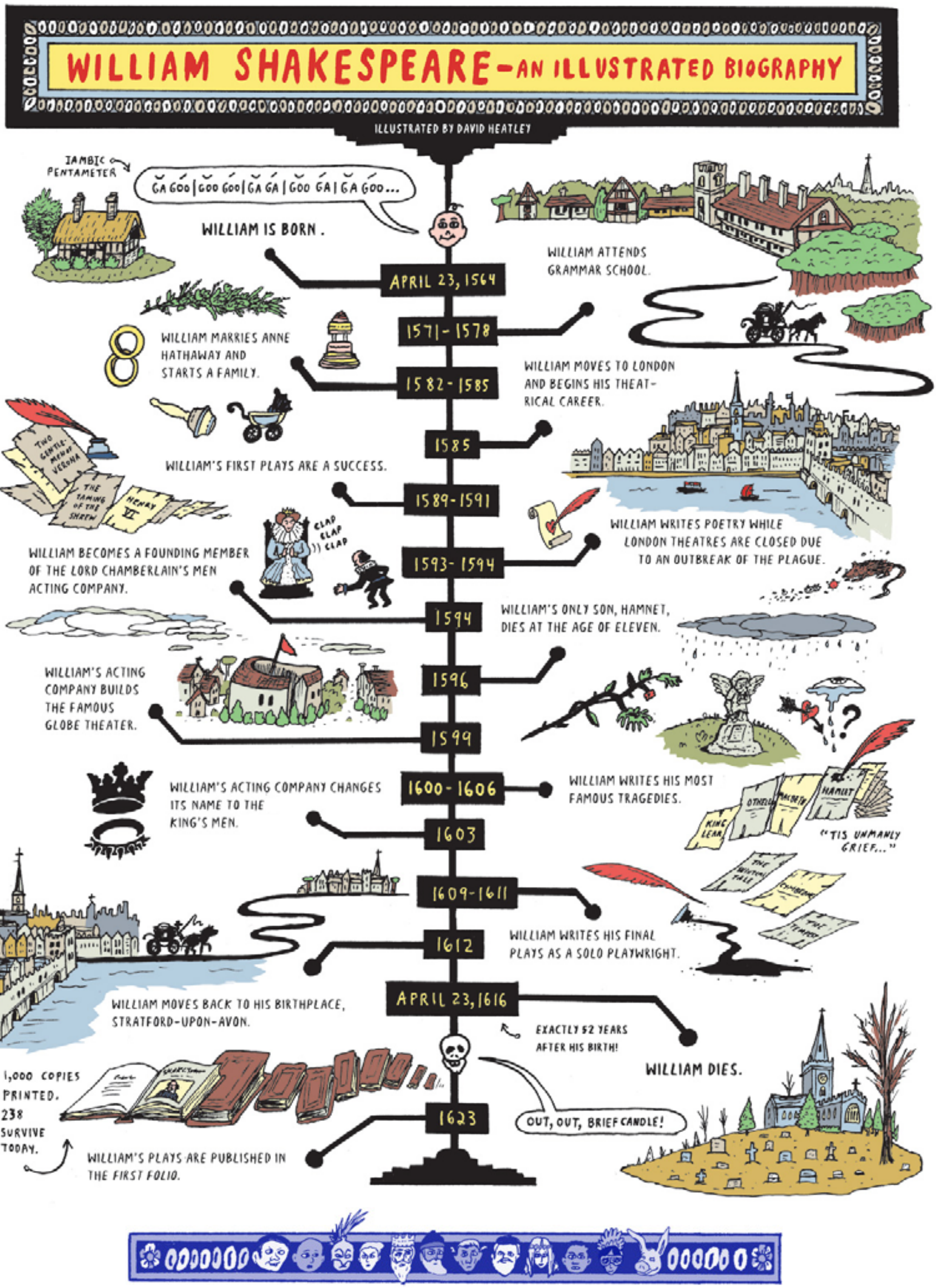
THE PLAYWRIGHT



William Shakespeare courtesy of Yale Center for British Art

William Shakespeare was born in April 1564 in Stratford-upon-Avon, England. He was a founding member of the Lord Chamberlain's Men (later called The King's Men under King James I), a company of actors who performed in London. A leading dramatist who wrote throughout the reign of Queen Elizabeth I and later King James I, Shakespeare is credited with having authored at least 39 plays, 154 sonnets, and other poetry. Scholars debate whether any of his plays (and especially *Pericles, Prince of Tyre; The Two Noble Kinsmen;* and *Edward III*) were collaboratively authored, but all of the work attributed to his pen has held lasting appeal for artists and audiences alike. His plays have been performed around the world and translated into over 100 languages.

SHAKESPEARE'S TIME



ELIZABETHAN ENGLAND

IN 16TH CENTURY ENGLAND,

religion and politics were one and the same. People believed in the "divine right of kings"–that is, monarchs were given their right to rule directly from God, and were subject to no earthly authority. In 1534, King Henry VIII famously broke from the Catholic Church when they denied him the right to a divorce from his first wife, Catherine of Aragon, who had not produced a male heir. He declared himself head of the new Anglican Church, which eventually became part of the Protestant Reformation. His actions resulted in a time of bitter and violent religious disputes in England, and the crown changed hands frequently in a short period of time.

BY THE TIME SHAKESPEARE WAS BORN IN 1564,

Queen Elizabeth-Henry VIII's second eldest daughter, born to his second wife, Anne Boleyn—was in power. Her 44 years on the throne provided the kingdom with more stability than the previous short-lived reigns of her two half-siblings, Edward VI (crowned at age 9 and dead by age 16) and Mary Tudor (nicknamed "Bloody Mary" for the nearly 300 Protestants she had burned at the stake).

QUEEN ELIZABETH'S REIGN WAS A TIME OF THRIVING CULTURE.

English citizens loved her, nicknaming her "Good Queen Bess". Because she remained unmarried throughout her rule and did not give birth to an heir, a distant relative, King James VI of Scotland, was named as her successor. Both Elizabeth and James were great patrons of the theater, and enjoyed Shakespeare's plays. In fact, King James honored Shakespeare's company of actors with the title of "The King's Men", and they performed at court regularly.

ELIZABETHAN TWITTER FEED

A CSC exclusive! We went back in time and got the scoop from the Royals themselves (plus Shakespeare, and his dad!) via Twitter.

King Henry VIII @VIIIKING · 1531
@CatAra you are outta here. This king needs a #maleheir. #kingsgreatmatter

Anne Boleyn @AnnieB · January 25, 1533
@CatAra check me out!!!. You better recognize, I AM THE NEW QUEEN! #cinderellastory

Catherine of Aragon @CatAra · December 1535
The #kingsgreatmatter is literally killing me. Missing my daughter @BloodyMary.

Edward VI @Eddie_the_KING · January 28, 1547
I'm the King of the world!!!! RIP, Dad @VIIIKING #kidsrule #9yearsold #winning

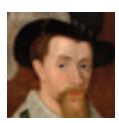
Mary Tudor @BloodyMary · July 19, 1553
Turn down 4 Protestantism. Turn up 4 Catholicism! This one's for my mom, @CatAra, RIP. #sorrynotsorry

Queen Elizabeth @GoodQueenB · 1560
Philip II, Eric XIV of Sweden, Henry of Anjou...So many suitors. So little time. #singleNready2mingle (j/k I have work to do) #swiperight

John Shakespeare @Stratfor_Dad · April 26, 1564
Baptized my son William today @HolyTrinityChurch! #blessed

William Shakespeare @BillyShakes· 1589
Working on my 1st play! RT with title suggestions. It's a comedy w/ a lot of errors.

Queen Elizabeth @GoodQueenB · April 23, 1597
Saw a HYSTERICAL play by @BillyShakes! Check out Merry Wives of Windsor! #LoveMeSomeFalstaff #ChamberlainsMen



King James 1 @Scotty · March 24, 1603
RIP @GoodQueenB, thanks 4 the throne! #transformationtuesday #JacobeanEra

King James 1 @Scotty · May 19, 1603
Congrats to my boy @BillyShakes and his players. #thekingsmen #royalpatent #Othello #MeasureForMeasure

Anne Hathaway @ShakesWife · April 23, 1616
RIP/Happy birthday @BillyShakes. Thanks 4 the bed. @HolyTrinityChurch

GROWING UP SHAKESPEARE:
Fun, Games, and School

BOYS AND GIRLS began "petty school" around the age of four in order to learn how to read. Girls left school at age six to be taught at home by their mothers, or, if they were rich, a private tutor. If boys belonged to a middle class or wealthy family, they could continue on to "grammar school" after leaving petty school, or they were sent to work in some sort of trade, such as farming. At grammar school boys would study Latin, drama, poetry, and history for long hours with no desks. Learning Latin was important for any boy wanting to enter a career in law, medicine, or the Church. Because Shakespeare's father made a sustainable living in public and government jobs, Shakespeare was able to attend grammar school where he likely picked up his love of drama and writing.

FOOTBALL–or soccer, as we know it–was a popular sport for people in the countryside around Shakespeare's hometown. The balls were made from inflated pigs' bladders! (LEFT) Shakespeare makes mention of this sport in THE COMEDY OF ERRORS: "Am I so round with you as you with me, that like a football you do spurn me thus?" Other popular sports of the day Shakespeare mentions in his works include tennis, bowling, wrestling, rugby, billiards, and archery.

FESTIVALS occurred at various times of the year. One of the most popular was on May 1st, May Day, the celebration of the arrival of summer! Columns were erected (maypoles) and adorned with ribbons and flowers, traditionally as part of a dance (RIGHT). This tradition is reflected in A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM: "They rose early to observe the rite of May."

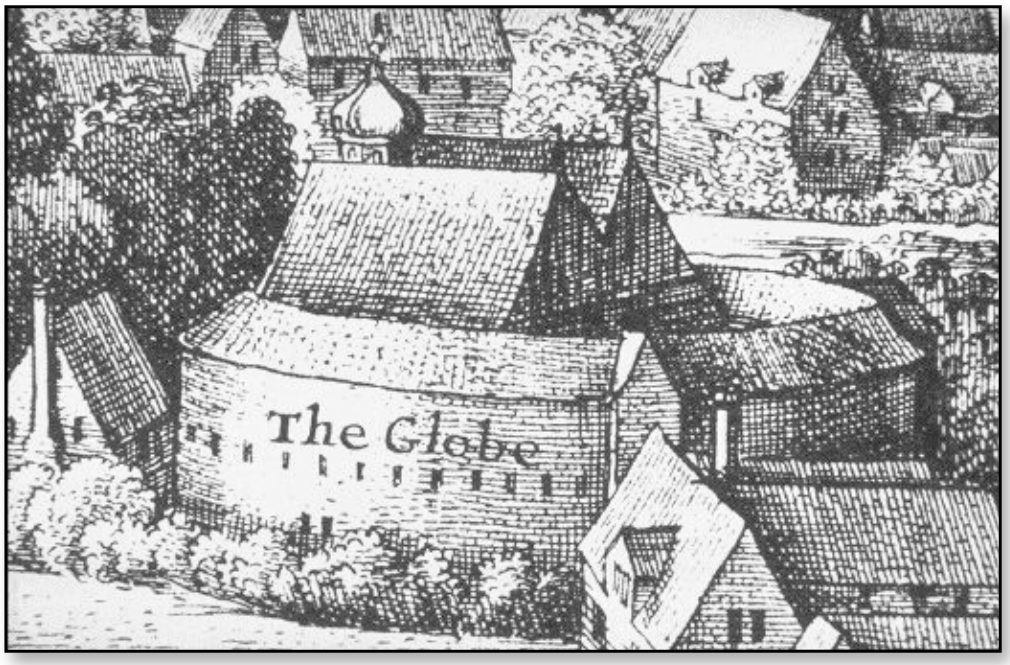
RIGHT: Children learned to read using "hornbooks" like these – a piece of wood covered with printed-paper, protected by a transparent sheet of horn.

LONDON CITY LIVING:

Filth, Fashion, and Fighting

IF YOU LIVED IN LONDON during Shakespeare's time, you would have encountered overly crowded streets, heaps of trash on the sidewalk, and the heads of executed criminals placed on poles for all to see. But amidst the grime, there were also beautiful churches and large mansions filled with nobles and wealthy merchants. Most items you needed would have been purchased from street vendors, including vegetables, fruits, toys, books and clothing.

ABOVE: Like New York City today, space was tight. Many buildings were designed with vertical living in mind, as London quickly became the epicenter of culture in England.

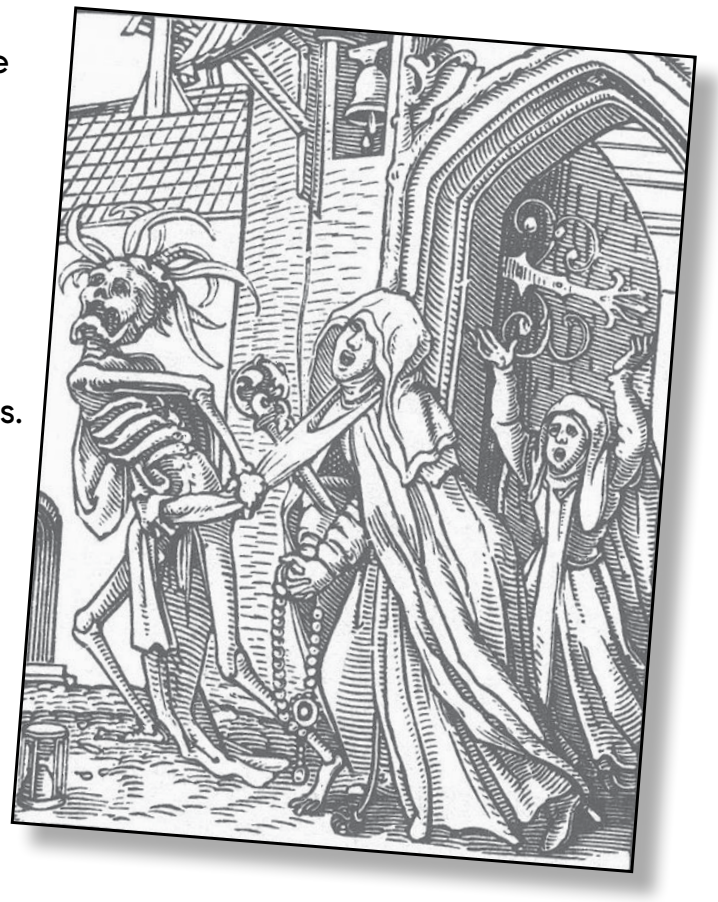


SHAKESPEARE MOVED TO LONDON to work in the theater. But theater wasn't the only cultural event happening in London. You could also view bloody tournaments between animals, and public executions! Gambling was also popular.

The first theater was built in 1576. Its shape, like The Globe (ABOVE), was influenced by bear fighting-rings (RIGHT), which were popular in London at the time. Shakespeare referenced this Elizabethan sport in Macbeth when Macbeth states, "They have tied me to a stake; I cannot fly, but bear-like I must fight the course."

OUTBREAKS OF THE PLAGUE were common in Elizabethan London. Many Londoners believed the plague was caused by the various smells throughout the city, so they carried containers filled with herbs to combat the stench. What they didn't know was that the plague was actually spread by fleas that lived on rats, which were rampant on the dirty streets.

In 1592, the plague forced London theaters to shut their doors for two whole years. 12,000 Londoners lost their lives. With no playhouses to produce his works, Shakespeare focused his attention on writing narrative poems and sonnets for wealthy patrons.



CLOTHING WAS A SIGN OF ONE'S RANK so there were strict rules dictating what citizens could and could not wear. Those dressing above their status could be arrested! Exceptions were made for actors as they often played nobles on stage.

ABOVE: As a rule, the less practical the outfit, the higher the rank of its wearer. Wealthy men often wore hats with ostrich feathers for decoration, and huge "ruff" collars. Wealthy women wore wide padded dresses with puffy sleeves.

RIGHT: The less wealthy wore practical clothing conducive to labor. While the wealthy were wearing luxurious fabrics such as silk and velvet, the lower-status citizens often wore rough wool.

THE COURT

ABOVE: The procession of Queen Elizabeth I. She is surrounded by her courtiers, ladies maids, and favored knights.

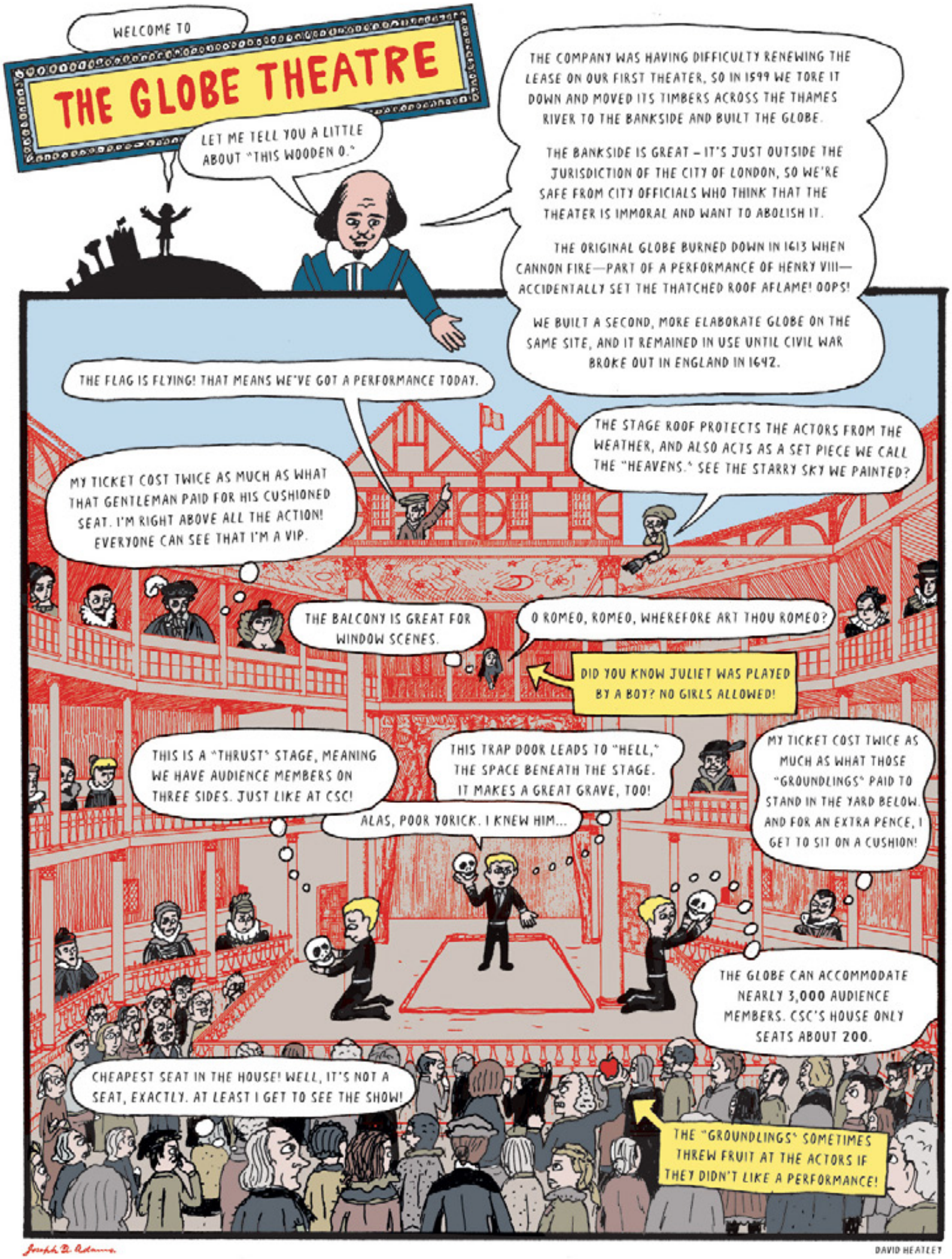
THE COURT OF QUEEN ELIZABETH I was made up of courtiers, people who were of a higher class that were invited to attend the queen as a companion or advisor. The number of courtiers that attended Elizabeth ranged from one thousand to fifteen hundred, and they were housed at the palace or in nearby lodging. They were paid a small amount of money, but could make themselves quite wealthy through accepting bribes from people who required favors from them. As such, the court was full of corruption and the queen had to be discerning about whose advice she heeded. However, it was a statement of the queen's popularity and wealth that she travelled with such a large entourage.

FOOLS AND JESTERS were a familiar sight at court. They traditionally wore motley, a colorful patchwork costume, and functioned like resident stand-up comedians or clowns. There were two types of fools: natural, and artificial. In Elizabethan England, mental and learning disabilities weren't understood, but those who had one of these disabilities could earn a living for themselves if they could make people laugh. Fools of this kind were called natural, meaning they were born "foolish." Artificial fools were deliberately foolish or eccentric for the purposes of entertainment, much like the comedians of today.

ABOVE: A motley fool! Notice that this fool's motley costume has ass's ears attached, a common symbol of foolishness. He also carries a "ninny stick," a rod with a carved imitation of his own face at the end.

CHIVALRY, a code of ethics that glorified warfare and armed conflict as well as the pursuit of courtly ladies, was revered by Elizabethan society. They believed that honor was something you attained through physical prowess rather than moral integrity. Some of these values still exist in our culture today—superheroes are often heroic because they have incredible combat abilities. Legendary knights were the superheroes of the Renaissance!

LEFT: One of the most important figures in the history of chivalry was Saint George who, according to legend, tamed and killed a dragon to save a damsel in distress and convert a city to Christianity.


WELCOME TO
THE GLOBE THEATRE
LET ME TELL YOU A LITTLE ABOUT "THIS WOODEN O."
THE COMPANY WAS HAVING DIFFICULTY RENEWING THE LEASE ON OUR FIRST THEATER, SO IN 1599 WE TORE IT DOWN AND MOVED ITS TIMBERS ACROSS THE THAMES RIVER TO THE BANKSIDE AND BUILT THE GLOBE.
THE BANKSIDE IS GREAT – IT'S JUST OUTSIDE THE JURISDICTION OF THE CITY OF LONDON, SO WE'RE SAFE FROM CITY OFFICIALS WHO THINK THAT THE THEATER IS IMMORAL AND WANT TO ABOLISH IT.
THE ORIGINAL GLOBE BURNED DOWN IN 1613 WHEN CANNON FIRE—PART OF A PERFORMANCE OF HENRY VIII—ACCIDENTALLY SET THE THATCHED ROOF AFLAME! OOPS!
WE BUILT A SECOND, MORE ELABORATE GLOBE ON THE SAME SITE, AND IT REMAINED IN USE UNTIL CIVIL WAR BROKE OUT IN ENGLAND IN 1642.
THE FLAG IS FLYING! THAT MEANS WE'VE GOT A PERFORMANCE TODAY.
MY TICKET COST TWICE AS MUCH AS WHAT THAT GENTLEMAN PAID FOR HIS CUSHIONED SEAT. I'M RIGHT ABOVE ALL THE ACTION! EVERYONE CAN SEE THAT I'M A VIP.
THE STAGE ROOF PROTECTS THE ACTORS FROM THE WEATHER, AND ALSO ACTS AS A SET PIECE WE CALL THE "HEAVENS." SEE THE STARRY SKY WE PAINTED?
THE BALCONY IS GREAT FOR WINDOW SCENES.
O ROMEO, ROMEO, WHEREFORE ART THOU ROMEO?
DID YOU KNOW JULIET WAS PLAYED BY A BOY? NO GIRLS ALLOWED!
THIS IS A "THRUST" STAGE, MEANING WE HAVE AUDIENCE MEMBERS ON THREE SIDES. JUST LIKE AT CSC!
THIS TRAP DOOR LEADS TO "HELL," THE SPACE BENEATH THE STAGE. IT MAKES A GREAT GRAVE, TOO!
ALAS, POOR YORICK. I KNEW HIM...
MY TICKET COST TWICE AS MUCH AS WHAT THOSE "GROUNDLINGS" PAID TO STAND IN THE YARD BELOW. AND FOR AN EXTRA PENCE, I GET TO SIT ON A CUSHION!
THE GLOBE CAN ACCOMMODATE NEARLY 3,000 AUDIENCE MEMBERS. CSC'S HOUSE ONLY SEATS ABOUT 200.
CHEAPEST SEAT IN THE HOUSE! WELL, IT'S NOT A SEAT, EXACTLY. AT LEAST I GET TO SEE THE SHOW!
THE "GROUNDLINGS" SOMETIMES THREW FRUIT AT THE ACTORS IF THEY DIDN'T LIKE A PERFORMANCE!
Joseph D. Adams
DAVID HEATLEY

SHAKESPEARE'S LANGUAGE

SHAKESPEARE'S VOCABULARY

Shakespeare's plays are made up on thousands and thousands of words that are put together to create the classics you know today. When reading a Shakespeare play, you'll probably recognize a majority of the words. However, like our modern playwrights use slang from today, Shakespeare uses a lot of words referencing things that people in the 1600s would understand like Elizabethan politics or Greek history.

WHERE DO THE WORDS COME FROM?

20,000 ROOT WORDS

These are words that were already used in the English language at the time, like "good," "parting," or "sorrow."

"Good night, good night! parting is such sweet sorrow,
That I shall say good night till it be morrow"
Romeo and Juliet, Act II, Scene 2

1,700 NEW PHRASES

These are words or phrases Shakespeare made up, like "foul play," "fortune-teller," or "school-boy."

"All is not well; I doubt some **foul play**; would the night were come!"
Hamlet, Act I, Scene 2

375 ANIMALS AND PLANTS

Think of all the times Shakespeare used an animal or flower to describe the setting, or a metaphor to describe a feeling or action.

"The **cuckoo** then, on every tree,
Mocks married men; for thus sings he;
Cuckoo, cuckoo, cuckoo"
Love's Labour's Lost, Act V, Scene 2

250 MYTHOLOGICAL CHARACTERS

These are words describing fantastical characters, many from Greek or Roman mythology. Examples include "mermaid," "basilisk," or "Poseidon.

"I'll drown more sailors than the **mermaid** shall,
I'll slay more gazers than the **basilisk**,"
Henry VI, Act IV, Scene 1

142 LITERARY REFERENCES

These are references to books, plays or history. Examples include references to Nestor, a Greek leader; Ulysses who is featured in *The Odyssey*, a Greek Epic; and Sinon, a character in Virgil's *Aeneid.*

"I'll play the orator as well as **Nestor**,
Deceive more slyly than **Ulysses** could,
And, like a **Sinon**, take another Troy."
Henry VI, Act IV, Scene 1

90 NAUTICAL TERMS

These are words that relate to sailing, like "mariners," "brine," and "vessel."

"All but the **mariners** plunged into
the foamy **brine** and quit the **vessel**"
The Tempest, Act I, Scene 2

Fun fact: By using 20,000 root words, Shakespeare was working with nearly half the number of existing words in the English language at the time. That's a mouthful!

AN INVENTING WORDSMITH

While a lot of these words existed beforehand, Shakespeare invented words, some of which are listed below:

ACTIVITY

Make up a word! Think of an object feeling or action and make up a word to describe it. Write a sentence with that word–maybe a mini scene?

RHYME AND RHYTHM

Like any other wordsmith, Shakespeare uses vocabulary, rhyme, and rhythm to suggest emotions, relationships and motivations. Did people in Shakespeare's day speak in rhymed verse? No, of course not — no more than we speak in rap. But then and now, people have enjoyed the rhythm and rhyme of verse—and sometimes the language and rhythm of verse tunes us in more immediately, more completely to the feelings and choices of characters. That's why people listen to the blues, hip-hop, and classical music—it's simply another medium of language and sound that gives us an emotional rhythm with which we can identify.

Shakespeare employs several forms of language in his plays. Check out some of the forms below:

PROSE

Prose is what we think of as everyday speech, without specific rules or rhyme and rhythm. Prose is the everyday language used then and now. Since verse was the conventional method of writing in Elizabethan England, Shakespeare was actually pushing the literary boundaries by including prose in his plays.

> "Had you rather Caesar were living, and die all slaves, than that Caesar were dead, to live all freemen? As Caesar loved me, I weep for him... but as he was ambitious, I slew him."
> **Julius Caesar, Act III, Scene 2**

At first glance, it may seem that Shakespeare used verse and prose to indicate a character's status (rich, powerful, educated characters speak in verse; poor, common fools speak in prose) but upon closer look, you'll find that many characters go back and forth between verse and prose, and they do so at very specific moments in the play. Actors pay close attention to when characters speak in verse and when they speak in prose, because Shakespeare made these choices on purpose, and it can tell the actor a lot about how their character thinks and feels.

Pro-Tip: A quick way to tell verse from prose: lines of verse begin with capital letters, while prose will appear in paragraph form.

VERSE

Verse can be defined as giving order or form to the random stress pattern of prose. Verse is all about combining stressed and unstressed syllables to create rhythm. The basic unit of verse is a foot, which is a repeating combination of stressed and unstressed syllables. An iamb, or iambic foot, is a foot of poetry containing two syllables, with an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable, for example,"ta DUM."

Pro Tip: A good way to remember the word "iamb" is to think of it as: i AM, i AM, i AM, i AM, i AM

BLANK VERSE

Blank Verse is the standard poetic form Shakespeare uses in his plays. It can also be defined as unrhymed iambic pentameter— that is, a line of poetry containing five ("penta" meaning five) iambic feet, not rhyming with any adjacent line. That's ten syllables all together. The pattern flows easily for English speakers, and the stresses match the human heart beat —

"ta DUM, ta DUM, ta DUM, ta DUM, ta DUM," or "i AM, i AM, i AM, i AM, i AM."

If you say, "The Yankees and the Mets are famous teams." with natural inflection, you will have spoken a line of iambic pentameter.

The Yankees and the Mets are famous teams
The YANK I ees AND I the METS I are FA I mous TEAMS

Here are two more:

I take the subway every day to school
i TAKE I the SUB I way EV I ery DAY I to SCHOOL

I can't go out because my homework's late.
i CAN'T I go OUT I be CAUSE I my HOME I work's LATE

Here's an example from *Romeo and Juliet*

"But soft! What light through yonder window breaks?"
but SOFT I what LIGHT I through YON I der WIN I dow BREAKS

-*Romeo and Juliet*, Act II, Scene 2

RHYMED VERSE

Even though most of Shakespeare's plays are written in blank verse, he still makes frequent use of rhyme—especially when he wants to call your attention to something. Words that rhyme really stand out when we hear them spoken aloud, so these words are of particular importance to the actors.

"By all vows that ever men have broke–
In number more than ever women spoke–
In that same place thou hast appointed me
Tomorrow truly will I meet with thee."
-*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Act I, Scene 1

IRREGULAR VERSE

Shakespeare doesn't always write verse in perfect iambic pentameter. The rhythmic patterns change, and so do the number of syllables. This was pretty innovative stuff in Shakespeare's day. He was one of the first writers to regularly break form. Just like a change from prose to verse is a clue for the actor, so is a variation in the verse pattern. For instance, take a look at this line from Marc Antony's speech in *Julius Caesar*:

"Woe to the hand that shed this costly blood!"
WOE to / the HAND/ that SHED/ this COST/ ly BLOOD.

-*Julius Caesar*, Act I, Scene 1

TROCHEES AND CHANGES IN IAMBIC RHYTHM

Often, when Shakespeare wants to catch an audience's ear on a specific word or phrase, he'll switch up the iambic rhythmic pattern of unstressed/stressed syllables (ta DUM). One of these irregular meters is called a trochee. A trochee is the exact opposite of an iamb: TA dum. Compared to an iamb, this feels surprisingly unnatural to speakers of the English language, so Shakespeare often uses trochees for his supernatural characters (the witches in *Macbeth;* Puck in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*). He also inserts it into regular lines of iambic pentameter. This often happens when a character is attempting to seem particularly forceful or demanding.

Double, double toil and trouble
DOU ble I DOU ble I TOIL and I TROU ble

-*Macbeth*, Act IV, Scene 1

MISSING FEET AND SILENCE

Shakespeare writes in iambic pentameter, which means there are five poetic feet per line: ta DUM, ta DUM, ta DUM, ta DUM, ta DUM. If a line is short, we say it is "missing feet". This interrupts the flow of the poetry, and forces the actors to find meaning in a moment of silence. Check out the next few lines in the scene following Brutus' decision to let Marc Antony speak at the funeral in *Julius Caesar:*

Marc Antony, here, take you Caesar's body.
mark ANT/ to NY/ here TAKE/ you CAE/sar's BO/dy
You shall not in your funeral speech blame us,
you SHALL/ not IN/ your FUN/'ral SPEECH/ blame US
But speak all good you can devise of Caesar
but SPEAK/ all GOOD/ you CAN/ de VISE/ of CAE/ sar
In the same pulpit whereto I am going,
IN the/ same PUL/ pit WHERE/ to I/ am GO/ ing
After my speech is ended.
AF ter/ my SPEECH/ is EN/ ded __ / __ __

-*Julius Caesar*, Act III, Scene 1

FEMININE ENDINGS

Shakespeare does not relentlessly follow the rhythm in every line. He occasionally varies the stresses or uses a period in the middle of a line, which causes us to pause longer. Nor does every line contain exactly ten syllables. Some lines may contain an added syllable and others may drop a syllable. Shakespeare's most common variation in iambic pentameter is the use of the feminine ending — lines of text that add an unstressed eleventh syllable.

All matter else seems weak; she cannot love,
Nor take no shape nor project of affection.

all MAT I ter ELSE I seems WEAK I she CAN I not LOVE
nor TAKE I no SHAPE I nor PRO I ject OF I a FEECT I ion

-*Much Ado about Nothing*, Act III, Scene 1

SHARED LINES & SPLIT LINES

Shakespeare sometimes splits a line of verse, so that two characters share the ten syllables. This is called a shared line or a split line, and helps show quick thinking or strong emotion, as well as creating a sense of accelerated action. Thus we have both the effect of poetry AND of natural speech. Have a look at these shared lines, from a conversation between the Macbeths just after the murder of King Duncan in *Macbeth*:

LADY MACBETH
Did not you speak?

MACBETH
When?

LADY MACBETH
Now.

MACBETH
As I descended?

They scan as:
did NOT I you SPEAK I when NOW I as I I de SCEND I ed?

-*Macbeth*, Act II, Scene 2

That's one line of verse, shared by two characters, over the course of three sentences that are so simplistic, they would probably not be taken for poetry on their own!

MALAPROPISM

A malapropism is the act of misusing or the habitual misuse of similar sounding words, espeically with humorous results. Dogberry, the inept police officer, creates much of the comedy found in *Much Ado About Nothing* through his frequent misuse of language (malaprops). In fact, people have coined "Dogberryism" as an alternate word for malapropism.

"Our watch, sir, have indeed comprehended two auspicious persons..."
-*Much Ado About Nothing*, Act III, Scene 5

Dogberry is confusing the words comprehended with apprehended and auspicious with suspicious.

THE IMPACT OF LANGUAGE

Shakespeare used many elements of language, such as specific vocabulary, rhyme, rhythm, and form to create the classic stories we know today. In Shakespeare's plays, every word and rhyme is a choice. As you read his work, look at the vocabulary and form and consider their impact on the story. Why do you think Shakespeare rhymes one line, but not another? Why does he use a trochee instead of an iamb? Why do some characters use literary references?

PHRASES BEYOND THE GRAVE

Shakespeare's words are not just prevalent on the stage — they have become a part of our everyday life. Along with inventing words, Shakespeare invented phrases, many of which are still used today. See anything familiar?

CONCLUSION

The most important thing to remember when preparing to read or hear Shakespeare is that it's still English. As we might listen to a new song on an album or on the radio a few times before we pick up every word and layer of meaning, we might have to mull over a passage of a play a few times in order to glean meaning from the language tools Shakespeare employs. A basic knowledge of the use of language and poetic form can enhance understanding and enjoyment of Shakespeare's plays.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

WHAT IS VIRTUE?

Is it something you are born with, or something you can earn?

Merriam Webster Dictionary defines virtue several ways, as "conformity to a standard of right; a beneficial quality or power of a thing; manly strength or courage; a commendable quality or trait; a capacity to act; chastity, especially in a woman." Virtue is, admittedly, an abstract quality. And, like all abstract ideas, it contains the power to uphold or challenge the way things are.

When Shakespeare used the word virtue, it was relatively new, having first come into use during the Middle Ages. During that time, and for centuries after, the ruling class encouraged a belief in the divine right of kings (perhaps in order to avoid accountability for the vast inequality that pervaded the social order they upheld and benefited from). Building on the Christian dogma of monotheism (meaning that there is a single deity, called God, who rules the universe), they argued nothing could happen on Earth that would be contrary to God's will. By this logic, every king was divinely

anointed to serve his (or her) people, and to question their power – or their decisions and behavior – was to question God.

It was assumed that kings were virtuous. Yet in *Pericles, Prince of Tyre,* which was written in 1608 under the rule of King James I, we encounter a series of rulers, more than one of whom is deeply corrupt and noticeably devoid of virtue. By contrast, Pericles, his wife Thaisa, and his daughter Marina all embody virtue, yet face numerous painful setbacks before they finally triumph.

DISCUSS:

1. What role does virtue play in the story of ***Pericles***? Is it a helpful quality to possess? Why, or why not?
2. What does virtue mean to you today?
3. Think of someone – a character, or a real person – that you believe possesses virtue. Get specific: how would you define their virtue? What is it about them that, to you, seems virtuous? Now consider:
   - If the circumstances of their lives changed, but they remained the same, would you still consider them virtuous? Would others?
   - What impact, if any, does their virtue have on a) their life, and b) the lives of others? What might the world around them be like if they did not possess the quality of virtue?

SOURCES

MAPPING THE LIFE OF PERICLES, PRINCE OF TYRE

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THE MORAL ARC OF SHAKESPEARE'S UNIVERSE BENDS TOWARDS JUSTICE

- Shakespeare's Globe
- "Shakespeare's Late, Great Romances" by Russ McDonald

EDUCATION SECTION

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- British Council
- "Fun International Facts About Shakespeare" by Laura Estill, Eric Johnson
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- *Essential Shakespeare Handbook* by Leslie Dunton-Downer and Alan Riding
- *Eye Witness Shakespeare* written by Peter Chrisp, photographed by Steve Teague
- *The Friendly Shakespeare* by Norrie Epstein
- *The Genius of Shakespeare* by Jonathan Bate
- Merriam-Webster Dictionary
- Oxford English Dictionary
- Royal Shakespeare Company
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- *Shakespeare for Dummies* by John Doyle (former CSC Artistic Director) and Ray Lischner
- *Teaching Shakespeare* by Rex Gibson
- Wikipedia
- *William Shakespeare and the Globe* written and illustrated by Aliki

SPECIAL THANKS

- Writers: Devon Savage, Anthony Michael Martinez, Marella Martin Koch, and Esmé Maria Ng
- Ariana Albarella, Alex Lee, Kathleen Dorman, and Rachel Langton